

# APOLOGETICS AND CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

A Course of Religious Instruction  
for Schools and Colleges

BY

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PART I  
APOLOGETICS

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## FOURTH AND REVISED EDITION

Apart from the Chapter on Faith which has been transferred in revised form from Part II, the text of this issue of "Apologetics" has been increased by seventeen pages. The chief alterations and additions are noted by italics in the Index.

The Chapter on Faith has been inserted so that the reader may have at hand a means of answering a type of question which his study of this volume will naturally suggest, such as, "What precisely is meant by 'an act of faith'?" "How is the act of faith made?" "How does an adult pass from unbelief to faith?" "What dispositions does he require?" "Can he arrive at these dispositions by his natural powers and without any special help from God?"

As on former occasions, I feel bound to express my great indebtedness to Father Kearney, C.S.Sp., Kimmage Manor, Dublin, for his unremitting and most generous assistance, and I wish to repeat the statement previously made that it was at his instance I undertook the formidable labour of writing these books on Apologetics and Catholic Doctrine. I am also indebted to Mother Emilian of the Loreto Sisters, to one of the Dominican Nuns of the Irish Congregation, to Prof. Alfred O Rahilly, and to Mr. Frank Sheed (Sheed and Ward); to them, and to others whose names are unknown to me, I offer my most sincere thanks.

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## APOLOGETICS

### INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

#### Summary.

- I. Apologetics defined ; its aim is to prove the Divine Authority of the Catholic Church ; its study, a duty and a discipline.— The nature of its proof ; its proof, conclusive but not coercive.
- II. The two methods of proof :—(1) the more elaborate method, arguing from the New Testament as history ; (2) the simpler method, arguing from our knowledge of the Church herself.— The more elaborate method, adopted in the body of the text ; reasons. The simpler method, followed in the Appendix to this Chapter.
- III. The relation of Apologetics to Faith.

Appendix. Proof by the simpler method that the Catholic Church is the living work of God : arguments from her miraculous unity in government, faith, and worship ; from the heroic sanctity of so many of her children ; and from her miraculous stability.

#### I

**Apologetics.** DEFINITION.—Apologetics is the science concerned with the defence of the Catholic religion. Its aim is to prove from reason the Divine Authority of the Catholic Church. Advancing through a series of connected truths, it concludes that the one and only guide of faith on earth is the Catholic Church, Holy and Infallible. It leads unbelievers to the portals of the House of God, and bids them enter. Within, they hear the Catholic Doctrine, Christ's message to them interpreted by His living representative.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Beginners will note that the words "Apologetics" and "Apology," though derived from the same Greek root, have come to have very different meanings. "Apology," as commonly used, may signify nothing more than an excuse, or an appeal for forgiveness, whereas "Apologetics" always denotes a scientific proof or defence of religious truth. "Catholic Apologetics," therefore, is not a mere appeal for the acceptance of Catholicism or a plea for its toleration but a solid demonstration that it is the one and only true religion.

ITS STUDY FOR CATHOLICS : A DUTY AND A DISCIPLINE.—While still in the Primary School, we grasped the truth that our faith in the Church and her teaching is a reasonable faith. We were shown that it is defended by two convincing arguments, which were put before us in some brief form, such as the following :—(1) “Christ the Son of God founded a Church to teach all mankind. He promised to be with her all days even to the end of the world. Because of this perpetual help, His Church must claim to teach men as He taught them : she must claim to be infallible in her teaching. The Catholic Church is the only religious body in the world that makes that claim. She alone therefore is the Church founded by Christ.”—(2) “The great antiquity of the Catholic Church, her marvellous growth, her unconquerable stability, her wondrous holiness, her inexhaustible fruitfulness in all charitable works, her power of holding her vast following together in solid unity, so that, in spite of all manner of differences in race and culture and ambitions, they remain ever one in faith, in worship, in obedience—it is the combination of all these characteristics that sets the Church quite apart from merely human institutions and marks her plainly as the work of God.” But, as we advance in secular knowledge, so also we should advance in our knowledge of our holy religion ; we should seize the full content and plumb the depth of these simple proofs : we should familiarize ourselves with the whole net-work of argument by which our faith is defended. The age in which we live is hostile to God, to Christ, and to His Church ; it is our duty, therefore, to master the proofs set forth in Apologetics, so that we may have a fuller vision of the reasonableness of our faith, of the enormous strength of its defences, and of the weakness of the objections alleged against it ; it is our duty to remove temptation from our path, and to fortify ourselves against the spirit of infidelity that infects the very air we breathe ; it is our duty to acquire sufficient enlightenment to enable us, at need, to answer the questions that

may be addressed to us by the honest inquirer. The exhortation of St. Peter to the early Christians to be “ready always to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you,”<sup>2</sup> is as applicable to us as it was to them. Besides bringing the reward of a duty fulfilled, the study of Apologetics is in itself a valuable mental discipline : it stimulates and develops our reasoning powers by setting them to work at problems of profound importance and of unfailing interest.

**Our Proof. ITS NATURE.**—The youthful reader, too much impressed perhaps by the methods he has seen employed in mathematics and physical science, must be warned against the assumption that, outside the sphere of exact calculation and experiment, absolute certainty is unattainable. On reflection he will realize that in the most important affairs of life truth is, as a fact, established by quite different methods. For instance, a man claims an estate by virtue of a will naming him as the heir ; witnesses whose word cannot be questioned testify to the genuineness of the will ; and the judge decides, saying, “It is clear that the witnesses have spoken the truth. He has proved that he is the heir.” The judge is absolutely certain that his decision is correct, because it is based on the word of men whose truthfulness and whose knowledge of the facts to which they testify cannot be doubted ; and if far greater issues were at stake,—if, *e.g.*, there were question of the lawful election or authority of a King, a President, or a Parliament, a question affecting the welfare of millions,—a bench of judges with similar human evidence before them, *i.e.*, the evidence of living witnesses and authentic documents, would be equally certain of their decision. The certainty at which one arrives in such cases resembles the certainty which is given to us in Apologetics. In Apologetics we prove the Divine Authority of the Catholic Church by proving

<sup>2</sup> 1 Peter iii. 15.

that we have God's word for it ; He makes His mind known to us through the language of miracles, and His miracles are attested by men whose truthfulness and impartiality, and whose knowledge of the facts they report, exclude all reasonable doubt and give us the absolute certainty we require. The reader will therefore understand that human testimony, properly checked, is a most certain means of arriving at the truth.

CONCLUSIVE BUT NOT COERCIVE.—Our proof is conclusive. To question it would be unreasonable. But it is not coercive. It cannot force conviction on the prejudiced or the foolish, for prejudice and folly wrap the mind round with an impenetrable casing. Thus, it is waste of time to argue with one who refuses to listen, or with one who seriously defends an absurdity, who maintains, *e.g.*, that a great work of literature is a mere chance arrangement of words, or that thieving and drunkenness are not vices. Folly is mere imbecility, mere incapacity of understanding, while prejudice acts like a brake on the reason, impeding its natural movement. Manifestly, then, a perfectly valid proof may not carry conviction to all. It deserves, but does not receive, universal assent.<sup>3</sup>

## II

The Two Methods of Proof.—Having established the preliminary truths that God exists and that by miracles He can witness to the doctrines which He desires us to

<sup>3</sup> It is well for the student to learn that *no truth* is safe from human perversity. There are men of ability who hold that the truths on which the science of mathematics is built are not eternally true and may some day be shown to be false ; and there are other men, equally clever, who tell us that the external world (including our own bodies) has no real existence but is a mere fancy or dream of ours. People of such views however are rarely met with ; they suffer from some twist of mind ; they are abnormal and must be disregarded. The reader, however, will not feel justified in applying so strong a term as "abnormal" to those who reject our argument at its various stages, but he will realize how easily men deceive themselves and snatch at any excuse to evade the truth

believe, we can prove by two methods the Divine Authority of the Catholic Church :—

*The more elaborate method in which we argue from the New Testament*

First we show that the writings of the New Testament considered simply as ordinary human compositions, are truthful and trustworthy ; hence we accept as a faithful report the account which they give of Jesus, His words, and works.

A. We find in these historical documents :—

- (1) that Jesus claimed to be God ;
- (2) that He made good His claim by miracles and prophecies.

B. Continuing our examination of the New Testament, we find also :—

- (1) that Jesus, true God, founded a Church to carry on His work and teaching, and declared that she would last for all time ;
- (2) that He gave His Church certain well defined marks or characteristics, so that she could be clearly known to the men of all ages.

Equipped with the means of identification, we proceed to examine the religious bodies of the present day which claim Christ as their author, and we discover that all the marks imprinted by Him are found in the Catholic Church alone.

*The simpler method in which we argue from our knowledge of the Church herself*

In this method, we show from the unique and miraculous characteristics of the Church herself that she is

sustained and guided by God. The argument is developed in the Appendix to this Chapter.

NOTE.—(1) The more elaborate method, which we follow in the body of the text, deserves careful study and should be mastered by every educated Catholic; because it meets on their own ground the large number of opponents who hold that in religious matters one should not move hand or foot without the authority of the Bible; because it provides a convenient occasion for dealing with a great variety of objections and difficulties; and, more important still, because it gives us such a knowledge of our Saviour and His work, that we should indeed be hard of heart, were we to deny Him the full homage of our gratitude and love.

(2) The proof by the simpler method of the Church's Divine Authority is one with which, in outline, Catholic pupils are already familiar. It has been thought advisable that, while they are still on the threshold of Apologetics, they should study it in its amplified form; hence its place in this Introductory Chapter. As will be explained in the Note at the end of the Appendix, this proof contains within itself the proof of God's existence and His use of miracles as signs of His revelation. The other short argument usually given to Catholic pupils in the Primary Schools (the argument from the Church's claim to Infallibility) would also have been repeated here in fuller form, but it is an argument with long roots and could not be impressively unfolded within the compass of a few pages. It will be found in the main text as a subordinate part of the proof by the more elaborate method.

### III

**Apologetics and Faith.**—One who has been an unbeliever is convinced by our argument, and says, "I believe that the Catholic Church is the true Church, because God has

said so." Does he thereby make an act of faith? <sup>4</sup> That will depend on his attitude to God and to the truth which God has revealed. He cannot make an act of faith unless (1) he freely, humbly, and reverently subjects himself to the Supreme Authority of God who knows all things and cannot deceive him, and (2) accepts with good will the truth which God has made known to him. Those conditions, however, he cannot fulfil of himself; he needs the help of God's grace. <sup>5</sup>

Many non-Catholics believe that the Catholic Church is God's representative on earth, and yet they make no act of faith. <sup>6</sup> They do not welcome the truth God has sent them; some look on it with indifference, repugnance, or hostility; others shrink from the change of life it would demand of them; though recognizing God as the source of all truth, they seem to forget that He can give the strength to overcome every obstacle; they seem to forget that He is dishonoured by disobedience and by a false trust in His mercy. <sup>7</sup>

Briefly, acceptance of the truth established in Apologetics is not in itself an act of faith; of itself, it is but an act of the natural reason; it becomes an act of faith, only when the two conditions mentioned above are fulfilled. A true act of faith always gives honour to God: it is an act of divine worship. <sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> When we speak of "an act of faith" without further qualification, we mean "an act of faith pleasing to God," or "an act of divine faith," or "an act of faith done with the help of God's grace."

<sup>5</sup> See pp. 216-220, "How the act of faith is made."

<sup>6</sup> Their belief may be termed "an act of merely natural faith"; it is not pleasing to God.—An extreme instance of "natural faith" is that of the demons who, while believing in the divine origin of the Catholic Church, are filled with hatred of God and of the truth He has revealed.

<sup>7</sup> These are inferences from the statements of non-Catholics who however may not fully mean what they appear to say: we should beware of the sin of harsh judgment. The grace of faith is a free gift of God; He will not deny it to the sincere and conscientious, but He may delay it till the last moment of life when its coming will be known only to him who receives it.

<sup>8</sup> See pp. 210-211, "The act of faith: its definition."

## APPENDIX

*Proof by the Simpler Method that the Catholic Church is the Work of God*

## § I

THE HAND OF GOD IS SEEN IN THE MIRACLE OF THE CHURCH'S UNITY

*Miraculous Unity in Government.*—To unite a vast multitude of men in working out a particular end without the incentive of earthly advantage, to maintain among them agreement of opinion and unanimity of purpose, to organize them and hold them together beneath a single government in spite of human weakness, of racial prejudice and great world-changes, this surely needs more than human intellect can devise or human ingenuity achieve.

But in the Catholic Church we see the members of the greatest of all societies, acknowledging the sway of one ruler, yielding a ready obedience not through fear of armed force, nor through the urge of national sentiment, nor in the hope of earthly gain; we see them as one in professing their submission to the Successor of Peter although on all other matters they are sharply divided. Numbering amongst her multitudinous subjects men of every nation and of every race, men who differ in culture, in language, in customs, and in political ambitions, the Church is daily confronted with difficulties which have shattered kingdoms and empires, yet her sovereignty goes on with a permanence and smoothness, with an efficiency and a stability which are the envy of the statesman and the politician, and which manifestly proclaim the Guidance and Support of God.

*Miraculous Unity in Faith.*—In the faith professed by the vast multitudes of the children of the Catholic Church, we see displayed the same miraculous unity. Pandering not to man's base passions, teaching doctrines repellent to human frailty, swerving not a hair's breadth from the truths she has defined, she is yet the teacher to whose words millions listen with reverent docility.

The human mind is fickle and wayward; opinions shift and alter in endless diversity; individual differs from individual: what is asserted in one place is denied in another; what is held to-day is abandoned to-morrow; yet, in spite of this natural restlessness and disunion, the children of the Church never change in their belief. Conquering the natural desire to exalt private judgment and follow its dictates, they humbly listen to the voice of their Mother: overcoming the natural reluctance to believe what cannot be entirely understood, they, at her command, profess with alacrity their belief in mysteries the most profound. This unanimity in faith, this cordial submission of the intellect on the part of such great multitudes, can have but one explanation, viz.:—the direct and constant assistance of God Himself.

*Miraculous Unity in Worship.*—And as her faith is one and unchanging, so too is her worship. In its essentials, it is the same in every land. All over the earth, she gathers her children around the altar to join with her in offering the same Great Sacrifice, the memorial and perpetuation of the Sacrifice of the Cross; and she presents to them the same seven Sacraments, the same seven channels by which the grace of the Redeemer is conveyed to their souls. She binds them all, learned and simple, great and lowly, to kneel at the feet of her priests, and confess their most secret sins. That men in such numbers should suppress their inherent desire for novelty and individualism, their personal likes and dislikes, their ingrained reluctance to reveal their hidden wickedness, and take on themselves the yoke of a uniform worship, with

all its severe exactions—that is a phenomenon for which no human or natural explanation can be found.

The Church, therefore, in her triple unity of Government, Faith, and Worship is a living miracle of God.\*

## § 2

### THE HAND OF GOD IS SEEN IN THE MIRACULOUS SANCTITY OF SO MANY OF HER CHILDREN

The holiness of the Catholic Church has always been so marked and unrivalled, that it cannot be explained as the effect of any merely human cause. It is a standing miracle of God's power and goodness.

Holiness implies sincere attachment to God, as our dear Father and Friend; it carries with it necessarily the avoidance of sin, because sin is hateful to Him; yet the mere avoidance of sin does not alone suffice for holiness. In ancient and modern history, we may find several instances of men remarkable for kindness, truthfulness, and justice; but while we willingly admit that no serious fault can be laid to their charge, we search the record of their lives in vain for the evidence of that burning personal love of God which is found in the Saints of the Church. It is hard indeed to keep the soul free from sin, hard to conquer the desires of the flesh, hard to resist the attractions of the world; yet such avoidance of sin though a great and noble achievement, is still but a first feeble step in the direction of heroic sanctity. Morality alone is not holiness: no one would be content to speak of Christ as a moral man; He was something far more: He was holy.

But, granted for the sake of argument that there may have been men outside the Church equal in holiness to the Saints, the truth still remains that the instances are most rare, and therefore cannot have been due to one

\* See Chapter X for a further presentation of this triple unity.

perpetually-operating cause. In the Church, on the other hand, the instances are numerous; they appear un-failingly, generation after generation, springing up in every rank of society, and presenting us with every phase of character and ability. The Church is the one and only fertile field of saints on earth; she is the garden of God in the desert of the world.

Whence do the flowers of sanctity which she produces derive their life and beauty?

Not from her doctrine alone; not from any rules of life which she has formulated or sanctioned; for nothing of all this is a secret: her teaching and her methods are accessible to all, and may be, and have been, copied by others; but one thing she has which no outsider can imitate or reproduce: it is some special help which she gets from God, which is obtainable in her fold alone, and which, passing into the souls of her children, awakes in so many of them the radiance of a peerless sanctity. In outward form, other religious bodies may resemble her, but they differ from her as the painted image differs from the living man, or as the electric apparatus, severed from the dynamo differs from one exactly similar that is connected with it.

Look over the great list of saints from the period of the so-called Reformation down to our own times. Many of their names are known to unbelievers as geniuses in the spiritual order, and are honoured by them almost as much as by ourselves. Who has not heard of that singularly gracious character, the seraphic Theresa of Avila, and of her contemporary and kindred spirit, St. John of the Cross? Who has not heard of Charles Borromeo the faithful shepherd of his people, and of the soldier-saint Ignatius of Loyola? Who has not heard of St. Vincent de Paul, the Christ-like friend of the poor and afflicted? And who in our own day has failed to hear of the youthful saint of Lisieux whose grace and innocence and wisdom are all so well expressed in the name she bears as the Little Flower of Jesus? Yet these



are but a few from a roll of hundreds, many of whom, you will notice, have founded orders and societies which perpetuate their virtues ; and as Christ lived in them, the founders, so He now lives in their spiritual children.

Nor can it be said that the title of saint is lightly given ; in fact there is no process of inquiry on earth equal in jealous care and severe scrutiny to that which the Church conducts in the canonization of saints.

First a Diocesan Court is erected, which collects all evidence, unfavourable as well as favourable, including every scrap of the candidate's writings, no matter how trivial or casual they may appear.<sup>10</sup> Next, after a suitable interval, the cause is brought to Rome, and the whole process is re-opened. The whole life is subjected to a most merciless examination ; nothing must pass unchallenged ; no secret is sacred, save that of the confessional ; everything is laid bare ; the faithful are even bound by Ecclesiastical Law to bring forward anything they may know against the sanctity or miracles of the candidate.<sup>11</sup> Each of the theological and the cardinal virtues is made the subject of a separate investigation, because it is necessary to establish that each and all have been practised in a heroic degree.

And even when this searching test has been completed, the Church is not yet satisfied. All possible human testimony has been called upon and has been found favourable. She now seeks divine testimony, and it is only when God has granted two stupendous and indubitable miracles in response to the invocation of the candidate's name, that the Church is at last satisfied that the case has

<sup>10</sup> The completeness of the examinations made by the Church even in the process of Beatification appears in the following facts regarding the Episcopal Court for the beatification of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, the Little Flower.

The Court held 108 sessions of 5 to 6 hours each, 45 witnesses were examined (exclusive of the doctors).

The report of the whole as forwarded to Rome filled 3,000 pages in close writing.

<sup>11</sup> See The Code of Canon Law, 2023.

been established, that the person whose life has been under examination is worthy to be numbered among the saints. Yet, during the course of the last century, in face of those apparently impossible exactions on frail human nature, over three hundred were declared Blessed, and seventy-eight were enrolled among the ranks of the Saints.<sup>12</sup>

Outside the Church there have been holy men to whose good deeds we pay the tribute of our sincere respect, but there is hardly one of them whose reputation would survive the preliminary judicial process of the Church ; and as to miracles wrought in their honour after death, who has ever heard of a court of inquiry into such evidence of divine attestation ?

The Church, therefore, since she is, and has ever been the one and only Mother of Saints that there is in the world—the one and only Mother of men whose lives have been in themselves miracles of holiness—the one and only Mother of men whose sanctity has been attested after death by the direct intervention of God Himself—is proved to be in possession of a perpetual and un-failing Divine help, and therefore of a perpetual Divine approval.<sup>13</sup>

NOTE.—The constant succession of miracles which God has granted to the children of His Church is in itself an all-sufficient proof of her Divine Authority.

The evidence for multitudes of these miracles is such that no unprejudiced mind can refuse to admit its cogency.

<sup>12</sup> Van Noort, *De Eccl. S.I.*, c. IV., A. ii. Also see Chapter X on the holiness of the Church, p. 157.

<sup>13</sup> Though sinners are numerous in the Catholic Church, it can in no wise be maintained that this is the result of her teaching or her discipline ; on the contrary, everything in her tends to produce saints. Saints are the fruits of the Church ; sinners are not her fruits : they are sinners precisely because they choose to put themselves outside the pale of her influence, by refusing to follow her teaching, and to submit to her laws. Saints are saints because they conform their lives to the teaching of the Catholic Church ; sinners are sinners because they do not. See Chapter X, pp. 163 f.

In Courts for Canonization, the miracles alleged are subjected to a most severely critical examination in all their aspects; scientific experts are called to sift the evidence, and a single flaw entails absolute rejection.

### § 3

#### THE HAND OF GOD IS SEEN IN THE MIRACLE OF THE CHURCH'S STABILITY

The stability of the Catholic Church is the marvel of her adversaries. It is only the hand of God that could have brought her safe through perils which have proved fatal to merely human institutions. Often she seemed rent with schism or corrupted by heresy. The pallor of death seemed to have come upon her, but, sustained by her Divine vitality, she cast off disease as a garment, and rose from her bed of sickness, renewed in youth and Pentecostal zeal. She is like the house of which Christ speaks in the Gospel: "and the rain fell and the floods came, and they beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded on a rock."<sup>14</sup> Often have her children heard the demons' exultant cry that, at last, she was whelmed in the wave of death. But the tempest passed, and day broke anew, and the eyes of men beheld her still firmly fixed as of old on the rock of Peter, triumphant amid the wreckage of her enemies.

"There is not," says the Protestant writer, Macaulay,<sup>15</sup> "and there never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church. The history of that Church joins together the two great ages of human civilization. . . . The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in unbroken series from the Pope

<sup>14</sup> St. Matt. vii. 25.

<sup>15</sup> Essay on Ranke's *History of the Popes*.

who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends. . . . The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigour. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustine, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. . . . Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. . . . It is not strange that, in the year 1799, even sagacious observers should have thought that, at length, the hour of the Church of Rome was come. An infidel power ascendant, the Pope dying in captivity, the most illustrious prelates of France living in a foreign country on Protestant alms, the noblest edifices which the munificence of former ages had consecrated to the worship of God turned into temples of Victory, or into banqueting houses for political societies. . . . But the end was not yet. . . . Anarchy had had its day. A new order of things rose out of the confusion, new dynasties, new laws, new titles; and amidst them emerged the ancient religion. The Arabs have a fable that the Great Pyramid was built by antediluvian kings, and alone, of all the works of men, bore the weight of the flood. Such as this was the fate of the Papacy. It had been buried under the great inundation; but its deep foundations had remained unshaken; and, when the waters abated, it appeared alone amidst the ruins of a world that had passed away. The republic of Holland was gone, and the empire of Germany, and the great Council of Venice, and

the old Helvetic League, and the House of Bourbon, and the parliaments and aristocracy of France. Europe was full of young creations, a French empire, a kingdom of Italy, a Confederation of the Rhine. Nor had the late events affected only territorial limits and political institutions. The distribution of property, the composition and spirit of society, had, through a great part of Catholic Europe, undergone a complete change. But the unchangeable Church was still there."

The dangers to the Papacy came from within as well as from without. An elective monarchy, notoriously the most unstable of all forms of government, it attracted the ambition of worldly ecclesiastics and, for a time during the Middle Ages, became a prize for which rival monarchs intrigued, each trying to secure it for his own minion. It was, therefore, threatened with the twofold evil of an unworthy occupant and a disappointed faction. Hence, we find, as a fact, that there have been some few Popes, incompetent and even wicked, and that disastrous schisms have occurred from time to time. Any one of these schisms, any one of these Popes, if he had held a secular throne and were equally unfit for his office, would have brought the most powerful dynasty crashing to the ground. Moreover, the Papacy was threatened with another and, perhaps, greater, because more constant, danger, viz., the danger arising from ordinary human infirmity, for the Pope as a teacher, when not exercising his gift of Infallibility, is liable to the errors of common men: St. Peter was upbraided to the face by St. Paul for his mistaken indulgence to the prejudices of Jewish converts, and some of his successors, though acting like him with the best intentions, seemed to bring the Church to the very brink of peril by their imprudence. We may, indeed, make no difficulty in admitting that, in the long history of the Papacy, there have been errors of policy which would have cost a temporal monarch his throne. It seems as though God wished to make of the occasional weakness of the Papacy a motive of credibility, a proof

that the Church is Divinely supported. "The foolish things of the world hath God chosen," says St. Paul, "that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen that He may confound the strong. And the base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible hath God chosen, and things that are not, that He might bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His sight,"<sup>16</sup> *i.e.*, so that no man could take credit to himself for what had been the work of God. Again, we read in the Book of Judges how the Lord said to Gedeon: "The people that are with thee are many, and Madian shall not be delivered into their hands, lest Israel should glory against Me, and say: I was delivered by my own strength." So He bade him keep but 300 men of the assembled host of 32,000. Gedeon obeyed, and with this insignificant force he put a great army to rout. And as the hand of God was manifest in the triumph of Gedeon in spite of inferiority of numbers, so has it been manifest in the survival of the Papacy in spite of the occasional weakness or unworthiness of those who have sat on the throne of Peter.

We may summarize the argument as follows:—(1) The Papacy, the foundation on which the Church is built, is the only institution which has survived all the vast social and political changes and revolutions in the life and government of Europe since the days of the Roman Emperors. (2) It has survived in spite of persecution, and political intrigue; in spite of heresy and schism among its subjects in spite of the worldliness and the weakness or incompetency of some of the Popes. (3) It has survived, not as a mere shadow of its former greatness, but in unimpaired vigour.—Such a survival is miraculous. The Papacy and the Church over which it presides must, therefore, be the work of God.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> 1 Cor. i. 27-29.

<sup>17</sup> It may be observed that the above proof from the Church herself as a living fact, as a successful achievement, is ever gathering force with the lapse of centuries. The Vatican Council puts the apologetic

When Gladstone, angered by the decree of the Vatican Council and by the publication of a list of propositions condemned by the Holy See, asked contemptuously whether Rome could hope "to refurbish her rusty tools" and harness the avenging power of God to her excommunications in the modern world, he was reminded by Newman that the Pope who, in the Middle Ages, made Henry, the German Emperor, do penance bare-foot in the snow at Canossa, had had his counterpart in that other Pope who, in the nineteenth century, and by an actual interposition of Providence, inflicted a "snow-penance" on the Emperor Napoleon. We quote the memorable words of the Protestant historian, Alison<sup>18</sup> :—"What does the Pope mean," said Napoleon to Eugene, in July 1807, 'by the threat of excommunicating me? Does he think the world has gone back a thousand years? Does he suppose the arms will fall from the hands of my soldiers?' Within two years after these remarkable words were written, the Pope did excommunicate him, in return for the confiscation of his whole dominions, and in less than four years more, the arms did fall from the hands of his soldiers; and the hosts, apparently invincible, which he had collected, were dispersed and ruined by the blasts of winter. 'The weapons of the soldiers,' says Ségur,

argument very concisely in the "Third Chapter, concerning Faith," which we translate as follows:

"To enable us to fulfil the duty of embracing the true faith and of persevering steadfastly in it, God, through His only-begotten Son, established a Church; and, to give everyone the power to recognise her as the guardian and teacher of Revelation, He endowed her with manifest marks of her divine origin. These marks are found in the Catholic Church alone. Nay further, through her wonderful propagation, her peerless sanctity and inexhaustible fertility in all good works, her world-wide unity and unconquerable stability, she is herself a great and perpetual motive of credibility, and an unassailable testimony to her divine mission.

"And this evidence is supported by aid from on high; for our most kind Lord not only excites and helps the erring by His grace 'to come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Timothy ii. 4), but by His grace confirms those whom He has brought from darkness 'into His marvellous light' (1 Peter ii. 9), that in this same they may persevere; and He never abandons them, unless they abandon Him. Wherefore, they who by the heavenly gift of Faith have adhered to the truth, cannot be at all compared to those, who under the influence of human opinions subscribe to a false religion; for the former having under the guidance of the Church embraced the Faith, can never have just cause for changing it or calling it into question."

For Latin text of above see (1) "Thesaurus Doctrinæ Catholicæ" (F. Cavallera) 179, or (2) "Enchiridion Symbolorum" (Denzinger-Bannwart), 1793-4.

<sup>18</sup> History of Europe, ch. 60.

in describing the Russian retreat, 'appeared of an insupportable weight to their stiffened arms. During their frequent falls they fell from their hands, and, destitute of the power of raising them from the ground, they left them in the snow. They did not throw them away: famine and cold tore them from their grasp.'" And Alison adds :—"There is something in these marvellous coincidences beyond the operations of chance, and which even a Protestant historian feels himself bound to mark for the observation of future ages. The world had not gone back a thousand years, but that Being existed with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years." And as He was with Pope Gregory in 1077, so He was with Pope Pius in 1812, and so shall He be with some future Pope again, when the need shall come, and show to His enemies that His arm has not forgotten its strength.

Any one of the special characteristics outlined above would alone suffice to justify the claim of the Catholic Church: each one is in itself a moral miracle; <sup>19</sup> each one is in itself a proof of God's special and extraordinary support; but it is the combination of all, their mass effect, which makes the argument absolutely overwhelming.

The Church presents to the unprejudiced inquirer the unmistakable marks of her Divine Mission; from her brow there flashes forth the light of truth that brings assent. Truly she is "the standard set up unto the nations who calleth unto herself all those who do not yet believe, and giveth to her own children the full assurance that the Faith they profess rests on solid foundations."

### Summary

We who are Catholics believe that the Catholic Church is the one and only Church of God.

We believe, because God has testified that what we believe is true.

He has conveyed His testimony to us in many ways, but chiefly by setting before our eyes the unique characteristics of the Church herself, viz.,

<sup>19</sup> That is, a miracle of human behaviour.

her miraculous unity with world-wide Catholicity, her sanctity, her gift of miracles, and her unconquerable stability.

We bless and thank Him for giving us the light to see so clearly the imprint of His hands. We bless and thank Him for inclining our hearts to submit to His Church, and to love her as our Spiritual Mother.

**Note.**—This proof contains within itself the demonstration of those preliminary truths which are common to both Methods of establishing the Divine Authority of the Catholic Church. It can be briefly re-cast in the following form :—The unique and marvellous characteristics of the Catholic Church cannot be due to the operation of any natural cause. They can be explained only by the action of some great, living, intelligent being, the master of the human mind and heart. That being we call God.

## SEQUENCE OF THE ARGUMENT

(*Chapters I—X*)

### I. Natural Apologetics:<sup>1</sup>

1. God exists: He is the Supreme Being, intelligent and free, infinite in all perfections: He created the world and all things in it. (Ch. I.).

2. Man, one of God's creatures, possesses reason and free-will. (Ch. II.).

3. Man has duties to God, to himself and to his neighbour; but without a revelation, it would be practically impossible for the generality of mankind to arrive at a sufficient knowledge of these duties and of the truths that underlie them: we have, therefore, an assurance that God in His Mercy must, as a fact, have given the necessary revelation. (Ch. III.).

### II. Christian Apologetics:

1. Miracles and prophecies are signs by which a divine revelation may be known with certainty. (Ch. IV.).

2. The New Testament, as history, is trustworthy. (Ch. V.).

3. The New Testament shows that Christ claimed to be God. (Ch. VI.).

4. It shows likewise that His claims were proved by miracles and prophecies. (Ch. VII.).

<sup>1</sup> The three chapters of this section may be postponed to the teacher's discretion, until the remaining portion of Part I. and all Part II. have been thoroughly mastered; but they should by no means be omitted. In addition to the matter of which they explicitly treat, they give a reasoned refutation of the false systems of Agnosticism and Materialism, which when encountered for the first time by an impressionable mind, unprepared and unassisted, constitute a most grave danger to the Faith. The only remedy is to face such errors squarely during school years, to rob them of their novelty, and to unmask their absurdity. The pupil who goes out into the world without this enlightenment is ill equipped for battle. While in class, he may not succeed in grasping every metaphysical point in the arguments: it will suffice if he sees their main lines and is satisfied of their validity.

### III. Catholic Apologetics:

1. The New Testament proves that Christ established a Church, and that He invested Her, and Her alone with authority to teach mankind. (Ch. VIII.).

2. It proves also that Christ gave His Church certain characteristics, one of which was imperishability; His Church, therefore, still exists in the world. (Ch. IX.).

3. Of the existing Christian Churches, the Catholic Church is the *only one* that possesses all the characteristics of the institution founded by Christ. Therefore, the Catholic Church is the one and only true Church. (Ch. X.).

**Note.**—(1) Chapters XI—XIV., though they belong to Catholic Doctrine, have been inserted in this volume: Chapters XI—XIII., to complete the treatise on the Church, and Chapter XIV because of its close relation to the subject-matter of Apologetics.

(2) The line of proof followed in the Appendix to the Introductory Chapter and in the body of the text is that which the Church herself set forth at the Vatican Council—see extract from the text of the Council, Intro. Ch., footnote 17. This method of Apologetics may therefore be truly called the official or classical method.—The Council lays stress on the double fact, viz., that God by His grace helps those who are in outer darkness to come to a knowledge of the truth—that God by His grace gives to those who already dwell in the region of light the strength to persevere in the Faith.

(3) The work is arranged on the plan of providing a course for average pupils and, at the same time, for those who are more talented. The text set in large type gives a complete treatment of Apologetics suitable for an ordinary class. The teacher can direct the pupils to read the small print or selected parts of it according to their ability.

## SECTION I NATURAL APOLOGETICS

### CHAPTER I

#### THE EXISTENCE AND THE NATURE OF GOD AS SHOWN BY PURE REASON

##### § I

##### THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

*From truths naturally known, we prove the existence of a Living, Personal God, i.e., of a Being endowed with intelligence and free-will, the First or Originating Cause of all things distinct from Himself.*<sup>1</sup>

#### BRIEF TREATMENT OF THE PROOFS

##### I

##### Proof from Order and Law in Nature

##### PROOF FROM ORDER IN NATURE

*(Usually called the proof from Design)*

In the works of nature, as well as in the works of man, order or orderly arrangement is due to the activity of an intelligent designer.

1. Suppose you pay a visit to a bicycle factory. In one of the workshops you see a number of parts, sorted into different collections—a pile of steel tubing, a sheaf of spokes, wheel-rims, hubs, handlebars, pedals, boxes of nuts and screws and so forth. You return some hours

<sup>1</sup> Attention is directed to footnote 47, page 103, where it is shown that the Resurrection of Christ enables us to dispense with the philosophical proof for the existence of God given in this chapter.

later, let us say, and find that the entire assemblage of units has been transformed into a dozen new bicycles, each perfect in every detail: part has been fitted into part with deft adjustment, yielding a result which is a model of ordered arrangement. Could you possibly imagine such an achievement to have been the product of mere chance? No, you would recognise at once that it was the work of an intelligent mechanic.

Now turn from the bicycles to the human hand that helped to make them, and you will find a far more wonderful instance of order and ingenuity. Every movement of the human hand causes an interplay of finely wrought bones, a contraction or relaxation of pliant muscles, a straining or slackening of fibrous sinews. Its framework is composed of no less than nineteen bones, while eight more of various shapes ensure strength and flexibility in the wrist. Surely *blind chance* can have had no part in the formation of such a highly-complicated and intricate system of bones and muscles, of sinews and arteries, wherein the several units are working harmoniously for the production of each and every movement of the whole. And, if we exclude chance, the question immediately arises, whence has it come? Obviously not from man, for it has grown and developed with himself. Who then is the author of that wonderful piece of mechanism? Who is it that has caused it to grow to its present shape, to develop so many different tissues, to attain to such efficiency? The answer springs to your lips. The Maker of the human hand and of the countless other marvels with which our world is filled is none other than the great Master-Worker, Almighty God.

2. The photographic camera consists of a case in which there is a circular opening for the admission of light; the light passes through the lens, and forms a picture on the sensitive plate. Parallel with this is the instance of the human eye, the eye-ball corresponding to the case of the camera, the pupil corresponding to the circular opening, the crystalline lens to the camera-lens, and the retina

to the sensitive plate. In both examples, it will be observed, several distinct things are found united or fitted together to produce a single result, viz., a clear picture on the sensitive plate and on the retina. Could those distinct things have come together by chance? No, it is perfectly plain that such a combination could have been effected only by the intelligent operator. The camera was made by man: the human eye was made by a worker no less real, though invisible.<sup>2</sup>

How did the maker of the camera do his work? He collected the materials he required; he shaped, filed, and polished them with great care, and finally fitted them together. Though you may admire his skill, you are convinced that you yourself with proper training could imitate it. But what of the maker of the human eye? How did *he* do his work? In some most mysterious way which we are quite unable to understand, and which we recognise as far beyond the possibility of imitation, he caused a minute portion of flesh to multiply itself a million times over, and, in so doing, gradually to build up, shape, and perfect every part of the wonderful organ. He who could get a particle of matter to behave in that way is a worker whose intelligence and power it is impossible for our minds to measure. He is the Master of Nature: we call Him God.

#### PROOF FROM THE LAWS OF NATURE

All nature is obedient to law. Astronomy, physics, and chemistry show that inanimate matter, from the

<sup>2</sup> Order is unity or uniformity amid variety. Order is present when several different things combine to produce a single effect or result. Examples: (1) A watch consists of the case, the dial, the hands, a multiplicity of wheels and other arrangements: each part contributes towards the production of a single result, viz., the convenient indication of the hour. (2) the human body consists of a great number of members and organs, yet all help, each in its own way, towards the well-being of the whole.

Order is the result of design. Design may, therefore, be defined as the planning of order.

stars of heaven to the smallest speck of dust, is, in all its movements and changes, subject to fixed laws. The same holds for living things—plants, animals, and men: each species grows, develops, and acts in the same way. The entire universe is bound together into one vastly complicated whole, and is like a great machine the parts of which are admirably fitted together. The orderly movement of the heavens, the marvellous structure of living things and their organs, such as the organs of sight and hearing, the wonderful instinct of the lower animals, as instanced in the work of insects and the nest-building of birds, the free activity of man, his great achievements in science, literature, and art—all these marvels are the gifts of nature and in conformity with its laws.

It is unthinkable that laws, producing effects so vast, and yet so orderly in their entirety and in their smallest detail, could have sprung from chance, or from any unintelligent cause we choose to name. They must have been imposed by a wise Lawgiver who so framed them, and so directed them in their working as to achieve the ends he desired. That Lawgiver must be a being of vast intelligence. He must possess free-will for he has given that faculty to man. He must possess power beyond our capacity to measure, a power to which our minds can affix no limit.

The great Newton who discovered the laws of the motions of the heavenly bodies wrote as follows: "This most beautiful system of sun, planets and comets could nowise come into existence without the design and ownership of a Being at once intelligent and powerful. . . . This Being governs all things, not as if He were the soul of the world, but as the Lord of everything. . . . We admire Him for His perfections, we venerate Him and we worship Him for His Lordship."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Principia* III, Sch. Gen.

## II

## Proof from Motion

Everyday experience shows us that things move. Nothing in the visible world can move entirely of itself, *i.e.*, without help. No moving thing contains in itself the complete explanation of its movement. Consider the particular case of inanimate bodies. They move only as they are moved. They do not move themselves in any way. They get all their motion from without.

Let us apply these observations to the earth and to the heavenly bodies. That some of these bodies are in motion is manifest; the movement of the earth on its axis is a proved fact; its motion round the sun is likewise certain.

Ask yourself now how did the earth get its motion? Many physicists say that it got its motion from the sun, which, while spinning round, flung it off as a fragment. But whence did the sun get its motion? Some say that the sun got its motion from a larger body of which it once formed a part, while others assert that the sun with its motion is the result of a collision between two stars. But how did the motion of the larger body or the stars originate? Science gives no answer, and even though it did, the answer would leave us exactly where we were: we should still be as far as ever from a final and satisfactory explanation of the motion of the earth. The only real reply, which excludes all further inquiry, is that the motion is due immediately or ultimately to some unmoved source of motion, to the first mover.

There must exist, therefore, a being distinct from the world who gave it motion. That being is either the first mover or a being moved by some other. If that mover is moved by another, whence did that other derive his motion? The question as to the source of motion can be answered satisfactorily only when, at last, we reach a first mover who is not moved by any other.

That first mover we call God.



## III

## Proof from Causality

A thing must exist before it can act : nothing therefore can make itself. If we see anything new come into existence, we are sure it must have been brought into existence by something else. That which is brought into existence is called an *effect* ; and that which brings it into existence is called a *cause*.

If we find that the cause of any particular effect is itself an effect, our mind is not content : we feel that we have not yet arrived at a satisfactory explanation of the first effect. Take, for example, the electric light that suddenly springs up and floods your room at night-time. It is an effect. But what is its cause ? The current. The current however is an effect of the moving dynamo. Now, if the moving dynamo is the last cause that we can name, we are still without a full and satisfactory explanation of the electric light. Why ? Because the dynamo itself is an effect. Therefore, at the end of our series of questions, we find ourselves in the presence of an effect that needs explanation quite as much as the effect from which we started.

Let us repeat in general or abstract form what we have been saying in the last paragraph :

In the world around us, the existence of any particular thing, which we will call A, is accounted for by something else, which we will call B. A is the effect ; B is its cause. But suppose B itself to be the effect of C ; C the effect of D ; D the effect of E, and so on through a long series. If the last cause which we can set down—let us call it Z—has itself been produced by something else, then we are still without a true and satisfactory explanation of A. The complete and final explanation will be found only when we reach a cause which is not an effect, a cause which has not derived its existence from something else. This cause which we designate the First Cause, accounts

at once for the entire series of causes which we have been considering and of any other series which we choose to investigate.

The First Cause therefore of all things in nature must necessarily be uncaused (if it were caused it would not be the first cause). It was not brought into existence ; thus, it must have existence of itself, it must be self-existent.

The first cause, the self-existent source of all things, we call God.

## IV

## Proof from Dependence

Everything in the visible world is subject to change and death. Plants, animals, and men come into being, and after a short time perish, while inanimate matter suffers endless changes. No particular thing in the universe has any grip on existence ; its existence is an unfastened cloak that may slip from it at any instant : existence is no part of its nature. Everything in the world, therefore, is dependent, *i.e.*, it does not exist of itself, but depends on something else for its existence.

Since dependent beings do, as a fact, exist, and go on existing, and since they do not exist of themselves, they must be held in existence by an independent or necessary being, *i.e.*, by a being who is self-existent, a being to whose nature existence belongs.

Can the self-existent being be like matter, or electricity, or any other lifeless thing we care to name ? No ; to support in existence all things in the world, including living plants, sentient animals, and rational men, the self-existent being must be a Living Power. He must be the Supreme Being who holds within Himself the source of His own existence.

We call Him God.

**Note.**—Grasp the significance of the truth that we are absolutely dependent on God for our existence. It is

the foundation of all religion ; it brings sharply before our mind the nothingness of man and the greatness and goodness of God. From it, springs the chief of all our duties, the duty of loving Him with our whole heart and soul as the Giver and ever-active Sustainer of our very life and being, and of acknowledging His supreme dominion over us and our total dependence on Him.

### FULLER TREATMENT OF THE PROOFS OF GOD'S EXISTENCE

**First Principles.**—Before giving our fuller treatment of the above proofs, we shall state the first principles on which they are based. First principles are the self-evident truths that serve as the basis of a science. Thus, in Euclid, the axioms are the first principles from which all the propositions may ultimately be deduced. In our proofs, the First Principles are chiefly two, viz. :

(1) That our reason and the evidence of our senses are trustworthy.

(2) That anything which begins to exist must have been brought into existence by something distinct from itself (Principle of Causality).

We need not, and in fact we cannot, prove First Principles. They shine by their own light. Those who deny their validity put themselves beyond the pale of discussion.

## I

### PROOF FROM ORDER AND LAW IN NATURE

#### *Proof from Order in Nature* <sup>4</sup>

**Order Explained by Examples.**—*The Photographic Camera.*—The photographic camera is a familiar object nowadays. It consists

<sup>4</sup> *Text of St. Thomas Aquinas.*—“ We observe that some things which are without understanding, such as natural bodies, operate for an end (as appears from the fact that always or more frequently they operate in the same way to arrive at what is best) : whence it is clear that they attain this end not by chance but by intention. Now, these things which do not possess understanding, operate for a purpose only in so far as they are directed by a being endowed with intelligence : just as an arrow is directed by the archer. Therefore, there is an intelligent Being, by whom all the things of nature are directed to their end. And this Being we call God.” St. Thomas, *Summa Th.* I, q. 2, a. 2.

of a small case into which are fitted a sensitive plate and at least one lens. The plate is a little sheet of glass on which is spread a chemical preparation : it is called “ sensitive ” or “ sensitized,” because it retains any picture made on it by light-rays. The lens is of glass or other transparent substance, and has the power of casting on a screen the image of any object placed in front of it. The camera is completely closed but for a small opening in one of the sides. Through this opening, the light-rays enter : they pass through the lens, and fall on the sensitive plate where they make the picture.

Without going into all details, we may note the following as the essentials of a satisfactory camera :

(1) A case, blackened within.

(2) A circular opening which can be altered in size so as to admit only the exact amount of light required.

(3) A lens of a special curved shape.

(4) A sensitive plate.

(5) An arrangement by which the lens can be adjusted to a particular distance from the sensitive plate, so as to secure the proper focus, and save the picture from being blurred.

All these things were shaped and brought together for the purpose of producing a good picture. We have here an example of order or design, i.e., a combination or arrangement of different things in order to produce a single effect.

*The Human Eye.*—The human eye is similar in structure to the camera. Note the following points of resemblance :

(1) The eye-ball corresponds to the case.

(2) The pupil corresponds to the circular opening : it is of adjustable size, and can be altered according to the amount of light required.

(3) The crystalline lens, corresponding to the lens of the camera.

(4) The retina, corresponding to the sensitive plate.

(5) An arrangement for focussing : in the camera, this is done by altering the distance between lens and plate ; in the eye by altering the curvature of the crystalline lens.

Here again we have an example of order, because different things are combined to produce a single effect. Each contributes in its own measure towards the same end, viz., the formation of a clear picture on the retina.

**Order Demands Intelligence.**—How did the camera come to be made ? You have your choice of just two answers, viz., that it was made by chance or by intelligence. Now, you know that it

could not have been made by chance : such an explanation is so foolish that you would regard it as a jest. You need no help whatever to convince you that the camera was put together by an intelligent workman.

How did the human eye come to be made ? By chance ? No : that is an absurd reply. The human eye was made by some intelligent being.

**The Maker of the Human Eye Possesses Power and Intelligence without Limit.**—Make the following supposition : Suppose that all the parts of a camera lay scattered about the table, and suppose you saw them rise up and move towards one another and fit themselves together—would you say that this happened by chance ? No ; you would say that it was brought about by some intelligent, though invisible, worker, and you would add that he must indeed possess very wonderful powers.

Now take a step further. Suppose that the case, the lens, and the sensitive plate were all ground to the finest powder and mixed thoroughly together ; suppose that the minute fragments of each part sought one another out, and fastened themselves together again ; and suppose that each part thus completed took up its proper place so as to give us a perfect camera—would you say that this was due to chance ? No, but you would protest that here there was need of a worker, still more intelligent, still more powerful.

But we are not done with our suppositions. There is one more which we must make. Suppose you saw just a single tiny speck of dust on the table before you ; suppose that, having grown to twice its size, it broke up into two particles, and that each of these two particles, having doubled its size, broke up into two others ; suppose that this process of growth and division went on, and that, during its progress, the particles managed to build up the case, lens and plate ; suppose, in other words, that you saw one and the same minute fragment of matter produce such widely different things as the case with its blackened sides, the transparent lens with its mathematically accurate curvature, the sensitive plate with its chemical dressing, the aperture with its light-control, and last of all, the mechanism for focussing. What would you say to such a supposition ? You would be tempted at once to stamp it as utterly improbable. You would protest, and with good reason, that only an all-powerful being could get a single speck of dust to behave as we have described, to make it multiply itself, and, while so doing, form unerringly, and piece together, an ingenious mechanism.

But is there really any improbability in the occurrence of which we have just spoken ? No ; the very eyes with which you have

been reading this page are witnesses against you. Each of them began as a single particle of matter : the hidden worker acted upon it, made it multiply itself millions of times and made it develop such utterly distinct things as the eye-ball, the retina, the crystalline lens with its controlling muscles, the contractile pupil, along with other parts equally marvellous which it is unnecessary to mention. That hidden worker is a being whose power and intelligence our minds cannot measure.

**The Maker of the Human Eye is God.**—He who has made the human eye is a spirit ; He is a spirit because He is an active intelligent and invisible being. He is one to whom nothing is hard or impossible. We call Him God.

#### FURTHER EVIDENCE FOR THIS CONCLUSION

**God's Wisdom and Power.**—1. The human eye, as we have explained grows from a single particle of matter ; but the entire body with its flesh, blood, bone, muscle, its various limbs and organs, grows in precisely the same way. It begins as a single living cell which multiplies itself, and gradually forms every part. That living cell, small as it is, is far more wonderful than any machine that man has ever made. You can show how a watch does its work ; you can show how the movement of the spring passes from one part to another, until finally it is communicated to the hands ; but you cannot show how the living cell does its work : it is wrapt round with mystery—why ? Because the mind that made it is too deep for us to fathom. But the mystery lies not only in the *manner* in which the cell works but in the *results* which it produces. As fruit, flowers, foliage, bark, stem and roots come from a single seed, so the wonderful powers of man, his sight, his hearing, his other senses come from the living cell. The more intricate and ingenious a machine is, the greater testimony it is to the cleverness of its maker : but there is no machine in the world that can be compared with the living cell which builds up a man capable himself of making machines and of attaining to eminence in art and science.

The power displayed in the development of the living cell is on a par with the wisdom. It is a power exerted, not through hands and muscles, but by a mere act of the will. God commands the development to take place, and nature obeys Him.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> A remarkable instance of design appears in the set of organs for the reception, mastication, and digestion of our food. The mouth, with its flexible muscles by which it opens and closes, receives the food ; the tongue and palate register its agreeable or disagreeable taste ; the teeth cut and crush it ; the salivary glands pour out their juices to prepare it for digestion ; the muscles of the throat draw down

2. We have proved God's existence from a few special instances of order, but we could have argued with equal success from *anything whatever* in the visible world: the very stones you tread under foot are made up of molecules each one of which, when studied scientifically, is found to possess a structure that could have been given to it only by a wise architect: it is as clearly the work of intelligence as is the house in which you live.

We read that in olden times a certain man was accused of denying the existence of God. Stooping down, he picked up a straw from the ground: "If I had no other evidence before me but this straw," he said, "I should be compelled to believe that there is a God." He meant that wisdom alone could have devised the special tubular shape in virtue of which a very small quantity of matter supports an ear of corn, and allows it to toss and sway freely with the breeze.

### *Proof from Law in Nature*<sup>6</sup>

**All Nature is Obedient to Law.**<sup>7</sup>—That the universe is obedient to law is a truth which forms the very basis of all physical science:

(1) *Inanimate matter is subject to law.*—(a) In Astronomy, the laws of Kepler and Newton have exhibited the heavens as forming so exact a mechanical system that seemingly irregular occurrences, such as eclipses and the return of comets, can be predicted with certainty. (b) In Physics, the laws of sound, heat, light, and electricity, work so perfectly that results can be

the masticated food through the alimentary canal to the stomach, where the digestive juices convert it into such a form that it can bring nutrition to every part of the body. This admirable system of organs, all conducing to the achievement of a single purpose, viz., the preservation and strengthening of life, bears the unmistakable impress of design.

<sup>6</sup> In the proof from Order, we examined separate things, such as the human eye and the human hand; we showed that each is the outcome of design; that each, therefore, points to a Designer.

In the proof from Law, we assume with modern adversaries that all instances of orderly arrangement in the world are due to the operation of Nature's Laws. We prove against them that these Laws themselves give us no final explanation, but demand the existence of an Intelligent Lawgiver.

<sup>7</sup> A law of nature, or physical law, may be merely a formal statement of what regularly occurs in nature, or it may denote the cause of such regularity. We use the expression in the latter sense: let us then define a law of nature as "the cause of a certain regularity observed in nature." It must not be inferred, however, that we claim any exact knowledge of the cause of each set of regularly occurring phenomena. That the cause exists we are certain, but as to its precise nature and mode of operation we need not profess to know anything.

calculated in advance with mathematical accuracy. (c) In Chemistry, substances are found to have definite attractions and affinities and to combine according to fixed laws. In all other branches and sub-divisions of physical science, the same regularity is observed. Everywhere, like agents in like circumstances produce the same effects.

(2) *Animate matter is subject to law.*—(a) All living things are subject to fixed laws of nutrition, growth, and reproduction. Plants, animals, and men develop from a single living cell. In the higher forms of life, in man, for instance, that cell multiplies itself many times, gradually building up a great complexity of organs, such as the eye, the ear, the heart and lungs. (b) Every living thing possesses the capacity to repair its worn parts. (c) Among the lower animals, every individual of the same species is endowed with the same set of useful appetites and tendencies in connection with the quest for food, the defence of life, the propagation of its kind, and the care of its offspring. (d) The same holds for man, who, in addition, possesses inclinations in keeping with his rational nature. Impelled by the desire for truth and the love of beauty, his mind builds up many wonderful sciences, and produces all the marvels of literature and art. In its movements it is subject to certain laws, the laws of thought, just as the seed, developing into stem, leaf, and flower, is subject to the laws of growth.

(3) *Animate matter is subject to, and served by, the laws of inanimate matter.*—(a) All living things are subject to the laws of inanimate matter. Nutrition, growth, and many other processes take place in accordance with the laws of chemistry. The laws of gravitation and energy are as valid for the living as for the non-living. The tree, for instance, which stores up the energy of the sun's rays, returns it later on when its withered branches burn on the hearth.

(b) Animate matter is served by the laws of inanimate matter. Examples: Gravitation has so placed the earth in relation to the sun that it receives the moderate quantity of light and heat necessary for the support of organic life. . . . The air contains in every 100 parts nearly 79 of nitrogen and 21 of oxygen gas, together with .04 of carbonic acid, a minute proportion of ammonia and other constituents, and a variable quantity of watery vapour. In pure nitrogen, man would suffocate; in pure oxygen, his body would burn out rapidly like a piece of tinder; without carbonic acid plant life would be impossible. . . . The plant exhales oxygen and inhales carbonic acid; the animal exhales carbonic acid, and inhales oxygen: thus, each ministers to the life of the other. . . . The water, drawn by evaporation

from the sea, drifts in clouds, and descends in rain on the mountains, thus feeding the wells, the streams and rivers, so necessary for living things. . . . Bodies contract with a fall of temperature, and yet water expands when its temperature falls below 4° Centigrade. Hence, ice is lighter than water, and forms a surface-covering which, being of low conductivity, prevents the rapid congealing of the entire body of water and the destruction of living things beneath.

(4) *The whole universe, we may say in conclusion, is guided by law.* Everywhere there is order. Everywhere there is admirable arrangement. Everywhere there are fixed modes of action.

The Laws of Nature could not have been produced by chance or by a cause acting blindly, which is but another name for chance.—Is it necessary to refute the absurdity that chance could have generated a law? Law is the exact opposite of chance. Fixity is the characteristic of law; variability, the characteristic of chance: (1) Four rods of equal length, flung aimlessly from the hand, may fall into the exact form of a square. It is barely conceivable that this may happen once or twice; it is utterly inconceivable that it should happen a hundred times in unbroken succession; but what should be thought of the conceivability of its *never* happening otherwise? Yet this last must be realized in order to give us the basis of a law. (2) If the generation by chance of such a simple law be impossible, how can we measure the absurdity of supposing that chance could have produced the vast complexity of laws that rule the universe, the laws whose operation guides the course of planets, and accounts for the growth and reproduction of living things, the instinct and tendencies of animals, the work of bees, the nest-building of birds, the activity of the mind of man?

The Laws of Nature have been Imposed by a Lawgiver.—(1) The arguments by which we have shown that the laws of nature are not due to chance avail, also, to prove that those laws cannot be due to any unintelligent cause we choose to name. Therefore, they must be due to some great intelligence distinct from matter. They must have been ordained and imposed by a Lawgiver. And, as the statesman frames his legislation for a definite purpose, so, also the Lawgiver of the universe imposed His laws to achieve the ends He desired. The orderly arrangement produced by His laws was intentional. It was in accordance with His preconceived plan or design.

\* We abstract for the moment from the rare interpositions to which, according to the doctrine of miracles, the laws of nature are subject.

(2) *Observe how the necessity for an intelligent author of the Laws of Nature is enforced by considerations such as the following:*

(a) Great intelligence and skilful workmanship are required to construct a steam-engine that can feed itself with fuel and water. But indefinitely greater would be the intelligence and power which could make the iron-ore come, of itself, out of the bowels of the earth, smelt and temper itself, form and fit together all the parts of the engine, make the engine lay in its store of water and coal, kindle its furnace, and repair its worn parts. Yet this is an everyday process of nature in the case of living organisms. And, as intelligence is needed to guide the hands of the mechanic who builds the engine, much more is it needed to combine and direct the lifeless forces of nature in producing more marvellous results.

(b) The lower animals in the work which they do, often exhibit instances of wonderful order. They perform with great skill a series of actions for the achievement of a definite purpose. Take the following example: There is a kind of sand-wasp<sup>9</sup> which prepares a worm as food for its larvæ by cutting as with a surgical lance and paralysing all the motor-nerve centres, so as to deprive the worm of movement but not of life. The sand-wasp then lays its eggs beside the worm and covers all with clay. It has got its surgical skill without instruction or practice. It lives for but one season. It has not been taught by its parents, for it has never seen them. It does not teach its offspring, for it dies before they emerge from the earth. It has not got its skill by heredity. For what does heredity mean in such a case? It means that some ancestor of the insect, having accidentally struck the worm in nine or ten nerve centres, managed somehow or other to transmit to all its descendants a facility for achieving the same success. But it is mere folly to say that this chance act of the ancestor rather than any other chance act should become a fixed habit in all its progeny. And could the original success have been due to chance? Where the number of points that might have been struck was infinitely great, the chance of striking the nerve centres alone was zero. But perhaps the insect gets its skill by reasoning? No: (1) because reasoning does not give dexterity; (2) because it is impossible that each insect of the same tribe—and all are equally expert—should discover by independent reasoning exactly the same process; (3) because, when the insect is confronted with the slightest novel difficulty, it acts like a creature without reason and is powerless to solve it. Therefore, the intelligence which the sand-wasp exhibits does not reside in the insect itself but in the mind

<sup>9</sup> The *ammophila hirsuta*.

of God : it was He who planned the work : it is He who moves the insect to perform it.<sup>10</sup>

(c) Man is as much a product of nature as the bee or the flower. The elaborate works of civilisation, the arts and sciences, and all the accumulated knowledge of centuries, are as certainly due to the working of nature's laws or forces, as the honey-cell of the bee or the perfume of the flower. Is it for a moment conceivable that those laws were not directed by intelligence, that man and all his achievements could have sprung from a source, blind and lifeless, and, therefore totally inadequate to account for them ?

**The Lawgiver is God.**—(1) As the carpenter is distinct from the table he makes, the architect from the house he designs, as every cause is distinct from its effect, so the Lawgiver of the universe must be distinct from the universe and its laws. (2) A scientist of exceptional talent, aided by perfect apparatus for research, succeeds after many years of study in understanding, more or less imperfectly, the working of one or two of those laws. Must not, then, the Author of them all be a Being of vast intelligence ? (3) That Being must possess free-will. Else, how does man by a law of his nature come to possess such a faculty ? And why should the laws of nature be precisely as they are—we see no reason why they might not be otherwise—except from the act of a Being free to choose as He pleases ? The Being who possesses these perfections we call God.

## II

### PROOF FROM MOTION

**The Existence of Motion** in things around us is proved by innumerable instances.

<sup>10</sup> Fabre, the chief authority on entomology, from whose work, *Souvenirs Entomologiques* (Paris : Delegrave), the above example is taken, says that the behaviour of the larvæ is still more astounding. While eating into the live worm, they take care to avoid the vital parts ; were they to injure even one of these, the worm would die, and they would perish for want of fresh food. This, says Fabre, is "the miracle of miracles."

Fabre was a Catholic and for a long time an indifferent one. Many years before his death he was touched by God's grace ; in a spirit of great devotion and penance, he returned to the practice of his religion and continued faithful to the end. But even during his period of indifferentism, he did not deny God's existence. He never had anything but scorn for the feeble and foolish attempts of other scientists to evade the truth that instinct points straight to God.

**In the Visible World nothing moves entirely of itself, i.e., without help.**<sup>11</sup> You can divide all things in the world into two classes, viz., things animate and things inanimate, or, things with life and things without life.

(1) No lifeless thing moves without help. This obvious truth can be illustrated by a thousand examples. The marbles with which a child plays are propelled by his fingers : the stone falling through the air is being pulled down by gravity : the steamer gliding through the water gets its motion from the engine—and so on for instances without number. If then you see any quantity of inanimate matter in motion—any quantity be it ever so great or ever so small—you are certain that it must have got help from without.

(2) No animate or living thing moves without help. This, at first sight, is not so clear, yet a little reflection will show that it is true. (a) Living things move themselves but can do so only by receiving help from outside. Both animals and plants require food ; it is the source of their energy ; without it they would cease to be living things. (b) Life, or the principle of life, is not like the movement of a particle of matter ; life is not energy, but a director of energy. The total energy of a plant or animal during the whole course of its existence (including the store of energy which it may possess at death) is exactly equivalent to the energy which it has absorbed from without ; and this equality remains, no matter how the energy may have been expended. (c) The principle of life never begins its work, until it is stimulated from outside. One illustration will suffice : take, for instance, the grain of corn in the earth ; the living principle in that grain will remain inactive, unless the proper conditions of warmth, moisture, etc., are present.

"But," you will say, "what of our free-will ? Using the word 'motion' in a broader sense to mean more than the movement of something material, cannot we say, and must we not say, that our will moves itself ?" Yes, but it never moves itself without help. The will cannot choose between two courses, unless those courses have been laid before it by the intellect. "But what of the intellect ? Does it not conceive ideas unaided ?" No ; it cannot take its first step, until it gets information from one or other of the five senses ; and the senses themselves would remain

<sup>11</sup> Our argument does not require us to specify the nature of the help. The help may be a true cause or a stimulus, or it may consist in the removal of an obstacle.

forever passive, unless stimulated or affected by things distinct from them.<sup>12</sup>

There would be no motion in the world but for help given by someone who is outside the world.—Since nothing in the world moves of itself, since everything requires help of some kind for its motion, it follows that there must be some Being outside the world who gave it its first motion.

Suppose that there are five children who are willing to obey you strictly : suppose you get each to promise not to speak until spoken to ; and suppose you lock all five in a room by themselves : then, no word would ever be spoken in that room, unless someone from outside were first to speak to the occupants. It is so with the motion we see in the world ; as the silence in the room would never have been broken but for the voice from without, so the motion in the world could never have existed but for the motion given by some Being outside the world.

So far we have been thinking of the world as it is to-day, with its great number of living as well as lifeless things ; but it is the teaching of Science, that at some time in the distant past the earth was a fiery globe revolving then, as now, round the Sun, but with no life on its surface. How did it get this motion ? Scientists say it got it from the Sun. The Sun while spinning round flung off several fragments : these fragments are the planets of which the earth is one. But how did the Sun get its spinning or rotating motion ? It got it from a larger moving mass of which it once formed part—or as some assert, the Sun with its motion was produced by a collision between two stars. But, again, how account for the motion of the larger mass, or of the stars. There is no answer from Science : and, even if there were, it would merely tell us of another moving body or bodies whose motion would equally need explanation. Here then is the problem : the universe was formed from a quantity of moving matter ; who gave that matter its motion ? Someone who is outside the universe, and is no part of the universe. Someone who is truly called the First Mover.

**The First Mover is God.**—If you suppose that he who gave the world its motion was himself moved by a second being, the second by a third, and so on indefinitely, you make a supposition which

<sup>12</sup> You may urge your objection still further and say : " An angel is not in any way dependent on bodily senses. The intellect of an angel, therefore, can move itself, that is, it can obtain ideas without external help." No ; the intellect of an angel could not perform its first act, unless it were affected in some way by an object distinct from it. Some one has to make the link between the mind of the angel and the first truth it knows.

leads nowhere, because it would still remain true that there must be some being who is the fountain-head of all that motion, there would still be a First Mover. The hands of a watch are moved by one of the wheels, that wheel is moved by another and so on. But it is quite absurd to think that we can do without the main-spring by merely increasing the number of wheels indefinitely.<sup>13</sup>

The First Mover cannot be a lump of inert matter ; if he were, his motion would have been derived from without ; he could not have been the First Mover.

He is not like us : he is not united to a body ; if he were, his knowledge would depend on external stimulus, and he would not be the First Mover. He must be a Being whose knowledge had no beginning, whose mind was never in darkness.

He Himself is the source of all His activity. He is a Spirit, the Lord and Master of the universe : His name is God.

**Note.**—According to the capacity of the pupils, the teacher might explain that in God the mind knowing is not distinct from the object known ; that the mind knowing is God himself, and the object known is likewise God himself ; and that through His self-knowledge He has a perfect knowledge of His creatures. This identity in God of the mind knowing and the object known enables us to understand how His knowledge never had a beginning.

### III

#### PROOF FROM CAUSALITY

The only full and satisfactory explanation of the universe is found, as we shall see, in the existence of a First Cause, to whom all things and all changes, all facts and events are directly or indirectly due.

Take anything you please in the world about you—let us call it A—and try to account for its existence. You discover that it has been produced by B ; that B has been produced by C ; and C by D. Now, if the last cause named by you in this or any other such series be itself an effect, you are still without a true

<sup>13</sup> " But," you may say, " the series of wheels could be infinite." Very well ; let us suppose so. But let us suppose also that the wheels have the gift of speech and can answer a question. Ask any one of them, " Are you the cause of the motion I see in you ? " It will answer, " No," and all the members of the infinite series will give the same reply. We get an infinite number of " Noes " to an infinite number of questions. We must therefore look outside the infinite series for the source of that motion which we see flowing from member to member.

and full explanation of A, and you will not find that explanation until you arrive at a first cause, a cause which is not an effect, a cause which has not derived its existence from anything else, a cause which is uncaused and self-existent.

If it be objected that A may be caused by B, B by C, and C by A, thus moving in a circle, as it were, we answer: (1) If A has been caused by B, and B by C, it follows that A has been caused by C. But if A has been caused by C, then C cannot have been caused by A. (2) If A is caused by B, then B must have existed before A; if B has been caused by C, then C must have existed before B. Therefore C existed before A, and could not have been caused by it.

The series of effects and causes, A, B, C, etc., leads us therefore to a First Cause which is uncaused. Being uncaused, it was never brought into existence by anything else; it always existed; it has existence of itself; it is self-existent. It is idle to inquire why it exists, for it exists of its very nature.<sup>14</sup> The First Cause is thus self-explanatory, accounting not only for itself but for A and B and C, and for each and every member in any other such series which we choose to set forth.

Now, since there is nothing in the visible world about which we cannot ask the question, why it exists, it follows that the independent being who is the explanation and cause of all things in nature must himself be distinct from all and superior to all.

Each individual thing in the visible world, as we have seen, needs an explanation, and finds it, directly or ultimately, in the existence of a first cause. But the universe in its entirety likewise needs an explanation: it is not self-explanatory; it is not the full explanation of all that takes place within it:—The universe is made up of a certain number of constituents; the action of any one of them (X) may be explained by its properties, and by the influence exerted on it by all the others; the action of the second (Y) may be explained in a similar way, and so on, yet this leaves still unexplained why the constituent X existed at all, and why it had Y, Z, K, etc., acting upon it, and not a totally different set of influencing companions. Hence the universe considered as a whole, is not self-explanatory: it needs an explanation just as much as the smallest thing in it. It points beyond itself; it points to an uncaused being outside nature, a being that contains its own explanation, and is the final explanation of everything else, the first and sufficient cause of all things.

Since this being is the author of the order of the universe, the author of the intelligence and free-will of man, he himself in some

<sup>14</sup> Just as it is idle to inquire why a circle is round, for it is round of its very nature.

supereminent way, must possess intelligence and free-will, for the cause must be sufficient to account for the effect.

This First Cause, this Self-existent and Intelligent Being we call God.

**Note.**—(1) The student should observe that a physical cause, that is, a cause whose operation comes under the observation of the senses, can never fully account for its effect. Let us take an example:—Suppose we are asked to account for the letters we see in this printed page. The physical causes of those letters are the metal type, the ink, the absorbent nature of the paper, the printer's hands and eyes. But, clearly, these causes do not explain how the page came to be printed. The real cause is not physical. It is the free-will of the printer. Note how the example applies to the motion we observe in the world around us: the physicist explains the motion of the train by the motion in the piston of the engine; the motion in the piston by the expansion of steam; the expansion of steam by the heat from the coal; the energy in the coal, which is nothing more than compressed vegetable matter, by the sun's heat and light; the sun's heat and light, by the motion of the nebula out of which it was evolved. Therefore, as far as a complete explanation is concerned, we find ourselves, at the end of a long series of physical causes, just where we were at the beginning. The motion of the nebula requires explanation just as much as the motion of the train. Thus we are driven once more to find the ultimate explanation of all physical phenomena in the will of some all-powerful Being distinct from the world.<sup>15</sup>

**Note.**—(2) *The Existence of a First Cause is demanded by the Law of the Dissipation of Energy.*—Men of science agree that the two following principles belong to the fundamental laws of physics: <sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> We may bring out the point of this argument by means of a humorous illustration used for a somewhat different purpose by W. G. Ward in his work, *The Philosophy of Theism*, vol. II, p. 173. He supposes a "philosophical" mouse to be enclosed in a pianoforte. The mouse discovers that every sound of the instrument is produced by a vibration of the strings, and the vibration of the strings by taps of the hammers. "Thus far I have already prosecuted my researches," says the mouse. And he goes on with all the blithe optimism of the Atheist: "So much is evident even now, viz., that the sounds proceed not . . . from any external agency, but from the uniform operation of fixed laws. These laws may be explored by intelligent mice; and to their exploration I shall devote my life." And so, the mouse, arguing himself out of the old belief of his kind, becomes convinced that the piano-player has no existence.

<sup>16</sup> These laws are generalizations from a number of observed facts.



(a) The amount of energy in the universe is constant.<sup>17</sup>

(b) Energy existing as uniformly diffused heat is not available for useful work.

Every student of physical science knows that a portion of the energy employed in doing work appears as heat, which tends to diffuse itself uniformly. The amount of energy thus converted into diffused heat is constantly increasing, and as no useful work can be extracted from it, it is justly described as the growing waste-heap of the universe. Hence, even if the sum of energy in the universe be constant, the amount available for useful work is continually diminishing. The universe, therefore, will finally arrive at a state of rest, in which all work, and hence, all life, such as we know it, will be impossible.

But the useful energy of the universe, which is thus constantly diminishing, was evidently finite at all times, and hence can only have been diminishing for a finite time. *Wherefore it follows that the useful energy of the universe had a beginning.* With Lord Kelvin, we may compare the universe to a lighted candle: "Regarding the universe," he says, "as a candle that has been lit, we become absolutely certain that it has not been burning from eternity, and that a time must come when it will cease to burn." Or, we may compare it to a clock which is going. The movement of a clock is due to a spring which is slowly uncoiling. There is no mechanism within the clock to rewind the spring. At some point in the future it will stop. At some point in the past it was wound up by the hand of a man, or by some agency distinct from itself. It is so with the universe. As surely as the springs of its energy approach at every instant the final stage of complete relaxation, so surely were they, at some instant in the past, wound up by some extrinsic agency, by the hand of God.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Energy is the power of doing work. Any cause which changes or tends to change a body's state of rest or motion is termed a force. A force does work when it overcomes a resistance. *Examples:* The force exerted by a horse, in drawing a wagon, does work. The force exerted by a man, in raising a weight, and the pressure of the steam, in moving the piston of an engine, also do work. Cf. Chapter IV, Objections B, 2.

<sup>18</sup> This argument is a direct deduction from established physical laws: See Preston's *Heat*, pp. 296-298. Addressed to Materialists, it is an "argumentum ad hominem," i.e., an argument based on their own admissions. They, in common with all physicists, regard the laws of energy as the very foundation of physical science. It has been suggested that there may be a means in nature for the sudden restoration of useful energy (cataclysmic theory). But this is merely a gratuitous assumption unsupported even by a scrap of scientific evidence.

## IV

## PROOF FROM DEPENDENCE

(Usually called the Proof from Contingence)

The Meaning of "Dependence" and "Necessity."—Contrast these two statements:—

"The sky is clear," "The whole is greater than the part."

The former is a dependent truth: the latter is an independent or necessary truth.

The former *may* be true at this moment, but *need* not be true; its truth depends on the fulfilment of a condition, viz., that there be no clouds or mist: it is therefore a dependent truth. The latter is true at this moment and *must* ever be true; its truth does not depend on the fulfilment of any condition: it is an independent or necessary truth.

(1) If a statement which is now true *was not always true*, we know at once that it is a dependent truth; the very fact that it is a temporary truth shows us that it is not a necessary truth. May we infer from this that every statement that is true for all time must be a necessary truth? No. We can suppose that the statement, "The sky is clear," was always true and always will be true; we can suppose it to be eternally true; but even so, our supposition will not make it an independent truth; it will remain a dependent truth, eternally dependent on other truths.

A dependent statement such as, "The sky is clear," no matter how long it may continue to be true, can lose its truth at any instant: our mind admits the possibility without hesitation; but an independent statement, such as, "The whole is greater than its part," can never cease to be true; our mind rejects the possibility as absurd and inconceivable. A dependent statement is always reversible; it is subject to death, as it were; it is a perishable truth; while an independent statement is a truth which is irreversible, deathless, imperishable and necessary.

(2) The nature of anything is shown to us in its definition; the definition tells us what precisely the thing is, or how it is constituted. We define "the whole" as "the sum of two or more parts." *The very nature of "the whole,"* therefore, compels us to assert that "the whole is greater than its part." The assertion is really contained in the meaning of "the whole."

Now look at the other statement, "the sky is clear." We may define the sky as "the visible region above the earth." It is obvious that the nature of what we call "the sky" does not compel us to assert that "the sky is clear." Such an assertion would not follow from our definition of "the sky."

It is the nature of "the whole" to be greater than its part.<sup>19</sup> It is not the nature of "the sky" to be clear. The truth that "the whole is greater than its part" is true of itself; it does not lean for help on any other truth. The truth that "the sky is clear" is not true of itself; it needs outside help to make it true.

(3) An independent statement *explains itself*: it shines by its own light; it does not force us to look elsewhere for the reason why it is true. A dependent statement is the opposite of all this: it does not account for itself; it shines by a borrowed light; it leaves us dissatisfied, and sends us farther afield until we find a self-explanatory truth.

Now, as a truth may be either dependent or independent, *so too an existing thing may be either dependent or independent*. An existing thing is dependent:

- (1) if it exists for but a time; or
- (2) if existence does not belong to its nature; or
- (3) if it compels us to look outside it for the reason of its existence.

If, therefore, any one of these three conditions has been verified, the thing derives its existence from without.

**Everything in the World is Dependent.**—(1) Everything in this world about us is subject to change and death. Plants, animals and men come into existence and pass away. Inanimate matter suffers endless variations; new substances are being constantly built up and broken down.<sup>20</sup> All these things are obviously dependent, because their existence is merely temporary; but even though their existence were everlasting, it would still be, as we shall see, a dependent existence.

If we were asked to give the list of things that make up the nature of man or, in other words, if we were asked to set down all those things which constitute a man, we should not mention "existence" as one of them. The description of a man remains precisely the same whether he exists or not, or whether he exists everlastingly or not, and this is true of any particular thing in the world we choose to name. Existence, therefore, does not

<sup>19</sup> Cf. footnote 36 of this chapter.

<sup>20</sup> Consider, *e.g.*, our planet alone: (1) The distribution of land and water is insensibly, but constantly changing; (2) the earth's rotatory motion is getting slower and slower, because the tide, the great bank of water piled up by the attraction of the moon, acts as a brake on it; (3) the motion of the earth round the sun is being retarded, because of friction with clouds of meteoric dust: the earth is, therefore, ever being drawn nearer to the sun. Enormous changes will result, after the lapse of ages, as a consequence of (2) and (3).

belong to the nature of man, nor to the nature of anything else in the world.<sup>21</sup> Hence we say that everything in the visible world is dependent or contingent, *i.e.*, that it *need not exist*. Not merely is there no necessity for its coming into existence, but there is no necessity for its continuing in existence.<sup>22</sup> Nothing in the world exists necessarily. Nothing in the world has any grip on existence.

(2) If we examine the world at any stage of its history, we shall arrive at the same conclusion. Go back, if you will, to the remote age when, according to scientists, nothing existed but the fiery nebula out of which all things around us to-day are supposed to have been evolved. Here again you find a merely dependent thing: (a) it existed but for a time; (b) it was composed of a definite number of particles linked together in definite ways, and the fact that it possessed such a particular arrangement and no other shows its dependence on something outside itself; it needs explanation quite as much as the blast-furnace in one of our factories.—Existence does not belong to its nature.

(3) With scientists we may conceive the possibility that, amid all the transformations through which the world has passed, fundamental particles of some simple kind may have persisted fixed and unchanged, serving as the material out of which all

<sup>21</sup> The point of the argument can be illustrated as follows:—Suppose that last year a sculptor gave you a full description of a statue he intended making, and that to-day you are looking at the successfully completed work. Your description of the statue, as it is now, would correspond exactly to the sculptor's description a year ago when the statue as yet had no existence. The description of the statue tells us the nature of the statue, and does not include the statement that "the statue must exist."

To borrow a term from chemistry, the description of a thing's nature may be called its *formula*. The *formula* shows us a *possible* being and nothing more; it shows us a being that can exist; it does not say that the being must exist. We can construct a great number of formulæ corresponding to things actually existing, but we know that there must be an indefinitely greater number corresponding to things which, as a fact, have never existed, and never will exist, and yet each one of these unknown formulæ would fully describe the characteristics of a particular and possible being.

<sup>22</sup> You may object that the soul of man is immortal, and therefore must go on existing forever without any help. No; that is a false conclusion. The soul of man does not exist of itself; it does not exist without help; if it did, it would never have begun to exist; it would always have existed. But as long as it is kept in existence, it cannot fall to pieces like the body, because it is not made up of parts. Hence, when we say that it is immortal, we mean that it will last forever, *unless* He who holds it in existence withdraws His help.

else has been made.<sup>23</sup> But these particles, as scientists themselves admit, would be dependent things; (a) they would possess only a definite, *limited* power, a fact which would send our mind in quest of further explanation; (b) the power exerted by them would be described by scientists—to put their view in the simplest form—as a certain amount of activity; <sup>24</sup> but this activity would need explaining quite as much as the activity of our muscles.<sup>25</sup>

**Dependent Things are held in Existence by an Independent Being.—**

Since the visible world with all that it contains is dependent, it must be held in existence by some being distinct from it. If this being were dependent on a second and higher being, the second on a third, the third on a fourth, and so on endlessly, we should thus have an infinite series; but the entire series would be dependent quite as much as any member of it, and would not account for its continued existence. Therefore, no explanation of the continued existence of ourselves and all else in the world can be found, unless we admit the existence of an independent or necessary being, existing of itself, existing of its very nature.

Physical scientists are not in disagreement with us. Max Planck, one of the most eminent of them, expresses a common view in the following quotation (his word "absolute" is equivalent to "independent"; his words "accidental," "contingent" and "relative" have the same meaning as "dependent"):

"From the fact that in studying the happenings of nature we strive to eliminate the contingent and accidental, and to come finally to what is essential and necessary, it is clear that we always look for the basic thing behind the dependent thing, for what is absolute behind what is relative. . . . After all I have said, and in view of the experiences through which scientific progress has passed, we must admit that in no case can we rest assured that what is absolute<sup>26</sup> in science to-day will remain absolute for all time. Not only that, but we must admit as certain that the absolute can never finally be grasped by the researcher.<sup>27</sup> The absolute represents an ideal goal which is always ahead of us and which we can never reach."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Max Planck: *Where is Science Going?* p. 196. London: Allen & Unwin, 1933.

<sup>24</sup> Electric activity "together with the elemental quantum of action." See Max Planck, *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> We might have ruled out the discussion of the nebula and fundamental atoms by simply asserting that the word "existence" will not be found in the description of either of them.

<sup>26</sup> *i.e.*, "deemed absolute," as the context makes clear.

<sup>27</sup> *i.e.*, the physical scientist.

<sup>28</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 198, 199.

The search of the physical scientist for the independent, self-existent being is doomed to failure, because his sphere of inquiry is restricted to the visible world, where he will never find anything but dependent things or activities like those with which we are familiar; his last word will take us no farther than the theory of the Indian sages who said that the earth is supported by an elephant, the elephant by a tortoise, and the tortoise by—? : he will never reach the end of his inquiry, because he will never see the Absolute, *i.e.*, God, in the microscope.

**The Independent or Necessary Being is God.—**The Independent or Necessary Being, the giver of dependent existence and the upholder of every dependently existing thing, from intelligent man down to the least material thing, must be a great living Power: we call Him God. Existence must belong to Him as truth belongs to the statement that "the whole is greater than its part." He must be self-existent. He must be one who cannot, without an absurdity, be divested of His existence. He must, therefore, be identified with existence itself, a concept which excludes every demand for further explanation and sets our mind at rest.

**Note.—**(1) For the purpose of this argument, it would have been sufficient to show that there is at least *one* contingent being in the world. From that one contingent being we could have proved the existence of a Self-existent Being.

**Note.—**(2) To the beginner in these studies, the proofs from Motion, Causality and Dependence may seem to be much alike. It is therefore well to point out that each leads to a distinct notion of the Supreme Being:

The proof from Motion shows that *He is not moved by any other being.*

The proof from Causality shows that *He is not produced by any other being.*

The proof from Dependence shows that He exists necessarily—that *He exists without the help of any other being.*

In addition to the proofs for the existence of God set forth above, there are many others. Among them may be mentioned, in particular, the Aesthetic Argument, based on the perception of beauty in the universe, the Ethical Argument, based on the voice of conscience, and the Moral Argument or the Argument from the universal belief of mankind.

## § 2

## THE NATURE OF GOD AS KNOWN FROM REASON

By the light of pure reason we may arrive at some knowledge of the Nature of God from the fact that He is the First Cause, eternal, self-existent.

We can show that, since by the mere act of His will, He can call things out of nothingness into actual existence, and annihilate them at His pleasure, He must be the Master of existence, subject to no deficiency and containing within Himself in some higher way every created perfection that can possibly exist; in other words, we can show that He must be infinitely perfect—infinately perfect in Power and Knowledge and Goodness and in the splendour of Beauty. But, to those who have been taught by Bethlehem and Calvary to know Him and love Him with a warm, personal love, our philosophic arguments must appear to be as chill and formal as the propositions of Geometry. The Incarnation of the Son of God has given sight to us men who were groping in darkness; He who dwelt among us has thrown a light on the Divine Nature which does not shine from the ablest treatise on philosophy.

## THE PERFECTIONS OF GOD

**Simplicity.**—God must be simple, *i.e.*, He cannot consist of separate parts united into one whole. In a being so compounded, it is the union of parts that forms the whole. This union would require a cause. But the First Cause is uncaused.

**Spirituality.**—God cannot be matter, because all matter is made up of parts. He is, therefore, a Being with no extension. But He is also an Active, Intelligent Being, because He is the Creator of all things, including the human soul. An Active, Intelligent Being without extension is a Spirit. Therefore, God is a Spirit.

**Infinity.**—God is infinite, *i.e.*, He possesses every perfection in its highest form—Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Kindness, and Mercy, and the Splendour of Beauty.

(1) We get the measure of a sculptor's ability by comparing the finished statue with the rude block of marble. His ability

is in proportion to the distance he places between the perfect work of art and the unshapen stone. The greater the distance, the greater the ability. Now, the Divine Artificer had no material on which to begin His work. The things He made were nothing until He made them. But the distance between "nothing" and actual existence is infinite. God, therefore, produced something which is at an infinite distance from its previous state. Such an act is infinite and can come only from an Infinite Being.<sup>29</sup>

*Note.*—The arguments set forth below in (2), (3) and (4) rest on the truth already established, that God is the only being whose nature is such that He must exist.<sup>30</sup> God's nature is what makes Him God and sets Him apart from all else. How then can we best describe His nature? Is it enough to say that He is the most wise or the most beautiful of all beings? No; because we can think of a being as wise or beautiful without having to think of Him as actually existing. Search as we may, there is only one name for God which shows clearly what His nature is, and that name is Existence itself. As wisdom cannot be unwise or beauty unbeautiful, neither can existence itself be non-existing.

(2) We speak of a living plant, a living animal, a living man. Each of these possesses but a share of life, a limited life. But suppose that there were such a thing as life itself actually existing. It would not be a mere share of life; it would not be a limited life; it would be a perfect life. Now, apply this to what we know of God. He is Existence itself; He cannot even be conceived as non-existing. All other things get their existence from Him; their existence is limited. His existence is unlimited; He cannot be short of any perfection, for, if He were, He would have but a share of existence, and would not be Existence itself. Therefore God is infinite, *i.e.*, He possesses, in its highest form every perfection that can exist.

(3) A being is something that exists or that can be given existence; if it cannot be given existence, it is a mere nothing; it is something inconceivable (like a square circle). God is the Supreme Being. He is Existence itself. He is the Master of Existence. He can give existence to anything that can conceivably exist. If then we suppose Him to be wanting in any conceivable perfection, we are at once confronted with an absurdity, for He would possess the power to call that perfection into existence and should, therefore, already possess it. Not only should He already possess it but He should possess it in a higher form, as may be seen from the following illustration: The beauty of a picture comes from the æsthetic beauty of the

<sup>29</sup> St. Thomas: *S.T.*, I, q. 45, a. 5, ad 3.

<sup>30</sup> See Proof from Dependence.

painter's mind ; his mind is capable of conceiving, in line and colour, countless beautiful designs ; and, as the source must be higher than the stream that flows from it, so must his mind be in a higher order of beauty than any or all of the works he is capable of producing. So it is with God ; He, the source of all conceivable beings, is above them all, and must possess in a higher way all their greatness and goodness and beauty.

(4) We can give the preceding argument in a slightly different form : If God, the Master of Existence, were imperfect, He could make Himself perfect ; He could raise Himself from a lower to a higher state. But the less cannot produce the greater without outside help, and God could have no helper ; outside Him nothing can exist but His own creatures, things to which He has given a small share of being and which have to be held in existence at every instant by His power. Therefore the supposition that He could be imperfect is absurd.

**Unity.**—(1) Since God is infinite, He must be One. Two infinite beings, each containing all perfections that can possibly exist, would be a contradiction. If there were two infinite beings, each should possess some perfection which the other had not, otherwise they would not be distinct. But since each would be infinite, each should possess all perfections. Moreover, each would be independent, and outside the power of the other. Hence, neither could be infinite.

(2) Since God is Being Itself, He must be One, for Being Itself is one. If there were two Gods, each would possess but a share of Being, and neither would be identical with Being Itself.

**Omnipotence.**—God is omnipotent because He is infinite. All things that are possible He can do. They are possible only because He can do them. They can come into existence only because He can bring them into existence. He cannot contradict His own Will or Truth. He cannot commit sin, for instance, for the essence of sin is opposition to His Will. Nor can He attempt what is absurd, the making, for instance, of a four-sided triangle. Such a figure would be a mere nothing, a contradiction in terms. Men, because of the imperfection of their will or understanding, commit sin, or undertake what is intrinsically absurd.

**Omnipresence and Omniscience.**—God is everywhere, for He supports in existence everything outside Himself. He is Omniscient, that is, He knows all things. He is Omniscient because His knowledge is infinite. He has not a number of distinct ideas as we have. By one act of His intellect He knows and knew from all eternity all things past, present, and to come.

**Goodness and Happiness.**—Goodness is what makes a thing or being truly desirable or pleasing. Since God is infinite, He is goodness without limit ; He is infinitely pleasing to Himself and, therefore, infinitely happy.

*Note.*—The Nature of God is incomprehensible. But so is our own nature. So is the nature of all things around us, from the star to the daisy by the wayside. Sir Isaac Newton, one of the greatest scientists that ever lived, compared himself to a little child picking up a few shells on the shore, while all the depths of the ocean remained hidden from him. He felt that his momentous discoveries had revealed, but without explaining, just one or two levers in the infinitely complicated structure of the universe, while all the rest lay beyond in impenetrable darkness. His knowledge seemed to him as nothing compared with his ignorance. If it be so difficult, then, to know anything worth knowing of the visible world, how incomparably more difficult it must be to understand the Nature of its Author ?

**The Perfections of God in General.**—(1) We speak of men as possessing various perfections, *e.g.*, wisdom, justice, courage, reasoning power, but not as possessing them in a perfect degree. No man is perfectly wise, just, courageous, logical. May we predicate all these things of God ? No, not all, since some of them involve an imperfection. We may say that God is perfectly wise, *i.e.*, that He knows the causes of all things, or that He is perfectly just, *i.e.*, that He rewards and punishes according to merit. But we cannot say that He is perfectly courageous, for courage implies a willingness to face danger, and danger implies weakness, a condition in which one's life is threatened. Neither can we say that He is perfectly logical, for the epithet implies the power of passing from the known to the unknown, and to God nothing can be unknown.

The perfections, traces of which we observe in men, are, therefore, of two kinds, absolute and relative. Absolute perfections of their own nature involve no imperfection, while relative perfections do involve an imperfection. The former class God possesses *formally*—that is, He possesses them as they are in themselves. The latter class He possesses *eminently*—that is, He is the source, perfect in itself, whence they are derived.

(2) Agnostics<sup>21</sup> say that the perfections we ascribe to God are merely "anthropomorphic," *i.e.*, imitations of human perfections ; that if, for instance, a watch could think, it would have just as much right to argue that the watchmaker was made up of springs and cog-wheels, as we have to say that God possesses intelligence, goodness, justice, etc. We reply (a) that we do not ascribe to

<sup>21</sup> See below, Agnosticism.

God mere imitations of our human perfections; that the perfections we ascribe to God are found in Him in an infinitely higher manner than in creatures; that in creatures intelligence, goodness, justice are distinct qualities, while in God, in some incomprehensible way, they and all perfections are one and the same, identical with His nature or essence; (b) that, if the analogy of the watch were justified, we should be found ascribing to God hands and eyes and bodily organs, but such is not the fact; that, if the watch could reason aright, it would justly ascribe to the watchmaker the beginning of its movement and the orderly arrangements of its parts.

**Conclusion.**—Thus, with no aid beyond the natural light of reason, we have laid bare the foundation on which all religion is built.

We have discovered the great fundamental truths that God of His own free will has created the universe; that He has given us every good thing we possess, our life and our very being; that He holds us in existence from instant to instant; that, without His supporting hand, we and the whole world with us would lapse into the nothingness from which He has called us; that He is supreme in goodness, wisdom and power.

Our reason casts us at His feet. It impels us to a great act of loving adoration. It bids us tell Him that we love Him with our whole heart and mind and soul, and that we humbly and gladly acknowledge His absolute dominion over us and our absolute dependence on Him.

### § 3

#### REPLIES TO OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE PROOFS OF GOD'S EXISTENCE AND NATURE

##### KANT: HIS PHILOSOPHY; HIS CRITICISM OF OUR PROOFS

**The Philosophy<sup>32</sup> of Kant.**—Kant, a German philosopher (*d.* 1804) held that space and time are mental forms and nothing more;

<sup>32</sup> Philosophy is the science which by the use of reason alone endeavours to find an ultimate explanation of the world and our knowledge of it. The philosophy which we follow is substantially that of Aristotle; and our proofs for the existence of God rest on the principles which he formulated. Numerous other systems of philosophy have been proposed, but they have been mere fashions of thought, each having its vogue, and each in due course falling into disrepute because of its inherent absurdity.—It may be added however that Aristotle failed to make full use of his own principles and was thus led to a denial of God's Providence.

that they are mere moulds within our minds, which give our thoughts their special shape or quality; hence, the world about us, the earth, the sun, the stars, our own bodies, the people with whom we converse, the very book we are reading, are all so many images which our mind has constructed; similarly, our conviction that time is passing, that we have lived so many years, that such-and-such events belong to this or that point in the past, is merely a notion fashioned by ourselves. Does then nothing really exist? Yes, he says, there is something really existing outside our mind, acting on it, and giving rise to all the different kinds of ideas we have; this real thing, however, cannot be known as it is in itself.

The successors of Kant, quite legitimately, have gone a step further and have denied the existence of the external reality which he postulates. One of his disciples, Fichte (*d.* 1814), held that we ourselves do not exist, nor anything outside us; that nothing exists but thought; in other words, he maintained that thought exists but not the mind that thinks it. He and those that share his views are called Idealists. Kant was a modified or incomplete Idealist; an Idealist because he said that our ideas are not the images or likenesses of anything real—an incomplete Idealist, because he held that they are derived from some really existing thing even though its nature be unknown to us.

His teaching, logically developed, takes us even beyond the absurdity at which Fichte arrived. It leads to the conclusion, now held by many in the modern world, that truth itself is only the result of a "mould" of the mind, so that a doctrine can be, at one and the same time, both true and false—true for some, and false for others.

No form of Idealism, however plausibly constructed, can ever command wide acceptance; the principles that an external world really exists, and that a true knowledge of it can be obtained through the senses and the intellect, will always be regarded as self-evident and unassailable truths not only by the generality of mankind, but by all sane and profound thinkers. The undoubted hold which Kant still has on a small circle of non-Catholic intellectuals is due to the ability which he displayed in his wide survey of all branches of knowledge, and the ingenuity with which he worked out the details of an elaborate system, based though it was on the shifting sands of falsehood. Kant professed himself a Protestant; his philosophy, like the religion to which he belonged, has degenerated into a Babel of contradictory voices.

**Kant's Criticism of Our Proofs of God's Existence.**—Kant did not deny the existence of God, though if he had been logical he would have done so. He put it forward as a practical necessity:

if there were no God, he says, there would be no morality, and morality is a necessity of social life.

Kant objects as follows against the proof from Order in Nature :

A.—“The order which we observe in nature,” he says, “is a limited or finite thing ; it might have been produced by a finite being ; we are not justified, therefore, in concluding that it must be the work of an infinite being.”

*Reply.* 1.—Neither the argument from Order nor any of the arguments for God’s existence professes to prove that He is infinite ; this is quite clear from the italics at the head of this Chapter where we state what we purpose proving. Each argument examines some phase or aspect of the world—its order, its mechanism of cause and effect, its motion, its (instances of) dependence—and shows that each phase finds its ultimate explanation in a being distinct from the world supreme and intelligent. No doubt, at the close of each argument, we push on to the further conclusion that God is infinite, but that conclusion, though correctly drawn, is not required for our proof of His existence ; it belongs strictly to the next Section, “The Nature of God as Known from Reason,” where we address ourselves directly to the questions, whether He is one or several, whether He is a spirit, whether He is infinite, etc.

2. Let us suppose for the moment that the objection is sound ; let us suppose that the great Designer of the world is a finite being. What follows ? A most important conclusion, fatal to Materialists, who hold that nothing exists except what we perceive by our senses, the conclusion, viz., that, outside the world and distinct from it, there exists some Being of vast intelligence and power, on whom we are utterly dependent.

3. A thing may be finite, and yet the work done in connection with it may be possible only to an infinite being ; thus, for instance, a grain of sand is only a finite thing, yet to make it from nothing demands infinite power.<sup>33</sup> So, too, with the ordered universe : the universe is limited, yet the order which it reveals as we have shown above (pp. 1-4 ; 10-12), is due to a power and intelligence to which the human mind can affix no limit ; it is

<sup>33</sup> (a) Suppose that nothing existed but God and one of His angels. The angel would be held in existence at every instant by God, how then could it call another creature into being ? The angel’s command could produce no effect, unless it were merely the repetition of a command already given by God.

(b) He who at His word can create a grain of sand is the Master of existence, and with equal ease could give existence to worlds infinitely greater than ours. Our mind can conceive no limit to His power.

due to a Being whose infinity we are unable to question or deny. But we may bring this argument to a sharper point :—Life, the source of the marvellous order we observe in plants, animals and men, was introduced into the world at some point of time in the remote past ; it was *created*, and its creation is a direct proof of the infinite power of the Designer.

We have given Kant’s objection against the argument from Order, because it is one that anyone might reasonably propose. The only other arguments that he notices are those from Causality and Dependence, but his attacks on them are undeserving of an extensive reply.

B.—Kant held that the Law of Causality is merely a conception of the mind. Examples without number will show up the absurdity of this. Let one suffice. Look at a watch. You see the second-hand moving quickly round its little dial ; you attribute its busy movement to the works within ; that is, you hold that the works are the cause of the motion of the hand. But Kant would say : “No. Neither you nor any man can ever tell whether the works drive the second-hand or not. All that you can justly assert is that your mind represents the works as the cause, and the motion of the hand as the effect.” We need not be astonished that Kant should hold such an absurd opinion. In his view, the watch, with its mainspring, wheels, dial, hands, and case, is simply a construction which our own mind has fashioned from some unknown and unknowable reality outside us.

Kant would say also that what we call “causes” must always be things that can be perceived by the senses, and hence that we can never prove the existence of an invisible First Cause. This error too can be swiftly extinguished : our will is imperceptible to the senses, and yet it can work on the muscles of our body, causing movement in our limbs. Neither causes nor effects need be visible : our will, *e.g.*, can move our intellect to build up a new science ; the science would be the product or effect of the working of the intellect ; and the working of the intellect would be caused by the will ; and yet neither will nor intellect nor science is perceptible to the senses.

C.—Apart from the special errors of his philosophy, Kant completely misunderstood the argument from Dependence. He fancied that, when fully analysed, it was identical with a proof put forward by Descartes (*d.* 1650),<sup>34</sup> who derived his inspiration

<sup>34</sup> What is called “modern philosophy,” *i.e.*, philosophy tainted with idealism, owes its origin to the celebrated French Mathematician Descartes. He held that extension and motion are the only properties (of bodies) which have any real existence outside our mind.

from St. Anselm (*d.* 1109). The proof may be put as follows: "All, even atheists, understand by the word 'God' a being who contains all perfections. But existence is a perfection; therefore, God must exist." This proof is obviously defective. In the first place, it is not true that all, even atheists, understand by the word "God" a being who contains all perfections; "many of the ancients," as St. Thomas says, "asserted that this world is God,"<sup>35</sup> and therefore supposed Him to be limited." In the second place, the conclusion, "God must exist," does not follow; all that follows is that those who conceive God as a being possessing all perfections must conceive Him as existing; but to conceive Him *within* our mind as existing is no proof that He actually exists *outside* our mind. There is, however, a third and more important objection which we give in the footnote below.<sup>36</sup>

The great St. Anselm, who first proposed this proof, did not deny the value of the others. It was his laudable purpose to construct a simple argument which in a few words would carry conviction to all men, but he did not succeed. He was refuted by St. Thomas (*d.* 1274), Scotus (*d.* 1308) and many other Catholic philosophers. Atheistic writers, however, still persist in spreading the falsehood, originated by Kant himself, that in proving the existence of God we place our chief reliance on this argument of St. Anselm; they ignore the fact that we exclude it as unsound, and that we have been more successful than they in exposing its fallacy.

<sup>35</sup> *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book I, ch. XI (English translation by the Dominican Fathers. London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1924).

<sup>36</sup> St. Thomas says that the truth of the statement, "the whole is greater than its part," is immediately evident to us, because it is contained in the very meaning of "the whole"; but the truth of the statement, "God exists"; is not immediately evident to us. If, however, we knew the meaning of "God" as fully and as clearly as we know the meaning of "the whole," we should see at once that God must possess all the highest perfections including that of perfect existence; we should see that our very idea of Him had flashed into our mind from a being existing outside our mind; His existence would be known to us as immediately as the existence of the book we see before us on the table. But our knowledge of God did not come to us immediately from Himself; in our childhood it came to us through the word of our parents, and later on, when we were able to reason for ourselves, we saw that what they told us was true: a truth based on authority or reasoning is only indirectly known to us; it is not self-evident: St. Anselm's basic assumption is therefore false. See *ibid.*, beginning of Chapter XI.

### AN OBJECTION AGAINST THE ARGUMENT FROM CAUSALITY

Many Scientists assert that the Law of Causality is no longer valid, and that its place has been taken by what they call "the statistical Law."—(1) What the scientists who speak in this loose way should have said is that, because of their imperfect knowledge, they are unable to find the cause of certain happenings and have to depend on the statistical law. They have noticed, for instance, that atoms behave irregularly, as though they had a will of their own; to determine, therefore, what the atoms will do in any single instant, they have to rely on the law of averages or the statistical law. The case is exactly the same as that of a gardener who cannot discover why some of his rose-bushes fail every year, and who after ten years' observation puts down the yearly failure as averaging 20 per cent.; he is thus using the statistical law; it gives him a high probability but no certainty; his loss in any particular year may be more or less. But he is not so foolish as to think that his rose-bushes are perishing without a cause, and scientists who are unable to discover why atoms move as they do should show equal good sense. Their belief in the self-moving atom is an exact reproduction of the antiquated idea that the wind had a will of its own and moved where it pleased.

(2) Two leading scientists, Max Planck and Einstein, hold that the law of causality is universally valid. "Science," says Max Planck, "can only accept the universal validity of the law of causation which enables us definitely to predict effects following a given cause, and, in case the predicted effect should not follow, then we know that some other facts have come into play which were left out of consideration in our reckoning."<sup>37</sup> Commenting on the statement that "it is now the fashion in physical science to attribute something like free-will even to the routine process of nature," Einstein says: "That nonsense is not merely nonsense. It is objectionable nonsense";<sup>38</sup> of Jeans, Eddington,

<sup>37</sup> *Where is Science Going?* p. 148; cf. p. 145.

<sup>38</sup> See report of dialogue at the end of *Where is Science Going?* p. 201.

EINSTEIN'S THEORY OF RELATIVITY.—As is clear from the above, Einstein defends order and law in nature. The word "Relativity" with which his name is associated has given rise to the popular and entirely false notion that he believes in nothing fixed. His theory professes to remove certain alleged defects observable in the laws of astronomy and electro-magnetics, and to give a better explanation of the regularity of nature; it deals exclusively with quantity (structure); it does not touch the higher regions of life and intelligence, and has no bearing on Apologetics. Note that a popular exposition of the theories of Einstein and Planck is impossible: if it is intelligible to ordinary readers, it is inaccurate; if it is accurate, it is unintelligible.



and other English advocates of this "nonsense," he says that "scientific writers in England are illogical and romantic in their popular books, but in their scientific work they are acute logical reasoners." The fact that Eddington and Jeans profess themselves idealists completes their discredit; they say in their popular writings that the world is not a material thing but a mental thing.<sup>39</sup> "No physicist," says Einstein, "believes that; otherwise he would not be a physicist; neither do the physicists you have mentioned. You must distinguish between what is a literary fashion and what is a scientific pronouncement. These men are genuine scientists, and their literary formulations must not be taken as expressive of their scientific convictions. Why should anybody go to the trouble of gazing at the stars, if he did not believe that the stars were not really there? Here I am entirely at one with Planck. We cannot logically prove the existence of the external world, any more than you can logically prove that I am talking with you now or that I am here; but you know that I am here, and no subjective idealist can persuade you to the contrary."<sup>40</sup> The law of causality which says that nothing can come into existence except through the agency of a previously existing thing, can never be shaken or overthrown. To question or deny it is to abdicate one's reason. The objection we have been considering is a good illustration of the ineptness of physicists when they venture into the field of philosophy.

#### AN OBJECTION AGAINST THE NATURE OF GOD

**The Sufferings of Life and the Prodigality of Nature seem to argue against the Wisdom of God.**—The notion that there are defects in the work of God is due, not to the imperfect character of His design, but to our imperfect understanding of it. We cannot hope to understand God's purpose in everything. His design is not always clear to us. (a) Sometimes we not only fail to discover wisdom in the happenings of life, but seem to find a colossal

<sup>39</sup> According to Jeans, the world is a thought of the mind of God, the Supreme Mathematician; according to Eddington, it consists of "mind-stuff" by which he appears to mean that the earth and all things about us are "thoughts" either active or quiescent. See the *Limitations of Science*, by J. W. N. Sullivan, pp. 231-233. This is Pantheism or Idealism; but possibly Jeans and Eddington may be merely expressing inaccurately the truth that a final explanation of the world cannot be found in things we perceive by the senses.

<sup>40</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 213. We cannot logically prove our own existence or the existence of the external world, because the existence of both ourselves and the world is a self-evident truth shining by its own light. The idealist, if he is consistent, should go on to deny the existence of truth and of his own thoughts.

cruelty in them. "Why," we ask, "is there so much pain and grief in the world?" But, if there were no pain nor grief, there would be no pity nor self-sacrifice, no noble discipline for the soul of man. To complete our answer we must look to Revelation. It will tell us of the fall of man and its consequences.<sup>41</sup>

(b) Sometimes we marvel at the prodigality of Nature, and ask ourselves why there are so many useless things in the world. On this point St. George Mivart says that if the animals called labyrinthodonts which belong to the early geological ages had been endowed with intelligence, they might have made a strong case against the wisdom of Providence from the lavish waste of fern spores. Yet, all that vegetable waste has given us our coal. The animals would have judged wrongly "from their not being able to foresee events of what was to them an incalculably remote future. . . . Let a brood of young birds die before fledging," he continues, "their bodies feed a multitude of smaller creatures, these serve for others; and ultimately swarms of bacteria reduce lifeless organic matter to elements which serve to nourish vegetation, which serves to feed worms and other creatures, which again actively minister to the welfare of all the higher animals and of man. Nature is so arranged that the purpose of its First Cause can never be defeated, happen what may."<sup>42</sup> We may add that our argument does not require us to prove design in *all* things. It is sufficient to prove it in *some* things. Neither are we called on to prove that the design is perfect. Whether perfect or imperfect, it establishes the existence of a Designer: a hand-loom proves the existence of a designer just as well as a loom driven by steam, although the design may be less perfect in the one case than in the other.<sup>43</sup>

#### § 4

#### ATHEISM IN GENERAL

We apply the term "atheist," not to those who deny the existence of an Ultimate Reality, a First Cause of all things, for there are none such, but to those who deny the existence of a Personal God, Intelligent and Free, to whom men are responsible for their actions.

<sup>41</sup> See Part II. Chapter on "Original Sin."

<sup>42</sup> *Nature and Thought*, 1885, p. 218.

<sup>43</sup> A dormitory with nineteen beds made and one unmade, makes us just as certain of the activity of a bedmaker, as we should be if the twenty beds were made.

(1) The fact that the greatest minds in all ages were firm believers in a Personal God refutes the contention that such a belief is the mark of ignorance and low civilization. Our belief, and the belief of the vast majority of mankind, was the belief (a) of the ancient philosophers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, men to whom the modern world owes a debt that cannot easily be estimated; (b) of the astronomers, Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Leverrier, and Herschel; of the chemists, Berzelius, Dumas, Liebig, Chevreul, Davy, and Dalton; of the zoologist and geologist, Cuvier; of Schwann, the founder of the modern school of physiology; of the physicists, Ohm, Ampère, Galvani, Volta, Faraday, Joule, Clerk Maxwell, and Lord Kelvin; and of Pasteur, to whom humanity is so much indebted for having founded the study of bacteriology.<sup>44</sup> These are but a few of the names that might be mentioned. An exhaustive list would include the greatest statesmen, artists, poets, generals, inventors and scholars of every age.

(2) Atheism is found chiefly among (a) men who find the belief in a Personal God an irksome check on the indulgence of their passions,<sup>45</sup> and (b) students of physical science who, from a too intense concentration on their own particular line of work, which is concerned exclusively with material things, come to doubt all that is spiritual and moral, everything in fact, except those things to which the tests of the laboratory can be applied.

**Atheism is the Enemy of Human Nature.**—Atheism has already been refuted by our arguments for God's existence, but it can be refuted also by the fact that it is contrary to the well-being and nature of man:—

Society is necessary for man, because it is only as a member of society that man can attain to the normal development of his faculties; <sup>46</sup> and society can have no stable and happy existence

<sup>44</sup> For a much fuller list, see A. Kneller: *Christianity and the Leaders of Modern Science*.

<sup>45</sup> "Keep your soul," says Rousseau, "always in a condition in which it will desire that there is a God, and you will never doubt His existence," *Emile* IV.

<sup>46</sup> See Chap. III.

unless its members observe the moral law. The moral law requires justice and kindness in those who govern, and willing obedience and loyalty in their subjects; it forbids murder, lying, and every kind of wicked desire; it unites husband and wife in lifelong marriage; it binds the family together, and ensures the proper rearing of children. That society is necessary for man, and that its success depends on the observance of the moral law—these are truths which no sane man denies; they flash out from our very reason, and they cannot be rejected unless we surrender all trust in human intelligence, and confess that the discovery of truth is impossible. But, for the mass of mankind, the observance of the moral law, over any great stretch of time, is quite impossible, unless they believe in a Personal God, All-powerful, All-knowing, who will reward the good and punish the wicked. Belief in a Personal God, therefore, is a demand of our very reason and nature, and must be true.

It may be objected that in many countries to-day large sections of the population either deny or ignore the existence of God, and yet are well-behaved. We reply that these are people whose good habits have been derived from believing parents or from other Christian influences; that the momentum of Christianity by which they are now being carried along will inevitably spend itself in this or a future generation; and that their Atheism, which removes the only effective check on sin, will inevitably lead to moral degradation and the destruction of human society. Atheism is man's greatest enemy.

*Atheism has taken several forms, with which we deal in the following pages.*

### MATERIALIST EVOLUTION

Materialists hold that nothing exists but matter and its modifications. In ancient times, the chief materialists were Democritus of Abdera (d. 360 B.C.) and Epicurus (d. 270 B.C.); in modern times, the French Encyclopaedists, Diderot and d'Alembert, (c. 1750), Feuerbach (d. 1872), Moleschott (d. 1893), Tyndall (d. 1893), and E. Haeckel (d. 1919).

At the present day it is taught by some Russian scientists, writing under the watchful eyes of an atheistic government. In its existing form, Materialism takes its colour from the theory of Evolution. It is explained and refuted in the following paragraphs.

**Materialist Evolution says that the Laws of Nature may be due to blind forces inherent in Matter itself.**—We may express the doctrine in the following form: "Nothing exists, nothing ever

existed, but matter, *i.e.*, nothing but what has extension (length, breadth, and thickness), and can be perceived by the senses. The universe was once a fiery rotating nebula, *i.e.*, a cloud of glowing gas. Its molecules possessed those chemical and physical forces which, by action and interaction, have gradually evolved the great variety of things, with and without life, which we see in the world at the present day. Living creatures are, therefore, nothing more than cunning clocks. Thought and will are mere motions of matter."<sup>47</sup>

Under criticism this theory falls to pieces. Though it has been implicitly refuted by our proofs of God's existence, its defects and absurdities become still more manifest when we reflect on all that it involves.

*The Theory does not account for the Characteristics of the Original Nebula.*<sup>48</sup>—Granted for the moment that Materialist Evolution accounts satisfactorily for the universe as it now stands, what of the original matter itself? Its motion, its physical and chemical laws, the precise number of its particles and their relative position, all these characteristics with many more that might be mentioned, call for an explanation, because they of themselves offer none whatever.

(1) The motion of the original nebula, whether linear or angular, must have been in one definite direction: why in that particular direction rather than another? Our reason insists that the direction must have been determined by a Cause. Its velocity also was a definite velocity. Why that exact and particular velocity rather than another? Our reason again demands a Cause.

(2) The physical and chemical laws that governed the supposed development of the nebula, formed one particular set or system. But why that particular system rather than another? Furthermore, the very fact that matter obeyed that particular combination of laws demands an explanation, a cause: it points conclusively to the determining mind of the Lawgiver.

(3) The original nebula, with its particular complexity of properties, containing in germ, according to the Evolutionists, the present state of things, was itself evidently a particular nebula. It was made up of a definite number of particles in a definite arrangement. There was no absolute necessity for that par-

<sup>47</sup> The theory of Materialist Evolution is shown in Apologetics to be contrary to reason. The Catholic reader is of course aware that it is contrary to Divine Faith also.

<sup>48</sup> We here develop more fully a point on which we touched in the proof from dependence.

ticular number of particles, or for that particular arrangement of these particles. Fix your mind on any one atom or ultimate particle of the nebula: it gives no explanation of itself, or of its position with regard to the other particles. How did it come to hold the position it occupied? Why had it the particular particles near it that were actually around it and not a completely different set of neighbours?—The same questions may be asked of any other particle we choose to examine—And why was there the particular number of particles that actually formed the nebula and not a different number?

The original nebula therefore, does not explain itself; it is not by its nature a necessary thing; it calls for an explanation; it requires a cause. And we are back again to the Uncaused Cause, to the Universal Designer, to the Necessary Being.

*The Theory does not account for the Origin of Life and Reason.*—(a) The theory assumes quite gratuitously that life had its origin from non-living matter.<sup>49</sup> As the science of Biology advances, that unsupported theory is being more and more discounted. There is not a shred of evidence in its favour; on the contrary, it has been demonstrated that the living cell possesses a structure complicated beyond description, and that in its action it differs essentially from any material machine that we know of.<sup>50</sup>

(b) Even though the great chasm between living and lifeless matter were successfully bridged, there would still remain the greater chasms between sentient and non-sentient life, thinking and non-thinking. Spirit (as we shall see in Chapter II) differs absolutely from matter. The human soul by its ideas of truth

<sup>49</sup> A remarkable illustration of the truth that life can come only from life is found in the modern aseptic treatment of wounds. This treatment depends on two facts, *viz.*, (1) that if germs are permitted to get into a wound, they may propagate their kind, and so cause putrefaction, often with fatal results to the patient; (2) that if germs are entirely excluded from the wound, no corruption takes place, and the healing process is unimpeded.

<sup>50</sup> J. W. N. Sullivan, who died in 1937, was recognised by scientists as a competent reporter of their work. In *Science: A New Outline* (London: Nelson, 1935, p. 196), he says: "The chemical compounds that go to form a living cell are so complex that chemists have hardly yet begun to understand them. And the arrangement of these compounds within the cell, their mutual actions and reactions, and the way they conspire to maintain the amoeba (one of the simplest of living things) as an independent whole—all this is still a complete mystery. . . . So far as science has gone at present, a mechanical explanation of life has not been even approached." See also Part II (*Catholic Doctrine*), Chapter on "The Origin of Life," second paragraph.

and beauty, by its judgments of good and evil, exhibits itself as something completely different from a material thing. A mass of mere matter has in no way the power of a thinking being, and can never give itself these powers. The chasm between them is impassable.

(c) Each one of us possesses what we call self-consciousness, that is, a perception of his own acts, of his own existence, of his distinctness from the rest of the world. That consciousness began for us when our minds first awoke and commenced to take notice; it is so strictly a part of us as individuals that it could not have existed before we came into existence. Is it not then a wild absurdity to assert that such a thing existed long before we, as individuals, existed, that somehow or other it was tucked away by itself in some vibration of a fiery nebula?

And yet an extraordinary and unscientific reluctance to admit the existence of an Intelligent First Cause led some scientists of other days, such as Haeckel, to close their minds to sound reason, and to put forward the fantastic idea that all matter is alive and endowed with sensation and will.<sup>51</sup> Needless to say Haeckel produced not a particle of evidence for his contention. Even though admitted, it would be no sufficient explanation of the evolution of the world.

The "will" which he ascribed to primal matter was, on his own admission nothing but the "tendency to avoid strain," and "sensation," nothing better than an extremely attenuated and rudimentary power of perception. "Will" which is not will, and "sensation" which is far beneath the humblest sense-power within our knowledge, could not, of themselves, by any possibility, account for the free will of which we are all conscious, for the great products of the human intellect, and for the entire order of the world. It is a maxim in Philosophy, approved by common sense, that, without extrinsic aid, the less can never produce the greater: life, therefore, cannot come from dead matter, nor sentient life from non-sentient, nor rational life from irrational, except by the act of some power capable of breathing into matter these higher activities.<sup>52</sup>

Physicists admit that the universe is bound together in a close unity and that every particle affects, and is affected by, every other. To account satisfactorily for the existing order of the universe on the lines of Haeckel, each particle of matter should

<sup>51</sup> *Riddles of the Universe*, pp. 46, 64, 78. Scientists of his day looked with suspicion on much of Haeckel's work, because he was convicted of inventing evidence.

<sup>52</sup> For a full refutation of Haeckel, see Fr. Gerard's, *The Old Riddle and the Newest Answer*. Longmans, Green.

be capable of understanding the whole plan, and its own particular and ever-changing part in it. It should, moreover, be willing constantly to co-operate with every other particle. In such a supposition, which is not advanced by anyone, every particle of matter would be God—a conclusion which is fraught with countless absurdities, and is repellent both to our personal consciousness and to normal human reason.<sup>53</sup>

*On a General Survey the Theory offers us no more than a Series of Absurdities.*—Taking a general survey, see what the theory proposes: The nebula derived its heat and motion from nowhere. When it had cooled down, some fragment of it, by a process inconceivable to the modern chemist, made itself into the first living thing; that living thing got, somehow or other, the power of propagating itself, and of developing, under a law of unexplained origin, into the higher forms of life, and finally into man himself; poets, philosophers, scientists, and all their works, are, therefore, the offspring of a mere clod of earth, developing under the influence of a law which sprang out of nowhere, which was imposed by no lawgiver, which wrought and shaped with consummate skill, although there was not a glimmer of intelligence to guide it. The more this Mechanical or Materialist Evolution is examined, the more preposterous it seems. As a final and complete explanation of the world, it is a far greater absurdity than the statement that the picture of the Sistine Madonna was the work of a paint-pot. It was much in vogue among non-Catholics during the latter years of the nineteenth century; it was advocated by Tyndall<sup>54</sup> (d. 1893) and others as the full explanation of things, but, nowadays, the difficulties against its acceptance are admitted to be overwhelming.

*Note.*—Even if the fact of an unbroken line of evolution from nebula to man were established beyond doubt, the arguments for an Intelligent First Cause would remain unaffected. Nay more, if it could be proved that the world passed through this orderly and progressive development, like the seed that becomes the giant of the forest, then the argument for the necessity of a designer, lawgiver and perfecter, so far from losing force, would but receive an intensified cogency. The more vast and complicated the design, and the more intricate the interdependence of order, the clearer becomes the evidence for the mind of the Designer.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> See p. 46, on Pantheism.

<sup>54</sup> Belfast Address: *Collected Essays*.

<sup>55</sup> Professor Millikan says that the return to the belief in spiritual values is "the gift of modern science to the world." He has no

Only the briefest mention would have been made of the theory we have been discussing, but for the fact that it is taught in Soviet Russia, and is part of an active Communist propaganda abroad. Materialist evolution is quite dead. At the present time, no scientist of repute (unless under atheistic constraint) would venture to say that a merely material or mechanical explanation of the world is conceivable.

### PANTHEISM

The chief Pantheists were, in ancient times, Heraclitus (c. 500 B.C.), and the Stoics (a school of philosophy founded c. 350 B.C.); in modern times, Spinoza (*d.* 1677), Fichte (*d.* 1814), Hegel (*d.* 1831), Schelling (*d.* 1854), to-day its chief representative is Einstein. Pantheism, in the form in which it is commonly professed, is the direct opposite of Materialism. Materialism holds that nothing exists but matter; Pantheism, that nothing exists but spirit, God, the Absolute. Therefore, according to the Pantheists, all the phenomena of the universe, all contingent beings, are but manifestations of the Divine Nature; everything is one and the same. The logical issue of these principles is to remove all distinction between right and wrong, and to identify God with all sorts of different things—good and evil, living and lifeless, intelligent and unintelligent, present, past, and future. Pantheists do not shrink from such conclusions, and so set themselves in opposition to the common-sense of mankind: "Is it not ridiculous," says Fr. Boedder,<sup>56</sup> "to say that a cat is the same real being with the mouse which she devours, and with the dog that worries her, and that cat and dog alike are the same being with the master who restores peace between them? Is it not absurd to maintain that the criminal to be hanged is really the same being with the judge who pronounces sentence of death against him, and with the executioner who carries out this

sympathy with the scientists of other days who ordered God off the premises. He quotes the lines:

A firemist and a planet,  
A crystal and a cell,  
A jelly-fish and a saurian  
And caves where cave-men dwell;  
Then a sense of law and beauty,  
And a face turned from the clod—  
Some call it Evolution,  
And others call it God.

See J. W. N. Sullivan: *The Limitations of Science*, p. 237.

<sup>56</sup> *Natural Theology*, p. 114, 1891. See *Pantheism*, Matthews: C.T.S. Price 2d.

sentence? And who can accept the statement that the atheist is substantially the same being with God, whose existence he denies, and whose name he blasphemes?"<sup>57</sup> Briefly, Pantheism must be rejected—(1) because it is opposed to the infinite perfection of God: God cannot change; He cannot become greater or less; He cannot be identical with what is limited, whether it be matter or human intelligence; (2) because it destroys God's freedom by representing Him as a kind of intelligent machine with no power of choosing, and as compelled by His nature to produce all the happenings of the world, including the decisions of men; (3) because it is opposed to human consciousness, *i.e.*, to the knowledge which a man has of his own mind: every man is conscious of his individuality and of his free will; every man knows as clearly as he can know anything that he is distinct from the world around him, and that his will is free; if he is deceived in either of these, there is an end of certainty, and all reasoning becomes futile; further, if his will is not free, he is no longer responsible for his acts, and cannot be punished or rewarded for them, a conclusion opposed to the normal reason of mankind, and, therefore, unsound.

### AGNOSTICISM

The term "Agnostic" was invented by Huxley (*d.* 1895). According to Herbert Spencer (*d.* 1903), the chief exponent of Agnosticism, the final explanation of the world is to be found in "an infinite, eternal energy from which all things proceed—the ultimate Reality transcending human thought." This ultimate Reality is "unknown and unknowable."—We agree with the Agnostics that the "ultimate Reality," whom we call God, transcends human thought, in the sense that we cannot know Him adequately, but not in the sense that we can know nothing about Him. The Agnostics themselves, although they describe Him as "unknown and unknowable," profess to know

<sup>57</sup> Einstein, if he is a consistent Pantheist, must hold that he and the German Government which banished him for being a Jew—that he and the German scientists with whom he exchanged angry letters on the subject of his expulsion—that he and those who are unable to understand his theory of relativity—are all the one identical being. Emerson, the well known American writer, was a believer in Pantheism. In a stanza of one of his favourite poems, he represents the pantheistic god as solemnly identifying itself with several things. Andrew Lang parodied the stanza as follows: "I am the batsman and the bat,—I am the bowler and the ball.—The umpire, the pavilion cat,—The roller, pitch, and stumps and all."

that He is "an infinite, eternal energy from which all things proceed." If they know so much about Him, it is difficult to see how they can describe Him as either "unknown" or "unknowable." If by "infinite, eternal energy" they mean "infinite, eternal activity," their difference with us may be a mere matter of words. But if they mean energy of a merely physical kind—and this seems to be their meaning—then, they ascribe all the happenings of the world to motion of matter, and their position is that of the Materialists whom we have already refuted.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> The Agnostic practically rejects the use of inference as a means of arriving at truth. On its validity, see *Introduct. Ch.*; also *Agnosticism*, Fr. Gerard, S.J.: C.T.S. Price 2d.

## CHAPTER II

### THE HUMAN SOUL AS KNOWN BY PURE REASON

We can divide all living things into plants, animals, and men. Plants have the power of growth; animals have the power of growth and sensation; men have the power of growth, sensation, and reasoning. Every living thing has within itself the source of its own special power, the source of its own activity. That source, in plants and animals, is called the principle of life; in man, it is called the soul.

We can learn something of man's soul by observing what it enables him to do. We notice that, in contrast to the lower animals, he is not occupied entirely with what his senses tell him; he is not concerned solely with the quest for food and animal pleasures; in his perceptions and desires, he is not pinned down to merely material objects; he can rise above everything in the visible world, and pass into a higher region. He can form ideas of "truth," "justice," "wisdom," "eternity" and countless other such things which he could never have perceived with his eyes or ears or other sense-organs. He can think of God and His angels, and he can love them; yet God and His angels are utterly beyond anything his senses can show him; they are not material things with length, breadth, and thickness; they are living, intelligent beings with no extension; that is, they are spirits. Man's soul, therefore, being fitted by its nature for the contemplation of immaterial things and for intercourse with spiritual beings must itself be akin to them; it must be immaterial and spiritual; or, more plainly, it must be a spirit.

Not only is the soul a spirit, but it is also an immortal spirit. It is not an extended thing like the eye or the ear; it is not made up of parts that can be taken asunder.

It does not perish with the body: " 'Dust thou art, to dust returnest' was not spoken of the soul." After death it can continue to exercise its higher spiritual activity. It cannot be destroyed by any power except that of God Himself, the Master of existence; and, as the voice of nature confirmed by Revelation tells us, God will never annihilate the soul of man.

## A

## THE SOUL OF MAN IS SPIRITUAL

*Summary.*

Meaning of life and soul.

The soul of man gets its knowledge of material things through the senses, of immaterial things through the mind.

Man's will is free; how the will is exercised; definition of free-will.

How man differs from the lower animals; man is progressive, because he is rational; the lower animals are stationary, because irrational; man's work is marked by diversity, because his will is free; the work of animals is marked by uniformity, because they are not free.

Conclusion: the soul of man is spiritual, because it acts independently of matter and is self-directing. Therefore, it can exist apart from the body.

**The Soul or Principle of Life.**—We are familiar with the common distinction between things with life and things without life. By life we understand a special kind of activity which manifests itself in various ways, in growth, sensation, free movement, intelligence and reasoning. Plants grow and put forth leaf and flower; animals feel pain or pleasure, and possess freedom of movement; man grows like the plant, he has feeling and movement like the animal, and, in addition, he thinks and reasons. Every living thing—plant, animal, or man—has within itself the principle of its own activity. That principle we call "soul" or "principle of life."<sup>1</sup> Now, just as, by reading of the behaviour of a man whom we have never seen, we may learn much about his character, so, without directly perceiving the human soul, we may discover much about its nature by studying the acts that proceed from it.

<sup>1</sup> Strictly speaking, we may apply the word "soul" to the vital principle of plants and animals, but, in ordinary speech, we confine it to the vital principle of man.

**The Human Soul in Relation to Knowledge.**—Let us examine the activity of the human soul in relation to knowledge.

**THE KNOWLEDGE GIVEN BY THE SENSES.**—(a) Man is like a city with five gates through each of which messengers come with tidings of what is passing in the outer world. These gates are the five senses, and each sense allows some special kind of knowledge to pass in. Man has no other means than these of knowing anything about the external world. Through the eye he gets a knowledge of colour, through the ear of sound, through the nose of smell, through the palate of taste, and through the whole surface of the body, but particularly through the hands, he comes to know of the resistance, hardness, and softness of bodies and such like. (b) The eye is the organ, or instrument, of sight, the ear of hearing, and so with the rest. Each organ is a part of the body, or, for the sense of touch, the entire body, and is acted on only by things that are themselves bodies—that is, by things that are material, things that have length, breadth, and thickness. The eye cannot see an object, unless its retina be set in motion by the vibrating ether; the ear cannot hear a sound, unless its tympanum be struck by the air-waves; the nostrils cannot perceive the perfume of a flower, unless the minute fragrant particles actually penetrate to them; the palate cannot taste, the hand cannot feel without coming into direct contact with their objects.

