

"The Infallibility of the church" George Salmon

A devastating refutation of Catholic infallibility!

"Sometimes Truth makes Love hurt"

## Foreword

- Millions of human beings, hungering and thirsting after some—any— certainty in spiritual matters, have been attracted to the claim that there is but one infallible guide, the Roman Catholic Church. The claim is often made as a sharp contrast to the uncertainties and ambiguities one faces if he relies on Protestantism with its numerous conflicting and contradictory creeds.
- Salmon's *Infallibility* examines the Church Infallibility and Papal Infallibility phases of the doctrine's development. His reasoning is not vague, nor are his facts fabricated. The reading is not difficult. His arguments against Church and Papal Infallibility are simple and, to this reader, conclusive. I have had many a discussion with literate Roman Catholic friends who seemed totally taken back by the questions posed in this work.
- Kenny Chumbley has performed a real service to serious students who may have lacked access to Salmon's lectures. The reading of this summary should promote interest in the total work.
- Pat Hardeman, Ph.D.

## Introduction

- In his biography of the renown schoolman Thomas Aquinas, G. K. Chesterton noted "that we must either not argue with a man at all, or we must argue on his grounds and not ours" (St. Thomas Aquinas, 108). In *The Infallibility of the Church*, Anglican theologian George Salmon employed this principle with telling effect against the religion of Aquinas and Chesterton, Roman Catholicism. He met the Church on its own ground and used the premises of Rome to shatter the foundation of Rome—so skillfully, that the 1910 edition of *The Catholic Encyclopedia* labeled him "one of the subtlest of the recent opponents of infallibility" (VII, 794).
- *The Infallibility of the Church* originated as a series of lectures delivered by Salmon (Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, and sometime Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Dublin) to his class in the Divinity School of Dublin University. About the year 1870 he committed these speeches to writing and they have since been published in at least three editions: the original English edition, a photocopy published by James D. Bales in 1948, and a similar edition by Baker in 1959.
- For over three decades, however, *Infallibility* has been out of print. The singular aim of this booklet, is to make this unparalleled, critical examination of Catholicism available to a generation that knows not Salmon. To this end, I have condensed the 500 page original—working from the Second Edition published by John Murray, London, 1890—into a ninety-six page outline. While the topical arrangement herein is mine, the text, with minimal editing and paraphrasing, is lifted directly from Salmon's lectures. Page references are contained in brackets after each paragraph, and explanatory or extended insertions by me are in brackets. I also changed Salmon's usage of quotation marks and single

quotation marks to conform to American usage. Hopefully, this work will serve as a springboard for anyone wishing to investigate the basic premise of Roman Catholicism—Infallibility—in greater detail.

- Special thanks go to my treasured friend Pat Hardeman (Doctor of Philosophy, University of Illinois, 1956), who has lectured and debated on Roman Catholicism and who wrote the Foreword to this work; to my long time friend Stanley Paher, who advised me on the printing; and to my lovely wife Cathy, who patiently bore with me while I spent several weeks holed up in my study working on this project.

Finally, to Gary, Kelly, and Steven—God's children and mine—I dedicate this work.

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31 December 1996

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INFALLIBILITY

I. THE CATHOLIC CLAIM

The Crux of the Issue

A. The Roman Catholic controversy turns on the decision of one question—the Infallibility of the Church. [24] This is the pivot of the whole. If Catholicism cannot sustain this claim, all other claims are useless. [45]

1. Roman Catholics assume, as a self-evident truth, that God has appointed someone on earth to give infallible guidance to religious truth. [109] If they are right in this, no argument can be successfully leveled against Catholicism for if the Church is infallible, it is obvious we must be the mistaken party in any complaint or controversy we have with her. [12]

a. You would be greatly disappointed if you entered into controversial discussion with a Roman Catholic, expecting that by a few texts you could make an end of the whole matter. No one is much influenced by an authority with which he is not familiar and Roman Catholics generally are not familiar with the Bible. [12]

b. If they hear passages quoted from it in apparent contradiction with Catholic doctrine, they assure themselves you must be quoting unfairly, and that the contradiction is only apparent. For the Catholic,

the authority of the Bible rests on the higher authority of the Church and he will only accept from the Bible what has been communicated to him by the Church. [12]

2. Suppose we make what seems a convincing proof that some doctrine of the Roman Church is not contained in Scripture, what does that avail if we are forced to own that that Church has access to other sources of information besides Scripture as to the doctrine taught by our Lord and His Apostles? Suppose we even consider that we have proved a Roman doctrine to be contrary to Scripture, what does that avail if we are compelled to acknowledge that we are incompetent to decide what is Scripture or its meaning, and if it belongs to the Church of Rome alone to give us the book and to teach us its true interpretation? [17]

3. As long as anyone really believes in the infallibility of his Church, that premise immunizes him against any argument you can ply him with. But if we can strike down this one belief, the whole battle is won. [18]

Is the Church's Infallibility Self-evident?

4. In Bishop Milner's *End of Religious Controversy* (at one time viewed as the most effective book of Catholic apologetics), three maxims are laid down which, says the author, no rational Christian will dispute. First, Christ, in establishing a religion on earth to which all the nations of the earth were invited, left some rule or method by which those persons who seek for it may certainly find it. Secondly, this rule must be secure and never-failing, so as not to lead a sincere inquirer into error, impiety, or immorality. Thirdly, this rule must be universal, adapted to the abilities and circumstances of all. [79-80]

5. Milner considers and rejects two rules as not satisfying the prescribed conditions, and then arrives at what he conceives to be the only satisfactory rule—the teaching of his Church. The first rule he pronounces fallacious is "a supposed private interpretation, or an immediate light or motion of God's Spirit communicated to the individual" i.e., personal inspiration]. [80] The second rule he declares fallacious is private interpretation, wherein each man is allowed to interpret the Bible for himself. [82]

6. Milner's argument, in substance, reduces itself to this: There is an infallible guide somewhere ("a never-failing rule, which is never liable to lead a sincere inquirer into error of any kind")—no one claims to be that guide but the Church of Rome, therefore it must be she. When you ask, How do you know that there is an infallible guide somewhere? he answers, That is a proposition of which no rational Christian can doubt. [89]

7. When Catholics try to prove our need of an infallible guide, they make us think that without such help, man's attainment of religious truth is impossible. [72] The argument they rely upon to persuade men that there is an infallible guide is that it is incredible that God should leave us without sure guidance when our eternal salvation is at stake on so many issues. [97]

8. [The notion of an infallible guide appeals to many people.]

a. It relieves men of the responsibility to think for themselves [15]. The craving for an infallible guide arises from men's consciousness of the weakness of their understanding. In temporal matters we are constrained to act on our own judgment. When we have important decisions to make we often feel ourselves in great doubt and perplexity, and sometimes the decision we ultimately make turns out wrong, and we have to pay the penalty in loss or suffering. A loss, however, affecting only our temporal

interests may be borne; but it seems intolerable to men that, when their eternal interests are at stake, any doubt or uncertainty should attend their decisions, and they look for some guide who may be able to tell them, with infallible certainty, which is the right way. [47]

b. It would be so very pleasant to have a guide able to save us all trouble and risk, and to whom we might implicitly commit ourselves, that Romish advocates generally spare themselves the pains of proving that such a guide exists, and prefer to take that for granted as a thing self-evident. [170]

9. That, however, which Catholics assume as self-evident—that God has appointed someone on earth able to give infallible guidance to religious truth—admits of no proof, and is destitute of all probability. [109] Belief in an infallible Church, when not merely traditional, is the result of a process of reasoning; and, when we come to analyze that process, we shall find it be a very unsound one. [71] It is always unsafe to neglect to compare a theory with facts. [171]

### Catholicism and the Bible

B. Catholicism claims that Christ intended us to learn His religion, not from the Bible but from the Church. The first Christians, they tell us, did not learn their religion from books. There were flourishing Churches before any Book of the New Testament was written. The first Christians were taught by the living voice of apostles and evangelists and preachers. [113]

1. The Bible is said to be an inadequate rule, because there are so many differences of opinion between those who profess to follow its guidance. (Are there no differences between those who profess to follow the guidance of the Church of Rome?) [85]

2. The alternatives presented to us are—either an infallible Church, whose teaching is to be subject to no criticism and no correction, or else no Church teaching at all, each individual taking the Bible, and getting from it, by his own arbitrary interpretation, any system of doctrine he can. Reducing us to these alternatives, they have no difficulty in showing that the latter method inevitably leads to a variety of discordant error; and they conclude we are forced to fall back on the other. [109]

a. But in what subject in the world is it dreamed that we have got to choose between having infallible teachers, or having no teacher at all? God has made the world so that we cannot do without teachers, but in no secular area are our teachers infallible. [109-10]

b. We have no right to assume as self-evident that the laws which govern the communication of religious knowledge must be utterly unlike those which regulate our acquirement of every other kind of knowledge. In every other department of knowledge we must assert the necessity of human teaching; we must own that one who will not condescend to learn will be ignorant; we must hold that the learner must receive the teaching he gets with deference and submission; and yet we do not imagine that the teachers are infallible, and we maintain that the learner ought ultimately to arrive at a point when he is no longer dependent on the mere testimony of his instructors, but becomes competent to pass independent judgment on the truth of the statements made to him. [112]

c. We are ready to admit that God did not intend us, in religious matters any more than in any other, to dispense with the instruction of others. We do not imagine that God meant each man to learn his religion from the Bible without getting help from anybody else. We freely confess that we need not only the Bible, but human instruction in it. [113] But when every concession to the authority of the Church

and to the services she has rendered has been made, we come very far short of teaching her infallibility. [115]

3. If the Church is infallible, why was the Bible was given? It could not have been for the purpose of making men wise unto salvation, for the Church is supposed to do that. Conversely, it may be used by the ignorant and unstable to pervert it to their own destruction. [117]

a. If a Christian, reading the Bible for himself, puts upon it the interpretation which the Church puts upon it, he is no better off than if he had never looked at his Bible and had contented himself with the same lessons taught by the Church. [117]

b. But if he puts upon it a different interpretation from that of the Church (and if the Church be infallible, her interpretation is right and every other is wrong), then he is deeply injured by having been allowed to study for himself. Thus, if the Church is infallible, Bible reading is all risk and no gain. And so, in modern times the Church of Rome has always discouraged the reading of Scripture by her people; and if her theory be right, she has done so consistently and wisely. [117]

4. Another reason Catholicism gives for keeping back the Scriptures from common use is the claim that they are too difficult for the unlearned to understand. [120] To bolster their contention that an infallible guide is essential, they dwell much on the difficulty of understanding the Scriptures, and quote St. Peter's saying that the Scriptures contain many things difficult and "hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction." But we say that the obscurities of Scripture do not hide those vital points, the knowledge of which is necessary to salvation; and we have the authority of many ancient fathers to support us in so thinking. [90] Were the Fathers of the ancient Church afraid of their laity reading the Bible, or did they not, on the contrary, recommend and urge them to read it? [122]

a. Chrysostom: "All things are plain and simple in the Holy Scriptures; all things necessary are evident." (2 Thess., Hom. III., vol. xi., 528). "The Apostles and Prophets have made all things proceeding from them plain and evident to all; in order that each person, even by himself, may be able to learn what is said from the mere reading of it." (Hoary. III., de Laz., vol. i., 379). [90]

b. Augustine: "In like manner, God hath made the Scriptures to stoop to the capacities of babes and sucklings." (Enarr. in Psalm. viii. 8, vol. iv., 42). "Scarcely anything is drawn out from the more obscure places of Scripture which is not most plainly spoken elsewhere." (De Doct. Chr. ii. 8, vol. iii., 22). [90]

c. When any of the early Fathers has occasion to make an enumeration of the truths which Christians ought to know, he usually contents himself with a summary of doctrines nearly identical with that contained in the Apostles' Creed, all the Articles of which contain truths that lie on the very surface of Scripture, and do not require any laborious investigation of texts in order to arrive at them. [90-91]

5. Historically, Catholicism discouraged Bible reading by the laity for a very good reason: they knew some were likely to be struck by the fact that the system of the NT is very unlike that of modern Romanism. [Though opposition to reading the Bible has moderated,] the fourth Rule of the Congregation of the Index of Prohibited Books, approved by Pope Pius IV, only allowed Bible reading in the vernacular subject to the following constraints: "Since it is manifest by experience that if the Holy Bible in the vulgar tongue be suffered to be read everywhere without distinction, more evil than good arises, let the judgment of the bishop or inquisitor be abided by in this respect; so that, after consulting

with the parish priest or the confessor, they may grant permission to read translations of the Scriptures made by Catholic writers, to those whom they understand to be able to receive no harm, but an increase of faith and piety, from such reading: which faculty let them have in writing. But whosoever shall presume to read these Bibles, or have them in possession without such faculty, shall not be capable of receiving absolution of their sins, unless they have first given up the Bible to the ordinary." [123]

6. The Council of Trent ordained that no one, leaning on his own understanding shall dare, wresting Scripture to his own sense, interpret it contrary to that sense which has been and is held by the Holy Mother Church, whose province it is to judge concerning the true sense and interpretation of Scripture, or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers. Accordingly, the Creed of Pius IV requires all who subscribe it to promise: "I admit Holy Scripture according to that sense which has been and is held by Holy Mother Church, whose province it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of Scripture"; and, further, to say: "Nor will I ever receive or interpret it except according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers." [1281]

a. This decision stands in stark contrast to the practice of the Latin Fathers, who, far from desiring to check the study of the Scriptures, placed them in the hands of the people and encouraged them to read them. The existence of the Latin translation, dating from an early part of the second century, is evidence enough of this fact. For whose benefit can we suppose that this translation was made? The knowledge of Greek was then the accomplishment of every educated Roman. It would have been far harder then to find a Roman gentleman who did not understand Greek than it would be now to find an English gentleman who does not know either Latin or French. The Bible was translated into Latin, because the Latin Church, in those days, wished that not merely the wealthy, and the highly educated, but that all her members should have access to the oracles of truth, and be able to consult them for themselves. [118]

b. Despite her arguments on the differences of opinion and the difficulty of Scripture, the real reason Rome discouraged Bible reading is that she knew students of the Bible would soon note that the system of the NT is very unlike modern Romanism. [123] The Church of Rome, therefore, has been against the study of the Scriptures, because she knew the Scriptures were against her. [1 1-12]

#### Catholicism and Tradition

C. It used to be the boast of Romish advocates that the teaching of their Church was unchangeable. [19] Our Church, they said, ever teaches the same doctrine which has been handed down from the Apostles, and has since been taught "everywhere, always, and by all." [20] We have a right to ask, If the Church learned that doctrine by tradition, where has that tradition been recorded? Who are the ancient authors that mention it? If the thing has been handed down from the Apostles the Church of the first centuries must have believed or practiced it: let us inquire, as we should in the case of any other historical question, whether she did or not. [29]

1. Rome's contention on her unchangeableness fell into disrepute when the Bible became accessible to the common people. When, by means of translations printed in the vulgar languages of Europe, a knowledge of the New Testament became general, men began to notice that the Christianity then taught by the Church was a very different thing from that which was preached by the Apostles, and that a host of doctrines were taught as necessary to salvation by the modern church, of which, as far as could be learned from the Bible, the early Church knew nothing. [28] To refute the claim that Catholicism had

never changed, it was a simple matter to compare the doctrine of the Church of Rome with that taught in the Church of early times and show, by historical proof, that change had occurred. [20]

2. When discrepancies between Catholic doctrine and Scripture became apparent, Catholic apologists stopped insisting that the doctrines of the Church could be deduced from Scripture and revived the theory of some early heretics, refuted by Irenaeus, that the Bible does not contain the whole of God's revelation and that a body of traditional doctrine existed in the Church equally deserving of veneration. [28] When it was pointed out that things were taught in the Roman Church for which the Bible furnished no adequate justification, Roman advocates insisted that though the Bible contained truth, it did not contain the whole truth, and that the Church was able by them to supplement the deficiencies of Scripture, having in those traditions a secure record of apostolic teaching on many points on which the Bible contained only obscure indications, or gave no information at all. [28-291]

a. "When they [the Valentinian heretics] are confuted from the Scriptures they turn round and accuse these same Scriptures as if they were not correct, nor of authority, for that they are ambiguously worded, and that the truth cannot be discovered from them by those who are ignorant of tradition. For they say that the truth was not delivered in writing but viva voce; wherefore Paul also declared 'We speak wisdom among them that are perfect, but not the wisdom of this world.'" (Irene us iii.c.2.) [28]

b. To make the analogy complete, Irenaeus goes on to complain that when the Church met these heretics on their own ground of tradition, then they had recourse to a theory of development claiming to be then in possession of purer doctrine than that which the Apostles had been content to teach. [28]

3. Unable to sustain their doctrines in Scripture, Catholicism turned to tradition. It was still maintained that the teaching of the Church had never varied, but it was explained that though her present teaching might not be found in Scripture, tradition would prove that the Church taught now what she had taught from the beginning. The Council of Trent, in the celebrated decree passed in its fourth Session, clearly affirmed that all saving truth and moral discipline had been delivered either by Christ or by His inspired Apostles, and had been handed down either in Scripture, or in continuous unwritten tradition; and the Council, in particular decrees passed subsequently, claimed its teaching to have been what the Church had always taught. [33]

a. The principle of Trent was that the saving truth, communicated by Christ and His Apostles, is contained in the written books and in unwritten traditions, and that equal piety and reverence is to be given to the books of the Bible and to those traditions. [126] The principle of the perfect equality of Scripture and tradition, as a means of proving doctrine, runs through the decrees of Trent. Very frequently, indeed, when Scripture proof can be had, it is gladly cited; but tradition is freely used to supplement the silence of Scripture, or to interpret its obscurities. [127]

b. As Bellarmine states the matter, the rule of faith is the Word of God; but that word may be either written or unwritten. When we say unwritten, we do not mean that it is nowhere written, but only that it was not written down by its first announcers. To the first generation of Christians, the Gospel revelation was equally authoritative, whether it was announced to them by the Apostle's spoken words or by their written letters; and so to every succeeding generation it makes no difference whether the Word of God which comes to them be written or unwritten. [126]

c. After Trent it was admitted that certain things taught and practiced in Catholicism were without Biblical justification. But it was insisted that though the Bible contained truth, it did not contain the whole truth, and that the Church was able by her traditions to supplement the deficiencies of Scripture, having in those traditions a secure record of apostolic teaching on many points on which the Bible contained only obscure indications, or gave no information at all. [29]

1). Bellarmine gave as a rule for knowing whether or not the proof of a Church doctrine rested on tradition, that if a doctrine taught by the Church could not be proved by Scripture, it must be proved by tradition for the Church could not teach wrong; and so the doctrine must be proved either in the one way or the other. [29]