**THE KNOWLEDGE GIVEN BY THE INTELLECT AND REASON.**—(a) Man knows many more things than the senses tell him. Let us take some simple examples. When we say that "Honesty is the best policy" we understand what we mean by "honesty," and yet we cannot have learned its import by the senses alone. We may be acquainted with an honest man, we may see him do an honest act, but "honesty" itself we have never seen nor heard, nor grasped in any way by the senses. So, too, with such words as "truth," "goodness," "justice" and all the other abstract terms. We may have heard a true statement, witnessed a good deed, listened to a just judgment, but "truth," "goodness," "justice" themselves we have never reached with any organs of sense. Or again, we say that "man is a rational animal." No man that we ever saw was without a particular height, complexion, manner, and yet we think of none of these things when we use the word "man." We are thinking of something common to all men, but which, by itself, we have never seen or perceived by any of the senses. (b) The senses allow knowledge of the outer world to pass into us. Some power within us raises the data supplied by the senses to a higher plane—a plane which the senses of themselves could never have reached. That power we variously call, intellect, reason or mind. These are but other names for the thinking or rational soul.

**The Human Soul in Relation to the Exercise of the Will.**—Let us now examine the activity of the soul in regard to free choice.

**MAN'S WILL IS FREE.**—(a) Man is conscious that his will is free, *i.e.*, that he performs actions over which he has a mastery. He is conscious of the power to choose whether he will or will not do a certain act. Every day, in matters trivial or important he is aware of the exercise of this freedom. When he chooses one course rather than another, he knows that he has acted freely and might have chosen differently. I am writing just now. I am sure that I can refrain from writing if I choose to do so. (b) If our wills were not free, "then counsels, exhortations, precepts, prohibitions, rewards and punishments would be meaningless."<sup>2</sup> When a man violates a law the State will punish him, not exactly because he has violated it—for it will not punish him, if he be insane—but because he has violated it wilfully and was free to refrain from doing so. We chastise a dog for disobedience, not because we regard him as a free agent and as responsible for his act, but because we wish him to associate disobedience with suffering.

When we have mastered the next paragraph, we shall find ourselves able to develop a third argument for the freedom of the will.

**HOW FREE WILL IS EXERCISED : ITS DEFINITION.**—(a) A man about to decide, let us suppose, whether he should study law or medicine, tries to take the measure of his aptitude for each of the two professions; he reckons up the years of preparation in each case, the means at his disposal, the chances of a successful career, and then, when he has fully deliberated, he decides—that is, he exercises his free will. So many points may not have to be considered in other cases, but the process is the same: there is first a deliberation, a weighing of advantages, and then a choice. But the choice is free. A man may select the lower instead of the higher advantage. (b) As the senses serve the intellect, so the intellect serves the will. It brings before the will, as before a master, the opposing advantages, and the will chooses between them. The advantages may be, and often are, of such a kind as to be manifestly imperceptible to the senses, *e.g.*, the advantages to the mind of studying astronomy rather than pure mathematics. Free-will may, therefore, be defined as *the power of choosing either of two courses represented as good by the intellect, i.e.*, as having at least some good aspect. No man ever chooses evil as such; if he chooses what is as a fact, evil, he does so

<sup>2</sup> St. Thomas: *S. T.*, I, q. 83, a. 1.

because he represents it to himself as good in some way.<sup>3</sup> Note that the intellect, in declaring a thing to be "good," sets it down as belonging to a large class of things. That class, to which the general name "good" is given, includes everything man can desire from mere bodily pleasure to the happiness of heaven and the vision of God himself. "Good," therefore, cannot attract the senses, for it cannot be perceived by them. It *can* attract the will. The will has for its object the "good" presented to it by the intellect.

**Note.**—The will of its nature is attracted by what is "good," and is repelled by what is "evil." As we have already conveyed, we take "good" to mean, in this connection, "anything which we believe will bring us happiness," and "evil," "anything which we believe will bring us unhappiness."

If we were offered immediate, perfect, and eternal happiness, our will would not be free to refuse it; nor indeed could our intellect in such a case commit the absurdity of proposing an alternative. This immediate, perfect, and eternal happiness, which is attainable only after death, is what we call "the perfect good." The "good" things of our present life are imperfect; they are all mixed with evil, and, because of this very fact, they leave the will free to accept them or reject them. Let us take two examples: (1) A young man is thinking of becoming a doctor. His intellect represents the profession as "good" (because it is an honourable and beneficent way of living, etc.), and at the same time as "evil" (because of the long years of preparation, the severity and danger of the work attached to it, etc.). His will is attracted by the "good," and is repelled by the "evil." It is not forced to accept the "good," because the "good" is mixed with "evil"; it is not forced to reject the "evil," because the evil is mixed with "good"; therefore it is free. (2) A man is deliberating whether he will obey God's commandments or not. His intellect puts before his will the "good" of obedience to God, *viz.*, great peace of mind in this life, and perfect happiness after death; but his intellect also puts before his will the "evil" of obedience, *viz.*, the hardships which he must face, the checking of his passions, etc. As in the other case, his will is not forced to accept the "good" or reject the "evil"; therefore, it is free.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The evil object is viewed "*sub specie boni*," as philosophers say, *i.e.*, under a good aspect, or as having the appearance of goodness. That evil things can be so regarded is clear from experience, and, in fact, they must necessarily be represented as in some way good in order to be capable of being an object of desire for the will.

<sup>4</sup> St. Thomas: *S. T.* I-II, q. 10, a. 2.



**How Man Differs from the Lower Animals.—MAN IS RATIONAL. THE LOWER ANIMALS ARE IRRATIONAL.** Man has the faculty of reason, or the power of deducing new truths from those which he already knows, of passing from the known to the unknown. He is constantly pushing out the frontiers of knowledge; he adds new sciences to those already existing; he invents and perfects implements and machinery, rejecting the old for the new. The lower animals, on the other hand, are confined within the same circle of actions.<sup>5</sup> Bees are to-day just as they were in the time of Moses and Aristotle; spiders, as they were in the days of the Pharaohs; birds build their nests now as they have always built them, in the same shape and with similar materials; the most sagacious of the lower animals, the horse and the dog, which have been in contact with man for countless centuries, exhibit not the slightest progress. The lower animals are not inventive.<sup>6</sup> They are held in a groove from which they cannot escape. They are stationary, they are enclosed within fixed narrow limits, because they are irrational. Man is progressive, because he is rational,<sup>7</sup> because he sees that a general idea, e.g., "house" may take an infinite number of forms.

**MAN IS FREE. THE LOWER ANIMALS ARE NOT.** Men apply their minds to an infinity of subjects, and pass from one occupation to another; a man may begin life as a labourer and end as an artist or a philosopher. The lower animals, on the other hand, are pinned down to one set of actions. They do not possess free-will; therefore, the characteristic of their work is uniformity.<sup>8</sup> Man does possess free-will; therefore, the characteristic of his work is diversity.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The variations due to change of habitat, etc., are of little importance.

<sup>6</sup> This is universally admitted. The rudest implement, discovered deep down in the earth, is accepted by all as conclusive evidence of the work of man.

<sup>7</sup> Fabre, the chief authority on entomology, shows by many examples that the "intelligence" which insects exhibit does not reside in the insects themselves. Take the instance of the *ammophila hirsuta*, details of whose actions are given on p. 15.

<sup>8</sup> We admit, of course, that, in the same species of lower animals some individuals behave more sagaciously than others, but such diversity is as nothing compared with the diversity we observe in the work of man.

<sup>9</sup> In the lower animals the absence of free will is a consequence of the fact that they are irrational. It may be objected that a hunting dog, e.g., sometimes appears to deliberate and come to a decision as to which of two trails it is to follow. But the appearance of deliberation is due simply to the uncertainty of the animal as to which is the stronger trail. When the stronger trail is discovered, the dog follows it of necessity. The dog's action is determined from without. Man, on the other hand, in exercising free-will, determines himself. He

**Conclusion; The Soul is Spiritual.**—The soul is spiritual, i.e., it possesses activity, but has no extension and is independent of matter in its existence, and to some extent, in its operations. (1) The soul is spiritual, because some of its actions are independent of matter. It acts independently of matter, because it forms abstract and universal ideas, e.g., "honesty," "truth," "goodness," "man." Such ideas cannot be formed by the senses. They can be formed only by a faculty that resembles themselves in being immaterial. If the soul were a material thing and had extension like the senses, it could never pass beyond the pictures of concrete things with their definite shape, colour, hardness, etc. It could never deduce conclusions from known truths. It could never get a notion of God, or desire Him above all things in the visible world.

(2) The soul is spiritual, because it moves and directs itself, as it does in the exercise of free-will, while matter moves only as it is moved: matter gets its motion and the direction of its motion from without. While the soul is united to the body, the senses supply it with the materials from which it derives its knowledge, but, in its life and action, it is as independent of the senses as the painter is of the men who supply him with his brushes and colours. Since it acts independently of the body, it can exist even when the body perishes, and can continue to seek the truth and to love the good.

#### OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

**Objection.**—(1) "The mind cannot act, if the brain be injured. Therefore, brain and mind are one and the same, and what we describe as acts of the mind are merely movements of the brain."

**REPLY.**—(1) By way of retort or turning the argument: "The violinist cannot play, if the violin be broken. Therefore the violinist and the violin are one and the same, and what we describe as acts of the violinist are merely movements of the violin."

may follow at pleasure the less instead of the greater advantage. Again, the dog's choice is a sensuous choice and must be distinguished from the intellectual choice of free-will. The free-will, even when exercised in choosing between different kinds of food, is acting on the information given it by the intellect. The intellect represents each of the two kinds of food as "good." "Good," however, is a universal term like the word "man." It denotes a something which the senses cannot perceive. It belongs to the intellect alone. See *The Powers and Origin of the Soul*, and *Reason and Instinct*, by Fr. Northcote, C.T.S. Price 2d. each.

(2) The conclusion cannot be sound. The brain is matter. Abstract ideas, reasoning, and free-will, are immaterial things. They have no extension. They are utterly distinct from matter, and cannot be identified with it or with any of its states, whether rest or motion.

(3) The conclusion does not follow. In the living man, soul and body are most intimately united together. Every act of the mind, even every act which is beyond the power of matter, is accompanied, or preceded, by some act or movement of the brain, which is an organ or instrument of the whole man. Hence, in the ordinary course of nature, thought becomes impossible, if the brain be seriously injured, or, if, as in sleep and unconsciousness, its proper activity be impeded. But does this make thought identical with a movement of the brain? By no means, as the following illustration will show:—Suppose a lighted candle to be set in a lantern with a rather dim pane of glass. The candle, though burning with uniform brightness, will show only as much of its light as the glass allows to pass through. If the glass be thoroughly blackened no light will be seen. As long, therefore, as the candle remains in the lantern, its lighting-power will depend on, but obviously will not be identical with, the transparency of the glass. Now, the soul may be compared to the lighted candle, the body to the lantern, and the brain to the glass. While the soul is in the body, it cannot think unless the brain be in a suitable condition.<sup>10</sup>

**Objection.**—(2) “It is assumed that animals have merely material souls or principles of life. Is it not possible that, unknown to us, their souls may have spiritual powers also?”

**REPLY.**—To correct a possible misapprehension, the principle of life in a plant or an animal is not material in the sense that it can be seen or felt like a stone; it is a certain kind of activity and has no extension. However, it is correctly called material in the sense that its work has to do exclusively with material things; that it has no powers higher than those of the senses, and that it perishes with the body to which it is united. The possibility that the soul of an animal may be spiritual like ours is like the possibility that stones may be alive without our knowing it, or the possibility that there may be a sewing-machine and a vase of wild-roses at the centre of the moon. Such imaginings do not deserve consideration, because there is not an iota of evidence to support them. If the lower animals had spiritual souls like ours, they would be human persons with the

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Bishop Vaughan: *Life after Death*. London: Washbourne.

same right to their lives that we have, and to kill them for food would be to commit the sin of murder. But observe that the proof of the spirituality of the human soul rests on our knowledge of ourselves and our acts, and would not be weakened even by the most extravagant concessions as to the powers of the lower animals.

**Objection.**—(3) “It would seem reasonable to suppose that man has more souls than one; that he has three distinct souls, each doing its own work—a vegetable soul for growth, an animal soul for seeing, hearing, and feeling, and a spiritual soul for thinking and reasoning.”

**REPLY.**—(a) No biologist would give the suggestion a moment's thought. In every living thing, whether it be plant, animal or man, the different parts or powers co-operate closely with one another for the welfare of the whole, which shows that they must be under the government of a single vital principle. To the biologist, there is no more perfect example of unity than the unity which he finds in each individual living thing.

(b) A man's consciousness—that is, his knowledge of his inward states and acts—tells him that he is one and the same person who thinks and feels. Therefore, he has but one soul for thinking and feeling; but if his soul can combine spiritual with animal powers, there is no difficulty in ascribing vegetative powers to it also.

(c) If a man had three separate souls, he would need a fourth soul to watch over them and act on them so that all three would work together harmoniously for his common welfare; but this fourth soul could not act on the others and direct each in the performance of its proper task, unless it possessed the three powers which we ascribe to the one human soul. Thus, the suggestion is shown to be useless.

## B

### THE SOUL OF MAN IS IMMORTAL

**The Soul is Immortal.**—(1) We have proved that the destruction of the body does not involve the destruction of the soul. The soul, unlike the body, is immaterial. It is not made up of parts distinct and separable. Therefore, after death, it cannot perish of itself or through the agency of any creature. God alone can destroy it.

(2) Since the desire of perfect happiness is common to all men, it must spring from human nature itself, and must have been implanted therein by God, whose wisdom and justice exclude the

possibility of its universal frustration. Perfect happiness, therefore, is the Divinely appointed destiny of man, and must be attainable by all who act conformably to the Divine will. But perfect happiness in this world is beyond the reach of man. There must, therefore, be a future life in which it can be found.

(3) Conscience implies the existence of a Supreme Lawgiver who will reward the good and punish the wicked. It cannot be said that, in this life, the good and the wicked are uniformly treated according to their deserts. It happens only too often that the cunning malefactor succeeds in winning wealth and position, and that he ends his life untroubled by remorse and with a minimum of suffering, while the just man lives in toil and penury, and dies after a protracted agony, or freely sacrifices his life in the heroic discharge of duty. The justice of God, therefore, demands that there should be a future state in which this inequality is redressed.

(4) We are certain, then, that there is a life beyond the grave. But is it the Divine will that that life should endure for all eternity? Shall the good be granted but a limited period of happiness, undisturbed by the thought of approaching annihilation? No; their happiness must be of unlimited duration, and must be known to them as such, otherwise it would not be perfect happiness. And as for the wicked, when we consider the infinite majesty of God and His infinite claims to the obedience and gratitude of His creatures, and when we recall their deliberate malice and rejection of grace in this life, we cannot but recognise that their eternal punishment involves no incongruity. It must, however, be admitted that the proof from reason of the Immortality of the Soul, particularly in its reference to the wicked, presents difficulties which cannot be satisfactorily solved without the aid of revelation.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The doctrine that the damned suffer for ever will appear less difficult when we understand that their will is immovably fixed in hatred of God, and that their annihilation would necessitate the annihilation of the Saints in Heaven as well. If we could know the truth fully, we should perceive that God's act in annihilating a soul would in some way be an offence against His justice, and therefore a contradiction of His nature. See Part II, "The Last Things."

## CHAPTER III

### NATURAL RELIGION. ITS INSUFFICIENCY. PROBABILITY OF REVELATION

#### Summary.

- I. Natural religion, defined. Its duties discoverable by the unaided reason. Man has duties:
  - A. Individually and socially, to God;
  - B. To himself;
  - C. To his neighbour.
- II. A full and accurate knowledge of natural religion, practically unattainable without revelation:
  - (a) Man, unaided by revelation, has, as a fact, failed to acquire it;
  - (b) Its discovery would be fruitless through defective teaching-authority and human weakness.
- III. The goodness and mercy of God lead us to the assurance that the necessary revelation has been made.

**I. Natural Religion. Individual and Social Duties.**—Natural religion is the sum of man's duties in so far as they can be ascertained by the light of reason alone.<sup>1</sup> From the truths already established, we infer that man has duties to God, to himself, and to his neighbour.

**A.—INDIVIDUALLY, MAN HAS DUTIES TO GOD.**—(a) In God he recognises a Being of supreme excellence, deserving to be loved above all for His own sake. (b) To God he owes his entire being and its preservation at every instant. (c) To God he owes all his faculties, or powers of acting: every throb of his heart, every glance of his eye, every thought of his mind, even the most trivial movements of soul or body are possible only with Divine aid or co-operation. (d) To God he owes his sense of right and wrong, and his sure hope that a good life will bring him everlasting happiness after death. Man, therefore, perceiving his own in-

<sup>1</sup> Supernatural Religion is the sum of man's duties as defined by Divine Revelation. Other definitions: Natural Religion is the worship of God prescribed by reason alone; Supernatural Religion is the worship of God prescribed by Revelation.

feriority and his total dependence on God, is bound to acknowledge His supreme excellence, to recognize Him as his Creator, Preserver, and Sovereign Ruler. He is bound to love Him more than all else, to love Him with his whole heart and soul and mind; he is bound to thank Him and pray to Him as his Benefactor; to honour Him as the source of every perfection, to obey Him as his Master, and to conceive and express sorrow for the offences he commits against Him; in a word to offer Him the supreme homage of adoration.

**SOCIALLY, MAN HAS DUTIES TO GOD.**—(a) A society is a group of individuals united for a common purpose under a common authority.<sup>2</sup> The Family is a society for the rearing of children, under the authority of their parents. The State is a number of families united under one government for the temporal well-being of all. (b) The Family is necessary for the very life of man, the State for his normal development. It is only in a well-ordered state that any degree of civilization is possible: its members are enabled to provide more conveniently, by division of labour, for the necessities and comforts of life, and to promote by intercourse and mutual training the development of mind and heart. Since society, whether it consist of the Family or the State, is necessary for man, it follows that society is a Divine institution. It is a creature of God, indebted to Him for its existence and preservation, and for the benefits it receives; it can think and act through its governing authority; it, therefore, resembles a living person; it is conscious of its debt to God, and is under a like obligation to discharge it.<sup>3</sup>

Divine worship, naturally, in the case of individuals, necessarily, in the case of societies, must take some external, sensible form. Man, obeying the instincts God has given him, assumes a reverential posture at prayer, sets apart times and places for public worship, orders special ceremonies and rites, and appoints ministers to take charge of them.

**B.—MAN HAS DUTIES TO HIMSELF.**—God has given him his life and his faculties for use, not for abuse. He is, therefore, bound to take reasonable care of his life, to promote the health of mind and body, to be industrious, sober, and chaste.

<sup>2</sup> This definition is sufficient for our present purpose. A more exact definition is given in chapter VIII ("The Church").

<sup>3</sup> Note that, even from the point of view of worldly advantage, the State should show individual citizens the good example of respect for religion. For, without the aid of religion, the State cannot secure permanently the two conditions on which its existence depends. Those conditions are (1) that the citizens deal justly with one another; (2) that they be loyal to the common authority.

**C.—MAN HAS DUTIES TO HIS NEIGHBOUR.**—Since social life is necessary to man, and since social life is impossible without truthfulness, justice, and obedience to lawful authority, it follows that these virtues, and all others akin to them, are prescribed by our nature, and, therefore, by God.

But even though man were not made for social life his reason would tell him that his neighbour, as being a rational creature and under God's protection, had the same rights as himself to his life, to his property, and to his good name.

*The duties of Natural Religion may be summed up in the three great commands which God conveys to man through his reason.*

- (1) Honour God.
- (2) Subdue your passions.
- (3) Do as you would be done by.

*In Natural Religion man would avoid evil and do good for a twofold motive, viz., the love of God and the fear of His judgment after death.*

**II. Without a Revelation, a Full Knowledge of Natural Religion is Practically Unattainable.**—

**REVELATION.**—A revelation, literally "a drawing back of the veil," is a communication of truth made directly by God to man. It is obvious that God can communicate directly with us, since it was He who gave us the power to communicate directly with one another. In reasoning out the chief truths of Natural Religion, we had the advantage of knowing them beforehand through God's revelation to us: we set about the solution of a series of questions, the answers to which we knew in advance.<sup>4</sup> But how should we have fared without this special help? No better than those of whom we shall presently speak.

**MEN UNAIDED BY REVELATION HAVE, AS A FACT, FAILED TO ACQUIRE A FULL KNOWLEDGE OF NATURAL RELIGION.**—That man without special light from God cannot arrive at a full knowledge of Natural Religion is evident from the failure of pagan nations and pagan sages. Among all the peoples of antiquity, the Jews alone excepted, the grossest errors prevailed. The Divine power in whose existence they believed was divided, they fancied, among two or more divinities. Their gods were at feud with one another; they were the patrons of theft, lying, and

<sup>4</sup> The chief duties of man according to the law of nature are expressed in the Ten Commandments, the third excepted, but only because of its special designation of the Sabbath. Under Natural Religion, men would be bound to set apart a day from time to time for the public worship of God, but the selection of particular days would be at the choice of each State or Community.

every disgraceful crime, and were offered a form of worship which in certain instances consisted of nothing less than public immorality. Men with such notions of the Deity had no fixed and unalterable standard of right and wrong. There was a universal belief in a future state, but the notion prevailed among cultured peoples, particularly the Greeks, that even for good men life after death was much less happy than life on earth, while less civilized races contemplated an endless career of low, sensual enjoyment. A study of the general character of religion and morality among the pagans of the present day leads us to similar conclusions.

Plato (428-347 B.C.), one of the master-minds of the world, favours in his ideal state a community of wives and the destruction of weakly and deformed children.<sup>5</sup> His great disciple, Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), who systematized so many branches of learning, held the same lax views as to the care of infant life; he allowed the exhibition in the temples of lewd figures of the gods; he had no proper conception of human dignity, and regarded slaves as mere beasts who could be tortured or put to death by their masters without injustice.<sup>6</sup> It is true, however, that the moral code of the Roman Stoic philosophers, influenced possibly by the inspired books of the Jews, was remarkable for its elevation and purity, but still, Seneca, one of the leaders of the school, was emphatic in his approval of suicide, while Marcus Aurelius, its last and most perfect representative, hesitates, now approving, now condemning.

BECAUSE OF DEFECTIVE AUTHORITY AND HUMAN WEAKNESS, A FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE NATURAL LAW WOULD BE FRUITLESS FOR THE MASS OF MANKIND.—Through the promptings of nature itself, all men may know of the existence of God, or some Supreme Power, and their responsibility to Him. But the other truths and precepts of Natural Religion, the unity of God and the worship He should receive, the duties of man to himself and to his neighbour, all depend on reasoning so manifestly abstruse as to be within the reach of only the exceptional few, of rare talent and ample leisure. Let us make the supposition, which, as a fact, has never been realized, that in some community a gifted man of this description appears, that he masters all the truths of Natural Religion, that he devotes his life to the instruction of his fellows, and that he has no rival in ability to challenge his conclusions and impair his influence. Still his mission would fail for want of authority.

A man tempted to grievous wrong against God, against himself or his neighbour, would say: "This is forbidden by one liable

<sup>5</sup> *Rep.*, Book v.

<sup>6</sup> *Pol.* iv. (vii) 16; 17, i. 5.

to err like myself. All his reasoning may be false. I will not listen to mere man. I would listen to God but God, has not spoken." But would he listen to God? Taking him as representing the mass of mankind, we are certain that the external help of a revelation would not of itself suffice to keep him in the straight path of duty. So dark is his understanding, so weak is his will, so strong are his passions, that he would need a further help from God, an internal help which would open his mind to the truth and enable him to beat down the evil influences within him.

**III. The Probability of Revelation and other Divine Help.**—Man as we have seen, suffers from a moral sickness; his mind is dark, his will is weak; he is practically incapable of learning the Natural Law, and practically incapable of fulfilling it. But the goodness and mercy of God lead us to the assurance that He would come to the rescue of the plague-stricken members of the human race; that He would address to them a word that none could gainsay; that He would leave them in no doubt regarding the immortality of the soul and the judgment after death; that He would enlighten them as to all their natural duties; that He would establish among them a perpetual living authority to speak and teach in His name throughout all ages;<sup>7</sup> and that in addition to this outward help He would give a constant inward help also, so that men might perceive the truth and have the strength to live up to it.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Socrates, a few hours before his death, while trying to overcome the difficulties of his friends against the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, urged them in gentle and pathetic language to forget their Greek exclusiveness, and to seek for enlightenment not only among their own race but outside the bounds of their vaunted civilization; and one of his disciples, Simmias, suggested that perhaps they might succeed in discovering "some divine word," some divine revelation, on which they could place implicit reliance. It seemed as though God, the kind Father of all, had evoked the expression of these thoughts, so that the admirers of Socrates in a later generation might be prepared to see in the Infallible Church which came to birth in despised Judaea the perfect fulfilment of their master's hope (See Plato: *Phaedo*, 78 A, 85 D).

An unbeliever might object that a good God would never have created such a poor thing as man, so fickle and so prone to evil. The answer is that God did not do so. The first man He created is responsible for the blight that fell on the human race (See Part II of this work).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Newman: *Grammar of Assent*, p. 423.

## SECTION II

## CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

## INTRODUCTORY

**God has given a Revelation to the whole Human Race**

We recorded in the preceding pages the failure of the keenest minds among the pagans to arrive at a clear and accurate knowledge of our duties to God, to ourselves, and to our neighbours; we saw that even if they had succeeded in their search, they would have been unable, through want of authority in themselves and moral weakness in their hearers, to get the mass of mankind to live up to their teaching; and, arguing from the mercy of God, we drew the conclusion that He would help human insufficiency, that He would speak to all men and be their teacher, and that He would work on their minds and hearts so that they would see the truth and obey His precepts. Our inference as we shall see, was correct.

**The Nature of the Revelation**

God might have revealed to man nothing more than the truths and precepts of natural religion. By believing those truths and by obeying those precepts, man would be entitled to very great happiness after death. Freed from all temptation and misery, he would derive an intense pleasure from the contemplation of God, as imaged in His creatures. But God himself would be hidden from his eyes. God would seem to dwell in some separate world from which he was excluded. God would not be his friend and intimate.

In the revelation which God, *as a fact*, has given us, He has not only made certain for us the whole content of

natural religion, but He has told us many truths which no human mind could have ever discovered, and He has appointed for us a destiny which no creature without His special aid could win. He has promised that we shall see Him as He is with all His perfections, that we shall live with Him for ever and taste of His very own happiness. No human tongue can tell the value of His gift to us, for the gift is God himself. In His revelation to us therefore the Bounty of God shines forth no less clearly than His Mercy: His Mercy has healed our wounds and restored us to health, while His Bounty has clothed us and enriched us; it has raised us, poor creatures of earth, from beggary to royalty; it has made us sons of the Most High, destined for unending happiness in the home of our Father.

**Christ, the Bearer of the Revelation**

**THE BEARER OF THE REVELATION.**—Who was the bearer of this revelation? Who was the messenger of God to all mankind? None other than His own Divine Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord, true God, true Man. Born of the Virgin Mary, He lived and laboured and taught among us, and He died nailed to a cross.

By partial revelations delivered to the Patriarchs of old and to the Jewish people God had prepared the way for the full and universal revelation which He was to give us through His Son; God had foretold many things about Him so that when He came He might be known. He came to banish the dark ignorance that filled the souls of men. He was the Light of the world, and He still is its Light and will ever be so.

[When we pass on to the next Section, "Catholic Apologetics," we shall find that Christ founded a Church to continue His teaching. He promised it His unfailing support and guidance: He promised that it would last till the end of the world; and since He is God Omnipotent, no power of earth or hell can defeat His promise. Placed

in the world by Him to be the one and only Light that shows us the way to eternal happiness, it can have no rival: all other so-called churches or religions must be false.]

#### OUTLINE OF THE PROOF IN CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

The course of the argument is set forth in the following summaries of Chapters IV-VII. Chapters IV and V contain introductory matter.

##### § 1

Chapter IV. *Miracles and Prophecies are Sure Signs that a Revelation is Genuine.*—A teacher makes good his claim to speak to us as the messenger of God, if he has the support of miracles and prophecies. Miracles and prophecies in the sense in which we use these words, are above the capacity of creatures. It is only God who has the power to work a miracle; it is only God who has the knowledge required for the deliverance of a prophecy.

Chapter V. *The following Books of the New Testament, viz., The Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of Saint Paul tell us the truth about Christ.*—For the purpose of our argument, we abstract from the inspired character of the books we have named: we regard them as merely secular records of past events. By applying the tests which we would employ in deciding the value of any work on history, we arrive at the conclusion that their account of Christ is true and must be accepted by anyone with an impartial mind.

##### § 2

Chapter VI. *We learn from Genuine History that the Man Christ Claimed to be God.*—In the historical

works we have mentioned, the man Christ appears before us as a teacher of religion. He does not represent Himself to be merely a messenger of God. He claims to be a Divine Person; He claims to be God. He expresses His claim in word and act. He speaks as only God could have spoken; He acts as only God could have acted.

Chapter VII. *By Miracles and Prophecies Christ proved His claim to be God.*—In proof of His claim to be God, Christ worked miracles, and prophesied events which came to pass. He could not have done so if His claim were false: God would not have lent His divine power and knowledge to an impostor. Therefore, He must be what He claimed to be. He must be a Divine Person; He must be God.

**Note.**—In our study of Christian and Catholic Apologetics, we shall find that the revelation which God gave men through Christ is supported, not only by a single miracle or prophecy, but by many miracles and prophecies whose cumulative effect should compel conviction. It is supported by the great web of Messianic prophecies; it is supported by all the miracles of Christ during His life-time on earth, and by the crowning miracle of His Resurrection from the dead. It is supported by the miraculous spread of Christianity and by the constancy of its martyrs. It is supported by the miraculous nature and vitality of the Church which has survived innumerable dangers, and lives in undiminished vigour.

As to the nature of our proof, the reader is referred to the paragraph on this subject in the Introduction to this work. The proof that God has declared Christ to be a Divine Person is conclusive; it is based on evidence so complete, so telling as to leave not the smallest shadow of doubt on any unbiassed mind. On evidence of far less compelling force, men have risked the wealth and lives of millions.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE SIGNS OF REVELATION: MIRACLES AND PROPHECY

*Summary.*

How Revelation may be known ;—Miracles and Prophecies.

Replies to the following objections against miracles :

- A. That the evidence for miracles is necessarily unsatisfactory.
- B. That miracles are opposed to physical science.
- C. That alleged miracles need not be referred to Divine authorship.

**How a Revelation may be known.**—We find certain men claiming that God has given them a revelation, and that He has commissioned them to speak in His name to the whole human race. We can know whether a teacher has been sent by God (1) if his doctrine be not unworthy of its alleged Author ; *e.g.*, it should not be ambiguous or trivial ;<sup>1</sup> and (2) if it be confirmed by miracles or prophecies.

**Miracles.**—A miracle is an occurrence outside the course of nature, perceptible to the senses, and explicable only as the direct act of God himself.<sup>2</sup> A miracle is obviously

<sup>1</sup> We speak of conditions whose fulfilment can be recognised by ordinary men. Hence, we prefer to put the first condition as above, rather than say that the doctrine should be noble, elevating, agreeable to the reason, satisfying to human aspirations, and beneficial to society. —On the subject of this Chapter, read *The Question of Miracles*, by Rev. G. H. Joyce, S. J., Manresa Press.

<sup>2</sup> The miracles of which we speak in this work may be more correctly called "evidential" miracles. Being perceptible to the senses, they can be known to all men without exception. An instance of a "non-evidential" miracle would be the change of bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood ; the change is not perceptible to the senses ; it is known only through faith, and therefore cannot be used as evidence of God's intervention.

a clear proof of the Divine origin of the doctrine *in support of which it is wrought* ; it is God's *positive testimony* that the doctrine is true, and God cannot testify to a lie.

The *possibility* of miracles cannot be denied by anyone who admits the existence of a personal God : He who fixed the course of nature can alter, suspend or supersede it at His pleasure. The question then to be decided in connection with miracles is not whether God *could* work a miracle, but whether, in a given case, a miracle has occurred or not. In other words, the question of miracles is a question of evidence.

In examining a particular miracle for its apologetic value we have to consider three points :

(1) Did the alleged occurrence actually take place ? This reduces itself to an inquiry into the competence and veracity of the witnesses : Did they actually observe what they report ? Can their words be trusted ?

(2) Was the occurrence positively outside the course of nature or above its power ? Without knowing all about nature we can still be absolutely certain that there are occurrences which are outside its course and above its power ; we know, for instance, that nature cannot fill up and heal a great wound in a moment of time, or raise a dead man to life ; hence when we find that any such thing has actually taken place, we can assert with the most firm conviction that it must have been due to the direct action of God himself, who, when He wills, can override the methods of nature and quite exceed its power.

(3) Was the miracle worked in proof of a certain doctrine ? was it clear that the worker explicitly or implicitly wrought the miracle in proof of the truth of his words ? or did the circumstances clearly point to connection between the miracle and the doctrine ? This again is a question of the competence and veracity of the witnesses.

It is manifest that under these three headings the evidence in favour of miracles can be so thoroughly



tested and controlled that we can arrive at certainty both regarding the miraculous character of the occurrence and regarding its confirmation of a doctrine.

**Prophecies.**—Prophecy also gives us a conclusive proof of Divine Authority. Prophecy is the definite prediction of events which depend for their occurrence on the exercise of free will, whether it be the free will of God or of rational creatures, and which are of such a nature as to be beyond the possibility of guess or human prevision. God alone can know beforehand what a free agent will do and all the particular circumstances of his act. A prophecy, therefore, if fulfilled, is as conclusive of Divine Authority as a miracle. The former can originate only in God's Omniscience, the latter only in His Omnipotence.

**Objections.**—A. *The evidence for miracles is unsatisfactory.*—

1. "It is contrary to experience for miracles to be true, but it is not contrary to experience for testimony to be false. That the evidence is false will always be more probable than that the miracle occurred" (Hume's Objection). Reply: (a) It is never probable that the evidence which the Church requires for a miracle is false. The evidence is of such a kind, that, if we refuse to accept it, we can never believe anything that men tell us, and must reject all historical truth. This answer suffices, but a few further remarks may be useful. (b) Our experience is our knowledge of what we ourselves have seen and observed. When the first aeroplane appeared, those who had not seen it for themselves would be justly regarded as unreasonable men, if they were to say: "This machine is entirely outside our experience. It is therefore more probable that the evidence for its existence is false." Why would they be regarded as unreasonable? Firstly, because they reject the word of thoroughly reliable witnesses. Secondly, because they do not allow for the fact that an inventor may, at any time, construct a machine which will do a work outside all previous experience. Apply the illustration to the case of miracles. A man who refuses to believe in a properly attested miracle is unreasonable; firstly, because he rejects the word of reliable witnesses; secondly, because he makes no allowance for the possibility that God, the Author of Nature, may, at His own good pleasure, perform a work of which men had never had previous experience.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> This objection made some stir in its day, but has now been abandoned except by the unthinking.

2. "The advance of physical science, and the deeper insight it has given us into the secrets of nature, has been fatal to credulity in every form, to belief in charms, magic, withcraft, miracles, and astrology. The Christian miracles belong to the childhood of the world, when men were prepared to believe almost anything" (The ordinary rationalist view). Reply: (a) Several eminent scientists of the present day believe firmly in spiritism, which does not differ appreciably from magic or withcraft. It is, therefore, incorrect to say that credulity, as the rationalists term it, is a thing of the past. (b) The early Christians were by no means credulous in respect of the greatest and the all-important miracle of Christianity, viz., the Resurrection of Christ; they were most unwilling to believe it; they accepted it, as we shall see further on, only when overwhelmed by the evidence. But is it true to say that the age in which they lived was the childhood of the world? Not at all. Christianity appeared at a time when civilization was most advanced; it was embraced by men adorned with all the intense intellectual culture of Greece and Rome, by men who were specially fitted for the task of sifting evidence and appraising its value. It was embraced by them because they were convinced that the Resurrection of Christ, its basic miracle, was a fact.

B.—*Miracles are opposed to physical science.*—1. "Physical science claims that nature acts uniformly. The doctrine of miracles says it does not. Therefore, if we believe in miracles, we must reject physical science." Reply: We do not differ with scientists as to the uniformity of nature. We hold with them the general law of nature that the same physical cause in the same circumstances will produce the same effect, but we maintain that, when God intervenes, the circumstances are no longer the same; a new power has been introduced. His intervention is of rare occurrence and does not invalidate the work of the scientist whose conclusions are concerned only with normal cases.

2. "But an interference by God with the course of nature may involve a violation of the Law of the Conservation of Energy. If, e.g., the stones leave the quarry at the mere word of the miracle-worker and make themselves into a house, this must happen through the expenditure of some energy that did not previously exist." Reply: (a) The Law of the Conservation of Energy, it is hardly necessary to say, has not been proved for the whole universe, but only for isolated systems.<sup>4</sup> If the total

<sup>4</sup> Man himself can interfere with the forces of Nature. If he holds a stone in his hand, he is preventing the law of gravity from producing one of its effects.

<sup>5</sup> See Clerk Maxwell: *Matter and Motion*, p. 59. The law is too loosely stated in some text-books, as though it had been verified for the whole universe.

energy of an isolated system is observed to increase, the Law of Conservation requires nothing more than that the increase be ascribed to the entrance of some new energy. (b) The miracle referred to may have been due merely to a re-distribution of energy. According to physicists themselves, there are vast stores of energy in the universe on which the Creator could draw, if He did not wish to introduce new energy. (c) We need have no hesitation in admitting that a miracle is an effect produced independently of the laws of nature. With those laws alone the physicist is concerned, not with an agency extrinsic to them.

C.—*Miracles need not be referred to Divine Authorship.*—

1. "Miracles may be the work of evil spirits." Reply: Evil spirits can undoubtedly work apparent miracles, but evil spirits like all other creatures are dependent on God at every instant for their existence and power of acting. God will not permit them to involve us in inevitable deception. Their agency may be detected by the personal depravity of their human medium, or by the absurdity or wickedness of his doctrine.

2. "Miracles may be due to hypnotism." Reply: Hypnotism, as a curative agency, is successful only in certain forms of nervous disease. As a general explanation of miracles it is obviously inadequate. See below, Chapter VII (I.—A).

3. "We do not yet know all the forces of nature. So-called miracles may have been due to occult forces whose operation will some day be fully understood." Reply: (a) We do not know everything that natural forces can do, but we certainly do know some things which they can never do.<sup>6</sup> We know, e.g., that natural forces alone will never raise a dead man to life, or build up a piece of living tissue instantaneously.<sup>7</sup> (b) The objection assumes that miracle-workers had far more knowledge of natural forces than any modern scientist. To ascribe such knowledge to Christ, for instance, and the Apostles, who, from the human standpoint, were uneducated men, and who lived at a time when physical science was practically unknown, is to suppose a miracle as great as any. (c) The modern world has witnessed the utilization of natural forces previously unknown. Still, no natural forces can ever be utilized except specially constructed instruments or apparatus be employed. But workers of miracles used, in many instances, no means whatever, nothing but a word or a gesture.

<sup>6</sup> We do not know the lifting power of a man, but we do know that no man can lift a ton.

<sup>7</sup> The building up of tissue is a slow and detailed process, every stage of which is perfectly well known. A period of time, more or less protracted, is essential. The instantaneous cure of a wound or a fracture is beyond "the category of natural possibilities, unless the whole foundation of our medical knowledge is inaccurate." Windle: *The Church and Science*, p. 151.

4. "According to a modern scientific theory,<sup>8</sup> the present order of nature, which seems to us to be so fixed, may be subject to occasional, though indeed vastly rare, interruptions. These interruptions, resulting from natural causes, might coincide with what we call miracles, and miracles would thus be susceptible of a natural explanation." Reply: (a) As may be inferred from footnote <sup>8</sup> below, the vastly rare interruptions would be far too rare to coincide with the numerous and fully authenticated miracles that have taken place within the last two thousand years. Miracles, by comparison, would look like everyday occurrences. (b) The combined intelligence of all the scientists in the world at the present day would be unable to tell us the precise instant and the precise spot at which any one of the vastly rare interruptions might occur. But apparently this knowledge was possessed most exactly by a band of poor Galileans nearly two thousand years ago and by many others since their time, all of whom were presumably strangers to modern scientific ideas; when they commanded sickness to disappear or life to return, they picked out the precise individuals who were to be restored by an incalculably rare action of natural forces, and they timed their words of command to the very second in which the effects would be produced. Such knowledge would itself have been miraculous."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The theory is a deduction from the apparently haphazard movement of atoms. These movements are in all directions, and, as long as they continue so, they counteract one another, thus placing no obstacle to the working of the ordinary well-known Laws of Nature. But if, as is possible, all the atoms of a body were suddenly to move in the same direction, an interference would occur. If, for instance, the atoms of a brick which is now lying on the ground, obedient to the Law of Gravity, were all to move at once in the same upward direction, the brick would rise into the air. What is the probability of such an occurrence? It has been calculated that a brick might rise of itself into the air (to a height of thirty feet or so) *once* in a period of about a million years cubed (See W. R. Haslett: *Unsolved Problems of Science*, p. 256. London: Bell & Sons, 1936); but according to a more exact calculation which the author of the work referred to has recently made, the period of years would be enormously longer. As to the other well-known Laws of Nature, including those relating to life and death, scientists have not, and probably never will, attempt any calculation. They envisage vast, undefined periods of millions and trillions of years in which possibly a single deviation from any one of these Laws might occur.

<sup>9</sup> "Miraculous" would hardly be an adequate description, if we listen to those scientists who say that the precise instant and circumstances of any one of the rare interruptions to the ordinary course of nature would be absolutely unknowable even to the Creator himself (See W. R. Haslett, *ibid.*, p. 266). It should be unnecessary to remind the reader that God with His infinite knowledge is present in all His creatures and that no creature can exist or act independently of His power.

## CHAPTER V

PROOF OF THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE GOSPELS,  
THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, AND THE EPISTLES  
OF ST. PAUL*Summary.*

The four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul must be accepted as historical, if they satisfy the three tests of (a) genuineness; (b) veracity; and (c) integrity.

## A. The Gospels:

- (a) Their genuineness proved by external and confirmed by internal evidence.<sup>1</sup>
- (b) Their veracity established by the character and history of the writers, and by the impossibility of fraud.
- (c) Their integrity assured, chiefly, by the reverence of the early Christians for the sacred text.

## B. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul: genuineness, veracity, and integrity, similarly established.

## C. Views of adversaries.

**Note.**—The New Testament may be looked at from two points of view:

1. As consisting of ordinary historical documents;
2. As a series or collection of divinely inspired books, having God as their principal Author.

Inspiration is an influence breathed forth by God on the soul of a writer, so that he expresses what God wishes him to express and nothing else; it is not perceptible to the senses; the fact of its bestowal can be ascertained only from the testimony of God himself. That testimony He gives through the Catholic Church which, as we shall see, He has appointed to teach us with unerring voice

all that we must believe. From her infallible authority we shall learn of the existence of inspired scripture and of the books of which it consists.

In this chapter we make *no reference to inspiration*; we treat certain books of the New Testament from a human point of view, and we establish by reason that they are trustworthy historical documents.

**The Tests by which we shall establish the Historical Value of the New Testament Writings.**—The four Gospels,<sup>2</sup> the Acts of the Apostles,<sup>3</sup> and the Epistles of St. Paul,<sup>4</sup> are the portions of the New Testament writings on which we chiefly rely to prove the Divinity of Christ, and the authority of the Church which He founded. As the Gospels are of special importance in our proof, we give at some length the arguments which show that, even though we abstract from all question of their inspiration and regard them as merely secular compilations, we must accept them as historical.

A work must be accepted as historical, or, in other words, as a faithful narrative of past events, (a) if it be genuine, *i.e.*, if it be the work of the author to whom it is ascribed; (b) if its author himself be trustworthy, *i.e.*, if it be shown that he was well informed and truthful; (c) if it be intact, *i.e.*, if the text be substantially

<sup>2</sup> Viz. of SS. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Gospels of SS. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels, because of their close resemblance in matter and arrangement: they give us, as it were, but one picture, not three distinct pictures, of Christ. St. Matthew wrote before St. Mark; St. Mark, between 50 and 60 A.D.; St. Luke, somewhat later. As Our Lord died about the year 30 A.D., these three Gospels were written within the lifetime of those who had seen and known Him. St. John's Gospel, written about 100 A.D., supplements the account of the other three; its distinctive feature is its report of the discourses of Christ, and the prominence which it gives to the arguments for His Divinity. The word "gospel" means "good tidings"; the Gospels convey the good tidings of the coming of the Redeemer. The writers of the Gospels are called, from the Greek title, Evangelists.

<sup>3</sup> Written by St. Luke not long after he had completed his Gospel.

<sup>4</sup> Written within the period 50-67 A.D.

<sup>1</sup> "Genuineness" has the same meaning as "authenticity."

as it left the author's hand. All these conditions, as we shall show, are fulfilled in the case of the New Testament writings.

## A

## PROOF OF THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE GOSPELS

**The Genuineness of the Gospels.**—The Gospels are the genuine work of the writers to whom they are ascribed : <sup>5</sup>

I. *External evidence.*—The testimony of Christian and non-Christian writers of the first two centuries shows that the Gospels were widely known, carefully studied, and revered everywhere in the Christian world. (For details see small print below.)

The fact that the Gospels were held in veneration and were in *practical use* all over the Church, within one hundred years of the death of the Apostles, and while their memory was still vivid, is a conclusive proof of their genuineness. Would the Apostles themselves or their immediate successors, who gave their lives to testify to the truth of all that is contained in the Gospels, have allowed a series of forgeries to be published, and palmed off as the inspired Word of God? Would Jewish converts have accepted them, without jealous scrutiny, as equal in authority to their own profoundly revered books of the Old Testament? Would the Gentiles, so many of them men of the highest education,<sup>6</sup> have embraced a religion which made such severe demands on human nature,

<sup>5</sup> The student should note that the genuineness, truthfulness, and integrity of the Gospels are most readily demonstrated by showing the impossibility of the opposites, *i.e.*, forgery, untruthfulness, and change of text.

<sup>6</sup> The period in which the Gospels were written cannot be described as an age when the human mind was in its infancy. Dr. Arendzen thus writes of it: "The world into which Christ was born was the most refined and cultured history knows. . . . The Græco-Roman world was one of astounding peace and well-being, of amazing splendour and political achievement, an age of choice literature, of wonderful works of art, of profound but restless speculation. The three centuries that lie between 40 B.C. and 260 A.D. are in many respects those of the highest prosperity men have ever known." *The Gospels—Fact, Myth, or Legend?* Part II, ch. I.

which exacted even the sacrifice of life itself in witness of the faith, without previously assuring themselves of the genuineness of its written sources? Would learned pagans and heretics have fastened on all kinds of arguments against the Church, and have neglected the strongest of all, *viz.*, that its sacred books were forgeries? Would the faithful throughout the world, at a time when to be a Christian was to be a martyr, have all conspired without a single protest to fabricate and accept these books, falsely ascribe them to the Evangelists, and hand down the impious fraud as an everlasting inheritance for the veneration and guidance of their children's children? We must, therefore, either accept the Gospels as genuine, or commit ourselves to a series of puerile absurdities.

*Testimony of Early Writers.*

1. Numerous texts from the Evangelists are quoted in the letters of Pope Clement (95 A.D.), St. Ignatius of Antioch (107 A.D.), St. Polycarp of Smyrna (120 A.D.), and other disciples of the Apostles; also, in the *Shepherd* of Hermas (? 150 A.D.), the Letter to Diognetus (? 150 A.D.), and in the important work entitled *The Teaching of the Twelve* which was written, probably, as early as 95 A.D., but not later than 130 A.D.

2. (a) St. Justin<sup>7</sup> of Samaria and Rome, who became a Christian in 130 A.D., says that the Gospels were written by Apostles and disciples, and were read at the meetings of Christians on Sundays.

(b) Papias<sup>8</sup> of Phrygia, Asia Minor, disciple or associate of St. John, writing about 130 A.D., explains the circumstances in which the Gospel of St. Mark was composed, and refers to a work by St. Matthew, probably his Gospel.

(c) Tatian wrote his *Diatesseron*, or harmony of the four Gospels, about the year 170 A.D. Since the publication of the Arabic version in 1888, the genuineness of the work is no longer in dispute.

(d) St. Irenæus,<sup>9</sup> writing about 180 A.D., says: "Matthew wrote a Gospel for the Jews in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching and establishing the Church at Rome. After their departure,<sup>10</sup> Mark, also, the disciple and interpreter

<sup>7</sup> *Apol.* I, 66, 67; Dial. cum Tryph., n. 103.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted by Euseb., *H.E.* III, 39.

<sup>9</sup> *Adv. Hær.* III, 1.

<sup>10</sup> The Greek is uncertain. The word may mean "death."

of Peter, handed down to us in writing the information which Peter had given. And Luke, the follower of Paul, wrote out the Gospel which Paul used to preach. Later, John, the disciple of the Lord, who had reclined on His breast, published his Gospel during his sojourn at Ephesus in Asia Minor." The personal history of St. Irenaeus invests his testimony with special importance: a native of Asia Minor, in his early youth he drank in with avid ears, he tells us, the discourses of St. Polycarp who was himself a disciple of St. John, Apostle and Evangelist; he became bishop of Lyons in France, and lived for some time at Rome. His testimony, therefore, representing the tradition of East and West and of what was then undoubtedly the heart of Christendom, must be accepted as decisive.

(e) Tertullian of Africa, writing against the heretic Marcion, about 200 A.D., appeals to the authority of the churches, "all of which have had our Gospels since Apostolic times." He speaks of the Gospels as the work of the Apostles Matthew and John, and of the disciples Mark and Luke.

(f) Heretics, e.g., Basilides (d. 130 A.D.), and pagans, e.g., Celsus (d. c. 200 A.D.), did not question the genuineness of the Gospels. Later testimony is abundant. Probably there is not one of the pagan classics whose genuineness can be supported by such convincing evidence. No one disputes that Cæsar was the author of the Commentaries on the Gallic Wars, and yet the only ancient references to the work are found, about one hundred years after its composition, in the writings of Plutarch and Suetonius.

II. *Internal evidence.*—An examination of the texts themselves proves that the writers were Jews, and were contemporaries, or in close touch with contemporaries, of the events they record:

1. The writers were Jews: (a) The Gospels are written in the colloquial Greek of the period (Hellenistic Greek),<sup>11</sup> but show marked traces of Hebrew idiom.<sup>12</sup> This popular form of the Greek language was employed as a literary medium by Jews during

<sup>11</sup> The Gospel of St. Matthew was first written in Hebrew or Aramaic, and was shortly afterwards translated into Hellenistic Greek.

<sup>12</sup> E.g., the body is spoken of as "the flesh"; "soul" means life, temporal or eternal; "my soul" is sometimes used as the equivalent of the pronoun of the first person; abstract terms are avoided, e.g., "the meek," "the clean of heart," and other such expressions are employed instead of "meekness," "purity," etc.

the first century of our era,<sup>13</sup> but not subsequently. (b) The writers show no acquaintance with Greek literature or philosophy, but are familiar with the religion, customs, and usages of the Jewish people.

2. The authors were contemporaries, or in close touch with contemporaries, of the events they narrate: (a) Modern scholarship has failed to detect any error on the part of the Evangelists in their countless references to topography and to the political, social, and religious conditions of Palestine at the time of Christ. Those conditions, peculiarly complicated<sup>14</sup> and transient, could not have been accurately portrayed by a stranger to Palestine or by a late writer. The unsuccessful rebellion against the Romans (66-70 A.D.), which flung a devastating flood of war over the land, sweeping the Holy City and the Temple off the face of the earth, was followed by enormous changes in population and government. A writer, therefore, who was not a contemporary of Christ, or in intimate relations with His contemporaries, would certainly have committed many errors when dealing with the period which preceded that great catastrophe. (b) The vividness of the narrative seems to spring from personal contact with the events recorded.

**Trustworthiness of the Evangelists.**—The Evangelists are trustworthy, because they knew the facts and truthfully recorded them:

1. They knew the facts: SS. Matthew and John had been companions of Christ; SS. Mark and Luke had lived in constant intercourse with His contemporaries.

2. They were truthful: (a) Their holy lives, and their sufferings in witnessing to the very truths set forth in their Gospels guarantee their sincerity. (b) From the world's standpoint, they had nothing to gain

<sup>13</sup> The writings of Philo Judæus (?-50 A.D.), and some of the writings of Josephus, the Jewish historian, are in Hellenistic Greek.

<sup>14</sup> E.g., the government was administered in part by the Romans and in part by natives; the Sanhedrin, or great religious council of Jewish judges, still exercised its functions, and was in frequent conflict with the civil officials; taxes were paid in Greek money, Roman money was used in commerce, dues to the Temple were paid in Jewish money; the languages, Hebrew and Greek, and, to some extent, Latin, were spoken: in general, public and private life was affected in many ways by the diversity of language and the division of authority.

but everything to lose by testifying to the sanctity and the Divinity of Christ. (c) They could not, if they would, have been untruthful: they wrote for contemporaries of the events they narrate, or for men who had known those contemporaries, and could not, without detection, have published a false account. (d) Their narratives appear at some points to be irreconcilable, but can be harmonized by careful investigation. Had the Evangelists been impostors, they would have avoided even the appearance of contradiction. (e) They could not have invented their portrait of Christ. His character, so noble, so lovable, so tragic, so original, emerging unconsciously, as it were, with ever greater distinctness of outline, as the Gospel narrative proceeds, is, viewed merely as an artistic creation, quite beyond the inventive capacity of men such as the Evangelists were. Besides, every Jew of their day—and the Evangelists were Jews—believed that the Messiah would come to restore the kingdom of David; not one of them ever dreamt, before the teaching of Christ, that He would come to found, not a temporal, but a spiritual kingdom, to preach meekness, humility, and brotherly love, and to live a life of poverty and persecution, culminating in the agony of the Cross.

**The Integrity of the Gospels.**—The Gospels have come down to us intact, *i.e.*, free from corruptions or interpolations. The purity of the text is assured by:

1. The great reverence of the Church for the four Gospels and her rejection of all others.<sup>15</sup>

2. The practice which prevailed from the earliest times of reading the Gospels at public worship.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Gospels ascribed to SS. Peter, Thomas and James were in circulation in the sub-apostolic age, but were suppressed by the Church as spurious.

<sup>16</sup> See above, I, 2 (a). The value of the guarantee of publicity may be measured from the incident recorded by St. Augustine (*Ep.* 71, 5;

3. The wide diffusion of the Gospels among Christian communities all over the world.

4. The substantial uniformity of the text in all manuscripts, some of which date from the fourth century.<sup>17</sup>

## B

### PROOF OF THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES AND THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL

**The Acts of the Apostles.**—The opening words of the Acts and the Gospel of St. Luke prove identity of authorship. St. Irenaeus, who quotes several passages from the Acts, says that St. Luke was the companion of St. Paul, and the historian of his labours. The Fragment of Muratori (second century) which contains the list of Sacred Scriptures says: "But the Acts of all the Apostles are in one book which, for the excellent Theophilus, Luke wrote,

82; 35) as having befallen one of his colleagues, an African bishop. He says that St. Jerome's use of the word "ivy" for "gourd," in his version of the prophecy of Jonas, caused such dissatisfaction when read out in church, that the bishop, fearing lest he might lose his people, felt compelled to restore the traditional rendering.

<sup>17</sup> I. But the earlier manuscripts from which these are descended have not perished without a trace. Fragments of the Gospels, dating from the *third* century, have been lately discovered; they correspond closely to our text, and it is a fair inference that the missing portions would show the same correspondence (see Sir F. Kenyon: *The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri*. London, 1933). Still more recently (1935), a small fragment of St. John's Gospel has come to light; it is true to our text, and its date falls within the period 100–150 A.D., which would bring it very close to the time at which St. John wrote (see C. H. Roberts, *An Unpublished Fragment in the John Rylands' Library*). These discoveries have been made in Egypt; the eminent experts, Kenyon, Roberts, Schubart, Idris Bell and others, agree as to the dating of the fragments. It is now regarded as practically established that the four Gospels as we know them were circulating in Egypt as separate books within the first half of the second century.

II. The oldest manuscript of Horace dates from the seventh or eighth century, of Cicero, Cæsar, Plato from the ninth, of Thucydides and Herodotus from the tenth, of Aeschylus and Sophocles from the eleventh, of Euripides from the twelfth or thirteenth, yet no one doubts that these manuscripts, though ever so many centuries later than their authors' day, are, substantially, the uncorrupted descendants of the originals. No one would ever have thought of questioning the integrity of the Gospel texts, but for the fact that they contain a Divine law of belief and conduct, irksome to the irreligious.

because he was an eye-witness of all." Similar statements are found in Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and many others. Even the sceptic, Renan, declares: "a thing beyond all doubt is that the Acts have the same author as the third Gospel and are a continuation of the same." Harnack, a much greater authority, is of the same opinion. The arguments, which prove the integrity of the text and the veracity of the author, are similar to those advanced in the case of the Gospels, and need not be repeated.

**The Epistles of St. Paul.**—Our adversaries admit the genuineness of the epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, and Thessalonians; the other epistles, they say, with the exception of the Hebrews, were written under the direction or influence of the Apostle. We need not delay to establish the authority of the epistle which they reject or question, since it is not required for the purposes of our argument.<sup>18</sup>

## C

**Views of Adversaries.**—(1) Strauss (1808-74) said that the Gospels were Christian myths, committed to writing about 200 A.D.; that they portray an ideal Christ; that of the real Christ we know nothing. This view is not now regarded as within the domain of serious scholarship. It is mentioned chiefly to draw attention to the fact that, as the groundwork of some popular romances, it has sapped the faith of the ill-instructed.

(2) The latter-day representatives of the Tübingen school, founded by Baur (1792-1860), say that St. Paul is the real author of Christianity, the inventor of the Divinity of Christ, the Sacraments, and the doctrine of a visible Church. The Modernist school (Loisy and others) hold practically the same view. Reply:

(a) St. Paul suffered and died for the faith which he taught. He wrote at a time when very many who had listened to the teaching of Christ himself were still living. Had he tried, he could not, undetected, have falsified the doctrine of his Master.

(b) We may add that "if Christ were not God, Paul could never have deified Him, and the Christians would never have admitted His Divinity, for the first Christians were Jews, and Jews were sensitive of blasphemy."<sup>19</sup>

(c) Harnack (d. 1930), a scholar of high repute among Rational-

<sup>18</sup> See next paragraph (2).

<sup>19</sup> "The Synoptic Gospels in Recent Research": Rev. P. Boylan: *Maynooth Union Record*, 1915-16.

ists,<sup>20</sup> and the representative of the most recent phase of liberal criticism, said that the Synoptic Gospels were written before 70 A.D.,<sup>21</sup> that the Gospel of St. John, which he places between the years 80-118 A.D., does not possess the historical value of the Synoptics, but, still, that "it is one with them in their prevailing purpose to put prominently forward the divine sonship of Jesus."<sup>22</sup> Harnack, we observe, makes three most important admissions: (1) that the dates we assign to the Gospels are substantially correct; (2) that the Synoptic Gospels are historical; (3) that they represent Christ as claiming to be the Son of God. The conclusions of Harnack are a triumph for the Church. The New Testament documents have been tried in the furnace of hostile criticism and have emerged unscathed.

[Read the section on the Gospels in *Jesus Christ is God*, by P. Courbet. C.T.S., price 6d., and *The Gospels—Fact, Myth, or Legend?* by Dr. Arendzen. Sands & Co.]

<sup>20</sup> Rationalists hold that we can learn no truths except those we discover by the use of our natural reason. Many Rationalists profess to be Christians, while rejecting miracles, Divine Mysteries, and everything supernatural; they would interpret Grace as nothing more than a natural, though special, guidance given us by God.

<sup>21</sup> In the *Neue Untersuchungen zur Apostelgesch. und zur Abfassungsz. der Syn. Evang.*, 1911, Harnack places SS. Mark and Luke before 60. Shortly before his death, he signified his acceptance of the ancient tradition of the Church that St. Luke derived his information on the infancy of Jesus from Mary His Mother. *Theologische Quartalschrift, Tübingen*, 1929, 4, pp. 443, 4.

<sup>22</sup> *Lukas der Arzt*, p. 118, Leipzig, 1906. Harnack's final attitude on the question of the authorship of St. John's Gospel is another instance of his return to tradition. After many years of denial or doubt, he admitted that the Gospel was written by St. John the Apostle.

## CHAPTER VI

## JESUS CHRIST CLAIMED TO BE GOD

*Summary.*

That Christ claimed to be God is proved :

- I. (1) From His words as reported in the first three Gospels ;
- (2) From His words as reported in the Gospel of St. John.
- II. From His acts.
- III. From the belief of His Apostles and disciples.

*Note.*—*Christ claimed to be God, because He made claims that God alone can make*

## § I

## THE FIRST THREE GOSPELS TESTIFY THAT JESUS CHRIST CLAIMED TO BE GOD

**He claimed to be God, the Judge of all Mankind.**—"The Son of Man<sup>1</sup> shall come in His majesty and all the angels with Him . . . and all the nations shall be gathered together before Him, and He shall separate them one from another."<sup>2</sup> It is only God who can speak of Himself thus. It is only God who can read the hearts of the countless millions of mankind, and apportion to each individual his deserts. In the continuation of the same passage, He says that He, "the King," will tell the good on the day of judgment that in befriending others<sup>3</sup> they were befriending Him, and He will tell the wicked that in neglecting others they were neglecting Him. He identifies Himself, therefore, with God, whom good men please and wicked men displease.

<sup>1</sup> Jesus speaks of Himself as "the Son of Man," a Messianic title (See Book of Daniel, vii. 13, 14).

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew xxv. 31-46. The whole passage should be read.

<sup>3</sup> By feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, shelter to the stranger, etc.

**He claimed to be God the Lawgiver.**—The Pharisees accused the disciples of Jesus of having violated the Sabbath. Jesus replied that "the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."<sup>4</sup> That is to say, the Sabbath observance may be set aside by Him, viz., God, who instituted it. He said, in the Sermon on the Mount : "You have heard that it was said to them of old, thou shalt not kill . . . *But I say to you* that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment."<sup>5</sup> And, throughout the discourse, He returns repeatedly to the same emphatic declaration : "You have heard . . . *But I say to you.*" Had he claimed to be no more than a merely human envoy of God, He would never have spoken thus : to do so would have been the vilest blasphemy and arrogance ; He would have adhered with the strictest reverence and humility to the formula : "But God now bids me to say to you." The words He actually spoke show Him as claiming to enlarge and re-interpret the Ten Commandments on His own personal authority ; but such authority can be possessed by God alone, the giver of the Law on Sinai.

**He claimed to be Omnipotent; He claimed to be a Divine Person, God the Son, equal in power to the Father.**—"All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. . . . All things are delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knoweth the Son but the Father ; neither doth anyone know the Father but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him."<sup>6</sup> . . . He claimed to possess a power which only God could possess, power over the angels and all creatures, whether in heaven or on earth ; but while making this claim, He stated clearly that He was not the only Person in God ; He spoke of Himself as the Son who had received all things from the Father to whom He was mysteriously united in mutual

<sup>4</sup> St. Matt. xii. 8.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* v. 21, 22 ; cf. 28, 32, 34, 39, 44.

<sup>6</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 18 ; cf. St. Luke x. 22.



knowledge, and whom He alone at His pleasure could make known to men.

**He claimed to be God the Son, One in Nature with the Father.**—(a) One day, near Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus asked His disciples, saying: "Whom do men say that the Son of Man is? But they said: Some John the Baptist, and other some Elias, and others Jeremias or one of the prophets. Jesus saith to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answering said to him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father who is in heaven."<sup>7</sup> The expression "Son of God" is used sometimes in the Scriptures in the figurative meaning of "Friend" or "Servant of God."<sup>8</sup> Here, however, there can be no question of such figurative sonship. In this sense, John the Baptist, Elias and the prophets were "sons of God." Besides, had St. Peter used the words in this weaker meaning, he would not have required a revelation from God the Father.

(b) In the hearing of the priests and scribes, Christ spoke a parable to the people; He told how a man planted a vineyard and let it out to husbandmen, how he sent servant after servant to them to collect his share of the fruit, how the husbandmen beat them and drove them away empty-handed, and how at last "the lord of the vineyard said: 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son;<sup>9</sup> it may be when they see him they will reverence him.' Whom when the husbandmen saw, they thought within themselves, saying: 'This is the heir.

<sup>7</sup> St. Matt. xvi. 13-17. St. Peter had learned the truth about Christ, not from his merely natural powers ("flesh and blood"), but from the revelation given to him by the Father through the Son. Christ had already shown in many ways that He was a Divine Person, God the Son.

<sup>8</sup> St. Luke x. 22; cf. St. Matt. xi. 25.

<sup>9</sup> "Beloved Son" in the Scriptures means "true and only son." See *Cursus Scripturæ Sacræ* (St. Matt. iii. 17).

Let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.' So casting him out of the vineyard they killed him. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do to them? He will come and will destroy these husbandmen and will give the vineyard to others."<sup>10</sup> The people caught His meaning; they saw that His parable foretold that the Jews who had slain prophet after prophet, would at last slay the beloved Son of God himself, and so accomplish their own destruction. They cried out: "God forbid!" And the priests and scribes, but for the many friends about Him, would have seized Him on the instant. They saw themselves in the parable as the slayers of the true Son of God.

(c) When Jesus stood before the Sanhedrin on Good Friday morning, "the High Priest asked Him and said to Him: Art thou the Christ the Son of the blessed God? And Jesus said to him: I am. And you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming with the clouds of heaven. Then the High Priest rending his garments saith: What need we any further witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. What think you? Who all condemned Him to be guilty of death."<sup>11</sup> What was the blasphemy? It was the claim of Jesus to be the true Son of God, one in nature with the Father. It was for that blasphemy they condemned Him to death.

#### THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN TESTIFIES THAT JESUS CLAIMED TO BE GOD

**He claimed Divine Prerogatives.**—The Jews said to Him: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham? Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am."<sup>12</sup> [The Father]

<sup>10</sup> St. Luke xx. 13-16.

<sup>11</sup> St. Mark xiv. 61-64; cf. St. Matt. xxvi. 63-66.

<sup>12</sup> St. John viii. 57, 58.

hath given all judgment to the Son, that all men may honour the Son, as they honour the Father." <sup>13</sup> To Nicodemus He said: "He that doth not believe [in the Son] is already judged: because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God." <sup>14</sup> He speaks of Himself as "the door" <sup>15</sup> through which men enter into life; He is "the vine," <sup>16</sup> we are the branches; He is "the Way, and the Truth, and the Life." <sup>17</sup> Before He suffered, He prayed to His heavenly Father: "Glorify Thou Me, O Father with Thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with Thee. . . . And all My things are Thine, and Thine are Mine." <sup>18</sup> Many more texts of like purport from St. John and the other Evangelists might be quoted. <sup>19</sup>

**The Jews knew He claimed to be God.**—Jesus said to the Jews: "I and the Father are one." They were about to stone Him for these words, "because," they said: "Thou being a man makest Thyself God." <sup>20</sup> Jesus, replying to the Jews, who were offended because He had cured a sick man on the Sabbath day, said: "My Father worketh until now and I work." Whereupon "they sought the more to kill Him because . . . He said God was His Father, making Himself equal to God." Jesus, so far from saying that they had misunderstood Him, answered: ". . . what things soever [the Father] doth, these the Son also doth in like manner. . . . For as the Father raiseth up the dead and giveth life so the Son also giveth life to whom He will." <sup>21</sup> When Pilate tried to acquit Jesus, the Jews cried out: "We have a law; and according to that law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." <sup>22</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* v. 22, 23.      <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 18.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* x. 9.      <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* xv. i.      <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* xiv. 6.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* xvii. 5, 10, 19.

<sup>19</sup> When Christ says (St. John xiv. 28), "the Father is greater than I," He means that "the Father is greater than I, *as man.*"

<sup>20</sup> St. John x. 30-33.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* v. 17-21.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* xix. 7.

## § II

### THE ACTS OF JESUS TESTIFY THAT HE CLAIMED TO BE GOD

Jesus performed His many miracles, not merely as the ambassador of God, but as God Himself: "though you will not believe Me, believe the works," *i.e.*, the miracles, "that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." <sup>23</sup> He allowed men to adore Him as God. When He had given sight to the man born blind, He asked him: "Dost thou believe in the Son of God? He answered, and said: Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him? And Jesus said to him: . . . it is He that talketh with thee. And he said: I believe, Lord. And falling down, he adored Him." <sup>24</sup>—He forgave sin as of His own independent power. "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee," He said to the man sick of the palsy; and, when the Scribes ask themselves indignantly: "Who can forgive sins but God only?" He does not deny the assertion implied in their question, *viz.*, "it is only God who can forgive sin," but goes on to re-affirm the claim He has already made: "that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (He saith to the sick of the palsy) Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house. And immediately he arose; and, taking up his bed, went his way in the sight of all." <sup>25</sup> To Magdalen, who had kissed His feet and bathed them with her tears, He said: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." And to those who sat at table with Him on the same occasion, He said: "Many sins are forgiven her because she hath loved much." It is only through love of God that sins are forgiven. Christ, therefore, asserts that love of Him is love of God. In other words, He claims to be God. <sup>26</sup>

## § III

### THE APOSTLES AND DISCIPLES KNEW THAT CHRIST CLAIMED TO BE GOD

No one denies that, after the death of Christ, His followers, both Jews and Gentiles, preached His Divinity, and that they suffered and died in testimony thereof, <sup>27</sup> facts which can be explained only by their knowledge that He Himself had claimed to be the Son of God.

<sup>23</sup> St. John x. 38.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* ix. 35-38; cf. St. Matt. xiv. 33; xv. 25; xvii. 14.

<sup>25</sup> St. Mark ii. 5-12.

<sup>26</sup> St. Luke vii. 48.

<sup>27</sup> Acts iii. 14, 15; v. 41; vii. 55-58; viii. 37; xv. 26; xx. 28. See also *Testimony of Early Writers*, p. 77; cf. Arendzen: *Whom Do You Say?*

## CHAPTER VII

## JESUS CHRIST, TRUE GOD

THE CLAIM OF JESUS CHRIST TO BE GOD WAS  
JUSTIFIED BY MIRACLES AND PROPHECIES

**Note.**—Jesus Christ claimed Divine Authority. He claimed to be sent by God, to be God Himself. We shall see in this chapter how the divine testimony of miracles confirmed His claim.

*Summary.*

We prove the Divinity of Christ by three arguments :

- I. *A.* By His miracles.
- B.* By His prophecies.
- C.* By the fact that He was Himself the fulfilment of prophecy.
- II. By His Resurrection.
- III. By His perfection as a man and as a teacher of natural religion, considered in the light of His claim to be God.

## § I

## FIRST PROOF

MIRACLES AND PROPHECIES PROVE THAT JESUS  
CHRIST WAS WHAT HE CLAIMED TO BE—GOD

**A. His Miracles prove His Divinity.**—During His life on earth, Christ performed many miracles. He healed the sick, the blind, the lame, the dumb, the epileptic, by a mere word, and sometimes from a distance ; specially remarkable was the cure of the man born blind.<sup>1</sup> He raised the dead to life : the daughter of Jairus, the widow's son of Naim, and Lazarus. He delivered men from evil

<sup>1</sup> St. John ix.

spirits, thereby showing His dominion over the world of spirits. Many of His miracles were wrought on inanimate nature : He changed water into wine ; He fed five thousand with five loaves and two fishes ; He stilled a storm with a word ; He walked upon the waters. His miracles cannot be explained away : <sup>2</sup> (1) by the *delusion theory* according to which merely natural occurrences were regarded as supernatural by His credulous disciples, because the miracles were performed in public and their genuineness was not disputed by Christ's adversaries.<sup>3</sup> Nor (2) by the *theory of diabolical agency*, because Christ was holy in His person and in His doctrine,<sup>4</sup> and could not, therefore, have been an emissary of Satan ; Christ, by casting out evil spirits, showed that He was not the agent of Satan, but his enemy. Nor (3) by the *theory of hypnotism, or animal magnetism*. Certain nervous disorders may be cured by hypnotism or suggestion, but the cure cannot be effected instantaneously, nor from a distance ; Christ cured all manner of diseases ; in many cases the patients were not present and did not even know that He was about to cure them ; the theory takes no account of cases of resurrection from the dead.

*Christ appealed to His miracles as a proof that He was sent by God :* " the works themselves which I do, give testimony of Me that the Father hath sent Me." <sup>5</sup> Christ's teaching, therefore, was the teaching of God. But Christ taught that He Himself was God. Therefore, Christ is God.

**B. His Prophecies prove His Divinity.**—Christ foretold many things which came to pass and which no mere man could have foreseen : (1) With reference to Himself, He foretold His Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven ; <sup>6</sup> (2) with reference to His disciples, He foretold

<sup>2</sup> Re-read chap. IV on Miracles.

<sup>3</sup> St. John xi. 47. <sup>4</sup> For the evidence of this, see pages 104–113.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* v. 36. *Cf. ibid.* x. 37 ; St. Matt. xi. 4, 5.

<sup>6</sup> St. John iii. 14 ; St. Matt. xx. 18 ; St. John vi. 63.

that Judas would betray Him, that Peter would deny Him, that all His disciples would forsake Him ;<sup>7</sup> (3) with reference to His Church, He foretold that it would grow like the mustard-seed, that it would leaven all mankind, that, like Himself, it would be hated and persecuted by the world, and that the gates of hell would not prevail against it.<sup>8</sup> *The fulfilment of these prophecies proves that Christ's teaching was the teaching of God.* But Christ taught that He was God. Therefore, Christ is God.

His prophecy about Jerusalem and the Jews is particularly noteworthy. He said : "The days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side, and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee, and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone."<sup>9</sup> And again : "There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people, and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captives into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles."<sup>10</sup> How accurately these prophecies were fulfilled will be understood by readers of the *History of the Jewish War*, written, in seven books, by Flavius Josephus<sup>11</sup> (A.D. 37-98) at the request of the Roman Emperor, Titus. The complete destruction of the city was quite unexpected, as it was the Roman practice to preserve conquered cities and particularly the temples. The Emperor, Julian the Apostate (361-363 A.D.), tried to rebuild the Temple, so that by re-establishing the Jewish state and the Jewish religion, he might falsify the Christian prophecy. Jews flocked in from every side, and assisted with great enthusiasm in the work. Ammianus Marcellinus, a pagan writer, one of the imperial life-guards, tells us of the issue, one of the most remarkable,

<sup>7</sup> St. John xiii. 21, 26 ; St. Matt. xxvi. 34 ; *ibid.* 31.

<sup>8</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 31, 33 ; xvi. 18.

<sup>9</sup> St. Luke xix. 43, 44.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* xxi. 23, 24.

<sup>11</sup> He was a Jew. He first served against the Romans, was taken prisoner and pardoned. He was with Titus at the siege of Jerusalem.

as it is one of the best attested events in history : "[Julian] committed the accomplishment of this task to Alypius of Antioch, who had before that been Lieutenant of Britain. Alypius, therefore, set himself vigorously to the work, and was seconded by the governor of the province. Fearful balls of fire, breaking out near the foundations, continued their attacks, till the workmen, after repeated scorplings, could approach no more ; and thus, the fierce elements obstinately repelling them, he gave over his attempt."<sup>12</sup>

**C. Christ Himself the Fulfilment of Prophecy.**—Many Jews were converted by perceiving that in Christ were fulfilled the prophecies about the Messiah contained in their sacred books, the books of the Old Testament. We are not here concerned to prove that these books were divinely inspired, nor even that they were authentic. It suffices to accept as true, what no one denies, that the books were in existence long before the birth of Christ.

The religion of the Jews was a religion of expectation, with the belief in a Messiah, or a Redeemer to come, as its central doctrine. All that had been foretold of the Redeemer was accurately fulfilled in Christ. The following is a brief summary of the prophetic description of the Redeemer : He shall be sprung from the line of David (Isaiah xi. 1, 2), and shall be born at Bethlehem (Micah v. 2).<sup>13</sup> He shall be born of a Virgin Mother (Is. vii. 14). He shall be called the Son of God (Ps. ii. 7). He shall be called a Nazarene—a man from Nazareth (Is. xi. 1).<sup>14</sup> He shall judge the poor with justice (Is. xi. 4). His empire shall be multiplied (Is. ix. 7). His Kingdom shall be assailed but shall last for ever (Ps. ii. 1-4). He shall

<sup>12</sup> Hist. xxiii. 1-3. See Newman : *Essays on Miracles*, sect. vii. p. 334, where several other authorities, Christian and pagan, some of them contemporaries, are quoted.

<sup>13</sup> The chief priests and scribes, in answer to Herod, quoted this text to prove that Christ should be born at Bethlehem.

<sup>14</sup> The reference to Nazareth is found in the Hebrew. It does not appear in the English translation.

judge all men and crown the just with glory (Is. xxiv, xxviii). Yet He shall be a man of sorrows, despised and the lowest of men (*Id.* liii). He shall be sold for thirty pieces of silver, and the silver shall be used to purchase the potter's field (Zach. xi. 12, 13). He shall be offered of His own will, and shall not open His mouth; He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before His shearer (Is. liii. 7). His hands and feet shall be pierced, His garments shall be divided, and lots cast upon His vesture (Ps. xxi. 17-19). He shall be a light to the Gentiles and bring salvation to the ends of the earth (Is. xlix. 6). "The God of Heaven will set up a Kingdom that shall never be destroyed" (Daniel ii. 44).<sup>15</sup>

It is manifest that the fulfilment of all these prophecies in an individual<sup>16</sup> could not have been due to chance or human contrivance, but must have been the work of God. Christ was therefore the promised Redeemer. He had been sent by God. He taught with Divine Authority. But He taught that He was God, therefore He was God.

But why did not the entire Jewish people perceive that in Christ all prophecy was fulfilled? The question appears to be all the more difficult to answer, when we remember that, as the time of Christ's birth approached, hope in the speedy coming of the Messiah had become intense. Reply: (1) The Jewish people at the time of Christ were, as a mass, morally corrupt. Flavius Josephus says that, had not the Romans come to punish them, an earthquake, a deluge, or the lightnings of Sodom would have

<sup>15</sup> But, in addition to these direct references to the person of the Messiah, it can be shown that the Jewish religion contains in its general organisation and in its details a foreshadowing of His work, a foreshadowing of the Church which He founded and of the Sacraments which He instituted. Furthermore, it will be found that the chief incidents in His life are reflected or typified in the lives of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Saints of the Old Law.

<sup>16</sup> Note that the prophecies which say that Christ would found an everlasting kingdom and would be the Judge of mankind have, obviously, not yet been fulfilled in the strict sense. It is only at the end of the world that their perfect fulfilment will be attained. They have, however, been fulfilled already so far as they signify that Christ would *proclaim* Himself to be the founder of an everlasting kingdom and to be the future Judge of mankind.

overwhelmed them. Their wickedness closed their ears to the message of Christ. (2) They heard with savage bitterness the revolutionary doctrine of Christ that they would no longer stand apart from the rest of the world as God's chosen people, but that the hated Gentiles were to be admitted to the same privilege.<sup>17</sup> (3) Their leaders, the Scribes and Pharisees, conceived a terrible hatred against Christ, because they were envious of His influence, and because He had unsparingly denounced their arrogance and hypocrisy. They were therefore not disposed to examine His claims impartially. (4) Owing partly to the Pharisees' interpretation of the sacred writings, partly to the foreign oppression and to national pride, the Jewish people had come to think of the Messiah, not as one who would deliver them from sin, but as a temporal king who would break the Roman yoke and lead them to world-empire. The triumphs of a Spiritual King were all interpreted as the triumphs of an earthly monarch.<sup>18</sup> Even the Apostles could hardly rid themselves of the popular belief, for they asked Christ before His Ascension, with a pathetic yearning for the fulfilment of a patriotic hope, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time again restore the Kingdom of Israel?"<sup>19</sup>

## § II

### SECOND PROOF

#### THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST PROVES THAT HE WAS GOD

*Outline of Proof.*—Christ claimed to be God; in proof of His claim, He said He would rise from the dead; Christ rose from the dead; therefore, Christ is God. The witnesses to the Resurrection were trustworthy. Refutation of adversaries' Theories: the Deception Hypothesis; the Hallucination Hypothesis; the Trance Hypothesis.

**Christ said He would Rise from the Dead.**—When the Jews demanded a miracle in proof of His authority, He

<sup>17</sup> This doctrine of Christ was repeated on many occasions. Early in His mission, in the Synagogue of Nazareth, when He spoke of God's mercies to Gentiles in ages past, the people rushed at Him in a body, swept Him to the brow of a precipice, and would have flung Him to His death but for an exercise of His Divine power (St. Luke iv. 18-30). On His promise of the universality of salvation, see St. Matt. xxiv. 14; xxvi. 13.

<sup>18</sup> See chap. V, Trustworthiness of the Evangelists, 2 (e) end.

<sup>19</sup> Acts i. 6.

answered: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."<sup>20</sup> "He spoke," the Evangelist says, "of the temple of His body." Later He speaks more clearly: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign; and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the Prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights."<sup>21</sup> After the Transfiguration He says to Peter, James, and John: "Tell the vision to no man, till the Son of Man be risen from the dead."<sup>22</sup> Before going up to Jerusalem to suffer, He says with perfect distinctness: "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and the third day He shall rise again."<sup>23</sup> That He had foretold His resurrection was well known to all, for the Jews, after His death, said to Pilate: "We have remembered that that seducer said, while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again."<sup>24</sup>

**Christ Died and was Buried.**—The four Evangelists say that He died on the cross. The soldiers, finding Him already dead, did not break His limbs. One of them opened His side with a spear. When Joseph of Arimathaea asked Pilate for permission to bury Him, Pilate, before consenting, despatched a centurion to make sure that He was dead.<sup>25</sup> It was not likely that His enemies would leave their work half finished. In the words quoted above (end of last paragraph) they say "while He was yet alive," *i.e.*, they assert that He is now dead.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>20</sup> St. John ii. 19.

<sup>21</sup> St. Matt. xii. 39, 40.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* xvii. 9.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* xx. 18, 19.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* xxvii. 63.

<sup>25</sup> St. Mark xv. 43-45.

<sup>26</sup> The Roman historian Tacitus (55-120 A.D. approx.) says that "Christus was put to death by the procurator, Pontius Pilate, in the reign of Tiberius," (*Annals* xv. 44).

**Christ Rose from the Dead.**—The Evangelists tell us that the *grave was found empty* on the morning of the third day; that Christ appeared to Mary Magdalen and the other women; that He appeared to the Apostles and showed them His wounds, "See My hands and feet that it is I Myself. Handle and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see Me to have";<sup>27</sup> that He conversed with them and ate with them;<sup>28</sup> that He walked with the two disciples to Emmaus, and was recognised by them "in the breaking of bread."<sup>29</sup> "He was seen," St. Paul writes to the Corinthians, "by more than five hundred brethren at once . . . last of all He was seen by me."<sup>30</sup>

### A

#### *The Witnesses to the Resurrection were Trustworthy*

(1) *They were not deceivers*: they had no inducement to give false testimony; their labours and their sufferings are proofs of their sincerity. *They were not themselves deceived*: the supposition is excluded by their numbers, their reluctance to believe, and the length of time Christ was with them after His death.

(2) God himself showed by miracles that they were neither deceivers nor dreamers but speakers of the truth. Through their hands and in the name of the risen Christ, He wrought many signs and wonders, so that "fear came upon every soul."<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> St. Luke xxiv. 39.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* xxiv. 43.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* xxiv. 35.

<sup>30</sup> I Cor. xv. 6, 8. The other Epistles make frequent reference to the Resurrection.

<sup>31</sup> Acts ii. 43. Note in particular the miracle of tongues; the miraculous cure of the man publicly known as having been lame from birth; the deliverance of all the Apostles from prison: during the night an angel led them forth; next morning the servants of the High Priest reported: "the prison we found shut with all diligence, and the keepers standing before the doors, but opening it, we found no man within"—a miracle which has some features in common with Christ's deliverance from the prison of the grave (*Ibid.* ii. 7, 8; iii. 1-10; v. 18-23).

(3) Observe the striking fact that among the thousands of early converts that flocked to St. Peter, there was "a great multitude of the priests."<sup>32</sup> They belonged to the very class that had rejected the miracles of Jesus and had sent Him to His death; but now they broke away from the High Priest and the other leaders who were still fiercely brushing aside every new evidence sent them by God.<sup>33</sup> These converts knew that they were sacrificing all the privileges of their priesthood for a life of persecution; they knew that they would be branded as traitors to their order and their race. How could they have faced such a future? Only because of the sharp command of their conscience. The truth of the Resurrection must have shone out, clear as crystal in their minds. This would have come to pass in either of two ways: either they were convinced that the miracles wrought by the Apostles were genuine, and that, therefore, God himself had vouched for the truth of their statement that Christ was risen—or else, they were convinced, after personally interviewing and cross-questioning the numerous witnesses to the Resurrection (to all of whom they would have had easy access), that there was no flaw in their testimony. However, with the severe choice before them, we may take it as beyond all doubt, that many of them would have examined both sets of evidence, and would, moreover, have studied anew the Messianic prophecies and have found their fulfilment in the suffering, yet triumphant, Christ, the Son of God made Man, who died on the Cross and rose from the grave.

*St. Paul as Witness to the Resurrection.*—St. Paul's testimony, so valuable in itself, confirms that of the other witnesses. No critic doubts his account of the miraculous vision on the road to Damascus; no critic challenges the

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* vi. 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* v. 33; vii. 54. They were "cut to the heart" at the suspicion of being stained with the blood of the Son of God.

authenticity of the great epistles in which, within thirty years after the death of Christ, he preached the Resurrection to the Christians of Rome, Greece, and Asia Minor as the very basis of their faith; no one can question the holiness and complete sincerity of this former persecutor of the Church. It is inconceivable that a man of his strict honesty, high intelligence and learning, would have joined a band of cheats or dupes. It is inconceivable that he who was in touch with the witnesses to the Resurrection could have discovered some discrepancy, some shade of suspicion, in their testimony, and have suppressed all mention of it.<sup>34</sup>

## B

### *The Resurrection is Proved by the Miracle of the Worldwide Belief in it*

On the day of Pentecost, in Jerusalem itself, the scene of Christ's shameful death, the Apostles came boldly before the people and put the Resurrection in the forefront of their preaching. On that day three thousand Jews were converted by St. Peter to belief in Christ whom, he said, "God hath raised again, whereof we all are witnesses"; and five thousand more were added some days later, when he spoke of Him as "the author of life whom God hath raised from the dead."<sup>35</sup> In Palestine and beyond its borders, converts of every rank and race multiplied rapidly; within a few years they were counted by millions; within a few centuries, they formed the vast, and still growing, majority of the population of the Roman Empire. St. Augustine says that had not the Resurrection been a fact, the conversion of the world to belief in it by a few Galilean fishermen would have been as great a miracle as the Resurrection itself. And that miracle of

<sup>34</sup> The testimony of St. Paul is quite independent of the Gospels. He wrote many of his epistles before the Gospels were written.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 32; iii. 15; cf. iv. 10.

belief, a continuous miracle, gains in impressiveness as the centuries pass. Within the Church to-day, there are found four hundred million believers, and almost two hundred million more outside her fold; among them are men of every class, some of them of the highest intellect. Thus does God show that His Apostles spoke the truth; thus does He show that Christ our Lord rose from the dead.

*These positive arguments are reinforced by the very weakness of the theories proposed by our adversaries to account for the undoubted fact of the empty tomb on Easter morn.*

**Adversaries' Theories.**—*The Apostles were deceivers (the Deception Hypothesis).*—This was the earliest attempt to explain away the Resurrection and is an attack on the sincerity of the disciples. The guards at the sepulchre said that they fell asleep, and that, while they slept, the disciples came and removed the body.<sup>36</sup> The story spread widely among the Jews and many believed it. If the soldiers fell asleep, they could not have known what happened during their sleep; all they could have said was that, when they woke, the grave was empty. They might have added that *probably* the disciples came and stole away the body. Let us assume that they put their statement in some such reasonable form. Can we imagine that the disciples who had shown utter timidity during the Passion would risk liberty, perhaps life, in an attempt to steal the body, and all with a view to fraud? And why perpetrate such a fraud? If they really knew that Christ was not risen, then they knew He had deceived them and was not God. What had they to gain by preaching a fraudulent resurrection? Nothing but persecution, incessant labour, and death, not to speak of remorse of conscience. And could the five hundred witnesses have succeeded in their conspiracy of fraud? Impossible: their cruel, skilful, and powerful enemies would have unmasked them. The fact that the Pharisees did not even try to break the testimony of the witnesses by cross-examination is a proof of their conviction that the task was hopeless: the sincerity of the Apostles and disciples was only too manifest. And there is a further point: the silver in their treasury had bribed an Apostle to betray his Master; the silver was still there, and its pull on the avaricious would have been strengthened by the fear of persecution and death. There was no Judas among all the witnesses to the Resurrection; had there been

<sup>36</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 13. The Evangelist says they were bribed to make this statement.

even one false man among them, he would have broken under the weight of the double temptation; he would have sold his honour and saved his life by concocting a story to discredit his companions.

*The Apostles were deceived (the Hallucination Hypothesis).*—This is the favourite hypothesis of modern adversaries. The followers of Christ, they say, were in a state of tense nervous excitement after the Crucifixion; they believed that their beloved Master would triumph over the grave and come back to them again; it was in answer to their passionate longing for His coming that their fancy bodied forth the vision of the risen Saviour. That an individual might suffer from such an hallucination is possible; that all the Apostles and hundreds of the disciples should suffer from it simultaneously and over a long period is impossible. Besides, the evidence against the existence of any "passionate longing" is overwhelming. The followers of Christ were not expecting His Resurrection. When He was seized by the Jews, they fled in terror, believing that all was over. He had undoubtedly foretold His Death and Resurrection, but they appear never to have reconciled themselves to the thought of His Death, and so did not think of His Resurrection.<sup>37</sup> Mary Magdalen and the other women brought spices to embalm His body on the morning of the third day. They, therefore, did not expect to find Him risen from the dead. Magdalen's first thought, when she saw the empty tomb, was that someone had stolen the Body.<sup>38</sup> When Christ spoke to her, she did not recognize Him at first, believing that He was the gardener. Cleophas and the other disciple, as they talked sadly of Christ on the road to Emmaus, told the stranger, as they thought Him, how they had been frightened by the women's story of the Resurrection. When He revealed Himself to them as Christ, they returned and told the Apostles. The Apostles refused to believe them, just as they had already refused to believe the women.<sup>39</sup> St. Thomas was not present when Christ first appeared to the Apostles, and protested that he would not believe, until he had put his finger "into the place of the nails," and his hand "into His side."<sup>40</sup> The witnesses, therefore, to the risen Christ were not credulous, but incredulous, and the hypothesis of hallucination is excluded.

*Christ was a deceiver (the Trance Hypothesis).*—This suggests that Christ did not really die on the cross; He merely swooned; He recovered consciousness in the sepulchre; while the soldiers slept, He pushed aside the stone and rejoined His companions; and so He made on them the impression that He had triumphed

<sup>37</sup> St. Matt. xvi. 21, 22; St. Luke xxiv. 13-27, 44-46; St. John xx. 9.  
<sup>38</sup> St. John xx. 13.   <sup>39</sup> St. Mark xvi. 11, 13.   <sup>40</sup> St. John xx. 27.



over death. The mental anguish which Christ had suffered, the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the crucifixion, the piercing of His side with a spear make the trance hypothesis impossible. Suppose for a moment it were true, could one so severely wounded, so exhausted from loss of blood, have moved aside the great stone,<sup>41</sup> and have done so without waking the soldiers? Could He have played the rôle of victor over death, and walked like one in perfect health with those cruel wounds in His feet? Could He have entered the supper-room through closed doors? Could He have appeared and disappeared at will? Could He make a vast concourse of disciples fancy that He ascended into heaven in their sight? Are we to suppose that this Man of perfect holiness, who had suffered the agony of the Cross in upholding His claim that He was the Son of God, was a vile impostor; that He could set His followers on fire with zeal to go forth and preach a lie to the world? Even the Rationalist Strauss rejects the hypothesis as unworthy of consideration.

*Celsus' Objection.*—Why did not Christ show himself publicly after His Resurrection to His enemies and the entire people? That question was first asked by the pagan, Celsus (*d. c.* 200 A.D.), and has been repeated by Renan and others. (1) God wishes us to turn to Him freely, and, as a rule, does not employ a superabundance of means to bend the will of the evil-minded. He is content with giving clear, and amply sufficient proofs, that faith is reasonable.<sup>42</sup> The rich man in the parable,<sup>43</sup> calling out from hell to Abraham, besought him to send a messenger from the dead to warn his five brothers of the tortures of the damned. Abraham refused, saying: "They have Moses and the prophets. Let them hear *them*.' If they hear them not, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead.'" The Pharisees asked Christ for a sign from heaven and were refused.<sup>44</sup> While He hung on the Cross, they that passed by bade Him come down if He were the Son of God,<sup>45</sup> but He paid no heed to them. To one adversary He gave an exceptional grace: He appeared to the persecutor, Saul of Tarsus, afterwards the Apostle Paul.<sup>46</sup> (2) Had Christ appeared to all, the depraved subtlety of men would still have found a means to escape belief. "This is not Christ," they would have said, "but some evil spirit, an emissary of Satan." And unbelievers of later generations would probably ask: "If

<sup>41</sup> The women wondered whether they could find anyone to roll back the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre, "for it was very great" (St. Mark xvi. 4).

<sup>42</sup> See Introductory chapter: "Our proof is conclusive but not coercive."

<sup>43</sup> The parable of Lazarus and the rich man (St. Luke xvi. 19-31).

<sup>44</sup> St. Mark viii. 11-13.

<sup>45</sup> St. Matt. xxvii. 40.

<sup>46</sup> Acts ix.

Christ appeared to all men after His Resurrection, why does He not appear to all men now? Why does He not remain on earth always? Even though He did remain on earth always, these same unbelievers would still persevere in their incredulity, protesting that He was being personated by a series of impostors.

**Conclusion.**—We have proved, therefore, through the testimony of friends and enemies, that Christ died and was buried; we have proved through the testimony of witnesses who were honest and, at the same time, incredulous, and through the success which attended the preaching of the Apostles, that Christ rose from the dead. Christ claimed to be God. In proof of His claim, Christ said He would rise from the dead. He rose from the dead. Therefore, His claim is true.<sup>47</sup>

### THIRD PROOF

#### THE PERFECTION OF CHRIST AS A MAN AND AS A TEACHER OF NATURAL RELIGION, CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF HIS CLAIM TO BE GOD, PROVES THAT HE WAS GOD

*Outline of Proof.*—Christ, viewed from a merely human standpoint,<sup>48</sup> was the most perfect man, the most perfect teacher of Natural Religion that ever lived. Our adversaries proclaim it as well as we. But this most perfect man said repeatedly and emphatically that He was God. We must, therefore, conclude that His claim was just, that He *was* God; otherwise, we are driven to the appalling absurdity of saying that the most perfect of mankind was either a maniac or a blasphemer.

**Note.**—In this section we are looking at Christ through the eyes of our adversaries. They hold that He was mere man, a teacher of mere Natural Religion, *i. e.*, a teacher of religious or moral truths that can be discovered by the unaided human intellect. In the interest of our argument, we accept this false view of Him for the time being. In our sketch of His character, therefore, we ignore every word and act of His that show Him to be God. In our account of His doctrine, we allow ourselves to speak in-

<sup>47</sup> No one who admits the Resurrection of Christ can deny the existence of God. If Christ rose from the dead, there must be a God who raised Him to life. The existence of God, therefore, is established by the Resurrection quite independently of the philosophical proofs at the beginning of the treatise.

<sup>48</sup> We disregard for the moment all direct evidence of His divinity.

accurately of Him as a teacher of mere Natural Religion, suppressing everything that would set Him in His true light as a Teacher of Supernatural Religion, as one who taught that no act of ours, however good it may seem to men, is of any value in the sight of God unless it be inspired by belief in mysteries inaccessible to human reason.

#### CHRIST VIEWED AS IF HE WERE MERE MAN

**His Origin, His Power over Men, His Eloquence, His Silence.**—He came from Nazareth, a village in Galilee, the most backward district in Palestine. Men asked in wonder: "Can anything good come from Nazareth?"<sup>49</sup> . . . Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Mary?<sup>50</sup> . . . How doth this man know letters having never learned?"<sup>51</sup> Yet this poor tradesman had a power over the human heart which men could not resist. He called them and they came. They left their homes and their fathers, their boats, their nets, and their money and followed Him<sup>52</sup>—He was gifted with a wondrous power of speech. He pressed a world of meaning into a short sentence. He employed the plainest and homeliest illustrations, *e.g.*, the woman searching for the lost piece of money, the patching of an old garment, the shepherd in quest of his sheep.<sup>53</sup> He clothed His thoughts in simple and beautiful language, as where He says of the lilies of the field that "not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these."<sup>54</sup> By parables such as that of the Good Samaritan,<sup>55</sup> or the Prodigal Son,<sup>56</sup> he fixed His great doctrine of Love in the minds of the least instructed of His hearers. He touched at times a depth of pathos in such words as: "Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened and I will refresh you";<sup>57</sup> and, in His last discourse to His disciples, He speaks in the language of grave and tender sadness, full of the sorrow of parting and death, and yet breathing a sublime assurance that

<sup>49</sup> St. John vii. 41; i. 46. <sup>50</sup> St. Mark vi. 2, 3. <sup>51</sup> St. John vii. 15.

<sup>52</sup> St. Matt. iv. 18-22; ix. 9; St. Mark ii. 14.

<sup>53</sup> St. Matt. v. vi. vii. x. <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* vi. 26-34. <sup>55</sup> St. Luke x. 30-35.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* xv. 11-32. <sup>57</sup> St. Matt. xi. 28-34.

His work had not failed.<sup>58</sup> No wonder that men followed Him for days without food. Even His enemies said: "Never did man speak like this man."<sup>59</sup> He outmatched them in the gift of eloquence, and confounded them with His quick retort and subtle reply. Often they tried to ensnare Him into some awkward admission, but He baffled them by His wisdom.<sup>60</sup> And He could be silent as well as eloquent. At His trial, He answered when adjured to answer, but He was silent while the witnesses were giving their perjured evidence. There was no need for speech, for they contradicted and confounded one another. Pilate, who knew that their testimony was worthless, still sought to provoke Him to reply, but "He answered him to never a word, so that the governor wondered exceedingly."<sup>61</sup> And when Peter had denied Him, He spoke, not with His lips, but with His eyes. It was enough. "Peter going out wept bitterly."<sup>62</sup>

**He was a Man of Superb Courage and Stainless Character. He was Firm but not Obstinate.**—The poor tradesman from Galilee had no fear of the proud and powerful Pharisees. He scourged them in a terrible invective for their hypocrisy, their avarice, and their hardness of heart. He knew that their fury could be sated only by His blood, yet He never ceased to whip them with the lash of righteous indignation.<sup>63</sup> Several times He was on the brink of destruction. Once a raging mob had swept Him to the verge of a cliff, but, at the last moment, He eluded their grasp.<sup>64</sup> In the hour of His Passion, caught in the toils of His enemies, He made no appeal, no apology, no retractation of His doctrine. No cry for mercy escaped Him, when the pitiless scourges lacerated His flesh, nor

<sup>58</sup> St. John xiv. xvii. <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* vii. 46.

<sup>60</sup> *E.g.*, St. Matt. xii. 26-28; St. Luke xiii. 14-16.

<sup>61</sup> St. Luke xxiii. 9; St. Matt. xxvii. 13, 14.

<sup>62</sup> St. Luke xxii. 61, 62.

<sup>63</sup> St. Matt. xxiii.; xvi. 21; St. John xi. 48.

<sup>64</sup> St. Luke iv. 30; cf. St. Matt. xii. 15; St. John viii. 59; x. 39; xi. 53.

when His sacred hands and feet were nailed to the Cross. Bitter though His enemies were, they were silent when He challenged them to charge Him with sin.<sup>65</sup> He was the only man that ever lived who could stand up before His enemies and defy them to convict Him of a single fault. The traitor, Judas, confessed, "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood."<sup>66</sup> At His trial, when His foes strained every nerve against Him, neither Pilate nor Herod could find any guilt in Him :<sup>67</sup> His character scrutinized in the fierce light of savage hatred showed not a stain.—He was no self-seeker, no respecter of wealth. He fled when the multitude sought to make Him king.<sup>68</sup> He had not enough money to live without alms.<sup>69</sup> He could not pay the temple dues without a miracle.<sup>70</sup> He whose ability might have borne Him to the highest position had not "whereon to lay His head."<sup>71</sup> He preferred to be a teacher of truth, to wander about poor and homeless. He was firm, but not obstinate. He refused to abate His teaching to win the companionship of the wealthy young ruler.<sup>72</sup> Yet He knew how to bend when no principle was at stake. He sought to escape, even by hiding, the importunities of the Syro-Phoenician woman who implored Him with piteous cries to heal her daughter, but, at last, touched by her profound humility, He yielded.<sup>73</sup>

**He was Affable, Gentle, Courteous, and Humble. He was a Man of Loving Heart.**—He did not shun the companionship of men : His enemies murmured because He ate "with publicans and sinners."<sup>74</sup> Though Jews were not wont to converse with Samaritans, He spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well.<sup>75</sup> He was entertained at the house of his friends, Martha, Mary, and Lazarus.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>65</sup> St. John viii. 46.<sup>66</sup> St. Matt. xxvii. 14.<sup>67</sup> St. Luke xxiii. 13-15.<sup>68</sup> St. John vi. 15.<sup>69</sup> St. Luke viii. 3.<sup>70</sup> St. Matt. xvii. 23-26.<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* viii. 19, 20.<sup>72</sup> St. Mark x. 22.<sup>73</sup> St. Matt. xv. 24 ; St. Mark vii. 24.<sup>74</sup> St. Matt. ix. 11 ; St. Luke xv. 2 ; xix. 7.<sup>75</sup> St. John iv.<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* xi. 5.

He gently remonstrated with His two Apostles, James and John, for their ambition.<sup>77</sup> He was courteous to the Pharisee, Nicodemus, because he came to Him with a right intention.<sup>78</sup> He impressed more than once on His Apostles the need of humility ; they were not to lord it over their dependants like earthly princes ; they were to be the servants of their subjects. He Himself set them the example by washing their feet at the Last Supper.<sup>79</sup> He was a Man of loving heart. His three years' ministry was an incessant outpouring of love. The sick and the sinful came in vast numbers to Him. He healed them of their infirmities. His life was a daily triumph over sin, sorrow, and disease : He saved from death the unhappy woman, convicted of a shameful crime : "He that is without sin among you," He said to her accusers, "let him first cast a stone at her,"<sup>80</sup> and looking into their consciences they slunk away ashamed ; He restored the widowed mother her only son as he was being carried forth for burial ; He feared not to lay His hands on the foul leper.<sup>81</sup> He wept with passionate grief over the Sacred City, dear to Him and to all Jews as the very hearthstone of their race : "How often would I have gathered thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not."<sup>82</sup> Some great light of love must have shone in His face, else, why were little children brought to Him that He might notice them ? He chid the Apostles for trying to keep them back. He took them in His arms and blessed them.<sup>83</sup> On the Cross, His heart was still the same loving heart, true to its old affections, ready to receive the sinner and to pardon the persecutor and calumniator. Amid all His agony, He thought of His Blessed Mother, and asked St. John to be a son to her ; with words of sublime hope, He blessed the contrition of the penitent thief who, but a moment

<sup>77</sup> St. Matt. xx. 20.<sup>78</sup> St. John iii. 1-21.<sup>81</sup> St. Mark i. 41.<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* xiii.<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* viii. 1-10.<sup>82</sup> St. Matt. xxiii. 37. Cf. St. Luke xix. 42-44.<sup>83</sup> St. Mark x. 14-16. See also *ibid.* ix. 35.

before, had been reviling Him ; He besought His heavenly Father to pardon the very men who had nailed Him to the Cross, and who, even as He prayed for them, still pursued Him with mockery, insult, and blasphemy.

**Summary: He was the Model of all Virtues.**—To a perfect love for God and submission to His holy will (“Not My will but Thine be done”),<sup>84</sup> He united in a form, never before witnessed by men, the virtues of humility, courage, patience, meekness, and charity. He was a brave, strong man, who spoke His mind fearlessly, and died for the doctrine He advocated. He was gentle, courteous, affable, and unselfish. No contradiction, calumny, or persecution could wring from Him a word or gesture inconsistent with His dignity as a heaven-sent instructor of mankind. His goodness was without weakness ; His zeal and earnestness, without impatience ; His firmness, without obstinacy. He was not only a thinker, but a man of action. His eyes seemed ever fixed on heaven, but yet He was full of sympathy for the weakness of His disciples, full of tenderness for the sorrowful and the afflicted, and He combined an intense hatred of sin with an intense love for the sinner. He is the model for men of all conditions in all ages, the ideal which, while remaining unattained and unattainable, has been the inspiration of the noblest lives.

**THE TESTIMONY OF RATIONALISTS.**—All who have studied the Gospels, unbelievers as well as believers, are agreed as to the nobility of the human character of Christ. Lecky, a Rationalist, says : “It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character, which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries, has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love ; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments, and conditions ; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to

<sup>84</sup> St. Luke xxii. 42.

its practice, and has exercised so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind, than all the disquisitions of philosophers, and all the exhortations of moralists.”<sup>85</sup>

#### CHRIST VIEWED AS IF HE WERE A TEACHER OF MERE NATURAL RELIGION

Setting aside for argument’s sake all the higher doctrines of Christ, we shall find that He who was perfect as a man, was perfect also as a teacher of truths which, in the view of our opponents, may be assigned to the sphere of Natural Religion. He stands alone and unrivalled because of His doctrine of the Law of Charity, His doctrine of the Law of Sincerity, His doctrine of the supreme importance of the human soul, and His ideals of moral excellence. He taught as “one having power,” not like Socrates and others, as though He were groping for the light. He taught with clearness and decisiveness, and was Himself the model of all His teaching.

**His Doctrine of the Law of Charity.**—The Jews of His day held high dispute as to which was the greatest commandment of their Law. Some said it was the commandment to offer sacrifice ; others, the commandment of Sabbath observance ; others, again, the commandment of Circumcision. Christ swept aside all current opinion as so much rubbish, and laid bare the true foundation of sanctity. “The whole Law,” He said, in effect, “is summed up in the one Law of Charity, *i.e.*, the love of God and one’s neighbour.”<sup>86</sup> But, in His Sermon on the Mount, the first great exposition of His teaching, He gave the Law of Charity a wider interpretation. “Neighbour,” with the Jews, had meant a fellow Israelite or a

<sup>85</sup> *History of European Morals*, vol. II, p. 8, 3rd ed. Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1911.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. St. Matt. xxii. 37-40.

friendly alien. Christ broadened its meaning so as to include every man without exception, good or wicked, friend or foe. Men must love one another, because they are brothers. They are brothers, because they are children of the same heavenly Father<sup>87</sup> who loves them all, who gives the blessings of His Providence, the sunshine and the fruitful rain, to all, unjust as well as just, who goes in quest of the sinner, as the shepherd seeks for his lost sheep, who is no longer robed in the lightnings of Sinai, but shines with the radiance of kindness and love. Men must forgive one another as they hope to be forgiven. For how can they ask of their Father what they themselves refuse to a brother? Christ's Law of Charity, therefore, may be briefly expressed thus: "Love God, for He is your loving Father. Love and be indulgent to one another, for you are all His children. Love and forgive, as you hope to be loved and to be forgiven." Christ, unlike all other teachers, drew men close to God. He taught them to turn to God with a warm, personal love, and to see His image in their fellow-man.<sup>88</sup>

**His Doctrine of the Law of Sincerity.**—Christ would have no mere outward sanctity, the sanctity of the Scribes and Pharisees who made light of internal sin. "Ye fools," He said to them, "did not He that made that which is without, make also that which is within?"<sup>89</sup> God is as much the author of the inner as the outer man, and will have service of them both. We must pluck anger and all uncleanness from our hearts. Our sanctity must be sound to the core.<sup>90</sup>

**His Doctrine of the Supreme Importance of the Human Soul.**—The human soul is infinitely more precious than

<sup>87</sup> In Natural Religion, God would be addressed as "Father," because He is the Creator of the human soul, a spirit made to His own image; in Revealed Religion, the word "Father" takes on a higher sense, because by grace, God has made us sharers in His own Divine Nature (St. Thomas: *S.T.*, I, q. 33, a. 3 c).

<sup>88</sup> St. Matt. v., vi, vii.

<sup>89</sup> St. Luke xi. 40.

<sup>90</sup> St. Matt. v. 23-30.

anything else in the world. The loss of friends, the loss of all our possessions, the loss of life itself are all as nothing compared with the loss of the soul: "What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever shall save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel shall save it."<sup>91</sup> Others before Christ had perceived this truth, but dimly and as through a veil. He was the first to give it clear and fearless expression.

**His Ideals of Moral Excellence.**—Profound reverence for God, perfect submission to His will, and readiness to rise to heroic heights of self-denial in His service were Christ's ideals of moral excellence.

*Note.*—1. (a) Had Christ not been God, or one sent by God, His teaching on natural religion would have failed for want of authority. (b) Clear though His teaching was in its main purport, it is obscure in some points. For instance, we are not always sure whether the heroic virtues which He commends are for all, or only for the few, or how in individual cases His doctrine should be applied. Hence the necessity of having always with us a living, infallible voice authorized to speak in His name, and to give the true interpretation.

2. Socrates (469-399 B.C.) is regarded as the noblest man of pagan antiquity, but he cannot be compared with Our Saviour. Socrates was the foe of pretended knowledge. He urged men to strive after precise ideas of goodness, holiness, justice, beauty, etc. He was put to death by the Athenian democracy in a moment of frenzy, not because of his supposed doctrines or method, but because of the profligacy and disloyalty of some of his companions. Though superior to his contemporaries in intellectual power, he shared the loose notions of his day in regard to chastity. He concerned himself only with the better educated among the Athenians. Even these he did not so much instruct as stimulate to inquiry. He undoubtedly helped to purify the gross popular notion of the Deity, but his ideas about a future state were vague in the extreme, and he had no conception of the brotherhood of man. Since he was born into a highly cultured state, and had as his contemporaries men of the first rank in philosophy, history, and art (*e.g.*, Anaxagoras, Thucydides, Euripides), the develop-

<sup>91</sup> St. Mark viii. 35, 36.

ment of his talent was, in great measure, due to environment. Our Saviour, if we view Him from the human standpoint, enjoyed no such advantage. He spent His youth and manhood among peasants or artisans of little or no education.

**THE TESTIMONY OF RATIONALISTS.**—The German philosopher, Kant, says: "We may readily admit that, had not the Gospels first taught the general moral principles (*i.e.*, the precepts of natural religion) in their full purity, our intellect would not even now understand them so perfectly." Harnack,<sup>92</sup> who does not admit that there was anything supernatural in Christ, cannot find words sufficiently emphatic to express admiration for His moral teaching. His sayings and parables, he says, are simplicity itself in their main purport, and yet they contain a depth of meaning which we can never fathom; in His personality, He is not like an heroic penitent or an enthusiastic prophet who is dead to the world, but He is a man who has rest and peace in His own soul and who can give life to the souls of others; He speaks to men as a mother speaks to her child. It is unnecessary to quote the opinions of other rationalists. All are agreed that Christ in His character and His doctrine was immeasurably beyond the noblest teachers that ever lived.

**Conclusion.**—(1) It is admitted, therefore, that Christ was perfect as a man, was unsurpassed, unequalled as a teacher. But Christ claimed emphatically and persistently that He was God. We must admit that His claim was just, that He *was* God, or else face the terrible conclusion that He was a deceiver or a victim to some hallucination; in other words, we must say that the most perfect of mankind was a shameless liar and blasphemer or a pitiable maniac. Such is the colossal absurdity to which

<sup>92</sup> *What is Christianity?* II (end); English translation. He quotes (p. 4) Goethe, another rationalist, as saying: "Let intellectual and spiritual culture progress, and the human mind expand, as much as it will; beyond the grandeur and the moral elevation of Christianity, as it sparkles and shines in the Gospels, the human mind will not advance."

Rationalists are reduced, an absurdity which, when they realize it, must convince them that their entire position is untenable.

(2) The character of Christ—His wisdom, His goodness, His innocence—so absolutely above the limitations and frailties of human nature—a miracle of perfection—is wholly inexplicable without special reference to a unique Divine intervention. His very character therefore, is in itself a Divine testimony to the truth of His doctrine—to the truth of His claim to be God.

*The Divine origin of Judaism.*—The Divinity of Christ establishes the Divine origin not only of Christianity, but also of the preparatory religion of Judaism. Christ, in His human generation, was a man of the Jewish race. For nearly thirty years He professed and practised the Jewish religion. Therefore, it follows that the Jewish religion was what it claimed to be, a religion given to the Jewish race by God, and that the accounts of all pre-Christian revelation which its sacred books contain must be accepted as of Divine authority.

The Divinity of Christ therefore assures us of His own revelation, and of the revelations given before His time to mankind in general and to the Jewish race in particular.

## APPENDIX

### I

#### PROOF OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST FROM THE RAPID PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY AND THE FORTITUDE OF THE MARTYRS

Tacitus says<sup>93</sup> that in the first persecution of the Church (64–68 A.D.) under Nero "a vast multitude of Christians" were put to death. Fifty years later, Pliny,<sup>94</sup> the Proprætor of Bithynia in Asia Minor, reports to the Emperor Trajan that he is startled and perplexed by the number, influence, and pertinacity of the Christians he finds in his district and in the neighbouring province of

<sup>93</sup> *Annals* xv. 44. Tacitus (55–120 A.D. approx.). <sup>94</sup> *Lib. x.* Ep. 97.

Pontus. St. Justin Martyr writing about 150 A.D., says : "There is no race of men, barbarian or Greek, nay, of those who live in waggons or who are shepherds or nomads in tents among whom prayers and eucharists are not offered to the Father and Maker of the Universe through the name of the crucified Jesus."<sup>95</sup> At the conversion of the Emperor Constantine in 324 A.D., about one-twelfth of the Roman world was Christian. The proportion had risen to one-half about the year 400 A.D. Three decades later an imperial document declared that paganism had almost completely disappeared. The triumph of the new creed was social as well as numerical. Gradually it had worked its way upwards from despised toilers to proud officials, from ignorant Jews to learned philosophers. Such a rapid and world-wide revolution cannot be explained by natural causes :—(1) The founder of the religion was, in the eyes of the world, a poor Galilean tradesman. Four of His Apostles were fishermen, and one a petty tax-collector. When SS. Peter and John, after the first Christian miracle, were arraigned before the Council, wonder was expressed that they, being "illiterate and ignorant men,"<sup>96</sup> had the presumption to preach a new Gospel. The same charge was repeated many times in the years that followed. "Christians," said their opponents, "are fools . . . the lowest dregs of the people . . . unpolished boors, ignorant even of the sordid arts of life ; they do not understand even civil matters, how can they understand Divine ? . . . They have left their tongs, mallets, and anvils to preach about the things of heaven."<sup>97</sup> Such was the

<sup>95</sup> Dial. cum. Tryph. n. 117.

<sup>96</sup> Acts iv. 13.

<sup>97</sup> For references, see Newman, *Grammar of Assent*, p. 468. The noble Roman pagans regarded Christ also as just one of the rabble, because He had been a carpenter. They despised all hand-workers and grouped them under the symbol of the ass, the poor farm-drudge ; but, as Chesterton says in one of his great poems, that humble creature had his day of honour when there were palms before his feet. The contemptuous use of the word "ass" comes down to English speakers from pagan Greece and Rome ; it is anti-labour and anti-Christian, and should be avoided.

character the Christian teachers bore. Against them were pitted the power, wealth, and intelligence of the Roman Empire. (2) The doctrine preached by the Apostles was new and repellent to the worldly-minded. It demanded faith and humble submission, brotherly love and self-sacrifice unto death, from a people sunk in materialism, lustful, proud, revengeful, and almost incapable of any elevated concept of the Deity. It urged them to smash to pieces the long hallowed images of gods that were nothing more, they were now told, than personifications of the powers of nature and of base, human passions. It bade them forsake their ancient religion, so flattering to the senses, with its noble temples, its stately ritual, its days of public amusement, and attach themselves to a joyless band of despicable men whose eyes were fixed on the things of another world, and who bowed down in worship before the image of a crucified malefactor.

But it may be objected, perhaps the very corruption of the world at the time made men sick of vice and long for a great moral reform. We reply : (1) that at Rome in those days the Stoic philosophers taught a very pure system of morals, and yet they made no impression on the masses ; (2) that admiration for Christian morals is very far removed from full faith in Christian teaching and from the practice of Christian precepts ; (3) that we cannot conceive how, without the grace of the Holy Spirit, men could ever have overcome their repugnance for what must have seemed the unspeakable folly or blasphemy of its central doctrine that a Galilean workman was the Son of God. But, again, it may be urged that the rapid propagation of Christianity can be explained by the ease and security with which men could travel in those days to all parts of the Roman Empire. We reply : (1) that other religions, e.g., the worship of Mithra and Isis, enjoyed similar facilities, and yet failed to win and retain world-wide acceptance ; (2) that while Roman roads and Roman security on land and sea helped to

speed the Christian messenger to the furthest limits of the earth, all such advantages were far more than counter-vailed by the edge of the Roman sword; ten times, that vast empire concentrated all its might on the destruction of the infant Church, and, ten times, the followers of the poor Galilean emerged triumphant.<sup>98</sup>

The persecution of Christianity, in its severity and duration, in the number, quality, and fortitude of its victims forms a unique episode in history. The hostility of the Empire, never dormant for three centuries, broke out with especial violence on ten separate occasions. "The very young and the very old, the child,<sup>99</sup> the youth in the heyday of his passions, the sober man of middle age, maidens and mothers of families, boors and slaves as well as philosophers and nobles, solitary confessors and companies of men and women—all these were seen equally to defy the powers of darkness to do their worst. . . . They faced the implements of torture as the soldier takes his place before the enemy's battery. They cheered and ran forward to meet his attack, and, as it were, dared him, if he would, to destroy the numbers who kept closing up the foremost rank, as their comrades who had filled it fell."<sup>100</sup> But their courage was not as the courage of a hardened soldier; he has been trained to valour; he goes into battle, not as a lamb to the slaughter, not as a passive victim merely to suffer and to die, but with weapons in his hands, prepared to give blow for blow; and in fulfilling his duty he is supported by the conviction that to stand his ground is safer than to retreat, or by shame of cowardice, or by desire to win the applause of men; whereas the martyrs, from the world's standpoint, had everything to lose and nothing to gain from their fortitude; they—many of them no more than poor little children—suffered themselves to be smeared with

<sup>98</sup> See page 169 for the difference between the spread of Christianity and the spread of Mohammedanism.

<sup>99</sup> On child-martyrs, see Devas: *The Key to the World's Progress*, p. 74. Longmans, Green.

<sup>100</sup> Newman: *Grammar of Assent*, pp. 477, 478.

pitch and set alight, to be flung into boiling cauldrons, to be torn to pieces by the beasts of the amphitheatre, and all this amid the execrations of the crowd who cursed their obstinacy and promised them every reward, if they would but yield. All their strength came from the one Thought, the one Image of their Crucified Saviour whom they loved with an impassioned love. But how, without the inspiration of God, could that same Thought have "entered into myriads of men, women, and children of all ranks, especially the lower, and have had the power to wean them from their indulgences and sins, and to nerve them against the most cruel tortures, and to last in vigour as a sustaining influence for seven or eight generations, till . . . it broke the obstinacy of the strongest and wisest government which the world has ever seen?"<sup>101</sup>

To put the whole argument briefly:—The rapid propagation of Christianity among all classes throughout the world was miraculous, (1) because its preachers were men of no worldly influence; (2) because its chief doctrine was strange and repellent, while its system of morals was severe and offered no bribe to human infirmity; (3) because it was resisted by all the power of the Roman Empire.

The fortitude of the Martyrs was miraculous, (1) because the persecutions extended over three centuries; (2) because vast numbers of every rank and age, including children of tender years, suffered; (3) because their constancy was proof against the most terrible tortures; (4) because they were unmoved in face of the attractive rewards promised them, if they yielded; (5) because, in the throes of death they gave a beautiful and super-human manifestation of Christian virtue, of the joyful acceptance of death and suffering, of seraphic love, of profound humility, and of the very spirit of Christ on the Cross, praying with full heart for the salvation of their enemies, and blessing the very hands that were red with

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 465.



their blood. It is the combination of all these features, a combination unique in human history, that sets beyond the possibility of doubt the miraculous character of the endurance of the early Christians. The persecutions to which other religions have been subjected were either not so lasting or not so severe or not so willingly borne, and were certainly never accompanied by a great, steady, and continuous effulgence of Christian virtue.

In the early history of Christianity, therefore, we are confronted with two great miracles, the miracle of propagation and the miracle of endurance, in other words with two irresistible testimonies from God that the Christian religion was true, and that Christ, its Founder, was, as He claimed, the Son of God, equal to His Father.

## APPENDIX

### II

#### CHRIST, A LIVING FORCE : A PROOF OF HIS DIVINITY

Newman represents Napoleon in the solitude of his imprisonment as communing with himself, thus :<sup>102</sup>

"I have been accustomed to put before me the examples of Alexander and Cæsar, with a hope of rivalling their exploits, and living in the minds of men for ever. Yet, after all, in what sense does Cæsar, in what sense does Alexander live ? At best, nothing but their names is known. . . . Nay, even their names do but flit up and down the world like ghosts, mentioned only on particular occasions, or from accidental associations. Their chief home is the schoolroom ; they have a foremost place in boys' grammars and exercise books. . . . So low is heroic Alexander fallen, so low is imperial Cæsar, ' ut pueris placeat et declamatio fiat.'

"But, on the contrary, there is just one Name in the whole world that lives ; it is the Name of One who passed His years in obscurity, and who died a malefactor's death. Eighteen hundred years have gone since that time, but still it has its hold on the human mind. It has possessed the world, and it maintains possession. Amid the most varied nations, under the most diversified

<sup>102</sup> *Grammar of Assent*, pp. 490, 491. The argument was Napoleon's, the words are Newman's.

circumstances, in the most cultivated, in the rudest races and intellects, in all classes of society, the Owner of that great Name reigns. High and low, rich and poor, acknowledge Him. Millions of souls are conversing with Him, are venturing on His word, are looking for His Presence. Palaces, sumptuous, innumerable, are raised to His honour ; His image, as in the hour of His deepest humiliation, is triumphantly displayed in the proud city, in the open country, in the corners of streets, on the tops of mountains. It sanctifies the ancestral hall, and the bedchamber ; it is the subject for the exercise of the highest genius in the imitative arts. It is worn next the heart in life ; it is held before the failing eyes in death. Here, then, is One who is *not* a mere name, who is not a mere fiction, who is a reality. He is dead and gone, but still He lives,—lives as a living, energetic thought of successive generations, as the awful motive power of a thousand great events. He has done without effort what others with life-long struggles have not done. Can He be less than Divine ? Who is He but the Creator Himself, who is sovereign over His own works, towards whom our eyes and hearts turn instinctively, because He is our Father and our God ?"

The argument may be put briefly as follows : The power of Christ over the hearts of men is no natural phenomenon. It is miraculous. It is God's testimony to the Divinity of Christ.

*Note.*—The mighty name of Christ shows its power in the savage hatred as well as in the tender love it evokes. Once known He cannot be forgotten. Those on earth who have revolted from Him cannot tear His image from their minds ; they are obsessed by it and rage against it like the demons of hell.

#### The Various Methods of Proving the Divinity of Christ

##### A

God has made known to us by many miracles that Christ is His Son, one in nature with Him. These miracles are not all alike ; they may be divided into different classes ; each class gives us a distinct method of proving Christ's Divinity :

*Miracles relating directly to Christ.*—1. The miracles wrought by Christ Himself during His life-time on earth, and the miracle of His Resurrection. These are the miracles on which we depend for our main proof (Chapter VII, pages 90–103).

2. The miracle of Christ's undying influence in the world (Chapter VII, Appendix II).

*Miracles relating indirectly to Christ through His Church.*—

3. The manifold miracle of the Church, as seen in her several characteristics and age-long vitality, proves that she is from God, and that her belief in Christ's Divinity must be true (Introductory Chapter, Appendix).

4. The two-fold miracle of the Church's rapid propagation and the fortitude of the early martyrs proves that the belief of the first Christians in Christ's Divinity must have been true (Chapter VII, Appendix I).

In (3), we take a general view of the Church; in (4), we look at a special phase of her history.

### B

Besides the four methods given above of proving Christ's Divinity from miracles, there is a fifth in which we show that Christ, measured by ordinary human standards, was the most perfect of our race, and that we must either admit the truth of His claim to be God or descend to the utter absurdity of supposing that a character of supreme and unique excellence could have been stained by the grossest blasphemy or a pitiable illusion (pages 103-113).

## SECTION III

### CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS

#### INTRODUCTORY

**The Catholic Church alone is the Infallible Teacher of the Christian Revelation**

*The position of the Church in the Divine Plan.*—The Christian Revelation—i.e., the doctrine and the way of life taught by Christ—was not merely for a single nation, nor for the children of a certain epoch: it was for all men, and for all time. To secure that it might be accessible to all in every age, Christ by His Divine Authority instituted a society, His Church, world-wide and imperishable, which was to be its sole, authentic and infallible teacher.

Its mission was to bring to all men the light of divine truth, to show them their heavenly destiny and help them to attain it. Through the Church, God would bestow His gifts on men, making them His sons and co-heirs with Christ, blessing them with the spirit of gentleness and with that peace of heart which the world does not know. And, after death, He would reward them for their faithful and humble service in the Church of His Son by unveiling Himself to them, so that they might be united to Him in eternal love and happiness.

#### OUTLINE OF THE PROOF IN CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS

Chapters VIII, IX. We have proved that Jesus Christ is God himself. We shall now prove that for the benefit of all mankind, of every race and generation, He founded an infallible Church to speak and act in His name until

the end of the world ; and that He gave her certain Marks or Notes by which she could be easily known. These Marks are four<sup>1</sup> in number, viz., Unity (in Faith, Government and Worship), Universality, Sanctity and Apostolicity.

Chapter X. The Catholic Church alone possesses these marks. Therefore the Catholic Church alone is the True Church founded by Christ, and is the One and Only Infallible Teacher for all time of His Revelation.

<sup>1</sup> The four notes of the Church are properties or qualities easily perceived ; in virtue of Christ's institution, all four together are always present in the true Church but not in a false sect.

Besides these four notes the Church has other characteristic properties, e.g., Visibility, Imperishability, Infallibility. She has always claimed these characteristics. They might be called negative notes because the absence of any of them in a religious society, or the absence of the claim to them, shows that the society is not the Church of Christ.

## CHAPTER VIII

### JESUS CHRIST FOUNDED A CHURCH

#### Summary.

- A. The mission of Christ.—He was sent into the world by His heavenly Father to cleanse all men from sin, to make them children of God and heirs to His Kingdom. These blessings He won, and made accessible to every individual, on condition of faith in His doctrine, obedience to His precepts, and participation in the sacred rites He instituted.
- B. The mission of the Apostles.—Christ preached to but a few. He sent the Apostles to preach to all. He sent them to teach, to govern, and to minister. They obeyed His word.
- C. The foundation of the Church.—Christ, by giving the Apostles this commission, thereby founded a society, His Church—Christ saves us through His Church.

**Note.**—Students who are reading a short course should go at once to § C, page 126.

#### A

**The Mission of Jesus Christ.**—(1) Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was sent into the world by His heavenly Father : " he who honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath sent Him " ;<sup>1</sup> " Do you say of Him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, ' Thou blasphemest,' because I said ' I am the Son of God ? ' " <sup>2</sup> (2) He came to cleanse men from sin : the angel, addressing St. Joseph, said : " She "—the Blessed Virgin—" shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins " ;<sup>3</sup> " the Son of Man is come," He said Himself, " to save that which was lost." <sup>4</sup> He was to save them by His Passion and Death : " the Son of Man [is come] to give His life, a redemption for many " ;<sup>5</sup> and at the Last Supper He said, taking the chalice, " this is My Blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins." <sup>6</sup> (3) He came, not only to save men from sin, not only to give them life, but to give them a higher and fuller life : " I am come that they may have life and have it more abundantly " ;<sup>7</sup> He came to make men children of God : " God sent His Son," says St. Paul, " that we might receive the adoption of sons." <sup>8</sup> He came, therefore, to deliver us from sin, and to make us children of God and heirs to His Kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> St. John v. 23. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* x. 36. <sup>3</sup> St. Matt. i. 21. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* xviii. 11. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* xx. 28. <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* xxvi. 28. <sup>7</sup> St. John x. 10. <sup>8</sup> Gal. iv. 4.

(4) He accomplished His mission : in His prayer to His heavenly Father at the Last Supper, He said : " I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do." <sup>9</sup> (5) The blessings, viz., remission of sin and Divine sonship, which He purchased for mankind, He has made accessible to all on the following conditions : (a) that they believe in Him and His teaching : " This is the will of My Father that sent Me that everyone that seeth the Son and believeth in Him may have life everlasting " ; <sup>10</sup> " he that believeth not (My Gospel) shall be condemned." <sup>11</sup> (b) That they obey His commandments : " You are My friends, if you do the things I command you " ; <sup>12</sup> " he that loveth Me not, keepeth not My word " ; <sup>13</sup> (c) that they avail themselves of the sacred rites He instituted : for instance, He says of Baptism, " he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved " ; <sup>14</sup> " unless a man be born of water and the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God " ; <sup>15</sup> and of the Blessed Eucharist He says, " except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood you shall not have life in you." <sup>16</sup>—(As we shall presently see, these three conditions can only be fulfilled by membership in the Church which Christ established. He appointed the Church to convey His doctrine and commandments to men and to give them the sacraments).

## B

**The Mission of the Apostles. THEIR PREPARATION.**—Christ did not Himself teach all men. He taught but a few. These He sent forth to teach all the world what He had taught them. He chose twelve men from among the larger following of His disciples : " He made that twelve should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach." <sup>17</sup> For about three years they lived in closest intimacy with Him, and were trained by Him for their future work : " all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father," He said to them, " I have made known to you." <sup>18</sup> Their defects of knowledge or memory were all to be made good : " the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you." <sup>19</sup>

**I. CHRIST SENT THEM TO TEACH ALL MEN.**—He sent them first to the Jews : " Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles . . . but

<sup>9</sup> St. John xvii. 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* vi. 40.

<sup>11</sup> St. Mark xvi. 16.

<sup>12</sup> St. John xv. 14.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* xiv. 24.

<sup>14</sup> St. Mark xvi. 16.

<sup>15</sup> St. John iii. 5.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* vi. 54. It is sufficient to show, at this point of our argument, that Christ instituted some sacred rites ; we need not inquire into the precise number.

<sup>17</sup> St. Mark iii. 14.

<sup>18</sup> St. John xv. 15.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* xiv. 26.

go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." <sup>20</sup> Later, He sent them to all mankind. He " died for all." <sup>21</sup> Therefore, He said : " Teach ye all nations " : <sup>22</sup> " go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature " ; <sup>23</sup> " you shall be witnesses for Me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even unto the uttermost part of the earth." <sup>24</sup>

The Apostles obeyed His word, spreading the new message far and wide, so that not many years later St. Paul could say to the Romans that their faith was " spoken of in the whole world." <sup>25</sup> Likewise, he says to the Colossians : " the Gospel which is come unto you, as also it is in the whole world." <sup>26</sup>

**II. HE SENT THEM TO GOVERN ALL MEN.**—He sent them not only to teach but to govern, *i.e.*, to make laws, to judge, and to punish. For He said to them : " As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you " ; <sup>27</sup> " all power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore teach ye all nations . . . and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." <sup>28</sup> Therefore, Christ clothed His Apostles with His own authority, and promised them unceasing support. What He had been to them, they were to be to the whole world. He had been not only their teacher, but their ruler and master. So, they were to be the rulers and masters of the world. Again, He said to them : " if he"—*i.e.*, the sinner—" will not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican"—*i.e.*, let him be excommunicated—" Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven," <sup>29</sup> giving them thereby supreme power in all spiritual matters : their laws, judgments, sentences or remissions would all be ratified and sanctioned in heaven.

The Apostles exercised the triple power which He gave them : at the Council of Jerusalem they imposed laws of abstinence on Gentile converts, requiring them to abstain " from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood and from things strangled " ; <sup>30</sup> St. Paul determines the qualifications of those who should be admitted to Holy Orders ; <sup>31</sup> he delivers to the Corinthians a series of precepts and admonitions, ritual, doctrinal, and moral, concluding with the promise that, on coming to them, he would set " the rest in order " ; <sup>32</sup> he cuts off from the faithful and delivers over to Satan the blasphemers, Hymeneus and Alexander, <sup>33</sup> and the

<sup>20</sup> St. Matt. x. 5, 6.

<sup>21</sup> I Cor. v. 15.

<sup>22</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>23</sup> St. Mark xvi. 15.

<sup>24</sup> Acts i. 8.

<sup>25</sup> Rom. i. 8.

<sup>26</sup> Col. i. 5, 6.

<sup>27</sup> St. John xx. 21.

<sup>28</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 18–20.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* xviii. 18.

<sup>30</sup> Acts xv. 29.

<sup>31</sup> I Tim. iii. 2 ; Titus i. 6–9.

<sup>32</sup> I Cor. xi. 34 ; cf. *ibid.* vii. x, xvi.

<sup>33</sup> I Tim. i. 20.

incestuous Corinthian ;<sup>34</sup> he instructs Timothy as to the trial of priests, forbidding him to receive an accusation "except under two or three witnesses";<sup>35</sup> he speaks of coming to the Corinthians "with a rod,"<sup>36</sup> and of having the power "in readiness" to punish disobedience.<sup>37</sup>

III. HE SENT THEM TO SANCTIFY MEN BY MEANS OF SACRED RITES.—He bade them administer Baptism: "teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."<sup>38</sup> He gave them the power to forgive sins, and, therefore, we must infer that He bade them administer the Sacrament of Penance: "whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained";<sup>39</sup> and, after His Resurrection, addressing the Apostles, "He said to them . . . that penance and the remission of sins should be preached in His Name unto all nations."<sup>40</sup> He bade them imitate Him in the consecration of bread and wine: "and taking bread He gave thanks, and brake and gave to them saying: This is My Body which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me. In like manner the chalice also . . . saying: This is the chalice, the new testament in My Blood which shall be shed for you."<sup>41</sup>

These sacred rites the Apostles administered. We are told, for instance, that they baptized: "they therefore that received his (St. Peter's) word were baptized";<sup>42</sup> that they fed the faithful with the Body and Blood of the Redeemer: "the chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ? And the bread which we break is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord?"<sup>43</sup>

### C

**The Foundation of the Church.**—Christ, as we have already shown,<sup>44</sup> sent His Apostles into the world, clothed with all His own divine authority. In words most solemn, He said to them: "As the Father hath sent Me, so also, I send you." He sent them out into the "whole world" to "all nations" and promised to be with them "all days" until the end of time. He sent them (1) to teach all men His doctrine, (2) to rule all men with His

authority, (3) to make all men holy by means of the sacraments which He instituted. In thus sending them, He founded a religious society, His Church.<sup>45</sup> A society is a number of men united for a common object to be attained by common means and under a common authority. In a society, therefore we distinguish four essentials: there must be (1) a number of men; (2) a common object; (3) common means for its attainment; (4) a common authority binding them together. These four essentials were found in the Church from her very beginning. It was Christ who gave them to her. Hence Christ is the Founder of the Church.

*The Church is a Society.*—From the day of the first Pentecost onwards the Church stood out before the eyes of the world as a fully equipped society; it had all the four essentials: (1) *It was made up of a number of men.* Christ chose twelve Apostles, whom He sent, invested with His own authority, to preach to all men; on the first occasion of their exercise of the ministry, thousands joined them. (2) *The members of this body sought a common object, viz., sanctification and salvation.* Christ and His Apostles were one in purpose: "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you."<sup>46</sup> The object of the society He had called into being was manifestly the object for which He had come into the world, viz., to cleanse men from sin, to make them holy, to make them children of God and heirs to His kingdom. (3) *The common object was to be attained by the employment of common means, viz., belief in the doctrine of Christ as taught by the Apostles, obedience to His commandments and the use of the sacred rites instituted by Him and delivered by Him to His Apostles for the sanctification of all the members of the society.* (4) *The members were bound together under a common authority.* The Apostles were not sent to act independently of one another, but to govern by their collective authority. Had Christ intended that each of the Apostles should have his own distinct and independent following, He would have founded, not one society, but many societies. But He never spoke of more than one. He always spoke of His Church, never of His Churches; "on this rock I will build My Church."<sup>47</sup> He likened it to "a sheepfold," "a kingdom," "a city," words which imply unity of government or administration. The Apostles themselves regarded the Church as a single

<sup>34</sup> I Cor. v. 1-5. <sup>35</sup> I Tim. v. 19. <sup>36</sup> I Cor. iv. 21. <sup>37</sup> I Cor. x. 6.

<sup>38</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 19. <sup>39</sup> St. John xx. 23. <sup>40</sup> St. Luke xxiv. 47.

<sup>41</sup> St. Luke xxii. 19, 20. <sup>42</sup> Acts ii. 41; cf. viii. 16, 38; ix. 18; x. 48.

<sup>43</sup> I Cor. x. 16; cf. *ibid.* xi. 27.

<sup>44</sup> In sections A and B of this Chapter.

<sup>45</sup> "Church" comes from a Greek word, κηριακόν, which means "belonging to the Lord," i.e., the Lord's House.

<sup>46</sup> St. John xx. 21. <sup>47</sup> St. Matt. xvi. 18.

society under their collective authority. At the Council of Jerusalem they issued a decree binding men who had been converted by one or other of the Apostles. The Galatians, although the converts of St. Paul, recognized the authority of St. Peter and others of his colleagues, but St. Paul explains to them that he and his fellow Apostles are of one mind.<sup>48</sup> St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John and St. James wrote authoritative letters to communities which had not been converted by them but by other Apostles.<sup>49</sup> These facts of history establish the existence of a common authority in the society from its very foundation.

*Christ is the Founder of the Church.*—He who gives a society its four essentials is the founder of that society. But it was Christ who gave these four essentials to His Church; therefore Christ is the founder of the Church.

Christ gave the Church the four essentials by which it is constituted a society: (1) because it was Christ himself who called the first members, the twelve Apostles, the seventy-two disciples, and several others; it was Christ, who though unseen was regarded as the principal Minister of Baptism, the rite by which every member was admitted to the society; (2) because it was Christ himself who set up the common object to be attained, viz., the sanctification and salvation of souls; (3) because it was Christ himself who gave them the common means which they were to employ for its attainment, it was He who gave them the doctrine to be believed, the commandments to be obeyed, the rites to be availed of; (4) because it was Christ himself who gave the government of the Church its authority, its right to demand and exact obedience. The Apostles were not self-appointed; they were not appointed by the people; they were appointed by Christ. And after their appointment they were not left to their own discretion; they were always attended by the assistance of Christ, "Behold I am with you all days"; their commands were His commands; their government was His government; they ruled as His representatives. Many men have founded societies, but no man ever founded a society in the intimate, complete and thorough manner in which Christ founded the Church.

*Christ saves us through His Church.*—Since Christ conveys to us through the Church, and through no other channel, all the blessings He has earned for us on the Cross, we may speak of Him not only as having died to redeem and save us, but also, and more precisely, as

having died to give us the Church. St. Paul the Apostle says: "Christ loved the Church and delivered Himself up *for it* . . . that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church."—He "delivered Himself up *for it*," i.e., He delivered Himself unto death for it, to found it and endow it with all the gifts it possesses.

The Church alone, the ever living representative and agent of Christ on earth, shows us the way to heaven and gives us every help to get there. She holds in her hands all the blessings of Calvary. We can obtain them from her, but only if, dismissing all arrogance and in the spirit of little children (for only such, Our Saviour says, can enter the Kingdom of God), we fulfil the following conditions:—(1) that we humbly believe her teaching; (2) that we faithfully obey her laws; (3) that we gratefully receive the Sacraments she offers us.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Putting these conditions in the simplest form, we should say that to be saved, we must *believe* what the Church teaches, and *do* what she tells us.

<sup>48</sup> Gal. i. and ii.

<sup>49</sup> See Chap. IX, "The Church is One."

## CHAPTER IX

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH FOUNDED  
BY CHRIST

**Note.**—It must be carefully noted that in these Chapters (VIII, IX) we are speaking of the nature and characteristics of the Church which Christ founded. In Chapter X we show which one of the existing churches can lawfully claim to be identical with it.

The characteristics of the Church founded by Christ are set forth in the New Testament which we have proved to be a trustworthy historical document.

*Summary.*

The Church of Christ is (I) *Imperishable, Visible*; (II) *One, Universal or Catholic* (membership, therefore, obligatory on all men), *Apostolic, Holy*; (III) *Infallible*.

## I

THE CHURCH FOUNDED BY CHRIST IS IMPERISH-  
ABLE AND VISIBLE

**Christ's Church is Imperishable.**—That the existence of the Church, the society possessing the right to speak to men in the name of God, *was not to be limited to a particular period of time* is manifest from the promise of the abiding presence and assistance of Christ Himself and of the Holy Ghost, a presence and assistance which was to be not temporary but perpetual: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations . . . and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world."<sup>1</sup> "I will ask the Father and He will give You another Paraclete, that He may abide with you forever":<sup>2</sup> "I say to thee," He said to St. Peter, "thou art Peter"—*i.e.*, a rock—"and on this rock I will build my Church

and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,"<sup>3</sup> "The gates of hell," that is, death, destruction, the power of its enemies. These unequivocal promises of Christ made to the society which He founded, seal it with the seal of imperishability: it was to last to the end of the world, teaching, governing, and sanctifying men.<sup>4</sup>

**His Church is Visible.**—Christ established the Church as a visible society, that is, as a society which stood out plainly before the eyes of men as an organized body, consisting of teachers and taught, rulers and subjects, who joined in public worship and made open profession of their belief. The Apostles admitted men to membership of the Church by the public rite of Baptism; they made laws affecting the external behaviour of the faithful, and they exacted obedience; they gave the faithful the command of Christ to confess their faith openly: "every-one therefore that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But he that shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."<sup>5</sup>

## II

THE CHURCH FOUNDED BY CHRIST IS ONE,  
UNIVERSAL, APOSTOLIC, AND HOLY

The fourfold proposition that the Church founded by Christ is one, universal, apostolic, and holy, has been already implicitly established in the course of our proof that the Church is a society. But a more detailed and explicit treatment is necessary.

**Christ's Church is One.**—*General proof of the unity of His Church.*—(a) Christ, in His prayer after the Last Supper,

<sup>3</sup> St. Matt. xvi. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Had Christ intended that His Church should last only for a time, He would have set forth in clear prophecy the signs of its dissolution. The termination of a Divine institution should be as marvellous and manifest as its beginning.

<sup>5</sup> St. Matt. x. 32.

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

<sup>2</sup> St. John xiv. 16.

said: "not for them only"—i.e., His Apostles—"do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me, that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they, also, may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." <sup>6</sup> Christ, therefore, desired for His Church an absolute unity, a unity which should exclude all division, whether in government, doctrine, or worship, for He likens it to the perfect unity of the Father and His Divine Son, and this unity was to be so evidently miraculous as to afford a proof of the Divine Authority of Christ Himself. (b) St. Paul is of one mind with his Lord and Master. He holds that unity is the fundamental characteristic of the Church. Over and over again, he compares the Church to a living body: "as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ. For, in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jew or Gentile." <sup>7</sup> He conceives the members of the Church as parts of the same living organism. Vivified by the same spiritual life, they believe the same doctrine, they participate in the same worship, and yield obedience to one and the same authority.

*Particular proof of the Unity of His Church.* HIS CHURCH IS ONE IN GOVERNMENT.—This particular proposition has been already proved (p. 127). To recapitulate: (1) Christ spoke of His *Church*, not of His *Churches*. Therefore, He meant that His Church should be one society under one government, not several societies, each under its own government, distinct and separate from the rest. (2) He compared His Church to a "sheep-fold," "a city," "a kingdom," thereby implying unity of government. (3) The Apostles themselves regarded the Church as one in government. (See page 127.) Further proofs—(4) Christ said that no kingdom divided

<sup>6</sup> St. John xvii. 20, 21.

<sup>7</sup> I Cor. xii. 12 (f). Cf. Eph. i, v; Rom. xii. See Mgr. Benson's *Christ in the Church*.

against itself can endure.<sup>8</sup> Therefore no division in government could be found in the imperishable society established by Him. (5) The Church, St. Paul says, must be "one body and one Spirit."<sup>9</sup> It must be like the living body; and as in the living body there is but one governing will, so in the Church there must be but one governing authority.

HIS CHURCH IS ONE IN FAITH.—(1) Christ said to the Apostles: "Teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to observe *all* things whatsoever I have commanded you."<sup>10</sup> The Apostles, therefore, were to teach every man the whole doctrine of Christ. They were to insist that every man should believe one and the same body of truths. The Church of Christ, therefore, must be one in faith. (2) In the Church, according to St. Paul, there must be "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."<sup>11</sup> The Church, he says, in the simile he so often repeats, is a living body; and as, in the living body, there is but one mind, so in the Church there must be but one faith. The faithful, he says to the Romans, "with one mind and with one mouth" are to "glorify God and the Father of Our Lord, Jesus Christ."<sup>12</sup> "I beseech you, brethren," he says to the Corinthians, "by the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you, but that you be perfect in the same mind, and in the same judgment."<sup>13</sup> "Mark them who make dissensions and offences contrary to the doctrines which you have learnt, and avoid them, for they that are such serve not Christ Our Lord."<sup>14</sup>

HIS CHURCH IS ONE IN WORSHIP.—The proposition follows directly from the preceding. Worship is nothing more than a practical manifestation of faith. The members of His Church are one in faith; they must, therefore,

<sup>8</sup> St. Matt. xii. 25; St. Mark iii. 24.

<sup>9</sup> Eph. iv. 4.

<sup>10</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

<sup>11</sup> Eph. iv. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Rom. xv. 6.

<sup>13</sup> I Cor. i. 10.

<sup>14</sup> Rom. xvi. 17, 18.



be one also in worship. Their unity of faith excludes the possibility of any disagreement among them as to the rites by which God is to be adored and man sanctified.

Note that, of the three species of unity, unity of faith is the chief. It is, as it were, the root of the other two. Converts to Christianity believed first of all in Christ and His doctrine. Believing His doctrine, they believed, as part of it, that they were bound to worship God in the manner prescribed by Him and to yield obedience to the superiors whom He had appointed for their guidance.

**His Church is Universal or Catholic. The Obligation of Membership.**—HIS CHURCH IS UNIVERSAL OR CATHOLIC.—Christ gave His Apostles a most emphatic command not to confine their teaching to the men of any particular race or social status. He bade them preach the Gospel to “all nations”<sup>15</sup> and to “every creature.”<sup>16</sup> The Apostles obeyed Him: St. Paul applies to himself and his fellow-preachers the words of the Psalmist, “their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world,”<sup>17</sup> and he tells the Colossians that the Gospel is believed “in the whole world.”<sup>18</sup> The Apostle, we must understand, is speaking, not of an absolute, but of a moral catholicity, *i.e.*, of a membership which, in kind and extent, could be described as catholic or universal in the ordinary speech of men. The moral catholicity of the Church was to be both social and numerical: it was to be social, in the sense that the membership of the Church should include men of every condition and grade of culture; it was to be numerical, in the sense that the Church would be widely diffused throughout the world. The Church could not have failed to achieve, within a reasonable time after her foundation, a moral catholicity, because her teachers were supported by Christ Himself in their mission to the world, and because her doctrines, being the doctrines of God, must

<sup>15</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>16</sup> St. Mark xvi. 15.

<sup>17</sup> Rom. ix. 18.

<sup>18</sup> Col. i. 6. See Chapter VIII, B.I.

have made a powerful appeal to the reason and the heart of all well-disposed men. Since the Church of Christ, being imperishable, still exists in the world, it must, for the same reasons, *viz.*, Divine aid and suitability of doctrine to human needs, possess a moral catholicity; and it must, moreover, in accordance with the will of Christ that all men be saved, strive by practical and organized effort for the ideal of absolute universality.

**THE OBLIGATION OF MEMBERSHIP.**—The command of Christ to the Apostles to preach the Gospel to “every creature” implies a corresponding obligation on the part of all men to hear and obey them, and, therefore, to become members of His Church; “preach the Gospel to every creature,” said Christ, “. . . he that believeth not shall be condemned.”<sup>19</sup> No man, therefore, who, on coming to know the true Church, refuses to join it can be saved. Neither can he be saved, if, having once entered the Church, he forsake it through heresy or schism: “a man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid, knowing that he that is such an one is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment.”<sup>20</sup> The Church, as St. Paul says, is the living body whereof Christ is the Head. He who severs himself from the Church, severs himself from Christ, and cannot be saved, for in Christ alone is salvation: “I am the vine,” said Christ, “you the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing. If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth. . . . They shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire and he burneth.”<sup>21</sup>

**His Church is Apostolic.**—By saying that His Church is Apostolic we mean that in every age the rulers of His Church are clothed in the authority given by Christ to

<sup>19</sup> St. Mark xvi. 15, 16.

<sup>20</sup> Titus iii. 10.

<sup>21</sup> St. John xv. 5, 6. See Chapter VIII, B.II. See Chapter X, p. 160.

the Apostles.<sup>22</sup> Christ gave the Apostles authority to speak in His name. He said to them: "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you."<sup>23</sup> ". . . he that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me."<sup>24</sup> As we have seen in the first paragraph of this chapter, Christ placed them in charge of a work that will not be completed until the world ends. The Apostles themselves are dead, yet according to the terms of His assurance they must in some sense remain in the world until the end of time. They can remain in the world only through representatives chosen in the manner which, under divine direction, they themselves prescribed. They must, therefore, have made provision that their authority should be passed on to others and transmitted down the whole line of their successors, so that, in every generation, the rulers of the Church could say: "Our authority is the ever living authority of Christ Himself. Our authority is the authority of the Apostles, for we are one with them by lawful succession." The words of Christ make it clear that the Apostles are the last envoys whom God will send to the human race. The authority which He gave them and their successors He will never give to any others. The mission of the Apostles is final and perpetual. That the Apostles elected others to assist them in their work is plain from the Scriptures themselves; that they went further and made definite provision for their succession during all time, can be proved by many authorities, *e.g.*, St. Clement, who died about 100 A.D., says: "Christ was sent by God, the Apostles by Christ. They appointed bishops and deacons . . . and they made order that when they (the bishops and deacons) died, other men of tried virtue should succeed in their ministry":<sup>25</sup> and St. Irenaeus, writing towards the end of the second

<sup>22</sup> The word "apostolic" has other senses also with which we are not concerned at present.

<sup>23</sup> St. John xx. 21.

<sup>24</sup> St. Luke x. 16.

<sup>25</sup> I Clem. xlii, xlii.

century, speaks of "the bishops and their successors down to our time who have been appointed by the Apostles."<sup>26</sup>

But Christ in giving the Apostles authority over His Church did not make them independent of one another: He made them a united body with St. Peter at their head. (1) He built His Church on St. Peter as its supporting rock:<sup>27</sup> from St. Peter therefore, the other Apostles derived their strength; they belonged to the Church by belonging to St. Peter. (2) To St. Peter He gave the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, which means that St. Peter is master of the gate to that Kingdom, and that only through him could the other Apostles obtain admittance. (3) He gave St. Peter His own office of Good Shepherd:<sup>27a</sup> "Feed My lambs," He said to him, "feed My sheep," which shows that as He, Christ, had been the one and only Shepherd, so now St. Peter was to be the one and only Shepherd in His place, with authority over all, including his brother Apostles, the one supreme Pastor to whom all should listen and whom all should obey. Loyalty to St. Peter and his lawful successors was therefore an outstanding character of the Church founded by Christ.

**His Church is Holy.**<sup>28</sup>—THE CHURCH IS HOLY IN HER FOUNDER.—God Himself is the Founder of the Church, the Author of her organization and all her work. She is holy, therefore, in her system of government, in her doctrine, in her worship, and in her object.

THE CHURCH FOUNDED BY CHRIST IS HOLY IN HER DOCTRINE.—Non-believers admit the excellence of Christ's moral precepts, but Christ rose far above the low level of mere natural ethics and taught a far higher doctrine

<sup>26</sup> Adv. Haer., Book III, Chapter 3.

<sup>27</sup> For fuller treatment of Scriptural evidence, see pp. 181-3.

<sup>27a</sup> Because, of all the Apostles, Peter loved Him most.

<sup>28</sup> Men or things are holy according to the intimacy of their relation to God.

inspired by the Mystery of the Incarnation. Not content with the common virtues, such as truthfulness and honesty which are practised by many pagans, He urged His followers to higher things. He bade them strive to attain the ideals of heroic virtue. He recommended to them profound reverence for God leading to a childlike submission which would manifest itself in fraternal charity, meekness, humility, and self-denial in its various forms, e.g., voluntary poverty, submission to persecution, self-sacrifice even unto death to testify to their faith or to relieve the sufferings and save the souls of others.<sup>29</sup> He summed up all these ideals in one: "Be ye perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect."<sup>30</sup>

This doctrine of holiness with His other teachings He placed in the custody of His Church: "Teach all nations," He said to the Apostles, "teaching them to observe *all things whatsoever* I have commanded you."<sup>31</sup>

**THE CHURCH FOUNDED BY CHRIST IS HOLY IN HER MEMBERS.**—Christ did not say that all the members of His Church, high and low, would be holy, even in the humblest sense of the word: man may abuse the liberty God has given him, and choose evil instead of good. So, we find that among the Apostles, who had lived in intimate friendship with God Himself, there was a traitor; so, we find that Christ likens His Kingdom (Church) to a net that enmeshes worthless fish as well as good,<sup>32</sup> or to a field wherein the cockle grows among the wheat.<sup>33</sup> Still, *because of His divine assistance*, the Church of Christ, as a whole, must at all times be remarkable for sanctity; she cannot fail in this object of her existence, and she must exhibit many instances of the realisation of the highest ideals. Heroic sanctity must be manifested among her children in all ages. His Church is "the good tree" that "bringeth forth good fruit." She must needs

<sup>29</sup> Read the Sermon on the Mount, St. Matt. v, vi, vii.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* v. 48. See pages 163-166.

<sup>31</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 20. <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* xiii. 24-30.

<sup>33</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 47, 48.

bring forth the good fruit of virtue, for Christ, her Founder who is God Himself, will be always with her.

**HER SANCTITY PROVED BY MIRACLES.**—He will never cease to prove her sanctity by miracles, for He said: "These signs shall follow them that believe: In My name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover";<sup>34</sup> "he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do."<sup>35</sup>

### III

#### THE CHURCH FOUNDED BY CHRIST IS INFALLIBLE

The Church founded by Christ is infallible, that is, His Church cannot err in teaching and interpreting, as of faith, the truths which Christ delivered to her keeping.

**Indirect Proofs.**—(1) If it be admitted that His Church can err in exacting the assent of faith for her doctrine it follows (a) that God has bound men on pain of damnation to believe what is false: "He that believeth not," He said, "will be condemned";<sup>36</sup> and (b) that there can be no certainty whether any particular doctrine is the doctrine of God.—(2) If there be no organ of infallibility on earth, it follows that Christ's office as teacher ceased when He left the world; but see what this involves. Though God, all through the long waste of centuries, had been preparing the hearts of men for the coming of His Son, by vouchsafing to them revelation after revelation, and by setting up a whole system of elaborate ceremonial, yet we are asked to suppose that, in spite of all this, when the Redeemer came at last, He taught infallibly for but a few years a mere handful of people of one

<sup>34</sup> St. Mark xvi. 17, 18.

<sup>35</sup> St. John xiv. 12.

<sup>36</sup> St. Mark xvi. 16.

generation in a small corner of the world. Common sense rejects such an absence of wise proportion; it justly expects that what God granted to the men of Judea in the days of Christ, He has granted also to the men of every generation down to the end of time; it justly claims that God has established an organ of infallibility among us through which we can still hear the infallible voice of His Divine Son.

**Direct Proofs.**—*Proof from Imperishability.*—His Church will never perish. She will always teach men with Divine authority, because Christ has promised to be always with her. Hence, she can never err in her teaching. *Proof from Unity of Faith:* His Church must at all times teach and believe the same body of Divine truths. Possessing unity of faith, she must also possess, the means by which that unity may be preserved and defended. Owing to the waywardness or wickedness of men, the plainest doctrines of Christianity, as we know from history, and even the writings of St. Paul himself, are liable to constant misinterpretation. Christ's Church therefore is always threatened with error, and error would be fatal to unity. Christ therefore must have empowered His Church to declare with an infallible voice whether a doctrine has been revealed or not, and to expel from her fold and threaten with damnation all who reject her decision.

Since the Church founded by Christ is Imperishable, it exists in the world at the present day clothed in all its attributes. It is Visible, One, Catholic, Holy, Apostolic, and Infallible.

## CHAPTER X

### THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS THE TRUE CHURCH

**Note.**—In the preceding chapter, we set forth all the characteristics of the Church of Christ. In this chapter we make use of *four* of them to prove that His Church is the Catholic Church and none other.

#### Summary.

##### I. The true Church must have all the following marks:

1. It must be universal and one—one in government, faith, and worship;
2. it must be holy;
3. it must be apostolic.

##### II. The false Christian Churches:

1. Protestantism: its origin; its doctrines. It has none of the marks of the true Church.
2. The Schismatic Greek Church: its origin; its doctrine. It has not all the marks of the true Church.
3. The Branch Theory, viz., that the true Church consists of the Church of England, the Schismatic Greek Church, and the Catholic Church—Rejected, because destructive of unity.

##### III. The Catholic Church alone has all the marks of the true Church.

##### IV. Objections answered.

##### Appendix. Non-Christian religions.

## I

**Method of Identification.**—The Church of Christ, being imperishable, exists in the world to-day; and being visible, it stands out plainly before the eyes of men, and can be identified. It must possess four *marks*, i.e., four great, public characteristics: it must be Universal and One—one in government, faith and worship; it must be Holy; it must be Apostolic. A church which does not

possess *all* these marks or characteristics, cannot be the Church of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

To the four identifying marks we shall add what at first sight might seem to be a fifth, viz., the Claim to Infallibility, but it is really a sub-section of Unity. The Church of Christ must be one in faith to the end of time, because He has promised to be always with her; His perpetual help ensures that, in a fickle and ever-changing world, she will always teach His doctrine without the taint of error. His Church, therefore, must claim to possess that perpetual help; she must claim Infallibility, the indispensable shield of her Unity in doctrine. Hence a church that *disclaims* Infallibility is at once branded as a false church.

*The Divisions of Christianity. Our Line of Proof.*—In the world of to-day, those who believe in the Divinity of Christ and profess to be members of His Church fall into three divisions, viz., Protestants, Schismatic Greeks, and Catholics. Which of these groups is the Church of Christ? Or, does it consist of some combination of the three? These are the questions which we now propose answering.

We will show (in § II) that neither the Protestant nor the Schismatic Greek Church, nor a combination of Protestants, Schismatic Greeks, and Catholics can claim to be the Church of Christ. When we have established so much, we have proved by a negative argument, *i. e.*, by the method of rejection, that the Catholic Church must be the true Church. We then proceed to show (in § III) that she does actually bear upon her all the marks detailed in the preceding paragraph.

<sup>1</sup> These notes, marks or characteristics, may be used in two ways to prove the Divine Authority of the Catholic Church:

- i. We may consider their miraculous character and thus directly establish her authority. This is the method followed in the Introductory Chapter.
- ii. We may consider them as identification marks which prove that the Catholic Church is the identical Church founded by Christ. This is the method followed in this Chapter.

**Note.**—The student should keep in mind that in Chapter IX we examined the characteristics of the Church founded by Christ as they are recorded in the New Testament. In this chapter we appeal to our own observations to show that the Catholic Church and she alone has these same characteristics.

## II

### THE FALSE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

The true Church is not the Protestant Church nor the Schismatic Greek Church, nor is it a Combination of these Churches with the Catholic Church.

THE PROTESTANT CHURCH is not the true Church: (1) It is notoriously not one in faith or worship; every shade of opinion is represented among its members, some of whom, and among them Protestant Bishops, reject miracles and deny the Divinity of Christ.—From the doctrinal standpoint, Protestantism can be described as a chaos rather than a religion. Nor is it one in government, for it is divided into a great number of independent sects. (2) Not one of these sects claims infallibility.

THE SCHISMATIC GREEK CHURCH.—The Schismatic Greek Church is not the true Church: (1) It is not one in government; it is broken up into a number of divisions each under an independent authority; it is really not a church but an assemblage of churches. (2) It is not Catholic or Universal; it is confined chiefly to portions of the Greek and Slavonic races. Its total following does not exceed 100 millions. (3) It does not claim infallibility.

THE TRUE CHURCH DOES NOT CONSIST OF THREE PARTS OR BRANCHES, VIZ., THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE PROTESTANT CHURCH OF ENGLAND, AND THE SCHISMATIC GREEK CHURCH. Such a combination of churches would not be the true Church: (1) It would not be one either in government, faith or worship. (2) It would not have

a common organ of infallibility which the three parts would acknowledge as divinely established.

### § 1

**Protestantism.** ITS DIVISIONS.—The Protestant sects include the Lutherans of North Germany, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden; the Presbyterians (Calvinists) of Switzerland, Holland, Scotland, North-East of Ireland, and North America; the Church of England, Methodism, and an ever-increasing number of smaller associations.

ITS ORIGIN.—The Reformation, as the Protestant movement is inaccurately termed, began in Germany in the sixteenth century, and spread thence to Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway, Sweden and England. The following were the chief causes of the success of the Reformation:

(a) *The unhappy state of religion at this period.*—The numerous richly endowed offices in the Church had attracted unworthy men to her ministry; in many countries, she had become the slave of royal power; even the Papacy itself was, for a time, in bondage to the crown of France; the loyalty of men had been much weakened by a disastrous schism (The Great Western Schism, 1378–1417) during which there were two, and, for a short period, three rival Popes; many grave abuses, not, however, at all so grave as the enemies of the Church represented, had arisen in connection with the levying of Papal monies; in general, there was much laxity of discipline, and so, in the hour of stress, the Church in many places found herself with bitter enemies in her household and with too few zealous defenders.

(b) *Political considerations.*—In Germany, the princes thought that by joining in a religious insurrection they might succeed in casting off the yoke of the Emperor,<sup>2</sup> who, they knew, would unquestionably defend the old faith. Their designs naturally met with much encouragement in France, where the Emperor's power was a cause of uneasiness. Further, the German princes and with them the king of the united countries, Denmark and Norway, and the king of Sweden were attracted by the Lutheran doctrine that the king is head of the Church in his own dominions since it enabled them to consolidate their power and seize the vast wealth of ecclesiastical corporations. While Lutheranism favoured the pretensions of kings, Calvinism, on the other hand, with its denial of royal supremacy and its republican spirit, was of service in what may be described as the anti-monarchical, or anti-

<sup>2</sup> Charles V (1519–1556), King of Spain and Emperor of Germany. The Netherlands and parts of Italy also belonged to his dominions.

imperial, struggle of the Swiss and the people of the Netherlands. In England, Henry VIII regarded the Papal supremacy as an obstacle to his lust and rapacity, and used the great power of the crown to effect a schism; during the reigns of Edward VI and Elizabeth, the doctrines of Luther and Calvin were introduced so that, by a complete separation from Rome in obedience and faith, all foreign interference in the affairs of the kingdom might be permanently excluded.

(c) *The popular character of its doctrines.*—The doctrines of the Reformers offered an easy remedy for sin, abolished all irksome duties such as fasting and confession, and flattered national and personal vanity by denying the authority of the Pope, and by investing the individual with the power of choosing and interpreting his own faith.

(d) *Humanism or the Revival of Learning.*—Humanism, though favoured by many learned Catholics, and patronized by Popes, caused a ferment of intellectual unrest throughout Europe. It prepared the minds of men to admit novelties in faith as willingly as they had admitted them in the department of secular knowledge.

(e) *The personality of Luther.*—Luther (1483–1546), the leader of the revolt, was a man of great natural ability. He had all the qualities of a successful demagogue—vast energy, effrontery, coarseness of manner, power of invective, quick wit, cutting sarcasm, an unrivalled grasp of popular and forceful diction, fanaticism, fractiousness, and utter want of self-restraint. His imperfect theological training, his ignorance of the early history of the Church, his incapacity for exact reasoning, all these defects, while they helped to blind him to his iniquity, have left their clear imprint on the illogical system of doctrine which he constructed.

Luther opened hostilities in 1517 by denouncing a Papal proclamation which granted an indulgence, on the usual conditions of confession and communion, to all who should assist by their contributions, or, by their prayers, if they were too poor to contribute, in the charitable work of rebuilding St. Peter's, Rome. Although the object was worthy of the support of Christendom, the Pope found himself heir to the dissatisfaction created by his predecessors' exactions and misapplications of Church monies. Luther, at first, had the sympathy of some well-meaning men, but lost it as soon as he showed that his design was not reformation but destruction. His movement threatened at one time to overrun all Europe with the exception of Italy, Spain, and Portugal. A reaction, however, set in which wrested from it half its triumphs, and pressed it back to those Teutonic areas from which,

we may say, it has not since advanced. At the Council of Trent, where the true reformation took place, the Church cast the slough of abuses, and in a brief time, through the zeal of her missionaries, repaired her losses in the Old World by successes in the New. It cannot be said that Luther<sup>3</sup> and his associates were actuated by piety or by zeal for religion. Most of them, in fact, were men of loose morals, remarkable even in that corrupt age for profligacy, and not one of them could make any claim whatsoever to sanctity.

**ITS DOCTRINES.**—The following are the chief tenets of Luther : (1) the Bible privately interpreted is the sole rule of faith ; (2) man is made holy by faith alone without good works ;<sup>4</sup> his soul is always in the state of sin : faith does not remove sin, but merely hides it from the eyes of God ; man's will is not free ; (3) the Church is invisible,<sup>5</sup> although individual congregations are visible ; all believers are equally priests, and need no special spiritual power to act as pastors or presbyters ; the State has supreme power in all church appointments ; (4) there are three sacraments, viz., Baptism, Eucharist, and Penance, but they do not confer grace in the Catholic sense. Calvin (1509-1564) agreed with Luther as to (1), but added to (2) that man is predestined by God, independently of his own acts, to salvation or perdition ; he also held that (3) the Church is visible,<sup>6</sup> and independent of the State ; presbyters elected by the people thereby receive the spiritual authority of bishops ; (4) the Lutheran list of sacraments must be reduced to two, viz., Baptism and the Eucharist. It would be impossible to give a brief and clear account of all the extraordinary transformations through which Protestant doctrine has passed from its origin down to the present time. A great number of German Lutherans now hold that Christ founded no Church, that religious belief is a matter of private opinion, or sentiment, and may be quite false. The Established Church of England is in the main liberal or rationalist (Broad Church) ; it rejects the supernatural altogether (the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, the inspiration of the Bible, etc.) ; —a small section of its members (the High Church or Ritualist party) copy the ceremonies of the Catholic Church ; while some

<sup>3</sup> See Grisar's *Life of Luther*.

<sup>4</sup> When Luther was asked how infants can be saved, he replied that God brings them to the use of reason for an instant, so that they may make an act of faith. This curious reply shows that his admirers cannot claim him as the first great exponent of what is called "the modern outlook on the world," or the modern disbelief in the miraculous. See Grisar, *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 373.

<sup>5</sup> *i.e.*, it consists of the just alone.

<sup>6</sup> He also believed in an invisible Church consisting of the elect alone.

Ritualists hold almost all the doctrines of Catholicism, except the Primacy and the Infallibility of the Pope, others are frankly rationalist ;—the Evangelical or Low Church party, once very powerful but no longer so, professes a mild form of Calvinism.

**The Protestant Church is not the true Church.**—Protestantism, as a doctrinal system, is perhaps the weakest heresy ever proposed. *It has not even one of the essential marks of the true Church.* (1) It repudiates all claim to infallibility. Confessedly, therefore, it may teach false doctrine, and can be no guide to truth. It leaves the ultimate decision on every point to the individual judgment. (2) It does not claim to be apostolic.<sup>7</sup> Neither Luther nor Calvin received lawful appointment to teach. Luther, indeed, appears to have claimed a direct commission from God Himself,<sup>8</sup> but, needless to say, his pretension was not supported by miracles. A section indeed of the Anglican Church (the High Church party) claims apostolicity. But England was converted by emissaries from the Holy See. Her Church retained apostolicity, therefore, only so long as she remained in communion with Rome. Rome gave her apostolic authority and Rome could and did deprive her of it. She was thrust off the Rock of Peter ; she was put out of the Church of Christ.<sup>9</sup> If she says, "I am apostolic, because my doctrine is apostolic," how can she prove her doctrine apostolic without the gift of infallibility ? and how without the same gift can she guarantee, in a world of crumbling faith, that her doctrine will continue to be apostolic to the end of time ? (3) It is not catholic, either socially or numerically. Not socially, because the religion is practically confined to portions of the Teutonic races. Nor numerically, because the total of its adherents is about 170 millions, divided up into over 100 independent sects, each of which must be regarded as a separate church.<sup>10</sup> If, as may be asserted, those 170 millions really form but one church, then that church has not the unity of the Church of Christ. It is notoriously not one either in

<sup>7</sup> See below § 3 The Branch Theory.

<sup>8</sup> He said he was the instrument of God, chosen to reform the Church which had been corrupted since Apostolic times. *Kirchenlex*, viii, 325, 2nd ed.

<sup>9</sup> Some English Protestants argue that their Bishops, since they occupy the ancient Cathedrals of Catholic days, must continue to possess the Apostolic Authority of their predecessors. This is what Newman calls "bricks-and-mortar" Apostolicity. By the same argument a usurper could claim lawful succession, because he resides in the ancient royal palace. Similarly it could be argued that milk put into a jug a month ago, and left exposed to the air, must be still good milk because the jug has not changed.

<sup>10</sup> See below, p. 154, footnote 25.

government, faith, or worship. Its tenet that private judgment is the final arbiter of faith is a principle of destruction, ever creating new sects, and ever making the entire Protestant following more and more unlike the one, living body of Christ, the true Church. (4) It is not holy in the sense explained in the preceding chapter. Its denial of free-will and human responsibility undermines all morality. There are, of course, many Protestants who lead most upright lives, but their probity is due, not to the principles of Protestantism, but to good traditions inherited from Catholicism. In recent times, some praiseworthy efforts have been made by English Protestants, in spite of much official discouragement, to imitate the Catholic religious communities in their practice of the heroic virtues. If Protestantism as such had any power to make men holy, we should expect to find a pre-eminent degree of sanctity in its founders and chief promoters. But enthusiasm itself has failed to detect such a quality in Luther, Calvin, Henry VIII, or Elizabeth.

**The Root Error of Protestantism is its False Rule of Faith.**—The doctrine of the Reformers that the Bible, privately interpreted, is the sole rule of faith, *i.e.*, that it is the one and only sure and easy means of determining what we should believe, implies (1) that all truths necessary for salvation are found in the Bible, and (2) that everyone can ascertain, and ought to ascertain, those truths for himself by reading the Bible. Both implications are false.

As to (1), the Bible cannot be the only store-house of Divine truth for the following reasons: (a) The Bible itself says nothing of the kind. It says, in fact, the contrary. St. Paul writes: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have learned whether *by word* or by an epistle."<sup>11</sup> And St. John says in his Gospel: "But there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they were written, every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written."<sup>12</sup> (b) Christ did not send the Apostles to write but to preach. (c) The New Testament did not begin to come into existence for two or three decades after the Ascension.

As to (2), there can be no obligation to search for divine truth in the Bible, for the following reasons: (a) Christ never said that a knowledge of letters was necessary for salvation. He never commanded us to discover by reading the Bible what we should believe. Such a command would have been a grievous hardship at a time when there were no printed books, and when manuscripts were so expensive. (b) The Bible itself gives us no satisfactory proof of its inspiration or account of its contents. We

<sup>11</sup> II Thess. ii. 14.

<sup>12</sup> St. John xxi. 25.

require some living authority to say to us: "This book, consisting of such and such parts, has God for its author." The book itself cannot say this. It was the living authority of the Church herself in the early centuries which gathered together the writings now called the New Testament and declared them to be inspired. But for her acceptance and recognition of them, their inspiration would have remained unacknowledged, and there would have been no such book as that which is now known as the New Testament. (c) The Bible refers to its own obscurity: St. Peter says that in the epistles of St. Paul there are "certain things hard to be understood which the unlearned and the unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction,"<sup>13</sup> (d) The practical proof of the insufficiency of the Bible as a rule of faith is the diversity of belief among Protestants, every extravagance of doctrine being professedly based on some one's interpretation of the sacred text.

*The Catholic Rule of Faith is the teaching authority of the Church.*

The substitution of private judgment for a living infallible teaching authority is the root-error of Protestantism. Its destructive force is seen, not only in the multiplication of sects, but in the denial of the Divinity of Christ, the inspiration of the Scriptures, and other doctrines, regarded by the early Reformers as fundamental.

## § 2

**The Schismatic Greek Church.**<sup>14</sup>—ITS DIVISIONS.—The Schismatic Greek Church consists of several independent churches, viz., the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, the Churches of Russia, Greece, Rumania, Jugoslavia (Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, Dalmatia, Slovakia, Southern Hungary, etc.), Bulgaria, and some others.

ITS ORIGIN.—The separation of the Greek Church from the Catholic Church was due (a) to the ancient rivalry of Greek and Latin; (b) to the pride and ambition of the Patriarchs of Constantinople who saw in the transfer (330 A.D.) of the Emperor's seat of residence from Rome to Constantinople a

<sup>13</sup> II Pet. iii. 16. Every biblical scholar knows perfectly well that there is no book in the world more difficult than the Bible. It is a sheer absurdity to say that ordinary people, with no knowledge of Hebrew or Greek or archæology or of the writings of the Fathers of the Church, are competent to interpret it.

<sup>14</sup> The student must not confound the Schismatic Greek Church with the Catholic Greek Church. All over the East, side by side, we find both the Schismatic Greek Church and the Catholic Greek Church (the Uniat Eastern Church) which is united to the Pope, and differs from us merely in matters of ceremony and discipline.



ground for proclaiming their release from the supreme authority of the Pope; (c) to the policy of aggrandisement pursued by the emperors who, because they hoped ultimately to obtain for themselves the Pope's spiritual supremacy over the whole world, encouraged the Patriarchs in their disloyalty. The schism was begun in the year 867, by Photius, the erudite, but ambitious, Patriarch of Constantinople. Aided by his partisans, he held a council presided over by the Emperor at which sentence of deposition and excommunication was pronounced against the Pope, St. Nicholas I. The schism was healed, but began again in 1054 under the Patriarchate of Michael Cerularius and continues to the present day. See note on Photius, p. 172.

Between the fourth and the tenth century, Constantinople developed a peculiar rite, known as the Byzantine, and adopted Greek as the liturgical language. In the ninth century, SS. Cyril and Methodius converted the Bulgarians and Moravians, used the same rite, but translated the liturgy into Slavonic. From Bulgaria the Byzantine-Slavonic rite spread into Serbia and Russia. Since the break with Rome, the Schismatic Greeks speak of themselves as members of the "Orthodox Church," or "The True and Apostolic Church." Strictly speaking, the term "Schismatic Greeks" is inaccurate, since the majority of the Schismatics are not Greeks, but Slavs.

Many of the Schismatic Greeks have returned to their allegiance and are allowed by Rome to retain their rite and their peculiar liturgical language. They number about six millions in all and are known under the general name of Uniats. Scattered over the East, therefore, there are many communities of Catholics who through the permission of the Holy See celebrate Mass in their own language and with ceremonies which differ in unessential details from ours.

**ITS DOCTRINES.**—The Schismatic Greeks are one in faith with Catholics on almost all points, excepting the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception, and the Primacy and Infallibility of the Pope; they hold that the only infallible authority in the Church is a general council consisting of the bishops of the entire Church, Greek and Latin; hence, since they regard the Latin, or Catholic, Church as in error, and hold no communion with it, they maintain that, at the present time, no organ of infallibility exists, and they reject the decrees of all councils in which their bishops took no part; they hold that the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff is not of Divine, but of ecclesiastical, institution, and was transferred, at least, as regards the Greek, or Eastern Church, to the Patriarchate of Constantinople; the Primacy of the Patriarch, however, they never interpreted as anything more than a primacy of honour. Still, it must not be thought that at the present time

even this shadowy bond of reverence for the See of Constantinople exists. The Churches of Russia, Greece, and the Balkans—*i.e.*, about four-fifths of all the Schismatics—are completely separated from her and from one another.

**The Schismatic Greek Church is not the true Church.**—(1) The Schismatic Greek Church does not claim infallibility. Since its separation from Rome, it recognizes no living teaching-authority competent to decide infallibly matters of faith. (2) It claims Apostolicity, but unjustifiably. The Schismatic Greeks, broken up as they are into independent Churches, admit that, unlike us, Catholics, they have no central See communicating apostolic authority to the rest, but they maintain that their doctrine is apostolic. We reply that no Church has any certainty that its doctrine is apostolic and will remain apostolic to the end of time, unless it can show that its authority to teach is derived from the Apostles and is guarded by the gift of infallibility. (3) It is not catholic either socially or numerically. Not socially, because it is confined chiefly to portions of the Greek and the Slavonic races.<sup>15</sup> Nor numerically, because its total following is no more than 100 millions.<sup>16</sup> But, even though it had a claim to catholicity, it has no claim to unity of government.<sup>17</sup> It is divided into several churches, each claiming independence. It is really not a church but an assemblage of churches.<sup>18</sup> In Greece, and the Balkans, it is little more than a state-department with the civil monarch or president as its highest official. In the Turkish dominions, by a most extraordinary anomaly, its bishops in the days of the Sultan used to invoke the aid of the infidel government to settle their disputes. (4) The average level of sanctity among the laity of the Schismatic Greek Church is unquestionably high. This we may explain by the fact that it has preserved almost all the doctrines and devotions of the Catholic Church, that it has valid episcopal and priestly orders, and so still disposes of many of the means of grace. Yet, it must seem singular even to the Greeks themselves that, since they snapped the link with Rome, their Church appears to have remained in spiritual stagnation: It has had no miracles strictly authenticated or saints whose sanctity has been tested

<sup>15</sup> See below, p. 154, footnote 25.

<sup>16</sup> The number must be much less at the present time because of the persecution in Russia.

<sup>17</sup> Nor is it absolutely one in doctrine. Constantinople and Russia disagree as to the validity of Baptism conferred by a Protestant or Catholic. There are, also, several other points of difference which we need not detail.

<sup>18</sup> See Donald Attwater: *The Dissident Eastern Churches*. The Bruce Publishing Company, 1937. Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

so severely as in the Catholic Church;<sup>19</sup> it has developed no new and beautiful devotions such as we expect to find in a truly living Church that enjoys God's blessing. At any time in the future, there may be a re-awakening of intellectual life among its members, and its teaching authority may be questioned.<sup>20</sup> Its faith, resting as it does on an insecure foundation, will not be proof against assault. Then will ensue either a return to Rome or the loss of all faith, followed ultimately by the loss of all sanctity.

The root-defect of the Schismatic Greek Church is its rejection of a supreme spiritual authority, the great unifying bond of the Church of Christ. At the time of their separation, the Greeks formed one body, united around the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Their unity, however, was not a unity of obedience, but of reverence, and has been riven to fragments by secular princes who require that each kingdom should have its own separate and subservient church.<sup>21</sup>

### § 3

**The Branch Theory.**—Since the Oxford Movement (1833–1845) it has been a favourite theory with Anglican divines of the Ritualist party that the Church of Christ resembles a tree with three great branches, viz., the Church of England, the Greek Church, and the Catholic Church; the branches are distinct, yet they are of one tree, because each has Apostolic succession,<sup>22</sup> and all share in the same sacramental life; each is *the* Church of

<sup>19</sup> See Intro. Ch. where the process of canonization is described.

<sup>20</sup> (1) Already some of its theologians reject the notion of an infallible teaching authority in the Church; they say that the only infallibility she has ever possessed is infallibility of belief (see art. in *Theologie und Glaube*, H. 1, 1939), while others of its writers hold the Protestant doctrine of private judgment or are tainted with rationalism.—(2) There is also danger to the faith from sympathy with Protestants. In recent times, representatives of the Greek Church have held friendly conferences with English Protestants on the question of the co-operation of the "Churches"; Meletius, the irregularly elected Patriarch of Constantinople, has acknowledged the validity of Anglican Orders; and many Russian refugees in England, acting as though religion were a question of geography, have, for the time being, become members of the Protestant Church, and have thereby made complete shipwreck of their faith.

<sup>21</sup> How the Schismatic Greek Church in Russia will emerge from its terrible persecution by the Soviet Government we cannot say. Many of its members have nobly died for their faith; thousands are in the prison-camps; most of the churches have been turned to secular purposes, and the children are being brought up as atheists. It is the prayer of the Catholic Church that God may bring relief and the light of truth to those who are suffering so cruelly for His name.

<sup>22</sup> As to the Anglican claim to Apostolicity, see p. 147, f. 9; 160.

Christ in its own domain, so that men are bound on pain of schism to be members of it, not of another branch; the Church of England is for Englishmen, the Greek Church is for Greeks and Slavs, the Catholic Church is chiefly for the Latin races. This theory, they believe, reconciles the present divided state of the Church with the doctrine that she is one and continuous, but the difficulties against it are insuperable. In fact, it is mentioned here rather as a matter of historical interest than as having any serious place in religious controversy. It is ignored or rejected by the majority of English Protestants; it has not been accepted by the Greeks, and it is utterly repudiated by the Catholic Church. We are asked, then, to conceive a "branch" Church whose branches refuse to acknowledge its existence. Such a church would possess no unity of government: it would consist of mutually hostile bodies, each seeking the destruction of the other two, and would be utterly unlike the Church of St. Paul, the one living body of Christ, one in heart and mind. It would not be one in faith, for its creed would be a mass of ludicrous contradictions: its Catholic members would hold, while Greeks and Anglicans would reject, the Supremacy and Infallibility of the Pope, and the official Anglican Church<sup>23</sup> would regard as obligatory hardly any doctrine. The analysis of the theory yields at the very outset so many absurdities that it need not be continued further. We merely note in conclusion the following points: (1) The assumption that the Anglican Church has a sacramental life, that its Bishops and Priests are validly ordained, with powers to consecrate and absolve, is rejected by the majority of Anglicans themselves—the Catholic Church has expressly decided against the validity of Anglican orders, and regards the Anglican Church, in point of sacramental power, as a broken cistern from which the waters of life have long disappeared. (2) The theory makes the extravagant supposition that faith varies with nationality, that Christ wished men to believe one thing because they were born in England, and quite the opposite because they were born in Italy.<sup>24</sup> (3) The three "branches" would possess no common organ of infallibility.

<sup>23</sup> A member of the Anglican Church may hold, without imperilling his status, almost anything he pleases on the necessity and efficacy of Baptism, the Real Presence in the Eucharist, the sacramental nature of Matrimony, the Divine institution of the Episcopacy, the Resurrection of Our Lord and even His Divinity. Moreover, he is bound to tolerate every doctrine which a court, appointed by the civil authority, may decide as tenable. It was this last consideration which finally decided Cardinal Manning to become a Catholic.

<sup>24</sup> It is unnecessary to consider whether the true Church may not consist of a combination of some two of the three Churches. The arguments against any such theory, if it were proposed, may be easily deduced from what has been already said.

## III

## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS THE TRUE CHURCH

Since the true Church is not the Protestant nor the Schismatic Greek Church, nor any combination of Protestants, Schismatic Greeks and Catholics, it must be the Catholic Church.—Besides the Catholic Church has all the marks of the true Church.

## A

## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS UNIVERSAL, ONE, HOLY AND APOSTOLIC

**She is Catholic or Universal, and at the same time, One in government, faith, and worship** (See Chapter IX).

(1) SHE IS CATHOLIC OR UNIVERSAL.—(a) She is catholic in desire, for she has at all times endeavoured to fulfil the command of Christ to teach all nations. Unlike the false sects whose missionary zeal is either non-existent or but a recent and feeble imitation of her own,<sup>25</sup> she has always felt that she had a duty to the heathen which she dared not neglect. Nor is she content with seeking fresh conquests among barbarous peoples, for she is constantly striving to regain the European territory she lost at the Reformation. Everywhere she chafes against her frontiers, and is insatiably eager to enlarge them. (b) She is socially catholic, because, unlike the false sects, she is not confined wholly or chiefly to a single people; she belongs not to any nation, but to the world; she counts her members in every station of life, the poor and the

<sup>25</sup> The missionary efforts of the Schismatic Greeks are negligible. As to the Protestants, for nearly three centuries they completely ignored the command of Christ to teach all nations. Their foreign missions are practically confined to the English-speaking world; they are supported by almost ten times the money at the command of Catholics, and this gives them a certain prestige. But even non-Catholics who have experience of missionary lands readily admit that it is the Catholic Church alone which really elevates and makes practical Christians of the primitive pagan peoples.

illiterate as well as men eminent in every calling, statesmen, scientists, and writers. So powerful over the hearts and minds of men is the attraction of her doctrine and institutions that her adversaries are accustomed to speak of her as the sorceress of Rome, but her only spell is the spell of Christ to whose office of charity she has succeeded; she is to her followers what Christ was to the poor of Palestine, a light, a refuge, and a hope. (c) She is numerically catholic. Her following numbers about 400 millions, and far exceeds that of any other Christian denomination.<sup>26</sup>

(2) SHE IS NOT ONLY CATHOLIC, BUT ONE IN HER CATHOLICITY (see Chapter IX)—ONE IN GOVERNMENT, FAITH, AND WORSHIP.—(a) *She is one in government:* The people are subject to their priests, the priests and people to their Bishops, and all are subject to the Pope, the centre of authority, the bond of Apostolic unity. He commands their affection and their loyalty, not because of any personal considerations—he may be of the humblest origin, the counterpart of Peter the Fisherman, a man without pride of race or ancestry—but because, in their eyes, he is ennobled beyond any earthly potentate by the throne he fills; because, to them, he is the Elect of God, the Vicar of Christ. Nor are their relations to him adversely affected by any embitterment in their relations to one another. Divided by a real or fancied sense of wrong as to their material interests, they may be ranged on opposing sides in a terrible war. Still their allegiance to him will remain unimpaired. In the true spirit of their religion they will share the common hope that some day the frenzy of misunderstanding may cease, and that the nations of the world may bring their quarrels for adjustment to the Father of Christendom, the living representative of the Prince of Peace. (b) *She is one in faith.*—

<sup>26</sup> The word Catholic is found in the Scriptures, not expressly but equivalently. "The Catholic Church" is the short way of saying "The Teach-ye-all-nations Church."

All her members, whether they be cultured Europeans or children of the forest, hear the same doctrines from her priests or missionaries, and profess the same faith on penalty of exclusion from her fold. She bears the message of Christ and, courageous and plain-spoken as Himself, insists that it be received in its integrity. She shuts her ears to the sensual who look to her in vain for an abridgment of her moral teaching. She ignores the claims of false science and the demands of corrupt politicians. Men swayed by their passions or by pride of intellect must bow down before the Divinely appointed teacher; they must accept with unquestioning assent the Trinity, the Incarnation,—all the profound mysteries of her creed; they must listen to the voice of Christ with the humility of children. Therein lies the miracle of her unity, that she, while teaching what is hard to believe, while prescribing what is hard to practise, while rejecting all compromise in faith or morals, yet holds her vast following together in willing submission. (c) *She is one in worship.*—Her sacraments and sacrifice are everywhere the same, and everywhere the faithful have access to the same ministrations; she tolerates difference of language and ceremonial, but nothing that affects essentials. She makes the highest as well as the lowest, the Cardinal as well as the peasant, the king as well as the cottier, kneel as humble penitents at the feet of her priests; and she brings them all to the altar to be fed with the Bread of Life. She is as absolute in regard to worship, as she is in regard to faith. As she suffers no diminution or alteration of her doctrine, so she will hear of no neglect of her sacraments. They are the means, given her by Christ for the sanctification of men; she sees that none of them be made void but that each be applied as He intended. Her followers bear her yoke of worship as willingly as they bear her yoke of faith, thus exhibiting to the world the miraculous spectacle of a vast number of men, representing so many phases of human weakness, united, not for any material gain or sensual pleasure, but to

participate in mysterious rites that may seem unreal, perhaps even repellent, to those who cannot see with the eyes of faith. Re-read the Introductory Chapter, pages [8-10].

The Catholic Church therefore has the mark of Unity with world-wide Catholicity and this alone is enough to identify her with the Church which Christ founded.

(3) **She is Holy** (see Chapter IX).—She is holy, because she teaches, in addition to the other doctrines of Christ, His counsels of perfection, and succeeds in getting many of her children to practise them. It is part of her *very system* to bless and encourage all who strive to attain to the higher Christian ideals, the ideals of intimate union with God, of fraternal charity, and self-denial in its many forms: she is in truth the mother of saints and martyrs. Hence, we see in her fold those great religious societies of men and women, who seeking fuller freedom to surrender themselves to the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit, bind themselves by vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and who devote their lives to such practical works of charity as the education of youth, the relief of the poor, the support of orphans, the care of the sick and the aged, the rescue of the victims of sin; or, following the vocation for the contemplative life, spend their days in mortification and prayer. She is "the good tree" of the Gospel; she is the tree that, standing by the living waters, brings forth fruit in abundance. Well may she urge the claim that Christ Himself is with her and within her, and is multiplied in her children.

The holiness of the Church is manifested especially in the heroic sanctity and great number of the canonized saints whom she has guided to a perfection of sanctity beyond the powers of our frail fallen nature. This point has been developed in the Introductory Chapter, pages [11-13].

Finally the Catholic Church declares that Christ in accordance with His promise, never ceases to attest her

sanctity by miracles. We need not enter into a discussion of particular cases. It is sufficient to say that many of the miracles wrought in her communion cannot be disbelieved, unless we are prepared to reject everything founded on human testimony; further, that the very fact of her making such a claim is in itself an evidence of her truth.<sup>27</sup>

(4) **She is Apostolic.**—Compare the government of the Catholic Church to-day with the government of the Church of Christ at its foundation. Christ placed His Church under the supreme government<sup>28</sup> of St. Peter assisted by the Apostles: the Catholic Church to-day is under the government of the lawful successors of St. Peter and the Apostles; in other words, she is Apostolic.

That the Pope and the Bishops are the lawful successors of St. Peter and the Apostles is proved as follows:

ALONE OF ALL THE CHURCHES, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH CLAIMS THE APOSTOLICITY GIVEN BY CHRIST TO HIS CHURCH, *i.e.*, TO BE GOVERNED BY THE SUCCESSOR OF ST. PETER.—(1) As we saw in the preceding Chapter, Christ placed His Church under the government of the Apostles with St. Peter as the chief Pastor and Ruler. He promised to be with them “all days even to the consummation of the world,” thus implying that St. Peter and his brother Apostles would continue to rule the Church until the end of time. But since the Apostles are dead, how do they still rule the Church? There is only one answer: they rule the Church, and will ever continue to rule it through their lawful successors. “Their lawful successors” are those whom Christ accepts as lawful successors. (2) The Catholic Church claims, and is alone in claiming, that she is ruled by the successor of St. Peter. She claims that the Pope has succeeded to the office of St. Peter; that the Pope is the supporting

<sup>27</sup> On modern miracles, see Devas: *The Key to the World's Progress*, p. 80*f.* Longmans Green, price 1s.

<sup>28</sup> See pp. 135-7 and 181-3 for Scripture evidence.

rock of the Church; that he holds the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; that he is the Shepherd of the whole flock of Christ, and that his brother Bishops are subordinate to him as the other Apostles were to St. Peter. The Catholic Church claims that Christ accepts the Pope as the successor of St. Peter, and the Bishops as successors of the other Apostles.

THE CLAIM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH MUST BE TRUE.—The Catholic Church's unique claim to possess the precise form of Apostolicity given by Christ to His Church must be true, because, if it were false, the Church which He built on the rock of Peter would no longer exist in the world, and—a gross absurdity—Christ would have failed to keep His promise that she would last for ever.

Christ with His omnipotence will see to it that St. Peter and the Apostles will always be represented in lawful succession by the Pope and the Bishops: this is beautifully summed up in the celebrated phrase of St. Anselm: “Ubi Petrus, ibi Ecclesia,” “where Peter is, there is the Church.”

Christ will see to it that no vital interest of His Church will ever be endangered through the personal defects or failings of any of St. Peter's successors.

**Note.**—(1) *The Catholic Church's Apostolicity has never suffered, and will never suffer, interruption.*—The Apostolicity of the Catholic Church was not broken for any period in the past, and will not be broken during any time in the future. This is obvious from the words of Christ: He did not promise His help, merely for this century or that, or for this year or that, but for “*all days*” till the end of time.

(2) It is an historical fact no longer disputed, that at the present day no See in the world but the See of Rome is linked in unbroken succession to an Apostle. Constantinople, called by courtesy Apostolic, was not founded by an Apostle. Antioch, St. Peter's first bishopric fell

away from the Church in the Monophysite heresy<sup>29</sup> of the fifth century. A similar fate befell Alexandria, founded by St. Mark under the direction of St. Peter. Jerusalem, the See of St. James, had but a brief existence, perishing utterly at the destruction of the city by Titus in 70 A.D. There are no others.

But suppose that some non-Catholic Church could point to a central see tracing its succession step by step back to one of the Apostles other than St. Peter, would such a church be Apostolic? No; it would have lost its Apostolicity and would have been rejected by Christ at the precise moment when it severed the vital link of allegiance to the See of Peter, His Vicar on earth.

**Conclusion.**—Christ who is God founded a Church. He promised it would last to the end of time. Therefore, His Church exists in the world at the present day.

Christ imprinted certain marks on His Church so that men could always identify it. No Church, therefore, can be His Church, unless it possesses *all* those marks. The Catholic Church alone possesses them: therefore, the Catholic Church is the one and only true Church of Christ.

#### Outside the Church there is no Salvation

God commands all men to be members of His Church.<sup>30</sup> Those who deliberately disobey Him will be lost eternally. But, since He condemns no man except for a grave fault, He will not condemn those who through inculpable ignorance are unaware of His precept, who serve Him faithfully according to their conscience, who have a sincere desire to do His will, and, therefore, implicitly, the desire to become members of His Church. Let us consider the following cases: (1) A man, born of Protestant parents, is baptized; lives all his life a Protestant, without ever having a grave doubt that he is in the wrong; makes, before death, an act

<sup>29</sup> The heresy of Eutyches, condemned at the General Council of Chalcedon (451). Eutyches taught that there are not two distinct natures in Christ; that His Humanity was absorbed in His Divinity.

<sup>30</sup> See Chapter IX.

of perfect contrition for grave sins committed or an act of perfect charity.—Such a man will be saved, for he dies in the state of grace. (2) A heathen has never heard even the name of Christ; he obeys the natural law according to his lights; he dies a heathen, to all appearances.—The Divine Mercy will not suffer such a man to be lost. It is a recognized principle that God, because He wills that all be saved, does not deny grace to him who does his best. He will infallibly give him who is faithful to the natural law sufficient illumination and aid to enable him to make the acts of faith and charity necessary for salvation. The act of charity includes the desire of full compliance with the Divine Will; it includes, therefore, the desire of baptism. In view of the fact that the Church stands plainly before the eyes of men like a city on a mountain-top, that the words of her ministers have gone forth to the ends of the earth, we do not venture to say that such cases as these are typical of large numbers. We are certain, at all events, that for men, deprived of the abundant graces at the disposal of those who belong to the visible membership of the Church, salvation is not easy. (3) Children who die unbaptized are, according to the common teaching, admitted to a state of natural, but not supernatural, happiness. The Church has never said that they are sent to eternal punishment.

## IV

### OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

**Objection against the Infallibility of the Church.**—(1) The Church claims that, in virtue of her gift of Infallibility, her teaching never varies, that the faith of her children is always the same. This cannot be true, because from time to time she enlarges her creed by new definitions. Since the definition of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 all Catholics are bound to believe it. Before the definition they were free to reject it. (See also *Objections against Infallibility*, Ch. XII.)

**REPLY.**—The Church's teaching never varies; she never contradicts herself, as the false sects do; she never adds anything to the revealed truth given her by Christ. Her definitions are nothing more than fuller and more precise explanations of doctrines contained in the Deposit of Faith. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, for instance, is but a part of the doctrine always held by the Church that Mary is the Mother of the Redeemer, full of grace and sanctity, and that she loosed the knot of sin which Eve had fastened on the human race. The Church has not set forth the explicit and exhaustive meaning of all the profound truths entrusted to her. It is only as controversy,

or some new devotion arises, that she declares whether a particular doctrine is, or is not, implicitly contained in those truths. Thus, as time advances, her teaching grows in explicitness or clearness, and this is what we understand by the *Development of Doctrine*. It is a development that goes on without any increase or contradiction of revealed truth.—Once the Church issues a definition, it is clear to any doubters there may have been among her children that the doctrine must henceforward be held as of Catholic faith on pain of heresy. It is true therefore that a new definition creates a new obligation. But the new obligation cannot press as a burthen on the mass of the faithful who, in virtue of Passive Infallibility, have always believed all the doctrines explicitly or implicitly contained in the Deposit of Faith. It can affect but the very few, who, as a fact, have not been one in faith with the Church. And even these, loyal Catholics as we assume them to be (for of others there is no question), will gladly relinquish an unwitting error, and will acquiesce at once and without demur in the infallible decision.

**Objection against the Unity of the Church.**—(2) The Church has not always been one in government. During the Great Western Schism (1378–1417), the allegiance of the faithful was divided between two, and even three Popes.

**REPLY.**—Catholics were divided on a question of *identification*, not of *principle*. All acknowledged that there could be but one lawful Pope in the Church, but, owing to political disturbances and difficulties of communication, they were unable to identify him among the rival claimants. Some one of these was the lawful Pope, possessing Apostolic succession and authority. The Schism, although it was the source of many evils, proves God's solicitude for the preservation of the Papacy. For no human dynasty could have survived such a trial.

**Objection against the Catholicity of the Church.**—(3) "If the Church is from God, and has been sent by Him to preach to all nations, how is it that all nations do not accept her teaching? Why has she failed to influence the majority of mankind?"

**REPLY.**—(1) As Christ, the Son of God, was sent by His heavenly Father to preach to the Jews, so were the Apostles and their successors sent by Christ to preach to all nations, and as Christ, though He was God himself, failed to convert the majority of the Jews, so has the Church failed to gather into her fold the majority of the human race. The command received by Christ from His Father did not imply that all, or even the greater number, of those who heard Him would receive His words; neither does the command given by Christ imply that His Church will be

more successful in her mission than He was in His. In fact Christ himself foretold that the Apostles would be treated as He had been treated; He sent them to preach to the world, but He warned them that the world would hate them.

How is this hostility or aversion to be explained? Its causes are chiefly the following: (1) *Ignorance* of Catholic Doctrine and of the arguments by which its truth is defended. (2) *Prejudices* against the Church which clog the reason and prevent it from accepting the proofs set forth in Apologetics.<sup>31</sup> (3) *Pride of intellect* or an excessive confidence in one's own judgment: a man afflicted with this vice regards any effort to convince him of error in his religious convictions as an insult to his intelligence and an offence against his dignity; his state of mind is the very opposite of that childlike humility which Christ requires of those who seek His kingdom. (4) *Want of courage*; men are appalled by the strictness of the Catholic Moral Law (e.g., the law of Confession, the law of Marriage), and by the hardships which are often involved in conversion (e.g., opposition of friends, loss of means of livelihood, etc.). It is God's grace alone that enables the non-Catholic to break through these obstacles. (See Introductory Chapter, "Apologetics and Faith.")

(2) It is only on the day of General Judgment that God's dealings with the whole human race will be fully known; it is only then that we shall see how He used the Church as His agent of mercy to mankind, how through her prayers, her Sacraments and the Sacrifice of the Mass, He gave the blessing of a happy death to heretics and pagans, to those who retained but a vestige of her teaching, to those who in their invincible ignorance bitterly opposed her, to those who seemed hopelessly involved in grossest error; it is only then that the Church, the Spouse of Christ, will shine forth triumphant as the beneficent mother of grace to all men of good will.

**Objection against the Holiness of the Church.**—(4) Many wicked men are members of the Church. If she is called the Mother of Saints, she would with greater justice be called the mother of sinners.

**REPLY.**—(1) The glory of the saints is the glory of the Church: it was she who showed them the way to the great heights of holiness; it was she who through Christ her Head upheld them with grace, and saved them from fainting on their toilsome journey. The fact that they represent every order of society and every degree of intellectual ability, and that in them are found instances of triumph over all manner of weakness and sin, proves

<sup>31</sup> These prejudices are usually the result of early training. See Chapter XIV, A Convert's first Act of Faith.

that there is no man on earth who cannot become a saint, if he will only listen to her instructions and accept her aid. And what of the sinners of her fold? Has she to bear their shame? No; no more than Christ has to bear the shame of Judas: no more than the Apostles had to bear the shame of those Christians whose crimes they denounced. If there be wicked men in the Church, they themselves are to blame. Saints are saints because they listen to the voice of the Church: sinners are sinners, because they refuse to hear her.

(2) The epithet "Mother of sinners" might seem just, if the Church had so favoured the cultivation of saints by the sublimity of her ideals, as to neglect and leave in sin the ordinary Christian. But she has never done so; on the contrary she has ever been the most perfect teacher of the ordinary man. So much so, indeed, that in the *matter* of her teaching, in the *manner* in which she teaches, and in the *motives* she proposes, she has no rival in efficiency. As to *matter*; she teaches all the great precepts of the Natural Law as expressed in the Ten Commandments: she teaches therefore, all those duties the fulfilment of which makes men successful citizens, the duties of patriotism and of obedience to constituted authority, the duties of justice, truthfulness, chastity and honour. As to *manner*; in marked contrast to others, whose pronouncements are obscure, vague, and discordant, she teaches plainly, definitely, and with perfect consistency: in all her long history she has never contradicted herself: she speaks as one who knows her own mind: she speaks like her Founder Himself, as "one having power," conveying the full force of her message to the dullest mind. As to the *motives* which she proposes: she is at one with her rivals in putting forward such motives as "respect for right reason," "respect for public opinion," and fear of the punishments prescribed by the Civil Code, such as "fines, imprisonment and death,"<sup>32</sup> but she insists far more than they on two other motives which alone are capable of subduing the human heart and curbing the passions, viz., God's claim on our love, and the fear of eternal damnation. For Protestants the appeal of God's love for us, has lost much of its force owing to their denial of the Divinity of Christ: the majority of them no longer believe that God himself was born at Bethlehem for us and died on the

<sup>32</sup> These are natural motives: the other two, mentioned immediately after, are religious. It is worth remembering for controversial purposes that, should a well-instructed Catholic commit the grave sin of deserting his Church, he would still remain under the influence of the natural motives to moral rectitude, and would therefore be no worse equipped for civic life than the ordinary unbeliever. To put this in a more general way, we claim that the Church gives all the help that others give and more besides.

Cross for our sins: and as to the doctrine of hell, so prominent in the teaching of Our Saviour and so highly esteemed by the Saints of the Old Law and the New as a tamer of the passions, it has all but disappeared from their creed.

(3) Since the human will is free, and since the temptations of "the world, the flesh, and the devil" are very strong, we need not be surprised that sinners should be found in the Church: our Saviour Himself compared her to a harvest field, in which weeds are intermingled with the corn (St. Matt. xiii. 24-41).

But—to come to what seems to be the chief point in the objector's mind—is there a higher percentage of criminals among Catholics than among Protestants? No: we cannot accept such a statement. How can the better teacher keep steadily producing the worse pupils? Statistics of a contrary import may sometimes be seen but they are deceptive.<sup>33</sup> To be of any real value as a test of moral depravity, criminal statistics should take into account not only the total number of all kinds of sin, but also the degree of wickedness in each sin. A large number of small sins does not equal in guilt a single sin of supreme malice.

Catholics, through their poverty and their squalid surroundings, may frequently commit sins of theft, drunkenness and brawling. This is certainly to be deplored, but what is the guilt of many such sins compared with the ignoring of God or with any other of the colossal crimes found among the rich votaries of the world? "Our prisons," says Father Arendzen, "are full of men who have committed petty larceny or who have obstructed the traffic by some disorderly conduct, but the great criminals, the embezzlers of vast sums of money, financial gamblers who batten on the miseries of thousands, the corrupters of public morals by foul plays, novels, or shows, the poisoners of the public mind in the press, scoffing at God and all that is divine, ridiculing virtue and praising vice, the advocates of divorce and race suicide, the men whose sarcasm corrodes the love for anything that is noble, spiritual and sublime, the men who befoul everything they touch, these men live in purple and fine linen and are satiated with the pleasures and honours of this world, and are carried with pomp to a magnificent grave."<sup>34</sup> Everybody knows that the vast majority of such colossal sinners are not children of the Catholic Church.

<sup>33</sup> See the elaborate evidence presented in the important work, *Crime and Religion*, by Fathers Weir and Kalmer, Herald Press, Chicago, 1936. See also Devas: *Key to the World's Progress—Scandals and Sanctity*; and H. W. Cleary: *Secular versus Religious Education*, Chapter VI. Dunedin, 1909; *Catholics and Crime* (pamphlet), The Australian Catholic Truth Society.

<sup>34</sup> *What becomes of the Dead?* p. 291.



There are some further considerations which should not be overlooked, viz., (1) that no religious body can be held responsible for the behaviour of those who from childhood upwards have never been anything more than nominal members—no teacher can be answerable for pupils who never come to school; (2) that the records of judicial proceedings regarding crime are of little value; they usually have to do with the poor who easily fall into the clutches of the law—and seldom with the rich; and (3) that those who prepare criminal statistics frequently ignore altogether certain grave offences against the sanctity of marriage which are of common occurrence in Protestant countries and which we, following the teaching of Christ, place on a par with the sin of murder. To secure a fair comparison, (a) the Ten Commandments should be accepted as the standard of morality; (b) large sections of population, similar in circumstances and natural tendencies, should be examined both as regards number of sins and *degree of wickedness* in the various kinds of sin; and (c) the inquiry should continue over a lengthy period and be conducted by a tribunal not open to the suspicion of national or other bias. Such an investigation would yield results entirely favourable to the Catholic Church.

It is our faith that the Catholic Church is the only true Church of Christ, and that all other churches are false; that, therefore, God gives His blessing to the work of the Catholic Church, and that He gives no blessing to the work of her rivals. Our belief is attested by the remarkable fact, that, as teachers of morality and piety, the non-Catholic religious bodies are sterile: they have produced little of any value which can truly be called their own: they are mere imitators and borrowers; in a feeble and partial way, they copy our Church's methods and discipline (her missions, retreats, sodalities, and religious orders), and their prayer-books and books of devotion are based on our liturgical texts<sup>85</sup> and the writings of the saints.

## APPENDIX

### NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS

Christ, the Son of God, founded His Church for all men; He bound all men to become members of it. Therefore, all non-Christian religions must be rejected as false, and must be abandoned.

*Buddhism.*—Buddhism is an offshoot of pantheistic Brahminism

<sup>85</sup> Such as the *Missal*, the *Breviary*, and the *Ritual*.

a later form of the ancient religion of India.<sup>86</sup> Its founder was Siddhartha of the family Gautama. He was also called Sakya-muni (from *Sakya*, the name of his tribe, and *muni*, a solitary), but he is more commonly known by his sacred title, the Buddha, *i.e.*, "the enlightened." The son of a petty king, he was born at Kapilavastu in the north of India, towards the close of the sixth century, B.C. (1) He adopted the Brahministic doctrine of the transmigration of souls; he held (2) that there is a supreme physical law of retribution in virtue of which good is automatically rewarded and evil punished; (3) that existence is evil, because it implies limitation, hence privation, hence desire; (4) that souls come to re-birth, if in a previous state they were not free from desire, or from attachment to existence; (5) that a being attains perfection only when desire ceases, for it is only then that it can be admitted into the Nirvana, a state which cannot be exactly described, but which is apparently annihilation, eternal sleep, the absorption of personality. He did not deny that gods exist, but affirmed that in as much as they exist, they are evil, and like other existing things can attain to perfection only in the Nirvana. The impersonal force, manifesting itself in the law of retribution, or in the whole system of laws governing the conditions of all being, may, *perhaps*, represent Buddha's concept of a supreme God. His ethical teaching is, briefly, that man must suppress his passions and desires, and practise absolute self-denial, if he wishes to hasten his entrance into the Nirvana. The motive of virtue is, therefore, self-interest. Buddhism spread rapidly through India, Ceylon, Burmah, Tibet, China, and Japan.

*We may account for its propagation* (1) by the obscurity of the older religion which it supplanted, but chiefly (2) by the fragments of truth found even in its central doctrine; (3) by its implicit denial of the existence of a Personal God, the Lawgiver who will reward the good and punish the wicked; (4) by its toleration of sin, for it taught that those who indulged their passions did not lose, but merely delayed, their final happiness. In these last two respects, as well as in its doctrine of the motive of virtue, it differs widely from Christianity.

Its adherents are said to number over four hundred millions. This, however, is quite inaccurate. Under the name of Buddhism are included very many sects with irreconcilable doctrines and divergent forms of idolatry and superstition. Probably, pure Buddhism if indeed it still exists, is now professed by 140 millions

<sup>86</sup> Brahminism in its earliest form believed in the existence of several gods, each a distinct person with his own sphere of work; later, it developed into pantheism, because it held that these gods and the whole world with them derived their being from an impersonal force or power. See *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Brahminism.

at the outside, and probably by considerably less. In any case, it has no claim to be considered a universal religion. It is restricted to Eastern peoples. The admirable spirit of kindness which it once possessed evaporated long ago; it no longer has any thought for the hideous poverty and suffering so prevalent in the countries where it has a controlling influence. Its vague and unsatisfactory doctrine of the Nirvana and many others of its doctrines are mere absurdities or mere gratuitous assertions without a reasonable basis, and could not possibly receive any countenance except among men of a low grade of civilization.

*Mohammedanism.*—The religion of Islam (*i.e.*, "submission to God's decree"), as it is called by its followers, was founded by Mohammed. He was born at Mecca in Arabia, 570 A.D. In early life he was a shepherd, but later became a merchant, and travelled to Syria and Palestine. He was much given to prayer and fasting, and was subject to epileptic fits. In his fortieth year he professed to have received a call from the Angel Gabriel to preach the worship of the one, true God to his people, the Arabs, who, though descended from Heber and Abraham, had lost the purity of their primitive belief, and had fallen into idolatry. His preaching was rejected at Mecca. He fled to Medina, where he succeeded in making many converts and in organizing a small army. In spite of some severe reverses, he was enabled by his talents as a general and leader to crush in detail the warring factions of Arabia, and to weld them into a formidable military state (630 A.D.). Towards the close of his life he showed himself a monster of lust, cruelty, and rapacity. He died in 633 A.D.—The sum of his doctrinal teaching is expressed in the formula: "There is no God but the true God, and Mohammed is His prophet." This single confession, however, implies six articles, *viz.*, belief in (a) the unity of God; (b) His angels; (c) His scripture—Al Koran, the sacred book which Mohammed wrote; (d) His prophets—among whom are reckoned Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, and Mohammed himself, the last and greatest of all; (e) the Resurrection and Day of Judgment; (f) God's absolute and irrevocable decree, predetermining all things, good and evil (Fatalism). His moral teaching is concerned almost entirely with externals. It prescribes forms of prayer, alms, fasting, the obligation of making a pilgrimage to Mecca, and of waging war against the infidel. It permits polygamy and divorce, and approves of slavery. As a motive to virtue, it gives the assurance of admission after death to a paradise of fantastic sensuality. It offers a cheap method of getting to heaven, and derives a certain respectability from the fact that it possesses a written code. Within a hundred years after Mohammed's death, a succession of able generals spread his religion through

all the neighbouring countries, along the North African coast into Spain, and even across the Pyrenees. But the tide of conquest was stemmed at Tours by Charles Martel, 732.

*Its rapid propagation was due* (1), as in the case of Buddhism, to the clearness and consistency of its monotheistic doctrine in contrast with the confused and contradictory teaching of polytheism; (2) to its pandering to base passions; but above all (3) to the might of the sword.

At the present day, it has about 229 million followers, nine-tenths of whom belong to the Sunnite or Orthodox sect. It is a serious rival to Catholicism in Africa where it is spreading rapidly, and where it freely admits idolatrous accretions; the natives are attracted to it, because it offers them an easy ascent to what they regard as a higher social status. Its expansion in other countries seems ended. It is said that there are, in all, 73 subdivisions of Mohammedans, but it must be admitted that in the essentials of doctrine and practice they hardly differ. It must, however, be added that there is no strict unity of faith in Mohammedanism: it tolerates African superstitions and allows a merely figurative interpretation of the Koran. The fragments of revealed truth which the religion contains were borrowed from Judaism or Christianity. Its fatalism, its low morality, its gross conception of eternal happiness, and the character of its founder stamp it plainly with falsehood, and make its propagation impossible among civilized peoples. It is professed chiefly by undeveloped or unprogressive races, it clings to the old lines of Mohammedan conquest, and owes almost all its present strength to political support.<sup>37</sup>

*Buddhism and Mohammedanism briefly refuted.*—In neither Buddhism nor Mohammedanism do we find unity of government. In both, however, we find a close approximation to unity of belief, but this can be easily explained by the fact that their creeds consist of but a few simple articles which, quite unlike the great Mysteries of the Christian Faith, issue no peremptory challenge to human arrogance, nothing to provoke an angry protest from haughty intellectuals. Furthermore, their propagation has been due to non-miraculous or merely natural causes; neither of them has had to suffer a fierce, thoroughly organized, and widespread persecution; neither of them was attacked in its cradle as Christianity was; both of them have constantly enjoyed the countenance or support of civil rulers, and during their long history they have never received the *divine testimony of manifest and well authenticated miracles.* They

<sup>37</sup> On the subject of this Appendix see C.T.S. Tracts, Power's *Religion of the Koran* and de la Vallée Poussin's *Buddhism*.

lack, therefore, the seal of God's approval which has been given so positively to the religion of Jesus Christ.

*Christian Science.*—Christian Science is one of the many eccentric religions which have sprung up in Protestant countries. It has no relation to what we understand by "science" nor to what we know of Christ; it is neither Christian nor scientific. It draws its followers chiefly from the well-to-do classes, and has ample funds at its disposal to propagate its teaching. Numerically it can be regarded as an insignificant body, but because of its deceptive title, which may be a snare to the unwary, and because its error that Christ was a mere faith-healer is shared by all Broad Church Protestants, a rather full notice of it has been thought advisable.

Its founder, Mrs. Baker Eddy (1821–1910) of U.S.A., set forth the new gospel in her book, *Science and Health*, published in 1875; four years later, in Boston, she established the First Church of Christian Science; at the present time, there are more than 2,000 Branch Churches; of these, three-fourths are in North America, and, of the remainder, there are many in England and Australia, twenty-five in Germany, and two in Ireland.

#### *Its doctrines :*

(1) Christian Science believes in pantheism. Its god is not a person but a spiritual power manifesting itself in the world. Sin is a false view of the relation of the world and man to this god; sin is a mere fiction of the mind; it leads people to believe in other fictions, viz., that there are such things as matter, sickness, and death. Avoidance of sin is necessary to secure our ultimate absorption in the deity.

(2) Christ was the first Christian Scientist, He taught the existence of an impersonal god, He redeemed us by helping us to believe that sin, sickness, and death are all part of a bad dream; He was a faith-healer, that is, He healed people by getting them to believe that there was nothing the matter with them. He founded a healing church: He said to His Apostles, "You shall lay your hands upon the sick, and they shall recover," and He promised that many other signs would follow those who believe as Christian Scientists believe.

(3) Christ's teaching, which soon became obscured, has been restored to the world by Mrs. Baker Eddy, and has been accompanied by the miraculous cures which He foretold.

#### *Remarks :*

(1) Pantheism is opposed to the sound judgment of normal mankind. It is only eccentrics who say that nothing exists but God, that all forms of matter (the earth, sun, moon, and stars

and our own bodies) are mere illusions, and that there is no such thing as sickness, suffering, or death. Absorption in an impersonal deity really means annihilation. On such a prospect, no workable system of morals can be based. The mass of mankind will not do good and avoid evil except through love of a Personal God and fear of His judgment.

(2) Christ did not teach the existence of an impersonal god; He taught men to believe in God the Father who so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son for its Redemption. When He pleaded with His Father for mankind, He spoke to a living, personal Being, not to something impersonal, like electricity or a stone-wall. He did not teach the annihilation of the soul: recall His words on the General Judgment.—His sufferings, foretold by the Prophets and Himself, and preached by the Apostles, were real sufferings; they were not illusions, else He would not have been afraid of them in the Garden. His real death on the Cross for the sins of men is of the very essence of the Apostles' teaching.—He did not found a healing Church; He gave the Apostles the power to work miracles, including miracles of healing, as signs of the truth of their doctrine; miracles still continue in His Church, but they are less frequent to-day than in Apostolic times, because they are less needed, now that the great miracle of the Church's strength and vitality testifies to her divine authority. He did not heal people by getting them to say, "Sickness is an error. There is no sickness. I am not sick." Nor did He relieve the hungry by saying, "Hunger is an illusion. You are not hungry." Nor did He raise the dead to life by making them say (somehow or other), "There is no death. We are not dead."—Further evidence in abundance can be found in the New Testament to refute the crude absurdity that Christ, the Son of the Living God, was a pantheist and faith-healer, and that He did not truly suffer and die.

(3) Mrs. Eddy, or Mother Eddy as she is called by Christian Scientists, got her pantheism from a German, Dr. Francis Lieber, a follower of Hegel and a skilful writer. Her idea of Christ as the first faith-healer came to her from a Mr. Quimby, a hypnotist, with whom she was long associated. Her book, *Science and Health*, a curious mixture of feeble and forceful writing, was long a riddle to critics. But the riddle has been solved. It has been proved that the feeble matter is her own composition and that she borrowed the rest (but without acknowledgment) from the Hegelian, Dr. Lieber.<sup>38</sup> This point, however, is not of great

<sup>38</sup> See Walter M. Haushalter: *Mrs. Eddy purloins from Hegel*. London: Watts & Co.; 1936. The god of Hegel is simply the development that is going on in the world. It is a finite thing; it is not a substance but a process or change.

importance, because her book, being a material thing, has no existence. The same may be said of her followers' teaching, which is conveyed by sound-waves; the sound-waves are material things and therefore are mere illusions: the hearers are really listening to nothing. The cures claimed for Christian Science, so far as they are genuine, are not at all miraculous; they are merely cures by auto-suggestion. It is well known that nervous diseases can be cured in this way, *i.e.*, by getting the patient to take his mind off his complaint and imagine himself well.

Christian Scientists do not believe in doctors, and do not seek their aid for the sick. They thus expose themselves to the danger of prosecution for criminal negligence; and they are not of one mind with Christ whom they profess to follow. Christ recognised the medical profession: He said that the sick have need of the physician, not those who are well.

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*Note on the Schism of Photius: see p. 150.*

Recently, two competent historians, Father Francis Dvornik, a Czechoslovak scholar, and Father Grumel, a French Assumptionist, working independently of one another, have come to the conclusion that the Council (869-870) which condemned Photius was not a true General Council, because the Pope, John VIII., refused to sign its decrees, and that Photius made his peace with Rome, and died in communion with her. Hence, they maintain that there was but one Greek Schism, the Schism of 1054.—See *The Tablet*, Nov. 29, 1941, p. 343.

## APOLOGETICS ENDS. CATHOLIC DOCTRINE BEGINS

### A

Our treatise on Apologetics ends with Chapter X. We have proved by two main arguments that the Catholic Church is the Church of God, *i.e.*, that she speaks to us in His Name and with His authority. The arguments may be briefly summarized as follows:

(1) Jesus Christ put forward the claim that He taught with Divine authority, that He was sent by God, that He was God himself. God showed by miracles that this claim was just. It follows, therefore, that the Church founded by Christ is the Church founded by God. But we have established that the Catholic Church alone is identical with the Church of Christ; hence God, by testifying to the truth of Christ's claim, has testified likewise to the truth of the Catholic Church.

(2) The Catholic Church claims that she has a Divine mission,<sup>1</sup> that she teaches with Divine authority. We have shown how God has confirmed her claim by the miracles of her world-wide unity, her sanctity, and her stability.

Both arguments yield the same conclusion—God has revealed that the Catholic Church is His Church—and the conclusion is certain. Its certainty is based on the positive action of God, for He has given His positive miraculous support both to the Founder of the Church and to the Church herself. He, the source of all truth, has shown us the reasonableness of our faith in the Catholic Church. With Richard of St. Victor, a great theologian of the twelfth century, we can say: "O Lord! if we are mistaken in our belief, it is Thou who hast led us

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<sup>1</sup> See Introductory Chapter.

astray, because this our Faith is proved by signs which Thou alone couldst have worked.'"

What fruit have we gathered from this study of Catholic Apologetics? It has enabled us to see in a clear vision the extraordinary strength and solidity of the defences of the Church, and the weakness of the arguments alleged against her. It has enabled us to intensify the certainty which we already possessed that our faith in her is reasonable and it has given us some idea of the divine beauty of the Bride of Christ.

### B

As pointed out in the introduction, many non-Catholics accept the conclusion at which we arrive in Apologetics; they are convinced that God has declared the Catholic Church to be His Church; and yet they do not rise to the level of divine faith, because they do not possess the proper dispositions. They do not welcome the truth which God has revealed: they view it with indifference or regret or dislike or hostility. They are not prepared to receive it with that piety and gratitude, that gentle and reverent submissiveness and spirit of adoration, which are essential for an act of divine faith.

### C

(1) Once we have made an act of divine faith in the revealed truth that the Catholic Church is the living representative of Christ, we can learn from her the other truths that God has revealed and we can make acts of faith in them. Being infallible, her word or her belief that they have been revealed suffices for a Catholic; he accepts her teaching as the teaching of God and believes it on God's authority. And if he studies his religion in approved textbooks, he will be shown how to meet the objection that the Church's doctrine changes from age to age, or that it is an offence against human reason; he will be shown that through the writings of the Fathers

and the books of the New Testament her doctrine can be traced back historically to the days of the Apostles, and that it is either in accordance with reason or never in conflict with it.

(2) In Chapter XI, we deal with the nature and extent of the Church's Infallibility: obviously she is qualified to tell us how she interprets that gift; in which of her members it resides; and from what sources she derives her doctrines. In Chapter XII, we give her teaching on the Primacy and the Infallibility of the Pope. In Chapter XIII, we explain her attitude to the Family and the State. In Chapter XIV, we set forth her doctrine on the subject of Faith. Though in strictness these Chapters, being a part of Catholic Doctrine, belong to Part II of of this work, yet their close relationship to what has preceded justifies their insertion here: Chapters XI, XII, XIII deal with matters of special interest to the defenders of the Church's claims; and Chapter XIV emphasises the truth that only God's grace can build the bridge that leads from the territory of Apologetics to that of Faith.

## CHAPTER XI

## THE CHURCH'S INFALLIBILITY: ITS NATURE AND EXTENT

*Summary.*

The source of the Church's Infallibility—The Subject of the Church's Infallibility: The Church Teaching; the Church Believing—The Object of the Church's Infallibility: the Deposit of Faith together with all teachings necessary for its custody.

**The Source of the Church's Infallibility.**—When Christ commanded His Apostles to teach the whole world and every nation in it, promising to be with them, in their work of teaching, throughout "all days even to the consummation of the world,"<sup>1</sup> His command and His promise were addressed, not only to them, but also to their lawful successors. He is with them through the Holy Ghost: on the night of His Passion He said, "I will ask the Father and He shall give you another Paraclete"—*i.e.* another Comforter, or Helper—"that He may abide with you for ever . . . the Spirit of truth, He shall abide with you and shall be in you. . . . The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you."<sup>2</sup> Hence the perpetual assistance of the Holy Ghost is named as the Source or Principle of the Church's Infallibility.<sup>3</sup>

**The Subject of the Church's Infallibility.**—Since the Church founded by Christ is a society consisting both of teachers and believers, the Infallibility which He gave

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> St. John xiv. 16, 17, 26. "Whatsoever I shall have said to you," *i.e.*, "My entire revelation—all that you shall have heard from Me up to the moment of My Ascension into Heaven."

<sup>3</sup> We "appropriate" or ascribe this work to the Holy Ghost, though it is done by all Three Divine Persons: see Part II, "The Blessed Trinity," section III.

her will protect her from error not only in teaching but also in belief. The members of the Church in whom Infallibility resides are called the Subject of Infallibility. Infallibility may be either active or passive; it is active in the "Church teaching"; it is passive in the "Church believing." By the "Church teaching" we mean the official teachers of the Church, the successors of the Apostles, viz, the Pope and the Bishops who are united under his leadership; by the "Church believing" we mean the entire body of the faithful who believe their teaching.

**THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH TEACHING.**—The Church may convey her infallible teaching to us either on her solemn or her ordinary authority.

With her solemn authority she commands us to believe all doctrines contained in the four Creeds,<sup>4</sup> or, expressed in Definitions of Popes or General Councils.<sup>5</sup>

With her ordinary authority she commands us to believe the doctrine which the Pope and the Bishops throughout the world, in the every-day exercise of their pastoral office, unanimously<sup>6</sup> teach, as revealed truth.

The Church is as infallible in her ordinary teaching as she is in her solemn teaching. The only points of distinction between the two which we need note are: (1) Her solemn teaching is made known at once to all

<sup>4</sup> The Apostles', the Nicene, the Athanasian, and the Creed or Profession of Pius IV. The last-named issued in 1564, repeats the Nicene Creed and gives a summary of the doctrines defined by the Council of Trent; Pius IX inserted in it an acceptance of the decrees of the Vatican Council, "in particular of those affirming the Primacy and Infallibility of the Roman Pontiff"; and Pius X appended to it a solemn repudiation of the errors of Modernism.

<sup>5</sup> A General Council is a meeting of Bishops, representative of the entire Church, summoned by the Pope, deliberating under his direction, and issuing decrees or condemnations, which however have no force unless he confirms them. That the concurrence and approval of the Pope are necessary for the work of a General Council follows from the doctrine of Apostolicity (see Chapters IX and X; see also Chapter XII).

<sup>6</sup> Absolute unanimity is not required. Observe that a Bishop teaches his subjects, not only personally but through his priests and school-teachers and through the catechisms or text-books which he prescribes.

the faithful by a most public and solemn declaration, and always carries with a formal and express warning that its rejection means rejection of God's revealed word; it is thus a most effective organ of infallibility, a most effective means of combating widespread error. (2) Her ordinary teaching though less effective as an organ of infallibility, is of greater importance, because it is her ordinary, every-day means of propagating and preserving the faith, and has gone on without interruption since Apostolic times. (3) Her solemn teaching is of rare occurrence and is never more than a clear and emphatic explanation of doctrines that have always formed part of her ordinary teaching.

Almost all the great doctrines of the Church are taught with her solemn authority. Chief among those which are proposed to us on her ordinary authority are the Spirituality of the Soul and the Particular Judgment.

It may be asked, how are we to ascertain what the Church teaches on her ordinary authority? The answer is that all her doctrine, whether taught with ordinary or solemn authority, will be found in our catechisms and manuals of religious instruction.

Observe that the Bishops of the Church are not infallible individually but collectively and as forming a united body with the Pope. It is their living union with him that gives them their infallibility.

A Pope or a General Council may propose a doctrine for our acceptance without binding us to an assent of faith; this is usually called "provisional teaching"; it is not of much importance for the purpose of this work, and is sufficiently explained in the next chapter: see the paragraph, "The teaching authority of the Pope," p. 190.

**THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH BELIEVING.**—The infallibility of the Church believing<sup>7</sup> resides in the entire mass of the faithful, yet no individual member of the

<sup>7</sup> See on entire subject of this Ch. and next, Straubinger: *Fundamentaltheologie*. Paderborn: Schönigh, 1936.

Church is infallible in belief, not even the Pope himself. He with the Bishops united to him are infallible as *teachers* but not as *believers*.

**The Object of the Church's Infallibility.**—The truths which the Church teaches infallibly are called the object of infallibility. They may be divided into two classes: (a) all doctrines in the *Deposit of Faith*, i.e., all doctrines delivered by Christ to the Apostles; they are the sum of His public revelation to mankind; any subsequent revelations which God may have been pleased to grant, are private, and form no part of the Deposit of Faith; (b) all doctrines, or statements, which, though not found in the Deposit of Faith, are necessary for its safe custody, e.g., that a certain book contains teaching opposed to that of Christ.

The Deposit of Faith comprises all doctrines found in the Bible and in Tradition. (1) The Bible consists of the inspired books of the Old and the New Testament; God Himself is its author. (2) Tradition embraces all those truths which, though never committed to writing under Divine inspiration, have been handed down within the Church from age to age in various ways; many of them are found, e.g., in the works of the Fathers of the Church, those learned and saintly ecclesiastical writers who lived before 750 A.D.,<sup>8</sup> or in the Acts of the Martyrs, which record in several instances the express doctrines for which the martyrs suffered; many of them, in the teaching of Popes and Councils; many of them, also, are attested by early paintings and inscriptions, found in the Catacombs and elsewhere, or by the practices and customs of the Universal Church. Catholics call the Bible and Tradition "the sources of Faith"; they are the two channels by which the doctrine of Christ comes down to us, and the Church is the divinely appointed guardian and interpreter of both.

<sup>8</sup> Pope St. Gregory the Great, the last of the Latin Fathers, died in 604; St. John Damascene, the last of the Greek Fathers, died in 749.

CHAPTER XII

THE TEACHING AND GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Summary.

- I. The Primacy of the Pope :
  - A. The doctrine of the Primacy defined by the Church.
  - B. This doctrine found in Sacred Scripture :—
    - (a) The Primacy promised to St. Peter : “Thou art Peter,” etc.
    - (b) The Primacy conferred on St. Peter : “Feed My lambs.”
    - (c) Acceptance of the doctrine of the Primacy by the Apostles.
    - (d) This Primacy to be exercised to the end of time.
  - C. The Doctrine of the Primacy found in Tradition.
- II. The Infallibility of the Pope :
  - A. The doctrine of Papal Infallibility defined by the Church.
  - B. This doctrine is found in Scripture.
  - C. Reason shows the practical necessity of this doctrine.
  - D. This doctrine is found in Tradition.
- III. The authority of Bishops.
- IV. Difficulties answered—Some misconceptions removed—The Pope’s ordinary teaching distinguished from his infallible teaching—Objections answered : cases of Galileo, Liberius, Honorius ; pseudo-philosophical objections.—The Inquisition—Intolerance and Cruelty.

I

THE PRIMACY OF THE POPE

A. The Teaching of the Church.—The Vatican Council (1870) has defined : (1) that St. Peter was appointed by Christ visible Head of the Church ; (2) that he received from Christ a Primacy, not only of honour, but of jurisdiction, *i.e.*, that he received from Christ supreme authority to teach and govern the whole Church ; (3) that

he has, in virtue of the same Divine institution, a perpetual line of successors in the Primacy ; (4) that his successors are the Roman Pontiffs.—Christ Himself is the invisible Head of the Church. From Him all power in the Church is derived. He will remain with it for ever, guiding, governing, and supporting it.

*Note.*—As stated in the preceding Chapter, when the Church solemnly defines a doctrine she simply declares that it is revealed by God, *i.e.*, that it is part of the teaching delivered by Christ to the Apostles, that it has always been believed by the faithful, and that it is found in Scripture or Tradition, or in both together.<sup>1</sup> This *infallible* statement is sufficient for a Catholic. He is now certain that God has revealed the doctrine, and he believes it on God’s authority.

B. The Doctrine of the Primacy is found in Scripture.

—(1) THE PRIMACY PROMISED TO ST. PETER.—Christ said to His disciples : “Whom do you say that I am ?” Simon Peter answered and said : “Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus . . . said to him : “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona . . . And I say to thee : Thou art Peter” (*i.e.*, the Rock) “and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.”<sup>2</sup> The text must be interpreted as follows :

(a) Christ compares His Church to a house which shall be built on a rock. As the rock gives stability to the house,<sup>3</sup> so shall St. Peter give stability to the Church : he shall make the Church so firm that the gates of hell

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XI, “The Object of Infallibility.”

<sup>2</sup> St. Matt. xvi. 15-19.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matt. vii. 25, “the house fell not, for it was founded on a rock.”



—*i.e.*, death, the power of its enemies—shall *never* destroy it. But, since Christ thus promises that St. Peter, being the rock, shall make the Church proof against *all* assaults, it follows that St. Peter is to be the source of *all* its stability, that he is to be at once the foundation and the support of the Divine edifice. The sustaining strength of St. Peter, therefore, shall be felt in every part of the Church and by every member of it without exception. In a society it is the Supreme Authority which gives stability, hence St. Peter's office in the Church shall be that of Supreme Authority. He shall shield the Church from the great evil of heresy: he shall, therefore, be the teacher of the entire Church, and shall never teach any doctrine but the true doctrine of Christ. He shall shield the Church from the great evil of schism: he shall be the ruler of the entire Church, never tolerating a rival authority, never allowing the Church to break up into independent sections. He shall cast out the heretical and the rebellious, and hold the faithful firmly together, one in faith and obedience.

(b) The promise of the Primacy is directly stated in the words: "and I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven," *i.e.*, the keys of the Church. The keys were regarded by the Jews, as they are regarded by us, as a symbol of ownership or supreme authority. He who holds the keys is master of the house. St. Peter, therefore, shall be master or ruler of the Church.

(c) He shall receive the powers of "binding" and "loosing," *i.e.*, he shall have power to issue decrees; to make laws or annul them; to judge, condemn, or acquit; to grant or withhold absolution from sin. The same powers of binding and loosing are, indeed, promised to all the Apostles in St. Matt. xviii. 18, but from the fact that they were first promised to St. Peter, the rock and the holder of the keys, it is clear that his fellow-Apostles are to exercise them subordinately to his authority. We make a like comment on the words of St. Paul that the

Church is built "on the foundation of the Apostles."<sup>4</sup> It is built on them as forming a united body under the Primacy of St. Peter.

(2) THE PRIMACY CONFERRED ON ST. PETER AND HIS SUCCESSORS.—Christ promised the Primacy to St. Peter on hearing him make a profession of faith in His Divinity. He fulfils the promise on hearing him make a triple protestation of love for Him. "Feed My lambs," He said to Peter, "feed My sheep."<sup>5</sup> St. Peter thus was made shepherd of the whole flock of Christ. Christ had spoken of Himself as the Good Shepherd, the "lambs and the sheep" being the Apostles and all others who believed in Him; but now He makes St. Peter the Good Shepherd in His stead; He did so, because Peter surpassed his companions in love for Him.<sup>5a</sup> All including the Apostles are to listen to his teaching and obey his commands.

(3) THE DOCTRINE OF THE PRIMACY WAS ACCEPTED BY THE APOSTLES.—The Primacy of Peter was taken for granted in the Apostolic school. He is always mentioned first in the lists of the Apostles, although he was not the first whom Christ called; he proposes the election of the successor to Judas; he preaches the first Apostolic sermon on the feast of Pentecost; he works the first Apostolic miracle in the name of Jesus; he receives the first Jewish converts and the first Gentile converts into the Church declaring that salvation is for all men alike; at the council of Jerusalem "when there had been much disputing," he gives the discussion a decisive turn and draws the others with him. All this points clearly to the conclusion that St. Peter was recognised as the head of the Apostles.

(d) THIS PRIMACY IS TO BE EXERCISED TO THE END OF TIME—ST. PETER'S OFFICE IN THE CHURCH IS PERPETUAL.—(1) "The 'lambs' and 'sheep,'" *i.e.*, the

<sup>4</sup> Eph. ii. 20.

<sup>5</sup> St. John xxi. 15-17.

<sup>5a</sup> This is clear from Christ's question, "Lovest thou Me more than these?" See St. John, *ibid.*

members of the Church, shall always need the shepherd's care to shield them from the wolf and to lead them to wholesome pastures ; their shepherd, therefore, St. Peter, through his successors, shall be always with them. (2) The Church, *and, with it, its foundation and support*, is to last until the end of time ; St. Peter, therefore, through his successors, shall be always with the Church, guarding its life, and giving it strength to withstand its enemies. He, through them, shall be the source of its imperishability.

**C. The Doctrine of the Primacy is found in Tradition.**—(1) From the fifth century onward the Primacy of the Pope as the successor of St. Peter was universally admitted. At the Council of Ephesus (431), Philip, the Legate of Pope Celestine (422–432), said, and no voice was raised in protest : “ No one doubts, nay but all ages know, that the holy and most blessed Peter, prince and head of the Apostles, the pillar of the faith and the foundation of the Church, received from Our Lord, Jesus Christ, the keys of the Kingdom. . . . His successor in order, and the holder of his place, our holy and most blessed Pope, Celestine . . . has sent me,” etc. St. Cyril of Alexandria (*d.* 444), pre-eminent among the Eastern Patriarchs, said that Pope Celestine was “ the chief Bishop of the whole world.”<sup>6</sup> At the Council of Chalcedon (451), when the letter of Pope Leo I (440–461) had been read, the assembled bishops cried out : “ Peter has spoken through Leo.”—(2) In the fourth century,<sup>7</sup> the evidence, though less in volume, is equally decisive. “ I speak,” said St. Jerome to Pope Damasus (366–384), “ with the successor of the fisherman. . . . I, following no one as my chief but Christ, am associated in communion with thy blessedness, that is, with the See of Peter. I know that on that rock the Church is built.” St. Basil urges the same Pope to deal with troubles that had arisen in the Churches of Asia Minor ; he adds that he requests nothing new, and quotes as a precedent for the Pope's intervention the action of his predecessor Pope Dionysius (259–269).<sup>8</sup>—(3) In the earlier centuries the evidence is not so clear, (a) because the Church suffered much from persecution, and communication with the Pope was difficult ;

<sup>6</sup> Migne, 77, 1040.

<sup>7</sup> Carvings and ornamentations in the Catacombs dating from this century represent (1) St. Peter as the Moses of the New Testament receiving the New Law from Christ, and (2) Moses as the Peter of the Old Testament. Peter was the leader of the Christians, as Moses was the leader of the Jews.

<sup>8</sup> See Newman : *Development of Christian Doctrine*, ch. iv. 3 ; vi. 3. where a much fuller list of authorities, with references, will be found.

and (b) because the early Christians, being still in their first fervour, “ of one heart and one soul,” gave little occasion for the exercise of the Papal prerogative ; there was a development in government as well as in matters of faith ; opposition, as it arose from time to time, called forth a more explicit statement of doctrine, and a clearer enunciation of the relations of the Pope to the universal Church. Still, we note, even in the first century, the remarkable fact that Pope Clement (91–100), while St. John the Apostle was still living, writes, as one commanding, to the Church of Corinth, condemns those who have disturbed its peace, and warns them against disobeying what Christ had said through him.

In fine, be it noted : (a) that the belief in the Primacy of the Pope, universal in the fifth century, and distinctly expressed in the fourth, if it be not as old as the Church, must have been fraudulently invented during the ages of persecution ; in other words, either we must admit the Apostolic origin of the doctrine, or else maintain the gross absurdity that it was forged at a time when the chief office among Christians was the surest road to martyrdom ; (b) that, since the Church is infallible, a doctrine universally taught and believed at any time as part of the faith of the Church must be true ; and (c) that St. Peter must always have a living successor to act as the supporting Rock of the Church ; that this living successor must be none other than the Bishop of Rome, for he alone of all the bishops in Christendom has ever claimed the title.

## II

### THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE

**A. The Teaching of the Church on Papal Infallibility.**—The doctrine defined by the Vatican Council may be briefly stated as follows : The Pope is infallible when he speaks *ex cathedra*, *i.e.*, when, as Pastor and Teacher of all Christians, he defines, in virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the Universal Church. He is said to “ define ” a doctrine, when he makes it clear that the doctrine must be believed with a firm, interior assent of faith. The doctrine must be concerned with faith or morals and must belong to the Deposit of Faith, *i.e.*, it must be found in Scripture or Tradition.

### B. The Doctrine of Papal Infallibility is found in Scripture.

—(1) St. Peter, always living in his successors, is the rock on which the Church is built. He shall, through the assistance of Christ, always with him, save the Church from heresy.<sup>9</sup> He, the one and only source of stability, cannot be a false or doubtful guide. He must, therefore, be infallible. (2) Christ gave to St. Peter and his successors "the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." He gave them thereby the power of binding the consciences of men. He promised that whatever obligations they might impose would be confirmed in heaven. In other words, He promised to support and guide them in teaching the truth so that they would never impose any but a just obligation. But the Head of the Church is the chief teacher of the Church, and does, as a fact, from time to time, bind all the faithful to believe his teaching and to believe it with an assent of faith. Since, from the promise of Christ, he cannot bind them to error, he must himself be secured against error in his teaching: he must be infallible. (3) The Pope is the Pastor of the Universal Church. "Feed My lambs," said Christ to St. Peter, "feed My sheep." He has the command of Christ to feed all the faithful with spiritual nurture, to teach them the doctrines of Christ, to administer to them the sacred rites which Christ instituted, to govern them in the form, and under the laws, prescribed by Christ. But, if the Pope were to err in his *ex cathedra* teaching, he would not be the pastor, but the poisoner, of his flock. Therefore, he must be infallible. (4) Christ said to St. Peter: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not: and do thou . . . confirm thy brethren."<sup>10</sup> Christ says He had prayed that St. Peter's faith should not fail, and His prayer was effective. He as Man had uttered a request which He as God had already decided to grant. This is clear from the command He gave to St. Peter to confirm the others

<sup>9</sup> See above B (1), pp. 181-2.

<sup>10</sup> St. Luke xxi. 31, 32.

in the faith. Equivalently, His words would run: "*with the faith I have gained for thee, confirm thy brethren.*" St. Peter, therefore, was made infallible. He was to use his gift of infallibility to shield the faith of his brethren from the assaults of Satan. His office passed to his successors: as long as the Church exists, it will be assailed by the enemy of truth; it will, therefore, always need an unerring guide, a Peter living in his successors who shall confirm his brethren.<sup>11</sup> (5) Independently of the text, "Thou art Peter," etc., we proved that the Church is infallible.<sup>12</sup> But, in an infallible Church, the supreme judge of doctrine must be infallible. The Pope is the supreme judge of doctrine, because, since he is the supreme ruler, his decision on all questions affecting the teaching, the governing, or the sanctifying office of the Church, must be final.

C. Reason shows us the Practical Necessity of Papal Infallibility.—Reason itself demands that there should be in the Church an organ of infallibility capable of dealing with manifest corruptions of doctrine at their very inception. Such an organ of infallibility is found in the supreme teaching authority of the Pope. His prompt decision will spare the Church a multitude of evils. The only other organ of infallibility of which there can be any question is a General Council,<sup>12a</sup> i.e., a council consisting of a large number of bishops, representative of the entire Church, assembled at the summons or with the approval of the Pope, and passing doctrinal or disciplinary decrees

<sup>11</sup> Arguing from the doctrine, held by Protestants as well as Catholics, that each of the Apostles was infallible, we conclude that Christ's words do not refer to them as individuals, for they did not need St. Peter's help to preserve them from error. Christ, therefore, spoke of them in their representative capacity. He meant that St. Peter alone would transmit his infallibility to his successors, that he, through them, was to confirm in faith the Bishops, the successors of the other Apostles. The Protestant teaching that St. Peter's infallibility, like that of the other Apostles, was a personal prerogative, and, therefore, intransmissible, is irreconcilable with any reasonable interpretation of the text.

<sup>12</sup> See Chapter IX, pp. 139, 140.

<sup>12a</sup> Cf. p. 177, f. 5.

which he confirms. Such a large body, it is manifest, cannot be assembled without long delay, and, at times, owing to wars or other disturbances, cannot be assembled at all and hence is not an adequate organ of infallibility.

**D. The Doctrine of Papal Infallibility is found in Tradition.**—The voice of tradition, as in the case of the Primacy, grows clearer with the progress of the centuries. (1) Towards the end of the second century, St. Irenaeus praises the See of Rome as "the greatest Church," and says that the faithful everywhere "must resort to it" or "must agree with it."<sup>13</sup> (2) About the beginning of the third century, Pope Zephyrinus condemns the Montanists,<sup>14</sup> who thenceforward are regarded as outcasts from the Church. (3) In the fourth century, Pope St. Julius remonstrated (342) with the Eusebians: "Why were we not written to concerning the Church of Alexandria? or, are you ignorant that this has been the custom first to write to us, and then what is just to be decreed from this place. . . . For what we have received from the blessed Apostle Peter, that I make known to you."<sup>15</sup> (4) In the fifth century, the bishops at the Council of Chalcedon (451) in the words already quoted said, "Peter has spoken through Leo." They subscribed to his definition of faith, saying "This is the faith of the Fathers; we all follow it."<sup>16</sup>—From this century onward the doctrine was universally acknowledged in the practical life of the Church. It was accepted at the third Council of Constantinople (680–681), and all but defined in express terms by the Council of Florence (1438–1445), which declared "that the Roman Pontiff is the successor of St. Peter, . . . and the true Vicar of Christ, the head of the whole Church, the father and teacher of all Christians, and that to him, in Blessed Peter, Our Lord Jesus Christ gave full power to feed, to rule, and to govern the entire Church."

### III

#### THE AUTHORITY OF THE BISHOPS

**The Bishops, Successors of the Apostles.**—The Pope, the Bishop of Rome, is the successor of St. Peter; the Bishops, not taken

<sup>13</sup> Adv. Haer., III. 3.—In either interpretation the words refer to a higher doctrinal authority.

<sup>14</sup> Their founder, Montanus, claimed to be a prophet sent by God to supplement the moral teaching of Christ.

<sup>15</sup> Athanasius: *Apologia contra Arianos*, n. 33.

<sup>16</sup> Hardian, t. 2, p. 656. See Newman, *op. cit.*, for fuller list of authorities.

singly, but collectively and in union with the Pope, are the successors of the other Apostles. The Pope receives his authority directly from Christ; the Bishops receive their authority from the same divine source, but through the Pope who appoints them, and who is, as it were, the channel through which it is conveyed to them. The Pope is the supreme pastor; the Bishops are subordinate pastors; they retain their divine authority as long as they remain loyal to the Holy See.

**The Nature of their Authority.**—A Bishop on taking possession of the diocese assigned to him by the Pope becomes the spiritual ruler and teacher of its Catholic inhabitants. He can make laws and regulations for his subjects, and he is their authentic teacher on faith and morals. As an individual, he is not indeed infallible, yet this will cause no anxiety to his people who know that, in the rare case of error, the supreme Head of the Church will intervene to protect them. But pending an appeal to the Pope, the clergy and the laity are bound to obey their Bishop, because he has authority (1) to teach the Catholic Doctrine, and (2) to decide whether any particular question belongs to the sphere of faith or morals. To deny him this latter power would be tantamount to asserting the Protestant claim to the right of private judgment.

*Note.*—The authority to teach and govern is called Jurisdiction. A Bishop's jurisdiction extends only to his own subjects and diocese; that of the Pope extends to the universal Church.

### IV

#### DIFFICULTIES ANSWERED

**Misconceptions as to Papal Infallibility.**—To remove some gross misconceptions—Papal Infallibility does not imply impeccability, or sinlessness. The Pope is infallible in doctrine, but not impeccable in conduct. He must work out his salvation "in fear and trembling" like other men, sharing with St. Paul the apprehension "lest, perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway."<sup>17</sup> Neither does Papal Infallibility imply a power to make new revelations, *i.e.*, to disclose to man Divine truths previously unknown. The whole Christian revelation was delivered to the Apostles. The Pope, in the exercise

<sup>17</sup> I Cor. ix. 27

of Infallibility, merely explains it without adding anything to it. Nor are his infallible utterances inspired. For inspiration we require: (a) that the writer or speaker be moved by God Himself to write or speak; and (b) that he be so guided by God, while writing or speaking, that he expresses what God Himself wishes to express and nothing more. God is the author of inspired utterances. He is not the author of Papal definitions, but He guarantees them against error.<sup>18</sup>

**Twofold Teaching Authority of the Pope.**—The Pope possesses a twofold teaching authority, viz., supreme or infallible and ordinary.<sup>19</sup> When he employs his ordinary authority, he is not infallible and does not, of course, bind us to an assent of faith. Still, it is the common and safe opinion that we must give his teaching an interior, religious assent. The obligation arises (1) from the obedience which we owe, as dutiful children, to lawful ecclesiastical authority, and (2) from prudence, which forbids us to set our opinion against the great authority of the Pope, familiar, as he must be, with the traditions of the Church, and aided, as he is, by the counsel of eminent theologians. Should it happen—in the nature of things, it must happen very rarely—that learned Catholics see, or think they see, grave reasons for doubting some point in the ordinary teaching of his Holiness, they may represent their views to him, but must do so privately, respectfully, and with a profession of complete willingness to accept his final ruling in the proper spirit of obedience.

<sup>18</sup> A Papal definition has but the one meaning intended by the Pope. A passage of inspired Scripture on the other hand, may have, not only its literal meaning, but also a meaning of a higher order; thus, for instance, when God tells us of the sufferings of King David, He gives us an historical narrative and also a type or image of the future sufferings of His Son; or, take the words which Christ addressed to His Mother and St. John on Good Friday; Mary became the spiritual Mother of mankind at the moment of the Incarnation; this truth was proclaimed by her Son on the Cross in words which have a literal meaning also.—On the different senses of Scripture, see Father Hugh Pope, O.P.: *Aids to the Bible*, Vol. I, pages 68–72. London: Washbourne.

<sup>19</sup> The Pope teaches the Church with his ordinary authority either directly, or through one of the Roman Congregations, *i. e.*, through one of the committees of learned men who assist him in his work. The Congregation of the Holy Office or Inquisition is concerned with purity of doctrine; the Biblical Commission, with questions connected with the Sacred Scriptures.—Note that the ordinary teaching of the *Pope* is to be carefully distinguished from the ordinary teaching of the *Church*. As explained in Chapter XI, the Church is infallible in all her teaching whether Solemn or Ordinary.

**Objections against Papal Infallibility.**—Protestants mention four Popes as having erred, viz., Paul V and Urban VIII, who condemned Galileo; Liberius and Honorius, who are said to have fallen into heresy, the former into Arianism, the latter into Monothelism. Our general reply is that the conditions required for an infallible decision were not present in any of these cases:

(1) *Paul V, Urban VIII and Galileo.*—Paul V in 1616 and Urban VIII in 1633, acting through the Congregations of the Holy Office and the Index, condemned as heretical the teaching of Galileo (1564–1642) that the sun is immovable, and that the earth rotates daily on its axis. The astronomer would most certainly have escaped all censure but for his imprudence in applying his doctrine to the interpretation of the passage in the Book of Josue (x. 13) where it is said that the sun stood still. He undoubtedly suffered for his opinions in the sense that, for many years, he had to endure much mental distress. As for physical punishment, he was not “tortured” nor “cast into a dungeon,” as our enemies used to say, but was kept for a short time in honourable confinement. Copernicus (1473–1543) and Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, his predecessors in astronomical research, had advocated the same opinions without molestation. His condemnation does not affect the doctrine of the Infallibility of the Pope, for the Popes in question did not teach *ex cathedra*. A Pope cannot delegate his infallibility to a Congregation. He must, himself, personally address the Universal Church, and require that his teaching be accepted by all its members with the assent of faith. This condition was not verified in the case of Paul and Urban. That there was no question of an irreversible decision is perfectly clear from the words of Cardinal Bellarmine (1542–1641), a member of the Congregation of the Holy Office which condemned Galileo, and now a canonized Saint. Writing to Galileo’s friend, Foscarini, he says that there would be no objection to putting forward the new system as the best explanation of celestial phenomena, provided no reference were made to the apparent conflict with the Bible. And he continues: “I say that if a real proof be found that the sun is fixed, and does not revolve round the earth, but the earth round the sun, then it will be necessary very carefully to proceed to the explanation of the passages of Scripture which appear to be contrary, as we should prefer to say that we have misunderstood these rather than pronounce that to be false which is demonstrated.”

But, though the condemnation of Galileo proves nothing against the Infallibility of the Pope, may it not be said that it proves the hostility of the Church to scientific progress and freedom of research? In reply, we put forward the following considerations: (1) Since the great majority of contemporary physicists and

astronomers treated Galileo's opinions with derision,<sup>20</sup> the most that can reasonably be urged against the Church in not immediately adopting them is that she was not in advance of her age. (2) No Protestant can complain of the Church's treatment of Galileo in view of the attitude of the Reformers to Copernicus who, some generations earlier, had advocated the same opinions. Luther denounced him as an arrogant fool who sought to overthrow all scientific astronomy, and who contradicted Holy Writ. Melancthon wished his pestilent doctrines to be suppressed by the civil power. (3) When physical science appears to demand a new interpretation of some statement in the Scriptures bearing on natural phenomena or such like, the attitude of the Church, as any impartial non-Catholic would admit, must be conservative; her procedure will be exactly as Cardinal Bellarmine describes it (see quotation above); she will disregard the unsupported word of one or two scientists; she will move only when she is assured that unanimity of scientific teaching demands a revision of the received interpretation. (4) The Church may, by her slowness to accept what is new, cause a temporary retardation of progress, but she rightly regards the custody of faith as something immeasurably more precious than the interests of physical science. And, for her, the custody of faith is bound up with veneration for antiquity. Hence, even though no point of faith be at issue, she will not abandon the ancient interpretation except under the pressure of irresistible evidence.