2). Bishop Milner, in *The End of Religious Controversy*, writes: "It is a fundamental maxim never to admit any tenet but such as is believed by all the bishops, and was believed by their predecessors up to the Apostles themselves." "The constant language of the Church is *nil innovetur, nil nisi quod traditum est*. Such and such is the sense of Scripture, such and such is the doctrine of her predecessors, the Pastors of the Church, since the time of the Apostles." [33-34]

3). Dr. Wiseman: "No new doctrine can be introduced into the Church, but that every doctrine which we hold has existed and been taught in it ever since the time of the Apostles, having been handed down by them to their successors." (*Moorfield Lectures*, i. 60, 1847). [34]

4). Bossuet reiterated that the faith of the Church, being a Divine work, had its perfection from the first, and had never varied; and that the Church never pronounced any judgments, except by way of propounding the faith of the past (*Primier avertissement aux Protestants*), [36-37]

5). The true hermeneutical rule, according to Milner, is: "the Word of God at large, whether written in the Bible or handed down from the Apostles in continual succession by the Catholic Church, and as it is understood and explained by the Church"; or, stated another way: "Besides their rule of faith, which is Scripture and tradition, Catholics acknowledge an unerring judge of controversy, or sure guide in all matters relating to religion, namely, the Church." [129]

4. To summarize, the Catholic church maintains that her doctrines are not to be rejected because they are not found in Scripture, inasmuch as she has other ways of coming by them. It would be a mistake, however, if you thought she meant to offer you any historical proof by uninspired testimony for the Apostolic origin of her doctrines not found in Scripture. If the Church condescends to offer proofs of her doctrines, she claims to be the sole judge whether what she offers are proofs or not. If she presents a Scripture proof, she claims to be the sole interpreter of Scripture; and she requires you to believe, on her word, not only that the doctrine in question is true, but also that it is taught in the passage of Scripture which she alleges in support of it. [128] If she asserts that she had received a doctrine by tradition, you are bound to believe it has been continuously held in the Church from the first, even though there may not be a particle of historic evidence to justify the assertion. [128]

#### The Inadequacy of Tradition

5. Originally, Catholic controversialists began by taking Scripture as their guide; then, when practices were found current which could not be defended out of the Bible, tradition was invoked to supplement the deficiencies of Scripture. [130]

a. But there is ambiguity about the word tradition. Bellarmine divides tradition into Divine, Apostolical, and Ecclesiastical. Divine traditions are things ordained by Christ Himself. Such for example, he says, are the matter and form of the Sacraments, because that it is certain that Sacraments could only be instituted by Christ Himself. Apostolic traditions are things ordained or taught by the Apostles under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and by them handed down to the Church. Ecclesiastical traditions are ancient customs of the Church, which, however instituted at first, have, by length of custom, the force of laws of the Church. Such traditions, says Bellarmine, are the observance of Easter and Whitsuntide, the custom of mixing water with the Eucharistic wine, the habit of making the sign of the Cross. [140-411]

b. To know which traditions contain saving truth and moral teaching is virtually impossible. There is no difficulty in an individual using Scripture as his rule of faith; for he can learn without much difficulty what the statements of the Bible are on any subject, and on most subjects these statements are easily understood. But if it were certain that Apostolic traditions independent of the Bible existed, it is next to impossible for the individual to find them with any certainty. If he has to search for them in the writings of Fathers, the canons of Councils, the decrees of Pope, the magnitude of the mass in which he has to search is enough to deter him from making the attempt. [ 13 1 ]

c. The Abbe' Migne, in the prospectus to his edition of the Fathers, tells us that he has formed one unique and admirable work, the materials which he had to gather being often fragments and small works without number, scattered here and there, and some of them unedited, drawn from books and manuscripts belonging to all places, all ages and languages, and now for the first time united in his library. [131]

1). And what is the size of this convenient compilation? The Latin Fathers form two hundred and twenty-two thick volumes; the Greek, one hundred and sixty-seven. But this is only Fathers: if you want the proceedings of Councils, the decrees of Popes, &c., you must search for them elsewhere. [131]

2). And then, when we search for Apostolical traditions in the writings of the Fathers, there is nothing to mark their Apostolic origin. We have no certain means, by our own ingenuity, of distinguishing true from false traditions: not one of the Fathers is recognized as singly a trustworthy guide: every one of them is admitted to have held some views which cannot be safely followed. [131]

6. Despite her professed reverence for tradition, it is a fact that certain practices of the Catholic Church cannot be found in tradition, and some are contrary to the tradition that survives. The Church of Rome acknowledges that it can, for reasons which to her seem good, depart from tradition, even when the tradition is of the most venerable antiquity. For example: she withholds the cup from the laity, even though she acknowledges that the Sacrament, on its first institution, was administered in both kinds, and that this mode of administration continued in the Church for many ages. [141]

a. Tertullian's treatise, *De Gona Militis*, contains a list of early Church customs for which no Scripture authority can be given. The occasion of it was that Tertullian—whose turn of mind led him, whenever a question was raised as to what was permissible to a Christian, to take what we may call a puritanically struck view—had pronounced it unlawful for Christians to wear a flower crown, as the heathens did, on occasions of rejoicing. It shows the feeling of the Church of the time on the sufficiency of Scripture that, whenever Tertullian puts forward any of these severe rules, he has always to meet the objection, Can you show from Scripture that what you condemn is wrong? On other occasions he makes some attempt to satisfy the demand. Here Scripture proof fails him, and he has to take his stand on the custom of the

Church, which forbade the wearing of such wreaths; and this leads him to instance a number of practices which have no authority but Church usage. It is an argument a fortiori in favor of our rule of requiring Scripture proof for Divine or Apostolic traditions, that in the early Church such proof was demanded even for Ecclesiastical traditions. [142]

b. Another instance in which Catholicism departs from tradition involves a matter wherein we are willing to allow the question concerning Scripture and tradition to be determined by tradition alone; for, if anything can be established by tradition, there is a clear and full tradition to prove that the Scriptures are a full and perfect rule of faith; that they contain the whole Word of God; and that what is outside of them need not be regarded. The second part of Taylor's Dissuasive contains a complete catena of Fathers establishing by their consent this principle, which no Father denies. There is no Roman Catholic doctrine disputed by us for which anything like so complete a tradition can be cited. [143]

c. St. Basil: "Without doubt it is a most manifest fall from faith, and a . . . certain sign of pride, to introduce anything that is not written in the Scriptures, our blessed Saviour having said, 'My sheep hear My voice, and the voice of strangers they will not hear'; and to detract from Scripture, or to add anything to the faith that is not there, is most manifestly forbidden by the Apostle saying, 'If it be but a man's testament, no man addeth thereto.'" [1431]

d. In the same context Basil declares that he will only sparingly employ any words which, though they express the doctrine of Scripture, are not found in Scripture itself. He said that the first duty of hearers is "Those who are instructed in the Scriptures ought to test the things that are said by their teachers, and to receive what agrees with the Scriptures, and to reject what disagrees." He established this caution by the texts, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any Gospel to you besides that ye have received, let him be anathema"—a text, I may observe, forcibly used for the same purpose by St. Augustine. (Cont. litt. Petilani, III. 6, vol. ix. 301.) [143-441]

e. St. Cyprian opposed the then existing custom of the Church which acknowledged the validity of baptism conferred by heretics, contending that the claims of custom must give way to those of truth. He was resisted by Stephen, Bishop of Rome, who, in the vehemence of his opposition, transgressed all the bounds of charity, and proceeded so far as to excommunicate those who differed from him. Now, the question is, not who was right, but what were the principles on which the Fathers of the Church argued. Cyprian writes to another bishop, "I have sent you a copy of the answer which . . . Stephen has sent to our letter, on reading which you will mark the error of him who endeavors to maintain the cause of heretics against the Church of God; for, among other things, either insolent or irrelevant, or self-contradictory, which he has rashly and thoughtlessly written, he has added this: 'if anyone come to us from any heresy whatever, let no innovation be made on the tradition that hands be laid on him unto repentance.'" "No innovation on the tradition," cries St. Cyprian. "Whence comes that tradition? Does it descend from the authority of our Lord and the Gospel? Does it come from the command and Epistles of the Apostles? God testifies that we must do the things that are written, saying to Joshua, 'the Book of the law shall not depart from thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate in it day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all that is written in it.' Likewise, the Lord, when He sent His Apostles, commanded them to baptize all nations, and to teach them to observe whatsoever He commanded. If, therefore, it is commanded, either in the Gospels, or in the Apostolic Epistles, or in the Acts, that those coming from any heresy should not be baptized, but only hands laid on them, then this is a Divine tradition, and let it be observed; but if in these books heretics are called nothing but adversaries and anti-Christ; if we are

told to avoid them as perverse and self-condemned, why should we not condemn those who, the Apostle witnesses, are self-condemned?" Plainly, Cyprian maintained that the way to find out what traditions are genuine is not to take the word of the Bishop of Rome, but to search the Scriptures as the only trustworthy record of Apostolic tradition. [ 145]

7. It is quite a delusion, therefore, to represent Catholicism as resting on trustworthy tradition. We are not permitted to apply a historical test to her teaching: on the contrary, the teaching of the Church of the present day is made the test of traditions. If any sayings of ancient writers are brought forward, as contravening that teaching, they are set aside as false traditions. [132]

a. On the question of heretical baptism we have, as often happens, Father opposed to Father. [146]

b. Augustine differed from Cyprian in not thinking Scripture proof to be necessary in order to show a custom to be Apostolical. He thought, on the contrary, that the existence in the Church, from time immemorial, of a custom the origin of which could not be traced to the decree of a Council, or in any other such way accounted for, afforded a reasonable presumption the custom was Apostolical. [146]

c. You may take it as a general rule that there is not a Father who, if his own belief is demanded for something not contained in Scripture which he is not disposed to accept, will reply as St. Jerome: "This, because it has not authority from the Scriptures, is with the same easiness despised as approved." (In. Matth. xxiii.35.) "As we accept those things that are written, so we reject those things that are not written." (Adv. Helvid.) "These things which they invent, as if by Apostolic tradition, without the authority of Scripture, the sword of God smites." (In Aggari Proph. cap. i. II.). 1147]

d. There is a point on which all the Fathers are agreed, namely, the infinite superiority of Scripture to every other source of proof. [146] You will see, then, that if we were at the desire of the Romish advocates to leave the Scriptures and resort to the Fathers of the early Church for a decision of our controversies, these very Fathers would send us back to the Scriptures as the only guide to truth, the only safeguard against heresy. [147]

8. The appeal to tradition by Roman Catholics means no more than this: that there are doctrines taught by the Church of Rome which, it must be acknowledged, cannot be found in Scripture, and which she is unwilling to own that she invented, or to pretend that they were made known to her by a new revelation. It remains, then, that she must have received them by tradition. But the baselessness of this presence appears when we come to look into the testimony of antiquity with respect to each of the peculiar doctrines of Romanism. For tradition is a thing which must be the purer the further we trace it back. The Church may get a new revelation but it cannot get a new tradition. [1331]

a. We know, from the confession of Bishop Milner and others, that fifty years ago the Roman Church knew nothing certain, either by Scripture or tradition, as to whether or not the Virgin Mary was conceived without sin. Well, then, it is clear that if that Church has attained to certainty on this subject since, it was not by tradition she attained it. [133]

b. In like manner, when Augustine hears the idea suggested that, as the sins of good men cause them suffering in this world, so they may also to a certain degree in the next, he says that he will not venture to say that nothing of the kind can occur, for perhaps it may. (De Civ. Dei, xxx. 26.) Well, if the idea of purgatory had not got beyond a "perhaps" at the beginning of the fifth century, we are safe in saying

that it was not by tradition that the later Church arrived at certainty on the subject; for if the Church had any tradition in the time of Augustine, that great Father would have known it. [ 133-34]

c. Tradition, as it were, hangs by a chain from the Apostolic Church, and when one part of the chain snaps, down comes all that is below it. When once it is proved that the Church at any period was ignorant of a doctrine, there can be no presence that the Church, at any subsequent period derived its knowledge of that doctrine from Apostolic tradition. [134]

d. I quoted Bellarmine, as teaching that in calling one part of the Word of God "unwritten," he does not mean that it is nowhere written, but only that it was not written down by its first authors. Yet, if you ask how late are we to go down: when did some one or other of the Fathers complete the task of committing all these traditions to writing? you can get no distinct answer. The Roman authorities will not even pledge themselves that every tradition of the Church is committed to writing at this moment; and with good reason, for if they once closed the account it might be an inconvenient check to new developments. [134]

9. If I am asked why I do not appeal to traditions, independent of Scripture, as evidence of the true Christian doctrine, I am content to answer, Because I see no historical evidence that there are any such trustworthy traditions. Roman Catholics say, You receive the New Testament on the authority of tradition; why do you not receive other things which come to us on the same authority? I answer, that I am willing to receive anything else that comes on the same authority. Produce me as strong testimony in favour of any doctrine not contained in Scripture, as that which proves the Books of the New Testament to have been written by the Apostles or by their contemporary fellow-labourers, and I will receive it. The fact is, the evidence on which we believe that the Epistle to the Galatians was written by St. Paul is far stronger than that on which we believe the AEnid to have been the work of Virgil. For any saying, or action, or doctrine of our Lord, not contained in the Bible, there really is not as much evidence as the editor of a respectable newspaper requires before he admits an announcement into his columns. Indeed, when we search for the early history of the Christian Church it is remarkable what a break occurs after the NT history, and before we come to other trustworthy records of much historical value. In the age which immediately succeeded the Apostles there were but few writers, and what remains to us of their compositions adds, I may say, nothing to what the New Testament has told us. When we come lower down the remains of antiquity increase, but there is a singular absence of trustworthy traditional information. [135]

10. It is certain, however, that the early Christian writers appear to have drawn their knowledge of the facts of the Gospel history solely from the New Testament and to have been as much at a loss as we, when difficulties occurred, such as tradition might have been expected to explain. [ 135]

a. For instance, as to a fact so little likely to be forgotten as the number of years our Saviour lived on earth, and the duration of His ministry, we find very opposite statements in early Christian writers, who should have had the means of being better informed. Clement of Alexandria makes the whole duration of our Lord's ministry but one year, while Irenaeus states, not merely on the authority of John viii.5 7, but of persons who claimed to have received St. John's oral teaching, that our Saviour passed through all the stages of human life from infancy to old age. [ 135-36]

b. There is a like discrepancy as to a fact one would think tradition might have preserved—the personal appearance of our Saviour (opposite opinions were held). Such a question as whether Matthew wrote in

Hebrew or Greek appears to be not settled by tradition. Hermas appears to have been recognized as a prophet at Rome, and his book, called "The Shepherd" was admitted to the public reading of many Churches. Yet even in Rome itself in less than a hundred years it was quite forgotten who Hermas was, while in foreign Churches the wildest guesses were made on the subject. The Roman Church does not even give a unanimous account as to the names and order of its first bishops. The Epistle of Clement gained much celebrity; but what order this Clement held in the series of Roman bishops is disputed to this day. [136-37]

c. In the third century learned men appear to have been in the same position as we when called on to reconcile the tradition that Paul wrote Hebrews with the absence of his name and the difference of style from his acknowledged letters. They tried to solve the question by sagacious conjecture, but to have been quite without historical testimony. [137]

d. The reason we do not use traditions as well as Scripture in the proof of Christian doctrine, is that we do not know of any trustworthy enough; and what we have seen of the failure of tradition proves to us that there were good reasons why God should have granted us in Scripture a more secure channel for conveying Christian truth. [137]

e. But if it is alleged that it can be established by uninspired testimony that any doctrine not contained in Scripture is part of the Christian scheme, let the evidence be produced, and we are willing to consider it. [138]

#### Catholicism and the Doctrine of Development

D. Roman Catholic controversialists originally began by taking Scripture as their guide; then, when practices were found current which could not be defended out of the Bible, tradition was invoked to supplement the deficiencies of Scripture. Last of all, when no proof could be made out either from Scripture or antiquity for Roman Catholic doctrines and practices, the authority of the Church was introduced to silence all objections. [130]

1. One of the best examples of a Catholic doctrine that is foreign to Scripture and tradition is the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

a. Abundant proof that this dogma had been no part of the faith of the Church, was furnished by von Dollinger, reputed to be the most learned man in Catholicism, and amongst others by two Munich professors, who, under the name of Janus, published a work containing a mass of historical proofs of the novelty of the proposed decrees. These arguments were urged by able bishops at the Vatican Council itself. But the Pope carried out his project in the teeth of historical demonstration. A few of the most learned of the protesters against the new dogma refused to recognize the doctrine thus defined as that of the Catholic Church, and formed a schism, calling themselves "Old Catholics." But the bulk of the people had no inclination to trouble themselves with historical investigations, and accepted, without inquiry, what their rulers were pleased to offer them; and a number of the eminent men, who had not only denied the truth of the new dogma, but had proved its falsity to the satisfaction of every reasoning man, finding no other choice open to them, unless they abandoned every theory as to the infallibility of the Church which they had previously maintained, and unless they joined a schism which, as was foreseen at the time, and as the event proved, would be insignificant in numbers, preferred to eat their

words, and to profess faith in what it is difficult to understand how they could in their hearts have had any real belief. [23]

b. Another example of a teaching unknown to Scripture or tradition is that of Transubstantiation. It was built up in the middle ages, and founded on a scholastic theory of substance and accidents which modern philosophy rejects. [401]

2. Since the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was a complete novelty, unknown to early times, and, when first put forward, condemned by some of the most esteemed teachers of the Church, [21 ], a new hermeneutic had to be devised to justify it. That hermeneutic (popularized by Dr. Newman, but anticipated by the German theologian Mithler in his work Symbolik), [31] became known as "the doctrine of development."

a. This hermeneutic contended that Christ had committed to His Church certain seeds and germs of truth, destined afterwards to expand to definite forms; that He did not intend that the teaching of His Church should be always the same; but ordained that it should go on continually improving under the guidance of His Holy Spirit. [31]

b. In adopting this theory, Roman apologists exchanged tradition, which their predecessors had made the basis of their system, for a new foundation of development. [31 ]

c. As it applied to the Immaculate Conception, the doctrine of development argued that the later Church was entitled to draw out by legitimate inference all it could discover "of the intimate relation that existed between the Blessed Virgin and the human nature of our Lord," even though the earlier Church had been blind to such inferences. [33]

3. Things long denied by Catholic advocates, viz., the gradual growth and alteration of doctrine, are now generally admitted by them on the basis of the doctrine of development. This claims a power for the Church, not indeed of publishing revelations of totally new doctrine, and proposing them for articles of faith, but of developing old doctrines, and drawing from them consequences unsuspected by those who held them in former generations. [275]