It may be asked why does not the Pope pronounce at once infallibly on all questions submitted to him. The answer is that, although it is within his power to deliver, when he pleases, an infallible decision, still he holds himself bound to refrain from exercising his infallibility, until he has first done all that human industry can do, by study and careful inquiry, to ascertain the mind of the Church.<sup>21</sup> It follows, therefore, that his infallible decisions, except in cases of manifestly corrupt doctrine,<sup>22</sup> must

<sup>20</sup> Some of Galileo's arguments were undoubtedly worthless, and have since been abandoned. Professor Huxley, an unexpected witness, declares that "the Pope and Cardinals had rather the best of it," *Life and Letters*, ii. 424.—Of Galileo's contemporaries, Bacon, the so-called coryphæus of modern methods, was as hostile to him as any. It is surely an ironic comment on the whole incident that according to Einstein it would not have mattered a pin's point whether it was said that the earth goes round the sun, or the sun round the earth (Einstein and Infeld: *The Evolution of Physics*, p. 224. Cambridge University Press, 1938).

<sup>21</sup> God does not wish His human instruments to be merely passive. He wishes them to be active, to think and reason. Hence, even inspiration does not exclude industry and research.

<sup>22</sup> See II. C. above.

be of rare occurrence, and that, in dealing with the numerous questions submitted to him, he must, as a rule, employ his ordinary or non-infallible teaching authority.

*Pope Liberius (351-366).*—Liberius on refusing to confirm an Arian<sup>23</sup> formulary of faith was exiled (355) by the Emperor Constantius. Two years later he was permitted to return to Rome. Some say, while others, and very weighty authorities, deny, that he purchased his liberty by acceding to the Emperor's wishes. Let us suppose that he did sign the formulary: (1) It cannot be shown that it contained anything erroneous: many of the Arian formularies were unobjectionable; (2) he did not sign as teacher of the Universal Church; he signed as a prisoner and under compulsion; manifestly it cannot be held that, in such circumstances he intended to bind the consciences of the faithful.

*Pope Honorius (625-638).*—Honorius wrote two letters, one to Sergius, an advocate of the Monothelite<sup>24</sup> heresy, another to Sophronius, the champion of orthodoxy, in which he forbade further discussion and declared that "there is but one Will in Christ." Honorius was anathematized as a heretic by the General Council of Constantinople (680-681). His case, however, yields no argument against Papal Infallibility: (1) Honorius did not pronounce a definition *ex cathedra*, for, he said expressly, "It doth not behove us to settle the question whether the number of operations in Christ is one or two"; he had been misinformed by Sergius as to the point at issue, and thought that the controversy was, as he observed, "a war of words" to be settled by "grammarians." (2) His words bear an orthodox sense; they were written to contradict the false doctrine, ascribed by Sergius to his opponent, "that there are two *conflicting* Wills in Christ." (3) The decree of the Council of Constantinople must be regarded as condemnatory of the conduct of Honorius, not of his teaching as Head of the Church. So much is clear from the words of Pope Leo II. who explained that he had confirmed the decree, because Honorius had been negligent "in extinguishing the rising flame of heresy." The decree of a General Council is infallible only in the sense in which it is ratified by the Pope. It is, however, much disputed whether the Fathers of Constantinople intended to stigmatize Honorius as a heretic in the modern acceptation of the term. The word seems to have been applied in those days to anyone whose action, apart from any positive teaching, was thought to favour heresy or schism.

<sup>23</sup> The Arians denied the Divinity of Christ.

<sup>24</sup> The Monothelites taught that there was no distinct Human Will in Christ; that it was absorbed in the Divine. In other words, they taught that Christ was not true man.

*It is most striking that, with all the long history of the Church before them, vigilant opponents have been unable to discover any serious objections against Papal Infallibility. Besides the few trivial historical objections stated above, there are some others of the same type but they are quite unworthy of mention.*

*Below we give three objections, pseudo-philosophical in character. They are mere sophisms.*

1. "No one can interpret infallible teaching satisfactorily unless he is himself infallible."

REPLY.—(a) Christ did not give the individual members of His Church any special gift of infallible interpretation, because the gift would have been superfluous. He made His Church a living, efficient teacher and gave her the power to express herself in language so clear as absolutely to exclude all danger of misinterpretation. Some of her followers—not true followers, for they were already on the brink of heresy—have tried occasionally to misconstrue her teaching by a false subtlety, but she has always exposed them. No man of normal intelligence—let him be an atheist if you will—who is given the ordinary course in Catholic Doctrine from an official text-book, can ever have the slightest doubt as to what precisely the Church asks us to believe. Of course he will not understand *how* her teaching, e.g., about the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Real Presence, etc., can be true. That is not the point. What he will understand, and understand without the slightest trace of uncertainty, is the statement of her doctrine; when she says, for instance, that Christ, true God, true Man, is present in the Blessed Eucharist under the appearance of bread and wine, her statement, as a statement, will be perfectly plain to him; he will know exactly what Catholics have to believe. His certainty as to what the Church teaches is an absolute certainty; it is an indestructible certainty, because he will deny the possibility of his having misunderstood the words in which the doctrine is expressed. (b) The objection does not tell against Catholics but against those Protestants who profess to receive infallible teaching from the Bible, and who differ so widely in their interpretation of it. The Bible cannot speak to them; it cannot correct their errors.

2. "The proof of Infallibility can be constructed only by our own fallible reason, and therefore can give us nothing higher than a very probable conclusion."

REPLY.—(a) This objection in the hands of non-rationalist Protestants proves too much. It would destroy all human certainty of the fact of revelation; that fact is proved by our reason; it is proved on lines similar to those which we follow in

proving the Infallibility of the Church; and, if we had nothing better than a very probable knowledge that God had spoken to us, He would have spoken in vain, and we could have no faith in His word, for faith haunted by the possibility of error is no faith. Those Protestants who firmly believe that God *has* spoken to us, must see the absurdity of supposing that He who is All-wise and All-powerful could have left us with even the shadow of uncertainty either as to the fact or the terms of His message. (b) Our reason is fallible: undoubtedly. Still our fallible reason can lead us to absolutely certain conclusions, as can be shown by an abundance of examples from daily life; the courts of justice, for instance, will supply us with many decisions which cannot be challenged by anyone who has studied the evidence impartially. But it would be impossible to find in ordinary human affairs any evidence so compelling as that by which we prove the divine origin of the Catholic Church with all her characteristics, including her claim to Infallibility. The evidence leaves us no alternative—unless we regard as an alternative the supreme absurdity that the God of truth has deceived us. To the impartial mind, the evidence is irresistible, and gives a certainty impossible to overthrow.<sup>25</sup>

3. "Both the Church and the State have been instituted by God. As the State may issue unjust commands without losing its divine authority, so too the Church can retain its divine authority, though its teaching be occasionally false."

REPLY.—(a) The objection shows a misunderstanding of our argument. We do not prove the Infallibility of the Church from the bare fact that she is a divine institution but from the fact that she is a very special kind of divine institution which Christ

<sup>25</sup> This objection and the one that follows will be found in the work of the Protestant writer, Dr. Salmon, "The Infallibility of the Church" (first edition, 1888; reprinted, 1923), pp. 48, 57. It is curious that a work which would destroy all faith in revealed truth, and which is remarkable neither for logic nor scholarship, should still be regarded by believing Protestants as a serious attack on the Infallibility of the Catholic Church. The writer misquotes and misrepresents Catholic authors; most of his errors were exposed by Canon Murphy in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* (Series 4, Vol. IX, pp. 198-217, 409-437; Vol. X, pp. 37-64, 239-260, 395-434; Vol. XI, pp. 35-71, 223-253). Much of his book is occupied with the false notion that we accept the Infallibility of the Pope for a reason which does no credit to us as rational beings; he represents the Pope as conversing with us in the following style: "'You must believe everything I say,' demands the Pope. 'Why should we?' we inquire. 'Well, perhaps, I cannot give any quite convincing reason; but just try it. If you trust me with doubt or hesitation, I make no promise; but if you really believe every-

has made infallible. The cases would be alike if, for instance, Christ had established a world-wide State as well as a world-wide Church, and had said to its rulers: "Go and rule all men. Give them all the commands which I have told you to give them, He who obeys you, obeys Me. He who will not obey you, shall be condemned to eternal punishment. Against you the powers of Hell shall not prevail, and I shall be with you all days even to the end of the world." The rulers of such an imaginary State would be as incapable of erring in justice as the Catholic Church is incapable of erring in her teaching. (b) Rulers of States have divine authority; they retain it only so long as the people continue to acknowledge them as their rightful rulers. The people may not feel bound to withdraw their approval because of an occasional unjust law; they may be willing to submit, under protest, to a certain degree of injustice. A failure in justice, therefore, does not necessarily destroy the authority of a civil government; but on the other hand a failure in truth would of necessity destroy the authority of the Church. Under the commission of Christ, His Church must bind the consciences of men, on pain of damnation, to accept her doctrines; if then it could be proved that even one doctrine so taught by the Catholic Church was false, she would at once be utterly discredited; she would be rejected by all men as having no claim to speak to them as the representative of Christ.

**The Ecclesiastical and the Spanish Inquisition.**—*The Ecclesiastical Inquisition.*—During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, violent sectaries made their appearance in several parts of southern Europe. They attacked the clergy, destroyed churches and

thing I say, you will find—that you *will* believe everything I say," p. 59. He speaks of the Galileo case at length, and of the miracles of Lourdes, Knock, etc., and the devotion to the Sacred Heart, and does not realise that he is beating the air (pp. 200–261). On p. 280, he quotes, with approval, from an article in the *Quarterly Review* (October, 1889) which says that Protestants can grow in the conviction that they have the truth, but without ever attaining "to logical completeness"—which is but another way of saying that they do not grow "in the conviction" of religious truth but merely *towards* it without ever arriving at it.

The author of the work to which we have been referring believed sincerely in the Bible as God's word, the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Redemption. These are what he would call "the essential truths of Christianity." Had he lived to the present day, he would have discovered that a man can become a Protestant Bishop without believing any of them, and perhaps on surveying the havoc of divine truth wrought by his much-lauded principle of "private judgment," he might grow towards and reach the conviction that the only shield of God's revelation is Infallibility

monasteries, and encouraged revolt against civil authority. The whole fabric of society, political and religious, was threatened with disruption. To meet so grave a peril, the Church, in concert with the secular governments, established (1231) the Roman or Ecclesiastical Inquisition to try charges of heresy. Its tribunals were set up in several countries, as need arose. Its object was primarily corrective. If the heretic were prepared to recant his errors, it imposed a penance on him, sometimes very light, and reconciled him with the Church; if he were obdurate, it pronounced him guilty of heresy, and handed him over to the State for punishment. The State passed sentence, and its judgments were severe—confiscation of property, imprisonment, or death itself. Officially, the Church never condemned anyone to death, but she undoubtedly approved of the stern repression of heresy by the State, and believed that, in the circumstances of the age, she was justified in her approval. The activity of the Inquisition continued intermittently until the sixteenth century. The function of its modern representative, the Congregation of the Holy Office, is to inquire into the orthodoxy of books, and to condemn them, if they be found to contain any doctrine contrary to faith or morals.

Our adversaries point to the Ecclesiastical Inquisition as a proof of the intolerance and cruelty of the Church. (1) *As to the charge of intolerance.*—A man is said to tolerate what he believes to be an error when he, though able, is unwilling to suppress it. The Church, commissioned by Christ to preach the Gospel, and clothed with infallibility, can never be unwilling to suppress erroneous doctrine. The Church and every lover of truth must necessarily be intolerant of error. The so-called tolerance of the present age is not tolerance in the strict sense. It is due either to the incapacity to persecute, or to utter indifferentism in religious matters. (2) *As to the charge of cruelty.*—(a) "The Church, established by Christ as a perfect society, is empowered to make laws and inflict penalties for their violation. Heresy not only violates her law but strikes at her very life, unity of belief."<sup>26</sup> (b) "When Christianity became the religion of the Empire, and still more when the peoples of Northern Europe became Christian nations, the close alliance of Church and State made unity of faith essential not only to the ecclesiastical organization, but also to civil society. Heresy, in consequence, was a crime which secular rulers were bound in duty to punish. It was regarded as worse than any other crime, even that of high treason; it was for society in those times what we call anarchy."<sup>26</sup> Still, it is an undoubted fact that for centuries "the principal teachers of the Church . . . shrank from such stern measures against heresy as torture and capital punishment,"<sup>26</sup> and yielded only

<sup>26</sup> See *Cath. Encycl.*, "The Inquisition."



under pressure from the civil powers. Hence, it cannot be said that the Inquisition was due solely to the initiative of the Church. (c) The Inquisition gave the heretic ample time to recant. Its officers were bound under most severe penalties to move by slow delays, so as to give the accused every opportunity of escape. Whereas the civil authority, when it acted, as it often did, without any reference to the Church, gave no time for repentance. The Inquisition, therefore, was milder in its methods than the secular courts. (d) Protestants, in the days of the Inquisition, dealt with their opponents exactly as Catholics dealt with theirs. But, while the severity of Protestants was indefensible, since they maintained the liberty of private judgment and, therefore, admitted that their victim might be right and they themselves wrong, the severity of Catholics, on the other hand, was consistent with their doctrine that they alone possess Divine truth, and that *the heretic is necessarily a source of moral or spiritual infection, a slayer of souls*, and, therefore, more dangerous than the thief or the murderer. (e) The criminal law of the Middle Ages was much more severe than that of the present day, the death penalty being exacted for burglary, blasphemy, and even petty theft. From the modern standpoint, those in truth were merciless times. But what of the boasted clemency of our own enlightened age? A future generation may pass a most severe judgment on us for our indifference to the inhuman conditions in which so many of our workers toil and live, and for our cruelty in casting appalling multitudes of our children into the raging furnace of war. (f) Let us suppose all the facts alleged under the charge of cruelty to be fully established. Let us accept as true all the gross exaggerations of unprincipled adversaries as to the number of the victims of the Inquisition, and the nature of the punishments to which they were subjected. What follows? Nothing against the Church as a Divine institution.<sup>27</sup> Nothing against her claim to doctrinal infallibility. Much, perhaps, against the personal wisdom and clemency of her rulers. But, even though such personal failure be admitted—and in view of all the circumstances of the times we are far from admitting—it serves but to emphasize the fact that the weakness and errors of individuals can never bring the Church to ruin.

*The Spanish Inquisition.*—When Protestants speak of the cruelty of the Catholic Church, they usually have in mind the proceedings of the Spanish Inquisition, a tribunal established by Ferdinand

<sup>27</sup> Consider the dread punishments inflicted by God under the Old Law (see e.g., I Kings vi. 19; II Kings vi. 7), and the deaths of Ananias and Saphira under the New (see Acts v).

and Isabella in 1481, at the request of their subjects and with the approval of the Holy See. Its purpose was to unmask and punish pretended converts from Judaism or Mohammedanism. Many of these possessed great wealth and influence, and held high office in the State and even in the Church. Their plots and secret machinations threatened to reverse the dearly-bought victory which the Spaniards had won over the Moors after a struggle of nearly eight centuries. The Inquisitors were ecclesiastics, but they held office at the pleasure of the Spanish crown. Pope Sixtus IV, who declared that his sanction for the erection of the tribunal had been obtained on false pretences, protested more than once, but without avail, against its severity. Since it was a political rather than an ecclesiastical institution, the Church cannot be held responsible for its proceedings.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Llorente, the chief witness on whom Protestants rely, was appointed Secretary to the Inquisition at Madrid, in 1789, but lost his position some years later through his misconduct. His work, *A Critical History of the Inquisition*, was prompted by a desire of revenge. Apart from his undoubted animus, the fact that he destroyed the records on which he purported to base his statistics involves his testimony in grave suspicion.—See the review, *Times Literary Supplement*, 6th Nov., 1937, of *The Golden Century of Spain* by Trevor Davies. The author, whom the reviewer absolves from all prejudices says that the Spanish Inquisition was "in many ways more just and humane than almost any tribunal in Europe," and that "the number of persons burnt alive in Spain was surprisingly small, smaller perhaps than in other countries such as England." W. T. Walsh in *Isabella of Spain*, page 353, who gives a reference to the Protestant writer, Dr. Lea, says: "Not only was Spain free from the terrible religious wars that cost hundreds of thousands of lives in the countries where Protestantism obtained a foothold, but she escaped almost completely the terrors of witch-burning." The number of witches burnt or drowned in Germany, Great Britain, and New England States of America was enormous; thousands perished, but how many thousands we cannot say, because exact records are not available; as a rule the so-called witches received no trial but were done to death by a fanatical mob.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CHURCH—THE STATE—THE FAMILY

#### Summary.

Church and State.—The State and Parental Rights.—The Church and Education.

**Church and State.**—The Church provides for the spiritual wants of man : the State provides for some of the greatest of his temporal needs. The end or purpose of the Church is to give him eternal happiness : *the end or purpose of the State is to assist him towards temporal well-being in such a manner as will be helpful to the working out of his eternal destiny.*<sup>1</sup> All spiritual blessings are in the hands of the Church : they cannot be obtained from any other source :—all temporal blessings are not in the hands of the State, still those which are in its power to bestow are of vast importance : the chief service which it can render is to guard our lives and property, to encourage the practice of religion, and to promote the development of all that is best in us. Each of the two societies is supreme in its own sphere : each is provided with all the powers necessary for the attainment of its end. Each is, therefore, what is termed a perfect society.<sup>2</sup>

Matters spiritual, *e.g.*, Divine worship, the education of the clergy, belong exclusively to the Church ; matters temporal, *e.g.*, the choice of a form of government, the development of industries, exclusively to the State. Matters of a mixed character which affect both societies alike should be dealt with by mutual arrangement, but in case of conflict, the State, inasmuch as it pursues the less important end, must yield to the Church. Though directly concerned with spirituals alone, the Church is

obviously entitled to all temporal aids necessary, or useful, for the success of her mission : she is entitled, *e.g.*, to build churches and seminaries, to collect revenue, and to conduct schools for the education of the laity.

Since there can be no lasting temporal prosperity without sound morality, and since there can be no sound morality without true religion, the Church maintains that it is not only the duty, but the interest of the State :

- (1) to respect the law of God and the Church in all its enactments ;
- (2) to be subject to the Church in all spiritual matters ;
- (3) to discharge, through the ministers of the Church, its debt of public worship ;
- (4) to protect the Church, to promote her interests, and, in general,
- (5) to act in perfect harmony with her.

On the other hand, it is the duty of the Church to inculcate obedience to the State, to encourage patriotism, industry, frugality, public spirit and all civic virtues.

Such is the ideal for which the Church strives ; in countries predominantly Catholic, she urges her claim for its realisation ; elsewhere she refrains from doing so, and is, as a rule, content, from motives of prudence, to demand nothing more than liberty of worship, and such protection as is usually accorded to private societies within the State. She has expressly declared that the separation of Church from State is an evil, and that she admits it only with a view to avoid greater evil.

The authority, *i.e.*, the right to give commands and exact obedience, which is essential for the very life of the Church and of the State is from God. "There is no power but from God."<sup>3</sup> To Christ is given all power in Heaven and on earth ; He is the Lord of lords, and

<sup>1</sup> Words of Leo XIII, "Immortale Dei," page 2.

<sup>2</sup> The Encyclical "Immortale Dei" is published in *The Pope and the People*, C.T.S.E.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xiii. 1.

King of kings, He is the Head of the whole human race : we belong to Him, because He has purchased us with His life-Blood ; all the means that assist us in any way towards the salvation of our soul owe their value and efficacy to Him. He rules us through the Church ; He rules us through the State.<sup>4</sup> Directly through the Church, indirectly through the State, He helps us on our way to His Eternal Kingdom.

**The State and Parental Rights.**—(1) Like the Church and the State, the Family is of divine origin. God clothes parents with His creative power, so that they may bring forth children and train them to be worthy members of the Church and the State. The Family is the nursery of the Church and the State ; but unlike them, it is not a perfect society ; it is not self-sufficing ; it is entirely dependent on the Church for its spiritual life ; it is entirely dependent on the State for all the great advantages and opportunities that can be found only in a civilized community. But while thus dependent on both, it has its own rights which cannot be taken from it.

(2) Reason tells us that the right to marry and have children has not been conferred on man by the State, but belongs to him by his very nature. In fact, it existed before there was ever such a thing as a civil State. Marriage, therefore, even among pagans, is in its essentials beyond the reach of the State. The State, in the absence of natural impediments, cannot prevent its subjects from

<sup>4</sup> In the Encyclical, issued by Pius XI when establishing the Feast of Christ the King, we find the following words : " If princes and magistrates duly elected are filled with persuasion that they rule, not by their own right, but by the mandate and in place of the Divine King, they will exercise their authority piously and wisely ; and in making and administering laws, they will have in view the common good and human dignity of their subjects. The result will be a stable peace and tranquillity, for there will no longer be any cause of discontent. Men will discern in their king or their rulers men like themselves, perhaps unworthy or open to criticism, but they will not on that account refuse obedience, if they see reflected in them the authority of Christ, God and Man."

marrying ; the State cannot grant a divorce ; the State cannot grant a separation.

(3) The rights of parents spring from the marriage contract. Those rights are not created by the State. They are inherent to the very office of parenthood. They precede the rights of the State and should not be touched by it. The State is not the master but the guardian of the Family.

(4) One of the chief rights of parents is the right to determine, according to their conscience, the form of education which their children should receive. It is at once a right and a duty. In exercising their right and discharging their duty, they may lawfully avail themselves of the assistance of teachers, skilled in their work and of sound moral principles. But this does not relieve them of their responsibility. They are bound to watch over the progress of their children at school ; they are bound in a most special way to give them the best of all lessons, the lesson of good example. No matter what their children may learn from their school-teachers, they will look to their father and mother for the answer to the greatest of all questions, " How life is to be lived." The school is an extension of the home ; an ally, but not a substitute.

(5) In the general interests of the citizens, the State may laudably build and finance schools and teachers' training colleges ; it can fix a programme of secular subjects and send inspectors to see that the pupils attain due proficiency. In the case of careless parents who refuse to have their children educated, the State can lawfully intervene to supply their default. But this does not mean that a parental duty can be assumed by the State. The State can acquire no duty towards children as children, but as future citizens. Its right of intervention ceases the moment parents awake to their responsibility and are able and willing to discharge it.

(6) The State is the guardian of education as it is the guardian of marriage. It is its duty to provide all parents with equal facilities for the education of their children. If, therefore—as happens in some English-speaking countries where a strong Protestant sentiment predominates—the State builds and finances schools acceptable to the majority, and at the same time, refuses proportional assistance to the type of school which alone can satisfy the conscience of the Catholic minority, it is guilty of a grave offence against natural justice; from the public funds, to which by taxation Catholics have contributed their share as well as non-Catholics, it gives every assistance to non-Catholics for the education of their children, and not a penny to the Catholics. Such action on the part of the State violates the natural rights of Catholic parents, and is an odious persecution of their religion.

(7) In the countries referred to in the preceding paragraph—so-called democratic countries—the excuse offered for the injustice to Catholics is that the laws dealing with education have been passed by a majority of the citizens and are therefore just. But the principle on which the excuse relies is tainted, as may be seen from its consequences; it would give the majority unlimited power; it would allow them to suppress all religious worship, to abolish marriage and private property, to withdraw children from the custody of their parents and bring them up in public institutions. No law is just or valid unless it be in accord with the law of nature. Laws violating or ignoring the natural rights of parents are therefore invalid; *they have no force in conscience* and should be abrogated.

(8) The Church's teaching on the subject of education binds not only Catholic parents but all Catholic citizens. Every Catholic, therefore, who takes part in public life is bound to resist the opinion that education should be exclusively secular, that is, that it should be entirely

divorced from religion; and he is bound also to do his utmost to remedy any educational injustice from which his Catholic fellow-citizens may suffer.<sup>5</sup>

**The Church and Education.**—By the command, "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep," Christ has imposed on His Church the two-fold duty of instructing her children in the wholesome doctrine of salvation, and of guarding them against the poison of false teaching. It is His desire that she should so train them, that His image may shine forth in the soul of every one of them. It is not surprising therefore that, in her legislation on the subject of Catholic Education, she should speak with so much solicitude, and should be so definite, so determined, so uncompromising.

Being well aware that youth is the time when the deepest impressions are made on mind and character, the time when moral and religious convictions, of lifelong influence, are formed, she has laid grave obligations on pastors and parents to see that there be nothing either in the atmosphere of a school or in its courses of instruction that might prove a stumbling-block to the souls for whose training they are responsible to God.

The authority given to the Church by Christ includes the right to conduct schools herself, to safeguard the faith of her children in the schools under the control of others, to supervise the selection of teachers and of the matter taught, and to condemn any school or educational system which she considers to be hostile or dangerous to holy religion.

The following extracts from her sacred Canons show clearly the mind of the Church on this vital question:

(Canon 1372): "Catholic children are to be educated in schools where not only nothing contrary to faith and

<sup>5</sup> On the matters dealt with in these paragraphs, see "The Official Pronouncement of the Catholic Hierarchy of Australia on the Education Question," published by the Catholic Truth Society of Australia (Melbourne).

morals is taught, but where religious and moral training occupy the first place. Parents and all those who take their place have the right, as well as a most serious obligation, to provide for the Christian education of their children."

(Canon 1381): "The religious teaching of youth in all schools is subject to the authority and inspection of the Church. The local Ordinaries (*i.e.*, the Bishops) have the right and duty to see that nothing is taught contrary to faith and morals in any school in their territory. They moreover have the right to approve or condemn books and teachers and to demand the removal of either, in the interests of religion and morals."

(Canon 1374): "Catholic children shall not attend neutral, non-Catholic, nor mixed schools, that is to say, any school open to Catholics and non-Catholics alike. The Ordinary of the place (*i.e.*, the Bishop of the diocese) alone has the right, in accordance with the instructions of the Holy See, to decide under what circumstances and with what precautions it may be tolerated that Catholic children should attend such schools."—Observe the word "tolerated." It means that, in spite of all safeguards for the child's faith, attendance at such schools never has the approval of the Church; it is an evil which she permits in order to avoid a greater evil, and it must be terminated at the first opportunity.

The teaching of the Church is also manifested in the doctrines she has condemned. Thus the following three propositions were declared by Pope Pius IX *to be contrary to Catholic teaching*:<sup>6</sup>

Condemned Proposition (45):—"The whole government of public schools in which Christian youth are educated, can and ought to be in the hands of civil authority, and so completely in their hands that no right of any other authority is recognised to interfere with

<sup>6</sup> These propositions are found in the Syllabus of Condemned Propositions issued by Pius IX. Cf. Denzinger, 1700

school discipline, with the order of studies, with the conferring of degrees or with the selection of teachers."

Condemned Proposition (47):—"The best theory of civil society requires that popular schools, open to children of every class of the people, and generally all public institutes intended for instruction in letters and philosophical sciences and for carrying on the education of youth, should be freed from all ecclesiastical authority, control, and interference: and should be fully subjected to the civil and political power, at the pleasure of the rulers, according to the standard of the prevalent opinions of the age."

Condemned Proposition (48):—"Catholics may approve that mode of education which is disjoined from the Catholic Faith and the power of the Church, and which concerns itself exclusively, or, at least, primarily, with the knowledge of natural things, and the ends of earthly social life."

Thus, by her laws and her untiring vigilance, does the Church fulfil her office of Good Shepherd towards the tender nurslings of her fold, her little ones and adolescents, whom, with the divine assistance, she ever leads to eternal life.

**Definition.**—The Church is the great and world-wide religious society whose members, having been admitted to its fold by Baptism, profess the same Faith, partake of the same Sacraments, assist at the same Sacrifice, and are governed by their lawful pastors, the Bishops, under one supreme head, the Pope, the Vicar of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Young people should not be asked to memorise this formal definition; for them it will be sufficient to define the Church as "the Pope, the Bishops, and their followers."

## CHAPTER XIV

## FAITH

## Summary.

- I. The Solemn Teaching of the Church.
- II. The Act of Faith :
  - A. The Act of Faith : its nature. Note : (1) The Catholic Rule of Faith. (2) Extent of Infallibility. (3) Private revelations.
  - B. The Act of Faith is reasonable. It is reasonable in itself ; it is not unreasonable in its object, *i.e.*, in the truths proposed for belief.
  - C. How the Act of Faith is made : A convert's first act of faith—the dispositions necessary—how he makes his act of faith—the certainty it brings him. A Catholic's act of faith—how he makes it—the certainty it brings him.
  - D. The Acts of Faith which are necessary for salvation, either necessary absolutely or because commanded by the Church.
- III. The Virtue of Faith. Definition.—The Virtue of Faith, a precious gift, but may be lost : consequent duties—How the Virtue of Faith may be lost—How the Virtue of Faith can be guarded—Temptations against Faith—How we live by Faith and thus increase the Virtue of Faith.
- IV. Difficulties in connection with the belief in mysteries ; the possibility of a conflict between Faith and secular science.
- V. Errors as to the nature and effect of Faith.

## § I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly : (1) that Faith is a *divine virtue* by which we believe revealed truth, not because it is known to us by the natural light of reason, but because it is known to us by the authority of God who can neither deceive nor be deceived ; <sup>1</sup> that the virtue of Faith is infused into the soul with sanctifying grace,<sup>2</sup> and is lost only by a grave sin of unbelief,<sup>3</sup> which a man commits by deliberately

<sup>1</sup> V(atican Council) 1789 : for number, see Denz. Bannwart's Enchiridion Symbolorum.      <sup>2</sup> T(rent, Council of) 800.      <sup>3</sup> T 808.

doubting or rejecting a truth which he knows God has revealed ; <sup>4</sup> (2) that, without a gift from God consisting in His enlightening and helping grace, no man can make *an act of Faith* profitable for salvation ; <sup>5</sup> that the grace thus given to him does not deprive him of liberty, but is a help which he freely accepts, and with which he freely co-operates ; <sup>6</sup> that his act of Faith is not a blind movement of the mind,<sup>7</sup> but is in conformity with reason ; <sup>8</sup> (3) that the fact of *God's existence* can be most certainly known from created things ; <sup>9</sup> that the fact that *God has spoken* to us can be most certainly known from miracles and prophecies ; <sup>10</sup> (4) that the truths which God has revealed are found in *Sacred Scripture and Tradition* ; <sup>11</sup> that among these truths there are Mysteries which, in this life, the mind of man,<sup>12</sup> no matter how far it may advance in knowledge, can never comprehend.<sup>13</sup>

## § II

## THE ACT OF FAITH

## A

## THE ACT OF FAITH : ITS NATURE

**The Act of Faith: its main features.**—(1) When we make an act of faith, we accept a doctrine as true, because God who knows all things and cannot lie affirms it. In the

<sup>4</sup> Heresy is the sin committed by a baptized person who, while calling himself a Christian, obstinately denies any article of Catholic Faith. Apostasy is the total rejection of the Christian Faith by one who has been baptized. See Code of Canon Law, c. 1325.

<sup>5</sup> T 813.      <sup>6</sup> V 1814.      <sup>7</sup> V 1791.      <sup>8</sup> V 1790.

<sup>9</sup> V 1785, 1806.

<sup>10</sup> V 1790, 1813, Pius IX. 1637. The two truths that God exists and that God has spoken are the foundations of faith ; it is to them that the Vatican Council refers (1799) when it says that it is the office of right reason to prove the " foundations of faith."

<sup>11</sup> V 1787, T 783.

<sup>12</sup> V 1795, 1816 of Pius IX, 1669, 1673.

<sup>13</sup> When the reader has completed his study of this chapter, he will understand more clearly the meaning of the expressions which he finds in the Church's Solemn Teaching given above.

world of to-day, God does not speak directly to us with His own voice; He speaks to us through other men, the Pope and the Bishops of His Church; but when we accept *their* word, we accept it as the word of God. God's spokesmen may be very learned men, yet it is not because of their learning that we believe, but because God speaks to us through them. The doctrine which they convey to us derives no authority from them, for they are mere channels of divine truth; its authority, *i.e.*, its claim on our belief, comes from God alone. We believe, not because man has told us, but because God has told us. We believe because we revere God's supreme authority, and welcome the revelation He in His goodness has deigned to give us.<sup>14</sup>

(2) He who makes an act of faith, he who believes, has no doubt whatever in his mind. To quote the words of Cardinal Newman: "He is as certain that the doctrine is true, as that God is true; he is certain, because God is true—because God has spoken, not because he sees its truth or can prove its truth." Thus, the outstanding characteristics of the act of faith are: (1) that it is based entirely on the word of God, and (2) that it absolutely excludes all doubt or hesitancy.

**The Act of Faith: its Definition.**—An act of faith is an act by which we, with the help of God's grace, firmly and piously believe, on His word, truths revealed by Him. (1) It is an act for which divine grace is absolutely essential. Every act of faith is a step towards heaven, but we cannot take even one step in that direction by our natural strength: we need the special help from God called divine grace. Since, therefore, the act of faith is above our *natural* powers and needs the assistance of God's grace, it is termed a *supernatural* act. (2) It is made by our intellect at the command of our will, and God's grace works both on our intellect and on our will. It is by an act of our intellect or understanding that we accept or acknowledge the truth He has revealed to us; it is by an act of our will that we decide to accept it. His grace, gives us a gentle submissiveness<sup>15</sup> so that we freely, piously and

<sup>14</sup> Second Council of Orange, Denzinger, 178-180. Cf. St. Thomas, S.T. II.—II, q. 5, a. 2, ad 2 m.

<sup>15</sup> This is what is meant by the Second Council of Orange and the Vatican Council when they speak of *suavitas in consentiendo et credendo* as the gift of the Holy Spirit: see Denzinger, 180 and 1791.

reverently resolve that our intellect shall not be guided by its own natural light, but that it shall take His word as the sole reason for assenting to the truth revealed.<sup>16</sup> (3) Its motive, *i.e.*, the reason why we believe, is the perfect knowledge and truthfulness and supreme authority of God who cannot deceive us and cannot Himself be deceived. (Thus, it is evident that the act of faith is an act of divine worship; it gives God a praise that can be given to Him alone). (4) Its object,<sup>17</sup> *i.e.*, the sum of the truths which we must believe, comprises all truths contained in the Deposit of Faith. By the Deposit of Faith we mean that collection of revealed truths which, whether found in Scripture or Tradition, the Church commands us to believe with an assent of faith.

God has appointed the Church to teach all mankind the truths which He wishes them to believe; He has appointed her to teach them with an infallible voice, and to be their one and only guide to Heaven. The Faith, therefore, of which we speak throughout this treatise may be more fully described as Faith, Divine and Catholic.<sup>18</sup>

**Note.**—(1) **The Catholic Rule of Faith.**—The Rule of Faith is the test by which we can determine exactly the truths which we are bound to believe. The Catholic Rule of Faith is the teaching of the Church, the living representative of Christ on earth. When she declares that God has revealed a particular doctrine, we are certain

<sup>16</sup> A man could make an act of faith without grace, but it would be an act of merely human faith; it would not be pleasing to God, because it would not have that kind of submissiveness and assent which His grace alone can give.

<sup>17</sup> When we believe in general all that the Church proposes for our belief, we believe *implicitly* each truth. But for some of these truths an *explicit* act of faith is necessary. See page 221.

<sup>18</sup> Can we make an act of faith in a truth we already know from reason? Can we for the moment discard the argument which we ourselves have constructed, and place our dependence solely on the authority of God? Many theologians say that we can but St. Thomas thinks otherwise; to him faith and knowledge, for the same mind in respect of the same truth, are incompatible. Thus he would hold, that if we have clearly and fully proved God's omnipotence from the light of reason, we cannot make an act of faith in it. His opinion, however, would not prevent us from making an act of faith in "God the Father Almighty," for the omnipotence of God the Father as the *First Person of the Blessed Trinity*, is not discoverable by human reason. Similarly we may know that God is the giver of all good things, but this will not prevent us from *believing* that He is the giver of grace, for it is only through His revelation that we learn of the existence of grace.

that He has revealed it, and that we are bound to believe it. Catholics need not, and, in fact, usually do not, study the evidence for the revelation of every article of Catholic belief; <sup>19</sup> they inquire whether the infallible Church teaches that a particular truth has been revealed by God, and, if they find that she does, they believe it on God's authority. This Catholic Rule of Faith manifests the wisdom and goodness of God, for it meets the needs of both the learned and the uneducated. <sup>20</sup>

(2) *Extent of Infallibility.*—As explained on page 179, the Infallibility of the Church extends to truths outside the Deposit of Faith. The Church can declare infallibly that, *e.g.*, a certain book contains heretical or immoral doctrine. We are bound under grave obligation to accept such a declaration as true, but we do not, and cannot, give it an assent of Faith, <sup>21</sup> because it is not a truth revealed by God.

(3) *Private Revelations.*—God may, and sometimes does, grant revelations to private individuals. Those who receive them, and are perfectly certain that they come from God, are bound to make acts of Faith in them. Such acts are acts of Divine Faith, but not of Faith, Divine and Catholic. The Church never imposes on us the obligation of believing Private Revelations. She allows them to be published to the faithful, but only when she is satisfied of their spiritual utility and of the evidence on which they depend, as, *e.g.*, in the case of the revelations connected with the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

## B

### THE ACT OF FAITH IS REASONABLE

**The Act of Faith is reasonable in itself.**—(1) It is reasonable for us to accept truth on the word of God, because

<sup>19</sup> The evidence is in Scripture and in Tradition.

<sup>20</sup> See pp. 148-9.

<sup>21</sup> *i.e.*, of Faith Divine and Catholic.—We give it; however, an assent of what is technically called *ecclesiastical faith*. We believe it on the authority of the infallible Church. The opinion, however, is gaining ground that this concept of ecclesiastical faith is unnecessary; it is argued with great force that, since the infallibility of the Church is revealed by God, everything we believe on her infallible authority, we believe on the word of God himself. See Marin-Sola, O.P.: *L'évolution homogène du Dogme catholique*. Fribourg, Suisse: Imprimerie de l'œuvre de Saint-Paul, 1924; see also Gasparri's Catechism, Eng. trans., Appendix 7, q. 151, pp. 448-450.

every day of our lives we accept truth on the word of man. The greater and, by far, the more important part of the knowledge we possess is the gift of others. However acute our senses may be, however brilliant our powers of understanding, the store of information which we can brand as peculiarly our own is as nothing compared with that which we have derived from our fellow men. It is to their testimony that we are indebted for all our knowledge of the distant past, for much of our knowledge of the immediate present, for almost everything we know of the conclusions of science, and for all that mass of practical or moral certainty on which we regulate our daily lives, our certainty, *e.g.*, that we are the children of those whom we honour as our parents, or that the manuals we read in school are the exact reproductions of their authors' manuscripts. If, then, we accept truth so freely from men, how could it be unreasonable to accept it from God? Dependence on others is, in fact, a law of our very nature. <sup>22</sup> Nothing, therefore, could be more reasonable, more human, so to speak, than the Act of Faith.

(2) The higher the authority, the more reasonable is the act of submission to it. No authority can be higher than God's. Men are fallible. God is infallible. Therefore, if it is certain that God has spoken, not only would it not be unreasonable to believe on His word, but it would be the height of unreason and folly to refuse to believe.

(3) We insult a man by saying: "You are deceiving me. I refuse to believe you." The insult is all the greater in proportion to the man's uprightness, dignity, and superiority over us in knowledge. What, then, must be thought of the insult to God of deliberately rejecting His word?

**The Act of Faith is not unreasonable in its Object.**—There are only two grounds on which it is contended that the

<sup>22</sup> See Chapter III. "Socially, man has duties to God."



Object of Faith is unreasonable, viz., that it includes (1) mysteries, and (2) doctrines which may some day be disproved by secular science. We will show (1) that belief in mysteries is not unreasonable, and (2) that faith and secular science can never be in conflict.

(1) FAITH IN MYSTERIES IS NOT UNREASONABLE.—A mystery is a doctrine beyond mortal comprehension; our reason cannot prove it to be true; our reason cannot prove it to be false. Yet, convinced of the veracity of God, and of the infinite superiority of His knowledge to ours, we can believe it to be true, as a blind man believes what we tell him of the twinkling of a star or the colours of a sunset; he cannot prove or disprove our statements; he believes, because he is certain that we have knowledge which he has not, and that we are telling the truth.

*It is as reasonable to admit the mysteries of religion as the mysteries of physical science.*—In almost every science that we study, we are confronted with the mysteries of space and time and their limits. Nature is full of mysteries: a tiny seed falls to the earth and puts forth a tender sprout; in the course of years it becomes a great tree with its tangle of roots, its trunk and spreading boughs, its flowers and fruit, and reproduces itself a thousandfold. The processes of growth and reproduction which it exhibits, the very nature of the force of gravity which drew the seed to the earth in the first instance, are mysteries for which scientists have no explanation, and are but a few amid a countless number.<sup>23</sup> But, if the admission of mysteries be no argument against the validity of physical science, how could it tell against the

<sup>23</sup> Professor Huxley's testimony is important, although he exaggerates the mysteries of nature at the expense of the mysteries of Faith. Writing in 1877, he said: "The mysteries of the Church are child's play compared with the mysteries of Nature. The doctrine of the Trinity is not more puzzling than the necessary antinomies," i.e., apparent contradictions or impossibilities, "of physical speculation." Quoted with his permission in Bishop Gore's Bampton Lectures, 1891, p. 247, edition 1898.

reasonableness of religion? If the works of God be incomprehensible, how much more incomprehensible must not God Himself be?

*It is reasonable for man to expect mysteries in the true religion.*—If a religion had no mysteries, its Divine origin would be open to suspicion. If all its doctrines could be clearly and fully proved from reason, then they might have all been discovered by reason; they might have come from man, and not from God. Mysteries, therefore, so far from intimidating belief, are an incentive to it.

*It is not unreasonable that God should require us to believe mysteries, for such belief leads us to a higher worship of Him.*—(a) God, in bidding us believe what we cannot comprehend, exacts from us a homage most natural and fitting for us to render. Our belief in mysteries is a bowing down of our reason, the highest faculty we have, in the presence of God's infinite knowledge; it is an admission of the imperfection and limits of our understanding; it is the expression of our complete trust in our heavenly Father; in a word, it is the most perfect acknowledgment we can make that we are God's creatures, that we absolutely depend on Him as the source of all truth and all being. It is a submission most strictly demanded by God, and blessed by Him when given. Note the strong words of Scripture: "Without Faith it is impossible to please God"; "He that believeth not shall be condemned"; "Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed."<sup>24</sup> (b) Belief in mysteries tends vastly to increase our reverence for God: the wonder we feel at what reason tells us of His Nature deepens into profound awe, when we learn through Faith that He is One and Three. (c) Belief in the mysteries involved in our Redemption urges us to abandon all selfishness and to give God all the love of our hearts. The plan of the Redemption was that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity should become man to atone for

<sup>24</sup> Heb. xi. 6. St. Mark xvi. 16; St. John xx. 29; cf. *ibid.* iii. 18.

our sins and to make us Children of God ; that God the Son should be born into the world like any helpless little infant, that He should die on the Cross, and rise from the grave—but how many mysteries are there here ? And yet the great lesson of love they convey goes straight to every heart.

A father says to his child who fears to go out in the dark, " Give me your hand, and come with me." The child asks no more. It does not want a scientific explanation of the black shadows. So we too with a child's humility do not seek to understand the impenetrable mysteries of God. Our reason has no protest to make : its murmurs are stilled. Satisfied of His love and wisdom, we place our hand in His. We know He will guide us aright.

(2) FAITH AND SECULAR SCIENCE CAN NEVER BE IN CONFLICT.—The truths of Faith and the truths of secular science come to us from God, the former through revelation, the latter through human reason. Truth cannot contradict truth. " God," it has been well said, " is not afraid of your reason : He made it." There can never be a real, but there may be an apparent, conflict between the doctrines of Faith and the findings of secular science. (See pp. 228-230 for a fuller discussion of this point.)

## C

### HOW THE ACT OF FAITH IS MADE

**A Convert's First Act of Faith.**—We contemplate the case of an unbeliever, one devoid of all faith, who is convinced from reason of the existence and veracity of God and the possibility of revelation.<sup>25</sup> We suppose him to be about to make *an act of faith in the Church as a divinely appointed teacher.*

<sup>25</sup> We have shown how we can establish from reason the existence of God and the possibility of revelation. The veracity of God is usually taken as self-evident. If a proof be required, it might be put in the following form :

I. If God be not truthful, we cannot trust Him. If we cannot trust Him, we cannot trust the senses and the reason He has given us, and must believe that they may be constantly deceiving us. We

**THE DISPOSITIONS WHICH HE REQUIRES.**—The seeker after faith should be a man of good will. " Good will " includes : (a) *Prayerfulness and humility* : The man of good will prays to God for light and guidance ; he approaches the things of God with the humility<sup>26</sup> and trustfulness of a child ; he is ready to admit the fact of revelation, if it be borne to him on testimony which he would acknowledge as decisive in all the important affairs of life. (b) *Earnestness and conscientiousness* : he uses all diligence to ascertain the truth and is willing to accept it in spite of old associations and prejudices, and in spite of any irksome duties which its discovery might entail. (c) *Cleanness of heart* : he leads a good life ; he puts a check on the indulgence of his passions, because he knows that one of the greatest obstacles to Christian belief is unchristian conduct. In arriving at these dispositions he has the help of God's grace.

**HOW HE MAKES HIS ACT OF FAITH.**—Let us suppose that, while continuing steadfastly in these good dispositions, he carefully examines the arguments for believing in the Church as a divinely appointed teacher, and puts the result of his investigation in some such form as the following : " Relying on the testimony that men give me as to the origin of the Church, the sufferings and virtues of her children, and her triumphant survival down to the present day, I am convinced she is from God. In the miracles I see in her, I recognise God's way of telling me that she is right when she claims to be the teacher whom He himself has appointed as His representative on earth. I ought therefore to believe in her." But this conviction which he has reached under God's grace, is not in itself an act of faith. Many men get so far and no further, for it is one thing to recognise a duty and quite

must, therefore, become uncertain of everything, even of our own existence. But this conclusion is absurd. Therefore, the supposition that gave rise to it, viz., that God is not truthful, is also absurd.

II. God is infinite understanding ; He knows all truth ; He is the infinitely complete representation of all truth. He loves Himself necessarily, and with an infinite love, as the God of truth. It follows then from His very nature that He must abhor all falsehood, and that His every utterance must be true. See Fr. G. H. Joyce, S. J. : *Principles of Natural Theology*, Stonyhurst Series, p. 313.

<sup>26</sup> His humility will consist chiefly in the consciousness of his own infirmity, of his incapacity to discover all religious truth by the unaided reason, and of the weakness of his will and its tendency to evil. The humble man seeks God. The proud man, on the other hand, expects that God will seek him, that God will submit His revelation to him to be judged by any standard he chooses, to be accepted or rejected according as his arrogance directs, as though he were the master and God the pupil, as though his decision were of importance to God, but of little interest to himself.

another to fulfil it. The act of faith, as the Church teaches, cannot be made without a further and higher grace, *i.e.*, without a very special help from God, and God will not deny that help to one of good dispositions. The man of whom we speak will, therefore, receive the grace of a gentle submissiveness, moving him to honour God by freely, piously, and reverently submitting his mind to God's word; this grace enables him to give effect to his conviction, and to say: "I *do* believe that God has given me the Church to be my teacher. I believe it on the word of the good God himself who can neither deceive nor be deceived." This is the act of faith.<sup>27</sup>

**THE CERTAINTY WHICH THE ACT OF FAITH BRINGS HIM.**—Reason has led him to faith, but his faith does not rest on reason; it rests on the authority of God who is worthy of all reverence and love,<sup>28</sup> and who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Reason has made him quite certain that God has spoken, and that it would be wrong and foolish to deny it. Once he is convinced of this, he has opened a door that admits him to a far higher and different kind of certainty, the certainty that God's word gives him.<sup>29</sup> Resting solely on that infinitely secure authority, he gives a most firm assent to the truth that God has revealed; he believes it, not because of any argument or reasoning, *but precisely because God says it is true.* Divine grace has so strengthened his will that it can command the assent of his intellect; divine grace has so enlightened his intellect that it obeys, and accepts as most true even that which it cannot understand. God in giving such graces does not force the soul to yield to them; the soul may, but to its own great unhappiness, reject them. St. Augustine spoke a profound truth when he said: "For Thee Thou hast made us, O God; our heart is restless till it rest in Thee"; when a man attains to Faith, his mind slips into the socket that God has

<sup>27</sup> Converts are led to the Church in a great variety of ways: some are attracted by her claim to Infallibility, some by the consistency of her doctrine, others by her reverence for antiquity, or by her love for the poor and afflicted, or by her moral teaching. In the case which we have been considering above we supposed the future convert to begin his inquiry, convinced of the possibility of revelation. It must be admitted, however, that it is the absence of that very conviction which keeps many learned unbelievers outside the Church.

<sup>28</sup> It is not implied that perfect love for God is required, but there must be at least some low form of love, akin to that which is found in attrition, "some affection" for spiritual good, as St. Thomas describes it, a desire to enter on the true worship of God.

<sup>29</sup> "Higher certainty" does not mean "a greater absence of doubt." That would be a serious mistake. Doubt is absolutely excluded both from the act of reasoning that precedes faith and from the act of faith itself.

made for it; it rests securely there, and can never be dislodged except through its own grave fault.

**NOTE.—Grace; how far needed for faith.**—Faith helps us to become sons of God, a dignity whose attainment is absolutely beyond our natural powers; to make an act of faith, therefore, we need that special divine aid called grace. This is the defined doctrine of the Church. We shall understand it better when we read the Chapter on Grace in Part II. But grace, in the full sense of the term, is not required for the good dispositions that precede the act of faith, because they are not absolutely above the reach of human nature; yet so weak is fallen man that he cannot of his own strength arrive at them and persevere in them; he needs a special help from God, which since it is quite exceptional and gratuitous, is correctly called grace, though it is grace of a lower kind.<sup>30</sup> Most probably too he receives a further help of a similar character enabling him to discover without difficulty the arguments that prove the reasonableness of belief,<sup>31</sup> to hold them all clearly before his mind and perceive their force. It will be recalled that the case we have been considering is that of one devoid of all faith. A baptized Protestant who already believes some revealed truths would undoubtedly receive greater help; he would receive the higher kind of supernatural grace during the entire progress of his conversion.

**The act of faith is preceded by an act of reasoning.**—An act of sound reasoning always precedes the act of faith, otherwise it would not be a prudent or sensible act.<sup>32</sup> The act of faith, therefore, is reasonable, *i.e.*, it can be justified by arguments which impartial men would recognise as cogent. In making an act of faith we need not have definitely before our minds the reason why we make it: as a sick man may take medicine without recalling why he takes it, so we can make an act of faith without thinking clearly either (a) of the acts of reasoning that precede it, or (b) of the divine authority on which it rests.

<sup>30</sup> This grace is a "healing grace," because God gives it to heal the weakness caused by Original Sin. It is the teaching of the Church that, without God's special help, an unbeliever cannot keep the Ten Commandments for long. It follows, therefore, that, for the more difficult work of persevering in the good dispositions that precede faith, he would need this help still more.

<sup>31</sup> These arguments are technically called "the motives of credibility."

<sup>32</sup> An act of reasoning, explicit or implicit is necessary for the act of faith, and yet is no part of it. The following illustration may help: In a lighted lamp, the light is like the act of faith; the oil that produces the light is like God's grace; the vessel that holds the oil is like the act of reasoning. Though the vessel contributes nothing to the light, yet there could be no light without the vessel; and if, at any moment while the light is burning, the vessel be shattered, the light will go out.

*Why so many are convinced of the truth and yet are unbelievers.*—Why is it that so many men see clearly the force of the arguments, e.g., for the Divinity of Christ and the divine authority of the Church, and yet fail to make acts of faith? Because they have not the precise dispositions that open their soul to the grace of God: their lives may be blameless, except in so far as they have no sincere practical desire of the truth; they are absorbed in the cares of the world, or are immovably fastened to false convictions, their reason frozen by prejudice,<sup>33</sup> their imagination so stained and warped by early training that, even though convinced that they should believe, they cannot bring themselves to do so. These last offer “no imaginary case; there is many a man who has ground enough to believe, who wishes<sup>34</sup> to believe, but who cannot believe. It is always indeed his own fault, for God gives grace to all who ask for it, and use it. . . . As men may be convinced, and not act according to their conviction, so may they be convinced, and not believe according to their conviction. . . . The arguments for religion do not compel anyone to believe, just as arguments for good conduct do not compel any one to obey. Obedience is the consequence of willing to obey, and faith is the consequence of willing to believe; we may see what is right, whether in matters of faith or obedience, of ourselves, but we cannot will what is right without the grace of God.”<sup>35</sup>

*Exceptional graces.*—God may grant, as an exceptional favour, the gift of faith to men of evil dispositions: St. Paul while engaged in persecuting the Church received the grace of conversion through the dying prayer of the first Christian martyr, St. Stephen; St. Augustine was snatched from heresy and vice through his mother, the gentle St. Monica, who had prayed and wept for him over a dreary waste of years. And, as we might expect, God does not deny a similar favour to men of “good will”; He often bestows on them a sudden illumination of the mind, accompanied by an impulse to the will, enabling them to see and embrace the truth at once without passing through any prolonged process of reasoning.

<sup>33</sup> Many Protestants are taught in their early years that the Pope is Antichrist. This belief so grips their imagination that the very thought of examining the claims of the Catholic Church strikes them with panic. Cf. Newman, *Apologia*, p. 52.

<sup>34</sup> He “wishes” to believe, but, as is plain from the next sentence, he does not wish fully and sincerely. He has not a true will to believe but only an inclination.

<sup>35</sup> Newman: *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, XI, pages 225, 226. St. Augustine expressed the conviction that a man may know the way of salvation, and yet refuse to follow it: see Pohle-Preuss: *Grace*, p. 25.

**B.—A Catholic's Act of Faith.**—Let us take the case of a Catholic child who has received in Baptism the gift of Faith.<sup>36</sup> Blessed by Divine Providence which has made him the child of Catholic parents, he is helped by every influence around him—his home, his school, the church he frequents—along the path that leads to God. He is not tied up in the network of error and prejudice from which the convert disengages himself, often after bitter anguish and with the loss of lifelong friends. His Baptism by giving him the Virtue of Faith has prepared him for the Act of Faith.

*How he makes his Act of Faith.*—He learns from his parents and teachers the natural truths that lead up to the Act of Faith, viz., that God exists, that God has spoken, that God is truthful. He learns from them all the great truths of religion without at first any clear understanding of the divine authority on which they rest. But, when still very young, aided by the gift of Faith which he possesses, he comes to accept them, as his instructors themselves accept them, not on the word of man, but on the word of God himself. As he grows older, he grasps without difficulty some simple and telling arguments from reason in defence of the Faith, e.g., “The Catholic Church must be from God, because it has lasted in vigour all the centuries from the time of Our Lord”; “the Catholic Church must be the true Church, because she is the only one that claims to speak, as one from God should speak, with unerring voice.” These very arguments themselves, while they help to secure him throughout his life against temptation to unbelief, serve also to stimulate him to make, but always with the aid of divine Grace, new and more vivid acts of faith.<sup>37</sup>

*The Certainty which the Act of Faith brings him.*—His mind, as already explained in the case of the convert, has found the place that God has made for it. God will keep it there until death, secure against all the attacks of earth and hell. It can never be cast forth except through its own treachery.

## D

### THE ACTS OF EXPLICIT FAITH NECESSARY FOR SALVATION

**The Act of Faith which is absolutely necessary for Salvation.**  
—No one who has come to the use of reason can be saved,

<sup>36</sup> See below, The Virtue of Faith.

<sup>37</sup> A child behaves reasonably in accepting his parents' word as to what God has revealed; but if, as a fact, God has not revealed what they say, the child gets the credit of submissiveness to God's authority, but his act of belief is an act of faith only in appearance.

unless he make a definite or explicit act of faith in the existence of one God who will reward the good and punish the wicked: "without faith," as we are told in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder to them that seek Him," and, therefore, also, a punisher of them that avoid Him.<sup>38</sup> This explicit act of faith is as necessary for salvation as eyes are for sight; without it, salvation is absolutely unattainable.

**Acts of Faith, necessary because Commanded by the Church**—The Church, while urging all her children to obtain as full a knowledge of her teaching as their ability and opportunities allow, requires them to know substantially and to believe (a) the articles of the Apostles' Creed, (b) the Ten Commandments, (c) the doctrine conveyed in the Lord's Prayer, (d) the doctrine of the Sacraments (in particular, of Baptism, Penance, the Blessed Eucharist, and of the other sacraments when their reception becomes

<sup>38</sup> (1) According to some, the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 6) must not be understood as distinguishing two separate acts of faith, one in God as existing, the other in God as the rewarder of the good and the punisher of the wicked; it speaks of but one act of faith by which we profess our belief in Him as the giver of rewards and punishments. But according to St. Thomas and other authorities, St. Paul does demand a distinct act of faith in the existence of God; they say, however—and justly—that the Apostle, as is clear from the whole Epistle, is speaking of God, not as known from reason, but as known from His own revelation—of God as the Author of Grace and Glory.—God's existence as known from reason is not a matter of faith but of mere knowledge; we must know that God exists before we can reasonably make an act of faith in any message that claims to have come from Him. When, therefore, we say, as we sometimes do, that we "believe in God" or "we believe that God exists," we are speaking loosely; what we really mean is that we are convinced or know that there is a God. On the other hand in the Apostles' Creed the word "believe" is used in its strict meaning as implying an act of faith accompanied by hope and love, for we do not say simply, "I believe in God," but "I believe in God the Father Almighty . . . in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord . . . in the Holy Ghost," that is, we profess our faith in the mysteries of the Blessed Trinity and the Incarnation.

(2) The question may be asked: when did God reveal the truth that He is a rewarder of the good and a punisher of the wicked? The answer is that He revealed it in His dealings with Adam and Adam's

necessary).<sup>39</sup> To know and believe these truths and precepts is necessary for salvation, but not in the sense explained above; the necessity springs from the commandment of the Church; those who disobey her through no grave fault will not be lost.

### III

#### THE VIRTUE OF FAITH

**The Virtue of Faith Defined.**—Faith is a supernatural virtue infused into our souls by God which makes us able and willing to give an unhesitating assent to all the revealed truths which He has commanded the Church to propose to us for belief. It is a virtue, *i. e.*, it is not a single *act*, but an abiding *power* in the soul (—technically it is called a *habit*). It is supernatural, *i. e.*, no creature can claim it as a natural right; it is a pure gift of God's mercy, which we could never merit, and to which we could never attain, by our natural powers; it is infused into the soul by the Sacrament of Baptism.<sup>40</sup>

children. It passed from them to their descendants, and is widespread among the human race to-day. It is not a truth which the human reason alone could have discovered, because the rewards and punishments in question are closely associated with the gain and loss of God's grace; and God's grace by which we are truly made His children, one in nature with Him, can be known only through revelation.

(3) The act of Faith in God the Judge, accompanied by an act of charity or perfect contrition, suffices for the salvation of those who may never even have heard the name of Christ; hence it is easy to understand how very many outside the visible membership of the Church may be saved; but it must be stated that some authorities hold, and their opinion is probable, that an explicit act of faith in the Trinity and the Incarnation is also required. Hence, it is not lawful, outside a case of extreme necessity, to administer Baptism to an adult, without having previously instructed him in the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation. See page 135, "The obligation of membership," and page 160, "Outside the Church there is no salvation."

<sup>39</sup> See Lehmkühl, *Theologia Moralís, De fide*.

<sup>40</sup> Or, for an adult, as a consequence of the act of charity. The convert from infidelity who has made his first act of faith, but has no opportunity of receiving the sacrament of Baptism, will, if his dispositions continue to be good, obtain from God all the grace necessary to enable him to make the act of charity.

**The Virtue of Faith is a Precious Gift, but may be Lost. Consequent Duties.**—The Virtue of Faith is a precious gift. It places us within the sound of God's voice, and it opens our ears to receive it.<sup>41</sup> Every day of our lives we should thank Him for having made us children of His Church and partakers in His sacraments, for having set us on the true path that leads to Him. But this precious gift may become clouded or be lost. It will stay with us, as long as it is our sincere will that it should stay. It will grow weaker or vanish utterly, if our will become indifferent or hostile to it. It is a lighted lamp which God places in our hands to guide our footsteps through the night of the world. We can make it burn clear or dim; we can extinguish it at our pleasure, but we cannot re-light it; it is only God who can do that. "It is impossible," as the Holy Spirit tells us<sup>42</sup>—impossible, *i.e.*, practically impossible, impossible without a miracle of grace—"It is impossible for those who were once illuminated (*by grace of Baptism*) [who] have once tasted also the heavenly gift (*the Most Holy Sacrament*), and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost (*Confirmation*) [who] have moreover tasted the good word of God (*instruction*) and the powers of the world to come (*all the graces of religion*), and are fallen away, to be renewed again to penance, crucifying again to themselves the Son of God, and making Him a mockery," *i.e.*, because they are like the Jews who denied that He was God, who mocked Him, and crucified Him.

**HOW THE VIRTUE OF FAITH MAY BE LOST.**—God never suffers any soul to lose the gift of faith, the key to so many

<sup>41</sup> We distinguish *living* faith from *dead* faith. Faith is *living* when accompanied by charity, *i.e.*, when the soul is in the state of sanctifying grace. Faith is *dead* when sanctifying grace has been lost. But this *dead* faith is none the less a great mercy, for it leaves the way to salvation still open, and can become *living* by penance, by a return to the love of God. Without the love of God salvation is impossible: "if I should have all faith," says St. Paul (I Cor. xiii. 2), "so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Faith does not disappear utterly from the soul except through a sin of heresy or apostasy.

<sup>42</sup> Heb. vi. 4.

other precious gifts, the foundation of the whole spiritual life, except through her own fault. Faith is lost only by a mortal sin of unbelief; but this unbelief is usually led up to (1) by indolence in not acquiring a sound knowledge of Catholic doctrine; (2) by reading irreligious books and newspapers—the Church warns us especially against these: they are poison to the faith; she forbids the reading of irreligious books, not because she is afraid that they may prove her doctrine to be false, but because she knows that want of expert knowledge in her children exposes them to the danger of being deceived (see under 3); she forbids it also, because it is disloyal in a child of God to associate with His enemies open or hidden: when we read a book, we are in the company of the writer;—no mother would permit her son to consort with those who would try to turn him away from the love he owes his father; (3) by engaging in religious controversy when not qualified by a rigorous scientific training; we should give the honest inquirer any information we possess, but we should be firm in refusing to discuss religion with enemies; the average layman is not qualified for religious controversy; like an honest witness in the hands of a clever lawyer, he may be trapped into all manner of admissions and contradictions by a skilful opponent, and may, ultimately, perhaps, ascribe his discomfiture to the weakness of his cause, and not to his own ignorance and inexperience; <sup>43</sup> (4) by forming marriage or social ties with the irreligious, with heretics or infidels; <sup>44</sup> (5) by adopting an attitude of criticism or unfriendliness to the Church, seeking out and relating with approval, instead of deploring, and praying for the cessation of, those

<sup>43</sup> It must be noted, however, that the Church from the earliest times has found some of her ablest defenders among the laity. These men were specially trained for their work. Any layman who feels that he has a marked aptitude for theological study should by all means equip himself under proper direction as a controversialist. Next to prayer and the example of his own good life, he can render no greater service to his Faith.

<sup>44</sup> As regards (4) and (5), see Part II, The Sacrament of Matrimony (the evils of a mixed marriage).

scandals which "must needs come" in an institution whose ministers, though the instruments of God, still retain the ordinary frailty of human nature;—such an attitude of mind is a grave danger, not only to him who entertains it, but to all those with whom he associates; (6) by pride, manifesting itself in a reluctance to accept what cannot be proved from reason; (7) by a dissipated or sinful life, neglect of prayer and the sacraments.

HOW THE VIRTUE OF FAITH CAN BE GUARDED.—We can guard our precious gift of Faith by avoiding the dangers and evils already referred to. In brief, a good life is the best preservative of Faith.<sup>45</sup> Faith is nourished in particular by suffering and self-sacrifice. This is true of nations as well as of individuals. Genuine faith grows strong under persecution; when persecution ceases, then voluntary suffering and self-denial must take its place, if faith is to continue vigorous. The faith of a country which enjoys complete religious liberty is safest, when many of its children join those religious orders in which severe mortification is practised, or face the perils of the mission in pagan lands; their example, the example of living, vivid faith, is a light and an incentive to all others. The faith of a martyr-country like Ireland is her brightest jewel; every one of us, however humble, should do his part to preserve it undimmed and to add to its lustre; every one of us should be zealous for the honour of his Church and his country, and, unlike the selfish guest who sits at the table willing to take all and give nothing, he should pray and work for the spiritual good of the entire household.

TEMPTATIONS AGAINST FAITH.—We must be patient and prayerful amid difficulties and temptations. The enemy of our souls naturally desires to attack our faith, for he knows that it is the foundation of our spiritual life, and that, when he has robbed us of faith, he has

<sup>45</sup> "Good will" leads to Faith, and "good will" preserves it. This is the chief practical lesson of the entire chapter.

robbed us of all. Many of the saints<sup>46</sup> have suffered grievous trials from these assaults. The grace which held them firm is within our reach also. In temptation, (1) we should pray for this grace; (2) we should make acts of faith: "I believe. Lord, help my unbelief"; (3) we should never, as Saints and Theologians warn us, reason with such thoughts, but should treat them as we would impure temptations; (4) we should beware of the presumption of trying to solve our difficulties by our own efforts, but should seek the help of one in whose learning and piety we can fully confide.<sup>47</sup>

HOW WE LIVE BY FAITH AND THUS INCREASE THE GIFT OF FAITH.—The just man lives by faith—so teaches St. Paul. To live by faith implies that the great truths which God in His goodness has revealed to us, are not forgotten, but on the contrary are so frequently present to us in prayer and daily meditation that they influence our life and action.<sup>48</sup> To the man who lives by faith, the divine truths are more real, more impressive, more inspiring and more important than the things he sees and hears and feels, the things that beat on his senses in life's daily round. His mind is filled with the thought of God's presence, and his heart is set on the observance of God's law. Trials and reverses he accepts as from God's hand, knowing they are but crosses given him to

<sup>46</sup> e.g., SS. Liguori, J. Frances de Chantal. Cf. also *Life of Cardinal Wiseman* (1827–1829, p. 65), *Life of Cardinal Vaughan* (end), and the autobiography of the Little Flower (Saint Thérèse of Lisieux), p. 141, ed. 1912. St. Vincent de Paul, *Life* by Abelly, v. iii, ch. xi.

<sup>47</sup> With regard to these temptations we should keep in mind that ten thousand difficulties in matters of Faith do not make one doubt—so wrote Cardinal Newman. Doubts come from the will; difficulties from the intellect. Doubts arise from a reluctance to bow to divine authority, as, e.g., when one is unwilling to accept the evidence God gives that He is speaking to us. Difficulties arise from embarrassment of the mind, as, e.g., when one feels unable to reconcile the mercy of God and the eternity of Hell, or to reconcile divine doctrine with the teaching of physical science. A doubt cannot be cured except by a change of heart; a difficulty, on the other hand, can be removed by fuller instruction.

<sup>48</sup> *Mental Prayer*, by Father Wilberforce, O.P. C.T.S.E., 2d., is an excellent introduction to the practice of meditation.

make him more Christ-like.<sup>49</sup> His life of faith is stimulated and intensified by the Sacraments of the Church and especially by the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist,<sup>50</sup> and as he grows in holiness his gift of faith increases.

#### IV

#### OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

(1) "May not physical science, astronomy, geology, zoology, etc., some day disprove the chief doctrines of religion?"—No. Natural science deals solely with matter under some aspect or other; but religion and its fundamental truths, the existence of God, miracles, the spirituality of the human soul, the Divinity of Christ, all these lie completely outside its sphere. The physicist can no more apply his tests to them than he can examine an abstract idea under a microscope.

(2) "But may not these sciences disprove some statement as to natural phenomena made by the Sacred Scriptures which the Church holds to be the inspired word of God?" We can face all such questions with a tranquil mind. God is as truly the Author of nature as He is of inspiration, and God cannot contradict Himself. Scientists may *seem* to prove a contradiction between the Sacred Scriptures and the results of their investigations, but the contradiction is merely apparent, and can be readily solved by the following considerations:

(a) The Scriptures were written to instruct mankind in faith and morals. They are not a handbook of science, and are not to be judged as such. Further, since they were written for ordinary men, they make use of ordinary language, and, in scientific matters, follow the style of popular narration. Like scientists themselves when not writing scientifically, they speak, *e.g.*, of the rising and the setting of the sun, and employ all the so-called inaccuracies of common speech. It was a misunderstanding of this point which led Galileo into trouble.

(b) They contain many figurative expressions and passages, allegories and other forms of transfigured speech which, of course, must not be taken literally.

<sup>49</sup> Read the epilogue to this book which deals with the gratitude we owe to God for the gift of the Faith.

<sup>50</sup> Every time he receives a Sacrament worthily, he thereby makes a great practical act of Faith in Christ the Redeemer, the Author of all the Sacraments, and the Cause of all their graces.

(c) They contain explicit quotations from non-inspired sources. These, although inserted in the text under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, must not be regarded as conveying an inspired meaning, unless it is plain that the sacred writer adopts them as his own.<sup>51</sup>

In our reading of the Old Testament it is well to bear these points in mind. We are not, of course, at liberty to decide for ourselves whether a passage is figurative or not, or how it is to be interpreted. In all such matters we must accept the guidance of the Church. We shall find (Part II, Chapter II) that under her direction we shall have no difficulty in meeting the objections of scientists, which are almost exclusively concerned with the opening chapters in the Book of Genesis. The Church in interpreting a passage of Scripture, *dealing solely with natural phenomena*, will be guided by physical science; but she will not accept mere theories or hypotheses.<sup>52</sup> She will accept only demonstrated truth, and only when she is fully satisfied that it has been demonstrated. She does not need human science for Infallibility; still she holds that God expects her to use all diligence, and to seek knowledge from every available source, before giving her infallible decision. She will listen to the scientist on a point in physics, just as she will listen to the grammarian, the linguist, or the critic, on a question connected with the meaning of words.

(3) "May not the new methods of criticism with their elaborate examination of documents, language, style, historical and geographical allusions, etc., prove that some of the sacred books are forgeries?" The hopes entertained by unbelievers that modern methods, when applied to the writings of the New Testament, would finally dispose of the traditions as to their date, authorship, and historical value, seemed to them at first to promise realization, but, as already noted, have ended in nothing, a result which the humblest Catholic could have foretold. In the early decades of the last century rationalist critics placed the Synoptic Gospels, *e.g.*, as late as 150 A.D., but their successors, generation after generation, have been forced by the imperative demands

<sup>51</sup> The Biblical Commission was asked whether, with a view to solving difficulties—(arising chiefly in connection with some parts of the Old Testament)—*implicit* or unacknowledged quotations from an uninspired source might not also be admitted. The answer was: "No, unless it be proved by solid arguments and to the satisfaction of the Church: (1) that the sacred writer really does quote the words or documents of another (*i.e.*, of one not inspired); and (2) that in doing so he does not approve of them or adopt them as his own." See Pesch, *De Inspiratione*, p. 543. The teacher might also consult Tanqueray, *De Font. Rev.*, 1016-1027. Note that the decrees of the Biblical Commission bind in conscience. See p. 190, footnote 19.

<sup>52</sup> Page 192.



of scholarship to push back the date further and further, so that it now coincides<sup>53</sup> with what has always been the teaching of the Church.

**Errors as to the nature and effects of Faith.**—Luther and the early Reformers held : (a) that man is made just or holy by faith alone ; (b) that this justifying faith consists in nothing more than trust in divine mercy ; (c) that a man's sins are forgiven, because he believes for certain that they are forgiven. These and other like doctrines, which were absolutely novel, and which have not the slightest support either in Scripture or Tradition, were solemnly condemned by the Council of Trent (1545-1563).

The Modernists (Loisy and others) hold that each believer receives his own special revelation through his own mind, and that Faith is, as it were, the re-action within the soul resulting from such revelation ; hence they maintain that the Object of Faith varies for individuals, that one man may hold as true what all others reject. This teaching, one of a whole series of heresies and rationalist errors, denies that Christ bequeathed to us any fixed and unalterable body of truths to be interpreted by an Infallible Church. Its condemnation by Pope Pius X is approved by common sense, which revolts from the notion that God should bind one man to give his body to be burned rather than admit a certain doctrine, and that He should bind another to make the same supreme sacrifice rather than deny it.

**Note.**—Different senses of the word "Faith."—"Faith" as used in this Chapter may denote either the Act of Faith, the Virtue of Faith, or the truths of Faith ; in all cases, the precise sense can be easily inferred from the context. Sometimes in the Scriptures the word means "trust in God," but this trust itself is based on Faith strictly so called, faith in the merciful promises which God has revealed to us.—In one instance (Rom. xiv. 22, 23) the word is used as the equivalent of "conscience."

<sup>53</sup> See p. 82, C (c). Old traditions have in recent times vindicated their claim to respect. Troy, Mycenae, the Labyrinth of Crete, belonged almost to fairy-tale until the excavations of Schliemann and Evans.

### OUR FAITH: HOW REASONABLE ! HOW PRECIOUS !

Recall the memory of your early childhood when reason awoke within you, when you began to observe for yourself, to conclude for yourself, and to make truth your own.

Hardly had you passed from the halls of infancy when you heard the voice of God, speaking to you through the works of His hands. The perception of the world around you, its vastness, its beauty, and order, sprang up like a light within your soul : the fruitful earth with its flowers and other growing things—the sun with its grateful warmth, its rising and setting—the work of birds and bees—the distant stars of the night—your own senses, your own consciousness and powers of understanding—all this profusion of wonderful gifts swept your mind forward to the conclusion that the great universe must have come from One who is all powerful, all good, and all wise. You had been taught that it was God who made the world, but now you saw for yourself that it must indeed be so ; from that time forward the conviction of His existence was recognised by you as the very offspring of your own reason. It was so with other truths.

The truth that you had a soul which set you far above the beasts of the field ; the truth that your actions were not all alike, that some were good, some bad ; the truth that one day you would have to stand alone before God and answer to Him for your life on earth—all these truths, though known to you already from the words of your priests, parents, and teachers, came home to you with a new vigour as your understanding developed ; they pierced you through, giving you a poignant sense of the value of your soul, and of the solemnity of your life and destiny. Had you never been taught them, you still could have arrived at them by using the natural powers given you by God at your creation. But there were other truths which you could never have learned unaided.

Left to yourself, you would have spent your whole life

puzzling in vain over the question, why is the beauty of the world marred by sorrow, pain, and death? How did such things come into the kingdom of the good God? But when you heard the explanation that all these evils have come to us from the grievous sin committed by our First Parents, your reason accepted it as light in darkness. When further you were told how God sent His own Son to make up for this sin and the sins of the world, you believed with great joy and your reason cried out saying: "It is only the great and good God Himself who could have told me this. No man could ever have thought of the Son of God as the Babe of Bethlehem, as the Boy of Nazareth, as the poor Victim of Calvary, bearing the weight of our sins, suffering and dying on a Cross." Again, your mind was satisfied when you were taught that the same Divine Son, though He passed from the sight of men at His Ascension, did not really go away from us, and leave us orphans; that He founded a Church to speak to us in His stead and to guide us to holiness. And you never had a moment's hesitation in believing that the Church of which you were a child was truly His. Here, too, you saw for yourself, and independently of your teacher's word, the reasonableness of your faith, for you found that the Catholic Church is the only Church on earth that speaks to men as Christ spoke to them; that she alone speaks like an envoy of God, claiming absolute truth for all her teachings, and sternly forbidding any rejection of her doctrine; that she alone possesses a world-wide following, one fold under one shepherd, one in faith, one in worship, one in obedience; that she is the great Mother of Saints, the great inspirer of all good and charitable works; that, though in existence for nineteen hundred years, she lives to-day as fresh and vigorous as on the day of the First Pentecost. You perceived that she herself with her claim to infallibility with her unity and catholicity, with her holiness, her vitality and stability, needs no argument beyond her own self to prove that she is the messenger of God to men.

This simple demonstration of the reasonableness of your faith may not have been before your mind, clear-cut in every facet, from the first years of childhood; yet, though not shaped to perfection, it was there, giving you light enough to answer the questions, "Why do I believe in God? Why am I a Catholic?" But with the transition from youth to years of mature development, bringing with it the prospect of your having to face in the near future the temptations and questionings of an infidel world, a fuller demonstration was needed; it was necessary to show you more in detail what unbelievers say and how they can be refuted; it was necessary to present you with a more elaborate proof of the great fundamental truths, so as to add further strength to the defences and outworks of your faith, and to show you how weak is the position of its opponents.

While reading this treatise, it may have occurred to you to say: "If the Church is so clearly the work of God, shining before the eyes of men like a white city on a mountain-top, why is it that so many oppose her or stand aloof from her?" But reflect that even in this she resembles her Divine Founder who was rejected by the people among whom He lived and taught; many of them, doubtless, were what the world would call "good men and good citizens of blameless lives," yet they either treated Him with indifference or joined the mob that clamoured for His Crucifixion. Why this blindness, this hostility? God alone who reads the hearts of men can return the full answer. For us it suffices to know that a man may be convinced of the reasonableness of believing, and yet not believe; that no argument of itself will avail to call Faith into being; that Faith is begotten of grace, and is a gift as far above the reach of unaided man as are the stars of heaven; that God alone can give the human understanding and the human will the light and inspiration essential for submission to the Catholic Church; but that His mercy which would grant to all that full measure of faith is often foiled by the faults of the

individual himself or is restricted by the transgressions of his ancestors who have bequeathed to him a formidable legacy of prejudice that tends to check or diminish the influence of grace on his soul.

You who have been blessed from your earliest infancy with that most precious gift; you who have been given the light to see how unopposed to reason is your assent to all that you believe; you to whom the great truths of God have always seemed so easy of acceptance, so plain, so living, so familiar, so glorious, so benign; you to whom this blessedness has been vouchsafed should use the full power of your mind in the effort to appreciate its worth. Take to your heart the words of thankfulness spoken by Cardinal Newman who was storm-tossed for many years, striving amid so much anguish of soul to reach that Church, that haven of safety and certainty in which God has placed you without any effort of your own; remember that you to whom the greater mercy has been given are bound to a more fervent act of gratitude.

"Oh, my dear brethren," he says, "what joy and what thankfulness should be ours, that God has brought us into the Church of His Son! What gift is equal to it in the whole world in its preciousness and in its rarity? . . . To find ourselves in the region of light, in the home of peace, in the presence of saints, to find ourselves where we can use every faculty of the mind and affection of the heart in its perfection because in its appointed place and office, to find ourselves in the possession of certainty, consistency, stability, in the highest and holiest subjects of human thought, to have hope here and heaven hereafter, to be on the Mount with Christ, while the poor world is guessing and quarrelling at its foot, who among us will not wonder at his blessedness, who shall not be awe-struck at the inscrutable grace of God, which has brought him, not others, where he stands?"

"THANKS BE TO GOD FOR HIS UNSPEAKABLE GIFT."

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# APOLOGETICS AND CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

A Course of Religious Instruction  
for Schools and Colleges

BY

The Most Rev. M. SHEEHAN, D.D.,  
*Archbishop of Germia.*

PART II  
CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

IN the preparation of Part II for the Press, I have had the valued aid of my esteemed friends and former colleagues, the Very Reverend Dr. Pierse, the Very Reverend Dr. Moran, and Fr. Kissane, Professors of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. Drs. Pierse and Moran read the entire manuscript, while Fr. Kissane examined those portions of it in which special reference is made to the sacred writings of the Old Testament.

Father Kearney, C.S.Sp., who freely placed at my disposal his invaluable experience as a teacher of religion, helped me by his criticism at every turn. Owing to my departure for Australia, I have had to entrust to his willing hands the final revision of the proof-sheets. If the book be of any service to the cause of God and His Holy Church, the credit, as far as human agency is concerned, must be chiefly ascribed to him; it was begun at his instance, and brought to a conclusion under his unfailing kindness and encouragement.

IRISH COLLEGE,  
ROME,  
*August, 1922.*

✠ M. SHEEHAN,  
*Coadjutor Archbishop of Sydney.*

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

IN this edition of "Catholic Doctrine," the Chapter on Faith (Ch. I of first edition), owing to its transference to "Apologetics" two years ago, no longer appears; consequently the other Chapters, while retaining their titles and order, have had to be re-numbered; Section VII, "The choice of a State in life," of the Ch. on Holy Order has been omitted, but will be given its proper place in the volume which is to treat of Catholic Morals. Allowance being made for these omissions, the text contains about sixty pages more than the old, but the enlargement does not affect all Chapters equally; the more important additions will be found in Ch. VI ("Our First Parents"), Ch. VIII ("The Incarnation and the Redemption"), Ch. XIII B. ("The Sacrifice of the Mass"), and Ch. XIV ("Penance"). In Ch. IV. ("The origin of life and of living species") and Ch. V ("The origin of man"), the previous text has been thoroughly revised; less extensive modifications will be noted in the other Chapters.

I have to thank the Very Reverend Dr. McCarthy, Professor of Theology, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, for an exhaustive and most helpful scrutiny of the entire text,—the distinguished biologist, Dr. Denis Coffey, late of University College, Dublin, for his comments on Chs. IV and V—and Father O'Carroll, C.S.Sp., and his associates of the Senior Scholasticate, Kimmage, for a careful revision of the proof-sheets. Before the manuscript reached the hands of the printer, Father Kearney, C.S.Sp., answered the call of the Master whom he had served so faithfully in life. His death has deprived me of a friend to whose unselfish and unremitting assistance I have been greatly indebted. His concern was not so much with the scientific or strictly dogmatic contents of the work, but rather with its direct, spiritual usefulness; the numerous sentences and paragraphs which call the reader's attention to the practical bearing of the doctrine on Christian life are almost all due to his suggestion.

✠ M. SHEEHAN,

BLACKROCK, CO. DUBLIN,

*Archbishop of Germia.*

Nov. 8, 1941.



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ABBREVIATIONS

- iv. L = Fourth Lateran Council (1215).
- F = Council of Florence (1438-1445).
- T = Council of Trent (1545-1563).
- V = Vatican Council (1869-1870).

The numbers placed after these letters or after the names of Popes (e.g., T813, V1814, Pius IX. 1641) are those of Denzinger-Bannwart in the great summary of the official teaching of the Church, entitled *Enchiridion Symbolorum*. Other references to the same work appear under the contraction, Denz., followed by the appropriate number.

The few remaining abbreviations may be illustrated as follows:—(d. 432), "died in the year 432"; (c. 670), "year 670, approximately"; f after a number means "and following pages"; f. before a number refers to a footnote.

**GOD AS HE IS IN HIMSELF**

CHAPTER I

**THE DIVINE ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES**

*Summary.*

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. The Self-existence and Infinity of God.
- III. The Divine Essence—essence defined; the essences of creatures not fully known to us; the Essence of God, incomprehensible. According to the common teaching, self-existence constitutes the Divine Essence.
- IV. The Divine Attributes:—Quiescent Attributes: *Eternity, Immensity and Omnipresence, and Immutability.* Operative Attributes: *Knowledge, and Will.*
- V. An Objection answered.

I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—"The holy, catholic, apostolic, and Roman Church," says the Vatican Council (1870), "believes and confesses that there is one, true and living God, the Creator and Lord of heaven and earth, omnipotent, eternal, immense, incomprehensible, infinite in understanding and will and every perfection . . . a spiritual substance,<sup>1</sup> one, altogether simple and immutable, really and essentially distinct from the world, in Himself and of Himself supremely happy, and unspeakably above all things that are, or can be conceived outside Himself."

*These truths, expressing the perfections of God, and so fully and emphatically set forth in the infallible decision of*

<sup>1</sup> The reader should take care to grasp the technical meaning of *substance*. It does not necessarily mean something solid and material, such as wood and iron. It is the opposite of *accident*. An *accident* is something which cannot exist by itself, but only in something else: e.g., our height, weight, and colour are accidents, because they cannot exist apart from our bodies; so, too, motion is an accident, because it cannot exist apart from a moving body. A *substance* is something which exists by itself and not in anything else: thus, wood and iron are substances; our souls are substances; God is a substance.

the Council, can be established by reason ;<sup>2</sup> but, to many minds, the proof is difficult and obscure. We accept them with all the certainty of faith, because they have been revealed to us by God.

## II

**God is the Self-Existent, Necessary Being.**—It is a fundamental doctrine of our faith, revealed to us by God Himself, but discoverable even by unaided human reason,<sup>3</sup> that God owes His existence to no other ; that He is the only being who has within Himself the source and fount of His own existence.<sup>4</sup> God's words to Moses declare that self-existence belongs to Him alone. Moses had asked God to tell him His name. God answered : " *I Am Who Am,*" and He said : " Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel : ' *He Who Is* hath sent me to you.' "<sup>5</sup> It is because of God's self-existence that Scripture so often declares that He is the " Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,"<sup>6</sup> and that all creatures " are before Him as if they had no being at all."<sup>7</sup>

God alone exists in the fullest, truest sense, deriving His existence from no one else. He is existence itself. All other beings derive their existence from Him. In God " we live and move and are."<sup>8</sup>

**The Infinity of God.**—Infinity belongs to all the Perfections of God, and is reflected, but ever so imperfectly, in the works of His hands. Think of all the power that lives in the wind and the lightning, in the volcano, the earthquake, the ocean, in the on-rushing planets and

<sup>2</sup> See " The Nature of God as Known from Reason," Part I, pp. 28-32. These pages should now be re-read.

<sup>3</sup> Re-read Part I. Proofs from dependence, pp. 7 and 23.

<sup>4</sup> The ordinary teaching of the Church. Cf. the Athanasian Creed (see beginning of Chap. II) and IV Lateran.

<sup>5</sup> *Exod.* iii. 14.

<sup>6</sup> *Is.* xli. 4 ; xliv. 6 ; *Apoc.* i. 8 ; xxi. 6 ; xxii. 13.

<sup>7</sup> *Is.* xl. 17. <sup>8</sup> *Acts* xvii. 28.

stars ; think of all the wisdom manifested in the orderly movements of the universe, in the growth and preservation of living things ; of all the beauty that has ever shone on land or sea, and of all the fair visions and noble ideals that have ever filled the mind and thrilled the heart of man ; of all the knowledge and ingenuity of the philosophers, statesmen, and inventors of all the ages ; think of all the love of martyrs and patriots for faith and country ; of all the love of mothers for their children, love proof against every trial, patient and tender in sickness, pitiful and true even in dishonour ; think of all this power, wisdom, beauty, pity, kindness and love, and suppose it magnified and multiplied countless times over, and all concentrated, in some unspeakable way, in one being as the source of all, and you are still no appreciable step nearer the adequate idea of the Infinite Perfection of God ; your mind is still hovering in the shadows, still only straining towards the light, and has caught but the weakest, poorest glimmering of His Glory. His saints when favoured with some obscure vision of His face have been so overwhelmed with rapture, so pierced by a very agony of joy, that their souls seemed to them to tremble on the verge of annihilation. " Man," He said, " shall not see Me and live."<sup>9</sup> It is as though the soul of mortal man when in the presence of the infinite beauty of the Divine Essence, becomes forgetful of its task of maintaining and directing the activity of the senses and the various processes of corporeal life, and seeks to draw together all its forces and to exhaust its whole being in one supreme act of love.

## III

**Essence Defined.**—**The Essences of Creatures, not fully known to us.**—**The Essence of God, incomprehensible.**—**DEFINITION.** The essence of a thing is that which makes it be what it is, and marks it

<sup>9</sup> *Exod.* xxxiii. 20.

off from all other things. Thus, the essence of a line is length without breadth; the essence of a man is a rational soul united to a body. "Nature" is another name for essence, but, in the strict sense, it signifies essence as the source of action or operation: thus, we say that the soul belongs to the essence of man, but that thought and sensation belong to his nature. A true definition of a thing is a statement of its essence.

**THE ESSENCES OF CREATURES, NOT FULLY KNOWN TO US.**—We do not know fully the essence of any creature. In the case of man, *e.g.*, while we know some important truths about "soul" and "body" and their union, we are still ever so far from an exhaustive knowledge of these things. Did we know them fully, we should know all about their origin; we should know how God created soul and body and joined them together. Such knowledge, however, as we shall presently see, is for creatures unattainable.<sup>10</sup>

**THE ESSENCE OF GOD, INCOMPREHENSIBLE.**—We know something about the Essence of God, but so little that we justly describe His Essence as incomprehensible. "It is easier," says St. Augustine, "to say what God is not, than to say what He is"; and a writer of the period of St. Athanasius says that "a God whom man could comprehend would not be God."—(a) God possesses formally or eminently<sup>11</sup> all the perfections found in creatures; yet they do not exist separately in Him; all are identical with the Divine Essence. How this can be, we do not understand. (b) "God is a Spirit," said Jesus to the Samaritan woman, "and they that adore Him must adore Him in spirit and in truth."<sup>12</sup> He is a Spirit, absolutely pure and simple. The human soul is not an absolutely pure spirit, because it is united to matter. It is not an absolutely simple spirit, because, though not made up of separate parts it is divided, so to speak, within itself in many ways: it possesses, *e.g.*, distinct faculties or powers of action, intellect distinct from will, and both distinct from the faculties concerned with growth and nutrition; furthermore, the acts of each faculty are distinct

<sup>10</sup> Even mathematical and geometrical essences, although, in a sense, the creation of our own minds, we do not know fully. If we did, we should know at once, and as self-evident, all the properties of a circle, *e.g.*, from its definition; we should know at once the equality of chords equidistant from the centre, the equality of angles in the same segment, etc. Though our knowledge of essences is imperfect, it is nevertheless true and very important, because it enables us to unify, to bracket under one head, or trace to a common source, all that we know of each thing.

<sup>11</sup> See Part I, The Nature of God.      <sup>12</sup> St. John iv. 24.

from the faculty itself: <sup>13</sup> the act of understanding, *e.g.*, is distinct from the intellect, just as motion is distinct from the body moved. But in God there are no such distinctions; Will and Intellect, the act of willing and the act of understanding, every act which we ascribe to God is identical with His Essence.<sup>14</sup> If we could comprehend one act of God, we should comprehend God Himself.<sup>15</sup>

But, although we can never understand God and can never grasp the infinity of His Perfection, we can learn something about Him, and we can deepen our knowledge by pondering on what He has told us of His perfections. Yet, while so doing, we are, as it were, taking the idea of God to pieces; we are contemplating and loving and worshipping Him under a thousand different aspects; we are employing a piecemeal method which has been imposed on us by the feebleness of our mind, and which tends to obscure that most profound truth, *viz.*, that all His perfections are identical with Himself,—that all are one in adorable simplicity.

**Self-existence according to the Common Teaching Constitutes the Divine Essence.**—Though God is incomprehensible, we can name one of the Divine Attributes or Perfections which, according to the common teaching, is the root of all the others, and, therefore, the Divine Essence. That Attribute is Self-existence. It marks off God clearly from all creatures; and from it we can prove that He must possess every perfection.<sup>16</sup> "We may name Him the Good, the Holy, or the Wise," says St. Bernard, "but all is said, when we say that HE IS."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> True of angels as well as of men.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Faber: *Precious Blood*, Chap. III. W. G. Ward in the *Philosophy of Theism*, Vol. II, p. 150, says that the doctrine of God's Simplicity, though it can be proved by reason, is "to our mind . . . even more enigmatical, startling, and perplexing than is that of the Trinity."

<sup>15</sup> Therefore, to understand fully what a creature is, we should understand fully the act of creation, *i.e.*, God Himself. This truth is expressed in the oft-quoted lines of Tennyson:—

Flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies,  
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower—but if I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is.

<sup>16</sup> In Part I, we proved that God, being self-existent, must be identified with Existence itself (p. 27), and that, since He is existence itself, He must be infinite in all perfections (pp. 29, 30).

<sup>17</sup> *De Consid.* i. 6.

## IV

**The Divine Attributes, how Distinguished.**—Bearing in mind that the Divine Attributes or Perfections have no really distinct existence in God, but that all are concentrated in One, and that they are nothing more than the different aspects under which the human mind imperfectly perceives the Divine Essence, we may divide them into two classes, viz., the Quiescent Attributes, *i.e.*, the Perfections which belong to a state of rest, and the Operative Attributes, *i.e.*, the Perfections which belong to action.

**The Quiescent Attributes.**<sup>18</sup>—**ETERNITY.** In God, there is no beginning, no end, no succession. His Eternity is not endless time; it is essentially distinct from time, and cannot be measured by it. As we cannot say that a square is a multiple of a straight line, that it consists of an infinite number of straight lines laid side by side, so we cannot say that eternity is made up of an infinite number of years. In us, living creatures, there is a constant succession; for our present is being always renewed, and our past always being added to. We live but in the immediate present; all our yesterdays are dead; all our to-morrows are unborn; but in God there is no succession, no yesterday, no to-morrow, all is *now*. We hold but the minute fraction of our lives, the fraction that belongs to each passing moment, while God possesses His whole Life, in all its perfection, at one fixed, unchanging instant. "In the beginning, O Lord, Thou didst found the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest and all of them shall grow old like a garment. And as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed, but Thou art always the Self-same."<sup>19</sup>

**IMMENSITY AND OMNIPRESENCE.** Immensity means that God from all eternity had the *power* of being everywhere; "immense," therefore, as applied to God, has the technical meaning which we may express by the word "illimitable" or "unconfined." Omnipresence means that in the created world God *actually* is everywhere. God possessed immensity before the world began; He did not possess omnipresence until the world was created; His Omnipresence flows from His Immensity. God is present in the created world in a threefold sense:—(a) *In His knowledge,*

<sup>18</sup> *Simplicity* is one of the Quiescent Attributes. It has been sufficiently dealt with in the preceding section of this chapter.

<sup>19</sup> *Ps.* ci. 26-28.

since He knows all things: "neither is there any creature invisible in His sight, but all things are naked and open to His eyes."<sup>20</sup> (b) *In His power,* since He maintains all things in existence: He upholds "all things by the word of His power."<sup>21</sup> (c) *In His essence,* since He is in every part of the universe, in every part of every creature, far more perfectly than the soul is in every part of the body: "in Him we live, move, and are."<sup>22</sup> "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy face? If I ascend into Heaven, Thou art there; if I descend into Hell, Thou art present. If I take my wings early in the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right-hand shall hold me. And I said, 'perhaps darkness shall cover me, and night shall be my light in my pleasures.' But darkness shall not be dark to Thee, and night shall be light as the day: the darkness thereof, and the light thereof are alike to Thee."<sup>23</sup>

**IMMUTABILITY.** God is unchangeable. We speak of Him, now as wrathful, now as merciful, now as just, but the change is in us, not in Him. The force of gravity holds a statue firm on its pedestal; but, if the statue be pushed forward, the same force of gravity will shatter it to fragments. It is so with the soul. While it obeys the law of God, it is safe; if it violate it, disaster follows, not because of a change in God, but because of a change in the soul.

**Operative Attributes.**—**KNOWLEDGE.** (1) *The Objects of Divine Knowledge:*—(a) God, and God alone, knows Himself (fully): "the things that are of God, no man knoweth but the Spirit of God."<sup>24</sup> God's self-knowledge is the source of His infinite Happiness, for it makes Him conscious that He possesses the highest good. (b) God knows all reality, *i.e.*, He knows the past, the present, and the future, "even," says the Vatican Council, "those things which will take place through the free agency of creatures." Hence, the Gospel says of Christ: "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that did not believe, and who he was that would betray Him."<sup>25</sup> In virtue of God's Eternity, the past and the future are always present to Him. Compare the lives of all men that have ever been or shall ever be, to parts of the circumference of a circle; the all-seeing mind of God is at the centre; it is equally near to all, and has all equally under observation. (c) God knows all that is possible. He knows not only what man has done, but what man might have done in

<sup>20</sup> *Heb.* iv. 13.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* i. 3.

<sup>22</sup> *Acts* xvii. 28.

<sup>23</sup> *Ps.* cxxxviii. 7-12.

<sup>24</sup> *I Cor.* ii. 11.

<sup>25</sup> *St. John* vi. 65.

different circumstances : " if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in thee, they had long ago done penance in sackcloth and ashes." <sup>26</sup>

(2) *The One-ness of Divine Knowledge.* God knows all things through one glance, one single thought. That one thought, however, is identical with Himself.

WILL.—God's will is free, but only in respect of things outside Himself.—(1) God was free in creating the world ; <sup>27</sup> He had no need of it, and might have created a different world. He had no need of man, but having created him He could not by reason of His Goodness and Wisdom leave him unprovided with the means of attaining the end for which he was created.

(2) God loves Himself, for He is the Infinite Good. He has no choice but to love Himself. He cannot love a finite good in preference to Himself, for the finite good is of necessity less desirable, less lovable than its source, the Infinite Good : compared with the Infinite Good, the finite good is as nothing ; there is thus no rivalry between them. God must therefore love Himself. He loves Himself as He deserves to be loved, that is, with an infinite love. He loves Himself for His own sake. He loves His creatures, not for themselves, but because they are images, however feeble, of His infinite goodness. Holiness is love of God, the Infinite Good. God loves Himself with a perfect love, and is, therefore, all holy. He is just ; patient with sinners ; truthful ; faithful to His promises ; merciful and kind—no one can be so kind as He. God Himself has taught us these sublime truths ; He has taught us what we most require to know, *viz.*, how much He loves us. Many times in the Old Testament He speaks of the affection and pity with which He enfolds us, poor children of the earth ; but His love found its supreme expression in the Incarnation. God so loved the world as to give His Only-begotten Son to suffer and to die for sinful men ; and not only to suffer and to die for them, but to teach them with His own sacred lips in a new and far clearer way the lessons of Divine Mercy and Love.

## V

A DIFFICULTY AGAINST GOD'S FORE-KNOWLEDGE.—Fatalists object, " If God foresees that I shall be saved, then I shall certainly be saved, and need not work for my salvation. If God foresees that I shall be lost, then no effort of mine can save me."

<sup>26</sup> St. Matt. xi. 21.

<sup>27</sup> V. 1805 ; cf. St. Thomas, S. T., i. q. 19, a. 3.

REPLY :—Things will happen, not because God foresees them ; He foresees them, because they will happen. God foresees the yield of every acre ; but, if the farmer on that account were to sow no seed, God would foresee that the soil, owing to the farmer's laziness, would bear no crop. It is so with us. God foresees our salvation or damnation as resulting from our own behaviour.<sup>28</sup> St. Augustine answers the difficulty thus : " As you, by your memory, do not cause past acts to be done, so God, by His fore-knowledge, does not cause future acts to be done" (*De libero arbitrio*, Book 3, §§ x, xi).

<sup>28</sup> We may illustrate the difficulty and its solution by another example. No one would reason with himself thus : " God foresees whether I shall, or shall not, be run over by a motor car in the streets to-day. My destiny is fixed. Therefore, no matter what I do, I cannot escape it. It makes not the slightest difference whether I keep to the footpath or walk in the centre of the thoroughfare neither looking nor listening." God foresees that you will not be run over, because He foresees the precautions you will take to avoid it. Napoleon, who had some shrewd thoughts on religion, said that no one was a fatalist, for if a man were a fatalist and wanted to descend from the upper storey of a house, he should think it just as safe to fling himself out through the window as to come down by the stairs.

## CHAPTER II

## THE BLESSED TRINITY

## Summary.

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. The Trinity, a mystery, not a contradiction.—The doctrine explained.—The Trinity in relation to the Divine Understanding and Will.
- III. The doctrine, a chief article of Faith, and an incentive to piety.
- IV. The Trinity in relation to the works of God, the Divine Attributes, and the Divine Missions.
- V. Errors.

## I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly that in God there are Three Divine Persons, really distinct and equal in all things, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost is not the Father or the Son; that each of the Divine Persons is one and the self-same God; that the Three Divine Persons are co-eternal; that the Father comes from none other; that the Son was begotten eternally of the Father; that the Holy Ghost comes eternally from the Father and the Son as from one source; that all the Attributes of the Divine Essence are common to the Three Divine Persons.<sup>1</sup>

This solemn teaching of the Church is more fully expressed in the first section of the great *Athanasian Creed*,<sup>2</sup> which is as follows:

<sup>1</sup> iv. L. 432, and the Creeds.

<sup>2</sup> On the four solemn formularies or Creeds, see Part I, p. 177, foot-note 4. The Athanasian Creed, which priests recite in the Office on certain days, consists of two sections, the first dealing with the Blessed Trinity, the second with the Incarnation. There are 26 verses in the first section, 14 in the second; that is, 40 in all.

Whosoever wishes to be saved, must, before all things, hold the Catholic Faith.

And unless a man shall have kept this Faith, entire and undefiled, he shall, beyond all doubt, perish everlastingly.

Now the Catholic Faith is this, that we worship One God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity.

Neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance.

The Person of the Father is distinct, the Person of the Son is distinct, the Person of the Holy Ghost is distinct.

But of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost the Divinity is One, the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal.

As the Father is, such is the Son, such is the Holy Ghost.

Uncreated is the Father, Uncreated is the Son, Uncreated is the Holy Ghost.

Illimitable is the Father, Illimitable is the Son, Illimitable is the Holy Ghost.

Eternal is the Father, Eternal is the Son, Eternal is the Holy Ghost.

And yet not Three Eternals, but One Eternal.

As there are not Three Uncreated, not Three Illimitables, but One Uncreated and One Illimitable.

Likewise, Almighty is the Father, Almighty is the Son, Almighty is the Holy Ghost.

And yet not Three Almightyies, but One Almighty.

A Catholic who hears the infallible Church thus pronounce on the Blessed Trinity knows that he is listening to the voice of God.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God.

And yet there are not Three Gods; there is but One God.

So, the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Ghost is Lord.

And yet there are not Three Lords: there is but One Lord.

For, as we are compelled by Christian truth to confess that each Person is God and Lord; so are we forbidden by the Catholic religion to say that there are Three Gods or Lords.

The Father is made by none; nor created, nor begotten.

The Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten.

The Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son; not made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding.

Therefore, there is One Father, not Three Fathers; there is One Son, not Three Sons; there is One Holy Ghost, not Three Holy Ghosts.

And in this Trinity there is none before or after, none greater or less; but all Three Persons are co-eternal and co-equal.

So that, in all respects, as is aforesaid, we must worship both the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity.

Let him, then, who wishes to be saved, thus hold of the Trinity.

## II

**The Trinity is (1) a Mystery, (2) not a Contradiction.—**

(1) The doctrine of the Trinity is a mystery, because it contains two truths which our reason cannot reconcile, *viz.*, (a) that there is one God, and (b) that each of the Three Divine Persons is God. These truths, taken separately, we can understand, but not when taken together. We can understand that there is one God, and that each Divine Person is God, but not that each is one and the self-same God.

(2) The Trinity is a mystery, but not a contradiction. It would be a contradiction, if it said that God is One in exactly the same way in which He is Three. But this it does not say. It says that God is One in nature, Three in person.

**The Doctrine of the Trinity Explained.—**We can explain the *doctrine*, but not the *mystery*, of the Blessed Trinity. The doctrine is contained in the statement that "in one Divine Nature there are Three distinct Persons." We explain a doctrine by giving the meaning of the terms that express it. Thus, we explain the doctrine of the Trinity by showing what is meant by *nature*, what is meant by *person*,—that is, by showing what precisely is conveyed in the assertion that there are *three* Persons in *one* Nature; but we cannot explain *how* the doctrine can be true, for that is a mystery. Two questions therefore have to be kept carefully apart, *viz.*, "What does the doctrine mean?" "How can the doctrine be true?" We can answer the first question, but not the second.

**NATURE.—**The essence of man is that which makes him what he is and marks him off from all other things. His essence consists in the union of a body with a spiritual soul. This union of soul and body enables him to move, to feel, hear and see, to think and reason; in brief, it enables him to act as a man. His essence considered as

the source of action is his nature. The nature of man therefore is that which enables him to act as a man. Likewise the nature of an angel is that which enables him to act as an angel; the nature of God is that which enables Him to act as God.

**PERSON.—**It is a man's nature that enables him to act, but the acts which he performs do not belong to his nature or to any part of his nature; they belong to him as a *person*. Thus, when you move your arm or when you utter a word or when you solve a problem, you do not say: "My arm has moved" or "My tongue has spoken," or "My mind has solved a problem," nor do you say: "My nature—my soul united to my body—has done these things," but you say: "I have moved my arm, I have spoken, I have solved a problem," that is, "I as a person have done these things." *Person* therefore is distinct from *nature*; it may be regarded as a something added to intelligent nature and as always accompanying it—as a something through which we are constituted the owners of our acts, or the owners of our nature.<sup>3</sup> It is because you are a person that you are responsible for your acts, and can be praised or blamed for them.

**THREE PERSONS IN ONE DIVINE NATURE.—**Every work which you do through your human nature is the work of a single person; but every work which God does through His Divine Nature is the work of Three Persons. If you plant a tree, you can say: "I have planted this tree"; on the other hand, God, when He had created the world, could have said: "We Three, the Father, the Son, and

<sup>3</sup> Every creature, therefore, that possesses an intelligent nature is a person. Every angel is a person; every man—even the unborn child or one who is insane is a person. Once the intelligent nature exists, the person exists although through some defect or obstacle the person may be incapable of acting intelligently. The fuller explanation of *person* would be out of place in our text; it will be found in treatises of Philosophy.



the Holy Ghost have created the world." None of the Divine Persons can use the Divine Nature to act alone. Thus, for instance, the Father could not alone have decided to create the world. He could have decided only by an act of the Divine Will, but since the Divine Will is identical with the Divine Nature, its every act belongs at once and equally to all Three Persons. Similarly with the Divine Understanding and with all the other powers of the Divine Nature: every act proceeding from them belongs at once and equally to all Three Persons. Briefly we can say that everything which God does as God is done by the Blessed Trinity.<sup>4</sup>

THE THREE PERSONS ARE EQUAL IN ALL THINGS, AND YET ARE REALLY DISTINCT FROM ONE ANOTHER.—The Three Divine Persons are equal in all things, because each is God, each is infinitely perfect. Yet they are really distinct because the Son has come from the Father, and because the Holy Ghost comes from the Father and the Son. Therefore, directing our attention exclusively to the relations which they bear to one another, we can say of any one of them what we cannot say of either of the other two: of the Father we can say: "He has begotten the Son"; of the Son, "He is begotten of the Father"; of the Holy Ghost, "He proceeds from the Father and the Son."

The doctrine of the Incarnation helps us to see that the Three Divine Persons are really distinct; it teaches that one, and only one, of the Divine Persons—God the Son—was made Man. Christ through His human nature was able to act as Man, and His acts as Man belonged to Him alone. It was He alone who lived and laboured on earth; it was He alone who suffered and died on the Cross for us; it was He alone who redeemed us. Likewise, if either of the other Divine Persons had become Man, to Him alone would have belonged the title of

<sup>4</sup> See section IV below.

Redeemer; to Him alone would have belonged all acts done through His human nature.

Our word *person* is derived from our knowledge of creatures; we use it when speaking of the Blessed Trinity, not because it is in itself adequate, but because, as St. Augustine says, it is the least inaccurate term we can employ.<sup>5</sup>

The Trinity in relation to the Divine Understanding and Will.—St. Thomas, developing a thought suggested by St. Augustine, has been followed by all theologians in his exposition of the relation of the Holy Trinity to the Divine Understanding and Will:—God is a Spirit, and the first act of a spirit is to know, to understand. Now, God knowing Himself from all eternity, brought forth the full knowledge of Himself. This knowledge of Himself was not a mere passing idea, such as we have, but His own Image, His own very Substance, a Living Person. God knowing Himself is God the Father; God as known to Himself is God the Son. God the Father and God the Son loved one another from all eternity, for each beheld in the other the Supreme Goodness of the Divinity. Their mutual Love is their own very Substance, a Living Person, the Holy Ghost. Thus, with the utmost imperfection, we conceive the Blessed Trinity to be the eternal outcome of the Divine Understanding and the Divine Will.<sup>6</sup> But the mystery remains unsolved: we cannot answer the questions, "How can the Image of God be a Living Person?" "How can the mutual love of God and His Image be a Living Person?"

<sup>5</sup> Let us try to realize how difficult it is for us to know anything about the mysteries of God. Suppose that a triangle described in a limited plane possessed intelligence; that it could know everything about lines and plane figures, and could even measure the entire surface on which it dwelt. But, if it were told that solid figures existed, possessing a new dimension of which it knew nothing, it would at once be confronted with mysteries—mysteries which, indeed, it could accept as true, but without comprehending them. It could not even picture a solid angle, or fully understand that a solid could never be measured by a plane. Why? Because the solid figures belong to a higher order of things. It is so with us. God belongs to a higher order of being and can never be fully known by any creature.

<sup>6</sup> We find in creatures many faint resemblances to the Blessed Trinity.—The soul must exist before it can know itself; it must know itself before it can love itself. The soul as existing and before it possesses self-knowledge and self-love, may be compared to God the Father; its self-knowledge, to God the Son; its self-love to God the Holy

## III

**The Mystery of the Trinity, a Chief Article of Faith, and an incentive to Piety.**—The mystery of the Blessed Trinity, obscurely indicated in the Old Testament,<sup>7</sup> and clearly revealed in the New,<sup>8</sup> is a fundamental article of the faith delivered to us by our Saviour. When we come into the world, we are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. During life, we profess our faith in the Divine mystery every time we make the sign of the Cross, and every time we say: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." On our death-bed the priest will comfort our departing soul with the words: "Even though she hath sinned, she hath not denied the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." We praise and adore Him who has revealed Himself to us under the loving name of Father; we praise and adore the Son who became our brother, and humbled Himself even unto the death of the Cross for our salvation; we praise and adore the Holy Spirit who, dwelling in the Church and in our hearts, holds us together, one in divine faith and love: "Thee, God, the unbegotten Father; Thee, the Only-begotten Son; Thee, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter; the holy and undivided Trinity, with full heart and voice we praise and bless: Glory to Thee for evermore."<sup>9</sup>

Ghost. Numerous other examples may be found, *e.g.*:—(a) a sun-beam with its heat, light, and chemical properties; (b) a solid with its three dimensions, length, breadth, and thickness; (c) a line with its two extreme points and their connection.

<sup>7</sup> Some authorities say that God withheld His revelation of the Trinity from the Jews because of their tendency to Polytheism, *i.e.*, belief in more Gods than one.

<sup>8</sup> See, *e.g.*, St. John x. 30: "I and the Father are one," said Christ, the Son of God; and Acts v. 3, 4: "Ananias," said St. Peter, "why hath Satan tempted thy heart that thou shouldst lie to the Holy Ghost? . . . thou hast not lied to men, but to God." Cf. also St. Mark i. 11; St. Matt. xxviii. 19; St. Paul, 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Antiphon to the *Magnificat*, *Offic. Trin.*

## IV

**The Trinity in relation to the Works of God, to the Divine Attributes, and to the Divine Missions.**—THE TRINITY IN RELATION TO THE WORKS OF GOD. The Trinity may be described as the internal activity of God, the activity of God within Himself, in which each Divine Person has His own particular share. All works outside God, *i.e.*, all His dealings with creatures, their creation, preservation, sanctification, etc., are common to the whole Trinity.<sup>10</sup> But, by appropriation,<sup>11</sup> we speak of the Father, since He is the Head of the whole Trinity, as the Author of Creation, and of the Holy Ghost, since He is Divine Love, as the Author of our sanctification.

THE TRINITY IN RELATION TO THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.—By appropriation, we assign to the Father Omnipotence and Eternity; to the Son, Knowledge and Wisdom, since it is through Understanding He is begotten of the Father; and to the Holy Ghost, who is the mutual love of Father and Son, we assign Charity and all the Divine Attributes associated with it.

THE TRINITY IN RELATION TO THE DIVINE MISSIONS.—A Divine Mission is the sending of a Divine Person into the world for some special work, or to exist in some new way, among men. The Son can be sent by the Father; the Holy Ghost, by the

<sup>10</sup> The Divine decree to send a Redeemer into the world, the formation of the Human Nature of Christ in the womb of Mary, the joining of that Human Nature to God the Son in Personal union, the decision to accept the Sacrifice of the Cross as satisfaction for the sins of men—all this, being the work of God, as God, is common to the Three Divine Persons. On the other hand, as already stated, the acts of Christ as Man, the acts done through His Human Nature, are His alone.

<sup>11</sup> "Appropriation" means assigning a work, name, or attribute to a Divine Person as though belonging to Him alone, whereas it belongs really to all Three Divine Persons. In such appropriation, we are guided by our notion of the relations which each Divine Person bears to the others.—It should be remembered that in assigning a work to a Divine Person, as though He alone were the Author of it, we do so under the guidance of the Sacred Scriptures and of Christ Himself. Appropriation helps us to keep before our mind the relations of the Divine Persons to one another, thus leading to a more explicit faith in the Blessed Trinity; besides it saves us from forgetting or neglecting any one of the Divine Persons, and helps us to discharge the chief duty of our religion, *viz.*, to give each of them the homage of our adoration and love.

Father and the Son; the Father comes, but is not sent.<sup>12</sup> The Three Divine Persons enter into the soul with sanctifying grace, the Father as coming of Himself, the Son and the Holy Ghost as sent. This sublime union of the soul with the Blessed Trinity is revealed to us in the words of Christ: "If any one love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him."<sup>13</sup> God the Son was sent into the world by the Father. As God, He had always existed in the world since it was made; but, as Man, at the Incarnation, He began to exist in the world in a new way; as Man, He is still with us in the Most Adorable Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Holy Ghost, sent by the Father and the Son, descended on the Apostles at the first Pentecost. The tongues of fire and the rushing wind were the signs of His coming.<sup>14</sup>

## V

**Errors.**—The doctrine of the Trinity was denied (1) by the Monarchians (c. 200), who held that in God there is but one Person; (2) by the Modalists (Sabellius and others), who attempted to give the teaching of the Monarchians a more reasonable form

<sup>12</sup> It was our Saviour Himself who taught us to speak of "the coming" and "the sending" of the Divine Persons. They are mysterious words whose sense we can but faintly perceive. They are not to be understood literally: since God is everywhere, the Blessed Trinity is everywhere; there can therefore be no question of a *coming* or *sending* in the ordinary sense. What then was our Saviour's meaning? We can answer in part by saying that the words help to express the relations of the Divine Persons to one another: the Father is said to come of Himself, because He is the Head of the Trinity; the Son is said to be sent by Him, as indicating that the Son is begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost is said to be sent by the Father and the Son, as indicating that He proceeds from them. Thus, the words help us to understand the *doctrine* of the Blessed Trinity, and to make acts of faith in the *mystery*. It would be an error to say that the Father by some act peculiarly His own sent the Son into the world, or that the Father and the Son by some act special to themselves sent the Holy Ghost; such acts could be performed only through the Divine Nature, and would therefore belong equally to the Three Divine Persons.

<sup>13</sup> St. John xiv. 23.

<sup>14</sup> The Holy Ghost is spoken of as the Paraclete or the Comforter. The same title is also given to God the Son. It should be carefully noted that when we speak of the Holy Ghost as coming to the Apostles, we do not mean that He alone of the Blessed Trinity entered the souls of the Apostles. On the principle of Appropriation, explained in footnote 11 above, we ascribe to Him a work done by all Three Divine Persons together. It is only by assuming a created nature that a Divine Person can act alone.

by asserting that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were mere modes or manifestations of the same Divine Person; (3) by Arius (*d.* 336), who maintained that the Son was a mere creature; by Macedonius, his follower, who enlarged his master's impious doctrine, holding that the Holy Ghost too was a creature and inferior to the Son. Arius was condemned at the First General Council of the Church, held at Nice in Bithynia, Asia Minor, in 325; Macedonius, at the General Council of Constantinople in 381.<sup>15</sup> At the present time, Modernists and many Protestants (Unitarians) hold, against the plainest teaching of Scripture and Tradition, that the doctrine of the Trinity did not attain the form in which it is now professed in the Catholic Church until the fourth century, and that the early Christians regarded Christ, not as God, but as a Divine ambassador, and the Holy Ghost as nothing more than the power or activity of God. Modernism, founded on an altogether false notion of the development of doctrine,<sup>16</sup> (1) denies that the Church is infallible, and (2) issues in the absurd conclusion that, in the first century, a Christian would have given his life rather than assert the Divinity of Christ, and, in the fourth, rather than deny it. The Schismatic Greeks still hold that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father alone, or from the Father through the Son, and not equally from both. This ancient heresy of theirs was condemned many times by the Church, and, in particular, at the Councils of Lyons (1274), and Florence (1439), at which they themselves were present.

<sup>15</sup> The Creed which we recite in the Mass was drawn up at these two Councils. St. Athanasius (*d.* 373) was the great defender of the faith in those days.

<sup>16</sup> We admit that there has been a true and thoroughly reasonable development of doctrine: see the example of the definition of the Immaculate Conception, Part I, p. 161, "Objections Answered." Development is nothing more than an unfolding, a fuller and more precise explanation, delivered as the need arises, of the doctrines committed by Christ to His Apostles. It *never* implies that there can be any contradiction whatsoever between the teaching of the Church in different ages. We can illustrate the development of doctrine from geometry. Pythagoras to his great joy discovered the truth now known to us as Euclid, Book I, 47. Had he been asked where that truth existed before his discovery of it, he would have answered, "It was contained in the axioms, that is, in the self-evident truths on which the science of geometry is based. It is not a new truth but a truth newly ascertained."

## GOD THE CREATOR

## CHAPTER III

## THE CREATION AND ITS PURPOSE.—THE ORDER OF THE CREATION

*Summary.*

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church: God created all things.
- II. God's primary purpose in creating was His external glory; His secondary purpose was the happiness of rational creatures; His creative act is continuous; He exercises a providence over all that He made.
- III. The order of the Creation: The Bible account; it contains a principal and a subordinate element.—The account given by scientists: it cannot be in conflict with the principal element in the Bible account; it is not in conflict with the subordinate element.

## I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—God created the whole world. It had no existence until, by an act of His own free-will, He called it into being. He created the earth, sun, moon and stars; He created the first living things from which all existing plants and animals are descended; He created man to His own image and likeness; He created the angels.<sup>1</sup>—God created all things for His external glory.<sup>2</sup> He exercises a providence over all His creatures.<sup>3</sup>

## II

**God's Primary Purpose in creating.**—God's primary purpose in creating was His external glory. His external glory is His splendour, as manifested outwardly in His creatures. All the works of His hands reflect in their very being and nature His power, wisdom and goodness: His power has raised them from nothingness to existence; His wisdom has designed the nature of each and appointed its purpose; His goodness is the source of all the gifts bestowed on them through His wisdom and His power.

<sup>1</sup> iv. L. 428, V. 1782.<sup>2</sup> V. 1783.<sup>3</sup> V. 1784.

All created things are therefore images of their Maker, each in its own imperfect degree. But the word "image" is applied with special appropriateness to men and angels, because, through their understanding and free-will they have been raised above all other creatures; they have been made personal agents, and have been given a closer likeness to God.<sup>4</sup> The likeness becomes closer still when those noble faculties are correctly used, *i.e.*, when we employ our mind and will in knowing and loving God, for we are thus, in our little way, made active imitators of Him who has an infinite knowledge and love of His Own Divine goodness. All men therefore whose mind and will work as He would have them work reflect Him more perfectly, and therefore advance His external glory. They still further advance it by teaching others to know and love Him.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The lowliest of mankind, by his very nature, endowed as it is with a spiritual soul, gives God greater glory than the whole material universe with all its vastness; further, the lowliest of mankind by a simple act of the love of God gives Him greater glory than He receives through all the secular learning of scientists and philosophers.

<sup>5</sup> *God's external glory*, as arising from His rational creatures, reaches its highest expression in the Blessed in Heaven who enjoy the direct vision of His unveiled Loveliness. Unlike those on earth, they possess a knowledge of Him that can never grow dim or clouded, and a love of Him that can never prove untrue; they have attained to that perfect exercise of the mind and will for which He made them. *God's internal glory* is His intrinsic splendour, or, more strictly, His appreciation and praise thereof: *gloria est clara notitia cum laude*, St. Thomas, S. T. i.-ii, q. 2, a. 3. According to the accepted teaching of theologians, the Son is begotten of the Father by way of understanding, and the Holy Ghost proceeds by way of love; hence in the very life of the Holy Trinity, we have infinite knowledge and infinite love, and therefore infinite glory. We should notice that self-complacency in God follows necessarily from His knowledge of Himself as an infinitely perfect Being, the source of His own existence and of all His perfections; whereas self-complacency in a creature, if it spring from the notion that the creature is the sole author of its excellence, is mere folly, for the creature has nothing of its own.

The word "glory" in its everyday use is similarly applied. It denotes splendour, or the manifestation of splendour, or its appreciation and praise; thus, *e.g.*, we speak of the glory of an artist's talent, or the glory of his works which are its expression, or the glory which he wins from the public.

**God's Secondary Purpose**—God's primary purpose in the whole plan of creation was the manifestation of His splendour, but in the creation of men and angels He had a secondary purpose also. He made them, not only that they might by their nature testify to His glory, but that they might win everlasting happiness for themselves.

God's primary purpose cannot be defeated, but His secondary purpose may, because it depends for its attainment on the proper exercise of free-will. But if His rational creatures abuse their freedom, the failure is theirs, not His. Even in their failure, they manifest His Justice by the punishment which sin entails.

Creation was an act of love. "God in His goodness and omnipotence," says the Vatican Council, "drew creatures from nothing, not to increase His happiness, not to gain anything, but to manifest His perfection by the blessings He bestows on creatures."<sup>6</sup> His chief blessing was conferred on His rational creatures, men and angels. To them He gave a nature capable of receiving the further gift of Grace, and therefore of being raised to the sublime dignity of divine sonship.

**God's Creative Act is continuous.**—Since God alone is self-existent, we and all other creatures, animate and inanimate, spiritual and material, owe our existence to Him. Existence is no part of our nature; therefore, we need the sustaining hand of God from instant to instant. So fully are we dependent on Him that, but for His unceasing help, we should be unable to perform even the most trivial action. God's creative act, in our regard, is therefore continuous. Technically, we say that to God we owe our existence and our conservation: "God who made the world and all things therein . . . giveth to all life and breath and all things (that they have). . . . In Him we live and move and are."<sup>7</sup> "The fool hath said in his heart, 'there is no God.'"<sup>8</sup> but a deeper depth

<sup>6</sup> V. 1783.

<sup>7</sup> Acts xvii. 24, 25, 28.

<sup>8</sup> Ps. xiii. 1.

of folly has been touched by him who, while knowing his utter dependence on God, refuses to be subject to Him and to obey Him.

**God Exercises a Providence over All His Creatures.**—That God exercises a providence or ever-watchful care over all His creatures follows of necessity from His infinite goodness and wisdom. He, the infinitely wise and good, who has made all things and holds all things in being, must necessarily desire that they attain the end for which He made them. His providence extends to all His creatures, but in a particular way to man: Christ said, "are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore; better are you than many sparrows."<sup>9</sup> Man is more precious in the eyes of God than the birds of the air, because to man He has given a higher nature and a higher destiny. God in His providence orders the events and circumstances of our lives down to the smallest detail, so as to draw the sinner towards repentance, and the just to higher sanctity. If it pleases Him to send us sorrow or pain, we must accept it with loving resignation, full of faith that He knows what is best for us and that there is no one so kind as He.

### III

**The Bible Account.**—We read in the first chapter of *Genesis* that "in the beginning God created heaven and earth, and the earth was void and empty, and darkness was on the face of the deep." Then follows<sup>10</sup> a brief account of the six days' work, showing us the order in

<sup>9</sup> St. Matt. x. 29-31.

<sup>10</sup> The common interpretation is that the world, or matter in a state of chaos, was created by God before the six days' work began: see Hetzenauer, *Comment. in Librum Genesis*, p. 3. The six days' work was, therefore, a work of organization or development.

which the chief things in the world were created :—(1) On the first day, He said : “ ‘ Be light made,’ and light was made . . . and He divided the light from the darkness, and He called the light Day and the darkness Night.” (2) On the second day, He said : “ ‘ Let there be a firmament<sup>11</sup> made amidst the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.’ ” (3) On the third day, He made dry land appear from out the waters, and bade it bring forth the green herb and the fruit-tree. (4) On the fourth day, He said : “ ‘ Let there be lights made in the firmament of heaven to divide the day and the night’ . . . and God made two great lights, a greater light to rule the day, and a lesser light to rule the night, and the stars.” (5) On the fifth day, He said : “ ‘ Let the waters bring forth the creeping creature having life, and the fowl that may fly over the earth. . . .’ ” And God created the great whales (sea-monsters) and every living and moving creature which the waters bring forth . . . and every winged fowl.” (6) On the sixth day, He made the beasts and cattle and everything that creepeth on the earth. . . . “ And God created man to His own image.” (7) On the seventh day, “ He rested<sup>12</sup> . . . from all His work which He had done.”

**In the Bible Account, there is a Principal and a Subordinate Element.**—In the Bible account, we must carefully distinguish what is principal from what is subordinate.

*The principal element.*—The Jews to whom the narrative was primarily addressed were surrounded by idolatrous peoples who believed in the existence of many gods, and paid divine worship to all kinds of creatures, to the sun

<sup>11</sup> *A firmament.* By this name is here understood the whole space between the earth and the stars. The lower part of this space separates the waters that are upon the earth from those that hang above in the clouds.—Cf. note in the Douay Version.

<sup>12</sup> “ *He rested*, that is, He ceased to make or create any new kinds of things. Though, as our Lord tells us, St. John v. 17, *He still worketh viz., by conserving and governing all things, and creating souls.*”—Note *ibid.*—On the creation of human souls, see Ch. V. footnote 1.

and moon, plants and animals, and images of wood and stone. Hence, the sacred writer, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, impresses on the Jewish race, with greatest emphasis, that there is but one God, and that He created the whole visible universe with everything in it, living and lifeless. The expression of this great truth is the chief element in his narrative.<sup>13</sup> All else is secondary or subordinate.

*The subordinate element.*—The subordinate element is the popular dress in which the inspired message is clothed. Though, for convenience sake, we designate it “the subordinate element,” it is nevertheless as truly a part of inspired Scripture as the principal element; it is the medium through which the Holy Spirit has chosen to speak to us.

The Church,<sup>14</sup> while insisting that the account of the creation in Genesis is historical,<sup>15</sup> tells us at the same time that we may regard it as popular in form. Popular form implies popular expression and popular order. (1) *Popular expression, i.e.*, that things and happenings are described not in strict scientific language but as they would appear outwardly to the senses, and be commonly spoken of and understood by ordinary people.<sup>16</sup> Thus, *e.g.*, God is represented as speaking, and as taking counsel with Himself; the moon is represented as one of the two greater lights in the heavens. (2) *Popular order, i.e.*, that events,—and these only the most important—are set down in an order, not necessarily chronological, but

<sup>13</sup> In the Sacred text we should observe the constant repetition of the words : “ God made,” “ God said and it was done.”

<sup>14</sup> Through the Biblical Commission. On the Biblical Commission. See Part i, p. 190.

<sup>15</sup> *i.e.*, that it is neither fabulous nor legendary, but a true narrative of actual events.

<sup>16</sup> Thus in ordinary language I say “ the sun is at its highest in the heavens.” Were I to use accurate scientific language I should speak somewhat as follows : “ The earth has so turned on its axis, that our meridian is now directly opposite the sun.”

sued to the understanding of a primitive people and, therefore to mankind generally.

The Church has also declared that the word "day" need not necessarily mean a solar day of 24 hours, and that it can be lawfully interpreted as signifying a long period of time.

Beyond these general directions and a general condemnation of all methods of interpretation which would impute real error to the Sacred Writings, the Church has decided nothing as to how the subordinate element in the Scriptural narrative is to be understood.

**The Account given by Scientists of the Order of Creation.**—The account as given by scientists of the development of our world is contributed in part by astronomers, in part by geologists.

*The Astronomers' Account.*—Astronomers suppose that originally the universe was filled with a nebula or cloud of gas. The nebula was hot and possessed a movement of rotation. It gradually grew cooler and, as it cooled, broke up into detached masses, either through condensation or through the action of centrifugal forces.<sup>17</sup> One of these detached masses, it is said, has given rise to our solar system; while still a nebula, it continued to revolve, and, in course of time, either owing again to centrifugal force, or, more probably, to the gravitational attraction of some other great body which happened to pass in its vicinity, it flung off smaller masses to form planets. The satellites, it is conceived, must have originated in a similar manner; we can suppose them to have been torn, either from the planetary, or the earlier solar nebula.<sup>18</sup>

*The Geologists' Account.*—As the earth grew cooler, a solid crust of granite formed itself on its surface, and a dense cloud of vapour which allowed no sunlight to pierce through enveloped it. The vapour in course of time became converted into water covering the entire surface, or almost the entire surface of the earth. The dry rock gradually emerged, and primitive oceans and continents were formed. The atmosphere as it grew less opaque allowed the sun's rays to penetrate, thus permitting the appearance of low vegetable and animal life, at first perhaps in

<sup>17</sup> The force which causes mud or water to fly off from the rim of a carriage-wheel. The stone released from a sling is another instance.

<sup>18</sup> See *The Universe Around Us*, by Sir James Jeans, pp. 227 f.

the sea, and later on the land. Next came in successive order fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, and, last of all, and at a relatively recent date, man.

*Remarks on the above accounts.*—(1) These accounts do not dispense with the necessity of a Creator. Unless we admit His existence, we leave unexplained: (a) the origin of matter; (b) the origin of motion in the nebula; (c) the origin of vegetable and animal life, and the spiritual soul of man; (d) the origin of the wonderful order that pervades the universe.

(2) The astronomers' nebular hypothesis, which owes its inspiration to Laplace, is still no more than a hypothesis. Yet it accounts admirably for the following facts:—(a) that, as the spectroscope has shown, the earth and the heavenly bodies are composed of similar materials; and (b) that in the regions of celestial space the different stages of development have been observed which the theory supposes, viz., nebulae, stars at various degrees of incandescence, planets and satellites. The hypothesis looks to the past, but inevitably raises questions as to the future. In this connection it is worth noting that Sir James Jeans, a representative scientist of the present day, agrees with Lord Kelvin that the universe is gradually sinking down to a low level of energy unavailable for work.<sup>19</sup> Some have supposed that a counter-process of restoration may ensue, raising up new heavens and a new earth from the ashes of the old. "But," Jeans says, "science can give no support to such fancies."<sup>20</sup>

(3) We may regard the geological account as approximately accurate. Some minor modifications<sup>21</sup> will no doubt be made when more perfect instruments have been devised and more exact methods employed for studying the crust of the earth.

**Science cannot be in conflict with the Principal Element in the Bible Account.**—Physical science, as we have already learned,<sup>22</sup> deals only with causes whose operation comes under the observation of the senses. It shows how one lever in the machinery of the world is moved by another, the second by the third, and so on, but it cannot tell us how the last lever is moved. Its investigations are entirely confined to an examination of these levers. It deals only with things that happen within the visible

<sup>19</sup> See Part I, p. 22.

<sup>20</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 322.

<sup>21</sup> It is thought probable that low animal life may be proved to have appeared subsequently to low vegetable life.

<sup>22</sup> Part I, p. 21, Note (1).

world. As long as it keeps to its proper work, it cannot assert or deny anything about the existence or acts of God who is a Being distinct from the visible world, and, therefore, outside its scope. Hence, it cannot touch the doctrine of creation, which is the chief element in the Biblical narrative. It follows therefore that the authority which a man may have gained in the field of physical science forsakes him the moment he passes beyond the limits of his subject. If he ventures to discuss questions outside the realm of physics, the value of his speculations will depend, not on his ability as a scientist, but on his ability as a philosopher ; but since in philosophy he will be dealing with a type of evidence quite unfamiliar to him and for which he is not fitted by his previous training, his conclusions will, as a rule, be worthless.

**Science is not in Conflict with the Subordinate Element, as is shown by either of two interpretations.**—The only difficulties which scientists can raise are connected with the order followed by the sacred writer. We give two interpretations, both in conformity with the decision of the Biblical Commission, and both free from the charge of conflict with physical science.

**FIRST INTERPRETATION :** *The order followed in Genesis results from the grouping together of similar works.*—The inspired writer of Genesis opens his narrative with the words : “ In the beginning God created heaven and earth, and the earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” This primitive world or Chaos consisted, therefore, of three layers : above was a dark space ; beneath the dark space was water ; beneath the water was earth. The rest of the account tells in popular form how the present world was produced from the original Chaos. This work of development is described as having taken place in six days, the expressions “ first day,” “ second day,” etc., being used, not to signify days of twenty-four hours each, but to indicate the order in which the writer chose to set down the events of creation.

I. He tells how each layer in turn was divided : on the first day, the dark space was divided into day and night ; on the second, the water was divided into the water below (the sea) and the water above (clouds, air) ; on the third, the earth was divided into land under water and land over water (dry land with its concomitant vegetation).

II. Next, he tells us how, on each of the three following days, each region was peopled with its proper occupants : on the fourth day, the sun was created to rule the day, and the moon with the stars, the night ; on the fifth, fishes were placed in the sea, and birds in the air (sky) ; on the sixth, animals and man

appeared on the dry earth.—We may tabulate the interpretation, thus :—

| Day | Regions   | Day | Occupants   |
|-----|---|-----|---|
| 1.  | Day—Night.  | 4.  | Sun (for Day)—Moon with stars (for Night).  |
| 2.  | Sea—Sky (Air).  | 5.  | Fishes (for Sea)—Birds for Sky (Air).   |
| 3.  | Land under water.—<br>Land over water, with concomitant vegetation. | 6.  | [No occupants for Land under water, because insignificant or unknown.]—Animals and Man for Land over water. |

This interpretation has much to recommend it ; (1) it is suggested by the very words of Sacred Scripture : “ So the heavens and the earth were finished and all the furniture of them ” (*Gen.* ii. 1)—the “ furniture ” being the occupants ; (2) it represents the sacred writer as impressing most strongly on his people that God made everything in the world and gave each thing the place it occupies ; (3) it arranges events in an order which a primitive people could readily understand, and easily retain ; and (4) it will never require re-adjustment to suit the views of scientists.<sup>23</sup>

**SECOND INTERPRETATION :** *The order followed in Genesis is in its broad lines a chronological order.*—Let us note the following most remarkable points of agreement between the Biblical and the scientific account :—(1) both accounts represent the world as gradually developing from chaos to order ; (2) both represent lower forms of life as appearing before higher,—vegetation before fishes,—fishes (and monsters of the deep) before birds and mammals ; (3) both state that man was the last of all to appear. To these we may add the creation of light on the first day ; the inspired writer speaks as though he were on the surface of the primitive earth ; he sees the sunlight penetrate for the first time

<sup>23</sup> This interpretation, technically known as the idealist-historical, was first given by St. Thomas, S. T., I. q. 65. For a further account of it, see the following : Pope, *Aids to the Study of the Bible*, 1930, p. 20 f. ; Zapetal, *Der Schöpfungsbericht der Genesis*, Freiburg, 1904.



the dense vapour ; but the sun itself is not yet visible as a distinct object, and will not be seen until the fourth day.<sup>24</sup> Now, as to the points of divergence :—(1) the Biblical account says that fruit-trees appeared on the third day, whereas they did not appear, according to scientists, until the fifth or sixth ; (2) it represents animal life as appearing first on the fifth day, whereas scientists say that low forms of animal life must have appeared much earlier, probably on the third day and simultaneously with vegetation. Bearing in mind that the account is popular and not strictly scientific, we can easily remove these difficulties :—As to (1), the sacred writer groups together all vegetable life ; had he divided it scientifically, he would have but confused his simple hearers who could not be expected to recognize the distinction between higher and lower vegetation. As to (2), the low forms of animal life were regarded as insignificant, and as manifestly included under the higher forms. Scientists admit that it would be difficult to compress into such a narrow compass and convey in popular form a more accurate description of the development of the world. The great geologist Dana says that the coincidences between the narrative in Genesis and the history of the earth as derived from observation leave no doubt as to the inspiration of its author.<sup>25</sup>

This interpretation, regarded by many as satisfactory, is perhaps less so than the first.

**Note.**—*The week of seven days.*—God instituted the Jewish week of seven days as a memorial of the successive periods of the Creation : “ Six days shall you do work,” He said, “ in the seventh day is the Sabbath, the rest holy to the Lord. . . . For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and in the seventh He ceased from work.”<sup>26</sup>—God, through His Church, has ordered us to continue the observance of the week of seven days,<sup>27</sup> but He has given us a new Sabbath with a new significance. The

<sup>24</sup> In this interpretation, as in the first, we may take “ first day,” “ second day,” etc., to denote the order, in this case roughly chronological, in which the writer records events.

<sup>25</sup> See Turton, *The Truth of Christianity*, ch. viii. The writer, who is a Protestant, has dealt admirably with this interpretation. His book contains much excellent matter and can be recommended to non-Catholics.

<sup>26</sup> *Exodus xxxi. 15–17.*

<sup>27</sup> In the hymns of the Divine Office for the Vespers of the days of the week, beginning with the Sunday hymn, *Lucis Creator*, the Church commemorates the works of Creation, deducing from each a spiritual lesson.

new Sabbath commemorates the Redemption, a work of greater love than the Creation itself ;<sup>28</sup> and it has been fittingly assigned to the first day of the week, for it was on that day that God created physical light, the image of His Son, who is “ the Light that shineth in darkness,” the spiritual Light that pierced the darkness of a sinful world. The ancient Sabbath paid homage to God as having completed the work of Creation, while the Christian Sabbath pays Him homage as having begun in the Redemption a new and more glorious work.

<sup>28</sup> The Church gives expression to this thought every day in the Mass. She speaks of God as having wonderfully created us, but as having still more wonderfully redeemed us.

**Note.**—Chapters IV and V deal chiefly with the question whether God created life and all living species by His direct creative act or through powers given by Him to creatures.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ORIGIN OF LIFE AND THE ORIGIN OF LIVING SPECIES (PLANTS AND LOWER ANIMALS)

#### Summary.

- I. The origin of life: The teaching of the Church.—What scientists say.
- II. The origin of living species (plants and lower animals):
  - A. The teaching of the Church.—A Catholic may hold either Permanentism or Theistic Evolution.
  - B. The evidence for evolution.—Remarks and conclusion.
  - C. Evolutionary theories discussed.
  - D. Evolution not proved scientifically but useful as a working hypothesis.
  - E. If evolution has occurred, God is its Author.

#### I

**The Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches that life, as well as every other form of activity, must be traced to God as its ultimate source, and as the fount and well-head of created being with all its modifications. But whether the first animate thing that appeared in the world received its life from Him by a direct creative act, or through the interplay of powers or properties *which He had already communicated to matter*—that is a question which she leaves perfectly open. She allows us full freedom to choose between these alternatives as scientific evidence may direct.

**What Scientists say.**—It was the ancient view, and, until Pasteur had published the results of his investigations, the view of most modern scientists, that spontaneous generation, or the production of life from inanimate matter, did as a fact take place,

But Pasteur has shown by a series of masterly experiments<sup>1</sup> that, in all the commonly alleged instances of spontaneous generation, life originated, not from dead matter, but from living germs. Hence, the dictum, *omne vivens e cellula*, or “life comes from a living cell,” is now generally accepted as true by scientists. Some of them, however, while admitting that the process no longer occurs, still cling to the belief that it may have taken place in conditions that no longer exist. This, needless to observe, is a mere gratuitous assertion, against which the following considerations may be urged:—(1) Scientists regard the laws of nature as invariable, and, therefore, as always producing the same effect in the same conditions. But the conditions which, according to scientists themselves, prevailed when life had its beginning on earth can be reproduced in our laboratories; yet no chemist has so far succeeded in making a living thing from dead matter. (2) The living cell, so complicated in its structure that it has been compared to a fully equipped battleship, could not have been built up except through the direct act of an intelligent being.<sup>2</sup> If, in spite of difficulties which at present seem insurmountable, chemists succeed some day in making a living thing from non-living elements, our position as Catholics will not, as indicated in the preceding paragraph, be affected in the slightest

<sup>1</sup> One of his experiments was the following:—he procured a flask with a long neck curving downwards, and poured into it a liquid which, in ordinary circumstances, corrupts rapidly. He boiled the flask and its contents, so as to destroy any vestige of life that might have been present. His purpose in having the neck bent was to prevent germs floating in the air from falling in, and at the same time to allow the liquid in the flask any stimulus to the generation of life which, as some claimed, pure air might afford. He found that matter thus protected remained indefinitely without any manifestation of life. On the other hand, when the neck of the flask was broken off, so that germs could fall in, life quickly developed.—The practical outcome of his experiments was aseptic surgery and the preserved-food (canning) industries. See *The Life of Pasteur*, by Professor E. J. McWeeney, C.T.S.

<sup>2</sup> The evidence of geology is, so far, against spontaneous generation. Virchow's statement in his address at Wiesbaden in 1887 still holds good: “Never has a living being, or even a living element—let us say, a living cell—been found of which it could be predicated that it was the first of its species. Nor have any fossil remains ever been found which, with any likelihood, could have belonged to a being the first of its kind, or could have been produced by spontaneous generation.” Many of those who cling to the idea of spontaneous generation are agnostics, and hence are unwilling to admit the clear evidence for God's existence that appears in the direct creation of life. At the meeting of the British Association, 7th September, 1933, Professor

degree. St. Thomas and some of the greatest doctors of the Church had no difficulty whatsoever in holding spontaneous generation, since they regarded it—and we too, if it were ever proved, should regard it—as a process arising from powers implanted in matter by the Creator.

**Note.**—The teacher's attention is directed to the paragraphs in this and the next Chapter which are set in larger type.

It has been found necessary to discuss the question of Evolution at some length, so as to enable the reader to deal with misrepresentations of the Church's attitude, and to discount alleged scientific results, detailed in widely circulating books and magazines.

## II

### A

**The Teaching of the Church.**—The Church, while teaching as of faith that God created the living things from which all existing plants and lower animals are descended, leaves us free to hold either the theory of Permanentism or the theory of Theistic Evolution. According to the

James Gray in his presidential address in the Zoology Section said: "As a physical phenomenon, it is undoubtedly possible for a living organism to have been evolved spontaneously from inanimate matter. It is also possible for a stone to leap spontaneously from the surface of the earth. These things are possible, but are they probable? What in fact is the probability that any chance distribution of molecules should lead spontaneously to the dynamically active mechanism of the living organism? Would any serious credence be given to the suggestion that a motor car, or even a footprint on the sands, came spontaneously into existence without the intervention of directive forces? Why then should we accept the spontaneous origin of living matter? . . . Is there any evidence which suggests that, within the physical world, a dynamic machine has spontaneously come into existence? That such an event might happen is true, but has it, in point of fact, ever occurred under the observation of mankind? Unless a positive answer can be given to this question, the belief in the spontaneous origin of living matter seems to be a negation of the principle which underlies scientific thought."

To admit the creation of life would be to admit the existence of a personal God. Agnostics see this clearly; hence, they hold fast to the idea of spontaneous generation; but they fail to observe that spontaneous generation itself affords them no refuge from the truth which they are trying to evade, because, ultimately, it would have to be referred to the action of an Intelligent Creator. See the last sentence in the text above.

theory of Permanentism, God by a direct act created each species separately; according to the theory of Theistic Evolution, He caused some or all species to develop in course of time from one or more directly-created primitive stocks, or from inanimate matter.

**Note.**—The Church condemns as contrary to faith the theory of Materialist or Atheistic Evolution, which denies, or ignores, the existence of a Personal God, and claims that life in all its forms has developed under the operation of blind forces or causes.<sup>3</sup>

**Permanentism and Theistic Evolution: the Views of Theologians.**—Many of the Fathers of the Church held the doctrine of Permanentism, but St. Augustine (354–430) favoured a theory which bears some resemblance to that of Theistic Evolution. He held that each species of animals was created originally in a rudimentary state, and later on was given its perfect form; he does not tell us whether the development was gradual or instantaneous,<sup>4</sup> but once the development was attained, the species remained fixed. St. Thomas Aquinas<sup>5</sup> (1227–1274), and almost all the Scholastics,<sup>6</sup> influenced by such physics as were taught in their day, had no difficulty in admitting the origin of new species from those already existing.<sup>7</sup> This fact alone suffices to convince us that rigid adherence to Permanentism is not required by orthodoxy.<sup>8</sup> The theory of Theistic Evolution is held by some modern

<sup>3</sup> We have proved (Part I, pp. 41–46) that this theory is opposed to reason. We now know that it is opposed to faith also.

<sup>4</sup> He believed, apparently, that the species originated in something like a seed, which he calls the *ratio seminalis*; cf., e.g., *De Genesi ad litteram*, Bk. V, ch. v, 14; ch. xxii, 45.

<sup>5</sup> S. T. I., q. 73, a. 1, ad 3.

<sup>6</sup> The name given to the learned writers of the Middle Ages who built up the science of theology chiefly in accordance with the principles of Aristotle's philosophy.

<sup>7</sup> In the passage already indicated, St. Thomas mentions hybrids as instances of new species. His main purpose obviously is not to prove the fixity of species, but the divine origin of all.

<sup>8</sup> Readers of the Breviary will note that the Vesper hymn for Fer. V. seems to bear a manifest trace of the doctrine of Theistic Evolution. Fishes and birds are represented as having proceeded *ab una stirpe*, from one stock; but *stirps* may possibly be a loose designation of the waters of the earth, the common element which, according to *Genesis* i. 20, 21, "brought forth" these living things.

Catholic writers, but it must be added that, as stated in the extreme form which derives all plants and lower animals from one and the same common origin, it is, so far, entirely unsupported by scientific evidence. It is in fact a dream and nothing more; but if, against all present probabilities, the theory as thus advocated should become an established truth, it would but serve to give us a more exalted idea of the power and wisdom of the Creator who so framed His laws as to draw a single particle of inert or primitive organic matter slowly upwards to higher and higher forms of life.

## B

**Has Evolution taken place?**—The two sets of evidence given below have been put forward in support of the opinion that all present-day animals and plants are descended from a comparatively small number of ancient stocks.<sup>9</sup>

(1) **THE EVIDENCE FROM SIMILARITIES.**—The likelihood of evolution is suggested by the similarities we find in living things :—

*a.* All living matter consists of the same chemical constituents, and every living thing (except bacteria and other low forms of life) is either a simple cell or an aggregate of cells.

*b.* Living animals may be divided off into eleven great groups (*phyla*), each group (*phylum*) possessing its own characteristic structure. The vertebrate *phylum*, to which we belong, consists of animals having a skull, a backbone, a brain and spinal cord, a heart, stomach, liver, etc. The vertebrates are divided into five *classes*, viz., fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals. Birds and mammals are more highly developed than reptiles, reptiles than amphibians, amphibians than fishes.<sup>10</sup>

*c.* Rudimentary organs, as for instance, the sightless eye of the mole, and the teeth of the baleen whale which never cut the gums, seem to indicate descent from animals in which these structures performed a useful function.

*d.* The embryo of every air-breathing vertebrate begins as though it were going to become a fish, and as it develops passes through stages characteristic of lower forms of life.

<sup>9</sup> Evolutionists do not profess to trace life back to its beginnings. See footnote 16 below.

<sup>10</sup> Each *phylum* is subdivided into *classes*, *orders*, *families*, *genera*, and *species*. The *species* is the smallest group, but in each *species* there may be *varieties*. But see footnote 19, Chapter V.

*e.* Several instances, such as the following, have been observed. In a group of islands we find the same species of plants and animals, but with such differences that each island may be said to possess its own particular kinds; and on the neighbouring mainland to which, geology tells us, the islands were once joined, the same species are quite uniform, and differ more or less from all those in the islands. The similarities would suggest a common origin, and the differences would show that evolution had been at work.

(2) **THE EVIDENCE FROM PALÆONTOLOGY.**<sup>11</sup>—Fossils and other traces of living things are found in several geological strata. The earlier the stratum, the less perfect are the living things it records. Although there are exceptions, it is in general true that, as the millions and millions of years passed by, plants and animals of more highly developed forms appeared. In the vertebrate *phylum*, for instance, fishes are earlier than amphibians, amphibians than reptiles, reptiles than birds and mammals.<sup>12</sup> Complete series of fossils, it is claimed, can be constructed showing how, *within certain classes*, present-day animals have been derived from remote ancestral stocks.

**REMARKS ON THE EVIDENCE.**—(1) *Similarities a and b.* The similarities in the structure of living things undoubtedly seem to point to evolution, though of course no biologist denies that, in countless instances, similarities are no indication of common origin.<sup>13</sup>

*c. Rudimentary organs.*—Many of these organs, once regarded as useless, have been found to perform a useful function, though not the function which their shape might seem to indicate; no biologist therefore can safely label any organ as definitely useless.

<sup>11</sup> Palæontology is the study of the fossilized remains of living things, and is a branch of biology; it estimates the age of fossils by tests supplied to it by geology and other sciences.

<sup>12</sup> Birds and mammals are co-eval; they are supposed to have developed from reptiles, but along different lines.

<sup>13</sup> See H. Muckermann, Professor of Biology, Valkenburg, Holland, art. in *Cath. Encycl.*, Vol. V, p. 666.—No one says, *e.g.*, that because whales have fins, they have evolved from fishes, or that the higher vertebrates are related to the cuttle-fishes because of the extraordinary similarity of their eyes (The cuttle-fish, so called, is not a fish but a mollusc; it belongs to the highest *class* in the Mollusc Phylum. It is almost beyond belief that the elaborate eyes of the cuttle-fish and the higher vertebrates, though following an entirely different path of development, should have arrived at a structure fundamentally the same in its working. See *The Great Design*, pp. 214, 215; London: Duckworth, 1934.)

Besides, there are cases in which the rudimentary organ may merely point to an earlier condition of the same type of animal.<sup>14</sup>

*d. Embryology.*—The inaccurate statement still appears in some popular works that the embryo-mammal passes through all the stages which evolution supposes for the adult animal, viz., from fish to mammal. The fish-resemblance is merely superficial.<sup>15</sup>

*e.* The classes of plants and animals found in a group of islands may differ considerably from one another, and from those existing on the adjacent mainland, but the differences would not greatly exceed those observable in the human species, and would therefore be no argument for evolution.

(2) If evolution took place, palæontology should bear witness to the fact. It does not do so. No doubt it shows us that what we call the more "highly developed" animals are later than what we call the "simpler" types,<sup>16</sup> but mere succession in time is no proof of descent.

*a.* Palæontology tells us nothing as to the origin of any great class of animals. Precisely those fossils which are most required to support the theory of evolution are missing. Thus, *e.g.*, we have no evidence as to how a reptile could have been transformed into a mammal.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> No one can prove, *e.g.*, that the sightless mole is not the descendant of a mole that had the full use of its eyes, or that whales with rudimentary sets of teeth are not the descendants of toothed whales.

<sup>15</sup> The embryo-mammal in its first stages has indeed gill-slits like those in a fish-embryo, but, whereas in the fish-embryo the gill-slits develop into part of the breathing apparatus, in the embryo-mammal their development follows different lines and has nothing to do with breathing. The evolutionist, J. Arthur Thomson, says: "We must be careful not to think that an embryo-mammal is at an early stage of its development like a small fish, as some writers have carelessly implied. *Each living creature is, from the first stage of its development, itself and no other*" (*Biology for Everyman*, Vol. II, p. 1007. London: Dent, 1935.)

<sup>16</sup> The earliest forms of life, found in strata said to be about 500 million years old, are already highly developed: there are about 800 species of animals belonging to the chief groups of invertebrates; plant-life also is well represented and elaborately specialized. The fossils therefore supply no evidence for the extreme view that all plants and animals are derived from some one form of primitive life.

<sup>17</sup> On the grave defects in the evidence from fossils, see Caullery, *Le problème de l'Évolution*, p. 58; also W. R. Thompson, *Science and Common Sense*, p. 214 (London: Longmans Green, 1937). Caullery, though a believer in evolution, does not gloss over the difficulties against it.

*b.* Palæontology tells us little as to the development of animals from simpler forms *within their own classes*. Plausible series of fossils have been arranged tracing the descent of the horse, the elephant and the crocodile from less developed vertebrates; but these series are regarded by evolutionists as being only "in a general way convincing."<sup>18</sup>

TO SUM UP.—There is evidence for the modification of living things within many of the smaller groups, but there is no evidence as to how any of the greater groups originated. Nor, as we shall see presently, have evolutionists succeeded in discovering any natural cause which could have produced large-scale evolution.

## C

**The Alleged Causes of Evolution.**—Biologists, with few exceptions, believe that evolution has occurred, but they do not agree as to its cause. The principal theories which they have proposed are Lamarckism, Darwinism, Saltatory Evolution, Orthogenesis, and Emergent Evolution. These we shall briefly consider:

**LAMARCKISM.**—According to Lamarck<sup>19</sup> (1744-1829), living things have the power of adapting themselves to their needs: thus, after several generations, a tribe of animals, in the constant effort to escape its enemies, may acquire great keenness of vision and fleetness of foot,<sup>20</sup> or a group of plants may, after a long lapse of time, gradually develop the climbing habit, so as to get more air and sunshine. He would therefore ascribe all the diversities we see in plants and animals to the transmission of acquired characters.<sup>21</sup>

*Remarks.*—Lamarck's theory is regarded by many biologists of high standing (the Neo-Lamarckians) as the only logical explanation of evolution. But the difficulties against it are considerable: (1) Large modifications could not be effected by exertion. It is not conceivable that worm-like creatures, *e.g.*, could acquire, by constant efforts, eyes, ears, etc. (2) Minor modifications which would leave animals in the same group may be possible.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> See J. Arthur Thomson, *The Outline of Science* (London: Waverley Book Co.), p. 64.

<sup>19</sup> He was a firm believer in God: "nothing exists," he said, "except by the will of the sublime Author of all things" (*Philosophie Zoologique*, I, p. 56, 1809). He did not include the origin of man in his system of evolution.

<sup>20</sup> Another example: giraffes are supposed to have got their long necks from the efforts of generations of their ancestors to browse on higher and higher branches of trees in times of drought.

<sup>21</sup> See below, *Note on the factors of heredity*.

<sup>22</sup> See, *e.g.*, J. B. S. Haldane, *The Causes of Evolution*, p. 136.

**DARWINISM.**—According to Darwin (1809–1882),<sup>23</sup> evolution has been effected by “natural selection,” which may be explained as follows:

(1) Plants and animals are produced year by year in far larger numbers than the earth can support. Owing to restriction of space, shortage of food-supply, and enemies of various kinds, the greater part is destroyed before reaching maturity. There is thus a struggle for existence.

(2) In every living species parents tend to produce offspring like themselves (Tendency to Uniformity or Resemblance), yet not so exactly alike that all kinds of minute differences may not be observed (Tendency to Variation).<sup>24</sup> These minute differences or variations are due to chance. Some of them may be of advantage in the struggle for existence, and so enable their possessors to survive, while less fortunate individuals perish. The survivors will transmit the favourable variation to the next generation, some of whose members will possess the variation in a higher degree. These luckier ones will survive, and the weaker perish as before. And so by very slow degrees and over a course of millions of years the tribe becomes more and more developed. Nature is thus said to “select” the fit, and reject or kill off the unfit. “Natural Selection” therefore is the cause of evolution.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> In 1859 Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, in which he expressed belief in the divine guidance of evolution, but in 1874 he states that he had become an agnostic. He thought that his theory had destroyed the argument from design; he refused to say, however, that living things are produced by “chance”; he preferred what is really an equivalent assertion, that they are produced by the blind working of natural laws; but his followers, the Neo-Darwinians, are not afflicted with such verbal scruples. He was either unaware of the other arguments for God’s existence or unconscious of their force.—He is still held in high repute because of his laborious life and his keenness and accuracy as an observer, but his logical faculty was weak, hence the grave defects in his theory, which is treated with derision by an increasing number of biologists. Tschulock says it is “a logical monstrosity” (*Deszendenzlehre*, Jena, 1922); Berg, in his *Nomogenesis*, attacks it severely; J. W. N. Sullivan, a good representative of biological opinion, says “it is full of lacunæ” (*Limitations of Science*, p. 199); and Caullery condemns it as “a vicious circle” (*Le problème de l’évolution*, p. 295). A fair example of how all difficulties against it may be ignored or glossed over will be found in *Evolution—Fact and Theory*, by Wells, Huxley, and Wells.

<sup>24</sup> On the sources of the resemblances and differences, see below, *Note on the factors of heredity*.

<sup>25</sup> How then, if Darwin’s theory be true, must one account for the existence of living things in all grades of development? Why have

(3) Nature has been engaged at this task of selection for countless ages. It has been working on the lines of the horse-breeder who, by constantly mating the heaviest and most muscular animals in the stud, produces at length the type known as the draught-horse. There is a difference however: the breeder is a conscious agent who selects the means to attain his end; Nature, on the other hand, is an unconscious agent. Nature cannot work for an end, but produces results as though it did.

(4) Every living thing in the world at the present day is a victor in the contest for existence. Every living thing is an assemblage of organs or structures which have proved their worth in the struggle.<sup>26</sup>

*Remarks.*—(1) It is difficult to see how the very small modifications supposed by Darwinians would give their possessors any advantage. For instance, the protective coloration which enables animals to escape detection through resemblance to their background would be useless in its initial stages.<sup>27</sup>

(2) The breeder can produce a new type of horse by selecting and keeping apart those which show a tendency towards the desired modification, but in wild nature there is no apparent substitute for this watchful care. And if there were a substitute, the new types might merely resemble those produced in artificial conditions—that is, they would still belong to the same group of animals, and would not encourage the idea that they were edging away towards the great changes envisaged by evolutionists.

(3) (a) The small variations are supposed to occur by chance and to be sifted out automatically in the struggle for existence.<sup>28</sup> Yet Darwinians admit that the random variations “may be limited in quantity and quality.”<sup>29</sup> But this concession is insufficient. If evolution occurred on Darwinian lines, the varia-

not all perished except the most perfect? The answer is that development took place only in so far as the variation conferred some advantage in the struggle for existence. The competition among living things was not the same for all places and all times. Hence a variation might have been advantageous in one instance, and disadvantageous in another.

<sup>26</sup> See footnote 33 below.

<sup>27</sup> See Robson and Richards, *The Variation of Animals in Nature*, p. 309; Longmans, 1936. Though favourable to Darwinism, they are conscious of the difficulty mentioned above.

<sup>28</sup> “Evolution . . . is the result of purposeless and random variation sifted by purposeless and automatic selection. . . . Variation and selection in themselves are blind”: Wells, Huxley, and Wells, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, p. 242.

tions must have been not only limited but under intelligent guidance; otherwise, how explain the millions and trillions of instances in which living things have produced the precise variation that fits them for their surroundings? <sup>30</sup> how explain the development of the amazingly complicated organs of sight and hearing? and (vastly more difficult) how explain the *sense* of sight and the *sense* of hearing? Evolution based on random variations is simply inconceivable. (b) If every living thing is a haphazard product, what of the laws that govern its life, and health, and various activities, the laws which all biologists acknowledge, and which form the very basis of their science? Where did these laws come from? Chance may produce a single effect startling in its regularity, but it cannot produce an unending series of such effects: it cannot generate a law—and a law without a Lawgiver is unthinkable. (c) There is no such thing in nature as “random variations” or “chance occurrences.” What is popularly called “a chance occurrence” is really an unpredictable effect of natural laws—that is to say, unpredictable by us because we do not know enough about the laws at work in the particular case. We cannot foretell the precise shape which water will take, when the vessel containing it is dashed on to the pavement by the wind, but we could do so if we had a full knowledge of nature and the interplay of its laws; so too, if God were to give us a full knowledge of life and the laws by which He directs it, we should be able to predict the so-called random variations of living things.

(4) From the fact that Darwin stood for a slow-pace evolution, moving upwards by minute steps during vast periods of time, it is obvious that millions of years of observation would be necessary to test his theory fully.<sup>31</sup>

(5) Probably, a large number of biologists believe in Natural Selection, but they are divided as to its importance; some would make it the sole cause of evolution; others the chief cause, and others again a subordinate cause. But some or perhaps many of those who might call themselves Darwinians are inclined to doubt the possibility that the whole process of evolution could have been the work of chance.

<sup>30</sup> See Robson and Richards, *op. cit.*, pp. 373–375.

<sup>31</sup> It is said that experiments continued over a period of about 2,500 years might produce a new species of the quick-breeding fruit-fly, the *Drosophila* (Wells, Huxley, and Wells, pp. 207–8). Not a very important result; besides the “species” would probably not be a new species in the strict sense of the word. But if the attempt were made, by some method or other of which no biologist has the slightest conception, to transform an invertebrate into a vertebrate, how many millions of years would be required?

SALTATORY EVOLUTION.—This theory, first outlined by St. George Mivart, supposes that from time to time evolution forsook its slow pace and moved forward in long leaps, thus enabling us to understand how there may have been wide gaps in the line of descent. It may be sound, but so far has not been borne out by evidence. No sudden and great changes in plants or animals have been observed. Small, abrupt changes do occur, but without altering an animal's species; they are due to some kind of re-arrangement in “the factors of heredity.”

*Note on the factors of heredity.*—The discovery of the factors of heredity (the *genes*) is traceable to the experiments of the Augustinian Abbot Mendel, a contemporary of Darwin, who, however, was unaware of his work. These factors, which determine most, if not all, of an animal's characteristics, are found in every one of its cells; they are very small particles of even number, arranged like a string of beads within a ribbon-like body, the *chromosome*. Half of them come from one parent, half from the other; but a factor or a combination of factors, inactive in the parents, may become active in one of their progeny, and cause the sudden appearance of what seems to be a new character (*e.g.*, a different eye-colour, or a different shape of a limb). But the new character does not make a new species; it had been latent in the parents, and may again become latent in a future generation. The *genes* themselves do not change; they are the same for the same species, and are merely reshuffled. This is the conclusion to which observation has led. The sudden, great and fixed changes required for Saltatory Evolution are merely hypothetical.

The Neo-Darwinian supposition that evolution is due to small, random modifications in the *genes*, is just a possibility and nothing more. There is no proof of it. Darwin himself, not knowing anything about the *genes*, thought that every part in the body of the parent influenced the corresponding part in the body of the child; hence, he believed with Lamarck that “acquired characters,” *i.e.*, changes developed in the body of an individual during his life-time, are transmitted. These changes are now commonly regarded as intransmissible, unless accompanied by changes in the factors of heredity.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> For a popular account of Mendelism, any of the following works may be consulted:—J. W. N. Sullivan, *Limitations of Science*, p. 135 f.; same author, *Science, a New Outline*, p. 207 f.; Haslett, *Unsolved Problems of Science*, pp. 197–200; C.T.S. (England), *Twelve Catholic Men of Science*, p. 165 f.—The work of the Abbot Mendel, which escaped the notice of scientists for half-a-century, is of outstanding importance. It was the first strictly scientific contribution to the

**ORTHOGENESIS.**—This name has been given to distinct theories. We take it as referring to the view that there is an inward directive force in plants and animals which determines their development and transformation, whether towards survival or extinction. The theory is reasonable in so far as it rejects the absurdity of "evolution by chance," and it is supported by the fact which Darwinians cannot explain that many animals have gone on developing limbs and organs which have proved their undoing by putting them at the mercy of their enemies.<sup>33</sup>

**EMERGENT EVOLUTION.**—This theory is related to Orthogenesis and Saltatory Evolution. Its chief exponent is Lloyd Morgan. He believes that there have been abrupt changes from the lower levels of life to the higher, effected by the entrance—the *emergence*—of entirely new essences and properties not latent in the pre-existing things. Thus, he would hold that, when matter reached a certain degree of complexity, it suddenly acquired vegetable life; and that similarly vegetable-life became animal-life, and animal-life became rational life. This "emergence," which is ascribed to some influence or emanation from the god of the pantheists, would be interpreted by a Catholic evolutionist as due to the action of God the Creator. The theory has many advocates, particularly among American scientists.<sup>34</sup>

## D

**Evolution not Proved Scientifically but Useful as a Working Hypothesis**—**NO SCIENTIFIC PROOF OF EVOLUTION.** Evolution may be a fact, but there is no scientific proof of it. A scientific proof will be forthcoming, only when some incontestable law of nature has been discovered, which can be tested by experiment, and which will account for all the transformations alleged by evolutionists. We listen to the astronomer when he tells us of the changes

study of heredity. The laws which he established can be proved by experiment like the ordinary laws of physics.

<sup>33</sup> How is it that a development which has become harmful has not been weeded out by Natural Selection? Why cannot animals return to a simpler and safer state? The answer, we are told, is that evolution cannot retrace its steps, that there is a "law of irreversibility." If there is such a law, evolution cannot be entirely the result of chance. But of course the "law" is merely a supposition to escape a difficulty.

<sup>34</sup> See Caullery, *op. cit.*, pp. 431, 432; and J. W. N. Sullivan, *Limitations of Science*, pp. 162-167.

that have taken place in the stellar universe, because he ascribes them to the law of gravitation and other well-known and unquestioned physical laws which, he justifiably asserts, must have been working in the past as they are working to-day. But we do not listen to the evolutionist, because so far he has failed to discover any true and verifiable law of development; had he succeeded, the animated controversy as to the causes of evolution would be at an end.<sup>35</sup>

The differences among biologists as to the cause of evolution become intelligible when we consider the extraordinary complexity of the subject of their investigations: they are working on the fringe of a greater mystery than that which confronts the student of inanimate physics, *viz.*, the mystery of life. Their difficulties are increased by the vagueness that surrounds the term "species" which they are constantly using. Thus, though they are trying to discover "the origin of species," they have no clear answer to the question, "what is a species?"<sup>36</sup>

**EVOLUTION, USEFUL AS A WORKING HYPOTHESIS.**—A working hypothesis is a tentative or provisional supposition. In physical science, a working hypothesis is indispensable for progress: it stimulates inquiry by raising

<sup>35</sup> J. B. S. Haldane says: "I realize only too well how futile must be any attempt to pass judgment of value on evolution until we know more about it," *op. cit.*, p. 169.

<sup>36</sup> See footnote 19, next chapter. Scholastic Philosophy gives a true definition of "species." Biologists have borrowed the term but ignored the definition. They give us what they call a *working definition*, *i.e.*, a definition assumed as correct, though it may not be so. But even their working definition is a cause of confusion; for instance: "species" as applied to animals has a different meaning when applied to plants: see J. B. S. Haldane, *op. cit.*, p. 62.—Another cause of obscurity is the attitude of many English Darwinians who, since they regard rejection of their theory as disloyalty to science, have created an atmosphere in which unbiassed judgment has become difficult. In this they are hardly true to Darwin himself who, as Robson and Richards say, was "qualified and guarded" in his opinions: *op. cit.*, pp. 186, 187; 368, 369.



a number of questions that call for an answer, and it enables the investigator to arrange and classify what would otherwise be a mere assemblage of disjointed observations. Evolution as a working hypothesis has led to the founding of several new sciences—or we should rather call them new lines of investigation,—and has been of great help in pushing out the frontiers of knowledge.<sup>37</sup>

IF EVOLUTION HAS OCCURRED, IT IS THE WORK OF GOD.—As was shown in *Apologetics*, Chapter I, every creature, whether animate or inanimate, is dependent on God at every instant for its existence and its activity. It therefore follows that, if we assume the fact of evolution, we must assert that God is its author. It must have been He who gave the living thing its capacity to vary, and so ordered its surroundings, and all the influences affecting it, as to make it develop precisely as it did.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> For further information on the use of a working hypothesis, the reader is referred to Mellone's *Introductory Text-book of Logic*, Blackwood, p. 338, and to Prof. G. H. Darwin's *Addresses Before the British Association* (1905).

<sup>38</sup> The objections suggested by Wells, Huxley, and Wells, *op. cit.*, p. 244, hardly deserve attention. Summarized, they would run as follows :—" Evolution is due to natural forces, but so too, for instance, is air-pressure. If God is the Author of evolution, you must say that He is also the Author of air-pressure and all the activities of dead matter"—(*Reply* : we do say so).—" If God is the Author of evolution, why has He allowed it to produce bloodthirsty mosquitoes and loathsome diseases ?" (For reply, see *Apologetics*, pp. 38, 39).

P. 243 : " We see no evidence of purpose in the shape of a mountain range. Why should we see it in a living thing ? Both have been produced by the same natural forces"—(*Reply* : The same agent may produce works in which his purpose is evident to us, and other works in which it is obscure).

## CHAPTER V

### THE ORIGIN OF MAN.—THE UNITY OF ORIGIN AND THE ANTIQUITY OF THE HUMAN SPECIES

#### Summary.

- I. The origin of man.
  - A. The teaching of the Church.
  - B. The teaching of Scripture.—Remarks.
  - C. Agnostic evolutionists and the origin of the human soul.
  - D. Theistic evolutionists and the origin of the human body.
  - E. The Church and the evolution of the human body.
- II. The unity of origin and the antiquity of the human species ; the teaching of the Church—What scientists say.

#### I

#### A

**The Teaching of the Church.**—*The Origin of the Human Soul.*—The Church teaches that God directly created the soul of Adam ; that He directly creates every human soul ; and that the human soul is spiritual.<sup>1</sup> The Church has condemned the doctrine of those who maintain that our souls, like our bodies, are derived from our parents,<sup>2</sup> or who say that they existed before they were united to our bodies.<sup>3</sup>

*The Origin of the Human Body.*—The Church, through the Biblical Commission, requires us to believe in the

<sup>1</sup> (a) God creates human souls, not by distinct acts, but by virtue of a general law or decree. When He gave our First Parents the command to "increase and multiply," He thereby announced His decree to create a human soul whenever the physical material to which it can be joined is present.—(b) The doctrine of the spirituality of the human soul is implied in the definition pronounced by the Council of Vienne (A.D. 1311-1312) and confirmed by the Fifth Council of Lateran (A.D. 1512-1517) : see Denz. 480, 738.

<sup>2</sup> Denz. 533.

<sup>3</sup> Denz. 236.

“special creation” of Adam, *i.e.*, she requires us to believe that Adam came into being through no merely natural process but through some special intervention on the part of God. God, as we have seen, created the soul of Adam, as He creates every human soul, immediately out of nothing (*direct creation*), but in forming the body of Adam He made use of material already existing (*indirect creation*). Again, the Church, through the Biblical Commission, requires us to believe that God by a special act formed the body of Eve from the body of Adam.

## B

**The Teaching of Scripture.**—The Church is true to Scripture in claiming a unique character for the creation of Adam and Eve. The narrative of *Genesis* represents God as creating all living things except man through some virtue which He had communicated to matter: “*Let the earth bring forth the green herb . . . and the fruit-tree. . . . Let the waters bring forth the creeping creature having life, and the fowl that may fly over the earth. . . . Let the earth bring forth the living creature in its kind, cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the earth*” (*Gen. i. 11, 20, 24*). But when the sacred writer comes to the creation of man, he is moved by the Holy Spirit to choose a different form of words, “[And God said] ‘*Let us make man to our own image and likeness, and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth*’” (*Gen. i. 26, 27*); and in the further account which he gives in the following chapter, he says: “And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life” (*Gen. ii. 7*). Of the creation of Eve, he says that the Lord God having cast Adam into a deep sleep took from him a rib which He built into a woman (*Gen. ii. 21, 22*).

REMARKS.—(1) All creatures, even the very lowest, are a reflection of their Maker. He has made them existing substances, and therefore in some degree like Himself who is the Divine Substance, perfect and self-existing. But to man He has given a further and higher resemblance to Himself. He has made man like to Himself in intelligence and will, with the power to seek the Truth and to love what is spiritually Good; and, as a fitting complement to those great gifts, He has robed man in the mantle of His own Kingship, making him lord of the world. And this royal dignity is not restricted to the soul of man: his body, because of its service in aiding him to acquire and manifest knowledge and goodness, is destined by God for union with the soul in eternal life. The Scripture narrative brings out all this in sharp relief, and reason approves, for no one can dispute the pre-eminence and uniqueness of man among created things.

(2) The Biblical Commission does not bind as to the literal detail. The description of God as *breathing on* a human image of clay, or as *building up* a woman from a part of Adam’s body, need not be taken according to the letter. It expresses in vivid and popular form the truth that Divine Omnipotence acted in some special way on a portion of matter to make it a fitting receptacle for the soul of Adam, and that it multiplied, in a manner utterly mysterious, some part of Adam’s body to make the body of Eve.<sup>4</sup>

(3) Since Eve was derived from Adam, it follows that he is the fountain-head of the whole human race. He is thus a type, *i.e.*, a prophetic image, of Christ, as Eve is a type of the Church. Our physical life, we trace to

<sup>4</sup> We may illustrate, perhaps obscurely, from the multiplication of a single living cell which ultimately becomes a complete human body. The body of Eve was not built up by the mere addition of extraneous matter; this is clear from the words spoken by Adam when God brought her to him: “This now is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.”

Adam ; our spiritual life, we trace to Christ. Eve was the spouse of Adam : the Church is the spouse of Christ ; through Adam and Eve, we were born into the family of man : through Christ and His Church, we were born into the family of God.<sup>5</sup> Thus the words of *Genesis* have not only a literal but a typical or mystic meaning as well.

## C

**Agnostic Evolutionists and the origin of the Human Soul.**—Agnostic or atheistic evolutionists say that man has derived his principle of life, his soul, from lower animals. This would raise beasts to the level of man or lower man to the level of beasts. In the first alternative, beasts would be like children with brains seriously injured ; they would possess rationality but be unable to manifest it, and it would be the sin of murder to kill them. In the second alternative, man would not have a spiritual soul ; he would not be responsible to God for his actions ; he would live and behave like a savage creature of the jungle, acknowledging no other man's right to life or property ; his one governing principle would be, "might is right and woe to the weak." The absurdity of such repellent views is exposed by their consequences.

In Part I (*Apologetics*), we proved from reason that man has a spiritual soul (Chapter II), and that consequently he is able to understand the great truths and commands of Natural Religion (Chapter III). His spiritual soul sets him apart from the lower animals. The chasm between him and them is as wide as the chasm between truth and falsehood : it cannot be bridged.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The Fathers compare the sleeping Adam to the dead Christ on the Cross, and the origin of Eve to the origin of the Church : as Eve came from the side of Adam, so did the Church come from the side of Christ. They regard the flow of blood and water that gushed forth at the thrust of the soldier's spear as representing the final payment made by Christ for the setting up of His Church, and as expressing the cleansing and nourishing power of her Sacraments.—The decree of the Biblical Commission rules out as untenable the opinion of a few theologians who held that the words of *Genesis* should be interpreted exclusively in the mystic sense.

<sup>6</sup> Human ingenuity has never succeeded, and never will succeed, in getting the cleverest lower animals to grasp general ideas and to hold a rational conversation with us by signs.—We hear now and then of "inventive animals" which are said to deliberate and choose means for the attainment of an end. It is stated, *e.g.*, that an untrained chimpanzee fitted one stick into the hollow end of another in order to get at a banana which was out of reach of either stick by itself

*Note.*—Darwin, who reduced man to the level of beasts, was depressed by the implications of his theory. He said : "With me the horrid doubt always arises, whether the convictions of man's mind which has been developed from the mind of lower animals are of any value or at all trustworthy," *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, Vol. I, p. 316. Therefore, according to him, if we are nothing but improved beasts, we are not sure of any of our convictions, not sure of our responsibility for our actions, not sure even that the theory of evolution is true ! He should have gone a little further and said that an hypothesis issuing in such conclusions is self-destructive and should be abandoned. His words betray a vague suspicion that truth and science are unattainable to our senses, and can be reached only through the exercise of some higher power in us.—Darwinism, in its atheistic form, has had a most pernicious influence on morals, notably in Germany and Russia.

## D

**Theistic Evolutionists and the Origin of the Human Body.**—Theistic evolutionists who hold that the first man was evolved or developed as to his body from some ape-like creature rely chiefly on the arguments which we give below, and to which we add their opponents' replies :

(1) "In man there are several rudimentary, or useless, organs or parts. Their presence can be explained only on the supposition that they have been inherited from lower animals in which they served a useful purpose."

REPLY : "We may not know the use of an organ, but that does not prove that it has no use. Not so many years ago scientists held that the glands known as thymus, thyroid, suprarenal, and

(Wells, Huxley, and Wells, *op. cit.*, p. 126). But this proves nothing. Just as wonderful things are done by very young children while still unable to reason, which shows that no process of reasoning is required ; adults also while fumbling without plan or purpose have often chanced on a useful discovery. The main argument, however, against the "inventive animals" has been already given, *viz.*, that they cannot be taught to speak to us by signs ; they never reach the level of education to which deaf and dumb children can be brought.—Mr. Julian Huxley, one of the authors of the work just referred to, rejects the statement which we find in it, that man is merely a more highly developed beast. In his book, "The Uniqueness of Man" (1941), he is in agreement with us, and urges men "to be proud of their human superiority to the impersonality and irrationality of the rest of the universe."

pineal, were useless.<sup>7</sup> It is therefore reasonable to conclude that, as research proceeds, the list of 'rudimentary' organs may disappear from text-books of physiology. Another possibility must also be noted, *viz.*, that an organ useless to man in present conditions may be shown to have been useful to him in the remote past. Such a discovery however would not point to evolution but merely to an earlier stage of the human species."<sup>8</sup>

(2) "Man closely resembles the ape in the formation of the skeleton, organs, and nervous system. Apes existed prior to man. Therefore man is descended from an ape-like animal."

REPLY: (a) "In spite of the resemblances, which no one questions, the differences are enormous: the ape has a foot which grasps like a hand; its legs are flattened and without calf: it has neither chin nor forehead as these terms are understood by anatomists; its teeth are not arranged in close rows like human teeth; its head is so fitted to its body that, if the animal were forced to stand erect, it would be looking upwards, not forwards; the average weight of its brain compared with that of its body is as 1 to 70, while for man the ratio is 1 to 35. (Theistic evolutionists admit that over and above these and several other physical differences, the ape, like the rest of the brute creation, stands on the vastly lower plane of irrationality. Though it can signify its wants and feelings, and obey simple directions, it has no language, no power of speech; it cannot use signs expressing general or abstract ideas).—(b) Resemblance, though it may suggest descent, does not prove it.

(3) "We admit," evolutionists say, "that the gap between man and the ape is so wide as to exclude the possibility of man's descent from any living species of the ape-tribe. But this does not prevent us from adopting the theory that, from lemur-like animals, the remote ancestors of the apes, there were several offshoots; that one of these offshoots developed into different branches of the human

<sup>7</sup> The thymus gland (situated in the thorax) is a store-house and factory for the white blood-corpuscles so necessary in the war with microbes; the removal of the thyroid gland (in the throat) causes a marked coarseness of the physiognomy, slowness of thought and movement, and several other physical defects; the suprarenal glands (above the kidneys) brace up the heart and blood-vessels, and preserve the tone of the whole muscular system; the pineal gland (in the brain—so-called because like a fir-cone) appears to influence mental activity and bodily development. It has been observed, with a touch of humour, that there is nothing rudimentary in the "rudimentary" organs except our knowledge of them.

<sup>8</sup> See Fr. Wasmann, S.J., *The Problem of Evolution*, p. 66.

race, only one of which branches has survived; and that the other offshoots developed into animals lower than man but higher than the ape. That this theory is not devoid of evidence is clear from the fossils which have been discovered in Java, and in the neighbourhoods of Pekin, Heidelberg, and Piltown (Sussex). The Java fossil belonged to a creature with a brain about 50 per cent. above that of a higher ape, and not quite 50 per cent. below that of the average man; he was therefore probably irrational. The other fossils are human, but their owners had marked ape-like characteristics (*e.g.*, in teeth, jaw, or brow-ridges). Since all these fossils belong to the same period (about 500,000 years ago), it is not suggested that the Java-man, as the creature is called, was the ancestor of the others. Nor, for other reasons, do we claim that any one of these fossils was an ancestor of ours. Still less do we claim that we can trace our descent through the much later fossils of the ape-like Neanderthal men whose race perished off the earth only 20,000 years ago, and was succeeded, after no great interval, by an entirely human and vastly superior race, the Crô-Magnon men, skilful workers and artists, of better physique than ourselves, and possibly also of better brain-power. All that we claim is that, since men with ape-like characteristics existed on the earth in remote ages, the probability that, on the physical side, we have been evolved from a lower animal has been established."

REPLY: (a) Evolutionists have abandoned the idea that man is descended from the great apes, and now hold the theory of his descent and theirs from a remote ancestor, the lemur.<sup>9</sup> But they have not succeeded in discovering any satisfactory evidence. They admit that their quest has been fruitless: "the ancestry of man has so far proved irrecoverable. . . . If anything, we know rather less than we thought we did, say, thirty years ago."<sup>10</sup>

(2) The Neanderthal fossils<sup>11</sup> may be regarded as proving the existence of men, possessing some ape-like characteristics, who lived in a remote age, dating back from about 20,000 years ago. Numerous specimens have been found in different European countries and in Palestine. They show that the Neanderthal man had pronounced brow-ridges, like those of the gorilla, that his skull was low and ape-like, and that he could hardly have walked

<sup>9</sup> Described as a "dog-faced, tree-living, half-monkey, found in Madagascar and S. Africa."

<sup>10</sup> Haslett, *op. cit.*, pp. 148, 149.

<sup>11</sup> So-called because the first was found in the Neanderthal cave in Germany (the valley of the Düssel).

erect;<sup>12</sup> but they show also that he was a skilled worker, that he understood the use of fire, that he buried his dead ceremonially, and had a larger brain than ours.<sup>13</sup> The other fossils, both as to their date and their significance, are of inferior value as evidence,<sup>14</sup> because they are too few and fragmentary, but they may be taken as confirming our general conclusion from those of Neanderthal. That conclusion, however, by no means requires us to admit the probability of evolution. We see no reason why the ape-like features which we ourselves undoubtedly possess may not have been more pronounced in some section of our remote predecessors, adapting them to the particular conditions in which they lived.

**The Alternative to Evolution.**—Evolutionists say: "Admitting that we have not succeeded as yet in explaining away the differences between man and the ape, we maintain that the similarities cannot be accounted for *physically* except on the hypothesis of evolution. We must hold that hypothesis, because there is no rival in the field."—Their opponents can reply: "The *assumption* of evolutionists that the origin of man can, and must, be traced to *physical* causes may have to be rejected as quite unsound. Scientists may in course of time come definitely to the conclusion that no physical cause can be assigned

<sup>12</sup> Yet his canine teeth were less ape-like than ours: Cf. Wells, Huxley, and Wells, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

<sup>13</sup> But it is said that the higher centres of the brain were not so well developed. Hence the inference (possibly not correct) that he was less intelligent than we.

<sup>14</sup> *The dating of the fossils.*—The Java, Pekin, Heidelberg, and Piltdown fossils "are mostly found in gravels that may have been disturbed and re-deposited, and so are exceptionally hard to date": Wells, Huxley, and Wells, *op. cit.*, p. 133. The guesses range from a quarter of a million to a million years ago. *Description*—Java: part of a skull-roof, a thigh-bone, two molar teeth; Pekin: two well preserved skull-roofs and three teeth; Heidelberg: a lower jaw and teeth; Piltdown: an incomplete skull and a lower jaw, supplemented by other remains discovered later some two miles distant. *Interpretation.*—All show a blending of ape-like and human characteristics, and, with the exception of the Java fossil, are supposed to indicate either average, or somewhat under-average, intelligence. The Java fossil, if human, is that of an idiot.—See J. W. N. Sullivan, *Science, a new Outline*, pp. 242 f.; A. W. Haslett, *op. cit.*, pp. 147 f.; Wells, Huxley, and Wells, *op. cit.*, pp. 129 f.

for the origin of man, and that it is a mystery as inscrutable as the origin of matter or the origin of life. But it is, perhaps, not altogether fanciful to conceive that, while recognizing the mystery of man's origin, they may ultimately succeed in demonstrating that the precise formation of man's body—his brain and nervous system, the organs of sense and all the organs, together with the mechanism of bone and muscle—is not merely in exact harmony with his requirements as a rational animal, but is the *only* possible formation it could have received to make it fit in with the laws of nature.<sup>15</sup> Thus, there would be a scientific reason for stating that God made man as he is, as a necessary consequence of the laws which He Himself had imposed on the world."<sup>16</sup>

This reply enables us to meet a similar difficulty, viz., that God showed, as it were, a want of originality as a designer by making the body of the first man like that of the lower animals. But as musical compositions, though independently written, will show a resemblance because of their conformity with the same laws of harmony, so too man and the lower animals must be somewhat alike because of their adaptation to the same system of physical and chemical laws.

It is worth observing that the evolutionists whose words are paraphrased above speak of evolution as an *hypothesis*. That is the designation which the scrupulous investigator employs. It is only those afflicted with an anti-religious animus who represent it as a scientifically established truth.

<sup>15</sup> If it be ever given to us to understand the whole scheme of creation, we may find that all the diversified forms of animate and inanimate matter, and all the laws that govern them, fit together, minister to one another, and constitute a unity as perfect and harmonious as the deductions of mathematical science.—See Mivart, *On Truth*, p. 528.

<sup>16</sup> And the transition to the correct doctrine that "God made the world for man's use and benefit" would be easy. Recently, some non-Catholic evolutionists have shown a tendency towards this doctrine: See, e.g., J. Arthur Thomson, *Biology for Everyman*, Vol. 2, p. 1289, where he says that it looks as if the world had been prepared for man's coming.

## E

**The Attitude of the Church on the Evolution of the Human Body.**—(1) The teaching of the Church on the origin of the human body has been given above, I. A. Following her ordinary practice, she takes the words of Holy Scripture (*Gen. i* and *ii*) in their obvious sense, until the necessity arises of seeking a different interpretation. In the case before us, the necessity would arise, only if it were proved on strict historical evidence that Adam was born of lower animals—which is surely a ludicrous supposition, since there could be no historical evidence without contemporary human witnesses.<sup>17</sup> But though the proof is inconceivable, the *theory* of the evolutionary origin of his body does not, in itself, involve an absolute impossibility, and, so far, has not been publicly and explicitly condemned by the Church.

(2) The Church teaches that God built up the body of Eve from a portion of matter which He took from the body of Adam. So far, no interpretation of this teaching has been offered which would allow us to ascribe the origin of her body to evolution. And if evolution must be excluded in her case, it must be excluded also in the case of Adam.<sup>18</sup>

(3) The Church does not interfere with the investigations of Catholic biologists, who, as loyal sons of hers,

<sup>17</sup> We need not delay over the fantastic idea that God might at some time or other give a private revelation affirming the evolutionary origin of the body of Adam. He gives private revelations to encourage devotion, but devotion would not be encouraged by anything He might tell us about the kind of matter He was pleased to use in the formation of the first human body. (On Private Revelations, see Part I, Chapter on Faith, p. 212).

<sup>18</sup> Rev. E. C. Messenger, Ph.D. (Louvain), in his work, *Evolution and Theology*, suggests that Eve's body may have been produced by some natural process. He says that, in the animal world, life may originate from life without sexual generation. But his argument, though worked out with ingenuity, leaves us in complete darkness. Biologists know nothing of the origin of any highly developed mammal in the way he supposes.

are always ready to accept her guidance and decisions. She allows them to conjecture, observe and experiment as they please. Since all truth is from God, she welcomes every truth they may incidentally discover, even in pursuit of a theory which like that of the evolution of the human body may be a mere will-o'-the-wisp. She blesses their work, and imposes no restriction on them except the restriction imposed by physical science itself, *viz.*, that they are not to confound guesses and probabilities with absolute demonstration.

## II

**The Unity of Origin of the Human Species.**—**THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH.**—The Church teaches that the present human species<sup>19</sup> is descended from Adam and Eve.<sup>20</sup> Such, indeed, is the obvious sense of Sacred Scripture: before the creation of Adam, "there was not a man to till the earth"<sup>21</sup>; Eve is "the mother of all the living"<sup>22</sup>; and St. Paul says that "God, who made the world . . . hath made of one, all mankind, to dwell upon the whole face of the earth."<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the doctrines of Original Sin and the Redemption require us to believe that we are all sprung from Adam: we sinned

<sup>19</sup> (1) A *species* is a group which has something in common with other groups, but is distinguished from them by something which it alone can possess. Mankind is a species. Man is defined as a rational animal. The word "animal" tells us what he has in common with other living creatures; the word "rational" tells us what is exclusively his.

(2) From the definition of species, it is clear that no species shades off into another: *e.g.*, there cannot be such things as "three-quarters-brute, one-quarter-man," "half-brute, half-man," "one-quarter-brute, three-quarters-man," if a creature is a brute, it is not a man; if it is a man, it is not a brute.

(3) Numerous species of lower animals mentioned by zoologists are not true species, because they merge into one another. How many true species there are, fulfilling the requirement stated above, we cannot say. The question has not yet been fully studied, but we can take it as certain that the number is comparatively small.

<sup>20</sup> Bibl. Commission, June 30, 1909. <sup>21</sup> *Gen. ii. 5.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid. iii. 20.* <sup>23</sup> *Acts xvii. 24, 26.*

in Adam, because he was our parent ; and, because we inherited his sin, we had need of Redemption.

WHAT SCIENTISTS SAY.—(1) Scientists have not proved the multiple origin of the existing human species. The vague conjectures in which a few of them indulge need not be considered. (2) The fact that men all over the world, even the least civilized, have the gift of speech and the power to grasp intellectual and moral truths, tends to show that we are all members of the same family, and is, therefore, fully consistent with the doctrine revealed to us that we are descended from a single pair of ancestors. This argument, which is confirmed by world-wide similarities in ancient traditions and folklore, is not affected by differences of race and language. Though men of science know nothing as yet as to how the different races originated, they suggest that a species, possibly through the stimulus of a change of food and climate, may suddenly produce certain definite varieties, differing considerably from one another, yet true to the common type. Difference in language is due chiefly to geographical separation. As the study of philology advances, the kinship between the languages of all men is being gradually established.

**The Antiquity of the Human Species.**—The age of the human species is a question on which the Church has never given any decision, and may be left to the investigation of scientists. It is now generally admitted that the Bible teaches nothing definite on the matter.<sup>24</sup> The years from Adam to Christ fall into two periods, *viz.* (1) from Adam to Moses, and (2) from Moses to Christ. The latter period, as we know from secular as well as sacred sources, can be fixed as 1,500 years in round numbers. The length of the earlier period however remains uncertain. Formerly it was computed as (approximately) 2,500 years, which added to 1,500 would give a total of 4000 B.C., but the computation is open to question. It correctly assumed a period of about 200 years to have elapsed from the death of Joseph, son of Jacob, to the appointment of Moses as leader of the Hebrew race, but was probably astray in allowing no more than 2,300 years for the patriarchs from Adam to Joseph. The Bible (*Gen. v, xi, and later chapters*) appears to give a complete genealogy of the patriarchs with the age of each at the birth of his son, the next in the line : thus, Adam at the age of 130 years begets Seth ; Seth at the age of 235 years begets Enos ; and so on down to

<sup>24</sup> It was probably not the Divine Will to transmit to us any exact information on a matter that has no bearing on faith or morals.

Joseph, son of Jacob. By adding these figures together, a total of 2,300 (approximately) was obtained, but the calculation was based on two questionable assumptions, *viz.* (1) that the ages of the patriarchs are correctly given in existing texts of the Bible, (2) that the line of patriarchs is complete, so that there are no gaps in the list. As to the latter point : although, for instance, Adam seems to be definitely described as the father of Seth, it is possible that he may have been, not the father of Seth, but the father of one from whom Seth after a long lapse of time derived his origin. This possibility is suggested by what we read in other parts of the Old Testament : a man described in one passage as the son of another is referred to later on as merely a remote descendant. This method of description is found in the New Testament also : Our Lord is spoken of as the Son of David, although David preceded Him by a thousand years.

It may, perhaps, be worth noting that the Church has never condemned the opinion, which was proposed centuries ago, that a race of men lived on the earth, but became extinct, before the creation of Adam.

## CHAPTER VI

## OUR FIRST PARENTS: THEIR GIFTS AND THEIR FALL

*Summary.*

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. The gifts bestowed on our First Parents: Sanctifying Grace; Integrity; Immortality; Enlightenment.—The nature of their gifts.—Their happiness.
- III. The Fall of our First Parents.—Original sin: its meaning; the gravity of the sin committed by Adam; its chief consequence; how it is transmitted to us.—The doctrine of Original sin is a mystery.—The miseries of life are due to Original sin; how God enables us to profit by them.
- IV. Objections answered:
  - A. The Scripture narrative of the Fall is not opposed to reason.
  - B. The doctrine of Original sin is not opposed to the Justice of God.
  - C. Nor is it opposed to His Mercy.
  - D. Nor is it inconsistent with scientific discoveries.

## I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church about our First Parents.**

—The Church teaches solemnly<sup>1</sup>: (1) that God gave Adam Sanctifying Grace and immunity from death; (2) that by his sin he lost these precious gifts, became an enemy of God, a slave of the devil, and was changed for the worse in soul and body<sup>2</sup>; and (3) that he transmitted to all his posterity his guilt and its evil consequences.

## II

**The Gifts Bestowed on our First Parents:—Sanctifying Grace; Integrity; Immortality; Enlightenment.—THE GIFT OF SANCTIFYING GRACE.**—This was the most precious of all the gifts bestowed by God on our

<sup>1</sup> T 788, 789.

<sup>2</sup> The words of the Council are: *totum Adam . . . secundum corpus et animam in deterius commutatum fuisse.*

First Parents. It made them “participators in the divine Nature,”<sup>3</sup> so that God Himself was present in their souls as in a temple, and was united to them in most intimate friendship. It was His design that, after a short period of probation, they should pass out of this world, and dwell with Him as a child with its father, beholding Him, not “in a dark manner,” and through a veil, but “face to face,”<sup>4</sup> and thus be made sharers in His own eternal bliss. Such a happiness is, without Sanctifying Grace, beyond the reach of any creature, even the most exalted of the angels. What would have proved a great danger to their Gift of Sanctifying Grace was removed by their Gift of Integrity, of which we speak in the next paragraph.

**THE GIFT OF INTEGRITY**<sup>5</sup> (*Complete control over the lusts of the flesh*).—As in the state of innocence their will was obedient to God, so also their passions were obedient to their will: the appetites of the flesh, which man shares with brutes, were strictly subject to the coercive check of reason. Their Gift of Integrity, since it suppressed all hostility in their lower or animal nature, gave them a fitness for Sanctifying Grace, and was the firm pedestal on which it rested.<sup>6</sup> In the fallen state, the passions are rebellious; they fret under control and attract men powerfully to sin; they are no friends to Sanctifying Grace.

**THE GIFT OF IMMORTALITY** (*Immunity from suffering and death*).—They were free from all such evils, not because their bodies were of themselves insensible to pain or incapable of corruption, but because God either shielded them from harm or provided them with such a

<sup>3</sup> 2 St. Peter i. 4.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Integrity means completeness, the absence of defect. In some authors, “Integrity” is the general name for all the gifts (except Sanctifying Grace).

<sup>6</sup> See the paragraph below on the transmission of Original Sin: “How it is transmitted.”



knowledge of natural causes and with such preventive remedies against sickness and decay that they were able to live in unimpaired vigour, avoiding all that was hurtful or deadly.

**THE GIFT OF ENLIGHTENMENT.**—" (God) filled their heart with wisdom . . . that they might praise the name which He hath sanctified, and glory in His wondrous acts. . . . Moreover, He gave them instruction . . . and He showed them His justice and judgment, and their eye saw the majesty of His glory, and their ears heard His glorious voice, and He said to them : Beware of all iniquity." <sup>7</sup> God gave them the gift of speech ; He gave them such a knowledge of religious and moral truths as was necessary for their own enlightenment and for the instruction of their children ; He gave them such a knowledge of secular science as was needed for their happiness, or as befitted the circumstances of their life and work.<sup>8</sup>

**The Nature of Their Gifts.**—Of the Gifts conferred on our First Parents, Sanctifying Grace was *supernatural*, the others were *preternatural*.

<sup>7</sup> *Ecclus.* xvii.

<sup>8</sup> St. Augustine believed that in power of intellect Adam surpassed his fallen descendants even more than " the bird outstrips the tortoise in speed." St. Thomas says (1) that Adam, unlike us, had no need to draw out any proof of God's existence, but that he perceived that truth the very instant he became aware of the finite things about him and was conscious of his own power of understanding ; (2) that Adam had a full knowledge of all subjects suitable for human instruction (S. T., I, q. 94, aa. 1, 3). Our physical scientists propose theories which have only a short life, but Adam had a grasp of the fundamental principles which they are trying in vain to reach. A few Catholic writers in recent times, influenced by the opinions of palæontologists, have attempted to belittle the intelligence of Adam ; they seem to think that he may not have been much above a simpleton, but their views are untenable. Since Adam must have had a clear knowledge and appreciation of the gift of Sanctifying Grace, and must have been fully aware of his responsibilities as the head of mankind, he cannot have been a dullard. Nor would God have allowed the act of a dullard to involve the whole human race in disaster.

A supernatural gift is one which *no* creature as such can claim as a natural right. The direct vision of God in His unveiled beauty is a supernatural gift ; so too is the Sanctifying Grace which prepares the soul for it. A preternatural gift, on the other hand, is one to which a *particular* creature has no title, but which may be enjoyed as a natural right by some higher creature. Thus, for example, our First Parents' preternatural gift of enlightenment belonged, even in a higher form, and as of natural right, to the lowest of the Angels. The preternatural gifts left our First Parents on the created level ; their supernatural gift raised them up to the divine level, the level of God Himself.

Read again Part I, page 64, "The Nature of the Revelation," and see below, "Grace" (Ch. IX) and "Heaven" (Ch. XVIII).

**Their Happiness.**—St. Augustine says, in words no less true than poetical : " Man lived in Paradise as he pleased, as long as his pleasure lay in what God had ordered. He lived in the enjoyment of God, the source of all the good there is in man. He lived free from want, and might have so lived for ever. Food was at hand, lest he should hunger ; drink, lest he should thirst ; the tree of life, lest old age should undo him. His senses and feelings were undisturbed by bodily decay. He feared no disease from within, no assault from without. In his flesh was perfect health ; in his soul, perfect peace. As Eden was unvisited by excess of heat or cold, so the will of him who dwelt there was untroubled by fear or greed. No sadness was his, no mere empty pleasure : a steady tide of unceasing joy flowed out to him from God whom he loved with the glowing love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith undimmed by falsehood or insincerity. Man and wife were there, one in mutual trust, one in honourable love, one in the guard they kept over mind and body, one in the easy service of obedience to God's command." <sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *The City of God*, Bk. 14, xxvi.

## III

**The Fall of our First Parents.**—We assume that the reader is acquainted with the Bible-text on the temptation and sin of our First Parents. The Church, through the Biblical Commission, lays down certain principles to guide us in its interpretation.<sup>10</sup> She tells us that *we cannot question the literal and historical meaning of the narrative* when it relates facts touching the foundations of religion. Among these facts she enumerates: (1) The unity of the human race; (2) the original happiness of our First Parents in the state of justice (sanctifying grace), their integrity, and immortality; (3) the command issued by God to try their obedience; (4) their temptation by the devil under the form of a serpent;<sup>11</sup> (5) their transgression and its punishment; (6) the promise of a Redeemer.

With regard to the other details the Church has said nothing. Pending explicit direction from her, we are free to follow any interpretation not in conflict with Catholic principles.

**Original Sin: its meaning.**—The gravity of the Sin committed by Adam.—Its chief consequence.—How it is transmitted to us.—THE MEANING OF ORIGINAL SIN.—“Original Sin” may denote either (1) the actual sin committed by our First Parents,<sup>12</sup> or (2) the unhappy state to which that sin reduced them and their posterity.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the principles followed by the Church in interpreting the Biblical account of Creation, Ch. III.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. “Objections answered,” A.

<sup>12</sup> Original sin is usually spoken of as the sin of our First Parents but it is more correctly described as the sin of Adam. It was Adam who, as the head and representative of our race, brought ruin on us by his sin. Had Eve alone sinned, her guilt would not have been transmitted to her children: St. Thomas, S. T., I-II, q. 82, a. 5, c. If Adam had remained faithful, each one of his descendants would have been subjected like himself to some trial of loyalty to God, before being confirmed in the possession of his gifts: *id.*, S. T., I, q. 100, a. 1, c.

**THE GRAVITY OF THE SIN COMMITTED BY ADAM.**—Adam committed a most grievous sin, (1) because God Himself had impressed on him the gravity of the offence by declaring the punishment which it would entail: “The tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat; for in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death;”<sup>13</sup> (2) because the command was easy to obey; (3) because Adam was not the victim of passion or caprice, but acted from cool reason and on full deliberation;<sup>14</sup> (4) because he sought to be like God in the knowledge of good and evil, so that he might be his own director and attain to perfect happiness by his own enlightenment and unaided effort; (5) because he sinned, not as a private individual, but as the representative of the human race. His sin, as St. Thomas points out, was a sin of pride manifesting itself in an act of disobedience.<sup>15</sup>

**ITS CHIEF CONSEQUENCE.**—All the gifts we have mentioned were lost to us by the sin of Adam; of these, sanctifying grace was the chief. Everyone born of him in the ordinary course of nature, the Blessed Virgin alone excepted, is from the first moment of existence *in the state of sin*. Not that the child merely by being born is in the position of one who has committed actual sin, but that it begins its life in a condition brought about by the actual sin of Adam, and, therefore, contrary to the will of God:<sup>16</sup> it was God’s purpose that every member of our race should become His adopted child destined for the happiness of the Beatific Vision; that purpose was frustrated by Adam. But God’s mercy and

<sup>13</sup> *Gen.* ii. 17. The words mean that he was threatened with immediate spiritual death, and with the sentence of physical death.

<sup>14</sup> This shows the calculated malice of his sin.

<sup>15</sup> S. T., II-II, q. 163, a. 2.—The desire to be like God in the manner appointed by Him is the best of all desires, but Adam desired to be like Him in a manner He had forbidden. The same desire to have our own way, to be our own master, is present in every grave sin.

<sup>16</sup> It is in this sense we say that all men are children of wrath.

love intervened, and, through the Redemption, restored to us the unspeakably precious gift of sanctifying grace.

**HOW IT IS TRANSMITTED TO US.**—Original Sin is not transmitted to us through our soul, because our soul is directly created by God. It is transmitted to us through the bodily element, the flesh we have inherited from Adam. The moment he sinned, he lost his dominion over his bodily inclinations; his flesh was now in a state of rebellion against his spirit, craving for its own pleasures and gratifications, and it is that rebellious flesh which we have derived from him. Our soul did not exist before our conception. It sprang into existence only in the precise instant of its union with the contaminated bodily element. The entire living man, soul and body, produced by that union was therefore from the very first in a condition not intended by God. We may compare His action in creating our soul to the night-atmosphere which causes dewdrops to appear on a poisonous surface; the dewdrops from the first moment of their existence are poisoned; but that is not the fault of the atmosphere; it is the fault of him who strewed the poison.<sup>17</sup> God decreed from all eternity to create human souls; He did not revoke that decree, but, foreknowing that the soul of each one of us would be stained by the flesh of Adam, He formed the supplementary decree to repair the evil through the grace of the Redemption. It is better for man, as St. Thomas says,<sup>18</sup> “to be born with an infected nature than to be non-existent, chiefly because, through the grace of Christ, he can escape damnation.”

**The Doctrine of Original Sin is a Mystery.**—If Original Sin meant nothing more than physical sickness or weakness inherited from Adam, the doctrine would not appear to

<sup>17</sup> A slightly different illustration is suggested by St. Thomas, S. T., I-II, q. 83, a. 1, ad. 4.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, ad 5.

be incomprehensible: we could understand how his sudden fall from peace and happiness to direst misery and remorse would have profoundly altered him for the worse, to the detriment of all who were to be descended from him. But the chief feature in Original Sin is not that we are sharers in Adam's physical infirmity but that, without any personal fault of ours, we are sharers in his guilt—“sharers in his guilt,” in the sense that we are born in such a condition that without a help from God to which we have no claim, we are incapable of reaching the supernatural end, the one and only end, appointed by Him for the whole human race. That is the mystery.<sup>19</sup> It is a truth revealed to us by God which we cannot comprehend. It is parallel to the other truth, equally mysterious, that if Adam had not sinned, he would have transmitted to all his posterity the divine gift of Sanctifying Grace.<sup>20</sup>

**The Miseries of Life, due to Original Sin; how God enables us to profit by them.**—It is only by accepting the revealed doctrine of Original Sin that we can understand why the world is marred by so much wickedness and unhappiness. Because of the frustration of God's purpose by the sin of Adam, man is burthened with a corrupt human nature, and is at feud even with the material surroundings in which he lives; within him, he feels the strong pull of evil passions, and, in the course of his life “in this vale of tears,” he has to bear much sorrow and suffering. Such is our unhappy lot.<sup>21</sup> But God enables us to turn

<sup>19</sup> Since the doctrine is a mystery, no illustration suffices. Perhaps some feeble light may be got from St. Thomas (S. T., I-II, q. 81, a. 1 ad. 5) who compares us to children who are tarred with the crimes of a disreputable father. But we know that it is only in the imperfect judgment of men that the father's guilt is extended to his children. In the eyes of God, no guilt descends to us from any ancestor of ours except Adam, the head of our race.

<sup>20</sup> Parallel also to the Mystery of the Redemption, because Christ is the new Adam who has made good the losses we sustained through Original Sin.

<sup>21</sup> St. Thomas, S. T., I-II, q. 85.

to profit these very consequences of original guilt; He gives us grace to battle against temptation, and to win a reward all the greater in proportion to the severity of the struggle; He uses pain and sorrow to open our hearts to tenderness and sympathy, to teach us that this world offers us no lasting happiness, and to make us look with the eye of hope to our true home where He "shall wipe away all tears . . . and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow."<sup>22</sup> Pain is indeed a cruel discipline which He would have spared us, but, under His loving Providence, it is become like the plant whose root is bitter, but whose fruit is sweet.

**Objections answered.**—A. OBJECTION AGAINST THE REASONABLENESS OF THE SCRIPTURE NARRATIVE.—"The Bible account of the Fall opens with the words: 'Now the serpent was more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth which the Lord had made. And he said to the woman, Why hath God commanded you, that you should not eat of every tree of paradise?' Eve replies saying that they are free to eat of all trees but one alone which God had commanded them not to touch lest perhaps they die. 'No, you shall not die the death,' answers the serpent, 'for God doth know in what day soever you shall eat thereof, you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' Eve eats the fruit, and gives to Adam, who also eats. God appears to them. He condemns the serpent, saying: 'Because thou hast done this thing, thou art cursed among all cattle and beasts of the earth; upon thy breast shalt thou go, and earth shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.'

"On all this it may be remarked:—(1) animals do not speak except in fables and folklore; (2) the serpent is not the subtlest of animals; (3) the serpent, as the very name (*serpere*, to creep) indicates, was a creeping animal before the Fall quite as much as after; (4) if the serpent that tempted Eve were not a real serpent but an evil spirit disguised as a serpent, the whole serpent-tribe should not have been punished and pronounced accursed among all cattle and beasts."

[NOTE.—We shall treat this objection at considerable length in order to give an idea of how other seemingly serious objections against the teaching of the Scripture are examined and refuted.

<sup>22</sup> *Apoc.* xxi. 4.

A Catholic should always approach objections with a mind docile to the Church and filled with the conviction that she possesses the truth, and that he must accept her decision. Even if, after study, he is not clear on the solution of certain difficulties, he knows that there *is* a solution.]

**REPLY.**—We might dismiss the objection by simply accepting all the comments (1), (2), (3), and (4), but we shall give a few words to each—(1) The talking animals of folklore are merely a literary device that gives pleasure by its quaintness but deceives no one. Even primitive peoples are aware that animals have not, and cannot have, the gift of rational speech. They know that a parrot can repeat words, but they also know that it does not understand what it says, and cannot carry on a conversation. When therefore the inspired word of God represents an animal as speaking, we at once perceive that the literal interpretation must be excluded. (2) "Subtlest" means "craftiest." In popular speech, the serpent is justly described as "the subtlest of all animals." His cunning has passed into proverb, as witness the words of our Lord who speaks of the simplicity of the dove and the craft of the serpent. (3) "The serpent was a creeping animal before the Fall quite as much as after." Moses, the inspired writer of *Genesis*, says that, on the Fifth day, *i.e.*, before the creation of man, "God made . . . *everything* that creepeth on the earth" (*Gen.* i. 25); on that day, therefore, God made the reptiles from which all those in the world at the time of Moses were descended. Hence it follows that the serpent which was condemned to crawl cannot have been of the animal kind; the word must refer to a being of a different order, and the "crawling" to a spiritual, not a physical, humiliation. (4) God's sentence was not directed against a mere animal but against a wicked spirit. He did not curse or punish the serpent-tribe; this is clear from what we read elsewhere in the Scriptures: *Psalms* 148, *e.g.*, calls on all creatures, living and lifeless, including "beasts and cattle, *serpents* and feathered fowls" (v. 10), to chant the praise of their Creator.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> The call of the Psalmist to irrational and to inanimate creatures to sing the divine praises is but an expressive way of declaring that these things by the very nature God has given them are witnesses in the sight of men and angels to His power and wisdom. It is true that man looks on certain animals as his enemies, and turns with repugnance from certain material things as hateful and disgusting; but all these are God's creatures, good in themselves and beloved of Him. So far as they inspire fear or loathing, they serve as a means in the hands of God to chastise us for our sins. But for the Fall, man would be

But the objector will urge that "it is most improbable that the evil spirit would have taken the form of a serpent rather than that of a man."

To this we reply as follows:

(a) Where is the improbability? The form of a serpent is no more alien to a spirit than the form of a man. (b) God in permitting Satan to tempt Eve did not allow him to overpower her imagination by an appearance of beauty or magnificence. The humble shape which he was compelled to assume left her mind perfectly open to the wholesome thought that she was in the presence of one who was no worthy rival of God but a mere creature like herself—one therefore who was guilty of great wickedness in disputing the Divine command and urging its violation. Besides, God, foreknowing the fall of our First Parents, desired that they and their descendants should hold before their mind the picture of the Evil One as a treacherous and dangerous reptile.<sup>24</sup> (c) The doctrine that Satan "under the form of a serpent" tempted Eve has undoubtedly been revealed by God: no reasonable interpretation of the passage in *Genesis* could lead to any other conclusion; besides, it is expressly repeated by St. Paul ("But I fear lest as the serpent seduced Eve by his subtlety," 2 *Cor.* xi. 3);<sup>25</sup> but the Church has not, so far, proposed it to us on her infallible authority as an article of faith; nevertheless she strictly requires us to accept it under obedience as her official teaching. As Catholics we are not free to question it.

Outside the few points decided by the Church, she allows her scholars to propose any interpretation of the narrative of the Fall which accords with reason and tradition, and shows reverence for the word of God. One of these interpretations is as follows:

"The most important words in the passage are those referring to Our Lady and her future victory over Satan through her Divine Son: 'I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.' The obviously spiritual meaning of these words points the way to a spiritual interpretation of the complete passage. The Scripture says: 'Now the serpent was

at peace with the world; serpents and other animals would still be noxious, but he would have the power of easily avoiding them or of holding them in subjection.

<sup>24</sup> Contrast this picture with another which God has given us: at the Baptism of His Son in the Jordan, the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove, a radiant image symbolizing love and innocence and peace.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Apos.* xii. 9; xx. 2.

more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth which the Lord had made. And he said to the woman: Why had God commanded you that you should not eat of every tree of Paradise? The serpent here spoken of, as the subsequent narrative shows, is not a mere brute beast, but a malignant being endowed with reason who knows how to entice Eve to grasp at what seems to be a higher spiritual good; he is none other than Satan himself, correctly described as being 'more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth.' The sentence which God pronounces on him draws its terms from animal life but is purely spiritual in meaning; it is, not a pronouncement against the serpent-tribe: 'And the Lord God said to the serpent: Because thou hast done this thing, thou art cursed among the cattle and beasts of the earth; upon thy breast shall thou go, and earth shall thou eat all the days of thy life. I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.' That is, 'Because thou hast done this thing, thou art made more vile than the beasts of the earth; thou shalt grovel in humiliation, and thou shalt eat the dust of iniquity and defilement. I will put hatred and hostility between thee and the woman, and between thy followers and hers; thou shalt lie in wait for her, seeking to slay her with the venom of thy wickedness, but she shall crush thy head.' Satan therefore shall be punished<sup>26</sup> in the spiritual order after the fashion of the noxious reptile whose shape he had assumed;<sup>27</sup> his power shall be broken by the Redeemer, the Son of God, born of Mary."<sup>28</sup>

B. OBJECTIONS CONTESTING THE JUSTICE OF GOD.—1. "The punishment which God inflicted for eating a bit of fruit was excessive."

<sup>26</sup> Satan's guilt has remained unchanged since his fall. His temptation of Eve was not a new sin, but a new manifestation of his hatred of God; his punishment for it did not increase his suffering, but showed in a new way God's anger towards him.

<sup>27</sup> It may be well to point out to those who make such a difficulty about "the serpentine form" that the description can be justified without supposing a complete resemblance.

<sup>28</sup> Those who urge scriptural objections such as the foregoing fail for the following reasons:—(1) They depend on the English translation, interpreting it as though it were the original, and making no allowance for the great difference between ancient and modern turns of speech; (2) they work from isolated passages without regard to what is stated elsewhere in the Bible; (3) they ignore the ancient commentaries of the Fathers of the Church, and the writings of those modern Catholic scholars who have made a profound study of the sacred text.

REPLY : (a) An act in itself trivial may change its character because of the motive that inspires it. To hoist a bit of coloured cloth over your house is in itself a very small matter, just a sign that you favour that particular kind of decoration, but if the colours happen to be those of a country with which your people are at war, your act will be regarded as the outward expression of grave disloyalty, and, in short order, you will find yourself facing a firing squad. Similarly, to eat a bit of fruit is in itself of no account, but the act of our First Parents in eating the fruit, clearly and most emphatically forbidden by God under a dire threat, was the outward expression of grave insubordination. (b) We should note that the Church has not so far decided that the expressions, "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" and "the fruit thereof" are to be literally interpreted: see above, "The Fall of our First Parents."

2. "God has dealt *unjustly* with the human race. He has punished innocent children for the sin of their parents."

REPLY : Let us employ an illustration:—A king bestows his favour on two of his subjects, man and wife, both of lowly station. On condition of fidelity to him, he promises to adopt them as his heirs, to raise them and their children to royal rank (*Sanctifying grace*); he gives them house and lands, and provides them with every comfort (*the other gifts*). They prove ungrateful and traitorous. The king withdraws his promise of adoption, deprives them of their riches, and reduces them to the level at which he had found them. He has deprived them and their descendants of nothing but privileges to which they never had any claim except the claim which would have arisen from the faithful observance of the condition he had imposed.<sup>29</sup>

C. OBJECTIONS CONTESTING THE MERCY OF GOD.—1. "The doctrine of Original Sin implies that man received immunity from pain as a free gift which God might have withheld. It follows, therefore, that God might have created man subject

<sup>29</sup> (a) The parable must not mislead us into supposing that Adam and Eve like the king's subjects lived for some time without any special privileges; it is the teaching of theologians that they enjoyed, from the beginning, sanctifying grace and the other gifts, and, therefore, owed all the more gratitude to God.—(b) Another and perhaps more striking illustration of how children may suffer for their parents' deeds is afforded by the sequel to any great war. Vast indemnities are imposed on the defeated nations. This burthen cannot be fully discharged by a single generation, but must be passed on to generations as yet unborn. Thus, it is taken for granted that posterity is liable for its ancestors' debts.

to pain, a conclusion which cannot be reconciled with the Divine Mercy."

REPLY : The argument against the Divine Mercy might be valid, if, in the case supposed, suffering were useless and brought no reward. But suffering would not have been useless: as in the present world, it would have been a great civilizing influence, a teacher of kindness and virtue. Nor would it have failed of its reward: God even though He had destined man for nothing higher than natural happiness after death, would have given him, either in this life or the next, an ample recompense for every sorrow.

2. "Admitting that, as regards man, the existence of pain is satisfactorily explained, we are still confronted with the difficulty of pain in the lower creation. Why does a good God make animals suffer?"—NOTE: This particular difficulty belongs to Chapter I of this text and to *Apologetics*, Chapter I, § 2, "The nature of God as known from reason," but some further light is thrown on it by the doctrine of Original Sin.

REPLY : We should note the following points, not as removing the difficulty, but as lessening its force: (a) The lower animals are not at all so sensitive to pain as we; <sup>30</sup> hence, we greatly exaggerate their sufferings by ascribing to them feelings such as ours.—(b) While their nervous system has given them a capacity

<sup>30</sup> For instance, a crab will continue to eat, and apparently relish, a smaller crab, while being itself slowly devoured by a larger one; if a wasp while drinking honey be snipped in two, it will continue to drink as though nothing had happened; a fish just escaped from the hook will often return to the bait as greedily as ever; an insect will allow itself to be burned limb for limb in a candle flame: for other instances see *Transactions of Victoria Institute*, vol. xxv, p. 257, quoted by Turton, *The Truth of Christianity*, p. 86.—The writhings of animals are sometimes merely muscular, and are no certain indication of suffering. Both parts of a severed worm will wriggle equally, though surely the hinder part cannot have any sensation.—Civilized man is far more sensitive to pain than the savage, and, as the difference between them is only one of degree, whereas that which exists between the savage and the lower animals is one of kind, it may be reasonably argued that the sufferings of the latter are not very considerable.—The keenness of human pain is due in great part to rationality. The brute suffers in the passing instant; it does not link up what is gone with what is to come, and is not tortured by the thought that it is a cause of grief to others. Man, on the other hand, suffers intensely from the memory of what is past, from the anticipation of what is before him, from the very longing for the end of his misery, from self-pity, and from the reflection of his sorrow in the faces of those about him, or indeed, it may be, from their indifference or hostility.

for pain, it has also given them a capacity for pleasure, and it cannot be questioned that, in the animal-world as a whole, the ordinary state is one of happiness, and not of misery; if, then, it be said that they suffer unmerited pain, it can also be said that they enjoy, and in a much fuller degree, unmerited happiness.—(c) Pain is useful to animals, as a warning of disease and danger; in the present order of the world, it is in fact the shield of life.—These general considerations, however, do not dispose of the fact that, in the lower creation, there are instances of positive suffering for which we can see no explanation. But, firmly believing in the goodness of God, we are convinced that He never subjects to needless pain the lowliest and least sensitive of living things: if we could read His mind aright, we should see that even the gnat with a broken wing is a necessary and indispensable part of the whole plan and working of the world. Seemingly trivial things do in our own experience produce vast effects: the pressure exerted by the finger of a little child may seem of small account, yet when applied to an electric button it is sufficient to release all the powers of mischief in a heavy gun and lay the great buildings of a city in ruins. Somewhat in this way, we conceive the least things in the world to be inextricably bound up with the greatest.<sup>31</sup> All are knit together, all serve one another, with a perfection beyond our understanding. Pain and all else (except sin) that we designate evils are not really evils, though they seem so to us. We, with our little minds, discern but dimly the design of God in the happenings of the world. We see, as it were, the wrong side of a piece of tapestry. Though we may succeed in making out the main lines of the pattern, we are tempted to regard as ugly and meaningless the knots and threads, the bare patches and misshapen fragments of colour. But what a change when we turn to the other side! The very things that appeared to mar the harmony of the whole are now found to be a necessary part of it. God will show us some day, if we deserve it, the place in His design, and the high and far-reaching purpose, of the things great and small that silly men brand as imperfections and failures in His work.

Besides the considerations set forth above, we have to remember that the curse of Original Sin extends to the earth itself and to poor, dumb creatures. Had man not fallen, he could have gathered the fruits of the soil without painful exertion, and he would have been spared the sight of all the cruelty and suffering he now witnesses, with such repugnance, in the animal-world;

<sup>31</sup> Many men can tell how the whole course of their lives was determined by apparent trifles. We know how the loss of the horse-shoe-nail led to the loss of the steed, its rider, and a kingdom.

the easy response of the earth to his efforts, and the absence of all disturbing or distressing features in his surroundings would have enforced the single lesson of God's kindness to him; but, by his sin, he provoked God's anger. God, in His justice, condemned man to earn his bread by exhausting labour; God, in His wisdom and omnipotence, so changed the world that man, while still beholding therein the marvels of his Creator's goodness and bounty, should also be confronted with the evidence of his sin and be reminded of the need of repentance. It is not God, therefore, but man himself who is answerable for the sufferings of brute creation.

D. OBJECTIONS FROM SCIENCE. — *Palæontology*.<sup>32</sup>—“From palæontology we learn that earliest man was of low brain-capacity; he was therefore of low intelligence, and could not have possessed those wonderful gifts which Catholics claim for him.”

REPLY: (a) It is incorrectly assumed that the head of our race must necessarily, according to Catholic Doctrine, have been exactly like one of those whom palæontologists describe as the earliest men. As noted already, the Church has not condemned the opinion that a race of men may have existed, and have disappeared off the face of the earth, before the creation of Adam. (b) But let us set up the fantastic hypothesis that some day palæontologists may be able to identify an ancient skull of low brain-capacity as the skull of the first man. What would follow from that identification? Merely this, that Adam, when stripped down to his natural powers, as he was after the Fall, was of low intelligence, of “dark understanding” and weak memory. Before the Fall, his small brain—as, for the moment, we suppose it to have been—would not have prevented an Omnipotent God from bestowing on him all the gifts we ascribe to him. The only obstacle to God's action would have been irrationality, and that is excluded.

*Ethnology*.—1. “Ethnologists can point to the tools used by a race of men as an index to their culture. Earliest man possessed but the rudest tools. Therefore, we may infer that Adam must have been like the lowest kind of savage of the present day.”

REPLY.—(a) Since Scripture scholars are uncertain as to the precise location of Eden, we may dismiss the idea that any vestiges of Adam's life before or after the Fall will ever be dis-

<sup>32</sup> For definition of palæontology, see Chapter IV, footnote 11.

covered. (b) Suppose Adam to have fashioned the first rude implements. As their inventor, he could not be compared to the savage of to-day who has inherited them from his ancestors. The first steps in the mechanical arts were the most difficult. Probably as much intelligence was required for the making of the first implement of wood or bone or stone as for the invention of the steam-engine. (c) Rude implements of themselves are never a proof of feebleness of mind. If one of our learned ethnologists who has had no training in camp-life, but who knows well enough what good tools ought to be, were cast ashore on a desert-island with nothing to help him, but his bare hands, his efforts at tool-making would be very crude, but would not entitle us to question his intellectual ability. But Adam would have had to set to work without knowing anything of the qualities of a good tool; hence, if we were shown a set of clumsy implements as the alleged specimens of his handicraft, we should be still less justified in denying his high spiritual and mental endowments.

2. "Do not ethnologists tell us that religion began as some kind of gross superstition, a vague belief in good and bad influences, developing later into the worship of several independent spirits, and much later into the worship of a supreme divinity? If this view is correct, Adam must have known nothing of the one Supreme God."

REPLY.—(a) The notion that belief in the one Supreme God is a late development belongs to out-of-date ethnology; it was assumed as self-evident by Frazer and others, because, being obsessed by the theory of materialist evolution, they thought that man's religion, like man himself, must have evolved from gross beginnings. Their opinion would not deserve notice but for the fact that it still survives in English popular works written by ill-informed atheists. (b) The modern school of ethnology, employing scientific methods which so far have been successfully defended, has arrived at the conclusion (1) that in the earliest form of religion known to us by ordinary human means, the one true God was worshipped by prayer and sacrifice; that the law of unbreakable monogamy<sup>33</sup> was acknowledged together with the other great natural laws that govern the relations of parents and children and of all men to one another; (2) that corruptions, such as belief in magic, ghost-worship and polytheism, are all

<sup>33</sup> The natural law prescribing that a man should have only one wife, and a woman only one husband, and that their marriage should last until the death of either partner.

of later date<sup>34</sup>. (c) Even if the conclusions of modern ethnology were some day to be questioned or disproved, it is inconceivable that the spade will ever overturn anything to prove that Adam was not a worshipper of the true God: see Reply (a) to preceding objection.

**Note.**—The very civilization of which we boast to-day, our success in literature, science, the fine and the useful arts, springs in its origin from no other cause than the effort to recover the happiness which the race has lost. Vain effort, and yet not unworthy of praise: vain, because, in this life, on every joy there falls the shadow of sorrow and death; praiseworthy, because it is a noble thing to struggle against the material misery to which we have been condemned, to exercise and develop our faculties to the best of our endeavour, and to enlarge the heritage received from our forbears. But there is a higher task than this, and in its performance is found the only approach to happiness within our power: it is the duty of struggling against the spiritual misery arising from temptation and sin, the duty of bringing our soul into loving subjection to the Divine Will. *In that subjection, true civilization, true refinement consists: it makes us be what we should be, just and kind to our fellow-man, and faithful servants of God.*

<sup>34</sup> Ethnology, as the term is now generally understood, treats of the characteristics of those races of men which have no written records of their past. The modern school of ethnology studies the culture of each of these races (its way of procuring food, its arts and implements, its language and traditions, its religion and mental outlook); it shows how the different cultures may be divided into a few main groups; and, arguing chiefly from the method of procuring food, gives good reasons for its assertion that the group representing the simplest way of living has the earliest culture.—It is precisely in this group, the most conservative of all the groups, that we find a pure form of religion.—See the pamphlets, *The religion of earliest man*, and *The religion of later primitive peoples*, both by Rev. W. Schmidt, C.T.S., London; *Primitive Religion*, by Rev. M. Hannan, S.J. (in *Religion and Science*, pp. 91 f., Burns, Oates and Washbourne).



## CHAPTER VII

## THE ANGELS

## Summary.

- I. The teaching of the Church : the nature of angels ; their trial ; good and wicked angels.
- II. The doctrine of the Church as to the existence and number of the angels, and their relations with mankind, is in consonance with reason.
- III. Spiritualism : Does it rest on a basis of fact ? What is the value of spiritualistic communications ? The legislation of the Church.

## I

**The Teaching of the Church about the Angels.**—The Church teaches as of Faith (1) that angels are intellectual beings created by God, and, in their nature, of higher dignity than men,<sup>1</sup> (2) that some of the angels sinned,<sup>2</sup> and (3) that the good angels are sent by God to aid man.<sup>3</sup>

The further knowledge of the angels, which we gain from Holy Scripture, the Traditions of the Church, and from the works of learned and saintly writers, may be summarized as follows :

*The angels and their trial.*—(a) They are pure spirits ; (b) they were endowed with sanctifying grace to enable them to merit, after a period of probation, the happiness of the vision of God ; (c) those who failed in the test were condemned to eternal punishment : “ God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them unto torments,”<sup>4</sup> “ And there was a great battle in heaven : Michael<sup>5</sup> and his angels fought with the dragon, and the

<sup>1</sup> iv. L 428 ; V 1783.      <sup>2</sup> iv. L 428.

<sup>3</sup> A doctrine of Faith contained in the universal and ordinary teaching of the Church.

<sup>4</sup> 2 St. Peter ii. 4.

<sup>5</sup> The name of the Archangel Michael means in Hebrew, “ Who is like unto God ? ” It was the war-cry of the good angels, and indicates that their opponents had committed some sin of pride, the sin of striving to be their own masters, and to be happy without God’s help.

dragon<sup>6</sup> fought and his angels, and they prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven.”<sup>7</sup> *The good angels* : (d) the number of angels who remained faithful was very large : Christ Himself spoke of “ legions of angels,”<sup>8</sup> and the prophet Daniel says of God that “ thousands of thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before Him ; ”<sup>9</sup> (e) God employs the assistance of the good angels in the government of the world and the protection of mankind.<sup>10</sup> *The Guardian Angels* : (f) each man is accompanied throughout his life by an Angel Guardian<sup>11</sup> who shields

<sup>6</sup> The leader of the rebellious angels is variously named Satan (Hebrew, “ enemy ”), the Devil (Greek, “ calumniator ”), Beelzebub (a Philistine idol—the word means, “ averter of flies ”), or Lucifer (Latin, “ the light-bringer ”) from a passage in Isaiah (xiv. 12–14) which, however, refers primarily to King Nabuchodonosor : “ How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer . . . thou saidst in thy heart . . . I will be like the most High.”

<sup>7</sup> *Apoc.* xii. 7, 8. This passage must not be taken in a strictly literal sense. It represents symbolically the contest between obedience and disobedience to God in the angelic world.

<sup>8</sup> St. Matt. xxvi. 53.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel vii. 10. Since Scripture in speaking of the angels uses nine different names, theologians conclude that corresponding to these different Scriptural names there are nine angelic choirs, *viz.* :—Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones ; Dominations, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels and Angels.

<sup>10</sup> “ He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone,” *Ps.* xc. 11, 12. It was an angel who brought word to Mary that she was to be the Mother of the Redeemer : “ And the Angel being come in, said unto her (Mary) : Hail full of grace, . . . Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son ; and thou shalt call His name Jesus ” (St. Luke i. 28, 31).

It was an angel who brought word to the shepherds that the Divine Child was born : “ And the angel said to them (the shepherds) : . . . this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord ” (St. Luke ii. 10, 11).

The Church, to express her gratitude for the protection afforded by the angels, and to implore their aid, has founded feasts in their honour. The Feast of St. Michael and all the Angels was celebrated as early as the sixth century. A special feast in honour of St. Michael is of much higher antiquity.

<sup>11</sup> Christ said of the little children that “ their angels in heaven always see the face of My Father,” (St. Matt. xviii. 10).

him from the assaults of demons and even from temporal evils, except in so far as they may be designed in the divine ordinance for his spiritual advancement, who suggests good thoughts to him, offers his prayers and good works to God, adding to them his own most powerful intercession,<sup>12</sup> gives him special aid in the last hour of life, and leads his soul after death to the throne of the Most High, or to the chastening fires of Purgatory.<sup>13</sup> *The fallen angels* : (g) while the good angels seek to draw man to God, the wicked angels or demons are ever plotting his spiritual ruin<sup>14</sup> by endeavouring to fill his mind with evil thoughts, to fix his attention on temporal success, to turn him away from prayer. God, to try those whom He loves, may suffer evil spirits to afflict them,<sup>15</sup> and, as a punishment for heinous sin, He may permit an evil spirit to take up its abode in the body of the sinner (*demoniacal possession*), to torture him, and subject him to very grievous temptation.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Read the book of Tobias where the help given to us through the ministry of angels is graphically described.—The Catholic doctrine on the subject is beautifully and accurately put in Newman's *Dream of Gerontius*.

<sup>13</sup> That the Angel Guardian is not alone in discharging this last office may be inferred from St. Luke xvi. 22, where Christ says that the soul of Lazarus "was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom," and from the Offertory in the Mass for the Dead where we pray that "St. Michael, the standard-bearer, may bring the souls of the departed into holy light."—It is generally held that angels guardian are given to societies as well as to individuals, and that St. Michael is the Angel Guardian of the entire Church; also, that every religious order within her fold, and every nation and kingdom, enjoys the protection of a special Angel Guardian.

<sup>14</sup> The Scriptures say explicitly that the treachery of Judas and the lie of Ananias were suggested by the devil (St. John xiii. 2; *Acts* v. 3). St. Peter speaks of him as a roaring lion going about "seeking whom he may devour" (1 St. Peter v. 8). He tempted even Christ himself (St. Matt. iv. 1); and, under the form of a serpent, by seducing Eve he brought about the fall of our First Parents (*Gen.* ii).

<sup>15</sup> Read the history of Job.

<sup>16</sup> The reality of diabolical possession is clearly set forth in Sacred Scripture: Our Lord casts out devils; He questions them; He forbids them to speak; He gives His Apostles power over them (St. Matt. xi. 18; xii. 22 f.; St. Mark v. 2 f.; St. Luke viii. 27 f.).—The power

**The Power of the Evil Spirit.**—The modern world, because to a great extent it ignores or belittles the dread power and activity of the devil, greatly favours the machinations of that cruel and malignant foe. He and his fellow-angels, though blasted by the anger of God, and flung down from their supernatural estate, still retain the mighty faculties which they received at their creation, and which place them vastly above us in knowledge and power, making them most dangerous adversaries. How formidable is their hostility we learn from the Holy Ghost Himself, who warns us that "our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the spirits of wickedness,"<sup>17</sup> and that "the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour."<sup>18</sup>

But the Holy Ghost shows us how we may defend ourselves; He calls on us to use the means that God has given us: "Put ye on the armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil."<sup>19</sup> And what is this armour of which He speaks? It is the grace placed within our grasp by the sufferings of Christ on the Cross—the grace of Faith—the grace we obtain through prayer and the Sacraments,<sup>20</sup> and through the Sacramentals instituted by the Church.<sup>21</sup>

which Christ gave to His Apostles He has given to His Church: see the instructions, etc., in the *Roman Ritual* for the exorcism of evil spirits.—In our own day, instances of possession have been proved by abundant evidence. We should note, however, that Satan cannot, even in the case of possession, *compel* any one to commit sin; he may force his victim to do many things that are in themselves sinful, but cannot force him to approve of them. God has placed man's faculty of free-will absolutely beyond the reach of evil spirits. If we misuse it, the fault is ours alone.

<sup>17</sup> *Eph.* vi. 12.

<sup>18</sup> 1 St. Peter, I, v. 8.

<sup>19</sup> *Eph.* vi. 11.

<sup>20</sup> In particular through the Blessed Eucharist. St. John Chrysostom says that the devils shrink in terror from the worthy communicant (*Hom. ad Antioch.*, 61).

<sup>21</sup> See Sacramentals (last section of Chapter, "The Sacraments in General").

Satan and his minions, for all their power, are but creatures of God, and can act only as God permits. God checks their craft and ever-watchful hatred through the armour which, for the sake of His Divine Son, He has given us. Those who refuse that armour are defenceless against the assaults of the legions of Hell.

## II

**The Catholic Doctrine about Angels is in Consonance with Reason.—**  
**THE EXISTENCE OF ANGELS.**—(1) *If there were no angels, most of God's works would be known to Himself alone.*—Man is the only creature in the visible world capable of knowing and praising God in His works. But man's knowledge of nature is infinitesimal; his little mind works from the meagre data supplied by the senses; he sees, as it were, but the glisten of a dew-drop, while the great ocean of truth is hidden from his gaze. It, therefore, appears natural to suppose the existence of higher beings who survey the whole scheme of creation, who see, with a superhuman intelligence, the wisdom and goodness of God mirrored everywhere, and make of every marvel they behold a theme of divine praise. Thus, the doctrine of the existence of angels gives the material world with all its vastness a new significance, for we conceive it as a book wherein the angels read of their Creator. (2) *If there were no angels, the scale of creation would seem incomplete.*—Grouping minerals, plants, and lower animals together under the heading of things "purely material," we set them down as forming the first degree of creation; next above them we place the "material-spiritual" creature, *viz.*, man; but, to complete the scale or gradation, our reason expects to find a third order of creatures, *viz.*, those which are "purely spiritual."<sup>22</sup>

**THE GREAT NUMBER OF ANGELS:** *suggested by the great number of things in the material world.*—When we consider the infinite variety of forms and the orderly arrangement that God has given to matter, we are led on to the thought, that He who was so prodigal in the creation of inert and unintelligent things must have also created a higher world in which as great a diversity of being is found, and as wonderful an order prevails, a world consisting of a vast number of pure spirits, endowed each, in its own way, and in its own degree, with a capacity to know, serve, and love Him, a world bearing far more clearly than ours the imprint of the Divine Intelligence.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. St. Thomas, S. T., I, q. 50, a. 1; *Sum. Cont. Gent.* 2, 91.

**THE RELATIONS OF THE ANGELS WITH MANKIND:** *suggested by their present state.*—It is reasonable to hold that the good angels sympathize with man in his struggle against sin, for they themselves have felt the stress of temptation; and that they are eager to aid him, because they desire to promote the external glory of God, and to see His Will done on earth as it is in heaven. It is equally reasonable to hold that, while the good angels are all love and pity for man, the demons are all envy and hatred, grudging him the happiness which they have lost, laying every snare for his feet, and seeking to separate him for ever from God.

## III

**Spiritualism.**<sup>23</sup>—Spiritualism is the name given to the belief and practices of those who profess to hold communication with spirits or with the souls of the dead. The communication, it is said, usually takes place through a person called a medium; but the spirits themselves, it is claimed, sometimes appear under a corporal form, or manifest their presence by sounds, and in various other ways. In its modern form, Spiritualism takes its beginning from the early decades of the last century, and is now much in vogue in England and other Protestant or infidel countries. It represents the ancient effort of man to seek for knowledge at forbidden sources.<sup>24</sup>

**DOES SPIRITUALISM REST ON A BASIS OF FACT?**—Fraud has been proved in so many cases, that one might be tempted to dismiss the entire subject as unworthy of attention. It must, however, be admitted that in some cases the evidence points very strongly to the interference of a hidden intellectual being.

<sup>23</sup> Of the two words "spiritualism" and "spiritism," the latter is the more correct, but the former may be said to have the sanction of wider usage.

<sup>24</sup> See the article, *Demonology*, in the *Cath. Encyc.*, by the Rev. W. H. Kent, O.S.C., and note in particular the concluding paragraph.—*Hypnotism* (which is sometimes erroneously confounded with spiritualism) is a form of nervous sleep, artificially induced, in which the powers of understanding and will are so much in abeyance that the subject easily submits to the suggestions of the hypnotizer. Medical authorities differ very much on its value as a curative agency. In the hands of an unscrupulous practitioner, it may, as is only too evident, be applied to immoral purposes. But the fundamental objection to its use is the fact that it involves the surrender of one's will-power to another. Hence, although the Church has not condemned it, she warns us of its dangers (July 26, 1899). Hypnotism should only be used (1) when all other remedies fail, (2) when the hypnotizer is a qualified doctor of good reputation, (3) when the subject gives full consent. See also the article, *Hypnotism*, in the *Cath. Encyc.*

Instances of this kind have been vouched for by witnesses whose word we cannot reject, unless we are prepared to deny the value of all human testimony. Among them are men of high standing in physical science,<sup>25</sup> who are accustomed by life-long training to the rigorous examination of phenomena, and who should be qualified to decide whether a given manifestation can be accounted for on purely natural grounds or not.

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF SPIRITUALISTIC COMMUNICATIONS ?—It can be said at once that, although accurate information on matters of a purely private character is sometimes given,<sup>26</sup> the communications never possess any public interest whatsoever. When not trivial, silly, or obscene, they are mere repetitions, very poorly expressed, of doctrines already well known, or of pantheistic or agnostic errors. The higher intelligences with which Spiritualists profess to deal have never contributed anything whatever to human progress ; they have given us no new invention ; they have added nothing to science or art ; they have propounded no teaching which would be of the slightest help in making men lead better lives. One has only to read the records of spiritualistic communications to be convinced that, if they emanated from spirits at all, the spirits must have been of a very degraded order. Examples might be quoted, but they are too gross and ludicrous for a text like this. Enough has been said to indicate that the mere word of any of these spirits must be regarded as utterly untrustworthy. This is especially true in regard to the statement made by a spirit that it is the soul of a particular person who is dead : (1) No satisfactory proof of such identity has ever been given ; the only evidence offered is that the spirit reveals information supposed to be the exclusive possession of the deceased ; but this proves nothing, because such information

<sup>25</sup> e.g., Dr. A. R. Wallace, Sir W. Crookes, Professors Richet, Schiaparelli, Lombroso, and Sir Oliver Lodge.—Spiritualism appears to attract many men of science, because it offers them evidence which they can test personally and by methods akin to those they employ in their laboratory work. Such men, from long familiarity with experiments, are inclined to attach more importance to what comes under the observation of their own senses than to any other form of evidence. Probably, if God consented to work miracles under their direction and in their presence, they would become members of His Church. But God has already fully proved the truth of His Church by miracles of which they can learn, if they have the proper dispositions. God does not suffer Himself to be made the servant of every man and to be placed at his beck and call.

<sup>26</sup> e.g. as to the welfare and doings of absent friends. " Sometimes given," we say above, but, as a rule, the information is absolutely false, or mixed up with heartless fraud and deception.

may be accessible to evil spirits. (2) The Church's doctrine on the destiny of man after death is absolutely inconsistent with the belief that the souls of those who died in the state of grace can be summoned back at the whim of any human medium and for the mere purpose of engaging in the heretical, trivial, and often ludicrous communications of a spiritualistic séance. Hence, if there is no mediumistic fraud, the intelligences manifested on such occasions must be identified with the wicked angels, or, possibly, the souls of the damned ; a conclusion which is confirmed by the false or obscene doctrine they frequently enunciate.

**The Legislation of the Church.**—The Church has officially condemned spiritualistic practices, even though intercourse with Satan be excluded, and communication sought with good spirits only.

A decree of the Holy Office,<sup>27</sup> which is binding in conscience on all the faithful, declares it unlawful to assist, either with or without the agency of a medium, either with or without the use of hypnotism, at spiritualistic séances or manifestations of any kind whatsoever, even though such have the appearance of honesty or piety. The decision further states that by " assisting " is meant : " asking questions of souls or spirits, hearing responses or merely looking on, even though one may have made a tacit or express protest that one wishes to have no dealings with evil spirits."

Theologians point out (1) that the sole object of the spirits evoked at séances is to draw man away from God by getting him to accept their word as a substitute for the divinely appointed authority of the Church ; (2) that Satan is skilled in deception, and often assumes the appearance of an angel of light the better to win the confidence of his victims, with a view to their degradation and ultimate destruction ;<sup>28</sup> (3) that he and his minions are never allowed to use their superhuman intelligence to interfere with the general course of the world ; that they cannot act in such a way or give such information as would seriously disturb the lives of men,<sup>29</sup> hence the insignificance of the communications ascribed to them.

<sup>27</sup> Decrees of the Holy Office, 30th March, 1898, and 24th April, 1917.

<sup>28</sup> For the evil effects of Spiritualism, see the articles in the *Cath. Encyc.* already referred to, also Raupert, *The Dangers of Spiritualism*, and Travers-Smith, *Voices from the Void*. Those who indulge in Spiritualistic practices usually sink to the lowest depth of moral degeneracy or end their lives in a mental asylum.

<sup>29</sup> To take but one instance, consider the results which would ensue, if in the rivalry of politics or commerce either side could learn the secrets of the other through the agency of spirits.

THE INCARNATION AND THE REDEMPTION

A

THE INCARNATION

Summary.

I. The solemn teaching of the Church.

II. Jesus Christ, true God, true Man.—The Hypostatic, or Personal, Union.—The human knowledge and will of Christ; His virtues and graces. Difficulties and errors.—The worship due to Christ as Man; the veneration due to the B. V. Mary and to St. Joseph. Note: Mary the Mother of God.

I

The Solemn Teaching of the Church.—The Church teaches solemnly: 1—(1) that God the Son, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, became Man; 2 (2) that He was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary; (3) that He is true God, true Man. In the Athanasian Creed the Church speaks as follows:—

“It is necessary for eternal salvation that he who wishes to be saved should faithfully believe the Incarnation of Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

“The right Faith, therefore, is that we believe and confess that Our Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.

“He is God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before time: and Man, of the substance of a mother, born in time.

“Perfect God, Perfect Man: subsisting in a rational soul and human body.

“Equal to the Father, according to Divinity: less than the Father according to humanity.

“Who, though God and Man, is, yet, not two, but is one Christ.

“One, indeed, not by the conversion of the Divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of the humanity unto God.

“Entirely One, not by a mixing of substance but by unity of Person.

“For as the rational soul and body is one man; so God and Man is One Christ. . . .

. . . . .

“This is the Catholic Faith, and unless a man believe it faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.”

<sup>1</sup> In the Creeds.

<sup>2</sup> Since the Incarnation the Second Divine Person has a human as well as a divine nature, and, thus incarnate, He is known as Jesus Christ. See next footnote.

II

Jesus Christ, true God.—(a) The Church teaches solemnly that Jesus Christ<sup>3</sup> is true God, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, equal in all things to the Father. (b) We have already set forth (Part I, Chaps. VI and VII) the apologetic arguments from reason by which we can defend this great truth against the unbeliever, and we need not repeat or summarize them.<sup>4</sup>

Jesus Christ true Man.—(a) The Church teaches solemnly that Jesus Christ is true Man with a body and a soul like ours. (b) We have shown in Part I that, as Man, He belongs to authentic history. The Gospel record tells us that, like all men, He was born of woman; that, for the greater part of His life, He lived at Nazareth as the reputed son of Joseph the carpenter; that, in the three years of His ministry, He laboured and taught, journeying hither and thither, suffering fatigue, hunger and thirst, and showing the feelings and emotions of ordinary men—love, compassion, sorrow, anger, and fear; <sup>5</sup> that, at length, He was seized by His enemies, tortured by them, and nailed to a Cross; that after His death He was taken down and laid in a tomb. While on

<sup>3</sup> Jesus means, literally, “God saves” or “God is salvation”; hence, used as a name, it may be interpreted “Saviour.”—The title, “Christ,” is the Greek form of the Hebrew, “Messias”; it means “anointed.” In the Old Testament men were anointed kings, priests, and prophets, as a sign of the sanctity of their office and their special consecration to God. Jesus is by excellence the “anointed”—“anointed,” as St. Peter says (*Acts* x. 38), “with the Holy Ghost and with power”—because He alone is the true king, priest, and prophet. (See “The Application of the Redemption,” (4), at the end of this Chapter.)

<sup>4</sup> These proofs should now be re-read.

<sup>5</sup> Note, e.g., the following texts: “Jesus wept (for Lazarus). The Jews therefore said, ‘Behold how He loved him,’” *St. John* xi. 35.—“Jesus hearing this marvelled,” *St. Matt.* viii. 10. “He began to grow sorrowful and to be sad,” *id.* xxvi. 37. “He began to fear,” *St. Mark* xiv. 33. “Looking round about on them with anger, being grieved for the blindness of their hearts,” *id.* iii. 5.

this earth, He was subject, like us, to the infirmities of our nature, but, unlike us, He was subject to them not of necessity but of choice;<sup>6</sup> and, unlike us, He was free from ignorance and all tendency to sin.

**The Hypostatic, or Personal, Union.**—(1) The Hypostatic, or Personal, Union means the union of the two natures, the divine and the human, in one Divine Person; <sup>7</sup> as in us, soul and body are united in one man, so in Christ, but by a different kind of union, the two natures are united in one Person: the Person is the link by which the two natures are joined together. The two natures, the Council of Chalcedon (451) solemnly teaches, while remaining perfectly distinct, are joined together in an unchangeable and inseparable union. The Hypostatic union began at the Annunciation when Christ was conceived in the womb of the Virgin, and will continue for ever; it was not broken in the period between His death and Resurrection, for His Person remained united to His Body in the sepulchre, and to His Soul in limbo. (2) Christ acted sometimes by His human nature, sometimes by His divine nature, and sometimes by both together. He acted by His human nature, when, *e.g.*, He walked or slept; by His divine nature, when, *e.g.*, He cured the centurion's servant at a distance; <sup>8</sup> by both natures together, when He consecrated the Blessed Eucharist: as Man, He took bread, blessed, broke, and gave to the Apostles, saying, "This is My Body"; as God, He changed the bread into His own sacred Flesh.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Thus, *e.g.*, when He was afraid in the Garden of Gethsemane (St. Mark xiv. 33) it was because He freely chose to afflict His soul with fear.

<sup>7</sup> For the meaning of "nature" and "person," the student should read the paragraphs in the Ch. on the Trinity under the heading, "The doctrine of the Trinity explained."

<sup>8</sup> The example given by St. Maximus on *Ep. 4, Dionys. Areop.*

<sup>9</sup> Because of the union of the two natures in Christ it is true to say, *e.g.*, that "God died on the Cross," or that "the Man Christ was omnipotent," the subject of each sentence being equivalent to "the

**The human knowledge, will, grace, and virtues of Christ.**—Difficulties solved.—THE HUMAN KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST. The knowledge which Christ had through His divine nature was infinitely perfect. The knowledge which He had through His human nature was not infinite. It was of three kinds, *viz.*, *celestial, infused, and experimental.*

*Christ's celestial knowledge.* His soul from the first moment of its existence enjoyed, like the angels and the blessed, the immediate vision of God, and in that vision beheld all things past, present, and to come. This knowledge was as great as His created human intellect could receive.

*Christ's infused knowledge.* His soul was endowed with all that knowledge which God gave the angels at their creation, and with all the enlightenment which it is possible for living man to receive from God.

*Christ's experimental knowledge.* His soul had the ordinary knowledge which men obtain in everyday life from the use of their senses and reason.

That Christ had celestial and infused knowledge follows from His supreme dignity as the Word Incarnate: to His human nature, united as it is to a Divine Person, must be ascribed in fullest measure every perfection that can be enjoyed by any creature in Heaven or on earth. That He possessed experimental knowledge follows from the doctrine that He was true Man; being true Man, He, like other men, made use of His faculties of sense and understanding; He used His eyes and ears; He observed facts, and drew conclusions from them. His experimental knowledge grew from day to day, like that of any ordinary man. However, we must be careful to understand that

Second Divine Person." Hence the rule that whenever, as in these sentences, either nature is so spoken of as to denote *simply* the Second Divine Person, the attributes of the other nature may be ascribed to it; this is what is technically known as "the interchange of predicates" (*communicatio idiomatum*). The rule shows us that the following statements are *wrong*: "God, as God, was crucified" ("God, as God" does not denote the Second Divine Person *simply*; it speaks of Him as He was in His Divine nature, but it was not in that nature that He was crucified); "Christ as Man was omnipotent" ("Christ as Man" does not denote the Divine Person *simply*, but as He was in His human nature, and in that nature He was not omnipotent);—"Man became God" (wrong because "man" denotes, not a Divine Person, but a human person: it says that some one who was at first man afterwards became God)—"the humanity of Christ was divine," "the divinity was crucified" ("humanity" and "divinity" do not denote the Person of Christ but His natures).—"Omnipotence itself died on the Cross": correct because "Omnipotence itself" would be understood to mean, "God Himself, God the Son."

all the knowledge so acquired was already in His possession through other channels. To adapt Himself to human conditions, He acted, as circumstances required, like common men; thus, as we may safely assume, He allowed Himself when a child to be taught by His Mother and St. Joseph, as though He did not already know all things;<sup>10</sup> thus, as we read in the Gospels, He asked questions as though seeking information, and sometimes expressed surprise at the answers which He received. His experimental knowledge may be compared to His physical strength as Man; as His physical strength increased with years, so too did His experimental knowledge; as His physical strength was limited, so also was His experimental knowledge. Yet, as God, He was all-powerful and all-knowing.

**THE HUMAN WILL OF CHRIST.** Being true Man, Christ had a human will like ours; He had the power of loving what His human mind represented to Him as good. Being true God, He had also a divine will; He had the power of loving what His divine mind represented to Him as good. His human mind was limited; so too His human will. His divine mind was unlimited; so too His divine will. With His divine will, He loved the Godhead with an infinite love; with His human will, He loved the Godhead, not with an infinite love, but with the highest love of which His sanctified human nature was capable. His human will was ever and in all things subject to His divine will: "I come," He said, "not to do My own will,"—*i.e.*, His human will—"but the will of Him that sent Me."<sup>11</sup> His human will of its nature shrank from suffering: in the garden He cried out against the bitter chalice of pain and degradation, but, He said, "Not My will but Thine be done."

Although in Christ, there were two distinct wills, each acting in its own proper way, yet there was but one Worker; there was but One, the Son of God—to whom the acts of both wills belonged: hence, His least human act while He was on earth was the act of a Divine Person, and, therefore, of infinite value.<sup>12</sup>

**CHRIST'S GRACE AND VIRTUES.**—As to the grace and virtues of Christ, we must distinguish between habits and supernatural

<sup>10</sup> St. Thomas, S.T. iii., q. xii., a. 3, ad 3, teaches that Christ did nothing but what befitted His years.

<sup>11</sup> The will here ascribed or appropriated to God the Father is of the Divine Nature and belongs equally to all Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. It is the same as the divine will of Christ.

<sup>12</sup> The third Council of Constantinople (681) defined that there are two distinct wills in Christ, the divine and the human. It condemned the error of the Monothelites (literally, "believers in one will") who taught that Christ had but one will, the divine will.

acts, between principles and effects. The works done by Him under grace, or His virtuous acts, were constantly growing into a larger total; but the source from which these acts flowed, the sanctifying grace indwelling in His soul, the grace that beseeemed His dignity as the Man-God, did not, and could not increase.

**DIFFICULTIES SOLVED.** (1) "What is meant by the words of the Holy Spirit: 'And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age'<sup>13</sup> and grace with God and man,' St. Luke ii. 52?"—**REPLY:** From the explanations given above, the answer may be easily deduced. Christ *as God* did not and could not make any advance; for, as God, He was and is infinitely perfect. But Christ *as Man* advanced in wisdom and grace, *i.e.*, His experimental knowledge and the sum of His virtuous acts increased from day to day.

(2) "Christ as Man enjoyed the Beatific Vision. His happiness was greater than that of the angels. How then could He have suffered pain?"—**REPLY:** Christ did not allow the happiness He enjoyed either as God or as Man to save Him from truly and really suffering. As a mountain-summit may be bathed in peaceful sunshine, while below the rocks are riven with the lightning, so Christ confined the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision within the higher part of His soul, while at the same time exposing all the rest of His human nature to the tempest of grief and affliction. This co-existence of joy with pain may be illustrated from the martyrs whose souls were filled with gladness in the midst of all their agony.

**Errors.**—Arius denied the divinity of Christ; his teaching was condemned by the Council of Nicaea (325). Apollinaris held that Christ had no soul, and that its place was supplied by His divinity: this teaching was condemned at the first Council of Constantinople (381). Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, taught that, in Christ, there are not only two distinct natures, but two distinct persons; that Mary is the mother of Christ, the human person, but not the mother of God the Son, the divine Person. His doctrine was refuted by St. Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, and condemned at the Council of Ephesus (431) which defined that Mary is the Mother of God.—Eutyches erred in the opposite extreme by teaching that Christ was true God, but not true man; that He had but one nature, *viz.*, His divine nature, and that His humanity was absorbed in His divinity like a drop of oil in the ocean. His teaching, commonly called the Monophysite heresy, was condemned at the Council of Chalcedon

<sup>13</sup> St. Luke's word which is translated "age" may also mean "stature."

(451).—On the Monothelite heresy, see above.—In recent years some Protestants have proposed what is called the *Kenotic* theory (the word is derived from the verb *ἐκένωσεν*, “He emptied,” occurring in *Phil.* ii. 7), according to which God the Son is supposed to have “emptied Himself” or laid aside His omnipotence and omniscience when He became Man. Against this it is sufficient to say that, since Christ was God, and since God is unchangeable, Christ could never have parted with any of His divine attributes. The scriptural text simply means, as the words following indicate, that God the Son humbled Himself by “taking the form of a servant.”