#### Tradition Obviated By Development

E. A consequence of the doctrine of development is that it rendered tradition—the writings of the Fathers—obsolete. Their teaching, judged by the standard of the present day, might be defective, and even erroneous. In point of fact, there is scarcely one of the Fathers who does not occasionally come into collision with modern Roman teaching, and for whom it is not necessary to find apologies. [35]

1. Roman Catholic divines once battled on the field of history, attempting to maintain that the teaching of the Church of the present day agrees with the Church of early times: not indeed in form, but at least in suchwise that the former contains the germ of the latter. Now, the idea of testing the teaching of the Church of the present day, by comparison either with Scripture or antiquity, is completely abandoned. According to Cardinal Manning it is a matter of unimportance how the Church is to be reconciled with Scripture or antiquity, when once you understand that the Church is the living voice of the same Being who inspired Scripture, and who taught the ancient Church. [43]

2. Manning says the appeal to antiquity is treason and heresy. It is treason, because it rejects the Divine voice of the Church at this hour; and heresy, because it denies that voice to be divine (Temporal Mission

of the Holy Ghost, 226). According to Manning's theory, we are to accept whatever the present Church teaches, and to be sure that, however opposed this may seem to what we find in Scripture or antiquity, we need not trouble ourselves about the matter, and that the opposition can only be apparent. [43]

a. Development sets aside completely the old Roman Catholic rule of Scripture and tradition. It gives up tradition; and it must in consistency abandon as completely irrational that respect for the Fathers which even still distinguishes uneducated Romanists from uneducated Protestants. [275]

b. If in the theory of Development the Fathers lose all claims to respect, it is still worse with Scripture: the Fathers may have been but children, but the Apostles were only infants. They lived when the Church had but just come into being, and before it had learned all that the Holy Spirit has taught it in the course of nineteen centuries. If so, it ought to be only for curiosity that we need look into books written in the very infancy of the church; and to seek for our system of Christian doctrine in the Bible would be as absurd as to try to learn the differential calculus from the writings of Archimedes. In other words, the theory of Development, as taught by Cardinal Newman, substantially abandons the claims of Christianity to be regarded as a supernatural revelation which is likely to be preserved in most purity by those who lived nearest to the times when it was given. [276]

#### The Doctrine of Development Rests Upon Infallibility

3. When the Romanist is asked how they know that doctrines found neither in Scripture nor tradition have been correctly developed (inferred) from the "seeds and germs of truth," he answers, The Church of Rome is infallible; she alone has been commissioned to develop doctrine the right way. Let the Romanist prove that, and he may use the doctrine of Development, if he then cares to do so; but it is quite plain that without the doctrine of Roman Infallibility, the doctrine of Development is perfectly useless to a Romish advocate. [421]

a. The Romish champions, beaten out of the open field, have shut themselves up in this fortress of Infallibility, where, as long as their citadel remains untaken, they can defy all assaults. Confute them by any arguments you please, and they can still reply, "The Church has said otherwise," and there is an end of the matter. [46]

b. The function of the Church, in the latest form of Romanism, is made to be not so much to guard and hand down securely an original revelation as to be a perpetual organ for making new revelations. (In theory the power of making new revelations is disclaimed, but in practice there is no scruple about calling on the Church to believe new truths: that is, to accept as true things previously disputed or unknown; and the claims of theory are supposed to be satisfied by asserting, often in direct opposition to evidence, that the revelation was not new, for that the Church had always believed in accordance with the new ruling.) [44]

c. The present Roman Catholic position on development is one taken up in desperation by men who have been driven from every other. [44]

#### The Development of Infallibility—General Councils

F. It is necessary to give some examination to the claims of Councils, because it was to these venerable bodies that the attribute of infallibility first attached itself. [282]

1. LOCAL COUNCILS took their origin almost inevitably from the fact that Christian Churches in different towns regarded themselves as all belonging to one great society. In apostolic times a Church would separate from her communion a member who had disgraced himself by immorality of a scandalous kind; so in like manner would one be rejected who denied the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. In modern times excommunication has ceased to be an effective penalty, on account of the want of harmonious action between the different bodies into which Christendom is divided. If a man is put out of communion by one body, he finds quite a welcome reception in another. It was not so in the early Church. A Christian migrating from one town to another had only to take with him credentials from his original Church, and he was received on equal terms in his new abode. But one whom his own Church censured found the doors of early Churches also closed to him until those censures had been withdrawn. This mutual recognition of each other's acts made it necessary that one Church should be permitted to review the acts of another. If a bishop were arbitrary and wrong-headed, and excommunicated an innocent man, it were surely unreasonable if no redress were possible; and a Church could scarcely insist on keeping out of communion a man elsewhere condemned for false doctrine, without investigating his case, if he protested that he was perfectly orthodox, and that it was the bishop who had censured him whose views were eccentric. It was the review of excommunications for ratification or rejection which constituted the chief business of the Councils of neighbouring bishops, which we know to have met periodically in very early times. [282-83]

2. GENERAL COUNCILS. Those who took part in the early Councils were men of like passions with ourselves. Many, I doubt not, were learned and wise men. When they met together there was good reason for thinking that the blessing of God would rest on their deliberations. Yet even the most venerable assembly of former times consisted of imperfect men, who were collectively as well as individually fallible. [283-85] Belief in the infallibility of Councils can hardly be held by anyone who has studied the history of Councils, and who knows anything of their violence and party spirit, and of the bad arguments on the strength of which many of their infallible conclusions were arrived at. Any proofs of these that I can lay before you could scarcely establish more than is acknowledged by Romanist writers. [286-87]

a. THE NICENE COUNCIL [325 AD]. Constantine, at the time not a baptized Christian, and as a politician anxious above everything for the peace of his Empire...devised the magnificent plan of assembling all the bishops of Christendom, and obtaining their verdict on the Arian dispute. Peace would thus be restored among quarrelling bishops by a decision which no one would be so bold as to resist. [288]

1). How does the historical reason for convening the Nicene Council prove that the idea of the infallibility of the Bishop of Rome had not then entered any Eastern person's head? If to consult the Bishop of Rome would have settled the Arian controversy, his opinion could have been had with little expense or trouble. Yet the history of the next century or two presents a constant succession of councils. A heathen writer complains that the whole posting system of the empire was deranged through its being constantly occupied by bishops hastening to councils. Why, at so much cost and labour, bring a number of fallible men together, if one infallible man could have settled the whole question in his closet? [288-89]

2). Constantine clearly knew nothing of the idea that the bishop of Rome was the appointed teacher and guide of the Church; for if that had been the accepted belief of the Church of the day, the emperor could not but have heard of it; and, being most anxious to suppress controversy, and to give peace to the

Church, he would not have adopted the costly expedient of a council, but would have used the simpler method of obtaining a ruling from the bishop of Rome, if he had any reason to think that the Church would accept that ruling as decisive. The history of the Arian disputes shows that this controversy was not settled by the bishop of Rome. [425]

3). The need for a General Council shows that in the fourth century a "decision at Rome" was not sufficient to secure the "assent to it of the Catholic world." Constantine had experience in the case of the Donatist controversy that the decision of the Roman bishop would not be accepted as final. Nor can I find any trace that at this stage the Pope was consulted at all. Certainly there is no foundation for what is asserted by a few of the less scrupulous Romanists, that it was the Pope who summoned the Nicene Council. The bringing it together was entirely the Emperor's idea. 1289]

4). Arius had less than a score of bishops take his side at Nicaea; and we might imagine that after he had been condemned by an assembly of bishops, unprecedented in numbers and weight of dignity, and after the Emperor had backed with all his might the decrees of the Council, treating Arius as no better than a heathen, and condescending even to comments on his personal appearance—it might have been expected, I say, that the heresy would be completely suppressed. Quite the contrary proved to be the case. The Church's history for the next fifty years presents a spectacle of convulsive struggling, with alternate success: Council after Council meeting; one of about twice the numbers of the Nicene setting aside its decisions; Arianism become the creed of the whole nation of the Goths. 12931

5). If any Council can claim infallible authority it is the Nicene. More than a century after its date the Council of Chalcedon declared, "We will neither allow ourselves nor others to transgress by a syllable what our fathers at Nicaea have resolved; remembering the command, 'remove not the landmarks which thy fathers have placed, for it was not they that spake there, but the Spirit of God Himself.'" A like position of honour was conceded, when time had made them venerable, to all the first four General Councils. The Emperor Justinian decreed that the decisions of these four Councils should have the force of laws, adding "we receive the dogmas of these four Synods as the sacred Scriptures." Pope Gregory the Great says that he venerates these four as the four Gospels, and describes them as the foursquare stone on which the structure of faith rests. Yet the hard struggle each of these Councils had to make, and the number of years which the struggle lasted before its decrees obtained general acceptance, show that they obtained their authority because of the truth which they declared, and it was not because of their authority that the decrees were recognized as true. [293-94]

6). The way to see whether anyone is recognized as a judge is to observe how parties behave after the judge speaks. If they go on disputing the same as before, it is plain enough that his authority is not acknowledged. The fact that we ourselves believe the doctrine of Nicaea to be true does not set aside the fact that general acknowledgment of its truth was not obtained until after hot and violent controversies, which lasted longer than the average lifetime of a man. [295]

7). It was no point of faith in the early Church to receive these Councils as infallible. Thus Augustine, reasoning with Maximinus the Arian, when the authority of the Council of Nicaea had been cited for the Homoousion, and that of Ariminum against it, says, "I must not press the authority of Nicaea against you, nor you that of Ariminum against me; I do not acknowledge the one, as you do not the other; but let us come to ground that is common to both—the testimony of the Holy Scriptures." It was not a point of faith to acknowledge the infallibility of Councils, as it is to acknowledge the authority of Scripture; but that the decisions of the Councils were received because they could be proved from Scripture. [295]

8). To the eye of a Romanist the history of the Church for the rest of the fourth century presents a scene of awful confusion; Council after Council meeting to try to settle the already settled question, throwing the Nicene Creed overboard, and attempting to improve on it. What ailed them, not to acquiesce in conclusions adopted by infallible authority? Simply that, at the time, there was no suspicion of infallibility. [302]

b. THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE [381 AD]. The second general council was only recognized as an Ecumenical Council ex post facto. Originally it was but an assembly of Eastern bishops [called to deal with the divinity of the Holy Spirit]. Rome was not represented. Nor does it seem for seventy years after its occurrence to have enjoyed the consideration of such a Council. It was the respect with which its acts were quoted at Chalcedon, in 451, which seems first to have given it that character. The history of every one of the Councils tends to support the theory that infallibility, if it exist at all, resides in the Church diffusive, not in a Council. Every one of the Councils had to struggle for its reception. When its decrees are new they have but disputed authority. When time has mellowed them, and when the results arrived at by the Council have been long accepted by the Church, then we first hear of the Council's infallibility. [296-97] On this Council of Constantinople some light is thrown by a venerable Father who was present, Gregory Nazianzen. I believe he is almost the only Father who is not accused of having sometimes in his writings fallen into doctrinal error.

1). Gregory is quoted by Browne in his Commentary on the Articles, "If I must write the truth, I am disposed to avoid every assembly of bishops; for of no synod have I seen a profitable end, but rather an addition to than a diminution of evils; for the love of strife and the thirst for superiority are beyond the power of words to express." [297]

2). The second General Council was initially presided over by Meletius, regarded by the majority of Christians at Antioch as their bishop. A rival, Paulinus, however, was recognized as bishop by a small following in Antioch and by the West (Meletius was opposed because it was thought he was an Arian; a charge that proved untrue. Though he was not acknowledged by Rome in his lifetime, he was ultimately honored by her as a saint.) Meletius died during the sitting of the Council. At this point, Gregory desired that the schism should be healed by all recognizing Paulinus as bishop. He held that the Church ought not to be divided on a merely personal question and pressed strongly the need to conciliate the West. But his counsel was unacceptable to the greater part of the assembly, who were jealous in maintaining their independence against Western attempts at domination. The sun, they said, went from the East to the West, and not from the West to the East. They saw no reason why they should yield to a small and insolent minority at Antioch. Gregory tells us that a yell, rather than a cry, broke from the assembled Episcopate and that his opponents buzzed about him like a swarm of wasps; that they cawed against him as an army of jackdaws. [298-99]

3). Gregory, on the basis of an obsolete canon, was pressed into resigning the see of Constantinople. Though indignant at his treatment, he professed himself much delighted to return to his retirement, and willing to be thrown overboard, like Jonah, if it would give peace to the Church. After his removal, he had this to say about the second General Council: "You may boldly face a lion; a leopard is a gentle beast after all; a snake may frighten you and yet flee from you: there is just one animal to be dreaded—a bad bishop." He refers to his opponents as men who had answered a summons to all the gluttons, villains, liars, false swearers, of the empire. They are "chameleons that change their colour with every stone over which they pass," "illiterate, lowborn, filled with all the pride of upstarts, fresh from the tables of

false accountants," "peasants from the plough," "unwashed blacksmiths," "deserters from the army or navy, still stinking from the holds of the ships." He further describes them as time-servers, waiting not on God, but on the rise and flow of the tide, or the straw of the wind; angry lions to the small, fawning spaniels to the great; flatterers of ladies; snuffing up the smell of good dinners; ever at the gates, not of the wise, but of the powerful; unable to speak themselves, but having sufficient sense to stop the mouths of those who can; made wild by their elevation; affecting manners not their own; the long beard, the downcast look, the head bowed, the subdued voice, the slow walk, the got-up devotee; the wisdom anywhere but in the mind. Councils, congresses, we greet afar off, from which (to use moderate terms) we have suffered many evils. I will not sit in one of these Councils of geese and cranes; I fly from every meeting of bishops; for I never saw good end of any such, nor termination, but rather an addition of evils." [300-01]

c. THE COUNCIL OF EPHESUS [431 AD]. Cyril of Alexandria presided over the third Council [which, against the Nestorians, defined that there is one person in Christ, taught that Mary is truly Mother of God, and dealt with problems of grace against Pelagius], and of all those who have been honoured with the title of saint, he is the one whose character least commands our affection. Of the qualities which go to make up our modern idea of saintliness. the only one to which Cyril can lay claim is zeal for orthodoxy. Of the non-theological virtues of meekness, kindness, equity, obedience to law, we find in him no trace. His whole career was marked by violence and bloodshed. [304] He was a bitter opponent of a greater saint than himself, St. Chrysostom. [306] It involves a degradingly low estimate of Christian character if we hold up as a model of saintly perfection one in whom history only enables us to discover the excellencies and failings of an able and successful, but violent and unscrupulous party leader. If Cyril changed his character towards the end of his life, his contemporaries do not seem to have been aware of it. Here is the language of one of them on hearing the news of his death: "At last the reproach of Israel is taken away. He is gone to vex the inhabitants of the world below with his endless dogmatism. Let everyone throw a stone on his grave, lest perchance he may make even hell too hot to hold him, and return to earth." [308] I have spoken at such length about the character of Cyril, because in truth Cyril was the third General Council. [309] If I were to say that Cyril at Ephesus was "seeking to revenge a private quarrel rather than to promote the interests of Jesus Christ," I should say no more than was said by good and impartial men at the time. "Cyril," says Newman, "came to Ephesus not to argue but to pronounce an anathema, and to get over the necessary process with as much dispatch as possible." Nothing could have been more violent and unfair than the proceedings at Ephesus. [309]

1). The Council opened in the teeth of a protest by sixty-eight bishops, because the bishop of Antioch and the bishops of the East were known to be within three days' march of Ephesus. But because these bishops were known to be likely to vote the wrong way, they were not waited for. The Council did its work in one summer's day; deposed Nestorius in his absence, and acquainted him with the fact in a letter addressed to Nestorius "the new Judas." In a few days the bishop of Antioch arrived, and then the other party held what they professed to be the real Council, and deposed Cyril. [309-10]

2). There has been a question by what kind of majority must the acts of a Council be carried in order to entitle them to bind the Church: a simple majority? or two-thirds? or more? and ought we to count heads or to take the votes by nations or in some other way? Obviously, if we count heads, the provinces close to the place at which the Council is held are likely to have a disproportionately large share of the representation. In modern times these difficulties have been avoided by requiring that the decrees of Councils shall be practically unanimous. [310]

3). Very different was the state of things at Ephesus. To quote Dr. Newman, "At Ephesus the question in dispute was settled and defined before certain constituent portions of the episcopal body had made their appearance, and this with a protest of sixty-eight of the bishops then present, against eighty-two. When the remaining forty-three arrived, these did more than protest against the definition that had been carried. They actually anathematized the Fathers who had carried it, whose number seems to have stood altogether at one hundred and twenty-four against one hundred and eleven, and in this state of disunion the Council ended. How then was its definition valid? By after events, which I suppose must be considered complements and integral portions of the Council.

4). If this be so, the infallibility clearly rested not with the Council, but with the after events, which reviewed and chose between its contradictory utterances. But what were the after events thus vaguely described? Bribery and intimidation at the imperial Court. The scene was soon transferred from Ephesus to Constantinople; and if the deposition of Nestorius had more effect in the end than the deposition of Cyril by the rival section of the Council, the result was due not to the venerable authority of the Council, but to the effect produced by the turbulent monks of Constantinople on the nerves of the emperor, who was one of the weakest of men, and to eulogiai or, in plain English, bribes judiciously administered to his favourites. At an early stage of the controversy Nestorius complained that Cyril was shooting against him with golden arrows; and when the final decision was arrived at, the clergy of Alexandria mourned at the impoverishment of their Church, which, in addition to sending large sums to Constantinople, had gone in debt 1500 pounds of gold besides. [31 1-12]

5) Cyril presided at the Council as the representative of the bishop of Rome, but was opposed on the opposite side of the issue by the bishop of Alexandria. That the bishops of Rome and Alexandria were on opposite sides makes it plain that the theory had not yet been heard of in the East which would ascribe the headship of all Councils to the bishop of Rome, present or absent. [312-13]

d. THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON [451 AD]. [The fourth General Council treated of the distinction of the two natures in Christ, against the Monophysitic Eutyches]. One of the characteristics of this council was the acclamations (interruptions) of hishops that the reporters carefully took down. [316] At Chalcedon, where, in contrast to previous councils, the proceedings were comparatively orderly, there were occasional scenes of great uproar. Thus, when the Church historian, Theodoret, whose sympathies had been with Nestorius, took his place, the Acts of the Council record that:—"The most reverend the bishops of the East shouted out: 'He is worthy. 'The most reverend the bishops of Egypt shouted out: 'Don't call him bishop, he is no bishop; turn out the fighter against God; turn out the Jew.' The most reverend the bishops of the East shouted out: 'The orthodox for the Synod; turn out the rebels; turn out the murderers.' The most reverend the bishops of Egypt: 'Turn out the enemy of God; turn out the defamer of Christ.'" It became necessary for the Imperial Commissioners to suppress the clamour. 13171 Succeeding Councils have been less noisy and violent; but this has been because, as a general rule, the parties whom it was intended to condemn have not been allowed to be present, and the Council has only represented one side. [318]

1) If you take up the Acts of the Councils predisposed to reverence their decisions as conclusions which holy men arrived at after calm and prayerful deliberation, you find, on the contrary, records of turbulent meetings, in which men who exhibited no particle of the spirit of Christianity used every effort to gain a victory over their opponents, and get them turned out of the Church. In such a case, if we accept the

conclusions arrived at as correct, it is by no means on the authority of the bodies which affirmed them. [318]

2) How little, even at the time, was the real influence of a Council is proved by the poor success of the Council of Chalcedon in putting an end to the controversy on account of which it was summoned. No Council had higher external claims on the reverence of Christians. In the number of bishops present (over 600), it exceeded any previous Council. It had all the sanction that could be given it by the bishop of Rome, Leo the Great, whose dogmatic letter it enthusiastically adopted. It was backed by all the efforts of the Emperor Marcian, whose zeal was active in extirpating the heresy which it condemned; yet, after the Council, the Monophysite heresy spread with a new growth; and in respect of the number and zeal of its adherents surpassed the opposite party. Its leaders were frequently enthroned in all the Patriarchal sees—Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem. In fact, Egypt never acquiesced in the defeat it sustained at the fourth Council. [318-19]

3). By what better criterion can we test whether a judge is recognized as having authority to decide a controversy than by observing how he is listened to when he speaks? If we find that no one assents to his decisions except those who had been of the same opinion before he spoke, we may conclude that he was not owned as having authority to speak; and if the Council of Chalcedon was not entitled to impose its decisions without examination on the Christian world, I do not see how such a claim can be made for any other Council. [319]

e. THE SECOND COUNCIL OF NICAEEA [787 AD]. I have already referred to discredit thrown on Councils by the badness of the arguments by which their conclusions were arrived at, but a more plentiful crop of illustrations may be drawn from the proceedings of the seventh General Council, the second of Nicaea. The Fathers attempted to prove the propriety of image worship from Scripture; but, as if conscious that they would have no easy task, they propounded the then novel doctrine of the insufficiency of Scripture, and anathematized those who say that they will not receive any doctrine on the bare authority of Fathers and Councils, unless it be plainly taught in the Old and New Testament. Their Scripture proofs were not what would be very convincing to us. For instance, the antiquity of looking at images is proved from the Psalms, since David says, "Show me thy face;" and "Like as we have heard, so have we seen;" and again, from Canticles, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely." Should we have any hesitation in setting up our fallible judgment against that of those infallible interpreters, and in pronouncing such proofs to be texts wrested from their contexts, we need have less scruples about their proofs from antiquity, several of which are from spurious documents which no learned Roman Catholic now would venture to defend. [319-20]

f. THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE [1414-18]. The highest point, perhaps, that Councils attained was at the time of the Council of Constance. For two or three centuries the power of the Popes had been steadily growing, until first, by their removal to Avignon and their subjugation to French influence, then by the schism in the Papacy, their authority was greatly weakened. The schism made it necessary that there should be some superior authority to determine who really was Pope: or rather that was not enough, for though Christendom was generally agreed in desiring that the three rival Popes should be replaced by a single Pope, the adherents of each were indisposed to admit that they had been all along in the wrong. What was needed was an authority which, if the Popes should not voluntarily resign, would be able to compel them. In order that all might acquiesce in its decisions it was necessary that it should have power to depose even a real Pope; for there were some who acknowledged each of the three as

the real Pope. This power then the Council of Constance claimed in its celebrated decree, passed without a dissentient voice, "that every lawfully convoked Ecumenical Council derives its authority immediately from Christ, and that everyone, the Pope included, is subject to it in matters of faith, in healing of schism, and the reformation of the Church." I do not say that this decision placed Councils in a higher position than they were at the time of the Council of Nicaea—for I do not imagine that the Roman prelate would have dreamed then of setting himself above the Council—but it placed them higher than they had been in the times immediately before, or than they were afterwards. For when the Council of Basle attempted to exercise, in the face of a universally acknowledged Pope, the prerogatives which the Council of Constance had claimed in the time of schism, the result was failure. [321-22]

g. THE VATICAN COUNCIL [1870]. At the Vatican Council of 1870—at which Pius IX tried to have his claim to infallibility endorsed by the Council—there was no fair representation of bishops. In the first place, the assembly included some three hundred titular bishops—bishops not residing over any real sees, but holding mere titles of honour given them by the Pope, or else missionary bishops deriving their titles from places where there were few or no Christian congregations. In addition, the German bishops, who constituted the main strength of the minority, complained that they were swamped by the multitude of Italian and Sicilian bishops. The twelve millions of Roman Catholics in Germany proper were represented at the Council by Fourteen bishops; the seven hundred thousand inhabitants of the Papal States by sixty-two; three bishops of the minority—Cologne, Paris, and Cambray—represented five million; and these might be outvoted by any four of the seventy Neapolitan and Sicilian bishops. The German theologians compared their learning with that of the bishops of these highly favoured localities, amongst whom a clean sweep would have been made if it had been a condition of admission to the Council that the bishop should be able to read the New Testament in its original language, or have Greek enough to be able to consult the writings of Greek Fathers or the acts of Greek Councils— a qualification without which, north of the Alps, one does not rank as a theologian. The German visitors, too, compared the activity of religious thought in the country from which they came with that in those regions which provided the predominant element at the Council. It was said, and I believe with truth, that more religious books are printed in England, or Germany, or North American in one year than in Italy in half a century. In Rome a lottery dream-book might be found in every house, but never a New Testament, and extremely seldom any religious book at all. So that it seemed as if it were a recognized principle, that the more ignorant a people, the greater must be the share of their hierarchy in the government of the Church. The minority complained that all regulations as to the transaction of business were in the hands of a committee appointed by the minority, and solely representing them, without the consent of which committee no subject could be discussed; and, indeed, it was complained at first that the bulk of the Council did not know what business was coming on. [323-24]

1). At the first meeting it was found that, owing to the bad acoustic properties of the hall in which they met, nothing could be heard; and a number of bishops, when asked to give their formal vote, "Placet" or "Non placet," answered, "Non places quia nihil intelleximus." An attempt was made to improve matters in this respect by partitioning off a portion of the room; but bad the state of things always remained. [324]

2). There must have been a difficulty in following discussions carried on in Latin—a language which all the bishops did not pronounce in the same way, and which is not so easily caught, if utterance is indistinct, as are the sounds of one's native language. It would be too much to expect of human attention to follow the speeches which were delivered, these being small treatises without any

limitation of length, read by their authors without the liveliness of spoken speech, perhaps with indistinct utterance, and in a language with which the hearers were not familiar. [324-25]

3). An easy remedy for this state of things would have been if the speeches had been printed and circulated among the members of the Council, so that any could study at home what he had heard imperfectly. But here was the advantage of the Pope's holding the Council in his own city. There was no license of printing. A precis of the speaker's arguments was made for the use of an exclusive Infallibilist committee, which was to draw up the decrees of the Council. That precis the speaker was not allowed to correct, or even to see, so that if he were on the wrong side, it might be a mere caricature of his arguments which was submitted to the committee. [325]

4). About three hundred of the bishops were the Pope's pensioners, all their expenses being paid by him, and therefore could not be unbiased judges on a question concerning his prerogatives. The Pope himself had his good-humoured jokes on the numbers who had accepted his hospitality, and declared that, in trying to make him "infallible," they would make him "fallire" that is to say, make him bankrupt. [325]

5). Fifteen Cardinals' hats were vacant to reward the obedient; and, no doubt, as always happens, more were influenced by the hope of Papal favours than actually obtained them. The Pope made no secret how much he had his heart set on obtaining a declaration of his infallibility. This alone would weigh very innocently with many bishops who would shrink from displeasing a venerated superior. [326]

6). But, at the Council it was not enough to gain a majority: the minority must be reduced to complete insignificance; and this was effected when, as time went on, the summer months arrived, and the heat at Rome became unbearable—at least to a northern constitution. At first the tactics of the minority had appeared to be to lengthen out the proceedings. They made long speeches, some of them speaking out so plainly that two or three times the greatest uproar was excited. [326]

7). It became necessary for the majority to introduce what the French call the cloture: that is to say, the rule was made that, at the request of ten bishops, it should be put to the vote whether the discussion should go on any longer. And so in the first stage of the Infallibility discussion, a premature stop was put to the speech-making; and, amongst others, an able speech against Infallibility by the American bishop Kenrick was shelved. [326-27]

8). When they got into the summer months, the acclimatized Italian and Sicilian bishops could bear delay with comparative impunity; but the opponents of the dogma, who were natives of a colder climate, were one by one sickening with fever. They begged and implored that the Council might be adjourned; but the Pope and his party understood their advantage too well, and the request was sternly refused. It became evident that if the minority indulged in much speech-making, the operation of reducing their numbers could be effected in a very simple way: and so a vote was arrived at. [327]

9). But now appeared the mischief of the claim to infallibility. In our Parliament a law may be passed in the teeth of opposition, and the minority must submit and obey the law; but their thoughts and words are free: they can avow still that what has been done is opposed to their judgment. But at a Council, when a vote is arrived at, the minority are required to blot from their mind all the tricks and maneuvers, all the unworthy means by which they know their resistance has been overpowered, and to accept the vote of a majority, no matter how obtained, as the voice of the Spirit of God. The moment the decision is pronounced, they are bound not only to yield a decorous obedience, but from the bottom of their

hearts to believe that to be true which the moment before they had been protesting was false, and to publish this belief to the world. No wonder the bishops of the minority shrank from the humiliation of saying "non places" one moment, and "ex animo credo" the next. So, with two exceptions, they all ran away, leaving behind them a protest which was not regarded. [327]

10). It is plain how the chance of arriving at truth is prejudiced by the claim to infallibility. If no such claim were made, the majority would be forced to weigh the arguments of the minority, to count the risk of driving them into schism, to take care not to seem before the world to have the worst of the argument. But when infallibility is supposed to rest with the ultimate vote, the majority have no need to care about the arguments advanced. Secure a vote, no matter how, and all is gained. Thus, while there is no better way of arriving at truth than taking counsel with others, a Council which claims infallibility is a place where the wise and cautious are delivered over, bound hand and foot, to the will of a tyrant majority. [327-28]

#### The Development of Infallibility The Papacy

G. Since the Vatican Council of 1870, the theory of infallibility that is recognized exclusively by the Roman Church makes the Pope personally its organ. This theory satisfies the demands of the a priori arguments that are made to show the necessity of an infallible guide. These arguments try to show that a guide is needful to infallibly resolve every controversy as it arises, and this need can only be satisfied by a living speaking voice, not by the dead records of past Councils. The truth is, that the much desired object, of uniformity of opinion in the Church, can only be obtained, either on the terms of resolute abstinence of investigation, or else upon the terms of having an inspired teacher at hand competent to make new revelations on every desired occasion. If we adhere to the old theory, that Christ made one revelation, which it was His Church's business to preserve and teach; let that revelation have been as copious as you please, still if it is limited at all, it is of necessity that questions must arise which that revelation will not have determined; on which private judgment is therefore free, and on which, therefore, there will be difference of opinion. If such diversity of opinion is thought an evil, there must be a new revelation to supplement or explain the old one. And this necessity must go on as long as men continue to exercise their thoughts on religious subjects. [329]

I. The difficulty and inconvenience of assembling Councils is so great that the number of General Councils during the whole duration of Christendom has been comparatively few, and the likelihood that many more will be assembled is but small. The Roman theory leads you necessarily to expect a kind of incarnation of deity upon earth; one which with infallible voice will decide and silence every dispute. And if this is not to be found in the person of the Pope it is to be found nowhere else. [330]

2. The marvel is that if the Church had from the first possessed this wonderful gift it should have taken eighteen centuries to find it out. It is historically certain that in the year 1870, when it was proposed at the Vatican Council to proclaim the fact, the doctrine was opposed by a number of leading bishops; and that since the publication a number of most learned, and who up to that time had been most loyal Roman Catholics, consented to suffer excommunication rather than agree to it. And the reason for their refusal, alleged, as we shall see, with perfect truth, is that this new doctrine is utterly opposed to the facts of history. [330]

a. If, previous to the Vatican Council, the Church of Rome had known the doctrine of the Pope's personal infallibility to be true, she had, somehow or another, so neglected to teach it, that though it is a doctrine

relating to the very foundation of her religious system, her priests and bishops had been ignorant that it was any part of her teaching. [25]

b. Keenan's Catechism, published with the imprimatur of Scotch Roman Catholic bishops, contained the following question and answer—" Q. Must not Catholics believe the Pope in himself to be infallible?" "A. This is a Protestant invention: it is no article of the Catholic faith: no decision of his can oblige, under pain of heresy, unless it be received and enforced by the teaching body; that is, by the bishops of the Church." [26]

3. Though the theory is condemned by its novelty, let us not refuse to examine the grounds on which it is defended. To this end we must examine a question antecedent to that of the Pope's infallibility, viz., that of the Pope's alleged supremacy. Rome's argument is to try to show that Christ made the constitution of His Church monarchical, that He appointed Peter to be its first ruler and governor, and that He appointed, moreover, that the bishop of Rome, for the time being, should perpetually be Peter's successor in that office. Even if all these assumptions could be proved that the Pope is, by divine right, sovereign ruler of the Church, it still remains possible that in the course of his rule he may make mistakes, as earthly monarchs who reign by the most legitimate titles are liable to do. And in point of fact it is fully admitted that, in his capacity of ruler and governor, the Pope may make mistakes, and often has made very great ones. [330] Even if the Roman advocates succeed in establishing the Pope's supremacy, the task still lies before them of proving that the Pope, in his capacity of teacher, is infallible. [331]

#### The Proof texts for the Pope's Supremacy

4. Let us examine what success our opponents have in establishing the doctrine of the Pope's supremacy. The Scripture argument rests on a supposed transmission to the Pope of certain prerogatives of St. Peter. In order to make out the theory by this process four things ought to be proved—(1) that Christ gave to St. Peter a primacy over the other Apostles not merely in dignity and precedence, but in authority and jurisdiction, constituting him their guide and teacher and ruler; (2) that this prerogative was not merely personal but designed to be transmitted to successors; (3) that Peter was Bishop of Rome and continued so to his death; and (4) that those who succeeded Peter in this local office were also the inheritors of his jurisdiction over the whole Church. [331 ]

a. The Scripture proof, in the main, consists of three texts; sometimes called the three texts, viz., (1) the promise of our Lord to Peter (recorded Matt. xvi.), that upon this rock He would build His Church; (2) His promise (recorded Luke xxii.), "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren"; and (3) the commission "Feed my sheep," related in the last chapter of St. John. [332]

1). Before giving a particular examination to these texts I would remark on the general presumption against the Roman Catholic theory arising out of the whole tenor of the N.T. history, from which we should conclude that, highly as Peter was honoured, he was not placed in an office having jurisdiction over the other Apostles; for the Apostolate is ever spoken of as the highest office in the Christian Church; "God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily prophets" (1 Cor. xii.28): not, as it ought to be if the Roman theory had been true, first Peter, then the Apostles. The history related in Acts gives no trace of Peter's having exercised the prerogatives which are now attributed to him. To take a single example:—When Peter took the decisive step of eating with one uncircumcised, the Church of

Jerusalem (Acts xi.) called him sharply to account for a proceeding so repugnant to Jewish traditions; and Peter did not justify himself by pleading his possession of sovereign authority to decide the Church's action in such a matter, but by relating a special revelation sanctioning what he had done. As for the Epistles, they certainly give no support to the theory of Peter's supremacy; and in the story of Paul's resistance to Peter at Antioch they throw in its way one formidable stumbling-block. [332-33]

2). Still less is any hint given that Peter was to transmit his office to any successor. I need not say that we are not so much as told that Peter was ever at Rome. The New Testament contains two letters from Peter himself; one purporting to be written immediately before his death, and with the express object that those whom he was leaving behind should be able to keep in memory the things that it was most important for them to know (2 Pet. 1.15). We may be sure that if Peter had any privileges to bequeath he would have done so in this his last will, and that if there was to be any visible head of the Church to whom all Christians were to look for their spiritual guidance, Peter would in these letters have commended him to the reverence of his converts, and directed them implicitly to obey him. [333]

b. Let us turn now to the texts appealed to. That in St. Matthew is so familiar to you that I need not read it: but I will give you, in the words of Dr. Murray, one of the ablest of the Maynooth Professors, what this text is supposed to mean. He says, "Peter was thus established by our Lord as the means of imparting to the Church indefectibility and unity, and of permanently securing these properties to her. Peter was invested with supreme spiritual authority to legislate for the whole Church; to teach, to inspect, to judge, to proscribe erroneous doctrine, or whatever would tend to the destruction of the Church; to appoint to offices or remove therefrom, or limit or extend the jurisdiction thereof, as the safety or welfare of the Church would require: in one word, to exercise as supreme head and ruler and teacher and pastor all spiritual functions whatever that are necessary for the well-being or existence of the Church" [Irish Annual Miscellany, iii. 300.] [333]

1). It takes one's breath away to read a commentary which finds so much more in a text than lies on the surface. If our Lord meant all this, we may ask, why did He not say it? Who found out that He meant it? The Apostles did not find it out at the time; for up to the night before His death the dispute went on, which should be the greatest. When James and John petitioned that in His kingdom they might sit with Him, one on each hand, they do not seem to have suspected, and their Master then gave them no hint, that the chief place in His kingdom had already been given away. There is, as I have just pointed out, no other indication in the New Testament that the Apostolic Church so understood our Lord's words recorded by St. Matthew. [333-34]

2). It remains that this interpretation must have come from unwritten tradition. So we turn to explore the records of that tradition. Here, surely, if anywhere, we shall find that unanimous consent of the Fathers of which the Council of Trent speaks. The more important the doctrine, the greater the presumption that if true it would have been known from the first. But certainly here is a case where, if the Fathers were ever unanimous, they could not fail to be so if the Roman theory be true. This is no obscure text; no passing remark of an inspired writer; but the great charter text, which for all time fixed the constitution of the Christian Church. If, in these words, our Lord appointed a permanent ruler over His Church, the Church would from the first have resorted to that authority for guidance and for the composing of all disputes, and there never could have been any hesitation to recognize the meaning of the charter on which the authority was founded. Yet I suppose there is not a text in the whole New