**The worship due to Christ as Man.**—Since Christ is a Divine Person, we owe Him not only as God but as Man, the supreme worship of adoration. Everything in His human nature is divine and adorable, because it belongs to Him, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity; but, the better to excite our devotion, we may, in our act of adoration, fix our mind on Him, *e.g.*, in His relation to His Precious Blood, His Five Wounds, or His Sacred Heart. In thus adoring Him, we adore Him under so many different aspects, as it were: when we adore His Precious Blood, we adore it, not as distinct from Him, but as His own Blood which He shed for us; when we adore the Five Wounds, we adore Him as having suffered through these wounds for us; when we adore His Sacred Heart, we adore it, not as something apart from Him, but as the Heart within His living Body, and as symbolizing the love He bears us as God and as Man.<sup>14</sup>

**The Veneration due to the B. V. Mary, to St. Joseph and to the Saints.**—To God, and only to Him, we pay the worship of adoration, because His excellence is infinite and is all His own. We do not adore the saints, because they are mere creatures possessing nothing, not even their own existence, except as God’s gift to them. Still we

<sup>14</sup> The devotion to the Sacred Heart began as early as the eleventh century. It received a great impetus through a private revelation vouchsafed by our Saviour to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (*d.* 1690), a nun of Paray-le-Monial, in Burgundy, France. It has been recommended by many popes; and in particular by Leo XIII. and Pius XI.

give them the worship of simple reverence, because they are His friends, and, in honouring them, we honour Him who is the source of all their blessedness. To Mary, as the highest and most glorious of all His creatures, we pay a special homage.<sup>15</sup> She is the Mother of God; hence, all her dignity; hence, her Immaculate Conception; <sup>16</sup> hence, her freedom from the stain of even venial sin; <sup>17</sup> hence, the universal belief in her Assumption. Next after her, we revere her spouse, St. Joseph, the head of the household at Nazareth, to whom God Himself in the person of Jesus was obedient.

**Note.**—*Mary, the Mother of God.* Mary is the Mother of Christ; she is His Mother for the same reason that any other woman is the mother of her child; she is His Mother because He was conceived and nourished in her womb and was born of her; but her Son Christ is God; therefore Mary is the Mother of God. There is no force in the objection that, since she did not give her Son His Divine Nature, she cannot be called the Mother of God. No woman gives her child all he has; no woman gives her child his spiritual soul; his soul is a direct gift from God,<sup>18</sup> but she is none the less her child’s mother on that

<sup>15</sup> The worship we pay to God is technically known as “*latria*,” the veneration given to the saints and angels is called “*dulia*”; the special veneration given to our Blessed Lady is called “*hyperdulia*.”

<sup>16</sup> The doctrine that her soul, from the very first instant of its existence, was free from the stain of Original Sin: defined by Pius IX. (1854), see Denz. 1641.—Mary, the child of Joachim and Anna, was begotten in the ordinary human way, and, therefore, would have been stained with the sin of Adam, had not God given her soul sanctifying grace at her conception. By that sanctifying grace she was redeemed at the first moment of her being; it was a redemptive grace for which her Son was to pay by His death on the Cross. We were redeemed at our Baptism; our redemption was a *healing* redemption, because it healed the sickness of Original Sin which had been present in our souls since our conception; Mary’s redemption, on the other hand, was a *preventive* redemption, because it prevented that sickness from occurring.

<sup>17</sup> T. 833.

<sup>18</sup> (a) On the direct creation of the human soul, see Ch. v., footnote 1. (b) In ordinary conception, the first living cell, which subsequently is multiplied many times, contains elements from both parents; therefore,



account. Nor is Mary any the less her Child's Mother though His soul and Divinity did not come from her. Other women are justly called the mothers of men, and Mary is justly called the Mother of God.

Mary is the Mother of God, and God Himself made her worthy to be His Mother. Not only did He preserve her from the smallest taint of sin but He poured out on her an abundance, all but infinite, of grace and heavenly favours.<sup>19</sup> He made her the second Eve, the Mother of the Living, the Mother of all those who were to be restored by her Son to the life of divine friendship.<sup>20</sup> He has raised her to be the Queen of Heaven; He has given her a dignity incomparably higher than that of the highest of His Angels.

it is not true to say that the body of a child comes from the mother alone. But since Christ had no human father but was conceived miraculously through the power of the Holy Ghost, His body came from but one source, the pure flesh of His Virgin Mother.

<sup>19</sup> The intellect of Mary was not excluded from the influence of her sublime gifts. God owed it to His honour that, in all that knowledge by which the human mind is ennobled, Mary should surpass the rest of mankind. Though seemingly but a poor peasant woman, busy about the daily tasks of her humble household, she was full of divine wisdom, because she was full of divine grace; she saw more clearly than any saint or sage or scientist the manifestation of the Creator's glory in the realm of nature, and she had a vision of the beauty of His world to which no poet can ever attain. Cf. St. Albertus Magnus, *Mariale*, qq. 96-111; ed. Borgnet, vol. 37.

<sup>20</sup> (a) Mary is called the *Mediatress of all Graces*, because she is the Mother of the Redeemer who, by His Blood, has purchased all the graces that have been given, or shall be given, to man since the Fall. (b) Mary is the Mediatress of Grace in another sense also. She became the spiritual Mother of men at the instant of the Incarnation, and received that title from her Son while He was dying on the Cross. Hence the belief of the Church that it is "through her hands" we receive all the graces that we seek in prayer, all the graces that lead us to the Sacraments and prepare us for their worthy reception. (c) God, in giving us Mary as our Mother—Mary of Bethlehem, Mary of Cana, Mary who stood beside the Cross—appeals to the human nature He has given us, which is so responsive to the name of "mother." It is His will that through Mary we should learn a little of the infinitely greater tenderness of His own love for us. (d) Mary never asks God for anything except what has been gained for us by her Divine Son; nor does she ask God for anything except what He Himself has inspired her to ask.

## B

## THE REDEMPTION

## Summary.

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. Atonement and Redemption defined.—God chose to save us by a copious Redemption; why God chose to redeem us in this way.
- III. Christ proclaimed Himself our Redeemer; Christ, a willing Victim, suffered and died for us.—Christ's work for our salvation, considered under four aspects:—as a work of *satisfaction, redemption, merit, and sacrifice*.
- IV. The application of the Redemption.—Note: the prayers and supplications of Christ.

## I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly that our Lord Jesus Christ, by His life and by His sufferings which ended in His death on the Cross, made satisfaction for our sins and merited for us grace and eternal life.<sup>21</sup>

## II

**Atonement and Redemption Defined.**—Literally, atonement is reparation for an offence; it consists in undoing an insult or injury, or in causing offender and offended to be again *at one, i.e.*, to be reunited in affection. Redemption is deliverance from captivity effected by purchase. As applied to the work of Christ, the Atonement means: (a) the satisfaction which Christ made to God for the insults offered to Him by the sin of Adam and the sins of all mankind, and (b) the reconciliation between God and man which He thereby effected; the Redemption means (a) the deliverance of man from slavery to Satan and from the debt of eternal punishment incurred by

<sup>21</sup> Creeds; T 799.

sin, and (b) his restoration to the dignity of divine sonship. Either term, therefore, may be used to denote the entire work of Christ.<sup>22</sup>

**God chose to save us by a copious Redemption.**—God, at the prompting of the Divine mercy, and under no compulsion of justice, resolved to restore mankind to His favour. He might have effected His purpose in many ways. He might, for instance, without exacting anything from us, have freely admitted us once more to His friendship; or He might have been pleased to accept as sufficient atonement the acts of penance which we ourselves could perform. But He chose none of these ways. He chose the way of superabundant redemption, so that we might do more than discharge the debt we owed Him because of our sins, and should fully earn the recovery of His friendship. For such a redemption, the following conditions were required: (1) that the atonement should be made by a representative of the human race; (2) that the atonement should be freely made; (3) that the atonement should be made by one pleasing to God, and not himself bound to any reparation; and, above all, (4) that the atonement should be more pleasing to God than sin had been displeasing to Him. Now, in our Redeemer Christ, the Son of God made Man, all these conditions were fulfilled:—(1) As Man, He represented the human race, and made Himself answerable for our sins: “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all”;<sup>23</sup> (2) He made the atonement freely: “He was offered because He Himself willed it”;<sup>24</sup> (3) He was pleasing to God because He was God’s beloved Son; He was without sin, and was, therefore, not bound Himself to any form of reparation; (4) the atonement was more than equal to the offence, since every act

<sup>22</sup> As we shall see further on, we can also describe Christ’s work for us on the Cross as a work of merit and as a work of sacrifice.

<sup>23</sup> Is. liii. 6.

<sup>24</sup> *id.* liii. 7.

offered by Christ on our behalf, as being the act of a Divine Person, the Son beloved of the Father, was infinitely precious in the sight of God, and availed to blot out all the sins that man had ever committed or could ever commit.<sup>25</sup>

**Why God chose to redeem us in this way.**—God exacted this form of Redemption to show His boundless love for us, to make us understand the hatefulness of sin, and to move our hard hearts: “God is charity”;—*i.e.*, God is love itself—“by this hath the charity of God appeared towards us, because God hath sent His only begotten Son into the world that we may live by Him”;<sup>26</sup> “God, who is rich in mercy, for His exceeding charity wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together in Christ”<sup>27</sup>—*i.e.*, God, out of His great love for us, has, through Christ, raised us from the grave of sin to the life of grace, so that, united as brothers to His own Divine Son, we may return His fatherly love for us.

### III

**Christ proclaimed Himself our Redeemer.**—Christ Himself tells us that He came into the world to obtain pardon

<sup>25</sup> St. Thomas and many theologians hold that, if we suppose God to have required of man full satisfaction for sin, the incarnation of one of the Divine Persons was necessary. They argue as follows:—“Man had committed grave sin. Grave sin is infinite in malice, and could be repaired only by an act of infinite worth. An act of infinite worth is beyond the power of mere man. Hence, it was necessary that there should be a God-Man who, as Man, could truly represent, and act for, the human race, and who, as God, could perform an act of atonement infinite in value.”—This reasoning is based on the following principles:—(1) An insult is measured by the dignity of him who is insulted, therefore, the insult of mortal sin was infinite, since the dignity of God was infinite.—(2) An honour is measured by the dignity of him who confers it; therefore, any good deed that mere man, even though aided by grace, could perform as an agreeable offering to God would be finite, and, hence, insufficient to atone for a grave sin.

<sup>26</sup> I St. John iv., 8, 9.

<sup>27</sup> Eph. ii., 4, 5.

for our sins,<sup>28</sup> and to give us a new spiritual life. "The Son of Man is come," He said, "to save that which is lost"<sup>29</sup> and "to give His life a redemption for many."<sup>30</sup> And again our Saviour declared: "I am come that men may have life and may have it more abundantly."<sup>31</sup> To Nicodemus, He said: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting,"<sup>32</sup> *i.e.*, as the brazen serpent had to be set up to heal the wounds of the Israelites, so Christ had to be lifted up on the Cross to cure mankind of sin, and to give them the new life of sanctifying grace. "You were not redeemed," says St. Peter,<sup>33</sup> "with corruptible things as gold and silver . . . but with the precious blood of Christ . . . Christ suffered for us . . . who His own self bore our sins in His body upon the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live to justice," *i.e.*, should live to be just men, the friends and sons of God. So, too, St. Paul, whose epistles are filled with the doctrine of the Redemption as an atonement for sin and as the means of restoring us to friendship with God: "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son."<sup>34</sup> . . . "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . who hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children through Jesus Christ . . . in whom we have redemption through His blood."<sup>35</sup>

<sup>28</sup> (Re-read the paragraph, "The Mission of Christ," Part I. Chap. viii. A).

<sup>29</sup> St. Matt. xviii. 11.      <sup>30</sup> *id.* xx. 28.      <sup>31</sup> St. John x. 10.

<sup>32</sup> St. John iii. 14, 15.—When the Israelites in the wilderness murmured against God, He "sent among the people fiery serpents which bit them and killed many of them. Upon which they came to Moses, and said: 'We have sinned, because we have spoken against the Lord and thee. Pray that He may take away these serpents from us.' And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to him: 'Make a brazen serpent, and set it up for a sign. Whosoever being struck shall look on it shall live,'" Numbers xxi. 5-8.

<sup>33</sup> 1 St. Peter i. 18, 19; ii. 24.      <sup>34</sup> Rom. v. 10.

<sup>35</sup> Eph. i. 3-7; *cf. ibid.*, v. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 3; 2 Cor. v. 18; Colos. i. 20; Rom. iii. 24, 25. See also *Apoc.* v. 9; vii. 14.

**Christ, a willing Victim, suffered and died for us.**—CHRIST WAS A WILLING VICTIM. Christ was eager to shed His Blood for us. When He told His Apostles that "He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the ancients and scribes and chief-priests and be put to death," St. Peter with warm-hearted solicitude for His Master "began to rebuke Him, saying: 'Lord, be it far from Thee. This shall not be unto Thee.'" But Jesus turned on him sharply and said: "Go behind Me, Satan. Thou art a scandal unto Me, because thou savourest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men."<sup>36</sup> "A scandal," *i.e.*, an obstacle, because St. Peter, with thoughtless compassion, sought to dissuade Him from entering on the way of the Cross. Again, He said: "I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?"<sup>37</sup> "Straitened," *i.e.*, distressed with eagerness. The baptism of which He spoke was the baptism, or bathing, of His limbs in His precious Blood.

CHRIST SUFFERED AND DIED FOR US. While He prayed at night in the Garden of Gethsemane, He said: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." He did not allow His Divinity to spare His human Heart a single pang. He suffered as though He were not God. Nay, He suffered all the more because He was God, because His human mind was divinely enlightened, and His human will divinely inspired. His human mind had before it a vision of all the torments in store for Him, and of the sins for which His Blood was to atone. His human will, freely but with intense agony, consented that He should bear all that was to befall Him, and that He should feel all the shame and filth and horror of our sins. How cruel the affliction of a good father or mother, when word comes of a son's or daughter's disgrace! And as the shame of a child's sin stabs his poor parents to the

<sup>36</sup> St. Matt. xvi. 21-23.

<sup>37</sup> St. Luke xii. 50.

heart, so, but infinitely more because of His greater love and His greater sensitiveness to everything evil, did our sins afflict the Heart of our brother Jesus. That Heart, the throne of innocence, the well-spring of love, was now forced to feel all the foulness of the wicked world, and began to throb with a vehemence beyond its nature, sending forth the Blood with such violence that it burst through the pores, streaming in great drops to the ground. He grieved for our sins and did penance for them, as though He Himself—if we dare say it—were the sinner.<sup>38</sup> For our sake, as the Apostle Paul conveys, He became a thing accursed.<sup>39</sup> And on the morrow He was led from court to court, buffeted, spat upon, scourged at a pillar, crowned with thorns, stripped of His clothes in the sight of His Mother and all the people and nailed to a cross. There He hung, the gentlest, the kindest, the noblest of men, as though He were a criminal whose infamous deeds had justified the utmost savagery, “despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows,” as though He were “a leper and as one struck by God and afflicted. . . . He hath delivered His soul unto death, and was reputed with the wicked, and He hath borne the sins of many and hath prayed for the transgressors.”<sup>40</sup>—“It is finished,” He said, and, bowing His head, He died. The work for which He had come was done; He had paid the penalty of our sins, and purchased for us the privilege of becoming the children of God.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> See Steenkiste, *Com. in S. Matt.*, pp. 978 f, who quotes SS. Thomas and Ambrose; see, also, Card. Newman, *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, pp. 324–342 (*Mental Sufferings of our Lord*).

<sup>39</sup> *Gal.* iii. 13.

<sup>40</sup> *Isaias* liii.

<sup>41</sup> (1) The Redemption is a mystery: (a) It involves the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation: see the Note at the end of this chapter. (b) It is in itself a mystery of love; We cannot understand how God loved the world so much that He suffered His Divine Son to become man and die for us: see Fr. Hugon, O.P., *Le mystère de la Rédemption*, Paris, Téqui, 1916, p. 5 f.

(2) Sin also is a mystery. We speak of sin as an “offence against God,” as “an insult to God,” as “exciting the wrath of God,” but

**Christ's work for our salvation, considered under four aspects.**—The entire work accomplished for us by Christ on the Cross may be considered under four aspects: (1) as a work of satisfaction or atonement, (2) as a work of redemption or ransom, (3) as a work of merit, and (4) as a work of sacrifice.<sup>42</sup>

(1) **CHRIST'S WORK OF SATISFACTION OR ATONEMENT.**—Satisfaction is a reparation, equal to the offence, made to the person offended; its value depends on the dignity of him who makes it. Adam, by his sin, had offered a grievous insult to God. Christ, as the new Adam, the spiritual head of the human race, made satisfaction for that sin and for all the sins that had been, or would be, committed by men till the end of the world. His satisfaction more than sufficed for its purpose, because it was of infinite value; it was of infinite value, because He, as a Divine Person, the infinitely beloved of His Father, was of infinite dignity.

(2) **CHRIST'S WORK OF REDEMPTION OR RANSOM.**<sup>43</sup>—A ransom is a price paid for the deliverance of a captive. Because of grievous sin, man lay under the sentence of eternal punishment, and had become a slave of the devil, exposed to all his assaults, and powerless to obtain that divine grace by which alone he can be vanquished. Christ delivered us from this cruel bondage: He paid the full price of our liberation. God's justice had demanded that the wrongful pleasure which men get from sin should be balanced or blotted out by its equivalent in

God is unchangeably happy, and no creature can touch Him, disturb Him, or assail Him in any way; and yet the effects produced in us by sin are as though we had done all this. The creature who strikes at his Creator does not strike the Creator but himself. Sin therefore of its nature is a suicidal act. The dreadful harm it does can be known only through what faith teaches of the sufferings of Christ to repair it.

<sup>42</sup> St. Thomas S.T. iii. q. 48, aa, 1–4. See note following § “Christ's work of sacrifice,” p. 104.

<sup>43</sup> Both words, “ransom” and “redemption,” are from the Latin, *redemptio*, a buying back, release by purchase.

voluntary suffering. That equivalent was paid to Him by His own Son in the supreme agony of the Cross ; it was a payment which sufficed, in strict justice, to extinguish, for Adam and all his posterity, the debt of eternal punishment and of servitude to Satan.<sup>44</sup>

(3) CHRIST'S WORK OF MERIT.—A work of merit<sup>45</sup> is a work that gives a just claim to a supernatural reward ; a supernatural reward is a blessing, happiness, or honour to which no creature, man or angel, could ever attain by his natural powers. For a work of merit it is required, (1) that it be the act of a living man, (2) that it be freely done, (3) that it be in itself virtuous, (4) that he who performs it should be a friend of God, and (5) that God should have promised the reward. Adam by his sin had become an enemy of God, incapable of a work of merit, and, therefore, unable ever to recover of his own power the gift of divine sonship which he had lost for himself and his descendants. But Christ, the new Adam, the Father of spiritual life, as the first Adam had been the father of spiritual death, came into the world to rescue the human race from their unhappy condition. His work of Redemption was a work of merit : (1) it was the work of a living Man subject to mortality ; (2) it was freely done : " I lay down my life of myself, and I have power to lay it down ; and I have power to take it up again."<sup>46</sup> (3) It was a work of supreme charity : " Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends."<sup>47</sup> it was commanded by the Father : Christ said in the Garden :

<sup>44</sup> Christ, as St. Thomas says (S.T., III., q. 46, a. 6, ad 6), resolved to deliver us from sin, not merely by His power, but by a process of justice ; hence, though He knew that, from the fact that He was God, His smallest suffering would have more than sufficed to save us, He willed in conformity with the will of His Father that His human nature should exhaust itself in the agony of a just reparation.

<sup>45</sup> What we simply describe here as " a work of merit " is a work of true or perfect merit.: see Section III of next Chapter.

<sup>46</sup> St. John x. 18. <sup>47</sup> *id.* xv. 13.

" Not My will but *Thine* be done " ; (4) Christ was the beloved Son of God ; (5) the reward, *viz.*, the recovery of divine sonship, was promised, for He had been sent to us " that we might have life and have it more abundantly,"<sup>48</sup> that we might be made one with Him as He is one with the Father.<sup>49</sup>

(4) CHRIST'S WORK OF SACRIFICE:—In every sacrifice a suitable victim is offered to God by a priest, specially appointed by Him, to express the homage which the creature owes to his Creator.<sup>50</sup> The priest speaks to God in the name of the people ; and the victim or gift which he places in God's hands represents the desire of the people to give themselves to God—*i.e.*, to surrender themselves, in loving adoration and submission, to their Lord and Creator. Fallen man was unfit for the office of priest ; fallen man could find no suitable victim, no victim acceptable to God : Adam, therefore, had made it impossible for himself and his sin-stained descendants to offer to God the supreme worship due to Him. But Christ intervened on our behalf ; He became our Priest and our Victim ; and, both as Priest and as Victim, infinitely pleasing to God, He discharged fully and perfectly the debt of worship that we owed.<sup>51</sup> But, since man had sinned, it was necessary that the sacrifice should be one, not of simple adoration, but of adoration expressing itself in the form of propitiation or appeasement. Christ, both as Priest and as Victim, represented the whole human race : with Adam and all his posterity

<sup>48</sup> *id.* x., 10.

<sup>49</sup> *id.* xvii., 22. But Christ merited not only for us but for Himself ; by humbling Himself even unto the death of the Cross, He acquired a just claim to His glorious Resurrection : " He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross ; for which cause God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above all names." (*Phil.* ii., 8, 9).

<sup>50</sup> Sacrifice is dealt with more fully in Ch. XIII, " The Blessed Eucharist," B.

<sup>51</sup> The priests of the Old Law were mere types or figures of Christ, and their sacrifices but shadows of the Sacrifice of the Cross.

before His mind, He adored and appeased His Father, as though each one of us were speaking through His lips; and, in the name of each one of us, He offered to His Father, as an atoning gift, His bitter sufferings together with all the love and the grief of His human heart.<sup>52</sup>

*Note.*—The outstanding feature in the works of atonement and ransom is our deliverance from evil; in the work of merit, it is our restoration to God's grace and friendship; in the work of sacrifice, it is Christ's substitution of Himself for each one of us in His acts of adoration and in His propitiatory sufferings. Yet, as already intimated, in each of the four works, if we look closely, we can see the entire work of Christ.

#### IV

**The Application of the Redemption.**—(1) Christ completed the work of our salvation at the instant of His death. From that moment onwards His work for us has been a work of application, the work of applying or giving to our souls the fruits of the Redemption. (2) Christ does not now gain any new graces for us: while on the Cross, He gained for us every grace we need. Nor does He now make any fresh appeal for us distinct from that which He made on Calvary; He is "always living to make intercession for us,"<sup>53</sup> but that "intercession" is identical with the intercession which He made for us on the Cross, and which is ever continuing to produce its effects in us. (3) "God," says St. Augustine

<sup>52</sup> Christ offered His sacrifice for the remission of sin; therefore, He could not have offered it for Himself: this is the teaching of the Council of Ephesus (see Denz. 122). Nevertheless, as stated in the last footnote to the preceding paragraph, by the human obedience which led Him to the Cross, He merited glory for Himself as Man. (Cf. St. Thomas, S.T., III., q. 22, a 4, ad 2).

<sup>53</sup> *Heb.* vii., 25.

(*Sermo* 169, 11, 13), "made thee without thy aid; but, without thy aid, He does not make thee holy: He made thee, unknown to thee; but, without thy consent, He does not make thee righteous." Christ redeemed us, but not in such a way that we can be saved without our co-operation. He placed the fruits of the Redemption within our reach, but not within our grasp: we must stretch forth our hand and take them, else they will be of no profit to us. But where shall we find the fruits of the Redemption? Who can give them to us? The Church which Christ established.<sup>54</sup> (4) Christ at His Ascension passed from the sight of men, but He is still with us invisibly in His Church. He lives in her, and through her He exercises the threefold office of Priest, Teacher, and King.—As Priest, He is the principal Minister of the Sacraments, and is represented by the earthly ministers who act on behalf of the Church; as Priest, He makes us children of God in the Sacrament of Baptism; as Priest, He renews in the Mass the Sacrifice of the Cross, enabling each one of us to offer precisely what He offered in each one's name; as Priest, He gives us the blessings that come from the other Sacraments.—As Teacher, He publishes through the voice of His infallible Church the truths which He has revealed, and which we must believe in order to be saved.—As King, He conveys His commands to us in the laws which the Church tells us we must observe on pain of forfeiting His love.

*Note*—*The prayers and supplications of Christ.*—Nothing that has been said in this section should obscure the truth that the Man, Christ, was God Himself. His

<sup>54</sup> But note that the Church herself may be called the first fruit of the Redemption. St. Paul says: "Christ loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it . . . that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church," (*Eph.* v., 25, 27)—"delivered Himself up for it," i.e., He delivered Himself unto death for it, to found it and to endow it with all the gifts it possesses. See Part I., p. 128, § "Christ saves us through His Church."

prayers and supplications were utterly unlike ours. Since He was God omnipotent, He need not have prayed for anything. Why then did He pray? Because He in union with the Father and the Holy Ghost had decreed that, as Man, not only should He drink the chalice of suffering to the dregs, but that also He should cry out as a poor suppliant from the abyss of degradation and anguish, and should urge His human soul to the very limit of its power in the vehemence and ardour of His appeal for each one of us. Thus, His appeal was as real as His sufferings; it was a true human cry for mercy, though He, as God, had willed beforehand that it should be heard.<sup>55</sup>

Christ addressed His prayers to God the Father, but, while doing so, He was also addressing them to Himself, the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. So, too, with His Sacrifice: He did not offer it to the Father alone, but to the Father as united to the other two Divine Persons.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup> From what has been said above, we can understand why Christ prayed for Himself, why, *e.g.*, He prayed that He might be glorified. He prayed, because He with the Father and the Holy Ghost had decreed that He should do so, and that He as Man, should receive the glory of the Resurrection in answer to His prayer.

<sup>56</sup> Compare this with the Church's words at Mass. In some of her prayers she offers the Holy Sacrifice to God the Father; in others she offers it to the Blessed Trinity.

## GOD THE SANCTIFIER

**Note.**—Under this heading we treat of Grace and the Sacraments. Christ by His sufferings and death won for us the right to be made sons of God; we are made sons of God by Sanctifying Grace; we obtain Sanctifying Grace chiefly through the Sacraments.

### CHAPTER IX

#### GRACE

##### *Summary.*

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. Grace, Sanctifying and Actual.
  - A. Sanctifying Grace: (*a*) its nature; a pearl of great price; a higher life, a participation in the Divinity; its nature illustrated; (*b*) it makes us children of God, brethren of Christ, and enthrones the Holy Ghost in our soul; (*c*) its beauty hidden in this life; its efficacy will be known after death; (*d*) it is caused in us by God through the Humanity of Christ; with it we receive the divine virtues, the moral virtues, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost; (*e*) in adults, it is preserved and increased by good works; (*f*) good works cannot be performed without Actual Grace.
  - B. Actual Grace: its nature; it enlightens the understanding and strengthens the will; it helps the sinner and the unbeliever to Sanctifying Grace.
  - C. External Grace.
- III. Merit: true and imperfect; the just can truly merit eternal life, and an increase of Sanctifying Grace and of glory hereafter; the sinner and the unbeliever can merit, not truly, but imperfectly, the actual graces (all except the first actual grace) that lead to Sanctifying Grace.
- IV. Errors: Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism; Lutheranism, Calvinism, Jansenism.

#### I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly:—(1) that by Sanctifying Grace, dwelling within the soul, we are made just, holy, or pleasing to God; <sup>1</sup> (2) that Sanctifying Grace is lost by

<sup>1</sup> T 799; 821.

mortal sin ; <sup>2</sup> (3) that it is not possessed by all just men in equal measure ; <sup>3</sup> (4) that it is increased in him who fulfils the commandments of God and the Church ; <sup>4</sup> (5) that it gives him who possesses it at death the right to a degree of eternal happiness proportionate to his good works ; <sup>5</sup> (6) that Grace is necessary for good works ; <sup>6</sup> (7) that Actual Grace prepares the sinner and the unbeliever for the reception of Sanctifying Grace ; <sup>7</sup> (8) that the first Actual Grace God gives the sinner or the unbeliever is altogether gratuitous and cannot in any sense be merited. <sup>8</sup>

## II

### A

**Sanctifying Grace : its nature.—A pearl of great price.—A higher life, a participation in the Divinity.—SANCTIFYING GRACE : ITS NATURE.**—Sanctifying Grace is a supernatural <sup>9</sup> gift of God by which the soul is made pleasing to Him. It removes all stain of grievous sin ; it gives the soul a new and higher life, and fills it with splendour. It prepares the soul for that most intimate union with God which He has destined for it in the blessedness of Heaven. It is called a supernatural gift, because it is something to which no creature as such can ever have any claim. <sup>10</sup>

**SANCTIFYING GRACE, A PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.** The value of Sanctifying Grace may be estimated from the

<sup>2</sup> T 808.    <sup>3</sup> T 799 (end).    <sup>4</sup> T 803 ; 834.    <sup>5</sup> T 842.

<sup>6</sup> T 811, 812, 813 : 809.    <sup>7</sup> T 798, 807.    <sup>8</sup> T 797.

<sup>9</sup> For meaning of Supernatural, see Ch. VI, Section II, § "The nature of their gifts."

<sup>10</sup> Sanctifying Grace is an inward or *internal* gift, so described because it dwells within the soul. It is not a substance, because it cannot exist by itself. It is, therefore, what is technically called an *accident* (see footnote 1, Chap. I, "The Divine Essence and Attributes.") But it is not a mere passing accident like the red colour of a cloud at sunset ; it is a permanent quality like the fixed colour of a flower.

price that was paid for it : the price was the Life-Blood of the Son of God. According to St. Thomas, "the whole world and all it contains is of less value in the eyes of God than the grace in a single human soul." <sup>11</sup> Of Sanctifying Grace, the soul may speak in the words of *Wisdom* : "I preferred her before kingdoms and thrones, and esteemed riches nothing in comparison of her. Neither did I compare unto her any precious stone, for all gold in comparison of her is as a little sand, and silver in respect to her shall be counted as clay. I loved her above health and beauty, and chose to have her instead of light, for her light cannot be put out. Now all good things came to me together with her, and innumerable riches through her hands." <sup>12</sup>

**SANCTIFYING GRACE, A HIGHER LIFE, A PARTICIPATION IN THE DIVINITY.** The soul of man gives him a threefold life. It enables him to grow like a plant (*vegetative life*) ; to feel like the lower animals (*sensitive life*) ; and to think, reason, and choose freely (*intellectual life*). But there is a still higher life which he may receive, a *divine life*, a supernatural life, a life which, by a true and real change, raises him above the natural excellence of the most exalted creatures, and sets him, so to speak, on a level with God Himself ; a life which places him inside the veil that God has hung between Himself and His creation ; a life which gives him a share in what is special to God Himself, a share in the knowledge God has of His own perfections and in the happiness He derives therefrom. This life is given to him by Sanctifying Grace. God became man, so that man might, in a sense, become God. Thus, St. Peter says that, through Christ, the Father "hath given us most great and precious promises, that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature" <sup>13</sup> ; "we shall be like Him," says St. John,

<sup>11</sup> S.T. I-II, q. 113, a. 9, ad 2.

<sup>12</sup> *The Book of Wisdom*, vii. 8-11.

<sup>13</sup> 2 St. Peter i. 4.



"because we shall see Him as He is";<sup>14</sup> and the Church prays at the Offertory of the Mass that "we may be made sharers in the Divinity of Him who deigned to participate in our humanity."<sup>15</sup>

**Sanctifying Grace : its nature illustrated.**—Suppose that a young man, loved and honoured by all because of his gentle disposition, his upright character and high ability, nobly sacrifices his life in the effort to save a little child trapped in a burning house. Word is brought to his father and mother. It is a moment when their love for him, stimulated by grief, flashes out into intense ardour; it is a moment when all else in the world is forgotten. And yet, take one of the most insignificant objects in their home—a sheet of canvas—a thing of very humble use, a thing apparently altogether outside the circle of their regard, and on that canvas paint the perfect image of their son as he was seen in the last moments of his life. What is now the position of that piece of coarse cloth? It stands no longer among the common things of their household: it has passed into the very sanctuary of their grief and love; it shines with the aura of their son's personality. It is so with the soul. The soul, in herself, is but one of the many things in the great household of God's creation; and, of herself, she can claim from Him nothing but that comparatively low form of love which He gives to all His creatures, a form of love comparable to the petty esteem in which we hold the furniture of our house. But, by Sanctifying Grace, the image of God the Son is woven into the soul, becoming a part of her life, and God the Father, seeing that likeness there, loves her with that *personal* love which unites Him and the Son in the unity of the Holy Ghost. The soul is no longer on the humble plane of creatures, no longer separated by a chasm from God as they are; she has been drawn up to His own eminence; she has been made His friend and intimate; she has passed into the high sanctuary of the Most Adorable Trinity.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> 1 St. John iii. 2.

<sup>15</sup> From the above it is evident how false is the view of those who hold that the state of grace is merely the absence of mortal sin.

<sup>16</sup> Something akin to the above illustration will be found in the *Life of St. Teresa of Spain*, written by herself. London: Thomas Baker, 1916, p. 441. Observe that, in speaking of "the image of God the Son," we are not referring to His human features, but to His Divine Person.

Sanctifying Grace makes us children of God, brethren of Christ, and enthrones the Holy Ghost in our soul.—**SANCTIFYING GRACE MAKES US CHILDREN OF GOD.**—A rational creature as such is not a child but merely a servant of God. Through Sanctifying Grace, God adopts him as His son: "Behold," says St. John, "what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called and should *be* the sons of God";<sup>17</sup> "God sent His Son," says St. Paul, "that we might receive the adoption of sons,"<sup>18</sup> "we are the sons of God, and, if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and co-heirs with Christ."<sup>19</sup> When the Apostle speaks of "adoption," he has before his mind the Roman practice, which was very different from ours. With us, the adopted son remains, in the eyes of the law, a member of the family into which he was born, and acquires no legal right whatever to inherit from his adoptive parents. Among the Romans, a child was transferred by solemn process of law from the family of his birth to the family of his adoption; he was admitted to all the dignity and intimacy of a son born of the blood; he acquired a strict right to inherit; and thenceforward, he identified himself with the traditions, the honour, and the interests of his new family. Now, it is somewhat in this way that we are transferred by Sanctifying Grace from the family of mankind to the family of God: we acquire the claim of children to His affection and intimacy; we are raised, as far as is possible for creatures, to His dignity; His honour becomes ours; His friends become ours: and we receive from His hands the right to enter like heirs into the possession of such share of His Kingdom as He appoints for us.

<sup>17</sup> 1 St. John iii. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Gal. iv. 4, 5.

<sup>19</sup> Rom. viii. 16, 17.—Christ is the Son of the Father alone, the just man is the adopted child of the whole Trinity. We speak of the Father as the author of that adoption, of the Son as its pattern, of the Holy Ghost as its conveyor. See Pohle-Preuss, *Grace*, pp. 358 f.

SANCTIFYING GRACE MAKES US BRETHREN OF CHRIST.—Sanctifying Grace makes us other Christs. It makes us brethren to Him and to one another; sharing in His life, we are joined to Him as the living branches are joined to the vine-stock, or as the members of the living body are joined to its head. "Brethren of Christ" is thus no empty name. Who would forfeit that loving intimacy with Him which it denotes and with which no human friendship can be compared? "Love Him and keep Him for thy friend who, when all go away, will not leave thee, nor suffer thee to perish in the end. . . . Thou must at last be separated from all things else, whether thou wilt or not. Keep thyself with Jesus both in life and death and commit thyself to His care who alone can help thee, when all others fail."<sup>20</sup>

SANCTIFYING GRACE ENTHRONES THE HOLY GHOST IN OUR SOUL.—The change in the soul caused by Sanctifying Grace is wrought by all Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity, but, being a work of Divine Love, it is properly ascribed to the Holy Ghost.<sup>21</sup> The Holy Ghost is the Divine Artist who makes our soul like the soul of Jesus; it is He who joins us to Jesus in the mystic<sup>22</sup> brotherhood. And as it is He—the Holy Ghost—who unites Father and Son in eternal love, so it is He who unites us as other sons to the Father; it is He who draws us, as it were, into membership in the Blessed Trinity. Having made us other Christs, the Holy Ghost takes up His dwelling in our soul; He makes it His temple, and sets up His throne there: "Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost who is in you, whom you have from God?"<sup>23</sup> With the Holy Ghost in this indwelling are the Father

<sup>20</sup> *Imitation of Christ*, Book II., Chap. vii.

<sup>21</sup> See the note on appropriation in the chapter on "The Blessed Trinity," iv, footnote 11.

<sup>22</sup> "Mystic," *i.e.*, formed by grace.

<sup>23</sup> I Cor. vi. 19.

and the Son: "If any one love Me," says Christ, "he will keep My word, and My Father will love him and He will come to him, and will make our abode with him."<sup>24</sup> The "love" of which He speaks here as uniting the soul to Father and Son is the Personal Divine Love, the Holy Ghost.<sup>25</sup>

**Sanctifying Grace : its Beauty hidden from us in this Life ; its efficacy will be known after Death.**—ITS BEAUTY HIDDEN IN THIS LIFE.—The soul of the just man reflects the very light of the Godhead; it shines with a radiance like that of Christ Himself in His Transfiguration on the mountain. Could we behold the beauty of this precious gift of Sanctifying Grace,<sup>26</sup> it would be impossible for us ever to lose it by mortal sin, for all things else, wealth, rank, power, or anything we may name, would seem to us by contrast to be as valueless as a speck of dust. But God grants us no such vision in this life; it is His holy will to try us; He would have us believe for a little while without seeing, until at death faith be changed into sight.<sup>27</sup>

**ITS EFFICACY WILL BE KNOWN AFTER DEATH.**—After death we shall know the true meaning of being the friend and son of God. Sanctifying Grace, when perfected

<sup>24</sup> St. John xiv. 23.

<sup>25</sup> St. Augustine says: "Love, therefore, which is of God, is properly the Holy Spirit, by whom the Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts,—that Love by which the whole Trinity dwells in us," *De Trinitate* xv. 18, 32.

<sup>26</sup> *Roman Catechism*, n. 50.

<sup>27</sup> A real acorn and an artificial one may seem to be exactly alike in shape, colour and weight. But the real acorn can develop into a superb oak, and be the originating cause of an immense forest; whereas the other acorn, the one carved and coloured by the hand of man, can never develop into anything. Whence this immeasurable difference between them? "The acorn produced by the oak contains a principle of life; that which man's cunning hath devised, in rude imitation, is dead and destined only to corruption. *This may serve as an illustration of the essential, though invisible, difference between a man in grace and a man devoid of grace.*" Bishop Vaughan, *Thoughts for all Times*, Vol. I., p. 155.

by the Light of Glory,<sup>28</sup> will effect a change immeasurably great in our understanding and will: it will give us a direct knowledge of the infinite Beauty of God; it will teach us indefinitely more than if all the wonders and mysteries of the great world of men and angels were at once unveiled to our eyes, and it will add to that divine illumination of the mind an equal ardour of the will, so that we shall ever desire, while ever finding, the perfection of happiness.

**Sanctifying Grace is caused in us by God through the Humanity of Christ.**—Since Sanctifying Grace places us at a height inaccessible to the natural power of even the greatest of the Archangels, it is clear that it can come to us from none other than God Himself. God alone—*i.e.*, the Blessed Trinity—is the source of all Grace; but He sends it to us through the Human Nature of Christ. Christ as Man is the living instrument of God; He is the arm of God; or, taking another comparison, we may represent Sanctifying Grace as the light of God's omnipotent Love passing through the wounds of Christ and flashing on the human soul where it produces the image of Him through whom it comes to us.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Chap. xviii., III.

<sup>29</sup> (a) To put this teaching in technical language: God is the *principal* cause of Grace; Christ as Man is the *instrumental* cause. This does not mean that God produces, as it were, the larger part of Grace, and that Christ produces the smaller part. "Principal Cause" means "Source-cause," the source from which *all* the Grace comes. Christ as Man, the *instrumental* cause, adds nothing of His own to it; He is its transmitter. (b) According to St. Thomas (S.T. III. q. 8, a. 2, c.), the entire humanity of Christ—His Soul and Body and Blood—co-operates in the production of Grace, and his teaching is reflected in the prayer indulged by the Church, "Soul of Christ, make me holy. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, bring joy to me." (c) When Grace is produced by a Sacrament, two instrumental causes are at work, *viz.*: Christ as Man and the Sacrament itself. To make this clear, let us adopt the illustration of St. Thomas (S.T. III., q. 62, a. 5. c.), who speaks of the human nature of Christ as "the arm of

**With Sanctifying Grace we receive the Divine Virtues, the Moral Virtues, and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.—THE DIVINE VIRTUES.**—With Sanctifying Grace we receive the three Divine Virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity.<sup>30</sup> They are called Divine, because the acts that belong to them are directly prompted by God Himself under some aspect: we believe in God because of His truthfulness; we hope in God because of His willingness to help us; we love God because of His own goodness and loveliness. Faith opens our eyes to all that we must believe and do in order to be saved; Hope buoys us up and encourages us to struggle and persevere; Charity makes us the friends of God. In heaven Faith will be changed to sight; and, with the attainment of all we desired, the need for Hope will disappear; but Charity will remain: it draws us near to God in this life, and it will unite us ever so much more closely to Him in the embrace of love throughout the life to come.

**THE MORAL VIRTUES.**—The Moral Virtues are all those other virtues which are necessary for a good

God" because inseparably united to Him, while he compares the Sacrament to an implement—let us say, a sculptor's chisel—held in the fingers of Christ. God—Christ as Man—the Sacrament, all three are true causes of Grace, but not in the same way: God is the principal cause, while the other two are instrumental. St. Thomas in this comparison brings out the idea that the humanity of Christ is joined to God in inseparable union, and is always used by Him in the production of Sanctifying Grace; on the other hand, he wishes to convey that a Sacrament is a means which God may or may not employ. God, as we know, often gives Sanctifying Grace outside the Sacraments.

The reference to the sculptor must not mislead us. To some extent a statue owes its shape to the quality of the chisel and the deftness of the artist's fingers; but the grace produced in a soul owes its *entire* being to God, and is merely transmitted through the sacred instruments He uses.

<sup>30</sup> We must bear in mind that a virtue such as spoken of here is not a *facility*, but a *capacity*, for performing good works. We may illustrate by comparing the virtues to the limbs of the body: our feet enable us to walk, our hands to grasp, but it is only by frequent exercise that we acquire a *facility* in performing these actions.

Christian life. They may be grouped under the four main headings: Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST.—The nature of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost is explained in the chapter on the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Can we know if we are in Grace?—No one can know with absolute certainty that he is in the state of grace: "man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred."<sup>31</sup> St. Thomas says that we may conjecture from the following three signs that we are in God's favour:—(a) if we find contentment and delight in the thought of God, *i.e.*, in reflecting on His goodness and loving care of us, in uplifting our mind and heart in prayer, and in frequenting the Sacraments; (b) if we despise earthly things, *i.e.*, if we are detached from pleasures and riches, not desiring them for their own sakes but for use in the service of God; (c) if we are not conscious of any unforgiven mortal sin.<sup>32</sup>

In adults, Sanctifying Grace is preserved and increased by good works.—SANCTIFYING GRACE IS PRESERVED BY GOOD WORKS.—We who have come to the use of reason cannot retain Sanctifying Grace, unless we prove by our actions that we are friends of God. Christ said to His Apostles:—"He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me . . . . He that loveth Me not, keepeth not My words."<sup>33</sup> We must, therefore, live as true friends of Christ; we must be obedient to His words as conveyed to us by His holy Church; we must bring forth the fruit of good works, by which are understood all the acts of virtue we perform with a supernatural motive, *i.e.*, a motive known to us by faith.

<sup>31</sup> *Eccles. ix. 1.*

<sup>32</sup> *S.T., I-II, q. 112, a. 5.*

<sup>33</sup> *St. John xiv. 21, 24.*

SANCTIFYING GRACE IS INCREASED BY GOOD WORKS.<sup>34</sup>—Through Sanctifying Grace we are made living branches of the vine of Christ: "I am the vine," He says, "you are the branches . . . . Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He"—*i.e.*, God the Father—"will take away; and everyone that beareth fruit, He will purge it"—*i.e.*, dress, or prune, it—"that it may bring forth more fruit."<sup>35</sup> Thus, the branch that bears fruit will be given greater strength; its divine life, which is Sanctifying Grace, will continue to increase in proportion to the good works it produces. Hence, St. Peter bids us "grow in grace."<sup>36</sup> And, in the *Book of Proverbs*,<sup>37</sup> we read: "The path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forward and increaseth even to perfect day," *i.e.*, his soul becomes more and more resplendent as he grows in Sanctifying Grace. "He that is just," says St. John, "let him be justified still,"<sup>38</sup> *i.e.*, let him enlarge his store of Sanctifying Grace.

Good works cannot be performed without Actual Grace.—Every good work we perform is an act of one or more of the virtues. The virtues are, as it were, blossoms that appear on the branch the instant it is united to the mystic vine; and as the blossoms of an orchard tree will never yield fruit without sunshine and gentle rain, so without a help from God, known as Actual Grace, the virtues given with Sanctifying Grace will never produce the fruit of good works. Deprived of this help, we should be unable to keep God's Commandments, and so should lose Sanctifying Grace, which would thus prove a useless gift. Hence we say that Actual Grace is the due accompaniment of Sanctifying Grace—that is, God is urged by His own Wisdom and Justice to give it to us. What its nature is, we will presently consider.

<sup>34</sup> And by the Sacraments, as we shall see in the next Chapter.

<sup>35</sup> *St. John xv. 5, 2.*

<sup>37</sup> *iv. 18.*

<sup>36</sup> *2 St. Peter iii. 18.*

<sup>38</sup> *Apoc. xxii. 11.*

## B.

**Actual Grace : its nature. It enlightens the understanding. It strengthens the will.**—THE NATURE OF ACTUAL GRACE. Actual Grace is a supernatural gift of God, enabling us to do something towards eternal life. It is supernatural, because it is a help towards a happiness to which we, as creatures, can have no claim ; it is a transient, or passing aid, and is present in the soul only while the soul is acting ; it is like the electric current which, passing for an instant through the wire wound round an iron bar, gives the bar a momentary magnetic power ; while Sanctifying Grace, on the other hand, is of its nature something permanent, and is like the electric power in a storage battery. Sanctifying Grace makes us friends of God, while Actual Grace enables us to act the part of friends.

Actual Grace makes our acts pleasing to God because it makes them like the acts of Christ as Man. Thus, for instance, when by Actual Grace a sinner is made aware of his wickedness and begins to shrink from it as something detestable, his mind and his will are freely repeating the acts of the human mind and will of Jesus ; he is beginning to see and feel, though ever so obscurely, some of that dread vision of sin which filled the mind and oppressed the Heart of Jesus at Gethsemane. And when a just man is moved by Actual Grace to advance higher and higher in holiness, he is but reproducing or copying, in his imperfect way, the human acts of divine love that are constantly welling up in the Mind and the Heart of the Saviour. Hence we say that Actual Grace makes our acts pleasing to God by adding to them a divine or Christlike quality or flavour which we could not give them from our own natural powers.

Actual Grace works on our souls in a twofold manner :—(1) it enlightens the understanding, and (2) it strengthens the will and reduces the attractiveness of evil. According to St. Augustine, it effects “ not only that we discover what ought to be done, but also that we do what we have discovered ; not only that we believe what ought to be loved, but also that we love what we have believed.”<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *De Gratia Christi*, c. xii.

**ACTUAL GRACE ENLIGHTENS THE UNDERSTANDING.** It helps us to perceive the truths of Faith ; to keep them in mind ; to reason correctly about them ; to know what we should believe and do. When, for instance, we say to ourselves, “ God has revealed this : I must believe it,” or, “ This act is sinful : God forbids it : I must not do it,” or, “ God will be pleased with me, and make me love Him better, if I receive Holy Communion worthily,” or, “ What doth it profit me, if I gain the whole world and suffer the loss of my soul ? ”—in all this, we are thinking the thoughts that God’s grace has awaked in us. St. Paul says that we are not “ sufficient ”—*i.e.*, able—“ to think anything of ourselves, but all our sufficiency if from God.”<sup>40</sup> “ God calls us,” says St. Augustine, “ by our innermost thoughts.”<sup>41</sup>

**ACTUAL GRACE STRENGTHENS THE WILL AND LESSENS THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF EVIL.** Actual Grace inspires the will with fear of God’s anger, with zeal for His service, with desire for the happiness of His love. It helps us to fight down our passions, to resist the call of the world that would make us forget God in the cares of business, the amassing of wealth, the pursuit of secular knowledge. While leaving us free to accept it or reject it, it has the power, if we obey its impulse, to bind our hearts so firmly to God that nothing outside ourselves—no suffering, no blandishment—can ever relax its hold. It gave the mother of the Machabees the strength to witness unmoved the torture of her seven sons, and to exhort her youngest to have pity on her and to die for the faith as bravely as his brothers.<sup>42</sup> It made the Apostles and the Martyrs rejoice that they were found worthy to tread the blood-stained footprints of their Master. Its power was before the inspired mind of St. Paul when he said :

<sup>40</sup> 2 *Cor.* iii. 5.

<sup>41</sup> *In Ps.* cii. 16.

<sup>42</sup> 2 *Mach.* vii.—God gave grace under the Old Testament in consideration of the merits of the Redeemer who was to come.

"I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."<sup>43</sup>

**Actual Grace helps the Sinner and the unbeliever to acquire Sanctifying Grace.**—The state of Sanctifying Grace is opposed to the state of sin; both cannot exist in the soul at the same time; the one excludes the other, as light excludes darkness. But there is no such opposition between Actual Grace and sinfulness, because Actual Grace does not make the *soul* holy—it is only Sanctifying Grace can do that—but it makes our *acts* holy; hence it is given to the sinner and the unbeliever as well as to the just. It is in fact the very means God uses to draw all erring souls to Him. To the unbeliever, He gives sufficient light to know the truth, and sufficient strength to embrace it; to the sinner, He gives the grace of repentance. He leads both to the Sacraments, the unbeliever to Baptism, the sinner to Penance.<sup>44</sup>

**Complete Definition of Actual Grace.**—We are now able to give a complete definition of Actual Grace. It is a supernatural help from God, which, working within us, enlightens our mind and moves our will to do good and avoid evil for the sake of eternal life.—Another definition may also be given, *viz.*, Actual Grace is a supernatural

<sup>43</sup> *Rom.* viii. 38, 39.—From the intimate union of soul and body in the living man, it follows that every act of the intellect or the will is accompanied by some vibration or movement in the nervous system. Hence, it may, perhaps, be argued that the grace, *e.g.*, which reforms a drunkard, effects some transformation in the sensuous appetite.

<sup>44</sup> As to how the unbeliever is led on to make his first Act of Faith, see Part I., chapter on Faith.—According to the Council of Trent, we may trace, as a rule, four stages in the progress of the new convert and the baptized sinner towards Sanctifying Grace, *viz.*, (1) from faith to fear of God's judgments; (2) from fear to trust in the Divine mercy and hope of forgiveness; (3) from hope to initial love (*i.e.*, they begin to turn to God and to desire Him as the source of every good, and to turn away from sin as the cause of ruin and misery); (4) from initial love to contrition and a firm purpose to begin a new life. If the contrition be perfect, Sanctifying Grace is at once received. Perfect Contrition contains the implicit desire of Baptism, in the case of the unbeliever, and of the Sacrament of Penance, in the case of the sinner; if the sinner's contrition be imperfect, the actual reception of the Sacrament of Penance will be necessary.

help from God which, working within us, enables us to perform acts that lead to the acquisition, or effect the preservation and increase of Sanctifying Grace.

## C

**External Grace.**—The grace of which we have been speaking so far is *internal* grace, so called because it dwells or acts *within* the soul. All the other helps which God gives us towards heaven are included under the term *external* grace. Thus, the Incarnation, the Scripture, and the Church are External Graces; they are external, because they are not actually present within our souls. However, in ordinary speech, we are inclined to restrict the term "External Grace" to circumstances or incidents, apparently casual, which God makes use of to prepare us for the reception of His internal grace. Our birth and upbringing in a Christian household, our education at a Christian school, our easy access to a church and the ministrations of a priest, all these are great External Graces, for which we should express our gratitude to Divine Providence every day we live. Any seeming accident that leads us to God is an accident only in name; it is in truth an External Grace. What could appear more fortuitous than a man's entering a church to escape a shower of rain, or his purposeless glance at a religious book? Yet we know that God uses such incidents to effect the conversion of sinners. The wound which the soldier Ignatius received at the siege of Pampeluna seemed to be a mere accident, but it was the natural means God employed to make him a great saint. We should not forget, however, that External Grace is grace only in a loose sense. The true grace is internal and works within us. Hence, for instance, our birth in a Christian home would have been of no profit to us, had not God given us the light to see the truth of all we were taught there, and the will to love Him; hence, too, St. Ignatius's reading of the *Lives*

of the Saints during his hours of convalescence would have been nothing more than the pastime he intended it to be, had not God's grace been at work on him. God sometimes chooses to dispense altogether with External Grace and to work a miracle in the supernatural order, an instance of which is the conversion of St. Paul, whose frenzy as a persecutor of the Church, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord,"<sup>45</sup> was suddenly changed into an equal or greater zeal for the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ.

### III

**Merit, true and imperfect.**—To merit a supernatural reward is to have a claim to it by reason of some service or good work done. The claim may be just, or it may be merely reasonable. In the former case, one merits truly or perfectly; in the latter, imperfectly.

To merit *truly* a reward from God, we require the following conditions:—(1) On our part, good works, *i.e.*, virtuous acts done freely in the state of grace from a supernatural motive; such acts have a special dignity or worth in the sight of God: they are the acts of His friends, performed with the aid of His Actual Grace. (2) On the part of God, the promise to reward us.

The sinner cannot merit any reward truly, because he is not in the state of grace; but, by co-operating with Actual Grace, he establishes a claim on God's mercy, and is said to merit *imperfectly* the further graces he needs for his conversion.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Acts ix. 1.

<sup>46</sup> It is only adults who can merit: "Good works" cannot be performed by those who have not come to the use of reason. At death, all opportunity of merit ceases: "The night cometh when no man can work," St. John ix. 4.—Compare what is said above with the section on the merit of Christ, Ch. VIII, The Redemption, "Christ's work for our salvation, considered under four aspects."

NOTE.—The good works by which we merit are not of any advantage to God: "when you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do."<sup>47</sup> But, though God is not benefited by our works, He has promised to reward us: it is precisely because of His promise that we can merit truly.

**The Just man by good works truly merits eternal life, an increase of Sanctifying Grace and of glory hereafter.**<sup>48</sup>—God not only enables the just man by actual grace to perform good works, but promises him a reward for so doing. "Be glad and rejoice," says our Divine Saviour to all whom He had mentioned in the "Beatitudes";—"Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven."<sup>49</sup> "Be faithful unto death," He says to us in the Apocalypse,<sup>50</sup> "and I will give thee the crown of life." And St. Paul says that God "will render to every man according to his works, to them indeed who . . . seek glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life."<sup>51</sup> The just man, therefore, in virtue of God's promise, truly merits a reward in heaven proportioned to his good works.<sup>52</sup> The more precious, in the sight of God, are the good works that stand to a man's credit at death, the greater will be his eternal happiness; but since capacity for eternal happiness is given by Sanctifying Grace, it follows that the just man truly merits an increase of this grace by his good works.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>47</sup> St. Luke xvii. 10.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. St. Thomas, S.T. I-II, q. 114, a. 8; and T 809.

<sup>49</sup> St. Matt. v. 12.

<sup>50</sup> Apoc. ii. 10.

<sup>51</sup> Rom. ii. 6, 7; cf. 2 Tim. iv. 8; 1 Cor. iii. 8; Col. iii. 25.

<sup>52</sup> But remember that the reception of the Sacraments, though not technically classified among "good works," can also give him a claim to eternal life, an increase of Sanctifying Grace and of glory.

<sup>53</sup> Merit, though lost by mortal sin, is restored on the recovery of Sanctifying Grace: this has long been the teaching of theologians, including St. Thomas; it has already appeared in an official document, *viz.*, the Proclamation of the Holy Year (1925), issued by Pope Pius XI.

NOTE.—While it is true that neither man nor angel can ever attain to the sublime elevation of holiness enjoyed by the human soul of Christ or by His Blessed Mother, it is still an inspiring thought that, on a lower plane of sanctity, we can, by our acts from day to day, constantly increase and intensify indefinitely our measure of Sanctifying Grace. One grain of wheat may in time fill all the granaries of the world; it is so with Sanctifying Grace; but yet there is a difference: the multiplication of the grain of wheat depends, not on the good-will of the sower, but on soil and weather, and may be frustrated by unfavourable conditions, while Sanctifying Grace cannot be denied its increase, except through our own fault.

#### IV

The doctrines of Original Sin, the Redemption, and Grace, are so intimately related, that the denial of any one of them leads to a denial of the other two.

PELAGIANISM.—Pelagius (c. 400 A.D.) held:—(a) That the sin of our first parents was not transmitted to their posterity; (b) that Christ came into the world, not to restore anything we had lost, but to set up an ideal of virtue, and so counteract the evil example of Adam; (c) that we can, of our own natural powers, and without any internal assistance from God, merit the happiness of the Beatific Vision. *Observations.*—(1) The doctrines of Pelagius were condemned as heretical by several Popes and Councils. (2) They are refuted by the arguments given in this and the preceding chapters. (3) His followers, overwhelmed by the reasoning of St. Augustine, almost completely abandoned their master's position, and contented themselves with holding that man can truly merit the first grace. This error, called SEMI-PELAGIANISM, was also condemned.

LUTHERANISM, CALVINISM, JANSENISM.<sup>54</sup>—According to these systems, Original Sin has utterly annihilated free will. Man is the plaything of God or Satan, of grace or of sinful desire, and

<sup>54</sup> The heresy known as Jansenism is found in the work, *Augustinus*, written by Cornelius Jansen, Bishop of Ypres († 1638), but not published until two years after his death. He died in communion with the Church, professing full submission to her decrees. Man, he held, is the helpless victim of rival forces: grace urging him to what is good, concupiscence to what is evil; he acts virtuously or sinfully according to the relative strength of these forces. His followers were remarkable for the rigorous conditions they exacted of penitents and communicants.

is incapable of freely choosing right or wrong. Luther held that every act of man is sinful, but that he can be saved by "faith," which he understood to mean a trust that God, for the sake of Christ, will not charge us with our sins. The sins themselves, he contended, always remain in the soul. Calvin adopted this teaching, but his more logical mind led him on to the crowning absurdity that the very saving act of faith is itself a sin. *Observations.*—(1) We may regard as self-condemned any system that rests on a denial of human liberty. (2) If every act of man were sinful, then every commandment of God, *e.g.*, to honour and love Him, to be just, truthful, &c., would be a commandment to commit sin. (3) The doctrine that faith alone saves us, purports to be based on the words of St. Paul:—"For we account a man to be justified by faith without the works of the law."<sup>55</sup> Luther falsified the text by deliberately inserting the word "alone" after "faith." By the same process, he might have proved that hope, and not faith, is the one and only essential for salvation; for the Apostle says elsewhere:—"We are saved by hope."<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, he completely ignored or misinterpreted St. Paul's teaching on charity: "If I should have all faith, so that I should remove mountains; and have not charity, I am nothing."<sup>57</sup> The Council of Trent upheld human dignity by defining that man's will is free; that he has not been utterly corrupted by Original Sin; and that even without Grace or Baptism he is capable of morally good acts.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Rom. iii. 28.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* viii. 24.

<sup>57</sup> I Cor. xiii. 2.

<sup>58</sup> *i.e.*, acts of obedience to the natural law. See Part I., p. 160. "Outside the Church there is no salvation" (2).



## CHAPTER X

## THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL

## Summary.

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
  - II. Definition of Sacrament.
  - III. The Minister and the Subject of a Sacrament.
  - IV. The Sacraments are true causes of grace.
  - V. The number of the Sacraments; the Blessed Eucharist, how related to the other Sacraments. The relation of prayer to Sacramental Grace.
- Appendix. The Sacramentals.

## I

**The Solemn teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly:—(1) that there are seven Sacraments, neither more nor less, *viz.*, Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony; <sup>1</sup> (2) that all the Sacraments were instituted by Christ Himself; <sup>1</sup> (3) that they truly cause grace in him who is fit to receive them; <sup>2</sup> (4) that the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Order imprint a *character*, or indelible mark, on the soul, and that, therefore, they cannot be received more than once; <sup>3</sup> (5) that, to confer a Sacrament validly, the minister must intend to do what the Church does, but it is not necessary that he be in the state of grace.<sup>4</sup>

## II

**Definition of Sacrament.**—A Sacrament is an outward rite <sup>5</sup> instituted by Christ, the Son of God, to signify grace, and to give the grace it signifies.

<sup>1</sup> F 695; T 844.    <sup>2</sup> T 849, 850, 851.    <sup>3</sup> T 852.    <sup>4</sup> T 860.

<sup>5</sup> "An outward rite," *i.e.*, an outward act or action, appointed by God for frequent and public use, as a means of sanctification or worship.—The word "instituted" in the text above means that the Sacraments were set up by Christ as permanent things, *i.e.*, for frequent and public use.

A SACRAMENT IS AN OUTWARD RITE. A Sacrament is an outward rite, because it can be perceived by the senses. Christ founded a visible Church; He, therefore, gave it visible, or outward, rites. Hence we find that men enter its membership by the public rite of Baptism; that its pastors are solemnly and publicly ordained; that marriages between its subjects take place in its presence; and, in general, that all openly profess their faith, and manifest their unity, by availing themselves of the same public rites, and by seeking spiritual life and strength at the same fountains of grace. Two other reasons may be mentioned, why Christ gave us these outward rites: (1) He wished us to know with certainty and through the evidence of our senses the exact moment His grace is given to us; "if you were without a body," says St. John Chrysostom, "He would have given you simple and incorporeal gifts, but since your soul is united to a body He gives you spiritual things in visible things."<sup>6</sup> (2) He wished to humble the ever insurgent pride of men by compelling them to use for their sanctification the simplest material things. He wished that we who, from the days of Adam, have been misusing His inanimate creatures for our spiritual ruin, should turn back humbly to things of the same order, and use them as instruments of holiness.<sup>7</sup>

**THE SACRAMENTS WERE INSTITUTED BY CHRIST.** Christ Himself is the institutor of all the Sacraments, (a) because He earned by His Passion, and marked off, the grace which each should confer, and (b) because He personally appointed the several sacramental rites,—in detail for Baptism and the Blessed Eucharist, and in general outline for the rest.

<sup>6</sup> *Hom. ad pop. Ant.* (Breviary, iv. Lesson, Sund. within Oct. Corp. Christi).

<sup>7</sup> St. Thomas, S.T., III. q. 61, a. 1.

**THE SACRAMENTS CONFER GRACE.** The Sacraments confer Sanctifying Grace, or an increase thereof. They also confer Sacramental Grace, by which is meant the claim to the special actual graces that help us to attain the object of each.<sup>8</sup>

**THE SACRAMENTS SIGNIFY THE GRACE THEY CONFER.** The Sacraments signify, or indicate, the grace they confer, (1) because, in each, words are used which clearly point to the spiritual effect produced, *e.g.*, "I baptize thee . . . .," "I absolve thee from thy sins . . . ."; and (2) because, in each, the meaning of the words is enforced or illustrated by the ceremony itself. In Baptism, Confirmation, Extreme Unction, and Holy Order, the words are accompanied by an appropriate action or gesture: thus, in Baptism, the washing with water signifies the spiritual cleansing; in Confirmation, the anointing signifies strengthening, and in Extreme Unction, healing; in Holy Order, the imposition of hands signifies the giving of the Holy Ghost. In the Blessed Eucharist, the bread and wine over which the priest utters the words of consecration, suggest the spiritual food into which they are to be changed. In Penance, the whole ceremony has the appearance of an act of reconciliation; the sorrowful confession of guilt at the tribunal of mercy presaging and pointing to the absolution that is to follow. Matrimony signifies grace, not exactly from the words used or any action accompanying them, but because, as we are taught by the Holy Spirit, speaking to us through the lips of St. Paul,<sup>9</sup> Christian marriage is a figure of the union, so fruitful in spiritual gifts, of Christ with His Church.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> As to the object or purpose of each Sacrament, see § below, "The number of the Sacraments" (2).

<sup>9</sup> *Eph. v. 22-33.*

<sup>10</sup> In explaining how the Sacraments signify grace, the distinction between *matter* and *form* has been advisedly omitted. The *matter* is that part of the Sacrament which vaguely signifies the effect produced;

### III

**The Minister and the Subject of a Sacrament.**—**THE MINISTER OF A SACRAMENT.** The Minister is he who performs the sacramental rite.

*Qualifications of the Minister.* The Minister must be qualified for his office; thus, for all the Sacraments except Baptism and Matrimony, he must be in Holy Orders; <sup>11</sup> Baptism may be administered by a layman; Matrimony is conferred by the parties to the sacred contract.

*Conditions required of the Minister in the act of conferring a Sacrament.* (a) The Minister must employ the proper form of words, or words of the same meaning; he must perform the prescribed action; he must use the prescribed thing (*e.g.*, water in the case of Baptism; oil in the case of Extreme Unction).—(b) He must intend to do what the Church does, or to do as Catholics or Christians do.<sup>12</sup>

If the Minister be duly qualified, and if the conditions required of him be present, the Sacrament is validly, or truly, conferred. It is not essential that the Minister be in the state of grace or even believe in the efficacy of the rite: <sup>13</sup> the condition of his soul does not affect the validity of his act. The reason is that the virtue of what he does comes, not from him, but from Christ.

the *form* is that part which definitely signifies the effect: thus, in Baptism, the washing with water, by which some kind of cleansing is denoted, is the *matter*, while the *form* consists in the words, "I baptize thee," etc. In the case of some of the Sacraments, particularly Penance and Matrimony, these terms raise difficulties and lead to discussions beyond the reach of beginners.

<sup>11</sup> Fuller particulars are given below in the separate treatment of each of the Sacraments.

<sup>12</sup> Pope Leo XIII. in the Bull, *Apostolicae Curvae*, condemned Anglican Orders as invalid, on the ground that the apostate bishops during Reformation times, while professing to confer priesthood, openly repudiated the notion that they were ordaining men to offer sacrifice, and hence expressly excluded the intention of the Church.

<sup>13</sup> The Church teaches solemnly that Baptism given by a heretic is valid. T 860.

Christ is the Principal Minister of all the Sacraments—*i.e.*, He works through the voice and hands of the earthly Minister.<sup>14</sup> As early as the third century, Pope St. Stephen (253–7) declared, against the learned St. Cyprian, that the Church had always held that a Sacrament can be validly conferred by a heretic; and St. Augustine says that whether it be Peter or Paul or Judas who administers Baptism, it is equally Christ who baptizes.<sup>15</sup>

**THE SUBJECT OF A SACRAMENT.** The Subject of a Sacrament is he who receives it. All the Sacraments, with the exception of the Blessed Eucharist, exist only at the moment when they are being conferred on the subject. The Blessed Eucharist, from its very nature, does not merely consist, like the other Sacraments, in a passing action, but in the continued presence of Christ under the appearances of bread and wine; and as corporal food is food independently of its consumption, so the Blessed Eucharist exists as spiritual food independently of its reception by the faithful in Holy Communion.

*The valid reception of the Sacraments.* To receive a Sacrament validly is to receive it really or truly. To receive a Sacrament invalidly is to receive it merely in appearance but not in reality.—(a) To receive a Sacrament validly, the Subject *must be capable of receiving it*: thus, a priest is incapable of receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony; a woman is incapable of receiving Holy Order. Those who have not received Baptism are incapable of receiving the other Sacraments. Even the Blessed Eucharist produces no effect whatever on the souls of the unbaptized.—(b) Adults cannot receive any Sacrament validly without *the intention or will to receive it*. For infants and those who never have had the use of reason, no intention is required for the valid reception of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Blessed Eucharist.

<sup>14</sup> See below § “The Sacraments are true causes of grace.”

<sup>15</sup> *In Ioannis Evang., tract vi, section 7.*

*The worthy or fruitful reception of the Sacraments.* To receive a Sacrament worthily is to receive it with the due dispositions; to receive it fruitfully is to receive the graces it gives. Worthy reception is, therefore, practically the same as fruitful reception, the former expression looking chiefly to the recipient's fitness, the latter to the good effects produced.

The Sacraments are divided into *Sacraments of the Dead* (Baptism and Penance) and *Sacraments of the Living* (the other five), according as the primary end of their institution is to give Sanctifying Grace to a soul devoid of it, or to augment it in a soul already possessing it. The *Sacraments of the Dead* are so called, because they raise the soul from spiritual death to spiritual life, while the *Sacraments of the Living* get their name from their presupposing the presence in the soul of spiritual life, or Sanctifying Grace, which they augment or intensify.—For the *worthy* reception of the *Sacraments of the Dead*, adults require faith, hope, and at least attrition for grave sin committed;<sup>16</sup> for the *worthy* reception of the *Sacraments of the Living*, they must be in the state of grace.—Two points may, however, be noted: (1) A Sacrament of the Dead, if received in the state of grace, gives an increase of grace like a Sacrament of the Living; (2) it is generally held that a Sacrament of the Living will give Sanctifying Grace to one in mortal sin, provided he has imperfect contrition and is unaware at the moment of his sinful state.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Since attrition is founded on faith, and must always be accompanied by the hope of salvation, it would have been sufficient to mention attrition as the only essential for the worthy reception of Baptism or Penance by one who has committed grave sin. See Vermeersch, *Theol. Mor., De Sac. in genere*, p. 165.

<sup>17</sup> This doctrine has an important bearing on the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist, supplying us with the practical direction, *viz.*, “Do not abstain from Holy Communion because of a doubt.” Even though he who doubts is, as a fact, burthened with grievous sin, it is none the less true that he is “unaware of his sinful state.” Holy

*Sacrilegious reception of the Sacraments.*—A person who knowingly and wilfully approaches a Sacrament of the Living in mortal sin, or a Sacrament of the Dead without proper dispositions, profanes what is most holy, and commits the grave sin of sacrilege. The holiness of a Sacrament is beyond our full comprehension; it is a source of grace, and grace is the fruit of the Precious Blood of Christ.

## IV

**The Sacraments are true causes of grace.**—Christ the Son of God is the invisible Head of the Church: He teaches us through her lips; He sanctifies us through the Sacraments He has committed to her; He has made them true causes of grace. As the water of the distant reservoir gushes forth at fountains and hydrants all over a city, so the great reservoir of grace, filled for us by the Passion and Death of Christ, sends forth its living water at its appointed outlets, the Sacraments. As surely as our Saviour cleansed the leper by touching him and saying, "Be thou made clean";<sup>18</sup> as surely as He raised Lazarus to life with the words, "Lazarus, come forth";<sup>19</sup> as surely as He multiplied with His blessing the loaves and fishes;<sup>20</sup> so surely does He work grace in our souls through the Sacraments. Just as on earth, virtue came forth from His Divine Person through His Sacred Humanity, so now Grace comes from that same Divine Person through the medium of the Sacraments. In the Sacraments, we touch, as it were, His very hands,

Communion together with an act of attrition will restore his soul to Sanctifying Grace; he may, therefore, approach the altar with the confidence of an invited guest.

<sup>18</sup> St. Matt. viii. 3.

<sup>19</sup> St. John xi. 43. Christ as Man uttered the command of God—the command of the Three Divine Persons—when raising Lazarus to life. Christ as Man spoke the words, but the power which those words called into action was the infinite power of God.

<sup>20</sup> St. Matt. xiv. 19.

and hear His voice. It is He who through them produces the effect of grace. Neither the Minister nor the Subject is a contributory cause.—This last point may be better understood from the following illustration: A king's treasure-house is filled with heavy bars of gold. A warden is in charge of the door, and opens to all who have the right of entry. Each one who comes takes away with him as much gold as he can carry. Some take several bars, others few, and others again, because of their weakness, none at all. The treasure-house is the Sacrament; the gold is the grace it gives; the warden is the Minister; those who come for the gold are the Subjects of the Sacrament, and their strength represents their good dispositions. To apply the figure in detail:—As the warden turns the key effectively whether he be a loyal servant or not, so the Minister confers the Sacrament validly, whatever be the condition of his soul in the eyes of God. Again, as he who visits the treasure-house bears away as much gold as his strength allows, so the Subject of a Sacrament receives grace according to his good dispositions: the better the dispositions, the more grace is received; and, if there be no good dispositions, then no grace is obtained. Lastly, as the strength of the visitor to the treasure-house does not, as a cause, contribute one ounce or one grain to his share of gold, so the good dispositions do not contribute as causes to one's share of grace, but merely enable one to receive it in greater or less abundance; as all the gold is the gift of the king, so all the grace is the gift of God. Hence, we say, technically, that good dispositions are not a *cause* of grace but a *condition*, *i.e.*, they do not themselves contribute anything to the grace received through the Sacrament, but merely regulate or determine the amount we are fit to receive.

**Note:** (1) It follows from the preceding that the Sacraments may be validly and lawfully received, but

with little fruit because of imperfect dispositions. A series of careless Confessions and Communion may easily end in sinful indifference to these most precious gifts of Christ, and in the shipwreck of faith.

(2) Since the Sacraments are the instruments by which Christ conveys His grace to us,<sup>21</sup> it follows that they are not mere signs of grace. It follows also that their holiness is the holiness of Christ Himself, and that no one, no matter how perfect his dispositions may be, can exhaust the stream of Sanctifying Grace that flows through them.

## V

**The number of the Sacraments.**—(1) Had the Church never expressly defined that the Sacraments instituted by Christ are seven in number, the doctrine could still have been inferred with certainty from the facts of history. To-day the Greeks and Slavs, whose schism dates from the eleventh century, are in perfect accord with us on the divine institution, the number, the grace-giving power, and the use and identity of the Sacraments. So, too, the Nestorian and the Monophysite heretics, who left the Church in the fifth century. The bitter hostility of these Eastern sectaries excludes the possibility of their having borrowed anything from Rome since their defection. Nor did Rome, needless to observe, borrow anything from them. East and West, therefore, as far back as the fifth century, the doctrine with its practical application in the everyday life of the Christian, was recognised as an essential part of the true religion. Such unanimity of belief and practice at that early date puts its divine origin beyond question. The Bishops of the first four centuries were most zealous guardians of the faith, and would never have allowed any teaching or usage contrary to Apostolic tradition to creep unnoticed into the Church. The so-called Reformers of the sixteenth century presumed to remodel the Church of Christ and its instructions. By denying that the Sacraments give grace, by reducing their number from seven to three or two, and, in particular, by their rejection of the Sacrament

<sup>21</sup> See preceding chapter, § " Sanctifying Grace is caused in us by God through the humanity of Christ," and the footnote.

of Holy Order with its power to consecrate the Blessed Eucharist and to forgive sin, they left themselves but a poor remnant of Christianity; they broke the cisterns of grace given them by Christ.

(2) Christ gave us seven Sacraments, because such is the number of our spiritual needs. The first five in the list concern Christians as individuals; the last two concern Christians as members of a society.

*The Sacraments for individuals.* The Church on earth is the Church Militant, an army engaged in spiritual warfare. The comparison helps us to grasp the significance of the Sacraments appointed for the welfare of the individual. Through Baptism, he is born, as it were, into a race of warriors. In Confirmation, he comes of age, he takes arms, and goes forth a fully-equipped soldier to battle with the evil one. He is fed and nourished with the spiritual food of the Blessed Eucharist. If he be wounded by sin, Penance is at hand to restore him to health. In his last contest, Extreme Unction completes the healing process of Penance, removes any vestiges of weakness, and gives him strength and courage to win the soldier's reward, which, for him, is death in the state of grace and Heaven for eternity.

*The social Sacraments.* Since the Sacraments are rites of a visible Church, and are designed for the welfare of its members, they may all be described as "social," but the term can be applied with particular justice to Holy Order and Matrimony as promoting in a very special way the general well-being of the whole Christian society. The former provides the Church with a succession of bishops and priests to teach, govern, and sanctify the faithful, while the latter consecrates family life, and gives parents the grace to help by their instruction and good example in giving the Church a new generation of worthy members. Thus, Holy Orders perpetuates the government of the Church; Matrimony, its membership.

**THE BLESSED EUCHARIST IN ITS RELATION TO THE OTHER SACRAMENTS.** In the mind of St. Thomas, not only the Sacrament of Order, but also the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Extreme Unction and Matrimony are, as it were, the servants of the Blessed Eucharist (S.T., III, q. 65, a. 3, c.). *Baptism* is administered by the Church with the intention that its recipient should obey the command of Christ to nourish his soul on the Divine Food of the Blessed Eucharist (cf. S.T., III, q. 73, a. 2, c.); it is conceived as preparing the soul for the Blessed Eucharist. *Confirmation* completes the preparation begun in

Baptism; it encourages us to come more frequently to the Lord's Table, and enables us, by its Gifts and Graces, to derive more profit from the Sacred Banquet. *Penance* removes the obstacles to the worthy reception of the Blessed Eucharist. *Extreme Unction*, which the dying receive immediately after the Viaticum, helps them to a more perfect union with Christ who dwells within them. *Holy Order* was instituted for the service of the Altar, for the Sacrifice of the Mass, for the distribution of Holy Communion and for the preparation of souls for its reception. *Matrimony*, by its graces, enables parents to train their children by word and example to love God above all things, and to nurture and increase their love of Him by means of the Blessed Eucharist.

THE RELATION OF PRAYER TO SACRAMENTAL GRACE. The question may be asked: "If the Sacrament of Baptism, *e.g.*, gives us the right to all the actual graces essential for a good Christian life, how, then, can it be held that prayer too is necessary?" We may note in reply:—(1) The actual graces to which Baptism gives us a claim enable us to perform all the duties of a Christian life. One of these duties is the duty of prayer, the prayer of petition as well as the prayer of praise. Thus, the actual grace which moves us to pray,—the grace of prayer, in other words—comes to us from the Sacrament of Baptism. God does, indeed, give this grace of prayer to the unbaptized and the sinner, but He gives it in special fulness to the living members of His Church, and in such a form that they are urged to ask His help to live up to the Christian ideal.

(2) The claim which the Sacraments give us to obtain from God a whole series of actual graces is indeed a true claim to which God pays special heed; but He requires us to present the claim to Him as humble servants in the form of prayer.

(3) God does not deal with us as though we were mere machines. He deals with us as living men with understanding and will. Hence, *e.g.*, when He gives those who have been confirmed the grace to overcome temptations against faith, He enlightens their mind to see the danger and moves their will to ask Him for further help to turn away from it. The very act of turning away from sin is in the nature of prayer, for it is a turning to God, a profession that we wish to belong to Him and not to Satan. It is so with every actual grace we receive through the other Sacraments: our conscious correspondence with it is always a form of prayer.

## APPENDIX

### THE SACRAMENTALS

(1) Sacramentals are outward signs appointed by the Church to give spiritual and temporal blessings. They are of two kinds, *permanent* and *transient*. Permanent Sacramentals are things that have been blessed, as holy-water, medals, or rosary-beads. Transient Sacramentals are sacred actions performed by the ministers of the Church and with her authority; they are of three kinds, *viz.*, *consecrations*, *blessings*, and *exorcisms*. By *consecration* men are invested with some sacred office (not a Holy Order), as, *e.g.*, the office of Abbot, or things are withdrawn from profane use and dedicated to the service of God, *e.g.*, churches, altars, and chalices. By *blessing* the grace or protection of God is invoked on persons as at Benediction with the Most Holy Sacrament, at the blessing given by a priest or bishop, or on things, as at the blessing of crops.<sup>22</sup> An *exorcism* is an order of banishment addressed to an evil spirit in the name of Christ and the Church.

(2) The Sacramentals differ in many ways from the Sacraments:—*e.g.*, (a) The Sacraments were instituted by Christ; the Sacramentals have been instituted by the Church.—(b) The Sacraments give Sanctifying Grace. The Sacramentals, though incapable of conferring that precious gift, are still an important means of access to the Divine mercy and favour: they give Actual Grace; they enable us to obtain pardon for venial sin; they procure for us temporal blessings: and, as appears from the words of the Roman Ritual, they afford us a special protection against the power and influence of evil spirits.—(c) The Sacraments are true causes of grace, and, therefore, produce their effects infallibly, when the proper dispositions are present. The Sacramentals are not causes of grace; their efficacy depends partly on the dispositions of him who uses them, partly on the good pleasure of God, who is moved by them, because they bear with them the petition of His Spouse, the Church. Her prayer is more powerful than that of any individual however holy.—(d) God has commanded us to receive the Sacraments. We are under no such command to receive or use the Sacramentals,

<sup>22</sup> The action of the Priest in blessing a rosary-beads is a *transient Sacramental* and belongs to this class. The set of beads when blessed is a *permanent Sacramental*.

but they are recommended to us by the Church as profitable for our spiritual and temporal welfare.

(3) Christ, as we read in the Sacred Scriptures, blessed little children; He blessed the loaves and fishes; and He expelled evil spirits. The Church in her Sacramentals continues to exercise His power: Christ lives in her, and, through her, He acts, as He acted while on earth.

(4) Many of the Sacramentals are as old as the Church herself. Holy-water is of great antiquity, for we find that, even in the fourth century, the faithful were wont to take it with them from the churches for use in their homes.

(5) No good Catholic will refuse to avail himself of the Sacramentals or will treat them with disrespect: St. Paul says that "nothing is to be rejected that is . . . sanctified by the word of God and prayer."<sup>23</sup>

## CHAPTER XI

### BAPTISM

#### Summary.

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. Baptism defined.—How it is conferred.—Solemn and Private Baptism.—Its Minister and its Subject.
- III. Its effects: grace and the Sacramental Character.—The "revival" of Baptism.
- IV. It is absolutely necessary for salvation either in fact or in desire.—The Baptism of the Holy Ghost.—The Baptism of Blood.
- V. Baptism directly instituted by Christ.—Note: The office of sponsor.
- VI. Solution of difficulties.

#### I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly: (1) that Baptism is a Sacrament;<sup>1</sup> (2) that it imprints a Character, or indelible mark, on the soul and cannot be repeated;<sup>2</sup> (3) that water is necessary for its administration;<sup>3</sup> (4) that it removes all stain of Original Sin and all stain of Actual Sin as well, together with the punishment due to it;<sup>4</sup> (5) that it is necessary for salvation;<sup>5</sup> (6) that it can be validly received by infants;<sup>6</sup> (7) that children when they grow up are not free to reject the Baptismal promises made for them by their sponsors.<sup>7</sup>

#### II

**Baptism defined.—How it is conferred.—Solemn and Private Baptism.—The Minister of Baptism.—Its Subject.**

**DEFINITION.** Baptism is the Sacrament which makes us Christians and children of God.

<sup>23</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 4.

<sup>1</sup> T 844.    <sup>2</sup> T 852.    <sup>3</sup> T 858.    <sup>4</sup> T 790, 792.    <sup>5</sup> T 861.  
<sup>6</sup> T 791, 869.    <sup>7</sup> T 870.

HOW IT IS CONFERRED. He who baptizes pours water <sup>8</sup> on the head of the person to be baptized while reciting the words: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."<sup>9</sup>

SOLEMN AND PRIVATE BAPTISM. Solemn Baptism is Baptism accompanied by all the ceremonies prescribed by the Church.<sup>10</sup> Private Baptism consists of the bare essentials, *viz.*, the pouring of the water and the recital of the proper form of words. Solemn Baptism is given in a church; Private Baptism may be given anywhere.<sup>11</sup>

THE MINISTER OF BAPTISM. The ordinary minister of Solemn Baptism is a priest; the extraordinary minister is a deacon duly authorized by the bishop or the parish priest.—Private Baptism may be lawfully conferred in case of necessity by any person—cleric or layman—man,

<sup>8</sup> The Sacrament may also be validly conferred by a threefold immersion, as was the common practice in the Church down to the twelfth century, or by sprinkling with water. The latter method, however, was very rarely used.

<sup>9</sup> The words used by the Greek Church in communion with us are: "The servant of God is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."—We read in *Acts* ii. 38, x. 48, of Baptism "in the name of Jesus Christ." This does not mean that the Apostles said: "I baptize thee in the name of Christ." The phrase, "in the name of Christ," distinguishes the Baptism instituted by Christ from that of St. John the Baptist.

<sup>10</sup> The ceremonies include exorcisms and the anointing with Chrism.

<sup>11</sup> When a layman gives private Baptism, he should endeavour to secure, if possible, the presence of two witnesses and should draw up a baptismal certificate to which he and they should affix their signatures, and which he should send without delay to the priest in charge of the district or to the Bishop.

The following is a specimen of the required certificate:—"This day..... (give date), at..... (name the place), I baptized a child, the son (daughter) of..... (give the parents' names; if names unknown, say so).

"I baptized the child by pouring water on its head, saying at the same time: 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'"

"Signed (the baptizer signs his name and gives his address).

"We bear witness that the above statement is true.

"Signed (the witnesses sign and give their addresses)."

woman, or child—provided that he or she has attained the use of reason.<sup>12</sup> The case of necessity arises:—(a) when there is immediate danger of death; or (b) when, owing to circumstances, such as exist in missionary countries, Solemn Baptism cannot be given without difficulty or long delay.

THE SUBJECT OF BAPTISM. The Subject of Baptism is anyone who has not yet received it.<sup>13</sup>

### III

The Effects of Baptism: Grace.—The Sacramental Character.—"The revival" of Baptism.—GRACE, BOTH SANCTIFYING AND SACRAMENTAL. Through Baptism we are given a new birth: by our natural birth, we are children of our parents; by our spiritual or supernatural birth in Baptism, we become children of God and heirs to His Kingdom. This is effected by *Sanctifying Grace*, which, poured into our soul, removes every trace of sin, original and actual, and extinguishes any debt of temporal punishment which we may have incurred through actual sin committed before Baptism. With Sanctifying Grace we receive *Sacramental Grace*, *i.e.*, the right to a series of actual graces which, if properly used, will enable us to live the new life of Brotherhood with Christ, of membership in His Mystic Body, by faithfully following in His footsteps and obeying all His commands.

THE SACRAMENTAL CHARACTER. A Sacramental Character is some permanent change made in the soul, specially fitting it for spiritual work. Since Baptism

<sup>12</sup> Since he who baptizes must have the intention of doing what the Church does (see Chap. on Sacraments in General, § "The conditions required of the Minister" (b)), it follows that he must possess the use of reason.

<sup>13</sup> See preceding Chap., § "The Minister and the Subject of a Sacrament," on the valid and the fruitful reception of Baptism and the other Sacraments.



imprints a Character, it cannot be repeated : as a man can be born but once of his natural parents, so he can be born but once into the Church of God. By the Baptismal Character : (1) we are made members of the body whose head is Christ, *i.e.*, we become citizens and subjects of the Church ; (2) we become capable of receiving the other Sacraments ; we become capable of joining with the priest in the Church's great act of public worship, *viz.*, the Sacrifice of the Mass ;<sup>14</sup> we become capable of participating in all the special blessings bestowed by Christ on the Church in our behalf.—Baptism is, as it were, a compact between God and man ; God gives spiritual life and promises all the means necessary to preserve and increase it ; man, on his side, renounces sin, undertakes to lead a good Christian life, and promises obedience to the pastors of the Church, and, in particular, to the Pope, the Vicar of Christ.<sup>15</sup>

“REVIVAL” OF BAPTISM. It is the general teaching, and must be held as certain, that Baptism validly, but unfruitfully, received, can “revive,” *i.e.*, can produce the grace proper to it, as soon as the recipient puts himself into the required dispositions.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Note that an *unbaptized* convert, though he may possess faith, hope, and charity, cannot *offer*, in the strict sense, the sacrifice of the Mass ; see Ch. XIII, B, “The Priest, the Victim, and the Altar of the Mass.” His acts of adoration, however pleasing they may be to God, are not accepted, as ours are, by the Divine Victim on the altar, who gives them a higher value, and so presents them to the Eternal Father.

<sup>15</sup> It is the solemn teaching of the Church that the Character is indelible, which means that it is permanent at least for this life ; the teaching that it is permanent also for the life to come, though not defined, is regarded as certain.

<sup>16</sup> This “revival” or recovery is made possible by reason of the Baptismal Character which remains in the soul. It is effected sometimes with the aid of the Sacrament of Penance, sometimes without it, as will be understood from the following cases :—(1) A man about to be baptized forgets that he has committed a grave sin of which he has never repented, and fails to make an act of attrition ; it is only after Baptism that he perceives the omission.—Such a person, by an act of attrition, can remove the obstacle to the operation of the Sacrament, and so receive all its graces.—(2) Suppose the previous case repeated, but with this addition, that after Baptism, and before discovering the

## IV

**The Necessity of Baptism for Salvation.—The substitutes for Baptism.**—THE NECESSITY OF BAPTISM FOR SALVATION. By “salvation” we mean, as has already been explained, the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision.<sup>17</sup> The Church teaches that Baptism is necessary for the salvation both of adults and of infants ; its necessity for adults is defined by the Council of Trent ;<sup>18</sup> its necessity for infants follows (1) from the condemnation of the Pelagians<sup>19</sup> who held that infants were saved without Baptism ; (2) from the ancient rule of the Church that all, infants as well as adults, should be immediately baptized when there was danger of death ; and (3) from the comprehensive words of Christ, “Unless a man be born again, of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,” (St. John iii. 5). Baptism makes us members of

necessity of making an act of attrition, he unfortunately commits some grave sin.—His remedy in this case is either (a) an act of perfect contrition with the firm purpose of going to Confession, or (b) an act of attrition with the Sacrament of Penance. The Sacrament of Penance forgives the sin committed after Baptism but not before it. Simultaneously with that forgiveness, his Baptism produces its full effect.—(3) If a man knowingly and wilfully receives the Sacrament of Baptism without attrition for grave sin, he commits the heinous crime of sacrilege ; his assent to that crime must necessarily continue for some moments after the reception of the Sacrament : his case is, therefore, the same as the preceding, and must receive the same solution.—The principle underlying this reasoning is that the Divine Mercy could not permanently exclude the repentant sinner from the graces of the Sacrament.—Note that the word “revival” is given inverted commas to indicate a certain want of aptness. Strictly taken, it implies that the Sacrament is *restored* to life, as though at some time previously it had been “alive.” A better term would be “vitalization” or “vivification.”

<sup>17</sup> Exclusion from salvation does not, therefore, necessarily mean a state of suffering. Children who die unbaptized are “lost” in the sense that they are shut out from Heaven, but not in the sense that they are denied a real, though infinitely lower, happiness.

<sup>18</sup> The Council of Trent defines : “If any one says that Baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation, let him be anathema.” The word “optional” (*liberum*) would seem to indicate that the Council speaks only of an adult, of one who is capable of making a free choice.

<sup>19</sup> See Chapter IX. § “Errors”

Christ, members of His Mystic Body. It is only those thus united to Him who can be saved.

NOTE.—Because of the absolute necessity of Baptism, the Church has made a law requiring that all infants should be baptized “as soon as possible”;<sup>20</sup> her command imposes a grave obligation on parents and guardians. If there is danger of death, the child should be baptized immediately; this is a case of necessity in which anyone may lawfully administer the Sacrament.<sup>21</sup>

THE SUBSTITUTES FOR BAPTISM. The words of Christ Himself show us that He accepts the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and the Baptism of Blood as substitutes for the Sacramental Baptism of water.

*The Baptism of the Holy Ghost.* By the Baptism of the Holy Ghost we mean an act of perfect contrition or perfect charity made by an adult who has not received Sacramental Baptism. It is termed Baptism by analogy, or comparison, because it resembles the Sacrament in producing Sanctifying Grace in the soul and in blotting out Original Sin and grave actual sin.<sup>22</sup>

It is Catholic doctrine that it has this power, as is proved from the words of Christ: “He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him”;<sup>23</sup> of Mary Magdalen He said, “Many sins are forgiven her because she hath loved much,” and turning to her He added, “Thy sins are forgiven thee”;<sup>24</sup> to the penitent thief who had expressed sorrow for his crimes, resignation in his sufferings, and belief that Christ after death would reign as a King, He addressed the words, “Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.”<sup>25</sup> Baptism of the Holy Ghost does not imprint the Sacramental Character; therefore, it does not make one a member of the visible Church

<sup>20</sup> C.C.L., 770. The phrase “as soon as possible” is generally interpreted to mean, “within a few days.”

<sup>21</sup> *id.* 771. See above, “The Minister of Baptism.”

<sup>22</sup> It is called Baptism of the Holy Ghost, because the Holy Ghost causes grace in the soul directly and not through the medium of any sacramental rite. It is sometimes, but less appropriately, spoken of as the Baptism of Desire, *i.e.*, desire of the Sacrament of Baptism.

<sup>23</sup> St. John xiv. 21.

<sup>24</sup> St. Luke vii. 47, 48.

<sup>25</sup> *id.* xxiii. 39–43.—The acts of charity referred to here were grounded on faith in the Incarnation. On the question whether less extensive faith would suffice, see Part I, pp. 222, 223, footnote 38 (3).

(nor does it necessarily remit all the temporal punishment due to sin); hence, the obligation remains of receiving the Sacrament at the earliest opportunity.

*The Baptism of Blood.* Baptism of Blood is martyrdom suffered by one who has not been baptized.—(1) Martyrdom, whether of baptized or unbaptized persons, is the endurance of death or deadly suffering for the sake of Jesus Christ. There are, therefore, two requisites: (a) the martyr must be put to death or endure sufferings that would naturally cause death;<sup>26</sup> (b) the persecutor must inflict death or deadly violence through opposition to the Church, the Catholic Faith, or a Christian Virtue;<sup>27</sup> in the case of adults, it is furthermore required: (c) that they endure death or deadly violence from a supernatural motive and do not try to save their lives by resistance;<sup>28</sup> (d) that they have made acts of Faith and Hope, and that they have at least attrition for grave sin committed. Hence a person with these dispositions, if, while unconscious, he be slain from hatred of Catholicity, is a martyr:—his attrition, by which he detests sin “above every other evil,” carries with it the implicit intention to suffer death rather than offend God by denying the faith.

(2) It is Catholic doctrine that the Baptism of Blood<sup>29</sup> blots out Original Sin, and all actual sin together with the punishment

<sup>26</sup> St. John the Evangelist is a martyr, because he was plunged into a cauldron of boiling oil. His life was miraculously preserved.

<sup>27</sup> A Christian killed for refusing to commit a sin against the virtue of Chastity is a martyr; so, too, a Christian who suffers death rather than commit the sin of perjury.

<sup>28</sup> Christ was slain by the enemies of truth, the enemies of God, and offered no resistance. The martyr's death is like the death of Christ; hence its great fruitfulness for the soul. Resistance, so far as it spoils the likeness to our Saviour's Passion, is inconsistent with martyrdom; that likeness is not, of course, spoiled in the case of one who resists an unchaste assailant solely for the purpose of escaping sin and defilement.—Soldiers who fall on the battle-field, fighting for God or virtue, may be martyrs, but since, in their case, it would be difficult to establish that there is no admixture of any merely human motive, such as self-protection or the desire of distinction, the Church follows the rule that *those who die as combatants must not be honoured as martyrs.*

<sup>29</sup> This title reminds us of the words of Christ when He spoke of the outpouring of His Blood as a “baptism” (St. Luke xii. 50); but though He was condemned to death by Caiaphas on a charge of blasphemy, His death should not be described as a “martyrdom,” but rather as a “sacrifice”: see Ch. VIII, The Redemption, § “Christ's work for our salvation, considered under four aspects.”

due to it. This is evident: (a) *from the words of Christ*; He has absolutely promised salvation to those who give their lives for the Gospel, "he that loseth his life for Me shall find it";<sup>30</sup> and again He says, "everyone that shall confess Me before men, I will confess him before My Father who is in heaven";<sup>31</sup> (b) *from the Tradition of the Church*: the Church honours as martyrs enjoying the blessedness of heaven many who were never baptized, e.g., the Holy Innocents massacred by Herod, St. Emerentiana and several others. St. Augustine says, "it would be an affront to pray for a martyr: we should rather commend ourselves to his prayers."<sup>32</sup>

Martyrdom does not imprint the Sacramental Character; hence an unbaptized martyr could not receive the Blessed Eucharist in his last moments without first receiving Sacramental Baptism.

NOTE.—Since the substitutes for Baptism are rightly held to imply a desire of its reception, the doctrine of the Church on the necessity of the Sacrament can be expressed in a form that excludes all exceptions, viz., *the Sacrament of Baptism received in fact or in desire is absolutely necessary for salvation.*

## V

**The Sacrament of Baptism was Instituted by Christ.**—PROOF FROM THE SOLEMN TEACHING OF THE CHURCH. The Church in the exercise of her infallible authority declares the institution of the Sacrament of Baptism by Christ to be a doctrine given to her by God Himself.<sup>33</sup> This proof alone suffices for Catholics; the proof from Sacred Scripture is added to give fuller instruction.

PROOF FROM SACRED SCRIPTURE. The Scriptures show that Christ himself personally instituted the Sacrament of Baptism. He said to Nicodemus, "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God";<sup>34</sup> and to the Apostles, "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," (St. Matt. xxviii. 19). These texts show that Christ during His life on earth definitely proclaimed the necessity of Baptism, and showed precisely how the rite was to be administered: Christ, therefore, is the institutor of this Sacrament

<sup>30</sup> St. Matt. x. 39.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.* 32.

<sup>32</sup> *Serm.* 159, c. I.

<sup>33</sup> See first paragraph of this chapter.

<sup>34</sup> St. John iii. 5.

in all its essential details. That the Apostles understood their Master to speak, not of a figurative baptism, but of a true washing with water, is clearly conveyed in Sacred Scripture: we read in the *Acts*, how Philip having converted the treasurer of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, went down with him into a pool or river by the wayside and baptized him;<sup>35</sup> and how Peter seeing the wonders wrought on Cornelius and his household, the first gentile converts, exclaimed, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized?"<sup>36</sup>

*Note.* THE OFFICE OF SPONSOR.—The Church requires that, if possible, a sponsor or god-parent be present at Solemn Baptism; also, at Private Baptism, if a suitable person can be easily found. The Church permits the presence of two sponsors, but never of more than two. It is part of the sponsor's office to make a profession of faith in the recipient's name during the ceremony. His obligations do not end at the baptismal font; he is strictly bound to watch over the subsequent career of his spiritual child, to see that he be instructed in all the duties of the Christian life, and that he fulfil the promises which were made for him at Baptism. This duty, however, binds only when the parents or guardians neglect to discharge it. (1) To act *validly* as sponsor the person must: (a) be a Catholic with the use of reason, and intend to assume the obligations in question; (b) be nominated by the parents or guardians of the person to be baptized or by the minister of the sacrament; (c) physically touch the recipient at the moment of baptism or, in the rare case of baptism by immersion, take him from the sacred font.—Neither father, mother, husband nor wife of the person to be baptized is capable of being a sponsor. (2) To act *licitly*, i.e., to avoid committing sin in being sponsor, the person must be fourteen years old, and know the rudiments of the Faith. The following are prohibited by ecclesiastical law from acting as sponsors: (a) religious; (b) clerics in Sacred Orders; and (c) notorious criminals. (See Ch. XVII, vi, first paragraph.)

## VI

**Solution of difficulties.** (1) "At our Baptism, our sponsors promised that we would lead Christian lives. How can we be bound by a promise given without our knowledge and consent?"—REPLY: The obligation to lead a Christian life is not imposed on us by our sponsors' promises, but by the Sacrament itself: as we, by our physical birth and without our consent, are made

<sup>35</sup> *Acts* viii. 26–39.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.* x. 47.

members of a family, so, by our spiritual birth and without our consent, we are made members of the household of God ; as we are bound to love and obey our parents and are entitled to receive from them corporal nurture, so we are bound to obey the Church, and are entitled to our share of the blessings Christ has given her for us ; and as a man by ingratitude or disobedience can never cease to be the child of his parents, whether they forbid him the door or not, so he can never cease to be a child of the Church, no matter how disloyal or disobedient to her he may be : she may, by excommunication, sentence him to exclusion from her sacred rites, but she cannot cancel his baptism ; she cannot deny that he is still her child ; she cannot and will not refuse to restore him, on due repentance and submission, to all that he has lost.

(2) " Does it not seem that children who receive Protestant Baptism are bound to practise the Protestant religion ? "—**REPLY :** (a) There is no such thing as Protestant Baptism. Some Protestant sects have valid Baptism,<sup>37</sup> and their children who validly receive the Sacrament are made members of the Catholic Church ; the Church, however, from motives of prudence and charity does not exercise jurisdiction over them, *i.e.*, she does not use her right to command their obedience.—(b) A Protestant child is bound to obey his parents and superiors, until he discovers that they are in error ; if he lives according to his conscience, God in His own time will give him all the light and grace he needs for salvation.

<sup>37</sup> Because they have retained the true way of conferring it.

## CHAPTER XII

### CONFIRMATION

#### Summary.

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. Confirmation defined.—Its Minister and its Subject.—How it is conferred.
- III. Its effects : grace ; the Gifts of the Holy Ghost ; the Sacramental Character.—The " revival " of Confirmation.
- IV. Confirmation was instituted by Christ. Proof (1) from the solemn teaching of the Church ; (2) from S. Scripture ; (3) from Tradition.

#### I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly : (1) that Confirmation is a Sacrament ;<sup>1</sup> (2) that its ordinary minister is a Bishop ;<sup>2</sup> (3) that it imprints a Character, or indelible mark, on the soul and cannot be received more than once ;<sup>3</sup> (4) that it gives us an increase of grace and strengthens us in the faith.<sup>4</sup>

#### II

**Confirmation defined.—Its Minister and its subject.—How it is conferred.**—**DEFINITION.**—Confirmation is the Sacrament that gives us the grace to live as strong and perfect Christians. Baptism is the Sacrament of spiritual birth : Confirmation is the Sacrament of spiritual strength.

**ITS MINISTER.**—The ordinary minister of Confirmation is a Bishop, but it can also be conferred by a priest who has received special authority from the Holy See.

**ITS SUBJECT.** Its subject is anyone who has been baptized but not yet confirmed.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> T 844.

<sup>2</sup> T 873.

<sup>3</sup> T 852.

<sup>4</sup> F 697.

<sup>5</sup> In the early Church it was customary to give Confirmation and the Blessed Eucharist to children immediately or soon after Baptism. At the present time the administration of these Sacraments is usually postponed until the child is sufficiently instructed.

HOW IT IS CONFERRED. The Bishop imposes his hand on the recipient and anoints his forehead with chrism in the form of a cross, while reciting the words: "I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."<sup>6</sup>

### III

**The Effects of Confirmation: Grace.—The Gifts of the Holy Ghost.—The Sacramental Character.—The "Revival" of the Sacrament.—INCREASE OF SANCTIFYING GRACE.** The primary effect of Confirmation, as of all Sacraments of the living, is a great increase of the Divine Life of Sanctifying Grace, and, consequently, a closer and more intimate union with God who dwells in our soul.<sup>7</sup>

**SACRAMENTAL GRACE.** The Sacramental Grace of Confirmation is the right or claim which the Sacrament gives us to the special spiritual helps or Actual Graces which, if we avail ourselves of them, enable us to lead a more saintly life undeterred by human respect or other worldly obstacles.

<sup>6</sup> (1) The Greek Church uses the words, "The seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost. Amen."—(2) Three kinds of Holy Oil are blessed by the Bishop on Holy Thursday: (a) Oil of Catechumens, used in Solemn Baptism before the Sacrament is conferred and at the ordination to Priesthood; (b) Oil of the Sick, used in Extreme Unction; (c) Chrism, a mixture of oil and balsam, used in Baptism, Confirmation, and the Consecration of a bishop. At Baptism the top of the head is anointed with Chrism; at Confirmation, the forehead. The oil referred to in all these cases is olive oil, which possesses healing and strengthening properties; balsam is a preservative, and spreads a sweet perfume. The spiritual significance of the various anointings can, therefore be easily understood.—(3) The blow on the cheek which the Bishop gives those he confirms became customary about the twelfth century; it may be interpreted both as a substitute for the ancient "kiss of peace," and as similar in significance to the blow given at the conferring of knighthood, because it serves to remind the recipient that he is now a Knight of Christ, and should be prepared to do battle for His honour.

<sup>7</sup> This indwelling is appropriated to the Holy Ghost. See Chapter II, section IV, footnote 11.

**THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST.** In Confirmation, as the Council of Florence teaches, the Holy Ghost is given to us for our spiritual strengthening,<sup>8</sup> a strengthening which is effected in a most particular way through the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The Gifts of the Holy Ghost always accompany Sanctifying Grace: they were, therefore, given to us at our Baptism; but in Confirmation they are given to us in a fuller or more perfect form. To understand their purpose, we may compare the soul to a sailing ship, the gifts to the sails, and the impulses of the Holy Ghost to the favourable winds of heaven. At Baptism the ship of the soul was given its suit of sails, but the sails were small; at Confirmation they are enlarged so that they may more perfectly respond to the impulse of God's grace. At Baptism we were given a certain disposition to be moved by Divine light and inspiration; at Confirmation that disposition is perfected, so that we are enabled to respond easily to the fuller and more precise Actual Graces we need for final perseverance, for the heroic deeds of a martyr or the heroic life of a saint.<sup>9</sup>

The Gifts of the Holy Ghost, as the Prophet Isaias foretold (xi, 2), were bestowed on our Saviour; they are bestowed on us also; they shine in our soul, because it reflects His image. They are all conferred on us in the same instant. They are seven in number, *viz*: the Gift of *Wisdom*, the Gift of *Understanding*, the Gift of *Counsel*, the Gift of *Fortitude*, the Gift of *Knowledge*, the Gift of *Godliness (Piety)*, and the Gift of the *Fear of the Lord*.<sup>10</sup> They endow us with good dispositions, opening wide our intellect and will to the inflow of Actual Grace. In other words, they enlarge our power to receive Actual Grace.

<sup>8</sup> F. 697.

<sup>9</sup> Because of venial sin, the Gifts of the Holy Ghost may be impeded or contracted, like sails that are furled or reefed. Hence, the great importance of not offending God even in the slightest way.

<sup>10</sup> The capacity which the soul receives through the Gifts is described more definitely by St. Thomas as a better disposition or a greater docility; his great authority ensures the soundness of the teaching given above.

Through these Gifts, as through so many broad inlets, the Holy Ghost, unless resisted, will pour generously into our soul all those Actual Graces which shall enable us :—to dwell with pleasure on the Beauty and Majesty and Infinity of God (Wisdom) ; to grasp and hold in our mind all the great truths presented to us by God's Holy Church (Understanding) ; to show good sense in the custody of our soul by shunning bad company, dangerous occasions and everything that might imperil our spiritual life (Counsel) ; to be true to our Faith, to profess it boldly, and, with the superb courage of a martyr, to welcome death in testifying to its truth (Fortitude) ; to see the hand of God in the happenings of the world, to see His likeness in all created things, but at the same time, to realise that no creature deserves to be loved for its own sake, or can be of any profit to us, unless it lead us to our Creator (Knowledge) ; to serve God with joy, to say our prayers in spite of hurry or weariness, to receive the Sacraments, to join with devotion in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to look on God as our Father and on all men as our brothers (Godliness—Piety) ; to entertain a profound though filial fear of God, to meditate on the great disaster of losing His love, and of being separated from Him for all eternity (Fear of the Lord).

Through the Gifts of Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, and Knowledge, Actual Grace is given to the intellect ; through the Gifts of Fortitude, Godliness, and the Fear of the Lord, it is given to the will.<sup>11</sup>

**THE SACRAMENTAL CHARACTER.**<sup>12</sup> Like Baptism, Confirmation imprints an indelible mark on the soul, and, therefore, cannot be repeated. Confirmation is, as it were, a spiritual coming of age, and as a man can come of age physically but once, so he can but once come of age in the spiritual sense. The Baptismal Character marks him as a subject of Christ, while the Character given in Confirmation enrolls him as a soldier of Christ, fully equipped for battle.

<sup>11</sup> (a) Carefully distinguish between *Wisdom* and the *Gift of Wisdom*, *Understanding* and the *Gift of Understanding*, etc. The Gift of Wisdom enables us to respond easily to all the actual graces we need for the acquisition of divine Wisdom. Wisdom may be termed the fruit of the Gift of Wisdom ; the Gift is bestowed on us in full measure at Confirmation, but the fruit may not appear until many years later. So with the other Gifts. (b) We have enumerated the Gifts in the liturgical order, the order followed by the Church in the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

<sup>12</sup> See Chap. XI. § "Effects of Baptism."

**THE "REVIVAL" OF CONFIRMATION.** It is commonly held that those who are so unfortunate as to receive the great Sacrament of Confirmation in the state of mortal sin may, by due repentance and Confession, obtain the precious gifts of grace it conveys.

**THE NECESSITY OF CONFIRMATION.** The Church teaches that, "although Confirmation is not a necessary means for salvation, still it is not lawful for anyone to neglect receiving it."<sup>13</sup> Hence, no one should refuse Confirmation or unduly postpone it. So much depends on our receiving it worthily that we should exercise the greatest care in our preparation for it, using our best endeavour to acquire an accurate knowledge of doctrine and to put ourselves in the proper disposition by Confession and Holy Communion. When the Apostles were awaiting the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, they were for many days "persevering with one mind in prayer"<sup>14</sup> for each of us our Confirmation is our Pentecost, and it comes but once.

#### IV

**The Sacrament of Confirmation was instituted by Christ.—PROOF FROM THE SOLEMN TEACHING OF THE CHURCH.** The Church in the exercise of her infallible authority declares the institution of the Sacrament of Confirmation by Christ to be a doctrine given to her by God Himself.<sup>15</sup> This proof alone suffices for Catholics ; other proofs are added for fuller instruction.

**PROOF FROM SACRED SCRIPTURE.** (1) Christ's promise to send the Holy Ghost on His Apostles (*Acts* i. 8) was fulfilled at the first Pentecost.

(2) This unspeakable gift was intended for all the faithful as well : St. Peter addressing the multitude said : "Do penance and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost ; for the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are far off, whomsoever the Lord our God shall call."<sup>16</sup>

(3) The Apostles communicated this gift to them by a rite distinct from Baptism : "When the Apostles, who were in Jerusalem, had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John ; who, when they were come, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, for He was not yet come upon any of them, but they

<sup>13</sup> C. C. L, 787.

<sup>14</sup> *Acts* i. 14.

<sup>15</sup> See first paragraph of this Chapter.

<sup>16</sup> *Acts* ii. 38, 39.

were only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost." <sup>17</sup> This passage shows: (a) that the Apostles conferred the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands and by prayer, *i.e.*, by a visible rite; (b) that the rite was distinct from Baptism, the people of Samaria having been already baptized by the deacon, Philip; (c) that its administration was reserved to the Apostles, probably in their capacity as bishops, otherwise Peter and John would not have gone to Samaria in a time of persecution at the peril of their lives; (d) that the rite must have been instituted by Christ Himself, for it is only He who could have endowed it with its grace-giving power.

(4) As will be inferred from (3), the rite consisted in prayer and the laying on of hands. That anointing also formed part of it may be suggested in the words of St. Paul: "He that confirmeth us with you in Christ, and that hath anointed us, is God, who also hath sealed us, and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts." <sup>18</sup>

(5) The only rite in present use which can claim identity with the rite administered by the Apostles is our rite of Confirmation. If the identity of the two rites be denied, the absurd conclusion follows that a rite regarded as of such great importance by the Apostles was afterwards abandoned as useless by the Church.

**THE PROOF FROM TRADITION.** No one doubts that in the time of St. Augustine (*d.* 430), Confirmation was exactly as it is to-day: "The Sacrament of Chrism," he says, "is one of the visible signs and, like Baptism itself, is most holy." <sup>19</sup> As to the earlier ages, the testimony of but a few witnesses, out of a very large number, need be quoted:

(a) St. Cyril of Jerusalem (*d.* 386) devotes a special Instruction (*Catachesis*) to the praise of Confirmation: "As the bread of the Eucharist," he says, "after the invocation of the Holy Ghost is no longer bread but the Body of Christ, so this holy ointment after the invocation, is no longer plain ointment, . . . but the chrism of Christ, which, by the presence of the Godhead, causes in us the Holy Ghost. This symbolically anoints thy forehead, . . . but the soul is sanctified by the holy and life-giving Spirit." <sup>20</sup>

(b) St. Cyprian (*d.* 258), who wrote at a very early date, commenting on the passage from the *Acts* quoted in (3) above,

<sup>17</sup> *Acts* viii. 14-17.

<sup>18</sup> *2 Cor.* i. 21, 22.

<sup>19</sup> *Contra litt. Petiliani* ii. 239.

<sup>20</sup> Migne, P.G. xxxiii. 1090.

says: "The Samaritans who had already obtained legitimate ecclesiastical Baptism did not require any further Baptism. Peter and John merely supplied what was wanting, *viz.*, that by prayer and the imposition of hands the Holy Ghost should be poured forth on them. This is also the practice with us: those who are baptized in the Church are presented to the Bishops, and, through our prayer and the laying on of hands, they receive the Holy Ghost and are made perfect by the seal of the Lord." <sup>21</sup>

(c) Tertullian (*d.* 240) says: "The body is anointed, that the soul may be made holy; the body is marked with a sign, that the soul may be protected; the body is over-shadowed by the laying on of hands, that the soul may be enlightened by the Holy Ghost." <sup>22</sup>

The Schismatic Greeks have the Sacrament of Confirmation; <sup>23</sup> and the Gnostic heretics so far back as the first half of the second century practised the rite of anointing and laying on of hands. <sup>24</sup> This argument alone suffices to establish decisively the tradition of the Church.

<sup>21</sup> *Ep.* 73, 9.

<sup>22</sup> *De resur. carnis*, 8.

<sup>23</sup> See Chap. X. § The Number of the Sacraments.

<sup>24</sup> See Dölger, *Das Sakrament der Firmung*, p. 4 f.

## CHAPTER XIII

## THE BLESSED EUCHARIST

## A

## THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

*Summary.*

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. Proof of the Real Presence :
  - (1) from the words of Christ ;
  - (2) from the faith of the Apostolic and early Church (evidenced by the words of St. Paul and the Fathers, by *the discipline of the secret*, by the symbols and illustrations found in the catacombs, and by the belief of eastern sectaries) ;
  - (3) from the lateness and insignificance of the errors opposed to it.
- III. The Real Presence, produced by Transubstantiation.—Its completeness.—Its duration.—Its adorableness.
- IV. Difficulties solved.

## I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly :—(1) that in the Blessed Eucharist Christ Himself—His Body and Blood, His Soul and Divinity—is really, truly, and substantially, present under the species (accidents, appearances) of bread and wine ;<sup>1</sup> (2) that His presence is effected by transubstantiation, *i.e.*, by a change of the substance of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ ;<sup>2</sup> (3) that He is wholly present both under the species of bread and under the species of wine ; that, when the sacred species of the bread or the wine are divided, He is wholly present in each part or division ;<sup>3</sup> (4) that the Real Presence begins,

<sup>1</sup> T 883.<sup>2</sup> T 884.<sup>3</sup> T 885.

the instant the consecration is completed ; that it is not restricted to the moment in which the Blessed Eucharist is being received ; that it continues in the hosts that may be reserved after Holy Communion has been given ;<sup>4</sup> (5) that Christ in the Blessed Eucharist is to be worshipped with the supreme worship due to God Himself.<sup>5</sup>

*For a Catholic, it is sufficient to know that the infallible Church teaches the above doctrine : the following proofs, therefore, are not necessary ; but they are useful as giving a knowledge of Sacred Scripture and Ecclesiastical Tradition.*

## II

**Proof of the Real Presence from the Words of Christ.**—The words used by Christ when He promised the Blessed Eucharist, and when He actually instituted it, prove that He is really present therein.

**CHRIST'S WORDS OF PROMISE.** We read in the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel how Jesus fed a multitude of five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes ; and how, on the following night, He walked upon the waters, and rejoined His disciples as they were crossing the lake to Capharnaum. The next day, we are told, He again addressed the multitude, who had followed Him in ships to that city. By the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, He had proved to them His love and consideration for them, and His dominion over the laws of nature : He had thus prepared their minds and hearts for His doctrine of the heavenly food of the Blessed Eucharist. "Labour not," He said to them, "for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting which the Son of Man will give you."<sup>6</sup> And, when they said, "Lord, give us always this bread,"<sup>7</sup> He continued : "I am the Bread of Life : he that cometh to Me shall not hunger, and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst."<sup>8</sup> He then tells them clearly that the Bread is His Flesh : "The Bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world."<sup>9</sup> And when they objected saying, "How can this man give us His Flesh to eat ?"<sup>10</sup> He insists on the literal truth of His words, telling them with still greater emphasis that they must not only eat His Flesh but drink His Blood : "Amen, amen, I say unto you : except you eat the Flesh of the

<sup>4</sup> T 886.<sup>5</sup> T 888.<sup>6</sup> St. John vi. 27.<sup>7</sup> *ibid.* 34.<sup>8</sup> *ibid.* 35.<sup>9</sup> *ibid.* 52.<sup>10</sup> *ibid.* 53.



Son of Man and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you ; he that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day, for *My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed* : he that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me and I in him."<sup>11</sup> Many of His disciples thought this " a hard saying,"<sup>12</sup> and would not accept it. Jesus said to them, " Doth this scandalize you ? "<sup>13</sup> *i.e.*, " Are you shocked at what I have said ? " If (with some modern heretics) they had thought that, by " eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood," He merely meant that they were to take His doctrine and commands into their mind and heart, they would not have been shocked. They were shocked, precisely because they understood Him to speak of the true eating of His Body and drinking of His Blood. If they had mistaken His meaning, He would have shown them their error. He would have disowned the doctrine they ascribed to Him. But He did not disown it. Instead, He insists again on the Divine character and value of the Food to which they object.<sup>14</sup> But they are not satisfied, because He has not withdrawn or mitigated the command to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood. The stumbling-block still stands in their path ; and so they leave Him and walk with Him no more.<sup>15</sup> Then turning to the Apostles He said : " Will you also go away ? ' And Simon Peter answered Him : ' Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we have believed and have known that Thou are the Christ, the Son of God.' "<sup>16</sup> Those noble words, so full of loyalty and love, we adopt as our own, promising to be faithful to Jesus no matter who may be false to Him.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.* 54-57. <sup>12</sup> *ibid.* 61. <sup>13</sup> *ibid.* 62.

<sup>14</sup> The exact words which He addressed to them were as follows :—

a. " Doth this scandalize you ? If then you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before ? "

b. " It is the spirit that quickeneth (gives life) ; the flesh profiteth nothing. "

c. " The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life. "

d. " But there are some of you that believe not " (*ibid.* 62-65).

That is : a. " Are you shocked at what I have said ? Will you still be shocked even when you see that My Flesh is the Flesh of One who shall ascend into Heaven ? "

b. " It is the spirit of My Divinity that gives life, or makes My Flesh a life-giving Food ; mere human flesh such as you are thinking of profits nothing. "

c. " The words I have spoken to you promise you a Food which will make you one with Me in spirit and life. "

d. " But why argue with you ? You do not believe that I am the Son of God and can do what I have promised. "

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.* 67.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.* 68-70.

CHRIST'S WORDS OF INSTITUTION. Jesus fulfilled His promise at the Last Supper. He had been longing for that hour to come : " With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer. "<sup>17</sup> Taking bread He " blessed and broke, and gave to His disciples and said : ' Take ye and eat : this is My body. ' And taking the chalice He gave thanks and gave to them, saying : ' Drink ye all of this, for this is My blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins. ' "<sup>18</sup> Jesus uttered those words at a most solemn moment : He was delivering His last address, His last wishes and commands, to the Apostles, for on the morrow He was to be put to death ; hence, He spoke in the very plainest speech to the simple and childlike men who sat at table with Him. The words were in themselves unmistakable, but they were doubly so in the light of the promise already made that He would give them His Flesh to eat and His Blood to drink. The Apostles believed, as we believe, that, when He said, " This is My Body, . . . This is My Blood, " the bread and the wine were changed into His Body and Blood.

**Proof of the Real Presence from the Faith of the Apostolic and early Church.**—The faith of the Apostolic and early Church in the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Eucharist is attested by the words of St. Paul and the Fathers ; by *the discipline of the secret* ; the symbols and illustrations found in the catacombs ; and the belief of Eastern sectaries. The fact that the Church from the very beginning believed in the Real Presence proves that the doctrine must have been delivered to her by her Founder.

**THE WORDS OF ST. PAUL AND THE FATHERS.** (a) St. Paul says : " The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord ? " " Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. "<sup>19</sup>

(b) St. Ignatius of Antioch (*d.* 117) says : " The Eucharist is the Flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ. "<sup>20</sup>

(c) St. Justin Martyr (*d.* 167) : " We take this not as ordinary bread nor as ordinary drink, but, as Jesus Christ our Saviour . . . had Flesh and Blood for the sake of our salvation, so have we

<sup>17</sup> St. Luke xxii. 15.

<sup>18</sup> St. Matt. xxvi. 26-28.

<sup>19</sup> I Cor. x. 16 ; xi. 27.

<sup>20</sup> *Ep. ad Smyrn.* c. 7.

been taught that also the food consecrated by the word of prayer coming from Him . . . is the Flesh and Blood of that Jesus who was made Flesh."<sup>21</sup>

(d) St. Irenaeus (*d.* 203) : "Wine and bread are by the word of God changed into the Eucharist, which is the Body and Blood of Christ."<sup>22</sup>

(e) St. Hippolytus of Rome (*d.* 235) : "He hath given us His own divine Flesh and His own precious Blood to eat and to drink."<sup>23</sup>—Later evidence of this kind is abundant.

*The discipline of the secret.* Except when the needs of controversy demanded plain speaking, it was the custom among Christians during the first centuries, and particularly from the end of the second to the beginning of the sixth, to conceal from the heathen the more sacred and mysterious rites of religion and especially the real nature of the Blessed Eucharist. This practice has been termed in modern times, "*the discipline of the secret.*" Such secrecy in regard to the Blessed Eucharist would have been unnecessary, if it were merely a sacred meal to commemorate the Last Supper,<sup>24</sup> and were not believed to be the banquet of the Body and Blood of the Saviour. As an instance of the veiled language used, we may quote the following from an ancient inscription : "Take the food sweet as honey of the Saviour of the holy ones, eat and drink holding the fish in thy hands." The true meaning of this was plain to a Christian, but not to an unbeliever. The "fish" was the secret name of the Saviour.<sup>25</sup> The "fish" is said to be held in the hands, because in those days the Sacred Host was received in the right hand supported by the left, and then conveyed to the mouth.

**SYMBOLS AND ILLUSTRATIONS FOUND IN THE CATACOMBS.** In one of the oldest chambers of the Catacomb of St. Lucina, a fish symbolizing Christ is represented as bearing on its back a basket of bread and a cup of red wine. As one of the commentators explains, "what appears on the surface of the water is bread and wine; what sustains this appearance beneath the surface is the living Christ." This beautiful illustration of the Real Presence dates from the early years of the second century. Another in San Callisto, later by a hundred years, shows us a table on which are laid a fish and a piece of bread; on the left,

<sup>21</sup> *Apol.* i. c. 66.

<sup>22</sup> *Adv. Haer.* v. 2, 3.

<sup>23</sup> *In Proverb.* ix. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Sacred meals were common among pagans.

<sup>25</sup> Because the Greek word for fish, ἰχθύς, gives the initial letters of "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour," Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ υἱός, σωτήρ.

a figure representing Christ or a priest is consecrating the bread, and on the right a woman with outstretched arms is adoring or returning thanks.

**THE BELIEF OF EASTERN SECTARIES.** The Eastern sectaries have always most emphatically professed their faith in the Real Presence. On the significance of their testimony, see the Chapter, "The Sacraments in General."

**Proof of the Real Presence from the lateness and insignificance of the errors opposed to it.—THE LATENESS OF THE ERRORS.** For fully a thousand years the doctrine of the Real Presence was entirely unopposed: Christ who promised to be with His Church all days even unto the end of time would not have suffered His children to live in the grossest error and idolatry during all those centuries.

**THE INSIGNIFICANCE OF THE ERRORS.** When the doctrine was at length assailed, all the skill and determination of its opponents, who left no stone unturned to destroy it, produced no argument worthy of consideration.

(1) Berengarius (*d.* 1088) held that the words, "This is My Body," meant "This is not My Body but a figure of it": that is to say, Christ never gave men His Flesh to eat, and therefore violated the promise He had most distinctly made. This interpretation at once aroused the indignation of Christendom; it was branded as directly contradictory to the ancient faith of the Church and the teaching of Christ himself; it was withdrawn by its author, who died repentant.

(2) Some five centuries later the doctrine was attacked by the Protestants. Luther seems at first to have held the traditional teaching of the Church, but later maintained that Christ is present in the Blessed Eucharist only at the moment of its reception in Holy Communion; he forgot that Christ simply said, "This is My Body," and not, "This will be My Body when you receive it." Zwingli revived the doctrine of Berengarius. Calvin proposed the far-fetched theory that the words, "This is My Body," mean, "This is not really My Body, but when you receive it, you receive into your souls a spiritual influence from the Body of Christ which is in Heaven." Oslander thought that, as God became Man, so He became bread; hence, "This is My Body," would mean, "This is not My Body, but bread to which My Divinity is united."<sup>26</sup> These are but a few of a great

<sup>26</sup> This teaching is called *impanation* ("becoming bread," *panis*) a term modelled on *incarnation* ("becoming flesh," *caro*). *Companation*, or *consubstantiation*, held by many Lutherans, means that the substance of bread and the Body of Christ exist together in the Eucharist.

number of conflicting interpretations invented by the Reformers to place as wide a gulf as possible between themselves and the Church they had abandoned. In more recent times men have refused to give the words of Christ their true meaning, chiefly because they measure God's power by their own; what seems impossible to them must, they think in their folly, be impossible to God.

### III

**The Real Presence, produced by Transubstantiation.—Its completeness.—Its duration.—Its adorableness.**

THE REAL PRESENCE, PRODUCED BY TRANSUBSTANTIATION. When Christ said "This is My Body . . . This is My Blood" the substance of the bread and the wine was changed into His Body and Blood. Of the bread and the wine, nothing remained but the accidents, that is, the size, shape, weight, colour, taste, and all else that could be perceived by the senses.<sup>27</sup> This mysterious change is called Transubstantiation.<sup>28</sup>

We may illustrate the difference between substance and accidents as follows:—I hold a bar of iron in my hands. It has a certain size, shape, weight, colour, and hardness. None of these things makes it iron. Not its size or shape; for, clearly, it may change in either respect and still be iron. Not its weight; for its weight depends on gravity, and varies according to the distance from the centre of the earth; in fact it is conceivable that at a certain point outside the earth, it might lose

<sup>27</sup> See above Ch. I, footnote 1.

<sup>28</sup> The term "Transubstantiation," appears to have been first used by Hildebert of Tours (c. 1097), and was adopted by the Fourth Council of Lateran and by the Council of Trent. Its equivalent Greek form, μεταστροφῆς, was admitted into the official terminology of the Schismatic Greek Church in 1643, which proves that "Transubstantiation," though a new word, represented an idea as old as Christianity itself: had the idea been as new as the word, and therefore a mere Roman invention, the Greeks would have been the very last to give it countenance.

all weight. Not its colour; for that changes with the temperature: under moderate heat it will become red, and under intense heat, a glowing white. Not its hardness; for when it is cast into the furnace, it becomes a liquid. If then it is not iron because of size, or shape, or hardness, etc., what is it that makes it iron? It is its substance. The substance remains fixed amid many changes; it is an unchanging thing, whereas the changeable dress it wears constitutes its accidents.<sup>29</sup> Substance is not a hard or heavy thing; it is something invisible, a power that supports the accidents; it is something like a soul which cannot be grasped by the senses, but by the mind alone; and, like the soul, it is present in its entirety in every part, however small, of the body to which it belongs.