Testament on which the opinion of the Fathers is so divided; and you have to come down late indeed before anyone finds the Bishop of Rome there. [334]

3). The most elaborate examination of the opinions of the Fathers is in an Epistle [Epistle vii., Opp. vol. v., pt. 2. p. 99: Geneva, 1731] by the French Roman Catholic Launoy, in which, besides the interpretation that Peter was the rock, for which he produces seventeen Patristic testimonies, he gives the interpretations that the rock was the faith which Peter confessed, supported by forty-four quotations; that the rock was Christ Himself, supported by sixteen; and that the Church was built on all the Apostles, supported by eight. [335]

4). The Jesuit Maldonatus, whose Romanism is of the most thorough-going kind, begins his commentary on this passage by saying, "There are among ancient authors some who interpret 'on this rock,' that is, 'on this faith,' or 'on this confession of faith in which thou hast called me the Son of the living God,' as Hilary, and Gregory Nyssen, and Chrysostom, and Cyril of Alexandria. St. Augustine going still further away from the true sense interprets 'on this rock,' that is, 'on myself Christ,' because Christ was the rock. But Origen 'on this rock,' on all men who have the same faith." [335]

5). Augustine is not perfectly uniform in his interpretation. In his *Retractations*, he mentions having sometimes adopted the language which St. Ambrose had used in a hymn, and which designates Peter as the rock of the Church, but most frequently he had interpreted the passage of Christ Himself, led by the texts "that rock was Christ," and "other foundation can no man lay." He leaves his readers at liberty to choose, but his mature judgment evidently inclines to the latter interpretation. He lays more stress than I am inclined to do on the distinction between Petra and Petrus. "Thou art Petrus," Christ says, "and on this Petra which thou hast confessed, saying, 'thou art Christ the Son of the living God,' will I build my Church: that is to say, on myself. I will build thee on myself, not myself on thee. Men willing to build on man said, 'I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Peter.' But others, who were unwilling to be built upon Peter, but would be built on the rock— not on Petrus but on Petra—said, I am of Christ." [335-361]

6). The mere fact that Fathers differed in opinion as to what was meant by "this rock," and that occasionally the same Father wavered in his opinion on this subject, proves that none of them regarded this text as one establishing a perpetual constitution for the Christian Church. The extract I read from St. Augustine shows plainly enough that at the beginning of the fifth century it had not been discovered that this text contained the charter of the Church's organization, the revelation of the means of imparting to her indefectibility and unity. [337]

7). We may, then, safely conclude that our Lord did not, in that address to Peter, establish a perpetual constitution for His Church. [337] If Peter were the foundation of the Church, it would have shaken immediately afterwards when our Lord said unto him: "Get thee behind me, Satan," and tottered to its base when he denied his Lord. Immediately after Peter had earned commendation by his acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah, the doctrine of a crucified Messiah was proposed to him and he rejected it. So that if the Apostles had believed that the words "On this rock I will build my Church" constituted Peter their infallible guide, the very first time they followed his guidance they would have been led into miserable error. They would have been led by him to reject the Cross, on which we rely as our atonement, and on which we place all our hope of salvation. I will not delay to speak of the latter part of the passage, because it is clear that the privileges therein spoken of are not peculiar to Peter, very similar words being used in the 18th of St. Matthew to all the Apostles. [341-42]

8). If by "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church" Peter and his successors were made the governors of the Church, to whom it was to resort for the decision of every dispute, and the solution of every problem, the other Apostles would have so understood it, at least after their minds had been enlightened by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; and they would have taught its meaning to the Churches which they founded. The whole Church would have acted on this rule from the first, and the true meaning of the text on which the rule was founded could never have been forgotten. When we find then, on the contrary, that this is a text on which the greatest diversity of interpretation prevailed among the early Fathers, that a great majority of them do not find in the text a bestowal of personal prerogatives even on Peter, and that none of them find the Bishop of Rome there, then we can confidently say that historical tradition excludes the modern Roman interpretation, because it is absolutely incredible that, if this had been the right one, it should be entirely lost and forgotten, and not recovered for four or five centuries. [156]

c. When it is pointed out that the disputes among the Apostles for precedence show that they were not aware that Peter had been made their ruler, it is answered that our Lord on the night before He was betrayed decided the subject of these disputes in His charge to Peter. [342] Our Lord's words do very strongly bring out a special gift to Peter: "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you (humas, all the Apostles) that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee (Peter) that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." But certainly no one who interpreted Scripture according to its obvious meaning could suspect that the passage contains a revelation concerning the Church's appointed guide to truth in all time. The whole passage refers, on the face of it, to the immediate danger the faith of the Apostles was in from those trials under the pressure of which they all deserted their Master. There was a special prayer for Peter because of his special danger, and we see that this prayer did not exclude a grievous fall. If no security of unbroken constancy in the faith was thereby gained to Peter, for whom the prayer was directly made, we have no ground for supposing that it had greater efficacy in the case of any alleged successors, to whom the petition can at most apply indirectly. [342-43]

1). The work of "Strengthening" his brethren, thereby committed to Peter (one to which he was peculiarly bound, whose fall had periled men's faith), was no peculiar prerogative of Peter's. The same word *sterizein* is used in three of four places in the Acts (xiv. 22; xv.32,41; xviii.23) of Paul's confirming the brethren at Antioch, of Timothy confirming the Thessalonian Church. And most remarkable of all, Paul when purposing to visit Rome, which is said to have been Peter's peculiar charge, expects that it is by his instrumentality this benefit will be conferred on the Roman Church: "I long to see you that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established eis to sterietthenai humas " (Rom. I .1 1). t3431

2). In passing, I will mention another passage (2 Cor. xi.28), where Paul shows himself strangely unconscious of Peter's prerogatives. For, having enumerated some of his labours and sufferings in the cause of the Gospel, he adds: "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh on me daily, the care of all the Churches." If, as Roman theory would have it, the care of all the Churches was Peter's province, St. Paul is most unreasonable in complaining of the trouble he had incurred through gratuitously meddling with another man's work, thus literally becoming what St. Peter himself called an *allotriosepiskopos* (I Pet. iv. 15). But Paul elsewhere (Gal. ii.8) limits Peter's province to the "Apostleship of the Circumcision," that is to say, to the superintendence of the Jewish Churches; and states that the

work of evangelizing the Gentiles had, by agreement with the three chief Apostles, been specially committed to himself and Barnabas. 1343]

3). This prayer for Peter is so clearly personal that some Roman Catholic controversialists do not rely on this passage at all. Neither can they produce any early writers who deduce from it anything in favour of the Roman See. Bellarmine can quote nothing earlier than the eleventh century, except the suspicious evidence of some Popes in their own cause, of whom the earliest to speak distinctly is Pope Agatho in his address to the sixth general council, A.D. 68(). How earlier Fathers understood the passage appears from Chrysostom's commentary, when he answers the question why Peter is especially addressed: "He said this sharply reproving him, and showing that his fall was more grievous than that of the others, and needed greater assistance." t343-441

4). It is plain that the great teachers of the Church were ignorant for hundreds of years that this text contained more than a personal promise to the Apostle about to be tried by a special temptation, and that they never found out it was a charter text revealing the constitution of the Christian Church. [345]

d. I come now to the third text, the "Feed my sheep" of John; and here too, certainly, there is no indication in the text itself that there was an appointment to an office peculiar in its kind. The office of tending Christ's sheep is certainly not peculiar to Peter. It is committed, in even more general terms, by Paul to the Ephesian elders, "Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts =.28) and by Peter himself to his fellow elders, "Feed the flock of God which is among you" (1 Pet. v.2). The sequel of the story, too, is adverse to the supposition that our Lord meant to confer on Peter the oversight of his fellow Apostles. For when he asks concerning St. John, "What shall this man do?" he receives something like a rebuke: "What is that to thee? follow thou me." I don't know any respectable Patristic authority for understanding the passage otherwise than Cyril of Alexandria does, whose commentary we may well adopt: "If anyone asks for what cause he asked Simon only, though the other disciples were present, and what he means by 'Feed my lambs,' and the like, we answer that St. Peter, with the other disciples, had been already chosen to the Apostleship, but because meanwhile Peter had fallen (for under great fear he had thrice denied the Lord), he now heals him that was sick, and exacts a threefold confession in place of his triple denial, contrasting the former with the latter, and compensating the fault with the correction." [345-46]

e. It is a useful test of interpretations of Scripture to examine into their antiquity; for there is always an immense presumption against any new-fangled interpretation. Those passages of the New Testament which Roman Catholics now adduce as establishing the Pope's supremacy were not so understood by the most ancient interpreters of Scripture. [366]

Did Peter Ever Visit Rome?

5. There is no trace that Peter ever held over the Church any official position of headship, wherein, according to Christ's intention, he was to have a successor. I go on now to consider Peter's connection with Rome, which I look on as a mere historical problem, without any doctrinal significance whatever way it may be determined. [347]

a. The generally received account among Roman Catholics, and one which can claim a long traditional acceptance, is that Peter came to Rome in the second year of Claudius (that is, A.D. 42), and that he held

the see twenty-five years, a length of episcopate never reached again until by Pío Nono, who exceeded it. [347]

b. We may conclude, with at least high probability, that Peter was not at Rome during any of the time on which the writings of the canonical Scriptures throw much light, and almost certainly that during that time he was not its bishop. We have an Epistle of Paul to the Romans full of salutations to his friends there, but no mention of their bishop. Nor is anything said of work done by Peter in founding that Church. On the contrary, it is implied that no Apostle had as yet visited it; for such is the inference from the passage already cited, in which Paul expresses his wish to see the Roman Christians in order that he might impart some spiritual gift to the end that they might be established. We have letters of Paul from Rome in which no message is sent from Peter; and in the very last of these letters Paul complains of being left alone, and that only Luke was with him. Was Peter one of the deserters? The Scripture accounts of Peter place him in Judea, in Antioch, possibly in Corinth, but finally in Babylon. If Peter was ever at Rome, it was after the date of Paul's second Epistle to Timothy. 1347-481

c. Some Protestant controversialists have asserted that Peter was never at Rome; but though the proofs that he was there are not so strong as I should like them to be if I had any doctrine depending on it, I think the historic probability is that he was; though, as I say, at a late period of the history, and not long before his death. [ 348]

d. For myself, I am willing, in the absence of any opposing tradition, to accept the current account that Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome. We know with certainty from John xxi. that Peter suffered martyrdom somewhere. If Rome, which early laid claim to have witnessed that martyrdom, were not the scene of it, where then did it take place? Any city would be glad to claim such a connection with the name of the Apostle, and none but Rome made the claim. In the earliest uninspired Christian writing, the Epistle of Clement of Rome, he makes mention of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, but does not name the place where they suffered. There is a fair presumption, however, that in this Roman document Rome is intended. The earliest express mention of Italy as the place of their martyrdom is in a letter of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, about 170. There is mention of their tombs at Rome in a dialogue of Caius the Roman presbyter, about A.D. 200, and from that time this tradition reigned without a rival. If this evidence of Peter's Roman martyrdom be not deemed sufficient, there are few things in the history of the early Church which it will be possible to demonstrate. [349]

Was Peter Ever Bishop of Rome?

6. From the question, whether Peter ever visited Rome, we pass now to a very different question: whether he was its bishop. [349] With regard to Peter's Roman episcopate, we can say with confidence that the story had not arisen in the year 180; for Irenaeus, in a work published shortly after that year (Hort iii.3), ascribed the establishment of the Roman Church to Paul as well as Peter; and then adds, "the blessed apostles having founded and built the Church, committed the episcopal office to Linus. Of this Linus St. Paul makes mention in his Epistle to Timothy. To him succeeded Anencletus. . . after him Clement succeeded in the third place from the apostles." Thus Linus is made the first bishop of Rome, and his appointment St. Paul's work as much as Peter's. This is the earliest account we have of the succession of the Roman bishops. It is really useless to cite other authorities; for a doctrine so fundamental as Peter's episcopate and its consequences is alleged to be, if true at all, could not but be known to Irenaeus. [352]

a. I wish to state the conclusions which I consider would be arrived at by a historical inquirer with no theological purpose in view, on the questions: What was the connection of Peter and Paul with the Roman Church? How came it to believe that Peter had been its first bishop? and, How came the duration of the episcopate to be fixed at twenty-five years? [353]

b. I have seen, in a Roman Catholic book of controversy, the question put, Who founded the Church of Rome? and the answer given: It could not have been St. Paul, because we learn from his Epistle that there was a Church at Rome before he had visited that city; therefore the founder could have been no one but St. Peter. But there are absolutely no grounds for the tacit assumption in this argument, that the Church of Rome must have been founded by some Apostle. On the contrary, we know (Acts ii. 10) that "strangers of Rome" were present on the day of Pentecost; and we may reasonably believe that some of them soon returned to that city, whither also the constant influx of visitors from every part of the empire would be sure soon to bring some professors of the Christian faith. It follows that the origin of the Church of Rome is not to be ascribed to the exertions of some missionary arriving with the express intention of evangelizing the city, but was due to silent and spontaneous growth. It is quite possible that among those who came to Rome were some "prophets or teachers," but very unlikely that for some time any Apostles were among the visitors. [353-54]

c. The Epistle to the Romans gives us every reason to think that Paul was the first Apostle to visit that city. [354]

d. But what, then, are we to say to the statement of Irenaeus that Peter and Paul founded the Church of Rome? Probably the simple account of the matter is, that the visit of the two great Apostles was such an important event in the history of the Roman Church that the men of the next generations did not care to trace that history further back; but it is likely enough that these Apostles, at the time of their visit, did important work in organizing the Roman Church, and guiding it through the period of transition from the state in which the Church was taught by missionaries, or men endowed with miraculous gifts, to the permanent state in which it was under the guidance of a settled ministry. But we travel at once out of the region of historic probability when any evidence, tending to induce us to believe that St. Peter once visited Rome, is taken as establishing that he was bishop of Rome. [355]

1). I have already stated that the earliest list of Roman bishops we possess is that published by Irenaeus about A.D. 180. But Irenaeus was not the first to publish a list of Roman bishops. A list had been made by Hegesippus some twenty years earlier, as we learn from an extract from his writings preserved by Eusebius. [358]

2). The claim of certain Gnostic sects to have derived their peculiar doctrines by secret tradition from the Apostles stirred up the members of the Catholic church to offer proof that whatever apostolic traditions there were must be sought in those Churches which had been founded by Apostles, and which could trace the succession of their bishops to men appointed by Apostles. It would seem to be with the object of collecting evidence for such a proof that Hegesippus traveled to Rome. He states that on his way he stopped at Corinth, where he found Primus as bishop, and was refreshed with the orthodox doctrine of the Church, which it had held since its first foundation. Thence he proceeded to Rome, where he arrived in the episcopate of Anicetus, which may be roughly dated as A.D. 155-165. He tells us that he then made a "succession of bishops down to Anicetus." He adds that to Anicetus succeeded Soter, and to Soter Eleutherus, who had been deacon to Anicetus. It appears that the work from which Eusebius made his extract was published in the episcopate of Eleutherus—the same episcopate as that

in which the work of Irenaeus was published. But it may reasonably be inferred that Hegesippus had published his list of bishops in the time of Anicetus, to which, in the later work, he merely adds the names of the two bishops, Soter and Eleutherus, who had succeeded Anicetus. Nothing more than what is here quoted is directly known of the list of Hegesippus. [358-59]

d. The real inventor of the story of Peter's Roman episcopate was an editor of the Clementine Romance. This work was brought to Rome at the very end of the second or beginning of the third century; and it had then prefixed a letter from Clement to James at Jerusalem, telling how Peter had ordained him, and set him in his own chair of teaching as bishop of Rome. Though the doctrinal teaching of the Clementines was rejected as heretical, the narrative part of the book was readily believed; and in particular this story of Clement's ordination by Peter was felt to be so honourable to the Church of Rome that it was at once adopted there, and has been the traditional Roman account ever since. [360-61]

1). But the adoption of this fable sadly perplexed the chronology. For, according to the list of Irenaeus, Clement was but the third Roman bishop since the Apostles; and this is confirmed by the internal evidence of Clement's epistle, which, according to the judgment of the best critics, cannot be earlier than about A.D. 97. It was felt that unless Clement could be pushed back to an earlier period, his ordination by Peter would not be chronologically possible. Accordingly, another list of Roman bishops was published, which puts up Clement to the second, and pushes down Anacletus to the third place. This double list has been very perplexing to historical inquirers; but that the earlier order of Irenaeus is really correct is proved by a kind of evidence which I count peculiarly trustworthy. In the Roman Liturgy to this day the names of its first bishops are commemorated in the order of Irenaeus, viz., Linus, Anacletus, Clement. If this were the original order we can understand its being preserved in the Church of Rome. . . notwithstanding that subsequent chronologers of eminence placed Clement second. But if Clement had been really originally in the second place, it is quite impossible that the name of Anacletus, who is unknown to Church history, should have been placed before him. These Clementine legends have so filled with fable the whole history of Peter, that I should even think the story of Peter's coming to Rome at all open to question, were it not, as I already said, that no rival Church claims the martyrdom. [361]

2). The Clementine letter itself, which represents Clement as ordained by Peter, and as succeeding Peter in his chair as chief teacher of the Church, does not expressly speak of Peter as bishop of Rome. Tertullian, in the early part of the third century, had heard and believed the story of Clement's ordination by Peter, for he speaks of Polycarp having been placed by John over the Church of Smyrna; and Clement, by Peter, over the Church of Rome. But it does not seem to have dawned on Tertullian that Peter was bishop of Rome any more than John was bishop of Smyrna. [361-62]

e. We can only give conjectural answers to the question, Who first counted Peter as bishop of Rome? and, How came the duration of his episcopate to be fixed at twenty-five years? but I will tell you what seems to me most probable. Hippolytus was the first Christian scientific chronologer at Rome. Before his time, lists of Roman bishops had been made, and notes of the duration of episcopates had been preserved; but I consider that it was Hippolytus who first put these dates together, with the view of showing how the whole interval between our Lord's time and his own was to be accounted for. My belief is that, in working his way chronologically back, he placed the accession of Linus twenty-six years after our Lord's Ascension. You may take it as a fact that, in the early part of the third century, men had

come to find it impossible to conceive the idea of a Church without a bishop. So to the question, What about the twenty-six years before the accession of Linus? Was there no Roman Church then? Hippolytus answered that there was, and that it had St. Peter as its bishop; and my belief is that the duration of twenty-five years was intended to indicate that the Roman Church was founded the year after our Lord's Ascension. [362-63]

### The Growth of Rome's Influence

7. We know, as a historical fact, that the bishops of Rome, in the course of the Christian centuries, have exercised authority over distant cities. The question we now turn to is, whether or not that authority dates from the foundation of our religion. We can trace the history of the growth of the supremacy of the Roman bishop, exactly as in secular history we can trace the process by which the city of Rome came to exercise imperial dominion. We thus learn that in ecclesiastical matters, as well as in secular, Roman supremacy is a development, not a tradition. [366-67]

a. If I desired a summary proof that some at least of the powers which the Popes have exercised in later times were not part of the original prerogatives of the see, I should find it in the oath which every bishop in communion with Rome is now bound to take on his appointment: "The rights, privileges, and powers of the see of Peter I will, to best of my ability, extend and promote." Every bishop of Rome thought he was doing a good thing if he gained for his see some powers and privileges which had not previously belonged to it; and for some centuries he has pledged all over whom he has power to aid him in this endeavor. The Pope's avowed policy for centuries has been one of usurpation; and unless we believe either that all the Roman Catholic bishops have perjured themselves, or that their united efforts, continued for hundreds of years, have failed to augment and promote the rights, dignities, and privileges of the Pope, that prelate must possess some powers now which his predecessors did not enjoy. [367]

1). It is quite unnecessary for me to elaborate any proof that the doctrine of Papal Supremacy is a development; for it is fully owned by Newman how faint are the traces of it in the history of the early centuries. I have already told you that the method of his celebrated Essay on Development is to make frank confession that neither Scripture nor Tradition will furnish any adequate proof of Roman doctrines. [367] On what grounds, then, do those who insist on the infallibility of the Church of Rome claim deference for the authority of the Pope? Is it on the ground of superior knowledge which is the natural result of greater learning and deeper study? Clearly no such thing. The deference claimed is alleged to be due to the Pope's official position solely. [51 ]

2). Newman quotes with assent some of Barrow's proofs that Roman Supremacy did not exist in the first ages of the Church: (1) that in the writings of the Fathers against the Gnostic heretics of the second century they never allege the sentence of the universal pastor and judge as the most compendious and efficacious method of silencing them; and (2) that heathen writers are quite ignorant of the doctrine, although no point of Christian teaching would be so apt to raise offence and jealousy in pagans, no novelty be more suspicious or startling than this creation of a universal empire over the consciences and religious practices of men, the doctrine also being one that could not but be very conspicuous and glaring in ordinary practice. Newman also assents to Barrow's assertion that "the state of the most primitive Church did not well admit such a universal sovereignty. For that did consist of small bodies, incoherently situated and scattered about in very distant places, and consequently unfit to be modeled into one political society, or to be governed by one head, especially considering their condition under

persecution and poverty. What convenient resort for direction or justice could distressed Christians in Egypt, Ethiopia, Parthia, India, Mesopotamia, Syria, Armenia, Cappadocia, and other parts have to Rome." [368]

b. If we once admit Roman Supremacy to have been but a development, there were causes in operation which quite sufficiently account for it. The primacy of the bishop of Rome grew naturally out of the precedence accorded to the bishop of the first city of the Empire. Our own experiences would tell us that the people of the greatest city can choose their bishop from among a larger number of candidates, that they are likely to be able to secure the services of an abler man, that they can put larger sums of money at his disposal for charitable and other purposes, and altogether make him a much more influential person in the Church than the bishop of a small town. [370]

1). Rome had reigned without rival as the undisputed capital of the world, the place of resort of visitors from every land, the centre both of commerce and of intellectual activity, the wealthiest of cities, the home of the conquering race who had been accustomed to see the world bow down to them. One cause there was which might have prevented Rome from taking the first place among Christian Churches—I mean the superior claims of Jerusalem, which had been the cradle of Christianity, but the destruction of Jerusalem swept away all danger of rivalry with Rome from that quarter. [3721]

2). Rome had received a letter from the Apostle Paul, and that Apostle had taught there for approximately two years. It is not recorded in Scripture that Peter ever visited Rome, or that both Apostles suffered martyrdom there; but I think the testimony to these things is enough to warrant belief in them, and certain it is that the early Church did believe in them without doubt; so that there was nothing to detract from the superiority which its temporal greatness gave to Rome, on the ground of its being inferior to any rival in closeness of relation to the first preachers of the Gospel. The considerations I have brought before you only establish for Rome a precedence of honour and dignity, though it is well, in all our investigations, to bear in mind that this honourable precedence is a matter about which there has not been, and need not be, any dispute. Rome's right to govern other Churches is quite another matter, and was only gained after hard struggles and by slow degrees. [373]

c. Rome's first interference with other Churches was of the most honourable kind that no Church is likely strongly to object to, namely, sending them money, or otherwise conferring benefits on them. [373-74]

1). An example of Rome's benevolence is known through a fragment of a letter written about 170 by Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, to the Church of Rome (preserved by Eusebius). Dionysius writes, in acknowledgment of a donation sent from Rome: "This has been your custom from the beginning to bestow benefits in various ways on all the brethren, and send supplies to many Churches in different cities, here refreshing the poverty of the needy, and in the mines ministering to the wants of the brethren there confined. In the supplies which you have been in the habit of sending from the beginning, you Romans keep up the traditional custom of the Romans, which your blessed bishop Soter has not only maintained but increased, both administering the bounty which is sent to the saints, and comforting with blessed words the brethren who go up to your city, as an affectionate father his children." [374]

2). A second confirmation is given in another fragment preserved by Eusebius of a letter of the Alexandrian Dionysius. Writing to Stephen of Rome he says, "Syria and Arabia, to which you sent help on different occasions." [374-75]

3). Oddly enough, a third example is connected with the name of a third Dionysius, who was bishop of Rome. Basil, writing to Damasus of Rome (Ep. 70), gratefully calls to memory how in former days this Dionysius had sent agents to his province of Cappadocia to redeem captives. [375]

4). [He through whom money is dispersed (in this case, the bishop of Rome) always wields influence that doesn't require elaborate explanation.] Add to this the fable of Peter's Roman episcopate and the bishops of Rome were supplied with an ecclesiastical justification for a precedence which, on political grounds, it was inevitable for them to exercise. [375]

d. Did the early Church recognize the bishop of Rome as their ruler, teacher, and doctor. Confessedly, the opinion of him who was the leading bishop of the Church had great weight in every dispute; but the question now is, whether his decision was final, and whether, when Rome had spoken, the cause was finished. [376-77]

1). In one of the earliest of Christian uninspired writings, the epistle of Clement, we find an example, to which Romanists gladly appeal, of an interference of the Church of Rome with a distant Church. The object of the letter was to heal a schism in the Corinthian Church; and the Romans use an urgent, and to some it has seemed an imperious tone, in addressing their Corinthian brethren. They exhort the offenders to submit "not to them but to the will of God"—"Receive our counsel," they write, "and ye shall have no cause of regret." "But if certain persons should be disobedient unto the words spoken by God through us, let them understand that they will entangle themselves in no slight transgression and danger; but we shall be guiltless of this sin. Ye will give us great joy and gladness if ye render obedience unto the things written by us through the Holy Spirit, and root out the unrighteous anger of your jealousy, according to the entreaty we have made for peace and concord in this letter." [377]

2). According to the Scotch Presbyterian Dr. Cunningham (Growth of the Church, p.53), the occasion of Clement's letter was that the Corinthians "had, with much bitterness and bad blood, dismissed some of their presbyters; when the Roman Church, to whom, perhaps, the paid off presbyters had appealed, wrote to remonstrate." He adds that "this venerable document clearly proves that, at the period when it was written—probably toward the end of the first century—the Churches of Rome and Corinth were under the rule of presbyter-bishops, with a very limited jurisdiction, and subject to dismissal from their office at the caprice of the people." Now if this were really the constitution of the Church in the first century, the Corinthians acted fully within their rights in cashiering officers who had ceased to be acceptable to them; and the interference of the Roman Church is inexplicable, unless it possessed, or at least claimed, the right of controlling the independent action of foreign Churches. [377-78]

3). But it is remarkable that there is no trace in the letter itself of any pretension of the kind. Not a hint is given that the question of deposing presbyters was one on which Rome ought to have been consulted, or one which it had any right to review. It is not stated that there had been any appeal to Rome on the part of the displaced presbyters, but only that the transactions at Corinth had become notorious, and had brought great discredit on their Church. This letter contains no superiority for the Roman Church; and if the writer declares that its remonstrances cannot be disregarded without sin, it is because of his conviction of the enormity of the evil which called them forth. [378] Such a letter as this could clearly not be regarded as an attempt by Rome to domineer over provincial Churches. Clement's letter is in the name, not of the bishop of Rome, but of the Church of Rome. Clement's name is not once mentioned. It is from independent sources (the earliest, Dionysius of Corinth) we learn that Clement was the writer; but from the letter itself we should not so much as discover that Rome had any bishop. "The later

Roman theory supposes that the Church of Rome derives all its authority from the bishop of Rome, as the successor of St. Peter. History inverts the relation, and shows that, as a matter of fact, the power of the bishop of Rome was built upon the power of the Church of Rome. It was originally a primacy, not of the episcopate, but of the Church." Lightfoot, Clement, p. 254. [3791]

4). All through the second century this subordination of the bishop to the Church continues. The bishop only addresses foreign Churches as the mouthpiece of his Church. [379]

5). Among non-canonical writers, Ignatius is the first witness to the episcopal form of Church government. His letters to the Asiatic Churches are full of exhortations to obey the bishop and to be united to him; but in his letter to the Church of Rome no hint is given that there is a bishop entitled to the obedience (not to say of foreign Christians, but even) of his own people. No salutation is sent to the bishop; and, in short, we should not discover from this letter that there was a bishop of Rome. There seems reason to think that the bishop of Rome was then only concerned with domestic government, and that Ignatius had not even heard his name. [380-81]

e. I come now to what is regarded by many as the first mild attempt at Papal aggression—the proposal of bishop Victor at the very end of the second century to excommunicate the Asiatic Quartodecimans. [383]

1) The controversy concerned the proper day for the celebration of Easter. In the second century the contest with Judaism was as pressing as the contest with Romanism is among ourselves; and in the West natural suspicions were excited of the orthodoxy of a man who in place of keeping his Easter on the day observed by the Church, wished to celebrate it on the day of the Passover of the unbelieving Jews. For these reasons the Quartodeciman usage would naturally be disliked in the West. 1383-84]

2). Victor originally wrote to the leading bishops, not in an attempt to impose a Roman peculiarity on the rest of the Christian world, but to ask each to assemble his neighbours and report to him their practice. Then, armed with the evidence that Quartodecimanism was only a local peculiarity, he called on the Asiatic Churches to conform to the usage of the rest of the world on pain of being excommunicated. [384]

3). A few words may be necessary to explain what was meant by the threat of excommunication: it meant a suspension of those friendly relations which existed between the different Churches which all regarded as members of one great community. That one Church should break these relations with another did not necessarily imply any claim of superiority. Nevertheless, any Church would feel it as a most severe penalty were Rome to break communion with her. She would thereby lose the good offices of the Church most powerful in influence and in money. Her members, on visiting the city would find themselves, no matter how high office they had held at home, treated as aliens to the Christian community. Added to the practical inconvenience would be the stigma of an exclusion which, according to the general feeling of Christians, ought not to be inflicted but for grave cause. [385]

4). The attempt to carry out the threat was frustrated by the resistance of Irenaeus, who not only wrote a letter of sharp remonstrance to Victor himself, but wrote also to several other bishops, urging that whole Churches of God ought not to be separated from communion on account of an ancient custom, and pointing out that the matter in dispute was one on which differences had previously not been allowed to interrupt communion, citing in particular the fact that Anicetus of Rome and Polycarp,

though unable to agree on this subject, had remained in close communion with each other. The result of these remonstrances seems to have been that the attempt to excommunicate the Asiatics was abandoned; for we find during the next century no trace of interruption of communion; and the suppression of Quartodecimanism was only effected by the Council of Nicaea. [385-86]

f. In the third century the importance of the bishop of Rome increases; yet even so late as the episcopate of Callistus (A.D. 217-222), it seems to me that it still depends on his being able to speak in the name of his Church. [387-88] There is every reason to think that Callistus was the prelate whose decision, that persons excommunicated on account of adultery might be admitted to penance and restoration, gave rise to Tertullian's treatise, *De Pudicitia*, in which the rigorist view is strongly maintained, that such persons ought never in this life to be readmitted to the Church. [388]

1). In discussing whether adulterers can be readmitted to communion, Tertullian, after considering several other texts of Scripture, comes to the texts, "On this rock will I build my Church," "I have given thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven," "Whatsoever thou shalt bind or loose on earth shall be bound or loosed in heaven." Now, since at the time this tract of Tertullian was written the story that Clement had been ordained by Peter had come to be received belief at Rome, it would not have surprised me if Callistus had already made the claim for the bishop of Rome to be heir to Peter's prerogatives. But it is remarkable that while Tertullian altogether denies that it lies within the competence of the bishop of Rome to give absolution to an adulterer, his whole argument shows plainly that no claim of the kind had been made for the bishop personally, but only for his Church, or rather for every Church which could claim like relationship with Peter. If a personal claim had been made for the bishop, Tertullian would completely play into his adversary's hands; for what he takes pains to maintain is, that the powers described in the verses in Matthew were not conferred on the church, but on Peter personally. [388-89]

2). The absence of any claim for the bishop is so striking, that two learned Roman Catholics (Morcelli and Cardinal Orsi) have refused to believe that Tertullian's controversy was with a bishop of Rome at all. But since Tertullian sarcastically calls his adversary "Pontifex maximus," and, "Episcopus Episcoporum," it cannot well be doubted that he had a bishop of Rome in view. [389]

3) This incident makes it clear that the bishop of Rome in the days of Tertullian had not made the claims which were afterwards advanced by his successors. [389]

#### Difficulties in Identifying the Pope

8. Supposing it be proved that in order to avoid all risk of going wrong, Christ gave to His followers this rule, "Adhere to the bishop of Rome," still even this simple rule has its uncertainties, for we have first to determine who the bishop of Rome is. Now, in all the time between the third century and the Reformation not a century has passed in which there has not been a schism in the Church on this very point, Christians being perplexed between the contending claims of different pretenders to the Roman see. The greatest schism over the identity of the rightful Pope is commonly called the great Western schism, which began in 1378, on the death of Pope Gregory XI. It lasted nearly forty years, during which time two or more popes disputed with each other the honour of being the rightful successor of St. Peter; and the claims of the contending parties were so evenly balanced that the nations of Western Christendom were equally divided between them. [395]

a. Catholic writers have maintained that it is still impossible to decide with certainty- which party was in the right. Even a general council, which had the aid of the Holy Ghost to enable them to decide infallibly, did not venture to solve the question, and had recourse to its authority instead of availing itself of its knowledge, that is to say, instead of informing the Christian world which of the popes was the true one, the council, by virtue of its authority, deposed them all, and set up a new pope of its own. [396]

b. Upon the death of Gregory XI and the election of his successor (which took place at Rome), the cardinals, being French, would undoubtedly, if they had free choice, have elected a French successor. But they were surrounded by a violent mob who threatened to tear them in pieces and set the house on fire over their heads if they elected a foreign pope. Although the cardinals at first protested that an election constrained by violence would not give a real pope but an intruder, they ultimately gave way and elected an Italian Pope, Urban VI, notified his election as usual to the Courts of Europe, and did not set up the plea of constraint until Urban had showed himself troublesome in the character of reformer of abuses. Then they made a unanimous secession; declared that they had only chosen Urban in the persuasion that he would in conscience have refused the pontificate, his election to which was only due to violence. "But he, forgetful of his salvation, and burning with ambition, had allowed himself to be enthroned and crowned; and assumed the name of pope, though he rather merited that of apostate and antichrist." And so they set up a French pope, Clement VII. [396-97]

l). The schism thus begun lasted longer than what is commonly called a generation of men. A Christian who was of an age to form an opinion on the subject, say twenty-five years of age, when the schism began, might have died in mature age before it was finished: all the time he might have used more care in trying to choose the right pope than most men now spend in choosing the right doctrine; he might have followed the opinion supported by his nation, and backed by a considerable number of men in high esteem for learning and piety; and yet some hundred years after his death it might be discovered that in spite of all his care he had decided wrongly, and had wandered from the true fold out of which there is no salvation. [397]

2). It is true that high Roman Catholic authority can be adduced in support of the opinion that either pope might safely be followed; a charitable opinion certainly, but one which can hardly be consistently maintained. For if Christ had given His Church an infallible guide to truth, it surely must be held to be no small sin to forsake that guide and follow an impostor, more especially when the true guide distinctly declares that those who adhered to the impostor hazard their eternal salvation. [397] But suffice it to say that the two popes were in perfect agreement in informing the Christian world that this was a matter in which a wrong choice would endanger a man's eternal salvation. [398]

3). Remember that the main argument for the existence of an infallible guide to the Church is that it is inconceivable God could have left Christians exposed to the risk of error in any matter concerning their eternal salvation. But here we see that the institution of the office of pope does not preserve Christians from such risk of error; that on the contrary Christians were left for several years together perplexed between the claims of two popes, in favour of each of whom so much might be said, and each of whom uttered the most frightful curses against the other and his adherents; and one of the two must have been the real pope, and his curses have had all the efficacy which papal dignity can give. [398] If it is asserted that it is inconceivable that God could leave His Church without some guide able to lead her infallibly into truth, we may answer that it is just as necessary that God should make men know who that infallible guide is, and that it is indelibly written in the page of history that God did leave the Church

for a space of several years in a state in which it was next to impossible to determine what that infallible guide was. [400]

#### Evaluating Sources Supporting Papal Supremacy

9. When you see Patristic evidence produced in proof of papal supremacy, you must always examine who it is that is cited. With Romish controversialists of the less instructed sort the pre-scientific use of authorities still prevails. With them a Father is a Father. If they can find, in any of those to whom that name is given, words resembling some assertion which they wish to have believed, his name is clapped into a list of witnesses (which sometimes they print in capital letters) all seemingly counted of equal value. Such a list, however imposing it may appear to the unlearned, is only glanced at with contempt by one who understands the subject, and who knows that some of the writers cited say nothing really relevant to the question on which they are appealed to, and that others are persons whose unsupported statements have no weight. With increased knowledge of ancient documents, we are now able in many cases to compare the statements of Fathers with the sources whence they derived them, and in this way to form a judgment how far the reporters are trustworthy. The result is that, as might have been expected, the Fathers are in this respect found to be men of very unequal merit [402]

a. When examining authorities it is necessary to discriminate geographically; for the geographical test is as effective as the chronological in showing that the notion of the Petrine supremacy is a development and not a tradition. [402]