THE COMPLETENESS OF THE REAL PRESENCE. By the completeness of the Real Presence we mean that the entire Christ is present both under the species of bread and under the species of wine, and also under each part of either species.

*The entire Christ is present under both species.* At the words, "This is My Body . . . This is My Blood," the bread Christ held in His hands became His Body, and the wine in the chalice, His Blood. But, as Body and Blood were united at that time in the living Christ, the bread became the entire living Christ, true God, true Man, and so too the wine.

*The entire Christ is present under each part of either species.* When bread or wine is divided, each division is true bread or true wine; each division, therefore, contains the true substance of bread and wine. But in

<sup>29</sup> With every change in the iron bar, there is a corresponding change in the molecules of which it consists. Yet each molecule, throughout all the changes it suffers, continues to be iron. As in the entire bar, so in each molecule, there is that unchanging thing which we call substance.

the Blessed Eucharist, Christ is present instead of the material substances; therefore, when the Blessed Eucharist is divided, Christ is present in His entirety in each part or division. This doctrine is clearly taught in the Sacred Scripture where we read that Christ gave the consecrated chalice to His apostles, saying, "This is the chalice of My Blood," and that all drank of it.<sup>30</sup> Each one, therefore, received, in the portion which he drank the Blood of the Saviour, and (as follows from the preceding paragraph) in receiving the Precious Blood, he received the entire living Christ, true God, true Man.

**THE DURATION OF THE REAL PRESENCE.** From the defined doctrine that Christ gave His Apostles His sacred Body and Blood under the species or accidents of bread and wine, and under no other species, we draw the conclusion, universally held, that as long after the Consecration as the species remain unchanged, the Real Presence continues; and that when, by corruption or fermentation, they become altered into species of a different kind, the Real Presence terminates, and the substances proper to the new species enter in. The species follow the laws they would follow if the substances of bread and wine were behind them. Exposure to the air will change wine to vinegar; hence, if the consecrated chalice were kept uncovered for a considerable time, the accidents of wine would disappear, and with their disappearance the Real Presence would cease. Bread when eaten is gradually changed in the process of digestion, and a moment comes when it is no longer bread; hence, it is only for some minutes after Holy Communion that the Real Presence stays with us.

**THE ADORABLENESS OF THE REAL PRESENCE.** We can and ought to adore our Divine Lord in the Blessed Eucharist: "No one," says St. Augustine, "eats this

<sup>30</sup> See the words of consecration in the Missal and St. Mark xiv. 23.

flesh without having first adored it."<sup>31</sup> The practice of this great devotion received its first decided impetus in the twelfth century after the condemnation of Berengarius when the custom was introduced of reserving the Sacred Host in the Tabernacle with the express purpose of enabling the faithful to adore it outside the Mass. A still further advance was made by Pope Urban IV, who in 1264, at the request of St. Juliana of Liège instituted the Feast of Corpus Christi, for the office and Mass of which St. Thomas of Aquin (*d.* 1274) composed the well-known hymns, *Verbum Supernum*,<sup>32</sup> *Pange Lingua*, and the sequence, *Lauda Sion*. Within a century of that date the custom was established of exposing the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance and of bearing it in solemn processions through streets and public places. This custom gave rise to the rite of Benediction now so familiar in the Church.<sup>33</sup> During the last few hundred years numerous orders and societies have devoted themselves to the perpetual adoration of Jesus hidden in the Tabernacle.<sup>34</sup>

#### IV

**Solution of difficulties against the Real Presence.** (1) "It seems impossible that the same body could be present at the same time in Heaven and in all the consecrated Hosts throughout the world."—REPLY: (a) We may admit that the ordinary human body, subject to the laws of nature, cannot be present simultaneously in different places; but here, there is question of no ordinary body but of one united mysteriously to God, the Master of nature and its laws. The physicist knows nothing whatever of

<sup>31</sup> *In. Ps.* 98, 9.

<sup>32</sup> To be distinguished from the Advent Hymn of the fifth or sixth century which begins with the same words. The two concluding stanzas of St. Thomas's Hymn are sung at Benediction (*O Salutaris Hostia*, etc.).

<sup>33</sup> See the article on *Benediction* in *Cath. Encyc.* by Father Thurston, S.J. He says it developed into its present form during the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

<sup>34</sup> Observe how God uses the assaults of heretics for the development of His holy doctrine and the stimulation of piety.

such a Body. No one knows what such a Body may be capable of; no one can disprove its exemption from the laws of nature; no one can show that it is restricted like natural bodies to a single position in space. Other bodies are subject to the laws of space, but to this Body the laws of space are obedient.—

(b) There is but one soul in man, wholly and entirely present at once in many places, in the eyes, in the ears, and in every organ and member of the body, and yet the soul has no dimensions and occupies no space. We make no difficulty in accepting such a truth, because we can give sound arguments from reason in support of it.<sup>35</sup> Admitting it, we can understand the opinion of those philosophers who hold that God could, if He chose, create several distinct human bodies, all vivified by the same identical soul, so that what might seem to be the acts of many different individuals would all belong to a single consciousness and proceed from a single will. Now, the glorified Body of Christ in many distinct Hosts may be compared to such a soul: while remaining one and the same, it is present at the same time in different places. (c) Take the following illustration:—"A man writes a book on foreign travel; he gets fifty thousand copies printed; he gives a copy to fifty thousand different people. Now, in a book we have two totally distinct things—in the first place, we have the story, the narrative, the facts recounted, which I call the truth of the book; and, in the second place, we have the paper, the leaves, the type, the letterpress, the punctuation, which do not indeed constitute the

<sup>35</sup> (1) It may be as well to set down here the proof that in man or any living animal there is but one soul or principle of life:—In the living man all the organs assist one another and contribute to his well-being, as we may perceive from a simple example: the eye sees an apple, the hand plucks it and conveys it to the mouth, the teeth masticate it, the stomach digests it and sends nutriment to all parts of the human system; thus several distinct members or organs co-operate for the common good. There must, therefore, be some single power that binds them together and makes them do this. That power is the soul.

(2) We have seen in Part I that the soul is not a material thing and has no extension. "But," it may be said, "it is hard to understand how the soul which has no extension can be present in all the different parts of the body. Would it not be easier to suppose that the soul is in some part of the brain and governs the body from there?"—No. Such a supposition would be useless. Take any portion of the brain you please. It has length, breadth, and thickness, and can be divided up into an indefinite number of parts. If the soul can be present in all these, it can equally well be present in every part of the entire body.

truth, but which are merely the channel by which the truth is conveyed to us. The first I call the *substance* of the book; the latter I call the *accidents*. Put these fifty thousand copies of the book into the hands of fifty thousand different men. What is the result? Well, the result is, that each man possesses (1) the *entire* truth, and (2) the *exact* truth, and (3) the *same* truth. The accidents may be different in each, but the substance is the same; and, not only similar, but identical. Each book may vary in size, weight, type, paper, material, binding, and so forth. It makes no difference. There is not one truth in one volume, and another in another, but the same truth is present wherever there is a copy of the book; and if there be fifty thousand copies, then the same truth, whole and entire and identical, is equally present in fifty thousand different places. And further, whether a man receive but one copy, or whether he receive fifty copies, or even the whole edition of fifty thousand volumes, he will have the same truth, neither more nor less than if he had received but one. So in the Blessed Sacrament, if one hundred particles are consecrated, the incarnate Wisdom of God is present under each, just as the wisdom of any author is present in each of a hundred volumes. . . . This is of course a mere illustration and not to be pressed too far; for whereas in a book the truth is merely expressed by signs, in the Blessed Sacrament, the Eternal Truth, *i.e.*, the infinite God is substantially present in His human and Divine nature."<sup>36</sup>

(d) "Catholics," says Cardinal Newman, "do not see that it is impossible at all that our Lord should be in Heaven and yet on the Altar; they do not indeed see *how* it can be, but they do not see *why* it should not be; there are many things that exist, though we do not know how;—do we know *how* anything exists?—there are many truths which are not less truths because we cannot picture them to ourselves or conceive them; but at any rate, the Catholic doctrine concerning the Real Presence is not more mysterious than how Almighty God can exist, yet never have *come* into existence."<sup>37</sup>

(2) "It seems absurd that the Body of our Saviour could be so reduced in size as to dwell within the small dimensions of a Host."—REPLY:—(a) The difficulty is solved by removing the misunderstanding that underlies it. The dimensions of the Host are accidents; they are not a part of the substance of bread. Accidents (size, colour, weight, etc.) can be perceived

<sup>36</sup> Bishop Vaughan, *Thoughts for all Times*, Vol. I, p. 123. Washbourne, 1911.

<sup>37</sup> *Sermons to Mixed Congregations*, p. 267.

both by the mind and by the senses ; substance can be perceived by the mind alone. Substance has no size, no dimensions, and, so far, may be regarded as like a soul. Christ's Body, therefore, since it replaces the substance of bread, cannot be said to be affected by the size of the Host. How this can be, we do not know, but, as Cardinal Newman says, " Why should it not be ? What is to hinder it ? What do I know of substance or matter ? just as much as the greatest philosophers, and that is nothing at all." <sup>38</sup>

3. " Since the Blessed Eucharist produces the effects of ordinary food and drink, does it not seem that the substance of bread and wine must be present ?"—REPLY :—The appeasing of hunger, the allaying of thirst, and any such immediate effects, must be ascribed to the species alone. God who miraculously sustains the species of bread and wine gives them all that their own proper substance could give them. He provides them with whatever support they need for their existence and activity. It may be added, however, that, before actual nutrition is effected, the sacred species disappear and, with them, the Real Presence ; they are supplanted by new species, and the Real Presence by some natural substance.

This difficulty is sometimes given a very gross form by adversaries who deny that *Christ* could be present in a liquid which may actually cause intoxication. (a) They fail to observe that precisely the same objection could be urged against the presence of *God* in poisons, in the microbes of disease, and in the daggers of assassins ; yet every true believer in God knows that not one of these things could exist without His sustaining presence.—(b) Those Protestants who reject the Real Presence admit at the same time that what they call " the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper " is something holy, something blest by God. Obviously, therefore, their objection can be turned against themselves. They can be asked to explain how what is holy can produce the effect they mention.

4. " Does not Christ in the Blessed Eucharist expose Himself to the insults of blasphemers ?"—REPLY :—He does, but, if we may say so, no insult ever deterred Jesus from showing His love for man : He did not refuse to come on earth, though He knew that the Jews would nail Him to a cross ; so, He did not withhold from us this most precious gift of the Blessed Eucharist, though He knew that wicked men would reject it or use it for His dishonour. The very fact that our kind and patient Saviour

exposes Himself to insult and ingratitude in this adorable Sacrament should urge us to increase our love for Him a thousandfold.

5. " Since God is everywhere, what is the need of the Blessed Eucharist ? Would not God be present in the Host even though unconsecrated ?"—REPLY :—(a) God is present in the unconsecrated Host as He is present in all His creatures, sustaining them in existence and action. But no mere creature can be adored, because its activity is its own, not God's. The only creature that is adorable is the Human Nature which is united to the Second Divine Person ; it is adorable, because the acts done by means of it are the acts of God himself.—(b) God became Man. He did so, because He knew that by living, labouring, suffering, and dying, as a mortal, He could best win our love. Likewise, He gave us the Blessed Eucharist to touch our hearts with the knowledge that He, the Man of Sorrows, who was born, who was crucified for our sakes, and who rose from the dead, is still with us.—(c) It was Jesus, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and He alone Who became Man. All the human acts of His life were those of the same Divine Person. So, too, in the Blessed Eucharist, it is Jesus, and Jesus alone, who, through a nature like ours, hears our prayers and thirsts for our love. The other Divine Persons are always with Him in loving co-operation, but His acts as Man in the Blessed Sacrament belong in a special manner to Him.

<sup>38</sup> *Apologia*, p. 239.

## B

## THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

*Summary.*

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. Sacrifice among the Jews : God, the institutor of the Jewish sacrifices.—The place of offering.—The Jewish Priesthood.—The different kinds of sacrifice.—The meaning and value of the sacrifices of the Old Law.—The Pasch and the Day of Expiation.—The privileges of the Jews extended to Christians, but in fuller measure.
- III. Definition of sacrifice.
- IV. The Sacrifice of the Cross : Christ proclaimed at the Last Supper His intention to offer His life for us.—He offered Sacrifice on the Cross.—It was a true and perfect Sacrifice.—Christ, the High Priest of the human race.—Christ our Paschal Lamb.—The Resurrection and the Ascension in relation to the Sacrifice of the Cross.
- V. Christ at the Last Supper instituted a sacrificial rite as a memorial and representation of His Death on the Cross.—That sacrificial rite is the Mass.—The Mass has the externals of a sacrifice.—The Mass is a true Sacrifice, the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross, but without bloodshed.—The Priest, the Victim, and the Altar of the Mass.—The Mass prefigured in the sacrifice of Melchisedech, and foretold by Malachias.
- VI. The blessings of the Mass.—The excellence of the Mass.
- VII. Replies to objections against the Mass.

Notes : *A*—A few additional remarks on the Mass. *B*—Differences among theologians regarding the essence of the Mass.

## I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly—(1) that Christ at the Last Supper instituted the Mass, a true, visible sacrifice, such as the nature of man requires ;<sup>1</sup> (2) that Christ bequeathed the Mass to His Church to represent and commemorate for all time the Sacrifice of the Cross, and to be of avail for the remission of sins and of the punishment due to them,

<sup>1</sup> T 938.

and for the benefit of the living and the dead ;<sup>1</sup> (3) that Christ established a special priesthood for its celebration ;<sup>1</sup> (4) that Christ, through the ministry of His priests, offers Himself in the Mass as He offered Himself on the Cross ; but that, whereas He offered Himself in a bloody manner on the Cross, He offers Himself in an unbloody manner on our altars ;<sup>2</sup> (5) that, this difference apart, the Sacrifice of the Mass is the same sacrifice as that of the Cross, for there is the same Priest, the same Victim, the same offering.<sup>2</sup>

## II

*It is important to treat of the Jewish sacrifices before beginning the study of the Sacrifice of the Mass. Like them, the Mass is a true sacrifice under the form of a sacred rite : it is an outward means of worship appointed by God for frequent and public use.<sup>3</sup>*

*The Sacrifice of Calvary, as offered by Christ in Person, with the shedding of His precious Blood, was not a sacred rite : it was offered but once, and was not to be repeated. In its essentials as a sacrifice, however, it is continued in the Mass, and was prefigured in the sacred rites of the Jews.*

*Since Judaism foreshadowed Christianity, familiarity with the ancient sacrifices prepared the Apostles and the first Christians for the doctrine of the sacrifice of Calvary and the Sacrifice of the Mass.*

**Sacrifice among the Jews.**—GOD, THE INSTITUTOR OF THE JEWISH SACRIFICES. God commanded the Jews to worship Him with sacrifices ; He set forth all the details of these sacred rites ; He ordered that they should be offered in one place alone and through the hands of a specially appointed priesthood.

<sup>1</sup> T 938.<sup>2</sup> T 940.<sup>3</sup> See Ch. X, footnote 5.

**THE PLACE OF OFFERING.**—All sacrifices were offered within the precincts of the Tabernacle, a tent-like structure, brilliant with many colours and “diversified with embroidery.”<sup>4</sup> It was erected on an oblong plot of ground within an enclosure or court of the same shape. It was divided into two parts by a veil; the outer chamber was called the Holy, the inner the Holy of Holies. On entering the Holy, one saw to the right the table on which was laid the weekly offering of bread, the twelve Loaves of Proposition;<sup>5</sup> on the left, was the seven-branched candlestick, and, in front, the altar of incense built of setim wood and overlaid with gold. In the Holy of Holies stood the Ark of the Covenant, on which was laid a cover of the purest gold. This cover, overshadowed by the outstretched wings of two figures representing Cherubim, was called the Mercy-seat or Propitiatory; above it, God hung a bright cloud; this was His throne, the visible sign of His merciful presence among His people.<sup>6</sup> The Tabernacle with its apartments was reproduced in the Temple.<sup>7</sup>

**THE JEWISH PRIESTHOOD.**—All who ministered in the Temple were of the tribe of Levi. Of these, only the descendants of Aaron could offer sacrifice; one<sup>8</sup> was chosen as the High Priest; arrayed in splendid vestments he presided at the more solemn feasts; he alone was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies; this he did on the Day of Expiation, which occurred but once a year.

**THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF SACRIFICE.**—From the nature of the offerings, sacrifices were termed bloody or unbloody.

*The Bloody Sacrifices.*—In the bloody sacrifice, an animal was slain by him who wished to have it offered or by the temple

<sup>4</sup> See the wonderful description in *Exodus* xxv.-xxvii.

<sup>5</sup> One for each of the twelve tribes.

<sup>6</sup> All the appearances and manifestations of God under the Old Law were effected through the ministry of His angels; He himself was not really seen by men, and did not really speak to them, until He was made Flesh and dwelt among them (*cf.* Suarez, *De Angelis*, lib. vi, cap. xx, 28).

<sup>7</sup> The great Temple, which thenceforward took the place of the Tabernacle, was completed by Solomon (*c.* 970 B.C.). About five years after his death it was plundered of its treasures by Sesac, King of Egypt. It was destroyed by the Chaldeans under Nabuchodonosor in 586 B.C., and rebuilt on a smaller scale by Zorobabel in 515 B.C. Herod the Great set about repairing and beautifying it (20 B.C.), a work which was finished only within a few years of the final destruction of the building by Titus in 70 A.D.

<sup>8</sup> The head of the house of Aaron (*Num.* xxv. 11)—but this rule was not faithfully observed.

attendants;<sup>9</sup> the blood was received by the priest, who disposed of it as the rite prescribed. Of the bloody sacrifices, the chief was the Holocaust, offered on the Altar of Holocausts which stood outside the Tabernacle but within the enclosure;<sup>10</sup> it was the great public act of divine worship, and was offered up for the whole people every day, morning and evening; after the blood had been poured out beside the altar the entire victim was burnt, to signify the supreme dominion of God over creatures. Bloody sacrifices were also offered to obtain forgiveness of sin (*sacrifices for sin or trespass*), or to praise and thank God and beg His blessings (*sacrifices of peace*); the former were offered on behalf of private individuals, and so too, as a rule, were the latter.—The distinguishing feature of Sin-offering was that the blood was sprinkled on the Altar of Holocausts, the altar of incense or the Ark, according as it was offered for the people, the priests or the High priest. Certain parts of the victim were burnt on the altar while the rest, if offered for the people, could be eaten by the priests; if offered for the priests, it had to be burnt outside the camp.—The distinguishing feature of the Peace Offering was the sacred banquet; after certain parts had been burnt on the altar and the blood poured out, the rest was eaten by the offerer and his friends and others, especially the Levites and the poor.

*The Unbloody Sacrifices.*—In these sacrifices the following things were offered: (1) cereal foods, such as roasted ears of corn, flour and cakes of unleavened bread, all of them sprinkled with salt and tempered with olive oil; (2) wine; (3) frankincense. Generally speaking, these offerings were a subordinate accompaniment to the sacrifices with bloodshed. The wine was poured out beside the altar; usually, but not always, a portion of the food, with a little incense added, was burnt on it; the incense, when offered alone, was entirely consumed on the special altar reserved for it. The unbloody sacrifices are also known as *clean oblations*.

**THE MEANING AND VALUE OF THE SACRIFICES OF THE OLD LAW.**—*Their Meaning.*—The Jews by obeying the Commandment of God to offer Him sacrifice, thereby professed in act their subjection to Him the one true God, the God of Love, the Creator of all things. The very rites themselves were the outward sign of this acknowledgment. First, as to the bloody sacrifices: blood was

<sup>9</sup> The slaying of the victim preceded the Sacrifice proper and did not form part of it.

<sup>10</sup> Between the Altar of Holocausts and the Tabernacle was the Brazen Laver, the vessel in which the priests washed before ministering.



thought to be the seat of life; in offering the blood, therefore, the priest offered the life of the animal, and the life of the animal was a symbol of the soul of man: "[The Lord said] 'the life of the flesh is in the blood. . . I have given it to you, that you may make atonement with it on the altar for your souls'";<sup>11</sup> in the bloody sacrifice for sin there was the further notion, as we may infer from St. Thomas,<sup>12</sup> that the sinner who caused it to be offered held himself guilty of death: he identified himself with the victim, and transferred his sins to it by confessing them while he held his hand on its head. As to the unbloody sacrifices: food and drink are necessary for the support of life; hence, such offerings indicated the dependence of human life on God. In both kinds of sacrifice, the rite showed that man surrendered himself to God or desired union with Him as his Master and Owner, his loving Lord, the Perfecter of his happiness: by the sprinkling or effusion of its blood, the life of the animal was regarded as passing from the hand of man to the hand of God (symbolized by the altar); the wine was given to Him by being poured out, and the bread or other such food by being blessed and by being withdrawn from its ordinary use.

*Their value.*—Sin was remitted and grace obtained through the sacrifices of the Old Law, not, however, of their own intrinsic efficacy, but in virtue of the Sacrifice of the Cross of which they were figures. They were not causes of grace like our Sacraments: they produced their effect by operating on the understanding and will of the sinner, by appealing to him like some inspired preacher. They brought him into God's presence, as it were; they served to remind him of all that God had done for his people, of the great destiny He had marked out for them, and of the hatefulness and ingratitude of sin; and so they helped to touch his heart. God then gave him the grace to make an Act of Perfect Love, or Perfect Contrition, by which alone in those days sin could be forgiven.

THE PASCH AND THE DAY OF EXPIATION.<sup>13</sup>—*The Pasch.*—The Pasch (literally, "a passing by") was the most solemn of the Jewish festivals. It commemorated Israel's deliverance from the bondage of Egypt and the preservation of the first-born

<sup>11</sup> Lev. xvii. 11.

<sup>12</sup> Speaking of the Day of Expiation, he says: "*Sacerdos imponebat manum super caput [hirci] confitens peccata filiorum Israel, ac si ille hircus deportaret ea in desertum, ubi a bestiis comederetur, quasi portans poenam pro peccatis populi.*"—S.T., I-II, q. 102, a. 5, ad 6.

<sup>13</sup> These festivals or solemnities require special mention, because they are referred to in important texts from the New Testament quoted further on.

of the Hebrews whom the angel of God spared ("passed by"), while he slew the first-born of the Egyptians. The festival, which could be celebrated only at Jerusalem, was of seven days duration and occurred at the time corresponding to our Holy Week. The opening ceremony was the most important: on the eve of the first day (our Holy Thursday), at sunset, a lamb without blemish, chosen four days previously (on our Palm Sunday), was slain, and its blood was poured out at the foot of the altar by the priest; with a wooden cross set within the ribs, it was roasted at a fire; care was taken that no bone should be broken. A lamb was thus prepared as a sacred banquet for each family or, as convenience might direct, for groups of ten or twenty persons.<sup>14</sup> Cups of red wine, mingled with a little water, together with cakes of unleavened bread and bitter herbs, were set on the festive board, and all were regarded as sanctified by their association with the lamb; psalms and prayers were recited. Unlike the celebration in Egypt, the meal was not consumed in haste, but at ease and in a spirit of religious joy; it was a meal of thanksgiving, a "eucharist." It resembled a banquet after a *sacrifice of peace*, the guests at which believed themselves to be guests of God.

*The Day of Expiation.*—This day of solemn atonement was instituted for the expiation of all the sins and irreverences committed by the people during the course of the preceding year. It was observed as a most rigorous fast, all food being prohibited from the previous evening to the evening of the festival. The High Priest, clothed in linen vestments and wearing a linen mitre, offered a calf for the sins of his own household, and two goats, only one of which was slain, for the sins of the people. He twice entered the Holy of Holies, taking with him on the first occasion the blood of the calf, and on the second the blood of the goat, to be sprinkled or poured out as the rite prescribed. Then laying his hands on the head of the live goat, he confessed the sins of the people, and had the animal driven into the wilderness, as a sign that the people had renounced evil and had obtained forgiveness.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Strictly speaking, the name Pasch applies only to this preliminary rite; the seven days which followed were called the Feast of Unleavened Bread. On the Paschal Supper, see Lagrange, *The Gospel of Jesus Christ*, Vol. II, p. 196.

<sup>15</sup> Only the chief points in the elaborate ceremony are mentioned here. For the full account, telling of the preliminary ablution, the incense, and the manner of applying the blood, see *Leviticus* xvi. Much useful information on the Jewish sacrifices and ceremonies will be found in Pelt, *Histoire de l'Ancien Testament*, 2 vols. Paris: Lecoffre, 1930.

THE PRIVILEGES OF THE JEWS EXTENDED IN FULLER MEASURE TO US.—So far, enough has been said to indicate the nature of the great privileges enjoyed by the Jews: they had, in the cloud over the Mercy Seat, the sign of the presence of God's angel in their temple; they had sacrifices by which they could adore Him, beseech His help, and plead for forgiveness of sin; and yet the grace they received was but a trickle compared with that great flood of blessings which has come to us through Christ, the Son of God, who dwells invisibly amongst us as our Priest and Victim, our Teacher and our King.<sup>16</sup>

### III

**Definition of Sacrifice.**—The Jewish sacrifices helped the Apostles to understand the Sacrifice of Christ. Judaism was the preparatory school of Christianity; the elementary lessons which the Apostles had learned from the Temple ritual had not to be set aside, but preserved and enlarged. No doubt the enlargement brought the flash of divine enlightenment and the glow of divine love into a dull and cold picture, transforming gross material things into things spiritual, but it left the outlines unchanged. Though it spoke of God's new and greater mercy to fallen man, it did not alter the general conceptions of man's duty to God; least of all did it change the essential features of sacrifice.

The essential features in the Jewish sacrifices were the following:—

(1) Some material thing, representing man or human life, was offered as a gift to God. The gift was called "the victim," "the host," "the oblation," and sometimes even "the sacrifice," the word "sacrifice" being used in that case to denote what was but a part of the sacrifice.

(2) A priest offered, or handed over, the victim to God

by bringing it into contact with the altar in one of the ways already described.

(3) The offering of the victim was designed to express man's complete surrender of himself and his will to God, man's acknowledgment of God's supreme and fatherly dominion over him, man's desire to be united to God in love.—The effect or fruit of the sacrifice was to secure a renewal or increase of God's friendship. The outward rite was not a mere sign: it increased the value of the worshipper's acts.

From all this we may deduce our definition of sacrifice: "A sacrifice is a public action in which a priest offers or transfers to God a visible gift or victim, in order to signify God's supreme and fatherly dominion over us, our total dependence on Him, and our childlike submission to His will." We shall find that this definition is verified in the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Sacrifice of the Mass.

By "total dependence on God" we mean that to Him we owe all that we are and have and hope for—that is, that He is the Creator and Sustainer of our whole being and of all our powers of acting, thinking, and willing; the Giver of every good thing we possess, whether spiritual, intellectual, or physical; the Giver of the eternal happiness for which we hope.

Our adoration of God in sacrifice naturally carries with it acts of Thanksgiving, Petition, and Atonement or Expiation. How can we, His creatures, adore Him without thanking Him? How can we who are utterly dependent on His goodness adore Him without beseeching the continuance of His mercy towards us? How can we adore Him without desiring to make satisfaction to Him for our sins? Any one of these acts may be the dominant note in a particular sacrifice and give it a special designation. Thus, *e.g.*, the perfect Sacrifice of Christ is called a Redemptive Sacrifice, because primarily it is a

<sup>16</sup> See Ch. VIII, § "The Application of the Redemption" (4).

Sacrifice of Expiation; similarly, the Mass is called a Eucharistic Sacrifice, because, before all else, it is a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving for the Redemption.

#### IV

*In the Chapter on the Incarnation and the Redemption, we gave our attention chiefly to the sufferings that Christ bore for our sake.*

*In the paragraphs below we explain more fully the nature of the great Sacrifice which He offered to God for us.*

**The Sacrifice of the Cross.**—CHRIST PROCLAIMED AT THE LAST SUPPER HIS INTENTION TO OFFER HIS LIFE FOR US.—Christ said to His Apostles at the Last Supper that His Body would be delivered for them—that is, delivered up to death for them—and that His Blood, the Blood of the New Testament, would be shed for them and for many unto the remission of sins.<sup>17</sup> As the Old Testament, the ancient compact of God with the Israelites, was sealed with the blood of animals offered in sacrifice, so too the New Testament, a new compact between God and all mankind, was to be sealed by the Sacrifice of the Cross.<sup>18</sup> The Apostles whom Christ addressed were to be His messengers to all the nations of the earth; they and their successors were to carry His words to the men of all ages unto the end of time. Thus, through them, Christ at the Last Supper made known to the whole world His intention to suffer death in sacrifice for us.—St. Gregory of Nyssa says that Christ offered Himself at the Last Supper to make it clear that He freely accepted the work of the Redemption, and that

<sup>17</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 24; St. Luke xxii, 20; St. Matthew xxvi, 28.—“For many,” *i.e.*, “not for a small number.” St. Paul says, “Christ died for all” (2 Cor. v. 15).

<sup>18</sup> Heb. ix. 19.

it was not imposed on Him by the treachery of Judas, the hostility of the Jews, or the sentence of Pilate.<sup>19</sup>

**CHRIST OFFERED SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS.**—Christ fulfilled on the Cross the promise He had made at the Last Supper. “He hath delivered Himself for us,” says St. Paul, “an oblation and a sacrifice to God”<sup>20</sup> . . . “in whom we have redemption through His Blood, the remission of sins”<sup>21</sup> . . . “He gave Himself a redemption for all.”<sup>22</sup> “Christ died once for our sins,” says St. Peter, “swallowing down death that we might be made heirs of life everlasting.”<sup>23</sup> In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we find it set forth as a fundamental truth and insistently repeated that the many sacrifices of the Old Law were but figures of the one, all-sufficing Sacrifice of the Cross. To quote but a single passage: “If the blood of goats and oxen . . . sanctify such as are defiled . . . how much more shall the Blood of Christ who by the Holy Ghost offered Himself unspotted to God, cleanse our conscience?”<sup>24</sup>

**THE SACRIFICE OF THE CROSS, A TRUE AND PERFECT SACRIFICE.**—In the Sacrifice of the Cross, Christ was at once the Priest and the Victim, divinely chosen and appointed for each of these offices. It was a Redemptive Sacrifice; therefore, He did not offer it for Himself but for us sinners. As our representative, and with a heart full of love for us and of grief for our sins, He outwardly offered and surrendered His life to God:<sup>25</sup> (1) to show that God was the Master and Owner of the life of each

<sup>19</sup> *Or. Ia in resurrectionem*, P.G., 46, 612.—See Fr. de la Taille, S.J., *Mysterium Fidei*, p. 43. The first book of Father de la Taille's important work has been translated into English by Father Carroll; it is published by Sheed and Ward.

<sup>20</sup> Eph. v. 2. <sup>21</sup> Col. i. 14. <sup>22</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 6.

<sup>23</sup> 1 St. Peter iii. 18, 22. <sup>24</sup> Heb. ix. 13, 14.

<sup>25</sup> That is, to the Blessed Trinity—to God the Father—to Himself, God the Son—and to God the Holy Ghost. See the note at the end of Ch. VIII.

one of us, our Creator and Lord ; (2) to praise, thank, and glorify God on our behalf ; (3) to plead with God that we might be restored to divine friendship through the gift of Sanctifying Grace ; and (4) by His sufferings, to make reparation to God for all our sins. As a Priest, He offered His life to God ; as a Victim, He gave it. He was perfect as a Priest, because with His human and His Divine nature He was perfectly fitted to act as Mediator between God and man : from the perfection of His understanding and His Will, and from the infinite value of His acts, He, as Man, was able to offer to God on our behalf an adoration and an atonement so perfect that God laid aside His anger,<sup>26</sup> and placed once more within our reach the privilege of divine sonship. He was perfect as a Victim, not only because of His dignity as God and Man, but because He was a living, conscious Victim, permitting His executioners to put Him to death, accepting to His last breath freely, fully, and with infinite love, every suffering inflicted on Him : " He was offered because it was His own will,"<sup>27</sup> " I lay down My life . . . I lay it down of Myself, and I have power to lay it down."<sup>28</sup>—In the Jewish sacrifices, it was the altar, a structure of wood, or of wood and metal, that sanctified the gift laid on it ;<sup>29</sup> but Christ the Victim, who was Holiness itself, had no need of any such extrinsic sanctification. His own sacred Body was the Altar, and the Blood that streamed out on it was the sign that He had offered His life for us. Thus, Christ was, not only the Priest and Victim, but also the Altar of His Sacrifice.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> On all such expressions, see Ch. I, § Immutability.

<sup>27</sup> *Isaias* liii. 7.

<sup>28</sup> *St. John* x. 17, 18.—Observe that the slaying of the Divine Victim of the Cross was not the sacrifice proper ; the Sacrifice proper consisted in Christ's offering of Himself to God as Victim. Christ did not slay Himself ; He was slain by the Jews. Even in the Jewish sacrifices the victims were not slain by the priests but by the Temple attendants.

<sup>29</sup> *Cf. St. Matthew*, xxiii, 19.

<sup>30</sup> The Church sometimes speaks of the Cross of Calvary as the Altar of Christ's Sacrifice (see, *e.g.*, Council of Trent, Session 22,) and some-

CHRIST, THE HIGH PRIEST OF THE HUMAN RACE.—Among the Hebrews, the High Priest offered sacrifice for them alone : Christ, the High Priest of the human race, offered sacrifice for all mankind. The Jewish High Priest offered the sacrifice of Expiation year by year ; he died, and was replaced by another. Christ offered but the one Sacrifice, which He still continues to offer ; He died, but He is not replaced ; He died, but yet He still lives, and is represented by others, His earthly priests. Thus in the Epistle to the Hebrews we are told that of Him the Lord said "'Thou art a priest forever,' . . . the others (*i.e.*, the Jewish High Priests) were made many priests, because by reason of death they were not suffered to continue ; but this (High Priest, Christ), *for that He continueth for ever, hath an everlasting priesthood . . . always living to make intercession for us.*"<sup>31</sup> For it was fitting that we should have such a High Priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens ; who needeth not daily (as the other priests) to offer sacrifices first for His own sins, and then for the people's."<sup>32</sup> The Jewish High Priest entered the Holy of Holies, a tabernacle made by men, taking with him the blood of calf or goat ; Christ, our High Priest, went up to the true Holy of Holies, not made by human hands, and there offered at the throne of the Divine Majesty His own most precious Blood. The offering made by the Jewish High Priest was but a passing thing : the offering made by Christ will continue for ever.<sup>33</sup>

CHRIST, OUR PASCHAL LAMB.—*St. John* the Baptist, pointing to our Saviour, said : " Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world."<sup>34</sup> Those prophetic words, uttered at the beginning of Christ's public life, were verified at its close : at the Last Supper He revealed Himself as the Lamb who was to give His life for our redemption, the Lamb whose Sacrifice was to be commemorated and renewed

times of Christ Himself as the Altar (see, *e.g.*, the Pontifical, ordination of Subdeacon, exhortation, *Adepturi*, and the Breviary, Nov. 9, Office of the Dedication of the Basilica of our Saviour, Lesson IV, which concludes with the words, " Christ who is our Altar, Victim, and Priest "). The Cross was a secondary altar ; it did not sanctify the Victim but derived its sanctification from Him.—On this entire question, see *Fr. de la Taille, Mysterium Fidei, Elucid.* XIII,—or, in the English translation, pp. 215 f. : see footnote 19 above.

<sup>31</sup> See footnote 38.

<sup>32</sup> *Heb.* vii. 21-27 ; *cf. ibid.*, viii. 1 ; x. 12.

<sup>33</sup> See below the paragraph, " The Resurrection and the Ascension in their relation to the Sacrifice of the Cross."

<sup>34</sup> *St. John* i. 29.

in the new Pasch of the Blessed Eucharist. The first Paschal Lamb was slain to deliver Israel from the slavery of Egypt, and its blood, spread on the door-posts, saved the first-born of every Hebrew family from death: Christ, our Paschal Lamb, was slain to save mankind from the bondage of Satan; His Blood was cast upon the earth so that the destroying vengeance of God<sup>35</sup> might pass by all the dwellers thereon to the end of time. "You were not redeemed," says St. Peter, "with corruptible things as gold or silver . . . but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb unspotted and undefiled."<sup>36</sup> Of the blessed in Heaven, the Holy Spirit says: "These are they who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the Blood of the Lamb."<sup>37</sup>

THE RESURRECTION AND THE ASCENSION IN RELATION TO THE SACRIFICE OF THE CROSS.—The Sacrifice of Christ ended at the moment of His death on the Cross; it was crowned and glorified by His Resurrection and Ascension. The Resurrection showed that Christ was what He had claimed to be, the Son of God; it was the Divine approval of His life and work; it was the evidence that God had accepted His Sacrifice. By the Ascension, Christ passed from the eyes of men to the Kingdom of Heaven; He entered the true Holy of Holies where He exercises, and ever will exercise, His office of High Priest, making intercession by showing His wounds to the Father.<sup>38</sup> He is there, a perpetual Victim, no longer suffering but glorified; and it is as a glorified Divine Victim that He descends on our altars at Mass.

## V

Christ at the Last Supper instituted a sacrificial rite as a memorial and representation of His death on the Cross.—"I have received of the Lord," says St. Paul, "that

<sup>35</sup> On such expressions, see Ch. I, § Immutability.

<sup>36</sup> I St. Peter i. 18, 19; cf. I Cor. v. 7.

<sup>37</sup> Apoc. vii, 14.

<sup>38</sup> St. Thomas, on Heb. vii, 25, says that Christ intercedes for us (1) by presenting to His Father the Humanity to which He (the Son) is united and which He immolated on the Cross, and (2) by manifesting His desire for our salvation.—Christ's intercession for us in Heaven is not distinct from the intercession He made for us on the Cross. While on the Cross He gained for us every help we need for our salvation. See the concluding paragraphs of Ch. VIII, § "The Application of the Redemption," § "Note—The prayers and supplications of Christ."

which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread and giving thanks broke, and said: 'Take ye and eat: this is My Body which shall be delivered for you: this do for the commemoration of Me.' In like manner also the chalice, after He had supped, saying: 'This chalice is the New Testament in My Blood: <sup>39</sup> this do ye, as often as you shall drink for a commemoration of Me.' For as often as you shall eat this Bread and drink the Chalice you shall show forth the death of the Lord until He come."<sup>40</sup> Therefore, by the words spoken by Christ at the Last Supper, and by the consecration of the bread and the wine which those words effected, He signified that, on the Cross, His Blood would be completely separated from His Body. Thus, He placed before His Apostles a representation of His death, and when He said, "This do for a commemoration of Me," He instituted a sacrificial rite, a memorial of His Sacrifice, which was to be repeated by them and their successors to the end of time.<sup>41</sup>

The new rite was well named the Eucharist (*lit.* "the thanksgiving") because of the thanks offered by Christ before consecrating the bread and the wine: <sup>42</sup> raising

<sup>39</sup> St. Luke adds, "which shall be shed for you" (xxii, 20); St. Matthew has, "This is my Blood which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins" (xxvi, 28).

<sup>40</sup> I Cor. xi. 23-26.—"Until He come," *i.e.*, "Until He come to judge the world," or "until the Day of Judgment."

<sup>41</sup> It can be shown that Christ offered a true, bloodless sacrifice at the Last Supper. But are we to regard it as in itself a distinct sacrifice or as but the beginning and formal offering of the Sacrifice of the Cross? The Church has given no decision, and theologians are divided. One point, however, we should keep clearly before our mind, *viz.*, that the Last Supper and the Cross are bound together in close union. Even those bishops at the Council of Trent who may have held for two distinct sacrifices agreed that "what Christ began at the Supper, He completed on the Cross." It is indeed obvious that it was at the Supper that Christ made clear His intention to offer His life in sacrifice for us on the Cross.

<sup>42</sup> The bread was unleavened; it was the bread hallowed by the figurative Paschal Lamb. The Pasch was celebrated in the first month of the Jewish year, designated by the Scripture as "the month of the

His eyes to Heaven,<sup>43</sup> He thanked His Father for man's Creation, for man's Redemption, and for all the blessings that were to flow from it through the Church and the Sacraments.<sup>44</sup>

*At this stage, the teacher will find it advisable to get his pupils to read again and fully grasp the solemn teaching of the Church as given in the first paragraph.*

*It will be well for him to observe also, in connection with Notes, B, at the end of this Chapter-section, that such differences as there may be among theologians on certain subtle questions about the Mass in nowise affect the great fundamental Catholic doctrine, that the Mass is the same sacrifice as that of the Cross, and that in the Mass we offer to God the same Divine Victim who suffered on Calvary.*

**The Mass is the sacrificial rite instituted by Christ at the Last Supper.**—At the Mass, bread and wine are on the altar, and the priest repeats the words and actions of Christ at the Last Supper: he takes the bread in his

new corn" (*Deut. xvi, 1*), a title of deep significance, since it was to be the month of the Passion and the Eucharist, when Christ was to be crushed and ground and given as Divine Food to men. Bethlehem, where He was born, means "the house of bread"; thus, His place of birth and the time of His death are closely linked with the Blessed Eucharist. The Wine of the Last Supper was spoken of by the ancient patriarch Jacob on his death-bed; to each of his sons, the heads of the twelve tribes, he addressed words of prophecy; but to Juda he delivered the sublimest message, foretelling that he would be praised by his brethren, that they would bow down before him, and that from him would be descended the Messiah who would "wash his robe in wine, and his garment in the blood of the grape" (*Gen. xlix. 8-11*). The words in their surface-meaning seemed to say nothing more than that in the days of the Messiah there would be a great abundance of good things, and that wine would be as plentiful as water; but, with the eye of faith, we can see that "the Blood of the Grape," the red wine of Juda, is "the Blood of Christ the Vine," the Blood that was given at the Last Supper, the Blood that drenched the garments of the Son of God in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Blood of the Paschal Lamb "who taketh away the sin of the world."

<sup>43</sup> This detail has been preserved for us by the Church: see the direction (rubric) in the Missal.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. the passage from St. Justin, quoted by Fr. de la Taille. *Mysterium Fidei*, p. 218.

hands and says: "(Jesus Christ our Lord), the day before He suffered, took bread in His holy and venerable hands. Raising His eyes to Heaven, to Thee God, His Father Almighty, He gave thanks to Thee. He blessed it, broke it, and gave it to His Disciples, saying, 'Take ye and eat ye all of this, for this is My Body.' In like manner, . . . taking in His holy and venerable hands this precious chalice, He again gave thanks to Thee; He blessed it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, 'Take ye and drink ye all of this, for this is the chalice of My Blood of the New and everlasting Testament (the mystery of faith),<sup>45</sup> which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins.—As often as ye shall do these things, ye shall do them in memory of Me.'"<sup>46</sup>

The words of the priest and the appearances of bread and wine represent Christ as in the state of death. The Fathers of the Church compare the double consecration to a two-edged mystic sword; thus St. Gregory Nazianzen says to a priest: "Hesitate not to pray for me . . . when, using thy voice as a sword, thou dividest by a bloodless cutting the Body and the Blood of the Lord."<sup>47</sup> That the entire Christ with His Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, is present both under the appearances of bread and the appearances of wine is due to the fact that, in the living, glorified Christ, His Human Nature and His Divine Nature are indissolubly united: wherever His Body is, or wherever His Blood is, He is present in the completeness of His Humanity and in the fullness of His Divinity.

<sup>45</sup> The Blessed Eucharist involves the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, and the mystery of Transubstantiation; it is fittingly called "the mystery of faith," because it is faith's severest test and faith's greatest triumph.—The Mass is often spoken of as "the celebration of the Divine Mysteries"; the plural is used because of the double consecration.

<sup>46</sup> The Church has solemnly declared (T 953) that the Canon of the Mass, from which this passage has been taken, contains no errors.

<sup>47</sup> Migne, P. G., *Ep. ad Amphil.*, 37, 282.

**The Mass has the externals of a sacrifice.**—Looking at the mere externals of the Mass, we can show an unbeliever that it is a sacrifice, a sacrifice offered without bloodshed, or, in other words, a clean sacrifice or clean oblation:—Suppose a pagan priest stands at the altar, arrayed in ceremonial dress and surrounded by his people. The attendants present him with gifts of bread and wine, which, with some form of blessing or offering, he lays on the altar. The bread and wine are now no longer regarded as ordinary food and drink; they, it is supposed, have been placed in the hand of God, and are become sacred things; they have been given to Him as a sign that all present give themselves to Him, and acknowledge that from Him have come all things that support human life. No one would deny that such an action is a sacrifice. Now turn to the Mass, and what do we observe? The priest clad in vestments stands at the altar; before him are gifts of bread and wine which he transfers to the possession of God, not by a blessing, but by a rite more holy, more potent still, by a consecration; and by this consecration, he and the assembled people believe that their offertory-gifts of bread and wine, though they retain their appearance, have been changed, as to their substance, into the Son of God himself, and therefore have been united to God more intimately than they could have been by a mere blessing. There is thus a more manifest transference of the gift, a clearer sign of man's surrender of himself to God as the sustainer of life, symbolized in the appearances of bread and wine.

**The Mass is a true sacrifice, the same sacrifice as that of Christ on the Cross, but without bloodshed.**—At the Supper, when Christ had consecrated the bread and the wine, He said to His Apostles, "Do this for a commemoration of Me." Thus He made them priests with power to do as He had done, and they transmitted that power to others down to our day together with the command of Christ to exercise it.

**THE MASS IS A TRUE SACRIFICE.** Looking at the Mass with the light of faith, we see that it possesses all the requisites for a sacrifice:

(1) Christ, the Victim, is present—the Victim, offered by Himself at the Supper and on the Cross—the Victim who, by His very command to the Apostles, declared

Himself to be a perpetual Victim,<sup>48</sup> a Victim, therefore, capable of being offered to the end of time.

(2) The offering is made in an outward and public manner by a priest commissioned for the purpose by Christ.

(3) The priest, in the name of the Church, offers the Victim to the Eternal Father: "We offer to Thy glorious Majesty," he says, "a pure Victim, a holy Victim, an unspotted Victim, the Holy Bread of eternal life, and the Chalice of perpetual salvation;"<sup>49</sup> he offers for the same sacrificial ends for which the Victim was offered at the Supper and on the Cross, "for the salvation of the whole world" and "for the remission of sins":<sup>50</sup> He offers the Victim for the purpose of adoring, praising, and glorifying the Father Almighty (*adoration*), of thanking Him for His past mercies and favours (*thanksgiving*), of beseeching His help and blessings (*petition*), of appeasing His anger and gaining His friendship (*propitiation*), and of obtaining release from the punishment due to sin (*satisfaction*).<sup>51</sup>

**THE MASS IS THE SAME SACRIFICE AS THAT OF THE CROSS, BUT WITHOUT BLOODSHED.** It is obvious that the Mass is not an exact repetition of the Sacrifice of the Cross. Christ does not come on earth to renew over and over again, in every detail, what took place on Calvary: "Christ, rising again from the dead, dieth now no more; death shall no more have dominion over Him."<sup>52</sup> How

<sup>48</sup> "The virtue of that Victim, once offered, continues for ever," says St. Thomas, S.T., III, q. 22, a. 5, ad 2. This doctrine is based on *Hebrews* x. 14.

<sup>49</sup> See the first prayer after the Consecration.

<sup>50</sup> Words spoken at the Offertory and at the consecration of the Chalice.

<sup>51</sup> These purposes are expressed in the *Gloria in excelsis*, the *Pater Noster*, and many other parts of the Mass.

<sup>52</sup> *Rom.* vi. 9.

then is the Mass the same sacrifice as that of the Cross, and yet not identical with it? It is the same sacrifice, because in both there is the same Victim, the same Priest, the same Offering; yet not identically the same sacrifice, because, in the Mass, Christ as Priest offers through the ministry or agency of the priest of the Church, and because His offering is not accompanied by the shedding of His Blood. We might also point out the further difference that the Cross is the source of all the grace that has been given to man since the Fall, and of all the grace that shall be given to him till the end of the world; the source, too, of the Church herself and her Sacraments, including the very Sacrifice-Sacrament of the Mass.

**The Priest, the Victim and the Altar of the Mass.**—THE PRIEST OF THE MASS. (1) To offer the Victim is to hand over the Victim to God, to present Him as our gift to God. This is done by the priest at the Consecration.<sup>53</sup> And since it is the priest alone who has the power of consecrating, it is the priest alone who has the power of direct offering. The laity have the power of indirect offering, *i.e.*, the power of attaching their offering to that of the priest.—(2) The priest's power to offer the sacrifice of the Mass comes from the "character" which was impressed on his soul at his ordination, whereby he was given a likeness to Christ, the great High Priest, the Offerer of the Sacrifice of the Cross. Even if he be unworthy of his exalted office, his unworthiness will not deface the image of Christ within him, nor will it impede his power of offering, nor make the Victim less acceptable to God. The Mass, as the Council of Trent solemnly teaches, "is not defiled by the unworthiness or wickedness of those who offer it."<sup>54</sup>—The power of the laity to act as

<sup>53</sup> St. Thomas uses the word *consecrare* as equivalent to *offerre*; he says, *e.g.*, "This Sacrament comes into being at the consecration of the Eucharist, in which (consecration) the Sacrifice is offered to God" (S. T. III, q. 82. a. 10, ad 1).

<sup>54</sup> T 939.

co-offerers with the priest comes from the "character" impressed on their souls in Baptism; but their power to offer, unlike that of the priest, cannot assert itself unless accompanied by faith and the desire to please God.<sup>55</sup>—(3) The Mass, as the Church defines, is offered by Christ through the ministry of the priest. Thus Christ is the Principal Priest of the Mass, and the earthly priest is His agent; but he is a true agent; he truly consecrates or offers, just as he truly absolves. He is the agent or minister of Christ, since it is from Christ he has received the "character" of the priesthood;<sup>56</sup> he is the minister of the Church, since he is her deputy, acting in her name and for the benefit of all her children. Hence, he never acts as a private individual when celebrating: his Mass may be offered under a forest-tree or in some poor shack in the desert, with no one at hand to answer it or assist at it; even so, it is still a public action, the action of an official commissioned by the public or visible society

<sup>55</sup> The words of the Mass themselves tell you that you are not present as though you were merely praying to God, but that you are actually joining with the priest and with Christ in offering the Sacrifice. You will note that in the prayer, *Orate fratres*, the priest says: "Brethren, pray that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable before God the Father Almighty"; that he says in the Memento of the Living: "Be mindful, O Lord, of Thy servants and all here present for whom we offer to Thee or who offer to Thee this Sacrifice of praise"; and that, generally, throughout the Canon he speaks of the Sacrifice not as his alone, but as his and ours.—Some Protestants might seize on these statements to argue that the laity are priests, and might point to the words of St. Peter (I, ii. 9) where he speaks of the Christian people as "a kingly priesthood"; but God spoke in a similar manner of the Jewish nation as "a priestly kingdom" (*Exodus* xix. 6), yet no one can deny that to the Levites alone was reserved the charge of the religious ceremonies in the Temple, and that it was only a descendant of Aaron who could perform the sacrificial rite; besides, neither the words of St. Peter nor those of *Exodus* refer to laymen, as distinct from priests, but to an entire people spiritually united by sacrifice in the worship of their God and King.—The Christian laity, though co-offerers of the Mass, are not priests, because they have no power to perform the sacrificial rite of the Consecration.

<sup>56</sup> *i.e.*, from Christ as the chief instrumental cause of all grace given to man since the Fall.



of the Church, and the blessings gained at the lonely altar are borne by God's angels to all her faithful members throughout the world.

Every Mass is offered by Christ as the Principal Priest,<sup>57</sup> and by the Universal Church. It is visibly offered by the officiating priest, who acts as minister of Christ and the Church; by those who assist at the altar; by the congregation present, and by those who cause the Mass to be celebrated.

**THE VICTIM OF THE MASS.** Christ is the Victim of the Mass; yet we, by the "character" stamped on our souls in baptism, are joined to Him as secondary victims. As bread is made from many grains of wheat, and wine from the juice of many grapes, so we, the members of the Church, forming one body with Christ as our Head, associating our wills with His, present ourselves as co-victims with Him to the Eternal Father.<sup>58</sup> From the very nature of sacrifice, this must

<sup>57</sup> Some theologians say that Christ repeats in each Mass the offering of Himself He made on Calvary, thus actively co-operating with the priest of the Church. This opinion was first proposed some centuries ago, and has had many supporters and many opponents (see Vermeersch, *Theol. Mor., De Sanct. Eucharistia*, marginal no. 282); we cannot, therefore, give it any place in doctrinal instruction (see Notes, B (2), at the end of this Chapter-section, where an extreme form of the opinion is discussed; for the teaching of St. Thomas, see Notes A [5]). Any incentive to devotion which it may suggest can be found equally well in the consideration that the stupendous power which Christ, out of the fullness of His love for mankind, has given to the priests of His Church produces exactly the same effect as if He himself were acting directly and personally, and that, at the Consecration of each Mass, His offering of Himself on the Cross—the great Offering that has given the priest his power—is as vividly present to God as though it were being made at that moment. We might add also that Christ as Victim is directly and personally active in the Mass: see § "The Altar of the Mass," and § "The excellence of the Mass."

<sup>58</sup> That the Universal Church (excluding only those members who are sinners and do not desire the grace of repentance) offers, and is offered in, the Mass, can be inferred from the teaching of the Council of Trent (T 940, 941, 944, 945), and is expressly stated by Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical, "The Common Reparation due to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus," May 8, 1928.

necessarily be so: in every sacrifice the victim represents the offerers; they hand it over as a gift to God, accompanied by the gift of their self-surrender, *i.e.*, of their complete subjection to Him, and their desire of union with Him.

**THE ALTAR OF THE MASS.** The altar at which the priest celebrates has been consecrated with great solemnity by the bishop, so that, like the Cross of Calvary, it may be a secondary altar of Christ's sacrifice; but Christ Himself is the true or chief Altar, and it is in that capacity that He receives and attaches to Himself our offering of ourselves as sharers in His Victimhood.

**The Mass, prefigured in the Sacrifice of Melchisedech, and foretold by Malachias.**—**THE SACRIFICE OF MELCHISEDECH.**—Melchisedech, whom the Scriptures call a "priest of the Most High God,"<sup>59</sup> blessed Abraham after his victory over the four Kings, and offered a sacrifice of bread and wine, the first great figure of the unbloody sacrifice of the New Law. "Who," says St. Cyprian, "is more a priest of the Most High God than our Lord Jesus Christ who offered a sacrifice to God the Father, and offered the same that Melchisedech offered, namely, bread and wine, that is, His Body and Blood."<sup>60</sup> Since Christ offered this unbloody sacrifice at the Last Supper, and will continue to offer it to the end of time, He is called "a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech."<sup>61</sup>

**THE PROPHECY OF MALACHIAS.**—God, through the mouth of the Prophet Malachias, condemns the Jewish priests, because they had offered Him unworthy victims, "polluted bread," animals "lame," "blind," or "sick"; He angrily rejects the levitical sacrifices, and foretells that their place will be taken by a clean oblation which shall be offered up all over the world: "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will not receive a gift of your hand; for from the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation, for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts."<sup>62</sup> God spoke in these words of a new

<sup>59</sup> *Gen.* xiv. 18.

<sup>60</sup> *Ep.* 63, *ad Caec.* n. 4.

<sup>61</sup> *Heb.* vii; *cf. Ps.* cix. "According to the order of Melchisedech" means "like Melchisedech."

<sup>62</sup> *Mal.* i. 10, 11.

sacrifice, an unbloody sacrifice, one that should be pleasing to Him, and, therefore, one of His own institution ; it was to be offered at every hour and in every place. Observe how wonderfully His prophecy has been fulfilled : at every hour of our day, dawn is breaking in some part of the world, and with it comes the daily Mass, the clean oblation, the great sacrifice founded by His Divine Son.

## VI

**The Blessings of the Mass.**—OUR GIFT TO GOD IN THE MASS.—Since, through the promise of Christ, the Church can never lose her holiness, she infallibly gives God in every Mass the supreme worship of adoration. But she is never holy in *all* her members ; and even if she were, her holiness would be a finite holiness ; it would not be as the infinite holiness of the Divine Victim she offers ; hence, our gift of worship to God in the Mass is never infinite in value.

**GOD'S GIFTS TO US IN THE MASS.** The gifts or benefits we receive from God through the Mass are commonly called its *fruits*. They consist in the appeasement of God's anger (*propitiation*), the extinction of the debt of temporal punishment (*satisfaction*), and the reception of blessings, which include an increase of Sanctifying Grace and other favours (*impetration*).

The *fruits* of the Mass, in regard to their recipients, are divided into *general*, *special*, *more special*, and *most special*. The first go to the entire Church ; the second to those present ; the third, to those for whom in particular the priest offers the Mass ; the fourth, to the priest himself. As to the *general fruit* : the Church on earth benefits according to the measure of her sanctity, which may vary considerably from age to age ; the greater her sanctity, the greater the benefit received by each one of the faithful from every Mass that is celebrated, and the greater the relief granted to the souls in Purgatory. As to the other *fruits*, they are

limited only by the dispositions of those who receive them. But note that the *fruits* of the Mass, though proportioned to the dispositions, are of far greater value than any that could be derived from private prayer with the same dispositions, because in the Mass Christ *works with us* in a very special way.

One who is a friend of God and has no affection for venial sin can undoubtedly obtain through the Mass, not only a great increase of Sanctifying Grace, but also a full discharge of his debt of temporal punishment ; but in regard to this latter point, what is true of the living may not be true of the dead ; a Mass offered for a soul in Purgatory will certainly<sup>62a</sup> benefit that soul, but to what extent we cannot say.—Through the Mass, also, a friend of God can obtain from Him any temporal favour which would not be an obstacle to holiness or spiritual advancement.

The Mass does not remit sin directly, but indirectly. To those in the state of grace, it can give that greater glow of charity which takes away venial sin ;—to those in the state of mortal sin, it can give the grace of contrition ; even the greatest criminal on earth can obtain that grace, if he sincerely asks God for it through the Mass ; the only sinner who can gather no fruit from the Mass is one who seeks no friendship with God ; yet the Church obliges such a one to Sunday Mass, not surely in the desire to add to his load of guilt, but in the hope that, even by physical presence, he may catch some gleam of God's love and be touched to penance.

The more your will corresponds to the will of Christ in the Garden when He said : "Not My will but Thine be done," the greater will be the fruit which you will derive from the Mass. All good Christians take up the Cross of Christ and follow Him ; in other words, all accept and practise that form of self-denial which consists in the substantial observance of God's law, *i.e.*, in refraining from grievous sin ; but we should try to push

<sup>62a</sup> Prümmer, vol. iii, n. 242.

out the frontier of that self-renunciation by avoiding all deliberate venial sins. In that struggle towards the higher sanctity, the Mass will be your chief aid ; you will draw from it the great and strong graces given to those who as victims seek a closer resemblance to the Victim of the Cross.

**The excellence of the Mass.**—The Mass is superior even to the abiding presence of our Blessed Lord in the Most Holy Sacrament. We may kneel before Him as He is in the Tabernacle, like the shepherds kneeling at the crib of Bethlehem long ago ; we may draw close to Him, and plead with Him, like the sufferers who thronged round Him while He was on earth, begging for the touch of His holy hand ; we may join in the hosannas of a great multitude at the high festival, when He, our Lord and King, is being borne through the city streets. But through the Mass, though celebrated in the humblest circumstances, we can do much more than all this, because *in the Mass He gives us a greater help to adore God than He gives us at any other time.* The Mass is superior to all other religious exercises, to all private prayers and penances : “no work,” says the Council of Trent, “can be performed by the faithful, so holy, so divine, as this tremendous mystery.”

In the life of Christ there was one moment beyond all others. He called it His “hour” ; it was the hour in which He gave His life for us on the Cross. In the Mass, we are with Him at that supreme moment ; we stand with His Mother at the foot of the Cross, and we ask God through Him to apply to our souls all the blessings of the Redemption. Fix your thoughts on the Mass at which you will be present next Sunday. Your Saviour had that Mass and you before His mind on the Cross. He saw your utter dependence on the Divine Omnipotence for your being and life, for your every act and thought,—and He adored God for you ; He saw your indebtedness

to the Divine Mercy for all the graces bestowed on you including the very privilege of your being present at that renewal of His Redemptive Sacrifice,—and He thanked God for you ; He saw your weakness and your needs,—and He besought God’s help and blessings for you,—the precise help and blessings you ought to desire in the hour of that Sunday’s Mass ; He saw the marks of imperfections, or perhaps, the stain of guilt, on your soul, together with your unpaid debt of temporal punishment,—and He made full atonement and expiation for you, so that you might be cleansed and relieved by His sufferings. At next Sunday’s Mass, all the help He gained for you through His own sublime acts will be available for you. *Your acts will be pitifully feeble,—worm-eaten by distractions, perhaps, and wanting in fervour—but He, the Divine Victim, will take them in His own holy hands ; He will winnow them of their deficiencies ; and to their little worth, He will add all the glowing love of His Sacred Heart, all that perfect submissiveness to the Divine Will that was His on the Cross, and thus drawing them up to a resemblance to the acts He made in your name, He will present them to the Eternal Father.* Thus, through the Mass, our acts of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, atonement, satisfaction, and petition, receive a new and special efficacy ; thus, through the Mass, we can obtain far more surely than through any other means the grace of contrition in the hour of need, the grace of more perfect sanctity, and all temporal blessings not in conflict with our spiritual well-being.

The Mass, according to St. Francis de Sales, is “the mainspring of devotion, the soul of piety, the fire of charity” ;<sup>65</sup> it is the very life of the Church, the secret of her holiness and her vitality. No wonder that the spirits of darkness should have inspired the heretic with hatred for the Mass, for they know that when they

<sup>65</sup> *Devout Life.*

strike at the Mass, they strike at the heart of the Church; no wonder that Pope Urban VIII should say that, if the angels could envy man anything, it would be his power to offer the Holy Sacrifice; no wonder that the faithful in all ages of persecution, from the days of the Catacombs to recent times, were willing to pay with their lives for the privilege of assisting at Mass. Go back in thought to the penal era in Ireland: at daybreak in some mountain fastness you see a little group of men, women, and children, clustered round a rude altar at which a hunted priest is celebrating the Sacred Mysteries; they take no heed of the cruel blasts of winter; so intent are they on the progress of the great Sacrifice that their persecutors come upon them unawares: the ravening wolf descends on the flock of Christ, and their blood commingled with the very Blood of the Lamb is borne by Him to the high throne of God. No need to say that we, their children, should never fail in loyalty to the Mass; that we should never tarnish their proud name by indifference to the most precious gift of Christ.

CARDINAL NEWMAN ON THE MASS.—“To me nothing is so consoling, so piercing, so thrilling, so overcoming, as the Mass. . . . It is not a mere form of words—it is a great action, the greatest action that can be on earth. . . . Words are necessary, but as means, not as ends; they are not mere addresses to the throne of grace; they are instruments of what is far higher, of consecration, of sacrifice. They hurry on as if impatient to fulfil their mission. . . . Quickly they pass; because as the lightning which shineth from one part of heaven unto the other, so is the coming of the Son of Man. . . . And as Moses on the mountain, so we too ‘make haste and bow our heads to the earth, and adore.’ So we, all around, each in his place, look out for the great Advent. . . . Each in his place, with his own heart, with his own wants, with his own thoughts, with his own intention, with his

own prayers, separate but concordant, watching what is going on, watching its progress, uniting in its consummation; not painfully and hopelessly following a hard form of prayer from beginning to end, but, like a concert of musical instruments, each different, but concurring in a sweet harmony, we take our part with God’s priest, supporting him, yet guided by him. There are little children there, and old men, and simple labourers, and students from seminaries, priests preparing for Mass, priests making their thanksgiving; there are innocent maidens, and there are penitent sinners; but out of these many minds rises one eucharistic hymn, and the great Action is the measure and scope of it.”<sup>64</sup>

## VII

Replies to objections against the Mass.—Various objections against the Mass, in themselves unimportant, have been brought forward by Protestants; we deal with them, chiefly because they afford an opportunity of repeating and summarising our doctrine.

A. “In the *Epistle to the Hebrews* we are taught that under the Old Law there were many sacrifices, offered by a succession of High Priests, whereas under the New there is but one sacrifice and one High Priest, Christ, who has no successors. This doctrine cannot be reconciled with the Catholic system of many priests offering many sacrifices.”

REPLY:—(1) We have but one High Priest, Christ; He has no successor, but He has representatives who act with His power and authority. Though unseen, He is still with us; He still acts as our High Priest. His earthly priests are but His ministers, His visible agents. As the judges and officials of a Kingdom are not the successors of their King, but his representatives, so our priests are not the successors, but the representatives, of Christ.—(2) Further, they do not offer many sacrifices, but one and the same sacrifice. Under the Old Law, one High Priest succeeded another, and at each sacrifice a new victim was offered; under the New, in the Sacrifice of the Mass, Christ Himself, the same for ever, fills the office of High Priest and Victim.

<sup>64</sup> *Loss and Gain*, p. 328.

B. "The *Epistle to the Hebrews*, again, teaches that Christ by His one Sacrifice atoned for all the sins of men. Hence, there is no room for the sacrifice of the Mass."

REPLY :—"Christ by His one Sacrifice atoned for all the sins of men." Yes, but each individual did not thereby receive remission of sin. Christ, by His death on the Cross, filled, as it were, a great cistern with His merits. He connected us with that cistern by means of the Mass and the Sacraments. It was His plan that we Christians should obtain forgiveness of sin by making use of the Mass and the Sacrament of Penance. Through the Sacrifice of the Mass, we get the benefit of Christ's intercession for us: through the Sacrament of Penance, we get the benefit of the atonement He made for our sins. Through the Sacrifice of the Mass, God is moved to grant us in due time the grace of contrition: through the Sacrament of Penance, God applies to our soul the atonement made by Christ.

C. "You say that man is bound to offer frequent sacrifice to God to adore, praise, thank Him, and beg His blessings, and that the Mass is the sacrifice by which all this is done. But Christ's death on the Cross discharged all these duties for us. Hence, no subsequent sacrifice is required."

REPLY :—(1) One might argue just as well that, since Christ prayed for us, *we* need never say a prayer. Christ's *internal* act of adoration on the Cross has not exempted us from the obligation of personally adoring God in our hearts; neither has Christ's *external* act of adoration, His Sacrifice, dispensed us from the duty of offering sacrifice to God. We must be imitators of Christ in regard to the outward as well as the inward act. We imitate Him in respect of both by means of the Sacrifice of the Mass.—(2) Our opponents admit that the Jewish sacrifices were instituted by God, yet, if their objection were sound, this could not have been so; for Christ's one sacrifice, it could be contended, satisfied the obligations of all men, before and after His time, from the beginning of the world to the end.—(3) Sacrifice has been so common at all times and in all parts of the world as to give rise to the saying, "No sacrifice, no religion." The impulse to adore God in this precise way belongs to our very nature, and must have been implanted there by God Himself. He gave us a body as well as a soul, and He wishes us to worship Him with both. He wishes us to express outwardly, by gesture, as well as by word, our internal acts of worship. This we do in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

D. "According to Catholics, the Sacrifice of the Cross does not benefit us directly, but indirectly through the Mass. That is to say, the Sacrifice of the Cross is not all sufficient, but requires some instrument to produce its effect on us. The Mass, therefore, is derogatory to the Sacrifice of the Cross," (*i.e.*, the Mass depreciates, or lessens the value of, the Sacrifice of the Cross).

REPLY :—(1) Protestants teach that we receive the benefit of the Sacrifice of the Cross by an act of faith. But, according to their argument above, even this act of faith is disrespectful to the Sacrifice of the Cross; for it is the instrument that conveys its blessings to us.—(2) The Mass is in no sense derogatory to the Sacrifice of the Cross, because it is a representation and continuation of it, and derives all its efficacy from it.

#### NOTES

A. A FEW ADDITIONAL REMARKS ON THE MASS. (1) The Mass, as given to us by Christ, consists of the Consecration and the Communion. The essence of the Sacrifice, according to the common teaching, is found in the Consecration: the priest's communion may be compared to the eating of the Paschal Lamb, which ceremony was not the sacrifice proper, but the sacred banquet that followed it.

(2) At the very moment when the twofold Consecration has been completed, the Sacrifice is offered; the Divine Victim is handed over to God by the priest in the name of the Church. Since it would be impossible for us, with our human limitations, to make all our acts of adoration, etc., in that fleeting instant of time, the Church allows us to make them at our leisure before and after the Consecration. We make them in a most solemn way at the Offertory,<sup>65</sup> and continue doing so until just before the *Agnus Dei*, when the prayers for Communion begin.

(3) We are recommended to form, before the Consecration, the particular intentions for which we desire to offer the Mass. But there seems to be no doubt that the sacrificial virtue continues in action after the Consecration down to the conclusion

<sup>65</sup> As the prayers in the Missal show you, the priest does not offer bread and wine at the Offertory; anticipating the Consecration, he offers the Body and Blood of the Lord.

of the sacrificial prayers; if this were not so, the Church would not have placed the Memento of the Dead after the Consecration, but before it; in fact, she would have placed all the sacrificial prayers before the Consecration.<sup>66</sup>

(4) You will notice that, before the Consecration, the priest prays that the bread and the wine may be changed into the Body and Blood of Christ; but since the Consecration is effected by the words, "This is My Body," "This is the Chalice of My Blood," this prayer is not strictly a prayer of petition but an expression of desire for the presence of the Victim. You will find a parallel in the Sacrament of Penance: the priest says to you, "May Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and lead you to eternal life. . . . May the Lord Jesus absolve you"; and then he gives you absolution, saying, "I absolve you from your sins."

(5) St. Thomas does not hold that the Consecration is effected by a direct, personal act of Christ, but by the words of the priest who celebrates. He does indeed say that, because of the great dignity of the Eucharist, the priest uses the very words of Christ and speaks as though Christ Himself were speaking;<sup>67</sup> but, at the same time, he makes it clear that it is not Christ but the priest who consecrates.<sup>68</sup>

(6) As has been so often said, all grace comes to us through Christ our Lord. It is His grace, therefore, that gives us the good dispositions which we require for the fruitful reception of the Sacraments. But, as noted in Ch. X, § "The Sacraments are true causes of grace," when we actually receive a Sacrament, Christ gives us a further grace which is not caused by our dispositions, though its amount is determined by them. The same is true of the Mass: the good dispositions we bring with us are His gift to us, yet they are not the cause, but the measure, of the greater gift we get from Him through actual assistance at the Holy Sacrifice.

<sup>66</sup> (a) Compare the case of the Sacrament of Penance; its virtue does not cease the moment absolution has been given; it affects the penance prescribed by the priest, even though the penance be not performed till long after.

(b) It is worth noting also that the presence of the Divine Victim on the altar under the appearances of bread and wine—that is, in the image of His death—would seem to indicate that He is still capable of receiving our sacrificial acts.

<sup>67</sup> S.T., III, q. 78, a. 1, c. <sup>68</sup> S.T., III, q. 82, a. 1, c et ad 2.

B. DIFFERENCES AMONG THEOLOGIANs REGARDING THE ESSENCE OF THE MASS. It is sufficient for Catholics to know that the Church has defined the Mass to be a true sacrifice; only a few will be interested in the speculations of theologians as to *how* precisely it is a true sacrifice.

The principal theories may be briefly stated as follows:—

(1) "The Mass is the same sacrifice as that of the Cross. On the Cross, Christ suffered a real destruction. In the Mass, He suffers an equivalent destruction, because He enters into a lower kind of existence under the appearances of bread and wine."—Remarks: (a) Christ in the Eucharist is the same Christ who reigns in Heaven, adored by the angels and saints; the appearances of bread and wine are no part of Him and do not lessen His glory; hence the words of Consecration do not cause any equivalent form of destruction in Him.—(b) The supposed destruction would not be the same as that which took place on Calvary; hence, the Sacrifice of the Mass would not be the same sacrifice as that of the Cross.

(2) "Christ's Sacrifice did not end with His death; it continues in Heaven, where He still offers the love and humble obedience and subjection which He offered on the Cross. When He comes to us in the Mass, therefore, He brings with Him this heavenly sacrifice in which He is the Priest and the Victim, and we offer ourselves as victims in union with Him, imitating Him in His lowly submission and complete surrender of Himself to His Father."—Remarks: (a) Christ, as the Council of Trent clearly says, instituted the Mass "so that He might leave to His Church a visible sacrifice such as our nature requires."<sup>69</sup> The Mass, therefore, is the sacrifice offered by the Church, and not directly by Christ.—(b) Sacrifice and Sacraments are outward or sensible signs; they are for us who live on earth, to prepare us for Heaven; hence, there can be no such thing as a heavenly sacrifice.<sup>69a</sup>—(c) If Christ continues to offer, actively and personally, the Sacrifice of Calvary, then He has not yet completed the work of our Redemption—which is quite untenable: ever since His death on the Cross His work for us has not been a work of Redemption but the work of applying its fruits to us.—(d) Since Christ's human nature is a creature, and since all creatures are dependent on God for their continued existence, Christ as Man will be always subject to God, *i.e.*, to God the Father—to Himself, God the Son—and to God the Holy Ghost. But that subjection implies no humiliation; His humiliation ceased at the

<sup>69</sup> T 938.

<sup>69a</sup> St. Thomas, S.T., q. 61, a. 4, ad 1.

moment of His death. It is incorrect, therefore, to speak of the glorified Christ as "bowed down in lowly and constant obedience before His Father." It is equally incorrect to urge us to imitate that supposed obedience. Our model of obedience is not Christ as He now is in Heaven, but as He was while on earth. He is our model in His obedience unto the death of the Cross: St. Peter says, "Christ suffered for your sake, *leaving you an example that ye might follow in His footsteps.*"<sup>70</sup> Observe the similarity between the words of St. Peter and those of the Council of Trent quoted above; both speak of Christ as having left us something which is to engage *our* activity and not *His*.—(e) This theory, first proposed more than two-and-a-half centuries ago, has had the support of men of remarkable holiness. Though clearly unsound, and though rejected by the great majority of theologians, it offers us much that is valuable in what its advocates say of the dispositions required of us during the Holy Sacrifice.—So much space would not have been given to it, but for the fact that it is occasionally found in popular books of devotion.

(3) "The Sacrifice of the Mass is the rite by which the Sacrament of the Eucharist is produced. It is a Sacrifice-Sacrament, and we can apply to it the axiom that a sacrament effects what it signifies. The Mass signifies the Sacrifice of Christ; therefore, it effects that Sacrifice, *i.e.*, it places on the altar, under the appearances of bread and wine, the Sacrifice offered by Christ on Calvary." Remarks: (a) This theory was proposed by a distinguished German liturgist less than twenty years ago; it had the support of a few theologians among his compatriots, until its final refutation in 1935.<sup>71</sup>—(b) All events, past, present, and future, stand before the mind of God with equal vividness; but from this we cannot conclude that God can take an event out of the past and make it belong to the present. He cannot make the glorified Christ be, at one and the same time, the suffering Christ: that would violate the principle of contradiction.—(c) The axiom that "the Sacraments effect what they signify" refers to the grace, or to the source of grace,<sup>72</sup> which they effect in the present. It has no reference to the Passion or to

<sup>70</sup> 1 St. Peter ii. 21.

<sup>71</sup> By Dr. B. Poschmann in the *Theologische Quartalschrift* (Erstes und Zweites Quartalheft); he gives references to the important articles by Dr. Umberg, S. J., and others.

<sup>72</sup> By "source of grace," as distinguished from grace, we mean the Real Presence in the Eucharist and the "characters" given in Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Order.

our future glory, both of which are signified in this present time by the Sacraments—"signified," but, obviously, not effected.<sup>73</sup>

(4) "At the Last Supper, Christ dedicated Himself as the Victim of the Cross. He did so by means of a rite which signified His death. That rite was the initial act in His Sacrifice, the Sacrifice of His Passion. Christ, therefore, offered but the one Sacrifice; it began on the night of the Last Supper; it ended next day at the moment of His death on the Cross.

"He left the rite of the Last Supper to His Church to be a memorial of His Sacrifice: 'This do,' He said to the Apostles, 'for a commemoration of Me.' The Mass, therefore, is the Sacrifice which He commanded the Church to offer. It is offered by her through the power of Christ. Christ is the Principal Priest of the Mass as He is the Principal Minister of the Sacraments; and as He does not administer the Sacraments actively and personally, neither does He actively and personally offer the Mass.

"Though the Mass is offered by Christ through a representative, the Victim that is offered is no mere substitute for Christ, but Christ himself. After the Sacrifice of Calvary, Christ was accepted by God as an Eternal Victim. Therefore, *we* do not have to make Him a *Victim*: but we can make Him, in each Mass, *our* Victim, conveying through Him to God all that He gained for us on the Cross."—Remarks: (a) The teaching that the sacrificial rite of the Last Supper was but the first act in Christ's Sacrifice, though agreeing admirably with the emphatic statement in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* that Christ offered Himself but once, is still a debated question among theologians. (See footnote <sup>41</sup> above). (b) As to the remaining part of the theory, the part with which we are directly concerned here, no one denies that the Mass is offered by Christ through the ministry of His priests; that the Mass is offered by the Church; that Christ is an Eternal Victim. So far, therefore, the theory is sound. In respect of its other contentions, it is possible, but not probable, that it may need to be amplified. If therefore, it has any defect, we can safely say that the defect is simply incompleteness.

<sup>73</sup> St. Thomas says: "A sacrament is a sign commemorative of what is past, *viz.*, the Passion of Christ—demonstrative of what is *effected* in us through Christ's Passion, *viz.*, *grace*—and prophetic of future glory" (S.T., III, q. 60, a. 3, c.).—Of the Blessed Eucharist, he says expressly that it represents the Death or Passion of Christ, and *effects grace* (4 Sent. dist. 8, q. 1, a. 1, qa. 2 Sed contra and dist. 11, q. 2, a. 1, qa. 3 c.).

## C

## THE BLESSED EUCHARIST AS A SACRAMENT

*Summary.*

- I. The teaching and legislation of the Church.
- II. The Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist defined—Its Minister and Subject.
- III. Holy Communion : how far necessary for salvation.—Frequent Communion.—Communion under one kind.
- IV. The effects of Holy Communion ; it gives an increase of Sanctifying Grace ; it produces a union of love between Christ and the soul ;—it produces spiritual gladness ;—it is the food and medicine of the soul ;—it is the pledge of our glorious resurrection.
- V. Preparation and thanksgiving.

## I

**The Solemn Teaching and the Legislation of the Church.**

*The solemn teaching of the Church.*—The Church teaches solemnly :—(1) that the Blessed Eucharist is a Sacrament ;<sup>1</sup> (2) that it gives an increase of grace to those who receive it worthily ; that its effect on the soul resembles that of food on the body, supporting, strengthening, refreshing, and delighting it ; that it helps us to avoid mortal sin, and to overcome all imperfections ;<sup>2</sup> (3) that it is a pledge, or token, of the everlasting happiness that shall be ours ;<sup>3</sup> (4) that no one except the priest celebrating Mass is bound to communicate under both species.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> T 844. <sup>2</sup> T 850, 875 ; F 698. <sup>3</sup> T 875. <sup>4</sup> T 876.—Theological readers will note that the doctrines stated here are excerpts from the Decree issued by the Council of Trent (*Sess. xiii.*) The Council introduces the Decree with a prohibition addressed "to all the faithful of Christ," ordering "that henceforth they shall not dare to believe, teach, or preach concerning the Blessed Eucharist otherwise than as explained and defined in this present Decree." This proves that the Council is delivering solemn teaching.

*The Legislation of the Church.*—The Church has decreed :—(1) that, to receive worthily, the subject must not only be in the state of grace, but must have observed a complete fast from the previous midnight ;<sup>5</sup> (2) that all the faithful who have come to the use of reason are bound to receive at least once a year in Paschal time,<sup>6</sup> and at the hour of death ; (3) that no one should approach the Altar until he has obtained remission of all mortal sins in the Sacrament of Penance ; if then he be conscious of having committed some mortal sin since his last Confession, he must abstain from Holy Communion, even though he succeed in making an act of perfect contrition.<sup>7</sup>

**The Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist Defined.—Its Minister and Subject.**—The Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine. The other Sacraments

<sup>5</sup> The law of fasting does not bind those who are in immediate danger of death, nor those who receive in order to prevent irreverence. The latter case would arise, if a church were attacked, and there was a probability that the ciborium might fall into sacrilegious hands. A further exception is found in the following canon : "Those who have been a month ill with no certain prospect of speedy recovery may, on the prudent advice of a confessor, receive the Blessed Eucharist once or twice a week, even though they may have previously taken something in the form of medicine or drink" (C. C. L., 858 § 2).

<sup>6</sup> The Church has fixed the period as from Palm Sunday to Low Sunday, but permits Bishops in their discretion to extend the time, provided it begin not earlier than the Fourth Sunday of Lent, nor end later than Trinity Sunday. In Ireland, by a special concession, the period begins on Ash Wednesday. Those who have failed to fulfil the Paschal precept are bound to receive as soon as possible.—A confessor may, if he thinks it advisable, require a penitent to defer receiving until after Paschal time.—The faithful are urged to receive, each in his own parish ; if they receive elsewhere, they are required to notify their pastor (C. C. L., 859).

<sup>7</sup> C. C. L., 856.—Note, however, that he should not abstain from Holy Communion because of a grievous sin which he forgot to tell in his last confession, provided he was sorry for all his sins and can answer affirmatively the following two questions : "Would I have told that sin if I had remembered it ?" "Am I now resolved to tell it in my next confession ?"



exist only in the instant of their conferring; they are actions, and therefore transient, whereas the Blessed Eucharist consists in the continued presence of Christ; it not merely gives grace like the other Sacraments, but contains the very Author of grace Himself.

**THE MINISTER OF THE SACRAMENT.**—We distinguish between the Minister of Consecration and the Minister of Distribution. The former is the priest who consecrates the Blessed Eucharist at Mass; the latter is he who distributes it to the faithful. In cases of grave necessity the laity may be allowed to give themselves Holy Communion,<sup>8</sup> but the Church has always held it as an Apostolic rule that, apart from the exception just mentioned, the Bread of Life should be dispensed only by the consecrated hand of the priest.<sup>9</sup>

**THE SUBJECT OF THE SACRAMENT.**—The subject is any one who has been baptized.<sup>10</sup>

### III

**Holy Communion: how far necessary for Salvation.—Frequent Communion.—Communion under one kind.—NECESSITY FOR SALVATION.**—Christ Himself has said: "Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you."<sup>11</sup> The Church interpreting this command and putting it into a more definite shape, requires all adults to receive Holy Communion at least once a year in Paschal time. Those who wilfully disobey her, disobey Christ, and "shall not have life in them"; but those who disobey her through no grave fault will not be punished.

<sup>8</sup> *e.g.*, during the early persecutions the people were permitted to take the Blessed Eucharist to their homes, and communicate themselves privately.

<sup>9</sup> Pöhlle-Preuss, *Sacraments* ii, p. 261.—When there is grave reason, a deacon may, with the permission of the local bishop or pastor, administer Holy Communion. In case of urgency this permission may be presumed (C. C. L., 845, § 2).

<sup>10</sup> See Ch. X. § "The Subject of a Sacrament" (b).

<sup>11</sup> St. John vi. 54.

The necessity of receiving Holy Communion is, therefore, not like the necessity of receiving Baptism: Baptism is necessary for salvation, whether we know of it or not; while Holy Communion is necessary only in so far as we know the command of Christ to receive it.

**FREQUENT COMMUNION.**—Daily Communion was an ordinary practice of the Church in the early centuries; later, it was recommended by the Council of Trent<sup>12</sup> and, still more earnestly, by the saintly Pope Pius X: "All the faithful," he says, "should have access to frequent and daily Communion so fervently desired by Christ and the Church. . . . No one should be excluded from the Table of the Lord who is in the state of grace, and approaches with a right and devout intention."<sup>13</sup> A "right intention," he explains, consists in the sincere purpose of pleasing God, of being more closely united to Him in charity, and of seeking in this heavenly Food a remedy against all spiritual weaknesses and defects.

**COMMUNION UNDER ONE KIND.**—The priest celebrating Mass must communicate under both species; this is necessary in order to carry out fully the rite established by Christ. But, though necessary for the Sacrifice, it is not necessary for the Sacrament; we can obtain all the graces of Holy Communion by receiving under either species, since Christ is wholly present under each. He Himself has said: "He that eateth this *bread* shall live for ever."<sup>14</sup> In the early ages of the Church, it was customary to administer the Blessed Eucharist under the species of bread alone to the sick and to confessors imprisoned for the faith.<sup>15</sup> It did not become the prescribed form for the faithful generally until about the twelfth century, when its practical convenience began to be clearly recognised.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> T 875, 882. <sup>13</sup> Denz., 1981, C. C. L., 863. <sup>14</sup> St. John vi. 59.

<sup>15</sup> During the fifth century, Communion under both species was actually prescribed by Pope St. Leo. The Manichaeans in those days asserted that wine was the creation of the spirit of evil. The decree was issued to condemn their teaching, and to secure a public profession of faith in the Real Presence of Christ under this species.

<sup>16</sup> It would be difficult to procure wine in sufficient quantities for use all over the world, and difficult also to preserve the sacred species for any length of time; add to this the danger of spilling, and the repugnance many might feel to communicating from the same chalice.

## IV

**The Effects of Holy Communion.**—**HOLY COMMUNION INCREASES SANCTIFYING GRACE AND GIVES SACRAMENTAL GRACE.** Every time we communicate worthily we receive an increase of Sanctifying Grace. The better our dispositions, the greater the increase. If we approach the Altar resolved to conquer our self-love, resolved to take the Cross of Christ on our shoulders, and, for His sake, to keep His law down to the last detail, then our dispositions are perfect, and we lay our souls wide open to a vast increase of God's radiant Grace. Every time we communicate worthily we receive Sacramental Grace, *i.e.*, we are given a claim to all those generous Actual Graces which will help to keep us safe in God's love, and to live our lives in childlike docility to Him.

**HOLY COMMUNION PRODUCES A UNION OF LOVE BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE SOUL.**—After receiving the Blessed Eucharist, as long as the species of bread remain, Christ dwells within us. Not only do we obtain a great increase of Sanctifying Grace, but His soul is united to ours in some mysterious way; His Soul breathes into ours its own spirit of Divine Love,<sup>17</sup> so that we may say with St. Paul: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me."<sup>18</sup> The perfection of that union is compared by St. Cyril of Alexandria to the blending together of two pieces of wax under the influence of heat: "Thus," he continues, "he who receives the Body and Blood of the Lord, is joined to Him in such wise that Christ is present in him, and he in Christ." And by uniting us with Christ, it unites us thereby *with all the faithful*: "For we," says

<sup>17</sup> This is what we desire when we say the words, "Soul of Christ, make me holy." See Ch. on Grace, § "Sanctifying Grace is caused in us through the humanity of Christ."

<sup>18</sup> *Gal.* ii, 20.

St. Paul, "being many are one Bread, one Body, all that partake of one Bread."<sup>19</sup> As bread is made of many grains of wheat, and wine from the juice of many grapes, so, through this mystic food and drink, all who partake of it are made one in Christ: the same spirit of Christ dwells in all, and draws all together into a perfect union.

**HOLY COMMUNION IS THE FOOD AND MEDICINE OF THE SOUL: IT HELPS TO BLOT OUT VENIAL SINS AND PRESERVES US FROM MORTAL SIN.**—*It is the food of the Soul.*—As a lamp needs oil to keep it burning, so does the body need food to keep it alive; every part of it is being constantly worn away, and must be constantly renewed; the process of waste must be balanced by the process of reparation. The soul, too, in regard to its spiritual life, is subject to an incessant decline in fervour caused by the venial offences which we daily commit; and what food does for the body, the Blessed Eucharist does for the soul by giving it new energy, fervour, and life.<sup>20</sup> But in this comparison let us note a point of difference: material food is absorbed into the body, and is converted into living tissue, whereas what may be termed the opposite process is effected by the Blessed Eucharist; for it is not Christ who is made like unto us, but we who are made like unto Christ.

*It is the medicine of the soul.* As medicine can render the body proof against the microbes of disease, so the Blessed Eucharist can preserve the soul from mortal sin. It closes our ears to temptations from without, and stifles the flame of carnal desire that burns within. It is in this latter effect that we chiefly feel its wholesome power; impurity is the principal disease of the human

<sup>19</sup> *I Cor.* x. 17.

<sup>20</sup> "It is like an antidote whereby we are delivered from daily faults, and preserved from deadly sins," Council of Trent, *Sess.* xiii. c. 2.

soul, the disease that sets us against God, gives us a distaste for His service, blinds us, pins us to the earth, and brutalizes us. Frequent Communion is the best medicine for that dread disease which turns the steps of so many towards hell.

**HOLY COMMUNION PRODUCES SPIRITUAL GLADNESS.**—By spiritual gladness we do not mean a feeling of joy or sweetness, although this is often the effect of Holy Communion, but rather a greater alacrity, a brighter willingness, to do all that Christ and His Church command us. Those who have made a careful preparation, and receive the Sacrament worthily, may not perceive this effect, for God often denies His consolation to those He loves, so that by their patience they may merit greater grace; still, though no such increase be observed, it is none the less really given. Every good Communion brings us a great step nearer God: the virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity are strengthened, so that the soul sees divine truth better, trusts more firmly in the goodness of God, and is warmed by a closer approach to the sunshine of His Love.

**HOLY COMMUNION IS A PLEDGE OF OUR GLORIOUS RESURRECTION.**—In Holy Communion the body becomes ennobled, because it is brought into contact with the Sacred Species, and, therefore, indirectly with the living Flesh of Christ. Being the abode and tabernacle of Christ in this life, it is fitting that it should not see final corruption, but should share with Him in the privilege of a glorious resurrection. He Himself has said: "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise Him up on the last day."<sup>21</sup>

## V

**Preparation and Thanksgiving.**—**PREPARATION FOR COMMUNION.**—Need we speak a word on the necessity of being free from mortal sin when we approach the Altar? St. Paul says: "Whosoever shall eat this Bread or drink the Chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. . . . He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Body of the Lord,"<sup>22</sup> *i.e.*, acting as though he did not recognise that the Body of Christ is here. An unworthy Communion is a dreadful act of sacrilege and ingratitude: it is the traitor's stab, the kiss of Judas. But we should not rest satisfied with refraining from such an insult. The more we empty our soul of all affection even for venial sin, the greater will be the inflow of grace. Before receiving we should ask ourselves: Who is it that comes to me? (The Son of God Who was born at Bethlehem and died on Calvary.—I believe He is here in the Blessed Sacrament.—I adore Him). Why does He come to me? (To make me like Himself.—I love Him.) To whom does He come? (To a poor sinner.—I am sorry from my heart for having offended Him.—I love Him all the more for coming to one so imperfect.)

**THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION.**—After receiving we should spend some time in prayer. During the first few minutes we should try to pray without a book, making acts of faith, adoration and thanksgiving, offering ourselves to God and begging His grace; we should then take up our prayer book and read the acts after Holy Communion with deep attention. Those moments during which Christ is really present within us are amongst the most precious of our lives. Our private prayers have then a virtue which they have at no other time: as Jacob held the fleet angel fast and would not let him go, saying, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me,"<sup>23</sup> so we should cling to our Saviour, and not suffer Him to leave us, until He gives us all He so much desires to give, if we but ask Him. We should ask for ourselves and for others, for the welfare of the entire Church, for the living and for the dead.

<sup>21</sup> St. John vi. 55.

<sup>22</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 27-29.

<sup>23</sup> Gen. xxxii. 26.

## CHAPTER XIV

## PENANCE

## Summary.

- I. The solemn teaching and the legislation of the Church.
  - II. The Sacrament defined.—Its Minister and its Subject.—Conditions for its valid reception.
  - III. Contrition.—Its qualities.—Two kinds of Contrition: Perfect Contrition and Attrition.
  - IV. Charity: how to arrive at Perfect Contrition.—Devotional Confession.
  - V. Institution of the Sacrament by Christ: Proof: (1) from the solemn teaching of the Church; (2) from Sacred Scripture; (3) from the tradition of the Church; (4) from reason (negative argument from history).—Notes: the changes in the Church's method of administering the Sacrament;—the early Jewish converts and the Sacrament of Penance;—devotional confession.
- Appendix: Indulgences.

## I

**The Solemn Teaching and Legislation of the Church.**—THE SOLEMN TEACHING OF THE CHURCH.—The Church teaches solemnly: (1) that the Sacrament of Penance was instituted by Christ for the remission of sin committed after Baptism<sup>1</sup>; (2) that the words of Christ, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained,"<sup>2</sup> refer to the power of forgiving and retaining sin in the Sacrament of Penance<sup>3</sup>; (3) that it is only a priest or bishop who possesses this power; that he exercises it as a judge, with true authority to hear the self-accusation of the sinner, to give or withhold absolution, and to impose such penances as he thinks fitting<sup>4</sup>; (4) that three acts are required of the penitent

for the complete and perfect remission of sins, viz., Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction<sup>5</sup>; (5) that contrition conceived from such motives as the fear of hell, the loss of heaven, the filth of sin, and accompanied by a purpose of amendment, provided it excludes the affection for sin, is true sorrow, and prepares one to receive the grace of the Sacrament<sup>6</sup>; (6) that the penitent must make a definite and specific confession of all grave sins, even those of thought, which he can call to mind; that private, or auricular confession, as practised in the Church from the beginning, is not a human invention or opposed to the ordinance of Christ<sup>7</sup>; (7) that a debt of temporal punishment sometimes remains after sin has been forgiven, but that it may be cancelled by temporal afflictions willingly borne, by penitential works, and by the penance enjoined by the priest, for by such sufferings we are made like unto the suffering Christ, who alone can give our actions the power to satisfy Divine Justice<sup>8</sup>; that the debt of temporal punishment may also be remitted by the Indulgences granted by the Church;<sup>9</sup> (8) that, for those who have fallen into grave sin after Baptism, the Sacrament of Penance is the only gate of salvation; that though "it sometimes happens that contrition is perfect through charity and reconciles man with God before the Sacrament of Penance is actually received, nevertheless the reconciliation itself is not to be ascribed to contrition alone but to contrition together with the desire it includes of receiving the Sacrament"<sup>10</sup>; (9) that it is correct and profitable to confess venial sins.<sup>11</sup>

THE LEGISLATION OF THE CHURCH.—The Church has made a law requiring all the faithful who have come to the use of reason, to receive the Sacrament of Penance

<sup>1</sup> T 911.<sup>2</sup> St. John xx. 22, 23.<sup>3</sup> T 913.<sup>4</sup> T 902 (note the words in Denz., at the end of 910), 919, 920, 925.<sup>5</sup> T 914.<sup>6</sup> T 915.<sup>7</sup> T 989.<sup>8</sup> T 917, 916.<sup>10</sup> T 898.<sup>9</sup> T 922, 923, 904 (end), 906, 925.<sup>11</sup> T 899.

at least once a year.<sup>12</sup> Note, however, that the law binds only those who are burthened with the guilt of mortal sin. The sacramental confession of venial sin is never obligatory.

## II

**The Sacrament defined.—Its Minister and its Subject.—Conditions for its Valid Reception.—THE SACRAMENT DEFINED.**—Penance is the Sacrament by which the priest remits sins committed after Baptism to those who confess them with sorrow, and are willing to perform the works of satisfaction he imposes. The priest gives absolution, or remission of sin, by pronouncing the words, "I absolve thee from thy sins."

**ITS MINISTER.**—(1) The Minister of the Sacrament of Penance is a duly authorised priest or bishop. By "duly authorised," we mean that he must have jurisdiction<sup>13</sup> or faculties, *i.e.*, he must have received the right to exercise the power of forgiving sin. A priest in the confessional is like a judge, and as a judge cannot condemn or acquit except in the court to which he has been appointed, so a priest who is not provided with proper authority cannot validly absolve.

(2) The Pope has jurisdiction from Christ over the entire Church; he gives each bishop jurisdiction over his own subjects and diocese, and the bishop communicates it to his pastors and other priests. In her solicitude for the eternal welfare of men, the Church grants faculties to all validly ordained priests, even though deposed from office or outside her communion, to absolve anyone who is in immediate danger of death.

**ITS SUBJECT.**—Its Subject is any Christian who has committed sin after Baptism.

<sup>12</sup> This law was first made by the Fourth Council of Lateran, 1215. It is not satisfied by a bad confession. C. C. L., 906, 907.

<sup>13</sup> Jurisdiction is the right to act as judge or to exercise authority over subjects.

**CONDITIONS FOR ITS VALID RECEPTION.**—To receive the Sacrament validly, three acts are required of the penitent, *viz.*, Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction.

*Contrition* is the true sorrow which we conceive for having offended God by sin. (For fuller treatment, see the next section of this Chapter.)

*Confession* is the declaration of our sins to the priest, in order to obtain forgiveness. When we have *mortal* sins to confess, our confession must, *as far as memory serves*, be complete, specific, and numerical. (1) *Complete, i.e.*, all grave post-baptismal sins, not already mentioned in a good confession, must be told. (2) *Specific, i.e.*, the precise nature of the sin must be stated: it would not suffice, *e.g.*, to confess a sin against one's neighbour without explaining how exactly he had been injured, whether in person, property, or good name.<sup>14</sup> (3) *Numerical, i.e.*, the number of times each grave sin has been committed must be given.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Further details need not be given here. Any good catechism or prayer-book will set forth how in particular the Commandments of God and the Precepts of the Church may be violated.

<sup>15</sup> Under Confession, a few further points may be noted:—

(a) In case of necessity, *e.g.*, weakness at death, a complete confession is not required: a sign suffices.

(b) A priest gives conditional absolution to a Catholic who is on the point of death and is incapable of making any confession by word or sign. It is assumed that in such a case the past life of the dying man, or the faith which he has professed, indicates sufficiently his desire of confessing his sins in his last moments. But, since there is no actual confession, the absolution is of doubtful validity and the help of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction is required: See next Chapter.

(c) A doubtful sin is one as to which there is uncertainty in regard to its commission or its gravity or the fact of its having been previously confessed. If the doubt be supported by a good reason, confession is not obligatory, though for the penitent's peace of conscience it is usually advisable.

(d) Sins which we have forgotten to confess are forgiven; they are included in our contrition—and *their guilt never returns*. The obligation of confessing them, when remembered, alone remains and must be fulfilled, unless our confessor decides otherwise. If he decides that it would not be to our spiritual advantage to review the past, we must submit to his judgment, and keep our soul in peace.

*Satisfaction* is the voluntary acceptance of the penance imposed by the priest. The object of this penance is to discharge (in part at least) the debt of temporal punishment that often remains after sin has been remitted.<sup>16</sup>

### III

**Definition.—The qualities of Contrition.—DEFINITION.—**Contrition is the true sorrow which we conceive for having offended God by sin. We can have contrition only for our own sins; we cannot have contrition for another's sins, though we may be sorry for them. Contrition, of its very nature, implies detestation of sin and a firm purpose of amendment: we must share in God's hatred of sin, and we must be resolved not to offend Him again.

Contrition is the first and most necessary condition for the forgiveness of sin. God will not pardon us any sin, great or small, unless we be sorry for it.

*In the rest of this Section (except the § "Devotional Confession"), whenever we speak of "sin" without qualification, we mean "grave sin" or "mortal sin."*

**THE QUALITIES OF CONTRITION FOR GRAVE SIN.—**Contrition must possess four qualities:—

(1) it must be *internal, i.e.*, it must be genuine sorrow and not mere outward show;

(2) it must be *universal, i.e.*, it must cover all mortal sins of which the penitent is guilty; it must be a sincere turning to God and away from such sins, and must, therefore, be accompanied by a firm purpose to avoid them and to avoid dangerous occasions;

(3) it must be *supernatural, i.e.*, (a) it must be inspired by grace, for without grace we can do nothing towards

<sup>16</sup> A severe penance, *e.g.*, five decades of the Rosary, if imposed for mortal sin, is of grave obligation.

eternal life; and (b) it must spring from some motive revealed to us by faith, as *e.g.*, the fear of hell or the goodness of God as made known to us in the life and sufferings of Christ;—if this latter condition is fulfilled, we need have no misgiving as to the former: if our motive is correct, God will most certainly give us the grace necessary to make our act of sorrow pleasing to Him;

(4) it must be *supreme, i.e.*, the penitent must adjudge sin to be a greater evil than any evil of this life, *i.e.*, greater than any evil he may have to encounter in avoiding sin, and he must detest it accordingly.

Contrition, therefore, comes from a judgment of the intellect, followed by the approval of the will; it need not necessarily excite anything in the nature of physical pain or passionate grief, such as one suffers from a wound or the death of a relative: any good Christian mother, though *feeling* less love for God than for her son, would yet prefer to see him die rather than save his life by committing a mortal sin; she cannot help being drawn to him by a strong emotional love, still her reason, enlightened by grace, tells her that an insult to God is an infinitely greater evil than the death of her child.

**The two kinds of Contrition for Grave Sin.—**There are two kinds of Contrition, *viz.*, Perfect and Imperfect (or Attrition).<sup>17</sup>

**PERFECT CONTRITION.—Definition.—**Perfect Contrition is contrition founded on Charity or the perfect love of God: in Perfect Contrition, we grieve for our sins because they are hateful to One who is Himself infinitely lovable and whom we love above all things *for His own sake*.

<sup>17</sup> Contrition is derived from *conterere*, to grind thoroughly, and is often used to denote Perfect Contrition. Attrition is from *atterere*, to grind against, and does not convey the meaning of grinding completely.

But, though this love is unselfish, we need not exclude the thought of the great blessings His friendship will give us.<sup>18</sup>

*Perfect Contrition immediately reconciles the sinner to God, because it contains the desire of the Sacrament.*—(1) Christ Himself said: "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him;"<sup>19</sup> of Magdalen, He said: "Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much."<sup>20</sup> Love of God, therefore, restores us to His friendship. St. John Chrysostom says: "As a fire seizing possession of a forest cleans it out thoroughly, so the fire of love, wheresoever it falls, removes and blots out everything that would injure the divine seed, and purges the earth for its reception."<sup>21</sup>

(2) The love of God necessarily carries with it the desire to keep all His commandments, one of which is, according to the solemn teaching of the Church, that all grievous sins committed after Baptism be confessed in the Sacrament of Penance. Hence, the desire of receiving the Sacrament is contained, at least implicitly, in the act of Perfect Contrition.

**ATTRITION.**—*Definition.*—Attrition or Imperfect Contrition is contrition that springs from any supernatural motive lower than that of perfect Charity, *e.g.*, the filth and horror of sin, the loss of eternal happiness, or the pains of hell. The motives of Attrition do not call us to unselfish friendship with God; they appeal to our self-interest by showing us the evil consequences of sin to ourselves, *e.g.*, when we are shocked by the filth of sin, we are thinking chiefly of the wretched plight in which we find ourselves as outcasts from God, no longer His

<sup>18</sup> The Church has condemned the opinion that perfect Charity must be *absolutely* disinterested. See Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacrament of Penance*, p. 136.

<sup>19</sup> St. John xiv, 21. <sup>20</sup> St. Luke vii, 47. <sup>21</sup> *Hom.* in 2 *Tim.* 7, n. 3.

children, and with no claim on His loving care.<sup>22</sup> When we dread the loss of eternal happiness, we have not distinctly before our minds the nature of that happiness as arising from a loving union with God, but we conceive it in a vague way as something very precious to us; when we tremble at the thought of eternal torments, our minds are more fixed on God's terrible chastisement, than on the love to which He would draw us by cutting us away from sin. Attrition may be justly described as selfish sorrow for sin; yet it is true sorrow; it is grounded on Faith and Hope, and God is pleased with it.

*The qualities of Attrition.*—As is plain from what has been said above, Attrition must have all the qualities we have ascribed to Contrition. It must be *internal, universal, supernatural, supreme*. It is a sincere and thorough change of heart, a turning to God, and away from sin. The motives we have set forth (the fear of hell, the loss of heaven, etc.) lead the sinner (1) to see the error of his ways: to regard sin as the one and only true defilement of the soul or as the bar to his eternal happiness, or as the cause of eternal damnation; (2) to detest sin as the greatest of all evils; and (3)—most important of all—to desire reconciliation with God. We mark the third effect as the most important, because the Sacrament of Penance, being the Sacrament of reconciliation, cannot be received validly unless reconciliation is truly desired. He who is of such a mind that he would commit sin but for the pains of hell has not true Attrition; his heart is not converted; he still desires to commit sin; he is still willing to insult God, and hence does not really desire His friendship.

<sup>22</sup> As is evident from the above, the filth of sin does not mean its sordid details, physical or natural; it means the defilement which, in God's sight, is caused in the soul by sin; therefore, not physical, but moral defilement. Every true motive of Attrition brings God clearly before our mind and urges us to sorrow for having offended Him.

*Attrition disposes one for forgiveness of sin.* When the sinner has made such an act of Attrition as we have described, he is fit to receive the Sacrament of Penance. Without the Sacrament, he could not obtain pardon for sin, because his sorrow is not inspired by the perfect love of God. Still, it may be noted that his Attrition would seem necessarily to involve some love of God, however imperfect: he cannot completely turn away from sin as his enemy without perceiving, at least obscurely, that he is turning to God as his friend; he cannot desire reconciliation without seeking, or beginning to seek, friendship with God.<sup>23</sup>

*Pardon, through Attrition, does not remove the obligation of making Acts of Charity.* We know from our catechism that we are bound to make frequent Acts of Charity, as well as of Faith and Hope. The chief commandment of the Jewish Law was: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind." That, too, is our chief commandment.<sup>24</sup> It would, therefore, be a grievous mistake to suppose that, because the sinner can obtain pardon in the Sacrament of Penance without that perfect contrition which we have described, he is freed in any way from the obligation of making acts of divine Charity. He is as much bound as one under the Old Law, and has less excuse for failing in his duty: the Sanctifying Grace he receives at absolution gives him the *virtue* of Charity, and is followed by many actual graces that enable him to make *acts* of that virtue; furthermore, he has, in the Passion of our Saviour, a greater incentive to divine love than any that can be found in God's dealings with His

<sup>23</sup> See Lehmkuhl, *Theologia Moralis*, Vol. ii, *De dotibus contritionis*. Contrition necessarily implies the hope of pardon. Hence the sorrow of Judas, because it was devoid of hope, was not true Contrition. cf. Ch. IX, B., footnote 41.

<sup>24</sup> Reaffirmed by Christ Himself. See St. Matt. xxii, 37; St. Mark xiii, 30.

chosen people. In the Christian life which he is now beginning anew, he will make his acts of Charity as easily and as frequently as his acts of faith: God has so constituted us that, with His grace, our mind readily accepts His revealed truth, and our heart as readily gives Him the supreme love we owe Him as our Creator, our Father, and our Friend.

#### IV

**Charity: how to arrive at Perfect Contrition.**—CHARITY.—The love we should have for God is twofold: we should love Him because of all the blessings He has given us and because of the happiness He desires to bestow on us in Heaven: this is the imperfect love of gratitude and hope. But we should also love Him above all things and for His own sake because there is no limit to His goodness and loveliness: this is the perfect love of Charity.

Since our love of God is exercised through our will—the higher part of our soul—it is not necessary that we should feel a glow of affection for Him, though we should pray that this great favour may be granted to us; it suffices that, along with the firm purpose of never offending Him by mortal sin, we truly desire to see Him loved and honoured by all men, for, in so desiring, we show that we have made His interests our own, that we are looking beyond our personal advantage—in brief, that we love Him for His own sake. Every time we say the first part of the "Our Father" with full sincerity, we make this generous act of Perfect Love; we pray that we and all men may bless the name of Him who is our Father and our God, that the Kingdom of His Church may spread throughout the world, so that He may be enthroned in every heart, and may behold in the daily lives of us all the perfect fulfilment of His holy will.

In loving God perfectly, we love all other men as sincerely as we love ourselves; obviously so, since we



desire for ourselves and for them the greatest happiness conceivable; but we desire it for the sake of God; we desire it because we want Him to have friends worthy of His love. Hence, Charity is defined as "the love of God above all things for His own sake, and the love of ourself and our neighbour for the sake of God."

**HOW TO ARRIVE AT PERFECT CONTRITION.**—Under the Old Law, as we saw in Ch. XIII, B, Perfect Contrition was the only means of recovering Sanctifying Grace; under the New Law, those who are unable to receive the Sacrament of Penance must apply the same remedy: hence, for one dying in the state of mortal sin without the ministrations of a priest, there is no other means of salvation. Under the Old Law it was easy to make an act of Perfect Contrition; under the New Law it is still easier, because we know so much better how great is God's love for us, and how worthy He is to be loved for His own sake. The following gives in outline one of the many methods of making an act of Perfect Contrition: <sup>25</sup>—(1) Humbly ask God to help you by His grace to love Him as He should be loved. (2) Try to understand how hateful mortal sin must be to Him, since He has to punish it, with eternal torments. (3) Reflect that it was to save you from Hell and to give you a happiness greater than the mind of man can conceive, He sent His own beloved Son into the world. (4) Think of Jesus and what He did for you: He died on the Cross to make up for your sins and to gain your love. (5) Remember that Jesus who lived and died for you is God Himself, and ask yourself, Is He not worthy to be loved for His own sake? (6) Conclude by making an act of Perfect Contrition in some simple form, *e.g.*, "Jesus, true God, You died on the Cross for me. Jesus, true God, Your Heart is full of love

<sup>25</sup> See Lehmkühl, *op. cit.*, Vol. i, *De Caritate* § 1 (end); Fr. H. Davis, S.J.: *Moral and Pastoral Theology*, Vol. i, p. 312.

for me. I love You for Your own sake and above all things. I am bitterly sorry I ever offended You, and I will never offend You again."<sup>26</sup>

**Devotional Confession.**—"Devotional Confession," or "Optional Confession," is the name we give to the Sacrament of Penance as received by those who have nothing to tell but venial sins, or sins forgiven in a previous confession.—(1) We can free ourselves from venial sin at any time by acts of charity or sorrow, or by acts of the particular virtue in which we have failed, but we can do so with greater profit in the Sacrament of Penance, because it gives us (a) an immediate increase of Sanctifying Grace,<sup>27</sup> (b) Sacramental Grace, *i.e.*, a claim to those actual graces which will help us to avoid deliberate venial sin, and (c) a total or partial release from the debt of temporal punishment.—(2) Those who have only venial sins to confess should note most carefully that their sorrow must be a *true* sorrow.<sup>28</sup> To ensure this, they should fasten their mind on some fault which they really desire to correct. Otherwise they may come to regard Confession as a matter of routine, and be exposed to the grave danger of committing sacrilege. A sorrowless confession is invalid, and, if intentional, is sacrilegious. To guard against such a profanation of God's Holy Sacrament, they should mention in every Confession some sin of their past life for which they are truly sorry.<sup>29</sup> (3) In Devotional Confession, our sorrow

<sup>26</sup> In making the act of Charity which is contained in the act of Perfect Contrition, it is not necessary to have explicitly before the mind that God is "infinitely good in Himself." "Good in Himself," means "lovable for His own sake," and "infinitely" adds nothing to the phrase, because all that belongs to God is infinite. No one with any proper conception of God would ever think of Him as being limited in any way.

<sup>27</sup> Good acts, outside the Sacrament, may be more than sufficiently fervent to blot out venial sin; if so, they will increase our store of Sanctifying Grace, but the increase will not be so great, and may not be immediate. *Cf.* St. Thomas, S.T., I-II, q. 114, a. 8, ad 3.

<sup>28</sup> It must contain the purpose of amendment. It must be *internal*, *supernatural*, and *supreme*. It need not be *universal*: it need not extend to all the venial sins the penitent may have committed.

<sup>29</sup> A few further points may be noted:—

(a) We may confess venial sins for which we are not truly sorry, if we do so for the purpose of receiving admonitions or directions from our confessor, but we should never *intend* to get absolution from them. We must always add some sin for which we have true sorrow.

(b) Re-confessed sins of our past life are always valid matter for absolution. The reason is that, though God has pardoned them already,

may be perfect or imperfect. If it is imperfect, its chief motives would be: (a) the fear of God's chastisements, *i.e.*, the fear of having to suffer at His hand either in this world or in Purgatory; (b) the fear of spiritual decay, *i.e.*, the fear lest by deliberate venial sins we may chill God's generosity to us in the bestowal of actual graces,<sup>30</sup> and thus find ourselves drifting towards the dread verge of mortal sin.

## V

**The Sacrament of Penance was instituted by Christ.—PROOF FROM SOLEMN TEACHING OF THE CHURCH.** The Church, in the exercise of her infallible authority, declares the institution of the Sacrament of Penance by Christ to be a doctrine given to her by God Himself.<sup>31</sup> This proof suffices for Catholics. The other proofs are inserted for our fuller instruction.

**PROOF FROM SACRED SCRIPTURE.**—Christ appeared to the Apostles after His resurrection, and said to them, "Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent Me, so also I send you." When He had said this, He breathed on them and He said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."<sup>32</sup>—(1) Christ thus made the Apostles judges of

He is willing to pardon them over and over again as often as they are avowed with fresh sorrow.

(c) The following consideration has been put forward to show the advantage of re-confessing a grave sin:—"Suppose a holy person tells a grave sin from which he was absolved years ago. In now re-telling this sin he may not feel the same distress he felt on the first occasion; but his sorrow may be just as great; if it is, he will receive an increase of Sanctifying Grace *equal* to the amount he received at the first absolution, when his soul was raised from death to life. As he grows in holiness his sorrow will become greater, and the increase of sorrow will gain for him a corresponding increase of Sanctifying Grace each time he receives the Sacrament of Penance." This statement, though it regards Sanctifying Grace as something material that can be measured, is substantially correct. It is certain that, if a grave sin, remitted in a previous confession, be re-confessed again and again with ever increasing sorrow, the spiritual life of the soul is correspondingly intensified.

<sup>30</sup> It is this restriction of God's bounty which we have in mind when we say in popular language that venial sin makes us "less pleasing to God." We do not mean that it really lessens His love for us. His love for us depends on the degree of Sanctifying Grace in our soul, and is not directly affected by any number of venial sins.

<sup>31</sup> See first paragraph of this Chapter.

<sup>32</sup> St. John xx, 22, 23.

sinner, with power to grant or withhold absolution; and in giving them this power, He gave them the authority to prescribe all that its exercise demanded,—authority, therefore, to require men to confess their sins, and to submit themselves to examination as to their dispositions, their sorrow, their purpose of amendment, and their willingness to "bring forth fruit worthy of Penance." For how, in most cases,<sup>33</sup> can a sin be known except through the self-accusation of the penitent? And how can it be decided whether absolution is to be given or refused except after personal interview and inquiry?

(2) The power of forgiving sin in the Sacrament of Penance was not given to the Apostles alone, but to their lawful successors as well. Observe the solemn words of Christ: "As the Father hath sent Me, so also I send you." He sent them, therefore, clothed with His own power. And to whom did He send them? To all nations, even to the consummation of the world. As long, therefore, as the world shall last, the Apostles shall be with us, exercising the power of forgiving sin through their living representatives, the bishops and priests.

**PROOF FROM THE TRADITION OF THE CHURCH.**—The Church has always believed that the Sacrament of Penance was instituted by Christ. This may be briefly proved as follows:—

*From the belief of Eastern sectaries.*—All the Eastern sects have the Sacrament of Penance, which shows that at the time of their separation no one questioned its institution by Christ.

*From the condemnation of heresies.*—In the second century the Montanists were expelled from the Church, because they contested her right to forgive the sins of idolatry, adultery, and murder; so too, in the third century, the Novationists, who taught that there was no pardon for a denial of the faith.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> It may be added that, strictly speaking, in *no case* can we know for certain that sin has been committed except through the sinner's own avowal. No matter how criminal his outward act may have been, it does not follow that the full consent of his will went with it. His guilt is a secret of his conscience, and can be revealed by himself alone.

<sup>34</sup> Christ said (St. Matt. xii, 31) that a sin against the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven "either in this world or the world to come," but He was referring to the obstinacy of the Pharisees who, against the dictates of their own conscience, ascribed His miracles to Satan, and closed their hearts against the grace of repentance. His emphatic words do not denote absolute impossibility but extreme difficulty, and should be compared with what He says of the rich man: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. . . . With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." St. Matt. xix, 24-26. See Billot, *De Poenitentia*, Thesis vii.

From the Fathers and early writers.—(a) St. Cyprian (*d.* 258): “I entreat you, brethren, that each one should confess his own sin while he who has sinned is still in this world, while his *confession* may be received, while his *satisfaction* and the *absolution* given by the priest are still pleasing to the Lord.”<sup>35</sup>

(b) Origen (*d.* 254): “The layman who falls into sin cannot by himself wash away his fault; he must have recourse to the levite; he needs the priest; nay, at times, he applies to one even greater than they: he needs even the pontiff’s help, that he may obtain the remission of his sins.”<sup>36</sup>

(c) St. Pacian, Bishop of Barcelona (*d.* 390), admonishes sinners “to cease to hide their wounded conscience,” and to follow the example of “the sick who do not fear the physician, though he cut and burn the secret parts of the body”; he also says: “‘God alone,’ you say, ‘can remit sin.’ Quite correct. But what He does through His priest, is done by His power.”<sup>37</sup>

(d) St. Ambrose (*d.* 397): “Sins are forgiven through the Holy Ghost.—Certainly, but men lend Him their ministry . . . they forgive sins, not in their own name, but in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”<sup>38</sup>

(e) St. Leo the Great (*d.* 461) sharply condemns insistence on public confession as “opposed to Apostolic rule . . . since it suffices that guilt of conscience be revealed to priests alone in secret confession.” And in a passage too long for quotation he fully describes all the essentials of the Sacrament as we know it.<sup>39</sup>—In the later centuries the evidence becomes more and more abundant.<sup>40</sup>

PROOF FROM REASON.—A burthen so distasteful to human nature as sacramental confession could never have been imposed on the Church by Pope or Council without creating a vast upheaval. There would have been schisms and revolts every-

<sup>35</sup> *De lapsis*, 28, 29.

<sup>36</sup> *In Numeros*, homil. x, 1.—Note that even in those days there appears to have been a practice of reserving certain sins to a higher authority, just as at present a few heinous crimes are reserved to the Bishop or the Pope.

<sup>37</sup> *Libellus exhort. ad poen.* 6-8; *Epist. ad Sympr.* i, 6; iii, 7.

<sup>38</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, iii, 137.

<sup>39</sup> *Ep.* clxviii.; *Ep.* cviii.

<sup>40</sup> On the evidence from the Fathers, the teacher should consult the short but useful work of Tixeront, *Apologetical Studies: The Trinity—Jesus Christ—The Church—Penance*, pp. 96-183, Herder, 1917. See footnote 43 below.

where, and the date of the innovation would be as well known as that of the French Revolution or of any other of the great events of secular history. But there is not a trace of anything of the kind. The absence of all protest during the centuries that elapsed from the founding of the Church to the Reformation, is a conclusive proof that the practice of Confession was always regarded as a sacred duty imposed by none other than Christ Himself.

Notes.—THE CHANGES IN THE CHURCH’S METHOD OF ADMINISTERING THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.—The Church has always claimed the right<sup>41</sup> to determine, according to the needs of the age, the just conditions under which she will administer her Sacraments. Hence we are prepared to find that in the case of the Sacrament of Penance she has not adhered to a uniform practice.

*Public Confession.*—Until about the year 500 a public sinner had first of all to make a private avowal of guilt to the Church authorities; he then made a public avowal, and received a penance to be performed in public, after the fulfilment of which he was absolved. For private sin, private confession sufficed, as may be inferred from the strong statement of Pope St. Leo quoted above; occasionally, public avowal of a private sin was recommended by the confessor as an act of humiliation. From the year 500 onward, the practice of public confession became more and more restricted.

*Canonical penances.*—For the first four centuries severe penances, lasting for years or even a lifetime, were imposed for very grave sins; they are called Canonical Penances, because they were prescribed by the canons or laws of the Church. The penitent was excluded from Holy Communion, and, perhaps also, from the Mass of the Faithful;<sup>42</sup> he was condemned to rigorous fasts; he was not allowed to marry, and, if already married, he had to live apart from his wife until death; he had to beseech the prayers of the poor and the afflicted, to lie in sackcloth and ashes, and, in the Western Church, to wear a distinctive dress; in effect, he was withdrawn from the ordinary pursuits of life, and became like one who had entered a religious order. In the later centuries, until about 1200, penances of a milder type were inflicted, but never of such a kind that the nature of the sin committed could be inferred from them, *e.g.*, the penitent was required to go on a pilgrimage, or to make a retreat in a

<sup>41</sup> Given to her by Christ when He said: “Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth,” etc. St. Matt. xviii. 18.

<sup>42</sup> The part of the Mass that begins at the Offertory.

monastery. After the twelfth century, all traces of public canonical penances disappear.—It was a rule of the Church, observed for many centuries, but how long precisely we cannot determine, that, except in cases of urgency, absolution should be deferred until the penance had been performed.

*Severity during the second century.* Some historians assert that, about the second century, at Rome and Carthage, and in Spain, absolution was denied, even at the hour of death, to those guilty of apostasy or adultery or murder, and that the sinner had to effect his reconciliation with God by means of an Act of Perfect Contrition. On this it may be observed: (1) that, according to the Councils of Nicaea 325, and Trent 1545-63, the Church, from the earliest times, never desired to withhold absolution at the hour of death, if the necessary dispositions were present; (2) that the refusal of absolution to the dying, in the rare cases in which it occurred, was due to the confessor's disbelief in the genuineness of the sinner's contrition. It is quite conceivable that in those days of persecution, when the general level of sanctity was very high, individual confessors here and there might have been convinced that the death-bed repentance of the apostate, the adulterer, or the murderer, was merely the expression of a servile fear, unaccompanied by any sincere detestation of sin.<sup>43</sup>

THE EARLY JEWISH CONVERTS AND THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE. "The Sacrament of Penance did not appear to the early Jewish converts to Christianity as a startling innovation. A rite accompanied by the confession of sin was one of the many Jewish practices which by divine ordinance passed without effort, as it were, and unchallenged into the religious life of the Church of Christ. Under the Old Law, a sinner offered sacrifice for sin;<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> On the historical side of the Sacrament of Penance in all its aspects (Contrition, Confession, etc.) see the articles by Archbishop Hanna of San Francisco, in the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*; the articles by Père Adhémar d'Alès and Père Galtier in the *Dictionnaire Apologétique*; and Father Rauschen's *Eucharist and Penance*, Herder, 1913.

Many questions connected with the history of the Sacrament of Penance still remain obscure: see *The Australasian Catholic Record*, April, 1933, and October, 1934; also the article by Fr. Zeigler, S.J., *Gregorianum*, Vol. iv, fasc. 3, 1933. There is still some uncertainty as to the frequency of Confession in the early Church, but authorities are agreed that it was common in the ancient Celtic Church of Great Britain and Ireland, and that its use on the Continent received a great impetus from the fiery zeal of Columbanus and his Irish monks (end of sixth century).

<sup>44</sup> *Numbers*, v. 6-8.

the priest decided 'according to the measure and estimation of the sin,' therefore after an avowal on the part of the penitent, whether the victim presented was of sufficient value or not.<sup>45</sup> We are, therefore, not surprised to find that the confession of sin during the preaching of the Baptist evoked no comment; it was apparently regarded as an ordinary part of the process of reconciliation; and it was carried over without protest into the new dispensation. Christ did not abolish the Law; He perfected it by fulfilling it to the last detail. . . . The Jewish convert who had fallen into sin after Baptism must have been conscious that the new process of reconciliation, though giving grace instead of merely appealing for it, had yet been accurately foreshadowed by the old; he had still to go to the priest, still to place his hope of pardon in the blood of a Victim, not now a beast of the herd, but the Lamb of God, offered at the Pasch, slain upon the Cross, possessing a power of propitiation available at every moment."<sup>46</sup>

DEVOTIONAL CONFESSION.—In the early ages, men had recourse to the Sacrament of Penance only when burthened with the guilt of grievous sin, and what we know as "Devotional Confession" did not exist. This latter practice, which had its origin in a keener realization of the graces given by the Sacrament, began in the monasteries at some period later than the fourth century, and gradually spread to the laity.

## APPENDIX:

### INDULGENCES

**Indulgence defined.**—An Indulgence is not a pardon of sin, still less is it a permission to commit sin;<sup>47</sup> it is a release from temporal punishment granted by the Church, outside the Sacrament of Penance, to those whose sins have been forgiven. Though sanctifying grace be restored to the soul by absolution, the penitent, unless his sorrow

<sup>45</sup> *Leviticus*, v. 18, II; vi. 2-7.

<sup>46</sup> The author, in *Austr. Cath. Record*, April, 1927, p. 186; cf. Galtier, *De Poenitentia*, p. 90, 3.

<sup>47</sup> These gross absurdities, one would fancy, are quite unworthy of mention, but they have not yet disappeared from the writings of Protestant novelists and controversialists

be so intense as to be in itself a most severe affliction, still remains answerable for a debt of temporal punishment. This debt is sometimes fully discharged by the penance imposed in Confession, but there is, as a rule, a residue which must be removed either in this life or the next: in this life, by voluntary suffering or by gaining Indulgences; in the next, by the pains of Purgatory.

**The Church has power to grant Indulgences.**—The Church teaches solemnly that she has received from Christ Himself the power to grant Indulgences.<sup>48</sup>

(1) Christ who said to the Apostles, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven," also said to them, "Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven."<sup>49</sup> He therefore gave His Apostles and their successors the power to loose all spiritual bonds, to relieve the faithful of all spiritual debts, the debt of temporal as well as of eternal punishment. This power resembles that possessed by the State which can remit the death penalty, substitute a lighter for a heavier punishment, or grant complete amnesty.

(2) The Church's manner of acting, even in the early ages, shows that she was authorised by God to remit the temporal punishment due to sin. During the times when the canonical penances were inflicted, she frequently lightened, abbreviated, or entirely remitted them. She would not have done so, had she not believed that her act was valid in the eyes of God, and that, at her ruling, He accepted the lighter for the graver penalty. This will be all the better understood if it be borne in mind that, at that period, it was her practice not to admit the sinner to final reconciliation, until he had fully performed the work of satisfaction imposed on him.

(3) The proof of the Church's power to grant Indulgences is confirmed by the doctrine of the Communion of Saints. In a living body, a limb enfeebled by illness falls into debt, as it were, and receives help from its wealthier neighbours; thus, the weaker members are benefited by the stronger. Now, according

<sup>48</sup> Council of Trent, *Decretum de Indulgentiis*.

<sup>49</sup> St. Matt. xviii, 18.—This general spiritual power of forgiving sin and granting Indulgences is called "the power of the Keys," because of the expression used by our Lord in His promise to St. Peter: "I will give to thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth," etc.—St. Matt. xvi, 19.

to the doctrine of the Communion of Saints, we are knit together into the great spiritual union of the Church; we share membership with the saints and the blessed in Heaven; we have Christ as the Head of our organisation and the source of all its life. It would, therefore, seem reasonable that the process observable in the physical body should have its counterpart in the spiritual; that the weak should be aided by the strong; that the wealth of the rich should be available to discharge the debts of the poor. But where is this spiritual wealth found, and by whom has it been accumulated? In the Treasury of the Church, where it has been deposited by Christ and the saints. Christ, by the Sacrifice of the Cross, has enabled us to pay all our debts of temporal as well as eternal punishment. He has filled with His inexhaustible merits what the Church aptly calls her Treasury. There, too, are stored the merits arising from the sufferings of our Blessed Lady, the Mother of Sorrows, and from the sufferings and penances of the saints and the pious faithful of every age who have made more than the necessary satisfaction for themselves.