1). Whatever doctrines were delivered to the Church by our Lord and His apostles must have been held by the Church at all times and in all places. Now, it is owned that the doctrine of Roman supremacy was not held by the Church in all times; for it has to be confessed that such a form of Church government was altogether unsuited to the condition of the Church in the first ages. But we argue further that if our Lord had put His disciples under the government of a single head, Christian missionaries, wherever they went, would have carried with them the knowledge who their appointed ruler was, and would have taught the Churches which they founded to obey him. There would have been no difference between East and West as to the meaning of the texts which settled the constitution of the universal Church. The teaching of the Church on this point would have been in all places the same; for this is not a subordinate doctrine, a true tradition concerning which might conceivably have been lost. The doctrine is a fundamental one; and those who had ever known and received it must have kept up the memory of it by perpetual practical application of it. [402-03]

2). What we actually find is very different. The Gospel, you know, contains a system of truths first promulgated at Jerusalem, and which starting from the centre have been propagated all over the civilized world. Now, nothing is more certain than that the notion of Roman supremacy did not start from Jerusalem as its centre, but from Rome as its centre. In tracing the history of the growth of the ecclesiastical empire of Rome, we find that the movement began at Rome itself: that it was at first resisted in its own immediate neighbourhood; that by degrees it triumphed over that opposition, and extended itself over all the West. But in the East, though it occasionally gained temporary victories, their fruits were always short-lived; and ultimately the attempt to bring the East under the dominion of Rome utterly failed. [403-04]

b. Bearing all this in mind, you will see the necessity, when any ancient writer is quoted as asserting the right of the bishop of Rome to rule over other Churches, of inquiring who it is that says it. I might tell

you, for example, that several eminent authors assert that Paris is the capital of the civilized world, the centre of European thought and culture. But you would smile at me if, when asked who these eminent authors were, I had to reply Victor Hugo, Comte, and other enthusiastic Frenchmen. In like manner we can but smile when Romish divines, who have undertaken to adduce evidence in proof of the papal claims, tender to us the assertion of popes, or of papal legates, or of Roman presbyters. Such evidence is only good to show what Rome would like to have believed, but determines nothing as to what really was by Christ's appointment the constitution of His Church. [404]

c. It is much more to the purpose when they adduce Eastern evidence; but such evidence always turns out to be, not spontaneous acknowledgment of the justice of the Roman demands, but temporary acquiescence in them by persons of the moment badly in want of Roman assistance. Contending parties in the East [Arianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism] were always glad to get the West on its side; and the party successful in this endeavor could not afford to be critical if there was too much arrogance in the tone which the Roman supporters adopted. [4041]

#### Explicit Claims to Primacy

10. The earliest bishop of Rome whom I can find to have claimed privileges as Peter's successor was Stephen in his controversy with Cyprian, about A.D. 256, at which time the story told in the Clementines had had some fifty years of acceptance at Rome. [405]

a. Though Cyprian did not dispute the assertion that Stephen sat in the chair of Peter, he did not by any means regard the bishop of Rome as the Church's infallible guide, nor even as a competent witness to apostolic tradition if his testimony seemed to conflict with what was found in the written word. [405]

b. Cyprian was not only unanimously supported by a council of eighty-seven African bishops, but he had enthusiastic allies in the East. Chief of these was Firmilian of Cappadocia, at that time one of the most illustrious of Eastern bishops. There is extant a Latin translation of Firmilian's letter to Cyprian. Some of the first editors of Cyprian's works were minded to suppress the letter altogether on account of the great disrespect with which he treats the bishop of Rome. Certainly it is not surprising that Roman Catholics should have found matter of offence in Firmilian's letter. He begins by congratulating himself that through Stephen's "inhumanity" (in breaking communion with those who re-baptized converts from heresy) he had experimental proof of Cyprian's faith and wisdom. But, he adds, that for this benefit resulting to him from Stephen's conduct, Stephen himself was no more entitled to gratitude than Judas Iscariot was entitled to our gratitude for the benefits which resulted to the world from his treason to our Lord. [406]

1). Firmilian tells us that Stephen had boasted of his succession from Peter. What privileges exactly Stephen claimed on the strength of this succession we are not informed; but both his antagonists treat the connection with Peter and Paul as only aggravating his fault if he does not harmonize with them in doctrine. [407]

2). Other evidence of the arrogance of Stephen's claims is suggested by Cyprian's language in addressing his African council: "None of us sets himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying; inasmuch as every bishop, in the free use of his liberty and power, has the right of forming his own judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he can himself judge another." [407]

c. The result is that we may name the episcopate of Stephen as the time when, out of the fiction that Peter had been bishop of Rome, his supposed successors began to develop the consequence that they had a right to rule other bishops; but we find that this development was at the time not only scouted in the East, but was violently resisted in the neighbouring province of Africa. [407]

1). An earlier incident in Stephen's history will show how far the supremacy of the pope was from being then established. Two Spanish bishops, Basilides and Martial, had denied Christ in time of persecution, were deposed by their brethren, and two others, Felix and Sabinus, were consecrated in their stead. Basilides, however, went to Rome, and there obtained recognition as bishop from Stephen. The clergy and people of the towns over which these men had presided sent to Cyprian, who, assembling thirty-seven bishops in council, decided in a synodical letter that the deposition of Basilides and Martial was right, and the election of Felix and Sabinus canonical. Cyprian says: "Nor can it rescind an ordination rightly performed that Basilides, after his crime had been detected and his conscience laid bare even by his own confession, canvassing to be unjustly restored to the episcopate from which he had been justly deposed, went to Rome and deceived Stephen our colleague residing at a distance, and ignorant of the real truth. The effect of this is not to efface, but to swell the crimes of Basilides, in that to his former guilt is now added the guilt of deceit and circumvention. For he is not so much to be blamed who through negligence was imposed on [i.e., Stephen], as he is to be execrated who through fraud imposed on him." [407-08]

2). Now, if a Roman Catholic maintains that his present Church system is conformed to primitive usage, let him imagine a parallel case happening now. Let him conceive two Spanish bishops deposed by their neighbours, and others elected in their place without consulting the pope. The deposed bishops appeal to Rome and are acquitted. Meanwhile the Spanish clergy send the intruding bishops as a deputation not to the pope, but let us say to the archbishop of Paris, who, assembling a provincial synod, decides that the former bishops had been rightly deposed, and the new canonically elected. [4081]

d. In the third century, if disputes took place in [a Church], their brethren elsewhere would take an interest in it, and would use their influence to bring about the triumph of right. That the Roman Church should possess influence of this kind was a matter of course. But we see now that the possession of such influence was no exclusive prerogative of that see. Other Churches, too, claimed the right to make their voices heard, and had no scruple in taking a side opposite to that taken by the bishop of Rome. [408-091]

1). When Constantine came to power, he found a violent controversy raging, no less a question than who was the rightful head of the Church of North Africa, the consecration of Caecilian as bishop of Carthage having been pronounced invalid by the party which soon came to have Donatus as its leader. Constantine would, no doubt, be anxious to make himself acquainted with the rules established in the Christian Church for regulating the decision of such controversies; but he never appears to have heard from anyone that it would suffice to get the decision of the bishop of Rome. On the contrary, the order of the steps taken in this Donatist controversy was exactly the reverse of what, according to later theory, it ought to have been. There was first a decision by the bishop of Rome; then an appeal from the pope to a council; lastly, neither pope nor council having succeeded in making a settlement, the matter was taken up by the emperor personally. And when I say a decision by the bishop of Rome, you must not suppose that prelate, great and influential as he was, had taken on himself on his own authority to pronounce judgment on the question. He interfered only as commissioned by the emperor; and in this

commission he was not alone: three bishops are joined with him in it by name; and actually some twenty took part in the investigation. [409]

2). How ill it would have fared with the bishop of Rome if he had acted alone appears from the next stage of the proceedings; for the Donatists treated a council of even twenty bishops (the bishop of Rome being one of them) as too small to overrule the decision arrived at by seventy bishops in Africa; so they were granted a rehearing of the case, which took place before a larger body of bishops assembled at Arles. Even this did not prove decisive, and the case had to be tried once more by the Emperor himself. The whole history shows how completely undeveloped at that date was the whole idea of Papal supremacy, even over the Western Church. [409-10]

e. We now turn to the occasion when the sanction of a council was first given to the interference of the bishop of Rome with regard to the deposition or restoration of bishops outside his immediate jurisdiction. [410]

1). In the latter half of the fourth century there were at Rome two prelates, concerning whom the judgment of posterity has been different, both deposed by their nearer neighbours, both trying to enlist on their side the bishop of Rome: Athanasius and Marcellus of Ancyra, a strenuous opponent of the Arians, whom therefore the orthodox party were reluctant to condemn, but who is now generally owned to have made dangerous confusion of the personalities of the Father and the Son. Athanasius, exiled from the Eastern Empire, was driven to the West. He and Marcellus each protested his innocence to the Roman bishop, who, on their instigation, wrote to their accusers, challenging them to come to Rome and there establish their charges; and when, after a year and a half, the challenge remained unaccepted, Pope Julius pronounced the accused parties innocent. [411]

2). The Council of Antioch (341 ) demanded that the bishop of Rome acquiesce, without further inquiry, in the conclusions come to by Eastern councils with regard to the deposition of certain bishops, on pain of excommunication himself if he held communion with bishops who had been deposed. Twenty-nine useful canons were passed, which were afterwards, at Chalcedon, adopted into the code of the Universal Church. Pope Julius protested against these canons on the ground that he had not been summoned to that council, and that by Ecclesiastical law no canon was binding on the Church which had not received his assent. I don't know that we ought to allow Julius to be witness in his own cause; for this whole history is one of claims made by popes, at first meeting no recognition elsewhere, but by dint of pertinacious repetition at length obtaining more or less acceptance. While he protests against new canons made at Antioch without his knowledge and consent, he gives no intimation that he thought that new canons could have been made at Rome either without the consent of other Churches. [413-14]

3). Apiarius was an African presbyter, excommunicated for misconduct by his bishop. He went to Rome, and prevailed on Pope Zosimus to take up his cause with some warmth. The Pope's interference and the claims on which it was founded were the subject of discussions in at least three African synods. Zosimus founded his right to interfere on the Sardican canons which he quoted as Nicene. The African prelates, in council assembled, declared that there was no such canon in their copy of the Nicene code; and they begged the Pope to write to Constantinople and Alexandria, requesting that the Greek copies there might be collated, in order to ascertain whether the disputed canons had really been passed at Nicara. The Papal legates begged hard that the council would be content with the request to the Pope to examine into the matter for himself; but the council very wisely determined to send messengers of their own to the East to get copies of the Greek version of the canons of Nicaea. [414]

4). The result of the mission appears from the final letter of the African bishops. In this, after giving a short account of what had been done, they request that the pope will not in future receive persons excommunicated by their synods, this being contrary to the canons of Nicaea. They protest against appeals to foreign tribunals; they deny the pope's right to send legates to exercise jurisdiction in his name, which they say is not authorized by any canon of the Fathers, and they request that the pope will not send any agent or nuncio to interfere with them in any business for fear the Church should suffer through pride and ambition. [414-15]

f. These instances show how absurd it is to claim for the pope immunity from error in his declarations of doctrine, while he is allowed to be liable to error with regard to matters of fact. How can we put confidence in the judgment of one who is mistaken as to the facts which ought to guide his judgment? When a bishop of Rome has to decide what rights he shall claim for his see, it surely is important for him to know what rights early councils had recognized and what rights his predecessors had exercised. If a pope should be entirely misinformed on these points, it is quite to be expected that he should form a false estimate of the rightful claims of his see. [415-16] The case of Apiarius shows clearly that the right of receiving appeals was not an original possession of the see of Rome. Zosimus claimed it as a privilege bestowed by the Council of Nicaea; the African bishops were ready to concede it if it had been so bestowed, but asked for proof that it had been. That it belonged to the see by divine right does not seem to have been dreamed of on either side. [416-17] Thus we see that even in the West at the beginning of the fifth century the pre-eminence of the bishop of Rome implied no right of absolute dominions. [417]

11. If we want to know the true tradition of the early Church, we have no better evidence than the general councils. The celebrated Nicene canon stated: "Let the ancient customs prevail; with regard to Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, that the bishop of Alexandria should have authority over all these, since this is also customary for the bishop in Rome; and likewise in Antioch and the other provinces that the prerogatives of the Churches be preserved; so if any be made bishop with the consent of the metropolitan, the council adjudges him to be no bishop." The cause of this canon was certain schismatical proceedings on the part of an Egyptian bishop, Meletius. It is evident that the council regarded the supremacy of Alexandria as then an old thing; and secondly, that the council treats this supremacy as quite parallel to that exercised elsewhere by the bishops of Rome and Antioch. There could not be a stronger implicit denial of the right of Rome to rule the whole Church, or to enjoy an exclusive privilege, than the use of such an argument as, The bishop of Rome has such and such powers in his neighbourhood, therefore the bishop of Alexandria ought to have the like in his. At the same time the right of Rome is acknowledged to rule the Churches in the immediate neighbourhood. [420]

a. How far did that right extend? Rufinus, who translated these canons towards the end of the fourth century, says, Rome has the care of the suburbicarian Churches. Commentators differ as to what exactly this means. It is clear, however, that Rome had not patriarchal authority as yet over the whole West. [420]

b. The great schism between East and West grew out of disputes as to whether certain provinces belonged to the patriarchate of Rome or Constantinople. The two patriarchs felt a natural shame to confess that the cause of their solicitude was the money that would be diverted from their converts if these provinces should be lost to them. Consequently differences of ritual or doctrine, on points on which previous generations had been content to differ, were now first represented as soul-destroying

errors; and the disputants declared themselves each to be solely moved by solicitude for the souls that would be imperilled if they were placed under the teaching of his rival. But all these struggles to increase the part of the Church over which Rome was to hold sway are perfectly inconsistent with her modern claim to dominion over the whole Church. [420-21] The ancient Church, even when it came to recognize the bishop of Rome as the great patriarch of the West, implicitly denied his jurisdiction over the whole Church. [421]

c. In the second general council, one of the Constantinopolitan canons forbids the bishops at the head of the great ecclesiastical divisions to meddle out of their own provinces, or throw the Churches into confusion; but that according to the canons the bishop of Alexandria should alone administer the affairs of Egypt, the bishops of the East those of the East and so on. No mention of Rome is made in this canon, which deals only with Eastern affairs; but Roman claims to Eastern dominion are sufficiently condemned by the silence of the canon, there being apparently no necessity even to reject such pretensions. [421]

#### The False Decretals

H. The claim to Infallibility was the last stage in the progress of Roman ambition. First, there was but the readily acknowledged claim to honourable precedence among Churches; then there was the claim to command, first over neighbouring Churches, afterwards over more distant ones; last of all came the idea of Infallibility. [424]

1. The notion was suggested by the exemption which Rome seemed to enjoy from the calamities which befell other principal sees. At the third general council the bishop of Constantinople was deposed for heresy; at the fourth the bishop of Alexandria. Other sees were, in like manner, at times occupied by men whom the later Church repudiated as heretics. Thus, it was not until after some five centuries, during which the "Chair of Peter" escaped any permanent stain of heresy, that the idea suggested itself that this exemption was a privilege conferred in answer to our Saviour's prayer that Peter's faith should not fail. [425]

2. I ought to say something as to the theory of the pope's authority in things temporal. And I cannot discuss that subject without first speaking of the forgery of the Decretal Epistles, which did so much to lead men to believe that the pope's power, whether in things temporal or spiritual, was subject to no limitation [447]

a. It is the truth to say that Roman claims have principally taken their growth out of two forgeries. I have already described one of them, the pseudo-Clementine literature, which first started the idea that St. Peter had been bishop of Rome. This idea was developed by successive Roman bishops, who drew from it the consequence that, as Peter had been chief of the Apostles, so the bishop of Rome ought to be chief of all bishops; and who by gradually increasing claims endeavoured to elevate men's notions of the authority which in that capacity he ought to exercise. [448]

b. But the highest claims previously made fell far short of what men were taught was the pope's rightful possession in the second forgery of which I have now to speak—the collection of letters purporting to have been written by early bishops of Rome, a collection first published in the ninth century. [448]

1). In the progress of Roman ambition what had at first been but the advice of a venerated superior in dignity became an order or decree. In fact the manner in which the Roman bishops pushed their claims was, whenever one of two contending parties endeavoured to enlist the bishop of Rome on his side, to

treat the applicant as having made no more than proper acknowledgment of papal authority to decide the question. He in whose favour the decision was given might be trusted not to criticize too severely the arrogance of its terms. In like manner, they who asked for advice from the bishop of Rome were complemented as dutiful subjects who had come to him for commands. [449]

2). The earliest genuine epistle of the kind is one by Siricius, who was pope A.D. 384, in answer to a letter addressed to him by a Spanish bishop, asking for direction on some points of Church discipline for cases occurring in Spain. Siricius answers in a tone of authority, intermixing some reproofs; and his answers are to stand as decrees upon the several points submitted to his judgment. [449]

3). This letter of Siricius is the first of a collection published in the sixth century by Dionysius Exiguus, who collected all the papal epistles known in his time. These letters do contain proofs enough of Roman arrogance and incipient assumption; but the powers therein claimed for the Roman prelate were too small to satisfy the ambition of later times. [449]

c. In the ninth century another collection of papal letters, which were supposed by some means to have escaped the industry of Dionysius, was published under the name of Isidore, by whom, no doubt, a celebrated Spanish bishop of much learning was intended. In these are to be found precedents for all manner of instances of the exercise of sovereign dominion by the pope over other Churches. You must take notice of this, that it was by furnishing precedents that these letters helped the growth of papal power. Thenceforth the popes could hardly claim any privilege but they would find in these letters supposed proofs that the privilege in question was no more than had been always claimed by their predecessors, and always exercised without any objection. [449]

1). No sooner was the forgery made than it was brought into active use by Nicolas I (Pope, 858-867), who in the audacity of his designs exceeded all his predecessors, pressing to the uttermost any claim which they had made, and pushing the limits of the Roman supremacy to the point of absolute monarchy. [450]

2). Pope Gregory, accepting with entire faith the decretal epistles as authentic records of the powers exercised by his predecessors, felt himself authorized to push the principles involved in them to what he regarded as their legitimate consequences. From these epistles it followed at once that the pope was the sole source of spiritual power; without his consent no council could be held; every bishop, priest, or layman might appeal to him from every other judgment; the Church must be withdrawn from the control of all secular power, and be subjected to a single spiritual despot, whose errors and faults, if such there were, must be borne in silence, for from him there could be no appeal. [450]

3). One main pillar of Gregory's system was borrowed from the false decretals. The Church of Rome, by a singular privilege, has the right of opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven to whom she will. It is plain that if the pope has this power he can constrain to obey his will any man who values his eternal salvation; and so Gregory was able to use his power of binding and loosing in dethroning kings, and loosing subjects from their oaths of allegiance. [451]