**Indulgences: how divided, and by whom granted.**—They are spiritually helpful.—(1) Historically we may roughly divide Indulgences into ancient and modern: the ancient, extending over the first twelve centuries; the modern, from about the end of the thirteenth century to the present day. The ancient Indulgences were commutations of the Canonical Penances, and were, therefore, granted only to penitents who had been guilty of grievous sin, and who were thus enabled to satisfy the Justice of God by prayers, alms-deeds, or pious pilgrimages; the modern are of wider application, being offered to all who are liable for any debt of temporal punishment.—Modern Indulgences are variously divided: (a) *Plenary* and *Partial*, the former remitting the whole temporal debt,<sup>50</sup> the latter only a part.<sup>51</sup>—(b) *Real*, *Local* and *Personal*:

<sup>50</sup> The most important Plenary Indulgences are the Indulgence of the Jubilee and the Indulgence imparted to the dying by a priest.

<sup>51</sup> These Indulgences are described as Indulgences of a certain number of days or years. An example will show what this means: thus, an Indulgence of 100 days, e.g., or of 7 years and 7 quarantines, denotes a remission of as much of the temporal debt as would have been discharged in ancient times by a Canonical Penance lasting 100 days or 7 years and 7 quarantines (a quarantine is 40 days).

*Real*, when they are attached to *things* as, *e.g.*, beads or crosses; *Local*, when attached to *places* as, *e.g.*, a church or a shrine; *Personal*, when specially granted, *e.g.*, to the members of a religious community or confraternity.—  
 (c) Indulgences *for the living* and *for the dead*: the former benefit the living who gain them, the latter may benefit the dead for whom they are offered. We say “*may* benefit,” because the Church has no authority to remit the punishment of the souls in Purgatory; an Indulgence for the Dead, therefore, produces its effect only by way of intercession; God may not ratify such an Indulgence or apply it to those prayed for.

(2) All Indulgences can be granted by the Pope; partial Indulgences can, with certain restrictions, be granted by a Cardinal or a Bishop.

(3) The Church teaches solemnly that Indulgences are “salutary to the Christian people,”<sup>52</sup> *i.e.*, spiritually helpful. They are helpful not only because of the remission of temporal punishment which they effect, but also because of the intrinsic excellence of the conditions which must be fulfilled in order to gain them. Thus, to gain an Indulgence: (a) one must be in the state of grace, at least when the last of the prescribed exercises is being performed; and (b) the good works enjoined (*e.g.*, prayer, fasting, alms-deeds) must be conscientiously performed, and sacraments (if included in the terms of the indulgence) must be worthily received. It is hardly necessary to add that there must be an intention of gaining the Indulgence: supernatural favours are never forced on any adult, but must be voluntarily accepted; for such acceptance, however, it suffices that he had at some time in the past the general intention of gaining all the Indulgences he could. Experience has taught that Indulgences are a great stimulus to

piety and the penitential spirit: they turn men's thoughts to the gravity of sin, the obligation of atonement, the need of fervent prayer and good works, and the necessity of preparing to receive in the spirit of Christ the Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist. Besides, the desire to gain Indulgences is an implicit act of faith in the Church's divine authority to bind and loose.

<sup>52</sup> T. 989.

## CHAPTER XV

## EXTREME UNCTION

*Summary.*

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. The Sacrament defined.—Its Minister and its Subject.
- III. The effects of the Sacrament.
- IV. The Sacrament of Extreme Unction was instituted by Christ : proof (1) from the solemn teaching of the Church ; (2) from Sacred Scripture ; and (3) from tradition.

## I

**The solemn teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly (1) that Extreme Unction is a Sacrament instituted by Christ ;<sup>1</sup> (2) that it confers grace, remits sin, and comforts the sick ;<sup>2</sup> (3) that its minister is a priest.<sup>3</sup>

## II

**The Sacrament defined.—Its Minister and its Subject.**—**THE SACRAMENT DEFINED.**—Extreme Unction is the Sacrament through which those in danger of death from bodily illness or infirmity receive, by the anointing with holy oil and by the prayer of the priest, the grace of God for their spiritual strength and consolation, and often also a divine assistance by which they are restored to health. The priest confers the Sacrament by separately anointing the organs of the five senses while reciting each time the words : “ Through this holy unction and His most tender mercy, may the Lord pardon thee whatever faults thou hast committed ”—here he inserts the name of the particular sense—“ by sight (hearing, taste, etc.) ”<sup>4</sup> This form of words is now prescribed for the Latin Church.

<sup>1</sup> T 926.<sup>2</sup> T 927.<sup>3</sup> T 929.

<sup>4</sup> A single unction suffices for the validity of the Sacrament (C. C. L., 947, § 1). The unction of the five senses was not universally practised in ancient times. The separated Greek Church has never recognised more than a single unction.

Since it was not always in use, and differs considerably from the ancient forms and from those employed in the East, it may be inferred that our Lord did not determine the precise prayer which should be recited.

**ITS MINISTER.**—The Minister of Extreme Unction is a priest,—regularly, the parish priest or one acting with his authority.

**ITS SUBJECT.**—The Subject of Extreme Unction is any one of the faithful who having attained the use of reason is in danger of death from some bodily infirmity.<sup>5</sup>—(1) As the primary purpose of the Sacrament is to strengthen the soul weakened by sin and temptation, it cannot be administered to those who have never been capable of committing sin.—(2) The danger of death must arise from bodily infirmity. Hence, soldiers marching to battle or prisoners about to suffer the extreme penalty of the law, cannot be anointed ; but a soldier dying of wounds can, of course, be anointed ; so, too, a prisoner who has passed from the executioner’s hands, provided a hope remains that death has not yet actually taken place.—(3) Since Extreme Unction supposes the presence of spiritual life which is to be strengthened, the Subject must be in the state of grace in order to receive it fruitfully. But should it happen that he has only attrition for grave sin committed and becomes unconscious before the arrival of the priest, or is unable to make his confession even by a sign, Extreme Unction will restore him to Sanctifying Grace.<sup>6</sup>

## III

**The effects of Extreme Unction.—SPIRITUAL EFFECTS.**—(1) It gives an increase of Sanctifying Grace, and, by means of actual grace, it excites such confidence in the

<sup>5</sup> In the case of a child, unless it is certain that he has not yet attained the use of reason, those in charge should ask that Extreme Unction be given.

<sup>6</sup> See words of St. James in Section IV. Note that, without at least attrition for grave sin, the Sacrament produces no effect.

divine mercy that the recipient is enabled to bear more easily the inconveniences and pains of sickness, and to face, with greater strength and courage, the final assaults of the evil one.

(2) It remits venial sin and removes what is termed "the remains of sin," by which is meant the weakness of will and the depression caused by sinful habits in the past.<sup>7</sup> It cancels the debt of temporal punishment wholly or in part according to the recipient's dispositions.

**PHYSICAL EFFECT.**—It may restore the recipient to health, if, as the Council of Trent says, "it is expedient for the soul's salvation." This effect, by no means rare, as medical experience attests, cannot be satisfactorily explained as solely the result of the great peace of mind given by the Sacrament; the improvement often begins while the sick person is still unconscious. On the other hand, it need not be ascribed to any direct miraculous intervention on the part of God, but rather to a special activity of His ordinary Providence by which He aids and stimulates in a natural, though quite exceptional way, the recuperative powers of the patient. In the prayers which the priest recites after the anointing, he asks God to heal the sick man; these prayers have a special sacramental efficacy, but they do not appeal for the performance of a miracle. It will, therefore, be understood that, even for the patient's physical welfare, it is most important to summon the priest before his system is so enfeebled that recovery without a manifest miracle would be impossible.

**Note.**—*The responsibility of those in charge of the sick.* If the patient is conscious when the priest arrives, he can be properly prepared for Extreme Unction, and will derive all the more benefit from its reception. If he is aware of his serious condition, he should himself ask for the priest; but if he fails to do so, the responsibility devolves on his friends or attendants. They

<sup>7</sup> It also remits mortal sin in the case already explained. See above, § "Its Subject."

should send word to the priest at once; to delay would be both foolish and unkind. The priest is helped by God's grace to deal with sick people, to remove their apprehensions, and to prepare them to receive the consoling Sacrament of Christ with joy and gratitude.

#### IV

**The Sacrament of Extreme Unction was instituted by Christ.**—**PROOF FROM THE SOLEMN TEACHING OF THE CHURCH.** The Church, in the exercise of her infallible authority, declares the institution of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction by Christ to be a doctrine given to Her by God Himself.<sup>8</sup> This proof suffices for Catholics. The other proofs are added for their fuller instruction.

**PROOF FROM SACRED SCRIPTURE.** St. James says: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man; and the Lord shall raise him up; and, if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him."<sup>9</sup> The rite of which St. James speaks is manifestly our Sacrament of Extreme Unction: (a) The rite is performed by the priests of the Church and consists of prayer and anointing; (b) it relieves the sick man and causes forgiveness of sin; (c) it is administered in the name of the Lord, *i.e.*, by the command or through the power of Christ; (d) the inspired instruction here given by St. James clearly indicates the divine institution, for Christ alone has the power to make an external sign be a cause of grace. We may take it that St. James, in speaking of "priests" instead of "a priest," did not absolutely require the presence of several priests for the valid administration of the Sacrament; if he did, very many Christians would die without its consolations.

**PROOF FROM TRADITION:** (1) St. Chrysostom (*d.* 407), quoting the words of St. James, says the dignity of the priesthood springs from the power of forgiving sin, which, in one of its forms, is exercised in the anointing of the sick. The Sacrament is also referred to by Origen (*d.* 254) and a few others. The scantiness of early testimony is not astonishing, since Extreme Unction was generally regarded as the complement of Penance.

(2) Extreme Unction is administered at the present day by all the Eastern sectaries, with the exception of the Nestorians and Armenians, who, however, as their ancient books testify, recognised the Sacrament at the time of their separation from the true Church.

<sup>8</sup> See first paragraph of this Chapter.

<sup>9</sup> St. James, v. 14, 15.



## CHAPTER XVI

## HOLY ORDER

*Summary.*

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. The Sacrament defined.—Its Minister and its Subject.—How the Sacrament is conferred.
- III. The effects of the Sacrament, general and particular.—the powers and graces received by the Deacon, the Priest, and the Bishop.
- IV. The different kinds of Orders :— Sacramental and non-Sacramental ; Major (Holy) and Minor.— The celibacy of the clergy.
- V. The Hierarchy of Orders.—The Hierarchy of Jurisdiction.
- VI. The Sacrament of Holy Order was instituted by Christ :— Proof (1) from the authority of the Church, (2) from Sacred Scripture, (3) from tradition, and (4) from reason. Reply to objection against the transmission of spiritual power.

## I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly :—(1) that Holy Order is a sacrament instituted by Christ ;<sup>1</sup> (2) that it imprints an indelible mark or character on the soul ;<sup>2</sup> (3) that through this sacrament there is set up in the Church a Hierarchy consisting of Bishops, Priests, and Ministers ;<sup>3</sup> (4) that the Episcopate is superior to the Priesthood ; that the Bishop has power to confirm and ordain ;<sup>4</sup> (5) that the Priest has power to consecrate and offer the Body and Blood of the Lord and to forgive sin.<sup>5</sup>

## II

**The Sacrament defined.—Its Minister and its Subject.—How the Sacrament is conferred.** THE SACRAMENT DEFINED. Holy Order is the Sacrament which imparts to a man the gift of the Holy Ghost, in such wise as to enable him

to perform validly and worthily the sacred functions of deacon, priest, or bishop. The sacrament, therefore, can be conferred in three degrees according as the candidate is being raised to the diaconship, priesthood, or episcopate.

**ITS MINISTER.** The Minister of this Sacrament is a Bishop.

**ITS SUBJECT.** The subject is any baptized person of the male sex, but for the episcopate, he must be a priest. The Church, like the Jewish Synagogue, has always excluded women from the service of the altar : this law is not of her own making ; it was given to her by her Divine Founder. Hence, even the great Mother of God was not invested with the powers and dignity of the priesthood.<sup>6</sup>

**HOW IT IS CONFERRED.** The Sacrament is conferred by the imposition of hands and prayer ; thus, like all the other Sacraments, it is constituted by two factors. The imposition of hands, or laying on of hands, shows that some kind of power is being given ; the words of the prayer show that it is a sacred power.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The Holy Ghost, speaking through St. Paul, says : " Let women keep silence in the churches . . . for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the Church " (1 Cor. xiv, 34 f.). But, though the Church, at the direction of our Divine Lord, has always excluded women from Holy Orders, she has never refused to avail herself of their valuable services in the instruction of the faithful. Even in Apostolic times, the work of spreading the Gospel was facilitated by the exertions of devout women, and it is continued in these days, in a manner above all praise, by the nuns of the numerous teaching orders and congregations. Women assist also in the home : many of the saints were indebted under God for their sanctity to the influence of pious mothers ; and much of the good that there is in the world can be traced to the same source.

It must also be mentioned here that the Church counts among her most faithful servants the members of the widespread organizations of Brothers who, while not in Holy Orders, have devoted their lives to the Christian education of the young.

<sup>7</sup> " The imposition of hands "—this is the plural of convenience—denotes the use of the right hand alone or of both hands together. Besides " the imposition of hands," there is also, as will be noted below, " the extension of hands," which describes the action of the

<sup>1</sup> T 844 (963).    <sup>2</sup> T 964.    <sup>3</sup> T 966.    <sup>4</sup> T 967.    <sup>5</sup> T 961.

*The rite of conferring Deaconship.*<sup>8</sup> The Bishop, with both hands extended towards the candidate, prays that God may be pleased to accept him for the office of deaconship; he then lays his right hand on the candidate's head, and immediately afterwards, while holding the same hand stretched out towards the candidate, prays that God may bestow on him the gift of the Holy Ghost for the worthy discharge of his duties. This is the essential rite, the Sacrament of Holy Order in its first grade, the Deaconship.

Other prayers and ceremonies have been added by the Church to bring out more clearly its meaning. For instance: the Bishop, when laying his right hand on the candidate's head, says, "Receive the Holy Ghost for vigour and for resisting the devil and his temptations, in the name of the Lord,"<sup>9</sup> and, at the close of the ordination, gives him the Book of the Gospels, saying, "Receive the power of reading the Gospel in the Church of God both for the living and the dead, in the name of the Lord."<sup>10</sup>

*The rite of conferring Priesthood.* The Bishop lays both hands on the candidate's head;<sup>11</sup> then he says the prayer: "Hear us, O Lord our God, and pour forth on

Bishop in stretching out his right hand or both hands towards the candidate or the newly ordained; it is regarded as introducing or continuing the imposition of hands, and has the same meaning.—When Christ prescribed the imposition of hands for the giving of Holy Order, He prescribed nothing that was unfamiliar to the Apostles: they knew that Moses, at the command of the Lord, laid his hand on the head of Josue to appoint him as his successor (*Numbers* XXVII, 18 and 23); and they had seen Christ Himself impart a blessing or restore health in the same way (*St. Mark*, x, 16; *St. Luke*, xiii, 13).

<sup>8</sup> Nowadays deaconship is conferred as a preparatory step to the priesthood.

<sup>9</sup> This form of words was introduced into the ceremony about four hundred years ago.

<sup>10</sup> These words also are of no great antiquity.

<sup>11</sup> For *lawful* ordination to the priesthood the candidate must be a deacon. For *valid* ordination to the priesthood he need not be a deacon, because the power given with priesthood includes that of deaconship.

this Thy servant the blessing of the Holy Spirit and the power of priestly grace. . . ." This is the Sacrament of Holy Order in its second grade, the Priesthood. The other ceremonies, though obligatory, are not of its essence. They may be briefly described as follows:—The Bishop clothes the newly-ordained priest in stole and chasuble, anoints his hands with the Oil of Catechumens, and presents him with the chalice (containing wine and water) and the paten (with a host), saying: "Receive the power to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate Mass both for the living and the dead." The priest then, conjointly with the ordaining prelate, celebrates Mass, and, for the first time, consecrates the Body and Blood of Christ. Towards the end of the ceremony the Bishop imposes hands again, saying: "Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins thou shalt forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins thou shalt retain, they are retained."<sup>12</sup>

*The rite of conferring the Episcopate.* The Bishop lays both hands on the head of the candidate,<sup>13</sup> and immediately afterwards recites the prayer: "Benignly receive our supplications, O Lord, and over this Thy servant pour

<sup>12</sup> (a) The ceremony of giving the chalice and paten is not mentioned earlier than 900 A.D.; it has never been practised by the Greek or Oriental Catholics, and must, therefore, be of ecclesiastical, not divine, institution. The words, "Receive the power to offer sacrifice . . ." are regarded as declaratory, *i. e.*, as proclaiming that the young priest now possesses that power; the same applies to the words, "Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins thou shalt forgive," etc. (b) Pope Eugene IV, in his Decree for the Armenians, issued in 1439, said that the Sacrament of the Priesthood consists in the delivery of the chalice and paten, together with the accompanying words, but he was not speaking with his infallible authority: see Cardinal van Rossum, *De essentia sacramenti ordinis*. The doctrine which he enunciated, though supported by several theologians, is now generally regarded as incorrect, but there is no absolute certainty that it is so; hence, the practical rule in the Western Church is that the ceremony in question must never be omitted.

<sup>13</sup> He must be a priest. No one but a priest can be *validly* consecrated bishop.

forth in its fullness the grace of the Priesthood and the might of Thy blessing." This is the Sacrament of Holy Order in its third grade, the Episcopate, the plenitude of the Priesthood. As outside the essential rite, and yet of great moment, the following details may be noted:—  
 (a) Besides the consecrating Bishop, two other Bishops, called Assistants, take part in the ceremony: having placed the Book of the Gospels on the shoulders and neck of the candidate, they join with the Consecrator in the imposition of hands and in reciting the words, "Receive the Holy Ghost," but not in the Sacramental prayer that follows.<sup>14</sup> (b) The Consecrator anoints with Chrism the head and hands of the new Bishop, and gives him the pastoral staff (crosier), the episcopal ring, the Book of the Gospels, and the mitre.<sup>15</sup>

### III

**The effects of the Sacrament of Holy Order.**—IN GENERAL, the effects of the Sacrament of Holy Order are three in number:—(1) the Sacramental Character; (2) Sanctifying Grace; and (3) Sacramental Grace. The sacramental character not only marks the soul indelibly,<sup>16</sup> but also gives the power required for the exercise of the order conferred. The Sacramental Grace consists in the claim to special actual graces, or series of actual graces, which the Bishop, Priest, or Deacon needs for the worthy discharge of his sacred functions.

<sup>14</sup> he words, "Receive the Holy Ghost" are not found in any of the ancient formularies, but, as the Council of Trent says, "they are not uttered in vain"; they help to reinforce, as it were, the petition for the same Divine Gift referred to in the subsequent prayer.

<sup>15</sup> Since the Book of the Gospels, which also figures in the ordination to deaconship, did not exist in the early years of the Church, the giving of it cannot be of the essence of the Sacrament. The same remark applies to the crosier and the other episcopal insignia.

<sup>16</sup> Because of this indelible mark, a second reception of the same ordination or a return to the lay state is impossible.

IN PARTICULAR: (a) The Deacon receives the power of preaching the Gospel effectively, and of worthily and reverently assisting the Priest and the Bishop at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.<sup>17</sup>

(b) The Priest receives the power of forgiving sin and of offering the great Sacrifice of the Mass. He is made another Christ, a living representative of the Redeemer whose work he continues.

(c) The Bishop receives the power of confirming and ordaining. He is given the plenitude of the Priesthood and is made a Successor of the Apostles.

**THE BISHOP'S POWER OF ORDERS.**—It is through our Bishops, therefore, that the sacred power bestowed by Christ on His Apostles to consecrate the Blessed Eucharist, to absolve from sin, to confirm, and to give the Holy Unction to the dying, is always kept alive in the Church. Through his power of ordaining, the Bishop is enabled to provide his diocese with priests. Through his priests, in turn, he causes his people to be born into the Church; he feeds them with the Bread of Life; and he tends them in spiritual illness.

<sup>17</sup> (a) The Deacon's (or Priest's) power to teach effectively the truths of faith and move the hearts of men remains inactive until he has been appointed preacher by his Bishop, who is in communion with the Holy See. It is only then that he becomes associated with the successors of the Apostles whom alone Christ commissioned to teach all nations—it is only then that men are bound to listen to him. But observe that, even then, his power of preaching will not fully assert itself without that zeal which is the fruit of Sacramental Grace.—(b) Something similar may be said of his power to assist worthily in the Sanctuary. Lawful appointment joins him to those whom Christ ordered to sanctify men by sacred rites, but it is only by co-operating with Sacramental Grace that he can acquire for himself, and communicate to the congregation, the true spirit of reverence for the ceremonies of the Church and the Mysteries which they illustrate.

## IV

The different kinds of Orders : Sacramental and non-Sacramental ; Major (Holy) and Minor.<sup>18</sup>—The Celibacy of the Clergy.—There are eight orders, viz., the order of Bishop, Priest, Deacon, Subdeacon, Acolyte, Exorcist, Lector, and Door-keeper.

SACRAMENTAL AND NON-SACRAMENTAL ORDERS. The Episcopate, the Priesthood, and the Diaconate are conferred through the Sacrament of Holy Order. The other orders, according to the commoner opinion, were not instituted by Christ, but by the Church, and are, therefore, not part of the Sacrament.

MAJOR (HOLY) AND MINOR ORDERS. *The Major Orders.* The Major Orders are the Episcopate, Priesthood, Diaconate, and Subdiaconate. They carry with them the obligation to observe celibacy and to recite the Divine Office.

*The Minor Orders.* The remaining Orders are called Minor Orders ; their names suggest the duties originally attached to them. The *Acolyte* ministered to the Subdeacon ; he had charge of lighting the candles for Mass, and helped at the serving of the wine and water ; he was the bearer of letters on matters of doctrine or ritual from one Christian community to another.—It was the *Exorcist's* duty to exorcise evil spirits.—The *Lector* read portions of the Sacred Scripture for the people, and instructed children in the rudiments of doctrine.—The *Door-keeper* had the custody of the sacred edifice ; he called the faithful to service by ringing the bell, and helped to preserve order among the congregation.—Before Minor Orders are conferred, the candidate receives the first *Tonsure*, a ceremony by which he is separated from the mass of the faithful and becomes a cleric.—At present the Minor Orders are regarded as only so many steps by which the candidate approaches Major or Holy Orders. The office of Exorcist<sup>19</sup> is now discharged by a priest specially authorised by his bishop ; and the duties connected with the other Minor Orders are fulfilled chiefly by the laity.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> The solemn teaching of the Church is, "that besides the priesthood there are in the Catholic Church other orders, major and minor, which lead, as it were, by a series of steps to the priesthood." T 962.

<sup>19</sup> See Ch. VII on the Angels, § I.

<sup>20</sup> St. Thomas shows how all the Orders, Major and Minor, are related to the Blessed Eucharist : the Bishop, or the Priest, consecrates the Blessed Eucharist ; the Deacon assists him and, at need, may distribute Holy Communion ; the Subdeacon prepares the bread and

THE CELIBACY OF THE CLERGY. The celibacy of the clergy is not of divine, but of ecclesiastical, institution. It was generally observed during the first three centuries, and was imposed as a law in the Western Church about the year 400.

The Church in laying this obligation on her ministers is influenced chiefly by considerations such as the following :—(1) The state of virginity is holier than that of marriage, and is, therefore, more desirable in those who minister at the altar. This is testified by the lives of our Lord and the Blessed Virgin, and by the words of St. Paul.<sup>21</sup>—(2) An unmarried clergy can serve God with an undivided heart ; they are not distracted from their work by family affections and cares.—(3) The priest's vow of chastity wins for him the respect of his people ; it disposes them to listen to his instructions, and to approach him with confidence in the confessional.<sup>22</sup>

## V

The Hierarchy of Orders.—The Hierarchy of Jurisdiction.—In general, we mean by Hierarchy (*lit.*, "sacred government") the ministers or officials of the Church, arranged in ranks according to the degree (1) of Spiritual Power (Orders), or (2) of sacred authority (Jurisdiction) which they possess.

wine for the Sacrifice ; the Acolyte presents the wine to the Celebrant ; the Exorcist and the Lector remove impediments to participation in the Sacred Mysteries, the former by expelling evil spirits, the latter by removing ignorance of doctrine ; and the Doorkeeper stands on guard during the Holy Sacrifice to exclude the irreverent or unworthy.

<sup>21</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 32-34 ; cf. St. Matt. xix. 12 ; Apoc. xiv. 4.—The Council of Trent has defined that virginity is higher state than marriage, T 980.

<sup>22</sup> (1) Our law of celibacy may be stated as follows :—

(a) No one in Holy Orders can contract valid marriage.

(b) No married man can receive Holy Orders, unless his wife consents, and unless she herself takes a vow of chastity :—he cannot be promoted to the Episcopate, unless she enters a religious community.

(2) The Greek Church in communion with Rome regards Subdeaconship as a Minor Order. It permits married men to receive Deaconship and subsequently Priesthood, but not the Episcopate. It does not allow those already in Holy Orders to marry. Its exclusion of married men from the Episcopate is a proof that it regards virginity as the higher state.

Christ charged His Church with the duty of teaching and governing men, and of sanctifying them by the administration of the Sacraments. The Church teaches and governs through the Hierarchy of Jurisdiction; she sanctifies through the Hierarchy of Orders.

**THE HIERARCHY OF ORDERS** (*Spiritual power*). The Hierarchy of Orders consists of the Bishops, Priests, and Ministers<sup>23</sup> of the Church. The Deacon is inferior to the Priest, the Priest to the Bishop. Every Priest is also a Deacon; every Bishop is at once Bishop, Priest, and Deacon. The Papacy is not a holy order; the Pope, therefore, so far as the power of orders is concerned, ranks no higher than a Bishop.

The Council of Trent, in defining that the Hierarchy of Orders is of divine institution, did not mean that Christ gave the Church three distinct classes of ministers, but three distinct degrees of spiritual power. All these three degrees were possessed by each of the Apostles, the first Bishops of the Church, on the very day of her foundation, and later, according to the ordinance of Christ, were given by them, in whole or part, to others as need arose. In the Church there must always be Bishops, but there need not be Priests or Deacons as such.<sup>24</sup>

**THE HIERARCHY OF JURISDICTION** (*Sacred authority*). Jurisdiction is authority to *teach* and *govern*. In every well-ordered society, the degree of authority to be exercised by each official must be clearly marked out; otherwise, nothing but confusion would arise. In the Church all good order and efficiency would be at an end, if every Bishop were to teach, make laws, and administer the Sacraments in any part of the world he pleased; hence the necessity of a Hierarchy of Jurisdiction. As

<sup>23</sup> "Ministers," *i.e.* Deacons and members of the orders below Deaconship.

<sup>24</sup> See Rev. P. Finlay, S.J., *The Church of Christ*, p. 242.

instituted by Christ himself, it consists of the Bishops of the Church with the Pope at their head; the Pope is the successor of St. Peter; the Bishops, not taken singly, but collectively and in union with the Pope, are the successors of the Apostles. The jurisdiction of a Bishop is confined to his own subjects and diocese; that of the Pope extends to the universal Church. The Pope receives his jurisdiction directly from Christ; the Bishop receives his jurisdiction from the same divine source, but through the Pope who appoints him, and who is, as it were, the channel through which it is conveyed to him.

The Bishop retains his jurisdiction as long as he remains loyal to the Holy See and to its teaching; if he becomes schismatic or heretical, and is cut off from the Church by solemn condemnation, he loses all authority; such a one validly, though sacrilegiously, consecrates and ordains, but he cannot even validly administer the Sacrament of Penance—he has no jurisdiction.<sup>25</sup> The Bishop is the father of his subjects, and, as a father is head of his household, so is the Bishop head of his diocese, its ruler and its authentic teacher on faith and morals.<sup>26</sup> As an individual, he is not indeed infallible, yet this will cause no anxiety to his subjects, who know that, in the rare case of error, the supreme Head of the Church will intervene to protect them. But, pending an appeal to the Pope, the clergy and the laity are bound to obey the Bishop, because he has authority (1) to teach the Catholic Doctrine, and (2) to decide whether any particular question belongs to the sphere of faith or morals. To deny him this latter power would be tantamount to asserting the Protestant claim to the right of private judgment.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> See Penance: § "The Sacrament defined; its minister."

<sup>26</sup> "The Holy Ghost hath placed you Bishops to *rule* the Church of God." *Acts* xx. 28.

<sup>27</sup> Part I, p. 189.

The Bishops of the Church taken collectively constitute what we have already called, "The Church Teaching,"<sup>28</sup> and are infallible (1) when they are assembled under Papal authority in General Council; and (2) when, though dispersed throughout the world, they are at one with the Pope in teaching that a doctrine forms part of the Deposit of Faith.<sup>29</sup> It is clear that, in either case, they teach as a united body, as the successors to the College of the Apostles, and must, therefore, be infallible.

**NOTE.**—*The Jurisdiction of the Apostles.* The word "Apostle," (*lit.*, "one who is sent"), like the word "Pope," denotes jurisdiction, or sacred authority, not sacred power (*Orders*). Each Apostle had universal jurisdiction: (Christ said to them, "Going therefore teach *all* nations.") Except in the case of St. Peter, this was a personal privilege; it was required by the needs of the infant Church, and was exercised under St. Peter's direction. St. Peter possessed the privilege in virtue of his office as Head of the Church; hence, he alone was able to transmit it to his successors.

## VI

**The Sacrament of Holy Order was instituted by Christ.**—**PROOF FROM THE SOLEMN TEACHING OF THE CHURCH.** The Church, in the exercise of her infallible authority, declares the institution of the Sacrament of Holy Order by Christ to be a doctrine given to her by God Himself.<sup>30</sup> This proof suffices for Catholics. The other proofs are added for their fuller instruction.

**PROOF FROM SACRED SCRIPTURE.** *By a visible rite consisting of prayer and the imposition of hands, the Apostles ordained helpers and successors.* (a) We read of the first Deacons that seven men of "good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," were chosen; that they were "set before the Apostles," who "praying imposed hands upon them."<sup>31</sup>—(b) When St. Paul and St. Barnabas were about to set forth on their first mission, the heads of the Church at Antioch, "fasting and praying and imposing hands on them, sent them away."<sup>32</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Part I, p. 177, footnote 5.

<sup>29</sup> Part I, p. 179.

<sup>30</sup> See the first paragraph of this Chapter.

<sup>31</sup> *Acts* vi, 3-6.—One of the seven was St. Stephen, the first Martyr; another was St. Philip who preached and baptized in Samaria.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, xiii, 3.

*This rite conveyed divine grace.* (a) The text we have quoted about St. Paul and St. Barnabas is, in full: "The Holy Ghost said to them, 'Separate me Paul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have taken them.' Then they, fasting and praying and imposing hands, sent them away. So they being sent by the *Holy Ghost* went to Seleucia." Therefore, through this rite of prayer and the imposition of hands, SS. Paul and Barnabas were made the envoys of the Holy Ghost, *i.e.*, they were empowered by Him to preach and sanctify.—(b) St. Paul says to St. Timothy: "I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of my hands."<sup>33</sup> As the context shows, St. Paul is speaking of the grace to discharge the duties of a bishop. St. Chrysostom paraphrases the words thus: "Excite anew the grace thou hast received for the purpose of ruling the Church."<sup>34</sup>

*This rite is the Sacrament of Holy Order.*—From the above we infer:—(1) that the Apostles marked out helpers and successors by the imposition of hands, a gesture signifying the transmission of power or authority; and (2) that this visible rite communicated the grace to fulfil the offices of the ministry. But, the capacity to confer divine grace must have been given to the rite by Christ Himself; hence, this rite is a Sacrament. It is a visible sign instituted by Christ to give grace. Our proof is confirmed by the statement in the *Acts of the Apostles*,<sup>35</sup> that SS. Paul and Barnabas "ordained . . . priests in every church." SS. Paul and Barnabas were, therefore, bishops in our sense of the word, *i.e.*, they had received at their ordination the power to ordain others.

**PROOF FROM TRADITION.**—The proof from tradition that the Sacrament of Holy Order, as we have it to-day, was instituted by Christ, is clear and decisive, and need not be fully drawn out. East and West, the Sacrament was regarded from the earliest centuries, not as a mere ceremony, like that observed at the appointment of magistrates and civil officers, but as the means whereby the spiritual power of the Apostles was conveyed to each generation of the Church's ministers.

*Testimony of the Fathers and early writers:*—St. Ignatius of Antioch (*d.* 107) speaks of the bishop as one who has "acquired his ministry, not from himself, nor through men," and that he is to be regarded "as the Lord himself,"<sup>36</sup> *i.e.*, (a) one cannot

<sup>33</sup> 2 *Tim.* i, 6.      <sup>34</sup> *Hom.* in 2 *Tim.* i.

<sup>35</sup> xiv, 22.

<sup>36</sup> *Philad.* i; *Ephes.* vi.

be made a bishop merely by human appointment; and (b). a bishop is like our Divine Lord in possessing a spiritual power not given to other men.

St. Cyprian (*d.* 258) declares that bishops are the successors of the Apostles by ordination.<sup>37</sup> He says also: "Since by the imposition of hand (*sic*) we receive the Episcopate, that is, the Holy Ghost as the guest of our heart, let us offer no cause of grief to Him who shares a dwelling with us"<sup>38</sup>;—*i.e.*, we Bishops have received a special gift of the Holy Ghost consisting of an indwelling presence or power not given to others.—He quotes the judgment of Clarus, Bishop and Confessor:—"The meaning of our Lord Jesus Christ is plain when He sent His Apostles and entrusted to them alone *the power given to Himself by His Father*, whose successors we (Bishops) are, governing the Church of God with the same power."<sup>39</sup>

Firmilian (*d.* 269), Bishop of Cæsarea, says, in a letter to St. Cyprian, that the power of forgiving sin was bestowed on the Apostles, then on the churches and the bishops who have succeeded the Apostles by successive ordination.<sup>40</sup>

A contemporary of St. Ambrose (*d.* 397), probably Pope Sylvester I (*d.* 335), writes: "Who gives the episcopal grace, brother? You answer without hesitation, God. But still God gives it through man. Man imposes hands; God bestows the grace."<sup>41</sup>

St. Gregory of Nyssa (*d.* 395) says of a newly-ordained priest, that "he who was but yesterday one of the people suddenly becomes . . . the dispenser of hidden mysteries . . . Though in outward appearance he is the same as before, by a certain unseen power and grace, he is transformed into a higher being."<sup>42</sup>

St. Chrysostom (*d.* 407), in his great work on the Priesthood, says that its sublime dignity whereby man is made like the angels is acquired at ordination.<sup>43</sup>

*Testimony of the Councils of the Church.*—The General Council of Chalcedon (451), at which a great concourse of prelates from all over the Church was assembled, forbade the ordination of unworthy candidates to the Episcopate, the Priesthood, or the Diaconate, and condemned certain impious bishops who had conferred Orders for a gift of money, because "they had exposed for sale *an unpurchasable grace*." Many similar decrees and prohibitions were issued by subsequent Councils.

<sup>37</sup> *Opera Cypriani* (Hartel's edition), *Ep.* 66, p. 729

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* *App.* 94, 3.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* *Sent. Episc.* n. 79.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* *Ep.* 75, p. 821.

<sup>41</sup> *De dignitate Sacerd.* c. 5.

<sup>42</sup> *Orat. in Bap. Christi* (Migne, 46,582).

<sup>43</sup> See translation by Rev. P. Boyle, C.M. pp. 36, 37. Dublin, 1910.

*Testimony of the Greek Schismatics.*—The Eastern sectaries, as already stated, have the Sacrament of Holy Order. They are as zealous and emphatic in maintaining its divine institution as Catholics themselves.

ARGUMENT FROM REASON. We have already seen that Christ appointed the Apostles and their successors to the end of time to be His representatives on earth, to teach and govern all mankind, and to make them holy by means of sacred rites.<sup>44</sup> It is plain that those who are raised to such a sublime office need a very special grace to discharge their duties worthily; and it would seem to be entirely in conformity with the plan of Christ that they should receive that grace, not in some utterly hidden way, but through an outward rite signifying the spiritual effect produced: Christ commanded that by the Sacrament of Baptism men should be made members of His Church, that by the Sacrament of Penance their sins should be forgiven, that by the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist they should be fed with His precious Body and Blood; hence, we can infer that He instituted also a Sacrament of Holy Order, a public rite which would signify the bestowal of grace and power on those chosen to be the rulers of His Church, the dispensers of His mysteries, the ministers or guardians of His Sacraments.

Objection against the transmission of the Power of Order.—The following objection is drawn out at length and with much ingenuity by Macaulay in his review of Gladstone's work, "The State and its relations with the Church." We may put it as follows:—"A bishop, to prove that he has valid orders, must be able to trace his spiritual ancestry back to the Apostles. In most instances, this would indeed be a difficult feat. Even though accomplished, it would not suffice: for it would still be necessary to establish that every bishop in that long line of descent from the Apostles was validly baptized and ordained."

REPLY. (1) For a Catholic, the objection has no force whatever: at the words of Christ, "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world," all its specious fabric turns to dust. Christ will be always with the Church, so that she can never fail in her work of making men holy. The great instrument which He gave her to discharge that office is the spiritual power of the Episcopate, which He decreed should be transmitted from the Apostles to their successors to the end of time. He who issued the decree will see to its fulfilment. He will guard the

<sup>44</sup> See Part I, Ch. VIII, and the paragraph in Ch. IX, "The Church is Apostolic."

transmission of His Holy Orders, either by securing that there be no invalid rites, or, if He permits such to occur, by supplying Himself directly the power which they fail to give.<sup>45</sup> A Catholic, therefore, believes in the ordination of his priests and bishops, not because of any historical argument, or because he knows that the Church takes extreme care to preserve her rites from invalidity and to repair defects, but because she who speaks with the voice of Christ offers him her priests and bishops as truly ordained.<sup>46</sup>

(2) The objection, as Cardinal Newman explains, tells against those Anglicans who argue in the following way:—(a) "We can prove historically that we have valid orders; (b) having valid orders, we have the same spiritual power as the Apostles, and are, therefore, members of the true Church." That is, they say: "We are members of the true Church, because our orders are valid." Our argument is the exact reverse, viz.: "Our orders are valid, because we are members of the true Church."<sup>47</sup>

(3) It may be observed further that, even though Protestants succeeded in the difficult, and, it would seem, utterly impossible, task of tracing their orders step by step back to the Apostles and of showing that there had been not one single instance of failure in *rite* or *intention*, their conclusion would not follow. Valid orders without the divine authority to exercise them would not make their church a branch of the Church of Christ. Rome, as already stated,<sup>48</sup> gave the English Church the divine authority to exercise orders, and Rome, as a punishment for heresy and disobedience, withdrew it.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, Rome has declared that the orders conferred by the pervert bishops at the time of the so-called Reformation were invalid,<sup>50</sup> hence, the Anglican Church to-day has neither priests nor bishops.

<sup>45</sup> St. Thomas, *Supp. q. 35, a 3, ad 2.*    <sup>46</sup> Cf. T 968.

<sup>47</sup> The rather small section of Protestants who say that their orders are precisely the same as ours cannot argue as follows: "We are a branch of the true Church; Christ is always with us; He will provide for the validity of our orders." If they did use such an argument, they would have to make a claim which they would never dream of making, the claim to infallibility: the perpetual support of Christ would not only guarantee the validity of their orders, but would shield their faith from all possibility of error.

<sup>48</sup> Part I, 147.

<sup>49</sup> For a full discussion of the objection, see Newman's *Essays Critical and Historical*, vol. ii, pp. 86 f.

<sup>50</sup> See Ch. X, The Sacraments in General: § The Minister and the Subject of a Sacrament.

## CHAPTER XVII

### MATRIMONY

#### Summary.

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. The Sacrament defined.—Its Ministers and its Subjects.
- III. The effects of the Sacrament.—The obligations it imposes.
- IV. Matrimony is a Sacrament instituted by Christ:—Proof (1) from the solemn teaching of the Church, (2) from Sacred Scripture, (3) from Tradition, and (4) from Reason.
- V. The unity and indissolubility of Marriage; the Pauline privilege.
- VI. The Church's exclusive control over Christian Marriage.—The rights of the State: So-called civil marriage and divorce.—The impediments of Matrimony: invalidating and forbidding.—The evils of mixed marriages.—Obedience to the Church's teaching.
- VII. The dignity of Christian Marriage.

#### I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly:—(1) that Matrimony is a Sacrament instituted by Christ;<sup>1</sup> (2) that a Christian is forbidden by divine law to have several wives at the same time;<sup>2</sup> (3) that the Church has power to create impediments making it unlawful or impossible for people to contract marriage in certain circumstances;<sup>3</sup> (4) that the marriage bond cannot be broken by adultery;<sup>4</sup> (5) that the marriage bond cannot be broken by heresy, ill-temper, or desertion;<sup>5</sup> (6) that the Church has power to grant a separation of husband and wife, *i.e.*, permission to live apart, but not to contract a new marriage while both parties are still living;<sup>6</sup> (7) that clerics in Holy Orders and regulars who have taken a solemn vow of chastity cannot contract a

<sup>1</sup> T 971.  
<sup>5</sup> T 975.

<sup>2</sup> T 972.  
<sup>6</sup> T 978.

<sup>3</sup> T 974.

<sup>4</sup> T 977.



valid marriage ;<sup>7</sup> (8) that marriage not yet consummated is dissolved by the solemn religious profession of either party.<sup>8</sup>

## II

**The Sacrament defined.—Its Ministers and its Subjects.—**

**THE SACRAMENT DEFINED.**—Matrimony is the Sacrament which unites a Christian man and a Christian woman as husband and wife, and gives them grace to fulfil the duties of the married state. It is a sacred contract, *i.e.*, a binding agreement, by which two baptized persons, a man and a woman, undertake to live faithfully and affectionately together as husband and wife from that moment forward until parted by death, and to rear their children in the fear and love of God. Between those who are baptized, a valid marriage is always a sacrament ; between unbaptized persons, marriage is not a sacrament, but merely a natural contract.

**ITS MINISTERS AND ITS SUBJECTS.**—The contracting parties themselves are at once the Ministers and the Subjects of the Sacrament : at the marriage there is a mutual giving and a mutual acceptance ; under the former aspect, the contracting parties are the Subjects of the Sacrament ; under the latter, they are its Ministers. Therefore, the priest who assists at the marriage is not its Minister ; he is present as the Church's official representative.<sup>9</sup>

## III

**The effects of the Sacrament —The obligations it imposes.**

**THE EFFECTS OF THE SACRAMENT.** Matrimony being a symbol of Christ's union with His Church manifestly presupposes the state of grace in its recipients. Those

<sup>7</sup> T 979.

<sup>8</sup> T 976.—A marriage is consummated after the man and the woman have actually lived together as husband and wife.

<sup>9</sup> See Section VI below : § " The witnesses to the marriage contract."

who receive it worthily obtain (1) an increase of Sanctifying Grace, and (2) a right to all the actual grace necessary for faithfully performing the duties of the married state.

It would be a very grave misfortune if one were to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony while stained with mortal sin. It is indeed commonly held, but it is not absolutely certain, that, on a subsequent recovery of Sanctifying Grace, the sacrament "revives," and gives one a title to the actual graces referred to—though, perhaps, not as full a title as worthy reception would have given. But who would face such a risk ? who would think of offering a gross insult to God at the very outset of one's career ? who would think of entering sacrilegiously a state of life on which the salvation of many souls may depend ?

**THE OBLIGATIONS IT IMPOSES.**—*The duties of husband and wife to one another.* The primary duties of husband and wife to one another bind under pain of mortal sin. The husband is bound to support his wife in suitable comfort : if he be well to do, he should share his riches with her ; if he be poor, she should be willing to share his poverty with him. A wife is under grave obligation to submit to her husband as the head of the household : the Holy Spirit of God says, " Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the Head of the Church. Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let wives be to their husbands in all things." <sup>10</sup> Both are equally bound to each other in the duty of dwelling together, and the duty of marital affection : again, the Holy Spirit says, " Husbands, love your wives." <sup>11</sup> . . . " Teach the women to love their husbands." <sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Eph. v. 22-24.

<sup>11</sup> Eph. v. 25.

<sup>12</sup> Titus ii. 4.

The actual grace that flows from the Sacrament enables them to discharge these duties ; it strengthens their mutual love and loyalty ; it fosters in them the spirit of patience and unselfishness ; it gives them constant help to lead holy lives, to give good example to one another, and thus *save their souls*.

*Their duties to their children.* As parents, husband and wife are bound to provide for the health and physical well-being of their children, but are far more strictly bound to provide for their spiritual needs : they should make the home a place of peace and holiness, a true nursery of the Church ; they should bring up their children in the fear and love of God, and have them educated in a Catholic school.<sup>13</sup>—The actual grace parents receive through the Sacrament enables them to fulfil these important obligations ; it encourages habits of thrift and industry, so that they may the better provide for the material needs of the household ; and it gives them divine light and guidance, a great tenderness, patience, and love, so that they may help *to save the souls of their children*.<sup>14</sup>

Thus we see that God, while laying a heavy and life-long burthen on husband and wife, gives them in His goodness, through this great Sacrament, the grace to bear it. But He will increase that help and bestow it far more generously in response to fervent and constant prayer.

#### IV

**Matrimony is a Sacrament instituted by Christ.**—PROOF FROM THE SOLEMN TEACHING OF THE CHURCH. The Church, in the solemn exercise of her infallible authority, declares the institution of the Sacrament of Matrimony

<sup>13</sup> Read Part I, pp. 202-7.

<sup>14</sup> See Section IV, last paragraph, "Marriage, the foundation of the Christian home."

by Christ to be a doctrine given to her by God Himself.<sup>15</sup> This proof suffices for Catholics. The other proofs are added for their fuller instruction.

**PROOF FROM SACRED SCRIPTURE.** St. Paul says : "The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the Head of the Church. . . . Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it that He might sanctify it. This (*viz.*, Marriage) is a great Sacrament, but I speak in [reference to] Christ and the Church."<sup>16</sup> According to these inspired words of the Apostle, Christian marriage is to be regarded as an image, reflection, or sign of the union between Christ and the Church ; hence, Christian marriage must be a holy union, pleasing to God, and, therefore, blessed with the gift of Sanctifying Grace. Christ Himself, through whom all grace comes to us, must have attached to it the power of conferring such a gift. Christian marriage has, therefore, all the requisites of a sacrament :— (1) it is an outward rite, because the marriage contract is made outwardly in words or their equivalent ; (2) it signifies Sanctifying Grace, because it signifies what is most holy, *viz.*, the union of Christ with the Church ; (3) it gives, by the appointment of Christ, the grace it signifies.

**PROOF FROM TRADITION.** (1) In the fifth century the doctrine that marriage is a sacrament was universally admitted :—(a) it was taught expressly by St. Augustine,<sup>17</sup> who shows that Matrimony, like Baptism and Holy Order, is a permanent source of grace ; (b) it is held by all the Eastern sectaries who separated from the Church in this period. (2) Representations found in the Catacombs, dating from the fourth century or earlier, prove that marriage between Christians was regarded as a sacred rite.<sup>18</sup> In one of these ancient memorials our Lord is depicted as blessing the bride and the bridegroom. (3) At the end of the first century St. Ignatius of Antioch testifies to the sacred character of matrimony thus :—"It is right for men and women who marry to be united with the consent of the bishop, that the marriage may be according to the Lord and not according

<sup>15</sup> See above, "The solemn teaching of the Church."

<sup>16</sup> *Eph.* v. 23-32.—Do not make the mistake of quoting the last sentence *alone* as a proof of the doctrine. "Sacrament," in the language of St. Paul, meant "something holy and mysterious" ; it had not yet arrived at its technical meaning.

<sup>17</sup> See his treatise on Marriage in *The City of God*.

<sup>18</sup> A. S. Barnes, *The Early Church in the light of the monuments*, London, 1913, p. 141.

to lust,"<sup>19</sup> *i.e.*, marriage is not a mere business compact, or a compact suggested by low desire ; it is something sacred, because, according to Ignatius, it ought to receive the approval of the bishop, and thus be made pleasing to God.

**ARGUMENT FROM REASON.** (a) *Marriage, an unbreakable bond.* Christ, as we shall see in Section V, declared marriage to be an unbreakable bond. This doctrine being admitted, reason demands, according to Cardinal Newman, that marriage should be a sacrament. "It is," he says, "undeniably a solemn moment under any circumstances, and requires a strong heart, when any one deliberately surrenders himself, soul and body, to the keeping of another while life shall last ; and this, or something like this (reserving the supreme claim of duty to the Creator), is the matrimonial contract. . . . When the Christian binds himself by vows to a religious life, he makes a surrender to Him who is all-perfect, and whom he may unreservedly trust. Moreover, looking at that surrender on its human side, he has the safeguard of distinct provisos and regulations, and of the principles of theology, to secure him against tyranny on the part of his superiors. But what shall be his encouragement to make himself over, without condition or stipulation, as an absolute property, to a fallible being, and that not for a season, but for life ? The mind shrinks from such a sacrifice, and demands that, as religion enjoins it, religion should sanction and bless it. It instinctively desires that either the bond should be dissoluble, or that the subjects should be sacramentally strengthened to maintain it."<sup>20</sup>

(b) *Marriage, the foundation of the Christian home.* The Church depends, for her continued existence and normal increase, on the offspring of Christian parents ; they are her agents in the education of their children. The Christian home, when it is all that it should be, is the nursery of the Church ; there the child gets his first knowledge of God, the Creator of Heaven and earth ; he is told that it is God who has given him to his parents and made them love him ; he learns how Christ was born at Bethlehem, and how He died on the Cross for us ; he is taught how to pray ; his parents show him by the example of their lives what religion really means in practice ; they give his character a bent for holiness ; they lay in him the foundations of a good Catholic life. Nor does the influence of the Christian home cease with infancy : while the child is approaching

<sup>19</sup> Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. I, p. 273.

<sup>20</sup> *Callista*, pp. 122-3.

manhood, virtuous parents help to keep him from evil company and temptation ; they guide him in his choice of a career ; they are at all times his sincere friends and advisers ; in brief, as long as they live, they try to keep and guard him for God. The Christian home thus forms a most important part in the plan of Christ for the salvation of men. It is, therefore, a reasonable conclusion that He must have blessed marriage in a very special way ; that He must have attached Sanctifying Grace to the contract and a right to all the actual graces necessary for its worthy fulfilment ; in other words, that He must have elevated marriage to the dignity of a sacrament.<sup>21</sup>

## V

**The Unity and Indissolubility of Marriage.**<sup>22</sup>—**THE UNITY OF MARRIAGE.** The unity of marriage consists in there being but one man and one woman as partners in the contract.

The unity of marriage is opposed to polygamy and polyandry. Polygamy means having two or more wives at the same time ; and polyandry, two or more husbands. The latter has never been expressly condemned by the Church for the sufficient reason that even pagan regard it as an abomination ; the former was tolerated or permitted during the age of the Patriarchs and under the imperfect Mosaic Law, but, under the New and perfect Law, it was abolished by Christ when He said to the Pharisees : " Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."<sup>23</sup> If then it is unlawful to marry again during the lifetime of the first partner, much more unlawful is it to live with two or more wives or husbands simultaneously. St. Paul repeats his Master's doctrine, and says of those not called to virginity : " Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. . . . To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth that the wife depart not from her husband ; and, if she depart, that she remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife."<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Encyclical Letter on the Christian Education of Youth (C. T. S., London).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. above, " The solemn teaching of the Church."

<sup>23</sup> St. Mark x. 11, 12 ; cf. St. Luke xvi. 18.

<sup>24</sup> I Cor. vii. 2-11.

Luther and Melancthon allowed the Landgrave Philip of Hesse to marry another woman while his lawful wife was still alive; and some of their followers of the present day, against the clear teaching of Christ, make no difficulty in availing themselves of the same licence. The practice of keeping several wives in the same household is found principally among pagan orientals; it leads to many evils, the chief of which are domestic unhappiness and the enslavement and degradation of women.

**THE INDISSOLUBILITY OF MARRIAGE.** Marriage is indissoluble or unbreakable, *i.e.*, the bond of valid marriage cannot be loosed either by the contracting parties themselves or by any human power. This is true of all marriages, whether between Catholics, baptized non-Catholics or pagans. "What God has joined together," says Christ, "let no man put asunder."<sup>25</sup>

The Pharisees asked our Lord: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Who answering said to them, "Have ye not read that He who made man from the beginning made them male and female?" And He said, 'For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh. Therefore, now they are not two, but one flesh. *What therefore God hath joined together let no man put asunder.*' They say to Him, 'Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorce and to put away?' He saith to them, 'Because Moses by reason of the hardness of your heart permitted you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.'<sup>26</sup> By these words Christ abolished the permission for divorce given under the Old Law.

*Decrees of Separation and of Invalidity.*—(1) The Church, true to her character as Christ's representative, never dissolves, and has never claimed power to dissolve, a marriage entered into by Christians, if the parties have actually lived together as man and wife. (2) She sometimes grants a *separation* of husband and wife

<sup>25</sup> See the Encyclical of Pius XI on Christian Marriage; also, Part I, § "The State and parental rights," pp. 202-3.

<sup>26</sup> St. Matt. xix. 4-8.

because of cruelty or adultery,<sup>27</sup> but cannot permit either to marry again during the lifetime of the other. "Though it be allowed, because of fornication," says Pope Eugene IV (1421-47) in the *Decretum pro Armenis*, "to obtain a separation, it is not permissible to contract a new marriage, because the bond of lawful wedlock is perpetual." (3) The Holy See may sometimes decide, after detailed examination, that a marriage apparently valid is really not so. This decision must not be spoken of as a dissolution of the marriage tie; it is merely a *declaration of invalidity, i.e.*, a declaration that as a fact, from the very first there was *no* marriage tie in the particular case, because of the absence of some condition necessary for validity.

*Objection.* Having expressed Himself in the words quoted above from St. Matthew, Christ continued thus: "And I say to you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery." The Schismatic Greeks and the Protestants argue from this that marriage may be dissolved because of adultery, but this interpretation is impossible:—(1) It is condemned by the Church's solemn teaching; (2) it is opposed to the clear statements of our Lord made elsewhere and to the teaching of St. Paul;<sup>28</sup> if it were correct, it would be an encouragement of adultery, since it would allow not only the innocent but the guilty party to marry again; (4) the clause, "except it be for fornication," must be taken as an aside, a mere passing comment on the words, "whosoever shall put away his wife," so that the meaning is, "whosoever shall put away or separate from, his wife—a proceeding which would be justified by her adultery—and marry another, commits adultery."—Another reply to this objection is that the clause "except it be for fornication" was not in the

<sup>27</sup> If either husband or wife be guilty of adultery, the Church permits the innocent party to separate from the other for life (C. C. L., 1130). Other causes also justify a decree separating husband and wife: *viz.*, joining a non-Catholic sect; giving the children a non-Catholic education; living a criminal and ignominious life; causing grave danger to soul or body of the partner. In all these cases, however, if the evil cause ceases, conjugal life must be resumed (C. C. L., 1131, §§ 1, 2).

<sup>28</sup> See again St. Mark x. 11, 12; St. Luke xvi. 18; and 1 Cor. vii. 2-11.

original text. The argument for this contention has been ably developed by Cardinal MacRory in his work, *The New Testament and Divorce*.<sup>29</sup>

NOTE: *the Pauline privilege*. A marriage between unbaptized persons is not a sacrament. If one of the parties become a Catholic, he or she is free to contract a sacramental marriage with a Catholic, by which the non-sacramental marriage is at once dissolved. This is called the Pauline privilege, because it is fully set forth by St. Paul in 1 *Cor.* vii. 12 f.; he introduces it with the words, "it is I who speak, not the Lord," *i.e.*, "I do not quote the words of Christ, but I speak as an Apostle with His authority." Under the Pauline privilege, therefore, it is not man that "puts asunder," but God. Before it can be invoked, the converted party must inquire of the other (1) whether he or she is willing to become a Catholic, and, if not, (2) whether he or she promises to live in peaceful wedlock without insulting the Catholic religion. It is only when a negative answer is returned to both questions that the Catholic partner can be granted the privilege.<sup>30</sup>

## VI

**The Church's exclusive control over Christian Marriage.—**  
**The rights of the State.—So-called civil marriage and divorce.**  
**—THE CHURCH'S EXCLUSIVE CONTROL OVER CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.—**Matrimony is a Sacrament; the Church is, therefore, its sole custodian. Being infallible she cannot err in claiming, as she has always claimed,<sup>31</sup> the right to determine the conditions under which a marriage may be contracted lawfully or validly. *Reason* itself approves of this doctrine: just as, in profane matters, in order to safeguard the temporal welfare of its citizens, the State frequently requires certain conditions as necessary for a

<sup>29</sup> Edited by Fr. Barton, 1934.

<sup>30</sup> Note that the new consort must be not merely a Christian but a Catholic. See C. C. L., 1123.

<sup>31</sup> See first paragraph above, "The solemn teaching of the Church" (3).—Without entering into the historical question, we may note as sufficient that we find her asserting her claim as far back as 300 A.D. at the Council of Elvira. No impartial man can doubt that a claim made at such an early date, and frequently repeated in subsequent years, must have been based on the authority of the Apostles.

lawful or valid contract, and no one questions its right to do so,<sup>32</sup> so, too, as regards the matrimonial contract, the Church, in defence of higher interests, must possess a similar power.

*Those who should be present at the Marriage Contract.*  
 A marriage is invalid unless it takes place in the presence of the bishop or the parish priest of the place where the marriage is celebrated,<sup>33</sup> or a priest delegated by either, *and at least two witnesses*. (1) This law binds all Catholics; hence, a Catholic who wishes to marry a non-Catholic must comply with it.<sup>34</sup>—(2) It does not apply to marriages between non-Catholics.<sup>35</sup>—(3) If, as may happen in remote districts, or in times of persecution, access cannot be had to the bishop, parish priest, or priest delegated by either, and if it be foreseen that this state of things will continue for at least a month, a marriage may validly and lawfully take place in the presence of two witnesses.<sup>36</sup>

**THE RIGHTS OF THE STATE.** The State has no rights except in regard to what is extrinsic to the Sacrament: *e.g.*, it can require that it be notified when a marriage takes place; it can give a wife exclusive ownership

<sup>32</sup> Thus, *e.g.*, we find that, in many countries, with a view to protecting those under age from unscrupulous money-lenders, the State enacts that debts incurred by them have no force in law.

<sup>33</sup> A marriage would be invalid if the bishop or the parish priest were forced to officiate (C. C. L., 1095, § 3).

<sup>34</sup> The dispensation from the impediment of heresy, schism, or defect of Baptism, does not, therefore, exempt from this law.

<sup>35</sup> The Church has authority over all baptized persons, but, from motives of prudence, she does not choose to exercise it in the case of those who have been reared in heresy or schism. Needless to say, she grants perverts no such exemption from her laws.

<sup>36</sup> In case (3), if an undelegated priest can be found, he should be asked to officiate, and should send a record of the marriage to the parish priest or the bishop; his presence, however, is not required for *validity* but for *lawfulness*.—If no priest is available, the contracting parties and the two witnesses are bound, each one of them, to see that a record of the marriage is sent to the proper quarter (C. C. L., 1098; 1103, § 3).

of her dowry; and, on the death of the husband, it can apportion his property among the widow and the children.

**SO-CALLED CIVIL MARRIAGE.**—Between Christians, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, marriage is always a religious act and always a sacrament. For them there is no such thing as non-sacramental marriage.<sup>37</sup> The practice of making the marriage contract in the presence of a secular magistrate was introduced into France by Napoleon I, and has spread widely throughout Europe and America. It has been repeatedly condemned by Pius VII, Pius IX, and Leo XIII.

(a) As regards Catholics, Civil Marriage or marriage in a registry office is no marriage at all. Owing to the tyranny of the State, they may be compelled to go through the form of marriage before a civil functionary to secure the legitimacy of their children in the eyes of the State, but they must regard the ceremony as a mere formality possessing in conscience and in fact no binding force whatever.—(b) As regards baptized non-Catholics (Protestants), the marriage contract may be made by them anywhere and without any witnesses; wheresoever made, it constitutes them man and wife and confers on them the Sacrament of Matrimony; it is in nowise affected in conscience by the circumstance that it take place in a registry office.<sup>38</sup>—(c) As regards the unbaptized, in whose case there is question merely of a natural or non-sacramental marriage, many hold that the State may be entitled to require, even for validity, that such marriages should be contracted in the presence of its officials.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Pius IX Alloc., 27 Sept., 1852; Leo XIII Ency., 10 Feb., 1880.

<sup>38</sup> See p. 263.

<sup>39</sup> The opinion which denies the State this power over the marriage of the unbaptized is equally strong; the Church has given no clear and final decision on the matter. See Prümmer, *Theol. Mor.*, vol. 3, p. 448.

*Civil Divorce.* The State, needless to say, has no power to dissolve the marriage bond *even between non-Catholics, whether baptized or unbaptized.* If the Church grants a separation of husband and wife, the injured party may then apply to the secular court, and go through a form of so-called divorce, but merely to secure the protection or aid of the civil law in regard to property or maintenance.

**The Impediments of Matrimony.**<sup>40</sup>—Impediments, or obstacles to marriage, are of two kinds, forbidding and invalidating. An invalidating impediment makes the contracting of marriage impossible and the wilful attempt at marriage a grave sin; a forbidding impediment makes the contract gravely unlawful.

We mention below some of the chief impediments, but do not state in all cases how far the Church dispenses. *The Church never dispenses without a reasonable cause.*—When the question of marriage becomes practical, timely application should be made to the parish priest, from whom full information may be obtained. It will also be found advisable to consult one's confessor.

**INVALIDATING IMPEDIMENTS:** where an invalidating impediment exists, there can be no marriage.

*Consanguinity.* Blood relations to the third degree inclusive (second cousins) cannot contract a valid marriage. The Church dispenses for the third and the second degree (second and first cousins), but never for the first (brother and sister). The Church objects to marriage between cousins, because, as a rule, such unions are unfruitful or the offspring is mentally or physically, deficient.

*Affinity.* The impediment of affinity exists between a widow and the relatives of her deceased husband to

<sup>40</sup> See above, "The solemn teaching of the Church."

the second degree inclusive (*i.e.*, his brothers and first cousins); similarly, between a widower and the relatives of his deceased wife to the same degree (*i.e.*, her sisters and first cousins). The Church may dispense in such cases, but not in the closer affinity that exists between a step-parent and step-child.

*Spiritual Relationship.* Spiritual relationship arises from Baptism: a god-father or god-mother cannot marry a god-child; the baptizer cannot marry the baptized.

*Holy Orders and Solemn Vows.* Sub-deacons, Deacons, Priests, and religious who have taken a solemn vow of chastity, cannot contract a valid marriage.

*Existing Marriage.* A valid marriage cannot be contracted by a person actually bound by the marriage tie. As is plain from what has been already said, this impediment is not removed by civil divorce.<sup>41</sup>

*Defect of Baptism.* A Catholic cannot contract valid marriage with an unbaptized person. The Church grants a dispensation, but, as a rule, only to those who live in heathen countries. She requires the same guarantees as those mentioned below under *Heresy or Schism*.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> It can be removed only through the Pauline privilege. See last paragraph of Section V.

<sup>42</sup> Other Invalidating Impediments are, briefly:—*Insanity*;—*Force*, or *grave fear unjustly imposed* (consent cannot be *valid* if given by one who is insane, or if extracted by force or grave fear);—*Error regarding the person married*:—*Incapacity* (through physical defect);—*Age* (there is no valid marriage unless the man has completed his sixteenth year, and the woman her fourteenth);—*Crime*: (1) *Accomplices in adultery or in the murder or death of husband or wife* cannot contract a valid marriage in the following cases:—(a) if the adultery was accompanied by a mutual promise of marriage or by attempted marriage; (b) if either of the accomplices in the death or murder expressed the intention of future marriage. (2) If both adultery and murder have been committed, the accomplices, even though they have expressed no intention of marrying, cannot contract a valid marriage.

THE FORBIDDING IMPEDIMENTS.<sup>43</sup> These make marriage unlawful, *i.e.*, gravely sinful, but not invalid.

*A simple vow of Chastity.* A vow of chastity is a vow to lead a chaste or a virginal life, or a vow not to get married. A vow is a free and deliberate promise made to God, by which one intends to bind oneself under pain of sin to pursue some higher spiritual good. It must not be confounded with a good resolution, since this latter does not bind under sin. A vow may be *solemn* or *simple*. A solemn vow is one accepted as such by the Church; all other vows are simple. He who has taken a simple vow of chastity can contract a valid but not a lawful marriage;<sup>44</sup> he who has taken a solemn vow cannot contract marriage at all.

*Betrothal.* A betrothal, in the only form recognised by the Church, is a written promise or engagement of marriage, signed (1) by both parties and (2) by the parish priest or two witnesses. No other form of engagement has any binding force in conscience. Should either party, without good and sufficient cause, break faith and marry some one else, he or she thereby contracts an unlawful but not an invalid marriage.

*Heresy or Schism.* A Catholic cannot lawfully marry a baptized non-Catholic. Such a marriage is called a mixed marriage, and is abhorred by the Church. Still, for very

<sup>43</sup> As bearing on the subject of Impediments, the following may be mentioned:—(1) the *Banns*, or public notice of the proposed marriage, must be published in the form prescribed by the Bishop before the marriage can lawfully take place;—(2) solemn marriage, *i.e.*, marriage celebrated with solemn blessing during Nuptial Mass, is prohibited in the *Forbidden Times*, *i.e.*, from the First Sunday in Advent to Christmas Day inclusive, and from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday inclusive; marriage without these solemn ceremonies is permissible at all times, according to the general law of the Church;—(3) the Sacrament cannot be lawfully received by one not in the state of grace or not sufficiently instructed in Christian doctrine and the responsibilities of the married state.

<sup>44</sup> This is the general rule. The Holy See has made the simple vows of certain religious invalidating impediments.

grave reasons, she sometimes grants a dispensation, provided the following conditions be complied with:—(1) the non-Catholic consort must promise not to interfere in any way with the religious belief or practice of the other; (2) both must promise to rear all the children of the marriage in the Catholic religion. These guarantees should if possible be given in writing. The Catholic party is bound to labour, as far as prudence permits, for the conversion of the other.<sup>45</sup> No marriage ceremony before a non-Catholic minister is permitted.<sup>46</sup>—The Church shows her disapproval of mixed marriages by forbidding all solemnities on the occasion of their celebration: she allows no Nuptial Mass, no nuptial blessing, no blessing of the ring, and orders that the ceremony shall not take place within a church;—some relaxation may be granted by the bishop for a very grave reason, but the Nuptial Mass is absolutely prohibited.<sup>47</sup>

**The evils of a Mixed Marriage.**—The Church grants a dispensation for a mixed marriage, but only for grave reasons and to avoid a greater evil. She regards all such unions with abhorrence, because they are hostile to the spiritual good of the Catholic partner and the offspring, and frequently lead to great unhappiness. Her dispensation is not an expression of approval; it is a mere permission, grudgingly given, and does not remove the evil.

**A MIXED MARRIAGE IS A SPIRITUAL OBSTACLE AND DANGER.** (1) The Sacrament of Matrimony, as we have seen, secures for husband and wife all the actual graces

<sup>45</sup> C. C. L., 1062.

<sup>46</sup> See above, "The Witnesses to the Marriage Contract." It may happen that the only civil functionary for the registration of marriages in their district is a non-Catholic clergyman; in that case the Church allows them to appear before him, provided that he acts solely in his civil capacity (C. C. L., 1063, § 3), and provided also that they observe the rules stated above, "So-called Civil Marriage" (a).

<sup>47</sup> C. C. L., 1102, § 2; 1109, § 3.

they need to fulfil their duty of helping one another and their children on the road to heaven. A mixed marriage is an obstacle to the operation of these graces. A Protestant, as such, is disqualified by his false belief from being of any help to the Catholic partner or the children. He can never be a help towards salvation, and he may be a grave hindrance.—(2) Common sense tells us to avoid evil company, because, when good and bad associate, the deterioration of the good is far more likely than the improvement of the bad; this is due to the weakness of human nature and its tendency to fall from virtue. The closer the companionship, the greater is the danger; and, since there is no more constant, no more intimate, relation than that of husband and wife, the danger to the Catholic party in a mixed marriage cannot be exaggerated. The true faith is the foundation of our whole spiritual life, and, if the foundation be sapped, the whole edifice falls. An honest man who consorts with thieves may be dragged down to their level, but something worse than this frequently occurs in mixed marriage; a Protestant husband, for instance, who is sincere in his belief may perhaps save his soul, but his Catholic wife, if she lose her faith through his influence, sinks to a lower depth; she turns from God with her eyes open, and, unless she repent, will undoubtedly be lost. The children too are in the greatest danger of perversion. It seems a bitter thing to say, but it is only too true, that the more loving their Protestant father or mother is, the better is he or she equipped to lead them astray.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Since many non-Catholics regard as harmless certain practices which, as a fact, are grave violations of chastity and the natural law, the Catholic partner in a mixed marriage is often subjected to serious and persistent temptation, being compelled to listen to charges of folly, scrupulosity, and want of affection, and to bear with a policy of contempt and querulousness. To yield even once would be a great disaster, not only because of the mortal sin committed, but also because of the greater difficulty of renewing the struggle against the other's wickedness and evil desires. What a life for a Catholic! Truly a life in the very vestibule of Hell!



UNHAPPINESS. (1) Any true husband or wife feels deep distress at the illness of his or her consort. But what is a physical ailment compared with sickness of the soul? A Catholic wife, if she deserve the name of Catholic, must feel that her husband is in evil case. She will be always haunted by the doubt that he may be rejecting the grace of conversion. The better she and the children are, the more likely is this to be so: a man could scarcely live in close contact with devout Catholics for several years without being drawn to the Church, without getting the divine illumination and help to see and embrace the truth. If he die as he has lived, the natural anguish of his wife and children will be further embittered by the cruel thought that he may be lost to them for ever.—(2) The Catholic party will feel the burthen of trying to convert the Protestant. He or she knows that the first condition of success is a good life. Every fault of his or hers—and how difficult it is to be faultless!—will be a silent argument in the other's mind against the faith.—(3) In a home founded on a mixed marriage there is always a sense of division. It is felt at all times, particularly on Sundays and Holydays when husband and wife go to different places of worship, and, to mention a practical detail, on days of fasting and abstinence; and it may easily give rise to open quarrelling and unhappiness. With it is allied a lack of sympathy which comes to light in the hour of trouble: if any grave misfortune occurs, if, *e.g.*, one of the children dies, then the words of divine consolation such as might be prompted by a common faith remain unspoken.—(4) If the husband be a Catholic and the wife a Protestant, the position is almost unbearable. He will very probably be absent from home for the greater part of the day and he cannot help feeling distressed by the thought that, even though his wife has promised to let the children be reared Catholics, she cannot fail to influence them strongly by her example.—(5) The unhappiness is supreme, if the

Catholic has to die, leaving the faith of beloved children, far more precious than their life, in the hands of one who does not appreciate it, or who may be influenced by Protestant friends or may marry a Protestant.

In a mixed marriage there is a spiritual infection that threatens the earthly and the eternal happiness of the entire household.

**Obedience to the Church's Teaching.**—On the subject of marriage and the preparation for it, the Church sets forth the grave obligations of husband and wife to one another and to their children; she condemns the false and shameful views that teem in the books and newspapers of the modern world; and she warns us against the dangers arising from dances, dress, and uncontrolled intimacy. She conveys her teaching to us through her Bishops, through the united voice of her theologians, and sometimes to the individual through his or her confessor. She speaks to us in the name and with the authority of her Divine Founder, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is always with her. Her teaching, therefore, is His teaching. Hence, when the Church explains the Divine Law in regard to marriage and the preparation for it, and, descending to details, declares this or that to be sinful, *all Catholics are bound to accept her ruling; to resist it is to resist God Himself.* Young people in particular should ponder this truth: at a time of crisis in their future lives, it will nerve them against the attractions of the world and the call of passion, and will save them from a shameful betrayal of their Redeemer.

## VII

**The Dignity of Christian Marriage.** God consecrates the priest to be His helper on earth; He invests the priest with a share in His own divine power of mercy and forgiveness; He gives him the keys to open the

Kingdom of Heaven to men. So likewise God blesses husband and wife to be His helpers in preparing those who are one day to stand around His throne ; He lets the shadow of His creative power come down upon them ; He calls them to be the living image of His own paternity, to be the instruments whereby the Kingdom of Heaven shall be peopled. Christian marriage is the foundation of the Christian home, the nursery of the Church : hence its dignity.

The most serious step in life is Ordination or Matrimony. In each case a grave obligation is assumed which, if not fulfilled, will bring down a terrible judgment, because the souls of others are involved. Neither should be approached without prudent advice, calm reasoning, and fervent prayer. Marriage is the making or marring of life : a wise marriage may bring earthly happiness and will certainly set one on the road that leads to heaven ; a foolish marriage will certainly bring suffering and sorrow, and may lead to hell. Young people should be warned by their parents and teachers against the sin and folly of speaking flippantly of marriage, or treating it as a subject of levity. Such idle talk produces false and harmful notions ; it distorts the judgment and may issue in the gravest unhappiness ; it is encouraged by the dread enemy of the human soul, working through suggestive film-pictures, plays, novels, and broadcasts, and is a gross irreverence to the great Sacrament which Christ has founded. One of the consequences of Original Sin is the escape of the passions from the natural control of reason ; many people are inclined to look at marriage from a merely natural standpoint, and are attracted to it by worldly pleasure which, like all such, they find in the experience to be an empty illusion. The true happiness of husband and wife rests on divine grace : it consists in mutual sympathy and help in the practice of religion and in the ordinary affairs and troubles of life : it is at its highest when they see themselves surrounded by innocent

children dependent on them for every care, and when they realise that they are the visible agents of God in a great spiritual work ; that He is revealing through them His love and tenderness for the little ones He has given them.

Hence, with what jealous, reverent care should not young persons guard their affections ; in what a Catholic spirit should they not spend the serious time of betrothal ; how well should they not prepare themselves for this revered Sacrament, the symbol of the unique and fruitful love of Christ for His Spouse, the Holy Church !

## GOD THE AWARDER

## CHAPTER XVIII

## THE LAST THINGS

*Summary.*

- I. The solemn teaching of the Church.
- II. The purpose of man's creation.—Death.—The Particular Judgment.—Eternity.
- III. Heaven.—An abode of perfect and everlasting happiness.—Its happiness comes from the direct Vision of God.—Its happiness cannot be adequately described.—The Light of Glory.
- IV. Hell.—An abode of eternal suffering.—The fire of Hell.—The torments of Hell cannot be adequately described.—Objections against the doctrine of Eternal Punishment, based on apparent inconsistency with Divine Justice and Goodness, and the happiness of the Blessed. Replies.—The moral value of the doctrine of Eternal Punishment.
- V. Purgatory.—An abode of purification.—Proof of the doctrine from the definition of the Church, from S. Scripture, from Tradition, and from reason.—Succouring the dead.
- VI. The Resurrection of the Body.—All men will rise from the dead : proved from S. Scripture and Tradition, shown to be not in opposition to reason.—The nature and properties of the risen body.
- VII. The General Judgment.—On the Last Day Christ will judge and sentence all mankind.—The purpose of the General Judgment; after the General Judgment, the world will come to an end.

## I

**The Solemn Teaching of the Church.**—The Church teaches solemnly :—(1) that death is a punishment for sin ;<sup>1</sup> (2) that the just who depart this life free from all debt of temporal punishment are at once admitted, but not all in the same degree, to the Blessed Vision and love of God ;<sup>2</sup> that they have a clear and direct knowledge of the Divine Essence and Attributes and of the Three Divine

<sup>1</sup> T 789.<sup>2</sup> Pope Benedict XII, 530 (A.D. 1336).

Persons ;<sup>3</sup> that their happiness will last for all eternity ;<sup>3a</sup> (3) that demons, and men who die in the state of mortal sin, suffer eternal punishment ;<sup>4</sup> (4) that the souls of the just who have not fully discharged their debt to God's justice are cleansed by purgatorial pains after death before their admission to Heaven, and that they can be relieved by the suffrages of the living<sup>5</sup> (*i.e.*, by Masses, prayers, alms-deeds and other good works); (5) that on the Last Day all men will rise from the dead in the bodies which they had in this life ;<sup>6</sup> that they will be arraigned before the judgment seat of Christ, and sentenced by Him according to their deserts.<sup>7</sup>

## II

**The purpose of Man's Creation.—Death.—The Particular Judgment.—Eternity.**—**THE PURPOSE OF MAN'S CREATION.** God has placed us in this world to know, love, and serve Him, and thus to merit Heaven. He has taught us that from Him we have come, that to Him we go, and that in Him alone we can find the happiness for which we long. We are here in a state of trial : we are like soldiers on the field of battle ; God, by His Sacraments and His graces, has given us the weapons we need, the strength to use them, and the desire of victory.<sup>8</sup> He has created us and destined us for Heaven, not to enrich Himself but to manifest His goodness.

**DEATH.** Through sin, death has come into the world ;<sup>9</sup> all men must die, since all have sinned in Adam : "dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return."<sup>10</sup> But

<sup>3</sup> F 693.<sup>3a</sup> Denz. 530.<sup>4</sup> Athanasian Creed.<sup>5</sup> F 693 ; T 998.<sup>6</sup> iv. L 429.<sup>7</sup> The *Creeeds*.

<sup>8</sup> The scriptural texts supporting each assertion in this paragraph will be found in the preceding Chapters. On the last sentence, recall the illustration used in the Chapter on the Sacraments in General § "The Number of the Sacraments." sub-section, *The Sacraments for individuals*.

<sup>9</sup> Rom. v. 12.<sup>10</sup> Gen. iii. 19.

though death is certain for all, no one knows *when, where, or how* he will die. We must, therefore, be prepared at all times: "Be you ready, for at what hour you think not the Son of Man will come."<sup>11</sup> You can die but once: "it is appointed unto men once to die."<sup>12</sup> With death, the time for merit is at an end: "the night cometh when no man can work."<sup>13</sup> *You will die either as the friend or foe of God, and will continue to be his friend or foe for all eternity*: "if the tree fall to the south or the north, in what place soever it shall fall, there shall it be."<sup>14</sup> But Christ by taking away the sins of the world has robbed death of its terror; for what is there in death to make us tremble but the thought of having to face God with a sin-stained soul?<sup>15</sup>—"by dying He hath destroyed our death: by rising from the dead He hath restored our life."<sup>16</sup> He has made it the gate through which we must pass to Him.

**THE PARTICULAR JUDGMENT.** It is certain that, immediately after death, the Particular Judgment takes place at which each one's eternal destiny is decided: "it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment."<sup>17</sup> When your soul has left the body, it will be brought before the throne of God; the good and the evil you have done will be weighed in the balance of His justice; He will pass sentence on you, according to your deserts; He will cast you into the Hell of the damned or summon you to share with Him in the happiness of Heaven, either at once or after you have been cleansed in the fire of Purgatory.

**ETERNITY.** After death the soul enters eternity, a form of duration that never comes to an end. It is not a multiple of time: we may set down a million years

<sup>11</sup> St. Luke xii. 40.

<sup>12</sup> Heb. ix. 27.    <sup>13</sup> St. John ix. 4.    <sup>14</sup> Ecclesiastes xi. 3

<sup>15</sup> "The sting of death is sin," I Cor. xv. 56.

<sup>16</sup> Easter Preface.

<sup>17</sup> Heb. ix. 27. See also F 693, T 809.

for every grain of sand on the shore, for every leaf of the forest, for every drop of water in the ocean; we may multiply these millions together as often as we please, but at the end of our calculation we are no nearer to understanding eternity than we were when we began. No number of squares superimposed will give a cube: no number of centuries added together will give eternity. A square is no part, no measure of a cube: a century of years is no part, no measure of eternity.

### III

#### Heaven, an Abode of Perfect and Everlasting Happiness.—

The souls of those who die in the grace of God are admitted into Heaven either immediately or after their release from Purgatory. There in that abode of His blessedness they shall enjoy in company with the angels and saints a perfect and everlasting happiness: "and they shall see His face and His name shall be on their foreheads; and night shall be no more, and they shall not need the light of the lamp, nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall enlighten them, and they shall reign for ever and ever."<sup>18</sup> Their happiness shall never be clouded by grief: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away."<sup>19</sup> Their happiness shall never end: "the just shall go into life everlasting";<sup>20</sup> they shall receive from the "Prince of Pastors" "an incorruptible crown,"<sup>21</sup> "a never-fading crown of glory."<sup>22</sup> They cannot themselves destroy their happiness by sin: in this world men crave for happiness but never find it; they commit sin because to their dark understanding it seems to promise the fulfilment of their desire; but, in Heaven, the blessed

<sup>18</sup> Apoc. xxii. 4, 5.

<sup>19</sup> Ib. xxi. 4.

<sup>20</sup> St. Matt. xxv. 46.

<sup>21</sup> I Cor. ix. 25.

<sup>22</sup> I St. Peter v. 4.

do not seek for happiness, because they have found it in its perfection ; their longings and desires are at rest in God, so that even the thought of turning away from Him by sin can never approach them.<sup>23</sup>

**The Happiness of Heaven comes from the immediate vision of God.**—"We see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as I am known."<sup>24</sup> Now, we know in part ; for through our natural faculties we see God as but in a weak and blurred reflection : all the power and majesty and beauty we behold in the wide world about us, from the stars in heaven to the flowers of the field ; all the high and noble achievements of men in science, literature, and art ; all the love and devotion that have ever burned in the human heart, and all the joy that has ever shone there—all drawn together and intensified indefinitely—is so far below the inexhaustible Source and Author of all as hardly to deserve the name of image or shadow. Now we know in part ; for in all that God has told us of Himself in the many precious revelations He has vouchsafed to man, we see Him but obscurely ; even the great unfolding of His love manifested to us in the life and death of His own Divine Son gives us but an imperfect vision : faith sets us within a narrow circle of light, while above and all around, the impenetrable darkness of mystery baffles our reason. "But then I shall know even as I am known." We shall pass into a state utterly unlike the present ; we shall see God even as He sees us, immediately, clearly, with nothing to intercept or obscure the vision : "Dearly beloved, we are now the sons of God ; and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be ; we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is."<sup>25</sup> In the Beatific Vision, the veil shall be withdrawn from the truths of faith : <sup>26</sup> we shall know the mystery of the Creation, why God made the world, how He sustained it in being, how He guided its every movement, linking all together in perfect unity, triumphing and manifesting His glory even in His rebellious creatures ; we shall know the true nature of Grace and its wondrous workings in the mind and

<sup>23</sup> See, as bearing on the subject of this paragraph, Ch. II, "The Divine Infinity," and below, § "The Resurrection of the Blessed."

<sup>24</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

<sup>25</sup> 1 St. John iii. 2.

<sup>26</sup> Solemnly taught by Pope Benedict XII, who says that "the vision and the enjoyment of the Divine Essence make void or put an end to acts of faith and hope," Denz., 530.

heart of every man ; we shall know the mysteries of the Trinity,<sup>27</sup> the Incarnation, and the Redemption ; we shall see down into the depth of God's wisdom, justice, power, beauty, and love. Thus clasped to Him for all eternity, each soul will find a complete happiness, living in Him as it were, living a life of ceaseless and varied activity, passing from knowledge to knowledge, and from joy to joy, and united in loving association with Mary ever Blessed, with the angels and saints.

**The Happiness of Heaven cannot be adequately described.**—It is difficult to describe to another a pleasure which he has not actually experienced, to convey to him, for instance, in words alone the sensation produced in us by the fragrance of a flower or the taste of a fruit ; still we may succeed to some extent by telling him it is like such and such a perfume or flavour with which he is already familiar. The task is vastly more difficult when we deal with one who does not possess the use of that sense through which the pleasure has come to us. Such is the case when we try to tell a blind man of our delight in looking at a great stretch of landscape in the hour after sunset. He hears us speak of the objects within sight, of mountains, woods, and water, of the play of light and shade, of the richness of colour, the faint glow of purple up the heather-clad slope, the verdure of the rolling plain, the deep green of the forest, the silver flash of the river, the delicate and swift-changing beauty of clouds that hang in the azure sea above, the peace that seems to breathe at that hour from earth and sky. But all our rapture tells him no more than this, that, if he had his sight, he would enjoy a new and great pleasure which he fancies may perhaps be compared in some vague way to that which he feels when he listens to a beautiful harmony. We however when we try to

<sup>27</sup> The Trinity is expressly mentioned in the solemn teaching of the Council of Florence : "[the just in Heaven] see God One and Three as He is," Denz. 693.—To know God and His Mysteries is not the same as to comprehend them fully ; God, because He is infinite, can be fully known only to God Himself.

understand the happiness of heaven are in worse case even than the blind man trying to understand colours: he knows this much at least that, though the pleasure of seeing is quite dissimilar from that of hearing, yet in intensity both pleasures are much the same; we, on the other hand, are endeavouring to conceive a happiness which is not only altogether unlike, but infinitely beyond anything we have ever felt, for the Holy Spirit tells us that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, *neither hath it entered into the heart of man*, what things God has prepared for them that love Him."<sup>28</sup> Still, though it is plain that anything like an adequate idea of Heaven is impossible, we may yet form some conception of it from considerations such as the following:—

(1) *The sufferings of this life are but a poor price to pay for the happiness of Heaven*—Christ told His followers that they would be like lambs among wolves, calumniated, reviled, persecuted, imprisoned and scourged; yet He said to them, "Blessed are ye when they shall revile you and persecute you and speak all that is evil against you untruly, for My sake. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in Heaven."<sup>29</sup> All that is hard to flesh and blood was to be their portion; yet they were to make light of it; they were to rejoice at it, because it was but a little price to pay for the reward of Heaven. St. Paul tells us what he endured for the Gospel of Christ: five times he was scourged; thrice he was set upon and beaten with cudgels; stoned once; three times he was shipwrecked; a "night and a day in the depth of the sea"; his life was at the mercy of the robber, the Jew, the Gentile, and, cruel thought, the traitor within the fold; cold and ill-clad, he was worn with pain, labour, scant sleep, hunger, and thirst; and besides all this, his mind and heart were ever on the

<sup>28</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 9.

<sup>29</sup> St. Matt. v. 11, 12; St. Luke x. 3.

rack, fearing, praying, and planning for the welfare of so many widely dispersed Christian communities.<sup>30</sup> He knew what suffering was; yet, what does he say? "The sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared to the glory to come"<sup>31</sup>—not even worthy of mention when set beside the reward promised by God to His faithful servants.

(2) *The blessed in Heaven have outgrown the pleasures of this world.*—Toys and childish games were a source of pleasure to us in our early years; when we grew up, we turned to other amusements, and perhaps wondered how we could have taken our early pastimes so seriously: "When I was a child," says St. Paul, "I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away the things of a child."<sup>32</sup> So will it be with those who enter God's Kingdom. They will realise that at last they have arrived at true manhood, that they have outgrown all the pleasures that fastened them so passionately to earth and made the leaving of it so bitter to them. They will cast from them all the trivial things of their past; they will have gone out of the land of shadow and darkness; within their minds there will be a great out-flashing of light; they will have found Him who alone is Truth and Beauty and Omnipotence, and who will use His very Omnipotence to fill them with every joy.

**The Light of Glory.**—Sanctifying Grace alone does not enable the soul to see God; if it did, the just in this life would behold Him; something further is therefore required, which is called the Light of Glory. It is a force or power imparted to the intellect of the blessed in Heaven, like a new eye, enabling them to see God as He is; its intensity will depend on the greater or less degree of Sanctifying Grace which each one possesses at death. Each soul will therefore receive all the happiness it is capable of receiving; and no soul can envy another that receives more.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> 11 Cor. xi. 24 f.    <sup>31</sup> Rom. viii. 18.    <sup>32</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 11.

<sup>33</sup> Illustrations: (1) The small cup and the large cup are both filled to the brim by the torrent. One contains more than the other, yet

NOTE. *Borrowed or transferred expressions.* Of all the senses, sight is the noblest, because it seems to give us the clearest and most definite knowledge of material things; hence, we are prone to use the terms proper to it of the higher faculty, the intellect, and to speak as though the intellect had "eyes" and could get from God "light to see" the truth. All such expressions are however borrowed or transferred: they have been borrowed from the sense of sight, and given to the intellect to which they do not strictly belong. They represent our weak efforts to convey a meaning too deep for human language.

*The "lights" given by God—The "vision" of God.* "The light of Reason" is the natural power given us by God the Creator to distinguish between right and wrong: "the light of Faith" is the power given to the soul by God the Sanctifier to know and embrace the truths of faith; "the light of Glory" is the power given to the intellect by God the Judge to know Him with an intimacy of which no creature without His special aid would be capable. But "light" strictly understood is something material, and therefore can but vaguely describe a movement or power of the understanding. So, too, when we speak of the "vision of God," of "seeing Him face to face," our words are not, in the strictest sense, appropriate, but still they are the least imperfect we can find: the soul of the child who dies unbaptized knows God only through His works, knows Him only "at a distance," or "as hidden under an impenetrable veil," but the souls of the blessed enjoy a direct knowledge of Him; they share in some way in the knowledge which He has of Himself; hence we say that they "stand in His presence," that they "gaze upon Him in His unveiled Majesty," that they "behold Him face to face."

*"As the stag longeth for the running streams, so longeth my heart for Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, the Strong, the Living. When may I come and stand before the face of God? . . . O God, my God, after Thee do I long in the morning: my soul doth thirst for Thee, and how greatly doth my body thirst for Thee in the bleak, pathless, arid land. . . . Thou art my helper, and in the shelter of Thy wings I rejoice; with all my soul I cling to Thee. . . . O send forth Thy light and Thy truth that they may lead me and guide me to Thy holy mountain and Thy tabernacle. . . . The children of men are sated by the abundance of Thy house: and*

both are equally full.—(2) Suppose several people look at a beautiful picture; all go away thoroughly delighted, yet owing to difference in capacity and training, some will see more in the picture than others, and derive a greater pleasure from it.

*Thou makest them to drink of the streams of Thy delights. . . . Thou wilt show me the way of life: Thou wilt fill me with joy through the vision of Thee. Delights are in Thy right hand for evermore."*<sup>24</sup>

## IV

**Hell, an Abode of Eternal Suffering.**—The souls of those who die in mortal sin are cast into Hell. Each will suffer according to his deserts.

(1) *In Hell, the wicked will suffer the pain of loss.* In this life, they rejected God for sin: in Hell, they will know what they rejected. They will see that they have missed the one thing for which they were created, the one thing that can make them happy, the one thing which they need and can never obtain. That the living man needs air and water, is a truth only too distressingly illustrated in authentic narrative: we have read in the later history of India, how, amid the stifling heat of a summer night, a number of Europeans were packed into a little cell with but a few small apertures to the outer air; how, when the pangs of suffocation gripped them, they struggled and fought for places at the narrow openings; how they raved and blasphemed, tore one another to pieces, beat and trampled one another to death;—we have read many a time, how a group of castaways after days in an open boat under a blazing sun were driven mad with thirst, and how they threw lots to see which of them should be put to death, so that the others might drink his blood. These incidents, which one shudders to record, are our comment on the simple statement that man needs air and water; but how shall we illustrate the truth that man needs God? Man's desire for air and water is a desire of his animal nature, while his desire for God is a desire of his whole being. In the living man, the desire for air and water

<sup>24</sup> Monsignor P. Boylan, D.D., *The Psalms*, Dublin, Gill and Son, 1920: Ps. xli. 2, 3; lxii, 1, 2, 8, 9; xlii. 3; xxxv, 8-10; xv. 11.

is always present, always more or less awake, and, if frustrated, leads to dreadful suffering. In man after death, the desire for God which he now can hardly feel, will suddenly spring into full activity, like the placid mountain-lake which, when the enclosing wall of stone is rent, flings its whole volume in raging flood down to the valley; his whole being will flame up with an intense craving, with a hunger and thirst for God, of a force and vehemence infinitely beyond anything within mortal experience. After judgment, the sinner will feel himself fiercely, madly, borne and swept onwards by every faculty within him towards his Creator; but, held down pitilessly with his guilt, he will struggle in an agony of suffocation; he will rage with the frenzy of a parched and famished wild-beast in sight of the food and drink that cannot be reached; he will rave and curse, and, if he could, he would annihilate the very God whose attraction, whose infinite loveliness, now eternally unattainable, causes him such excruciating torture. St. John Chrysostom says: "Insupportable is the fire of Hell—who doth not know it?—and its torments are awful; but, if one were to heap a thousand hell-fires one on the other, it would be as nothing compared with the punishment of being excluded from the blessed glory of Heaven, of being hated by Christ, and of being compelled to hear Him say, 'I know you not.'" <sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> (a) *In St. Matth. Hom. 23, 8.*—The effect on the wicked is as though they were "hated by Christ," but the serene happiness of Christ is not disturbed by any such passion. (b) Father Faber (*Blessed Sacrament*, Bk. 3, sec. 7, p. 374, 3rd ed.) speaks thus of the Pain of Loss:—"Up and down its burning cage the many-facultied and mightily intelligenced spirit wastes its excruciating immortality in varying and ever varying still, always beginning and monotonously completing, like a caged beast upon its iron tether, a threefold movement, which is not three movements successively, but one triple movement all at once. In rage it would fain get at God to seize Him, dethrone Him, murder Him, and destroy Him; in agony it would fain suffocate its own interior thirst for God which parches and burns it with all the frantic horrors of a perfectly self-possessed frenzy; and in fury it would fain break its tight fetters of gnawing fire which

(2) *They will suffer the pain of sense.* In this life they rejected God for a created thing: In Hell, God will employ a created thing to punish them. They will be tortured by a physical agency which the Sacred Scriptures call fire. Our Lord says that "at the end of the world, the Angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them *into the furnace of fire*: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." <sup>36</sup> "If thy hand scandalise thee," He says, "cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into Hell, *into unquenchable fire.*" <sup>37</sup> He tells us too of the rich man and of the beggar Lazarus who lay at his gate: "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died and was *buried in hell*; and lifting up his eyes when he was *in torments*, he saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom, and he cried and said: 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me and *send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.*' And Abraham said to him: 'Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy life-time, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is fixed a great chaos (chasm), so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot, nor from thence come hither.'" <sup>38</sup> St. John

pin down its radical love of the beautiful Sovereign Good, and drag it ever back with cruel wrench from its desperate propulsion to its uncreated Centre. In the mingling of these three efforts it lives its life of endless horrors."

<sup>36</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 49, 50.

<sup>37</sup> St. Mark ix. 42.

<sup>38</sup> St. Luke xvi. 19-26.—The parable of the rich man and the beggar is our Lord's impressive illustration of the truth that He punishes the grave abuse of worldly wealth with unending torments. But He does not intend us to accept the dramatic details as literally true; He does not require us to believe that there could have been a respectful interchange of words between Abraham and a soul in Hell, nor that a disembodied spirit could have cried out for "a drop of water" to cool its "tongue." What He *does* require us to believe is that, even



writes in the *Apocalypse* that the wicked "shall drink, of the wine of the wrath of God," that they "shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the sight of the holy Angels, and in the sight of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever; neither have they rest day nor night."<sup>39</sup>

The pain of sense includes not only the pain of fire but every pain distinct from that of loss. It includes, therefore, all that the damned soul will suffer from remorse of conscience, from the memory of lost opportunities, from the thought of the wretched pleasures of this life purchased at the price of eternal happiness; it includes all that it will endure from association with demons, hateful to the soul as the soul is hateful to them. There is no sufferer on earth we pity more than him who is cared for by no one and never hears a kind word; yet to such, God, unknown to man, may give many consolations. But what of the soul in Hell? It will never again hear the voice of pity; it is left to brood on its misery, alone for ever.<sup>40</sup>

(3) *They will suffer for all eternity.* Christ speaks of Hell as the Hell "of unquenchable fire where the gnawing worm dieth not."<sup>41</sup> He tells us that God will pass sentence on the wicked, saying to them: "Depart from Me you cursed into everlasting fire which was

if, on an impossible supposition, a lost soul could make a piteous appeal for the very slightest relief, its request would be denied: Cf. Knabenbauer, *Cursus Sacrae Scripturae* (Gospel of St. Luke).—A parable differs from an allegory. In a parable there may be several details whose sole purpose is to brighten the narrative and fix it in the memory; in an allegory, on the other hand, every detail corresponds exactly, or very closely, to some part of the truth that is being illustrated. The parable referred to in the text above is a parable strictly so called. Some of the other illustrations used by our Lord, though called "parables," are really allegories: e.g., the Parable of the Sower and the Parable of the Vineyard (St. Matt. xiii. 3-8; 18-23; xxi. 33-46).

<sup>39</sup> *Apoc.* xiv. 10, 11.

<sup>40</sup> The reader might consult Faber's *Spiritual Conferences* (Sec. XI. "Heaven and Hell").

<sup>41</sup> St. Mark ix. 43, 44.

prepared for the devil and his angels."<sup>42</sup> He contrasts the fate of the bad and the good in the words: "And these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting."<sup>43</sup> "Everlasting" is sometimes used loosely in Sacred Scripture to denote a long, but not endless, period; this, however, as St. Augustine points out, is not its meaning here; it must, he says, mean "eternal" in the strict sense, and for the following reason:—the two expressions "everlasting punishment" and "life everlasting" occur in the same sentence; "everlasting" must, therefore, bear the same meaning in both; but all admit that "life everlasting" means "life never-ending;" hence all must admit that "everlasting punishment" means "never-ending punishment."

**The Fire of Hell.**—According to the safe and common teaching the fire of Hell is something real and physical, something material; yet, as the Fathers tell us, it is not identical with the fire of this world. Thus, Lactantius says: "The nature of that everlasting fire is different from this fire of ours which we use for the necessary purposes of life, and which ceases to burn, unless it be sustained by the fuel of some material. But that divine fire always lives by itself, and burns without nourishment."<sup>44</sup> St. Ephraem<sup>45</sup> and St. Basil<sup>46</sup> declare that the fire of Hell causes darkness, and incessantly torments its victims without destroying them. St. Augustine says that, while not corporeal, it resembles a corporeal thing.<sup>47</sup> Whatever be its nature, God has given it the power of acting on pure spirits and disembodied souls. Though we know it only from its effects, and though we know these effects themselves very imperfectly, we may be assured that "fire," the name given to it by Christ, conveys to us the best idea of its nature that we are capable of conceiving.

**The Torments of Hell cannot be adequately described.**—No tongue can describe the happiness of Heaven: no tongue can describe the horrors of Hell. It is a grievous mistake to suppose that

<sup>42</sup> St. Matt. xxv. 41.

<sup>44</sup> *De Div. Inst.* 7, 21.

<sup>46</sup> *In Psal.* 28, 7 n. 6.

<sup>43</sup> *Id. ibid.* 46.

<sup>45</sup> *Serm. Exeg.* Vol. II, p. 354.

<sup>47</sup> *De Genesi ad Literam*, xii. 32, 61.

the dreadful pictures of Hell drawn by preachers and writers are mere fabrics of the imagination, mere senseless exaggerations with no relation to the truth. The details presented may not indeed correspond with the facts, but they help us to stretch our mind towards the awful reality; they put before us sufferings we know of, so that we may get some idea of sufferings similar in their nature, but far more intense (*the pain of sense*), and of other and inconceivably greater sufferings of a different and higher order (*the pain of loss*). Ponder over the words of our Saviour Himself: they are the most appalling ever uttered by human lips, and He that spoke them did not exaggerate. His description of the damned as separated from happiness by an impassable chasm, as gnawed by the undying worm, as afflicted with burning thirst, as tortured in flames, as flung into unquenchable fire, as buried in Hell, gives us, when fully understood and expanded, more than all that we find in sermons and religious epics.

**Replies to difficulties against the doctrine of Eternal Punishment.<sup>48</sup>—**

NOTE AS A GENERAL REPLY TO ALL DIFFICULTIES.—*God commands us to believe in the eternity of Hell. The doctrine raises many difficulties; so does the doctrine of the most Holy Trinity; so does the doctrine of the Blessed Eucharist; yet it is precisely because the doctrine is difficult to our feeble understanding, our faltering reason, that we glorify Him in accepting it. We glorify Him by trusting in Him whose Divine Son died on the Cross for us; we glorify Him by our unshakable faith in His infinite justice, His goodness and mercy.*

**A. "Eternal punishment seems opposed to Divine Justice."**

1. "How can a sin committed in a moment of time deserve an eternity of punishment?"

REPLY:—(a) It is not reasonable to hold that the duration of the punishment should be determined by the length of time it took to commit the offence: theft, forgery, or manslaughter

<sup>48</sup> Formerly all Protestants believed in Heaven and Hell but not in Purgatory; now-a-days most of them believe in Heaven and Purgatory but not in Hell. In denying the doctrine of Eternal Punishment, they shut their eyes to the clear evidence of Sacred Scripture and to the general belief of the human race. The ancient and modern beliefs of Pagans are briefly given by Raupert, *Hell and its Problems*, London, St. Anselm's Publishing Co., 1912. His work will be found very useful on all the matters discussed in these paragraphs.

may be committed in an instant, and yet such crimes are justly punished by imprisonment for many years. (b) The suggestion that a good man may at the end of a long life be surprised into a single mortal sin and be cast into Hell, need cause no apprehension. Mortal sin is a violation of the law of God committed (1) in a serious matter; (2) with clear knowledge, and (3) in full freedom and with full consent. Sometimes we see a man who has long been honoured for his virtue, die apparently the death of the unjust; but what to us seems a grave sin may be due to some merely physical weakness, break-down, or aberration; God reads the heart; He will send no man to Hell who does not fully deserve it. But if he who has all his life enjoyed the blessings of God's friendship turns against Him in the end knowingly, freely, and deliberately, he is guilty of the blackest ingratitude and can expect no forgiveness after death. The supposition is indeed improbable, and may never be realised in fact. (c) God does not suffer from ignorance like a human judge; He knows us through and through; He will make full allowance for the obstacles in our path, for human frailty and ignorance, for evil surroundings, and for inherited tendencies to sin. He will judge us with perfect but humane or kindly justice.<sup>49</sup>

2. "Is not all punishment designed for the correction of the wrong-doer? If so, is not eternal punishment unjust?"

REPLY:—(1) All punishment is *not* designed for the correction of the offender. The State will send a man to the scaffold for murder: in such a sentence there is obviously no thought of reforming the criminal. Nor can it be said that the sole object is to offer his example as a warning to the evil-minded. The State has something further in view: it puts him to death to make him expiate his crime, to do to him what he has done to another; and men approve, saying: "That is right, Justice has been done." Even in the lesser punishments inflicted by the civil arm, this element of expiation enters in: for instance, when a thief is sent to prison for ten years, the object is not merely to deter others from crime or to hold the malefactor in detention for a period nicely calculated as sufficient for his

<sup>49</sup> "God," says St. Thomas, "judges men through the Man Christ, so that the judgment may be gentler for men," *ut sit suavius iudicium hominibus* (S.T., III, q. 59, a. 2, c.); see *Heb.* iv. 15, 16.—God judges men, in His human nature, not because He as Man has more pity for them than He as God, but because He desires to remind them that, in Him, they have a Judge who has felt all their weakness,—who has felt the stress of temptation and the edge of suffering.

reform, but to make him pay for his guilt. Crime disturbs the balance of justice : punishment restores it. The criminal owes a debt to justice : he must pay it to the last farthing. Apply this to the doctrine of eternal punishment. A man dies in rebellion against God : he must suffer a penalty equal to his crime. But how are we to estimate the penalty ? Only by humbly taking the words of God Himself : He has issued a most solemn and emphatic warning that the impenitent sinner deserves eternal punishment, and we must believe it. In this life, we walk by faith, and believe God is just ; in the next, we shall *know* He is just, and perhaps there may be many who, to their cost, will know it too late.—(2) The objection assumes that lost souls are capable of reform. This is false. As we say below in our reply to the next objection, the will of the sinner, for reasons which we cannot fathom, is, as a consequence of its very nature, fixed after death in perpetual hatred of God ; and this perpetual hatred demands in justice a perpetual punishment. To ask God to refrain from punishing the wicked in Hell would be like asking Him to deny the truth that they died in rebellion against Him.

B. "*Eternal Punishment seems opposed to Divine Goodness and Mercy.*"

1. "How can we reconcile Divine Goodness and Mercy with the doctrine of eternal punishment ?"

REPLY :—(a) If God were to release the damned, His mercy would be stultified. The wicked could defy Him, saying : "We trampled on Your Law. We had our own way in spite of You. We knew that Your mercy would not allow You to punish our defiance of You with the eternal torments of Hell. We have triumphed over You."—(b) By dying in mortal sin, the damned have eternally disqualified themselves for deliverance. When a man commits mortal sin, he deliberately thrusts God and His commandments aside ; he is no longer God's servant ; he has chosen himself as his own lord and master ; and if he dies without reversing his choice, that choice becomes final for all eternity. He will never cease to be a rebel against God ; he will never cease to be unfit for the kingdom of Heaven. The divine mercy, therefore, cannot release him.—(c) The lost soul is no object of pity. It is fixed in eternal selfishness ; it regrets its sins, merely because they have made it suffer, but not because they were offensive to God ; it will never bow its will to say : "Father, forgive me" ; it will never appeal to the divine mercy for relief ; it would gladly be rid of its suffering, but only on condition of retaining its attitude of independence of God.

2. "Why cannot God break the rebellion of the lost soul by giving it an overwhelming grace of repentance ? Or why does He not of His pity annihilate it and end its misery ?"

REPLY :—God can do neither of these things because they are absurd. When all that is now hidden is revealed, we shall see that to convert or annihilate a lost soul would involve an absurdity comparable to that of constructing a square-circle. In this present life, we can see clearly that a figure ceases to be a circle if it is transformed into a square ; after death, we shall see that God's release or annihilation of a lost soul would demand such a change in Him that He would cease to be God ; and we shall see also that, as St. Thomas says, the divine mercy extends even to the wicked in Hell by making their punishment less than their deserts.<sup>50</sup>

C. "*It would seem that the contemplation of eternal suffering must destroy the happiness of the Blessed.*"

"How can the Blessed be happy if they see those whom they loved on earth suffering eternal punishment ?"

REPLY :—The happiness of the Blessed in Heaven cannot be marred by the sufferings of those who were their friends on earth.

The friendships of this life are not proof against grievous wrong : if, for instance, a man learns that his parents have been robbed and murdered by one whom he thought his dearest friend, or if husband or wife discovers the other in a sin of infidelity, does not all friendship cease ? and in the latter case does not the Church herself grant a lifelong separation, no matter how penitent the offender may be ? Such crimes we recognise as destructive of affection ; but the crime of one who dies as God's enemy will appear far more heinous to the Blessed in Heaven ; for them, it will bear the character of a most grievous personal wrong utterly extinguishing every claim to their regard. They will perceive the obstinacy and black ingratitude of the sinner ; they will see how he spurned God's graces, and how he hardened his heart against the sufferings of Christ ; they will behold him after death with his will set in eternal hostility to his Creator ; and so the very thought of retaining any vestige of friendship for such a one will seem to them to be an insult to the God they love. They will feel as little pity for a lost soul in Hell, as men on earth feel for the sufferings of Satan. They will be united to God more

<sup>50</sup> S.T., *Suppl.*, q. 99, a. 2, ad. 1 : *etiam in eis [sc. damnatis] misericordiae locum habet, in quantum circa condignum puniuntur.* Cf. *ibid.* a. 3, ad. 4 ; a. 5, ad. 1 ; S.T., I., q. 21, a. 4, ad. 1.

closely, more lovingly, than a child is united to its parents; His honour will be their honour; His friends, their friends; His enemies, their enemies; His affections will be their affections, and they will see all things with His eyes.

**The moral value of the doctrine of Eternal Punishment.**—God has created no one for Hell; thus, we may put the Catholic doctrine of Eternal Punishment in a homely way by saying that He did not make Hell to put us into it, but to keep us out of it. He has created every one of us for Heaven, and He has given us every help to get there. Among these helps, one of the greatest is His revelation of the eternal torments of Hell. He has shown us that sin leads to Hell, so that knowing this we may, by our own free-will, and aided by His grace, learn to shun and hate what would bring us thither. If some one of agreeable manners sought our society with no other object but to rob us and ruin us, we would avoid him and come to hate the attractions with which he sought to ensnare us; in like manner, we come to detest sinful pleasure, knowing that it is but the bait that tempts us into the dread trap from which there is no escape. The more we meditate on Hell, the nearer we shall be drawn to God. We should pray with the Psalmist that we may be filled with fear of the Divine judgments: "Pierce Thou my flesh with Thy fear;"<sup>51</sup> "Blessed is the man to whom it is given to have the fear of God. . . . The fear of God is the beginning of His love."<sup>52</sup>

## V

**Purgatory, an abode of Purification.**—Purgatory is a place or state of punishment where the souls of those who have died in the state of grace, but who still owe something to divine justice, suffer for a time before they are admitted into Heaven. The debt to God's justice may arise from venial sin unrepented of, or from satisfaction still due after the guilt of mortal sin has been remitted.

*The pains of Purgatory.* The poor souls in Purgatory suffer the pain of loss, because, while detained there, they are deprived of the Beatific Vision of God. This

<sup>51</sup> *Ps.* cxviii. 120. The sense of the Hebrew differs somewhat: "My flesh shudders from fear of Thee."

<sup>52</sup> *Ecclus.* xxv. 15, 16.

temporary deprivation is a most severe punishment. The consciousness of being so close to God, now loved with an intense ardour, and of being unable to go to Him, causes dreadful suffering, which is enhanced by the sense of unworthiness and by regret that the opportunities of purging the soul before death were not availed of. Nevertheless the suffering souls are cheered by the light of hope, by the certainty of release: their agony is not the agony of the damned, not an agony of rage and despair, but an agony accepted with perfect resignation, borne with unyielding patience, an agony of love.

It is commonly taught, but it is not of faith, that the poor souls suffer also a pain of sense, caused by some material agency similar to the fire of Hell. How their sufferings compare with the sufferings of this world, we cannot tell: St. Bonaventure says that "the severest pain of Purgatory exceeds the most violent known on earth";<sup>53</sup> on the other hand, St. Thomas, following St. Augustine, asserts that "even the slightest torture of Purgatory is worse than all the sufferings one can endure in this world."<sup>54</sup>

**Proof of the doctrine of Purgatory.**—The doctrine of Purgatory is proved from the solemn teaching of the Church; it can be inferred from S. Scripture; it is in accordance with tradition and reason.

**PROOF FROM THE SOLEMN TEACHING OF THE CHURCH.** The Church teaches as a revealed truth that the souls of the just who, while in this life, have failed to pay in full their debt to God's justice are cleansed in Purgatory, to fit them for admission to Heaven. But the Church speaks infallibly in the name of God. Hence, God Himself testifies, through the Church, to the existence of Purgatory.—This proof suffices for Catholics. The other proofs are added for their fuller instruction.

**PROOF FROM S. SCRIPTURE.** (1) When Judas Machabeus after his victory over Gorgias, governor of Idumaea, went to bury the few Jews who had fallen, he found under their coats offerings which had been dedicated to the idols of Jamnia. In

<sup>53</sup> *Com. in Sent.*, iv. d. 20, a. 1, q. 2.

<sup>54</sup> *S.T., Suppl., Qu. 70 (de appendice, 2), a. 3, c.*

seizing this booty, they had probably been actuated by mere greed, never thinking of the contamination they suffered by appropriating objects connected with idolatrous worship; still they had done what "the law forbiddeth, so that all plainly saw that for this cause they were slain. . . . [And Judas Machabeus] sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead." Obviously, he believed that these men were not lost eternally, but that they were in some state or abode of temporary suffering, and could be relieved by the prayers of the living. The Holy Ghost through the inspired writer approves of his action and the belief that prompted it, saying: "It is therefore a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins."<sup>55</sup> (2) Christ said: "He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world nor in the world to come."<sup>56</sup> "The world to come" means life after death. Hence, according to our Saviour Himself, there are sins that can be pardoned after death.

**PROOF FROM TRADITION.** (1) Though Protestants deny the inspiration of the *Books of Machabees*, the quotation given above, regarded merely as a statement of secular history, proves that the Jews believed in Purgatory.—(2) The belief of the early Church is evident from the immemorial custom of praying for the dead:—*e.g.*, (a) Tertullian (*d.* 240) bids a widow pray for her husband's soul and "have sacrifice offered for him every year on the anniversary of his death."<sup>57</sup>—(b) St. Augustine (*d.* 430) wrote a special treatise on "How to help the dead." He says that "the universal Church . . . observes the custom of giving a place in the prayers of the priest at the altar to the commemoration of the dead."<sup>58</sup> His mother St. Monica on her death-bed said to him: "This one request I make to you, that, wherever you be, you remember me at the Lord's altar"<sup>59</sup> (c) The inscriptions in the Catacombs, some dating from the second century, are exactly like those we find in any Catholic graveyard. They beseech the mercy of Christ for the dead, and appeal to the living to pray for them. On the famous monument known as the Stèle of Abercius, erected in 216 A.D. in Phrygia, Asia Minor, we read the words: "Let every comrade who understands this pray for me."<sup>60</sup>

<sup>55</sup> 2 *Mach.* xii. 40-43, 45, 46.

<sup>56</sup> St. Matt. xii. 32.

<sup>57</sup> *De monogamia*, 10.

<sup>58</sup> *De cura gerenda pro mortuis*, I. 3.

<sup>59</sup> *Confess.* Book ix. C. II.

<sup>60</sup> This monument was presented to Pope Leo XIII on the occasion of his Episcopal Jubilee by the Sultan of Turkey. The inscription

**ARGUMENT FROM REASON.** The holy Scriptures tell us that into Heaven "there shall not enter anything defiled;"<sup>61</sup> and that "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account of it in the day of judgment."<sup>62</sup> From what we know of human nature, is it not reasonable to say that of those who die in the grace of God very many are burthened with venial sin? Such cannot enter Heaven, for they are not undefiled; nor can they be cast into Hell, for they are not enemies of God. There must, therefore, be a middle state in which they can be purified.—Protestants now-a-days, either because they feel the force of this argument, or because they find so much consolation in believing that they may help the dead by their prayers, express regret that the authors of the Reformation should have rejected the doctrine of Purgatory; but they must observe that its rejection follows naturally from the false principle enunciated by Luther, *viz.*, that a man's sins great and small are completely extinguished by an act of faith. If then they wish to believe in Purgatory, they must revise their teaching about justifying faith: indeed some of them have done so already.

**Succouring the Dead.**—(1) It is the faith of the Church that we who are on earth can relieve the souls in Purgatory by Masses, prayers, good works, and indulgences. The Mass produces its effect of its own efficacy, and does not depend for its value on the piety of the earthly priest who offers it. On the other hand prayers and good works are of no avail for the suffering souls, unless offered by one in the state of grace. When a man who is in the state of grace says a prayer devoutly or performs some good work with a supernatural intention, his act bears a threefold fruit, *meritorious*, *impetratory* and *satisfactorial*: (a) *meritorious*, *i.e.*, it merits an increase of Sanctifying Grace and eternal glory: this fruit is for himself alone; (b) *impetratory*, *i.e.*, it works as a petition for God's graces: this he can apply for the benefit of others; (c) *satisfactorial*, *i.e.*, it

contains important evidence not only on Purgatory, but on the Primacy of the Roman See and the Real Presence in the Blessed Eucharist. See Barnes, *The Early Church in the light of the Monuments*, London, Longmans Green, 1913.

<sup>61</sup> *Apoc.* xxi. 27.

<sup>62</sup> St. Matt. xii. 36.

helps to blot out the temporal punishment due to sin; this, also, he may surrender in favour of another. It is the satisfactorial fruit which God accepts for the relief of the souls in Purgatory.<sup>63</sup>—On Indulgences, see Appendix to Chapter on Penance—(2) The prayers in the Missal show that the dead are helped by the intercession of the Angels and Saints, and especially by the powerful advocacy of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Michael the Archangel.—(3) It is certain that the poor souls cannot shorten their purgatory by their own prayers. It can be safely taught, however, that they can pray for us; <sup>64</sup> but whether they can help us or not, God will reward our charity in praying for them, for He has said: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy"; <sup>65</sup> "it is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins."<sup>66</sup>

## VI

**All Men will rise from the Dead.**—The Church teaches solemnly that on the last day all men will rise from the dead in the same bodies which they had in this life.<sup>67</sup> This is one of the chief doctrines of the Christian faith; it is the plain teaching of Sacred Scripture and Tradition, and it can be shown to be not in opposition to reason.

<sup>63</sup> But we cannot be certain that He will apply it fully for the relief of the particular soul for whom we pray.

<sup>64</sup> The only evidence of official approval of the teaching that the poor souls can intercede for us is found in a prayer indulgenced by Pope Leo XIII. (*Acta Ap. Sedis*, xxii. 743). The Church in her liturgy never appeals for their intercession; but, on the other hand, she has never censured the widespread practice among the faithful of asking them for help. St. Thomas did not support what is now the common teaching. See Pohle-Preuss, *Eschatology*, pp. 100, 101.

<sup>65</sup> St. Matt. v. 7.

<sup>66</sup> 2 *Mach.* xii. 46.

<sup>67</sup> e.g., in the *Creeeds*: "I believe in . . . the resurrection of the body and life everlasting" (*Ap. Creed*); "and I expect the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come" (*Nicene Creed*).

**PROOF FROM SACRED SCRIPTURE.** Our Saviour said: "The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment."<sup>68</sup> St. Paul says that as surely as Christ rose from the dead, so surely also shall we: "Now if Christ is preached as risen from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, neither is Christ risen, and if Christ is not risen, vain truly is our preaching, vain too your faith."<sup>69</sup>

**PROOF FROM TRADITION.** Abundant evidence from the Fathers is available to prove that the early Church believed in the Resurrection of the just. As to the Resurrection of the wicked, let the testimony of Tertullian suffice, who says that Christ will come in glory to reward the good and punish the wicked, "after both have risen and resumed their bodies."<sup>70</sup>

**THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION IS NOT OPPOSED TO REASON.** (1) *The Resurrection is not impossible to God's Omnipotence.* St. Cyril of Jerusalem (*d.* 386) says: "God created us out of nothing; why should he not be able to re-awaken that which is destroyed?"<sup>71</sup>—(2) *It is fitting that the good and the wicked should rise again.* Of the good, St. Irenaeus (*d.* 202) says: "How can it be asserted that the flesh which is nourished with the Body and Blood of our Lord shall not partake of His life?"<sup>72</sup>

<sup>68</sup> St. John v. 28, 29—Christ refers particularly to the resurrection of the wicked when He warns us against the tempter: "fear him that can destroy both *body* and soul in hell," (St. Matt. x. 28). Cf. *id.* v. 29; xxii. 23-32.

<sup>69</sup> 1 *Cor.* xv. 12 f.; cf. *Rom.* vi. 3 f.; viii. 11; *Acts* xvii. 18; xxiv. 15; xxvi. 8, 23.

<sup>70</sup> *De Praescript* 13.—For further evidence, see Pohle-Preuss, *Eschatology*, pp. 130, 131, 134.

<sup>71</sup> *Catech.* 18. <sup>72</sup> *Adv. Haer.* iv. 18

Of both the good and the wicked it may be argued that their bodies which in this life served as the instruments of their virtues or vices should also share in their rewards or punishments in the life to come.

**THE NATURE AND PROPERTIES OF THE RISEN BODY.**—The Church, as already stated, solemnly teaches that all men will rise from the dead in the same bodies which they had in this life. But in what sense the same? "An objection might be made," says Cardinal Newman, "that since the component particles of our body are ever changing during life, that since on death they are dissipated to the four winds, the *same* body cannot be raised; what is meant then by its being called the *same* body?"<sup>73</sup> He lets St. Paul answer who, speaking of the resurrection of the just, says: "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but bare grain as of wheat."<sup>74</sup> The Apostle compares the earthly body to a seed, the risen body to the plant that springs from it. Look at a tree with its stem, branches, foliage, flowers, and fruit. All that you behold is contained in some way in the little seed from which it grew; yet how noble is the one, how insignificant the other! The tree is the same as the seed, yet how different! Such according to St. Paul is the relation of the risen body to the natural body; it is the same body, yet how changed by the power and love of God! "It is sown," he says, "in corruption: it shall rise in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour: it shall rise in glory. It is sown in weakness: it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body: it shall rise a spiritual body."<sup>75</sup> As in this life the soul has the power of transmuting mere senseless things, food and drink, into the substance of the living man, and of making them co-operate in noble thought and action; so, at the resurrection of the just, the soul enraptured by the vision of God will have the power of transforming and ennobling the body, so that it will become a worthy associate in an infinitely higher life. The body will shed its imperfections like a husk; it will become inaccessible to pain, disease, or death; its senses and faculties will be raised to nobler

<sup>73</sup> *Lectures on Justification*, p. 211.

<sup>74</sup> *I Cor.* xv. 37.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* 42-44.—That wonderful change which the Apostle compares to the development of the plant from the seed may also be illustrated from nature's transmutation of carbon into a diamond. What once was carbon, resembling nothing better than a thimbleful of coal-dust is now a flashing gem, a Koh-i-Noor, or "Mountain of Light," fit for a royal diadem.

capacities,<sup>76</sup> and, while remaining a true body, it will be given powers which will make it resemble a spirit, it will shine for ever in beauty and radiance like the glorified Body of our Saviour,<sup>77</sup> "who," as St. Paul says, "will reform the body of our lowliness, made like to the body of His glory."<sup>78</sup> What is true of the resurrection of the just is true also, but in a very different sense, of the resurrection of the wicked. They too will rise with the same bodies they had in this life, but they will rise in dishonour. In their case, the natural body will not reveal its capacity for ennoblement but for utter degradation. Their hatred of God will manifest itself in their appearance, making them hideous and repulsive like the demons with whom they must consort for ever.

## VII

**On the Last Day Christ will Judge and Sentence all Mankind.**—It is the faith of the Church, expressed in the Apostles' Creed and other early professions of belief, that after the Resurrection Christ will judge the whole human race. Few truths are more prominently set forth in Sacred Scripture than this. Time and again the New Testament speaks of the "second coming" of Christ as the universal Judge in contrast with His "first coming" as the Redeemer.<sup>79</sup> In St. Matthew's Gospel we read His own words: "When the Son of Man shall come in His majesty, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the seat of His majesty. And all the nations shall be gathered together before Him and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats

<sup>76</sup> St. Thomas, S.T., I-II, q. 3, a. 3, interpreting St. Augustine (*ad Dioscorum*, Ep. 56— or 118— § 14) says that the full happiness of the soul will overflow to the body, perfecting the senses in their operations.

<sup>77</sup> *i.e.*, like our Saviour at the Transfiguration.—In His appearances to the Apostles after His Resurrection, He did not manifest His glory: see St. Thomas, S.T., III, q. 54, a. 3, ad. 1<sup>m</sup>. <sup>78</sup> *Phil.* iii. 21.

<sup>79</sup> See *e.g.*, *I Cor.* xv. 23; *I Thess.* ii. 19; *2 Thess.* i. 7; ii. 8; *1 Tim.* vi. 14; *2 Tim.* iv. 1.

on His left." <sup>80</sup> All that is hidden will be revealed; the deeds of every man will be made known<sup>81</sup>; and Christ will pass sentence. To the just He will say: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"; and to the wicked: "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels." Straightway the sentence will be executed: "and these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting."<sup>82</sup> The wicked shall be cast body and soul into hell and buried for ever there; the elect clothed in the glory of their resurrection shall join the company of the angels, and enter with Jesus into the eternal Kingdom of the blessed. St. John in the *Apocalypse* relating his vision of the General Judgment says: "And I saw a great white throne and One sitting upon it. . . . And I saw the dead, great and small, standing in the presence of the throne, and the books were opened; and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged by those things which were written in the books, according to their works. . . . And whosoever was not found in the book of life was cast into the pool of fire." And he was shown the home of the blessed, the City of Light: "And the city had no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God hath enlightened it, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof, and the nations shall walk in the light of it. . . . There shall not enter into it anything defiled, but they that are written in the book of life."<sup>83</sup>

**The Purpose of the General Judgment.**—The Particular Judgment will reveal to each individual the wisdom and justice of God's

<sup>80</sup> St. Matt. xxv. 31-33.

<sup>81</sup> The sins of the just will not be revealed in such a way as to cause them shame or unhappiness.

<sup>82</sup> *id. ib.* 34, 41, 46.—In all that we say here, it is well to bear in mind the consoling words of St. Thomas quoted in a previous footnote.

<sup>83</sup> *Apoc.* xx. 11-15; xxi. 23-27.

dealings with him. The General Judgment will reveal to him the wisdom and justice of God's dealings with every member of the human race. Further, it will reveal to all the majesty of Christ and the glory of the elect. On the Last Day, Christ who was once spurned by the Jews, spat upon, nailed to a cross, rejected by faithless children whom He had fed with His doctrine and helped with His graces, will appear before all mankind in the might of the Godhead, compelling every knee to bend in homage to Him. On that day also the elect will shine as the stars of heaven: they who were once belittled and despised by sinners, they who once were clothed in the infamy of their Master will now share in His triumph. The Holy Spirit declares that the wicked seeing them "shall be troubled with terrible fear, saying within themselves repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit: 'These are they whom we had some time in derision. We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honour. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot among the saints. Therefore, we have erred from the way of truth, and the light of justice hath not shined upon us, and the sun of understanding hath not risen upon us. We wearied ourselves in the way of iniquity and destruction, and have walked through hard ways, but the way of the Lord we have not known. What hath pride profited us? or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow. . . . And as a ship that passeth through the waves, whereof when it is gone by, the trace cannot be found, nor the path of its keel in the waters; so we also, being born, forthwith ceased to be, and have been able to show no mark of virtue, but are consumed in our wickedness.' Such things as these the sinners said in hell . . . for the hope of the wicked is as dust which is blown away with the wind. But the just shall live for evermore, and their reward is with the Lord, and the care of them with the Most High. Therefore shall they receive a Kingdom of glory, and a crown of beauty at the hand of the Lord."<sup>84</sup> To Him "the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever."<sup>85</sup>

*With the General Judgment the present world will come to an end.*—St. Peter says: "The day of the Lord shall come as a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with great violence, and the elements shall be melted with heat, and the earth and the works which are in it shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things are to be dissolved, what manner of people ought

<sup>84</sup> *Wisdom*, v. 2-17.

<sup>85</sup> 1 Tim. i. 17.



you to be in holy conversation and godliness?" (2 St. Peter iii. 10-11). Science admits the possibility of such a dread conflagration, and mentions many causes that may bring it to pass. Will the earth, then, be utterly destroyed? In what sense are we to interpret God's promise to "re-establish all things in Christ" (*Eph.* i. 10), to make "a new heaven and a new earth" (2 St. Peter iii. 13)? Will the earth which, as St. Anselm says, "once harboured in its bosom the Body of Our Lord," which was watered by His precious Blood and by the blood of saints, be made anew so as to be a fit residence for the innocent and the blessed? Or will all the matter of the universe be at length united, every particle of it, to living spirits, and thus actively participate in manifesting the justice and wisdom of God? These are questions which no man can answer: revelation is silent, and it is idle to speculate.

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