4). Another doctrine Gregory got from the false decretals was, that no one dare hold speech with an excommunicated person; and as kings and emperors were not exempt from the operation of this rule, it followed that if the pope excommunicated a king, nobody could, even in matters of business, hold communication with him; so that he was no longer fit to reign, and must be deposed. [451]

d. On these spurious decretals is built the whole fabric of the Canon Law. The great schoolman, Thomas Aquinas, was taken in by them, and he was induced by them to set the example of making a chapter on the prerogatives of the pope an essential part of treatises on the Church. Bellarmine, and a number of other Roman controversialists, were similarly misled. [451]

1). Yet completely successful as was this forgery, I suppose there never was a more clumsy one. These decretal epistles had undisputed authority for some seven hundred years, that is to say, down to the time of the Reformation; yet the moment they were seriously assailed (as they were by the Magdeburg Centuriators), defense was soon found to be hopeless; and there is not a single Roman Catholic divine at the present day who would venture to maintain their genuineness. In fact the letters are full of the most outrageous anachronisms. Persons who lived centuries apart are represented as corresponding with one another. There is a uniformity of style between letters written by popes separated by long intervals...The same phrases recur; the subjects are all of the same sort, such as the primacy of the Roman see, the allowance of appeals, &c. The style is barbarous, and full of expressions not used in early times, but common in Frankish writers of the ninth century. They say nothing of the events, the heresies, and other controversies of their supposed date, but are full of questions which had not then arisen; and they name Church officers and Church ceremonies which had not then been introduced. [452]

2). We can fix with tolerable precision the date of this forgery. The letters borrow matter from the decrees of more than one council that was held in the first half of the ninth century: among others one that was held in 845; and they are themselves quoted in 857; so between these two dates the forgery was made; and if we say 850, we cannot be very far wrong. The place of composition was Gaul. Mentz is the city named in your text-books; but I think modern scholars are more disposed to say Rheims. Much as these letters helped Roman ambition, the primary object of the forgery was to secure the position of provincial ecclesiastics, and make it difficult to depose them. For this object it was very useful to take away from his neighbours all power of dealing with a criminous ecclesiastic, and to let the only authority that could deal with him be the distant one—Rome. A strong case of suspicion is made out against Ebbo, Archbishop of Rheims, as having something to say to this forgery—at least it was calculated to serve his interests. [452]

3). If we want to know what share these letters had in the building of the Roman fabric we have only to look at the Canon Law. The 'Decretum' of Gratian quotes three hundred and twenty-four times epistles of the popes of the first four centuries; and of these three hundred and twentyfour quotations, three hundred and thirteen are from the letters which are now universally known to be spurious. [453] In a former Lecture I had occasion to refer to Bellarmine, to see whether he could cite any Father as applying to Rome the text in which Christ prays that Peter's faith should not fail. I found he could allege no writer who was not a pope; and the popes he begins by citing are taken from the spurious decretals. It is idle to deny that this forgery is the foundation on which Romish belief in papal power has been founded. [453-54]

e. The decretals much helped the growth of Roman power. Yet, Romish advocates think they can remove the foundation, but the edifice built on it remain. They assert that these letters really taught nothing new; that they ascribed no more power to the see of Rome than it had long possessed. This is as impudent an assertion as has been ever made by them. [453]

I. The Church of Rome at the present day claims infallibility. The arrogance of her language admits of no other interpretation. [174] The practice came first, the theory came afterwards. Arrogant Pontiffs presumed to act as if they were infallible, and the necessity of justifying their conduct demands a theory that they really are so; but the lateness of the theory, which even yet is not included in the formula that converts must subscribe, is proof enough that from the beginning it was not so. [174-75]

1. Disputes have raged within the Roman communion for centuries as to the organ of the Church's infallibility. Does the gift reside in the Church diffusive, or only in its head, or in a general council, or in Pope and council together? The existence of controversy on such a subject is in itself demonstration of the unreality of the gift. If Christ had appointed an infallible tribunal, His Church would have resorted to it from the first; the tradition where it was to be found could never have been lost, nor could this have given rise to one of the most angry controversies in the Church. [175]

2. But is not the controversy over now? Did not the Pope, at the Vatican Council of 1870, bear witness to himself, and declare that every theory was wrong which made the organ of infallibility other than himself? But what time of day is this to find the answer to a question so fundamental? Can we believe that Christ before He left this earth provided His Church with an infallible guide to truth, and that it took her more than 1800 years before she could find out who that guide was? It seems almost labour wasted to proceed with the proofs I was about to lay before you, of the neglect or inability of the infallible judge of controversies to settle controversies, when it took him so long to settle that controversy in which his own privileges were so vitally concerned. [ 1 761

3. If Christians had originally trusted to the Church as an infallible guide, they would never have talked about Scripture or tradition. It would have been enough for them to know that the Church had told them what to believe: whether she derived her knowledge from Scripture, or from tradition, or from immediate inspiration, would not have mattered to them in the slightest degree. [130]

## FALLIBILITY

## II. ERRORS OF THE INFALLIBLE CHURCH/POPE

Clearly, there could be no more decisive proof that the Church of Rome can err, than if you could show that she has erred. [46]

### Private Interpretation

A. It is, in the nature of things, impossible for a fallible man to have infallible certainty that he has discovered someone able to guide him without possibility of error. [79] When men profess faith in the Church's infallibility, they are, in real truth, professing faith in their own. It is common with Roman Catholics to speak as if the use of private judgment and the infallibility of the Church were things opposed to each other. [47] An act of judgment must be the ultimate foundation of all our beliefs. [49]

1. But it must be remembered that our belief must, in the end, rest on an act of our own judgment, and can never attain any higher certainty than whatever that may be able to give us. We may talk about the right of private judgment, or the duty of private judgment, but a more important thing to insist on is the necessity of private judgment. We have the choice whether we shall exercise our private judgment in one act or in a great many; but exercise it in one way or another we must. Our certainty that any of the things the Church teaches is right cannot be greater than whatever certainty we have that our private

judgment has decided the question rightly whether we ought to submit unreservedly to her teaching. [48]

2. That submission to the Church of Rome rests ultimately on an act of private judgment is unmistakably evident, when a Romanist tries (as he has no scruple in doing) to make a convert of you or any other member of our Church. What does he then ask you to do but to decide that the religion of your fathers is wrong; that the teachers and instructors of your childhood were all wrong; that the clergy to whom you have looked up as best able to guide you are all mistaken and have been leading you in a way which must end in your eternal destruction? Well, if you come to the conclusion to reject all authority which you have revered from your childhood, is not that a most audacious exercise of private judgment? [48] I do not see how a Roman Catholic advocate can help yielding the point that a member of his Church does, in truth, exercise private judgment, once for all, in his decision to submit to the teaching of the Church. [49]

a. It is not uncommon for Catholic advocates to argue that in every department of conduct we submit our own judgment to that of skilled persons? If we are sick, or if a member of our family is so, we do not try to study the case out of medical books; we call in a physician of repute, and submit implicitly to his directions. If we go to sea, we leave the navigation of the vessel in the hands of the captain. If we have a difficult lawsuit, we do not try to conduct it ourselves; we take legal advice, and permit our adviser to determine our course of action. Why should we think that the problems of religion are so simple, that skilled and unskilled persons are on a par, and that this is the only subject in the world in which a man is to be ashamed to submit his judgment to that of those who are wiser than himself? The Catholic advocate who argues thus, however, does not at all understand the nature of the claim to infallibility made on behalf of his Church. [50]

b. It would be an absurd misrepresentation to suggest that any of us who insists on the necessity of private judgment thinks it a matter of indifference whether a man uses his judgment rightly. On the contrary, we think it every man's duty, who has to make a decision, to use every means in his power to guide his judgment rightly. Not the least of these means is the instruction and advice of people better informed than ourselves. [50]

3. It is absurd for Roman Catholics to disparage private judgment, or make light of the kind of certainty we can obtain by its means, since their belief, as well as ours, must ultimately rest on an act of private judgment. If they use their private judgment on no other question, they must use it on the question, Are we bound to submit implicitly to the authority of the Church of Rome? The result is, that absolute certainty can only be had on the terms of being infallible one's self. [53]

a. A man may say, "I am absolutely certain that I am right in my religious opinions, because I believe what the Pope believes, and he is absolutely certain not to believe wrong." But then comes the question, "How come you to be absolutely certain that the Pope is absolutely certain not to believe wrong?" It is not possible to answer this question without being guilty of the fallacy of arguing in a circle. A common way of answering is by producing texts of Scripture such as "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church," and such like. [53-54]

b. When a Catholic says, "I know that I understand these texts rightly, because the Church, which cannot err, has taught me that this is their true meaning," they are clearly in a vicious circle. They say, "The

Church is infallible, because the Scriptures testify that she is so, and the Scriptures testify this because the Church infallibly declares that such is their meaning." [541]

4. We find ourselves in the same circle if we try to prove the Church's infallibility by antiquity, sayings of the Fathers, by reason, or in any other way. For the advocates of the Church of Rome have constantly maintained that, on religious questions, nothing but the Church's authority can give us certainty. But when we are trying to prove the Church's authority, we shall be guilty of a logical fallacy if we assume the thing to be proved. Unless, then, we are building a fabric in the air, our proof of the church's infallibility must rest on something else; and if we arrive at a certain result, it follows that without the Church's help it is possible for us to arrive at not only true, but absolutely certain, results in our investigation of one of the most difficult of religious questions. All the attempts of Roman Catholic controversialists to show the helplessness of men without the Church make it impossible to have any confidence in their success in finding the Church. [54-55]

5. It is so certain that none of the natural processes of the human mind is absolutely free from risk of error, that it is plain that no study of these processes can give Roman Catholics the security which they demand. So they solve the difficulty by a *deus ex machina*. They are not naturally infallible, but God has made them so. It is by a supernatural gift of faith that they accept the Church's teaching, and have a divinely-inspired certainty that they are in the right. At the Vatican Council of 1870, which may be principally known to you by its decree concerning the Infallibility of the Pope, it was decreed that, though the assent of faith is not a blind motion of the mind, yet that no one can give the preaching of the Gospel that assent which is necessary to salvation without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. [81]

a. It is evident that if a man tells you, "I know that I am right, and you are wrong, because I have a divinely-inspired certainty that I am in the right in my opinion," such a claim does not admit of being met with direct disproof, though it has sometimes met with the mocking answer, "Your claim to a supernatural gift of faith means that your doctrines are such, that it requires a miracle to make a man believe them." We can, however, point out that the claim to have been taught by God's Spirit is made, and certainly on quite as good grounds by others, who say that they have been led by Him to conclusions quite opposite to the Roman Catholic. [82]

b. When a Romanist claims to have been taught by a supernatural gift of faith to trust his Church, and when a Protestant claims, equally under the guidance of God's Spirit, to have learned that she is unworthy of confidence, and when neither can prove, by miracles or any other decisive test, the superiority of the spiritual guidance which he professes to have himself received, what remains but to own that no certainty can be got from trusting to such supposed supernatural guidance. [82]

Does Catholicism Really Believe in Infallibility?

B. I propose now to lay before you such evidence as will show that, whether there be anywhere an infallible Church or not, the Church of Rome certainly is not. [169] Let us examine by the evidence of facts, whether the Church of Rome believes her own claim to infallibility. Acting is the test of belief. If a quack claimed to have a universal medicine, warranted to cure all diseases, we should not need to inquire into the proofs of its virtues if we saw his own children languishing in sickness, and found that he never tried his medicine on them. [172] The history of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is a typical case. [179]

1. From the beginning of the fourteenth century vehement disputes on this subject had been carried on, the leading parts being taken by two powerful Orders; the Dominicans, following their great doctor, Thomas Aquinas, holding that, though cleansed from original sin before her birth, Mary had been conceived in sin like others; the Franciscans, after their great teacher, Scotus, exempting her from the stain by a special act of God's power. The Dominicans went so far as to accuse the assertors of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of heresy, and even charged with mortal sin those who attended the Office of the Immaculate Conception, although that Office had been authorized by papal sanction; and they charged with sin also those who listened to the sermons in which the doctrine was preached. [179]

2 All this time private Christians, puzzled by the most opposite statements of learned men on both sides, must have looked eagerly to the infallible guide, in hopes to learn from him the true doctrine which they were to believe. But the judge was silent. He trimmed and wavered between both parties, and sought to make peace between them, without giving a triumph to either. The strongest step was taken by Sixtus IV, who, though himself a Franciscan, did not venture to declare that the doctrine taught by his own school was true; but who, in 1483, published a brief, in which he condemned those who said that it was a heresy, or that it could not be taught without mortal sin. [180]3. At length came the Council of Trent, in the course of which it became necessary to draw up an Article on original sin. It seemed then hardly possible to evade the question: for either it must be stated generally that all men are subject to this infection, and then the matter would be decided in favour of the Dominicans; or else the desire of the Franciscans should be complied with, that special mention should be made of the Virgin Mary, exempting her from the plague-spot of the human race. [180]

a. A violent dispute arose. When the dispute was made known at Rome, instead of embracing the opportunity of declaring by infallible authority the true doctrine on this subject, orders were given to the Papal Legates at Trent to reconcile the contending parties as far as possible, without giving a triumph to either. The directions were, not to meddle with this matter, which might cause a schism among Catholics; to endeavour to maintain peace between the opposing parties, and to seek some means of giving them equal satisfaction; above all, to observe strictly the brief of Pope Sixtus IV, which forbade preachers to charge the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception with heresy. And in accordance with these instructions the decree of the Council was drawn up. The controversy was named; it was declared that the Council left the matter undetermined, and renewed the brief of Sixtus IV. [180-81 ]

b. Doesn't this prove that the Pope did not believe in his own presence to infallibility, else why not take the opportunity of settling, by the joint authority of Pope and Council—an authority which, in theory, all owned to be infallible—a dispute which had so long convulsed the Church? [181]

c. To meddle in the matter—that is to say, to decide the question one way or other—"might cause a schism among Catholics;" in other words these "Catholics," whatever they might pretend, did not really believe in the infallibility of the Pope and the Council. Why should there be danger of a schism after the truth had been ascertained by infallible authority? Surely, no person could be made enough to separate himself from the Church of Christ in consequence of a decision which he believed to be infallibly true, and to have emanated from a divinely-promised and infallible guidance. The only way of accounting for the conduct of the Pope and of the Council on this occasion is, that neither one nor other believe in the presence of infallibility. For, as I said, acting is the test of faith; and here the Pope acts as any prudent, well-advised sovereign would act under similar circumstances, endeavouring to avoid a decision that

must irritate one party or other, and trying to conciliate both as well as he could. Although he speaks loudly and boldly before the world of his infallible authority, and ~f the great blessing of being in a Church which possesses an infallible tribunal for settling all disputes, yet he acts as one who was fully aware that there was no such tribunal. [181]

d. Is there clearer proof than this that the Roman communion does not practically believe in its own claim to infallibility? The guide will not venture to strike into one of two doubtful paths until those whom he is conducting have already made their choice, and that because he knows that, though professing to believe in his infallible wisdom, they will not follow him if he should happen not to take the path which they prefer. [182]

4. There remained one way of accounting for the silence of the Pope and the Council which might save their infallibility; namely, that this particular subject was one on which it had pleased God to make no revelation, and therefore that in the judgment of Pope and Council either view might be innocently held. Bishop Milner, for instance, says "The Church does not decide the controversy concerning the Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and several other disputed points, because she sees nothing clear and certain concerning them either in the written or unwritten Word, and therefore leaves her children to form their own opinions concerning them." But Pius IX made it impossible any longer to give this explanation of the silence of his predecessors. [182]

a. In process of time the whole controversy died away. Franciscans and Dominicans ceased to accuse each other of heresy or mortal sin, and so then was the time that the infallible tribunal ventured to speak; and in my own time (8th December, 1854) the Pope proclaimed that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was true, and moreover that the Church had always held it. Certainly in this case the Church carried the "discipline arcanum" to an immoderate extreme! since neither Bellarmine nor Milner, nor many other Roman Catholic divines whom I could name, were aware that the Church had any tradition on the subject. But if she had, how are we to excuse Pope Sixtus, or the Council of Trent, who, instead of making known the tradition at the time when the knowledge of it would have done good in healing the violent discussions which raged between members of the Church, kept silence until people had ceased to feel much interest in the controversy? [183]

b. The Pope did not make his decree without first taking advice, and you will find in the Library the answers he got from the bishops of Christendom. Among these, both some of the most eminent of the French bishops, and our Irish professors at Maynooth, declared, not by any means their disbelief in the doctrine of the Immaculate conception, but their opinion of the inexpedience of defining it by authority. [183]

c. Lord Bacon tells a story of a wise old man who got a great reputation for his success in settling disputes. When privately asked by a friend to explain the secret of his success, he told him it was a rule to himself never to interfere until the parties had completely talked themselves out, and were glad to get peace on any terms. That was just the way in which the Pope settled the controversy about the Immaculate Conception, by carefully holding his tongue until the dispute was practically over. [186]

5. If Christ Himself appeared upon earth, we should be glad to obtain from Him an authoritative solution of any of our religious controversies, and we should not dream of stopping His mouth lest his decision should be opposed to our prepossessions. So, though these men profess to believe that the Pope, as a guide to truth, fills the place of Christ on earth, their conduct proves that they do not believe what they

say. And the Pope's own conduct shows that he felt himself not in the position of a judge authorized to pronounce a decision to which all parties must submit. In other words, every time the Pope has thought of making a dogmatic decision, he has had to make a prudential calculation of the danger of provoking a schism. [186]

6. I could give illustrations in abundance of the nervous fear of the infallible authority to commit itself irrevocably to any opinion, without leaving always an outlet for retreat in case of need; but the copiousness of material makes selection difficult. [187] For example, since we are told that private judgment is insufficient to determine with certainty the meaning of Scripture it might be expected that the infallible guide would publish an authorized commentary on Scripture, setting forth the interpretation guaranteed by the unanimous consent of the Fathers, according to which the Creed of Pius IV binds all to interpret. But nothing of the kind has been done. If annotated editions are sometimes issued with the approval of the authorities, the sanction is intended to imply no more than apparent freedom from grave heresy, and the notes rest only on the credit of the authors. [188]

a. It may be said that it was needless for the Roman Church to publish commentaries on Scripture, since it is not to Scripture that she sends her people for instruction in the doctrines of their faith. She has catechisms and other books of instruction, from which her people may learn. But has she ventured to put her seal of infallibility to any one of them? Not so; catechisms, sermons, books of devotion, are guarded by no such gift. If we detect a catechism in manifest error, if we find a preacher or a book of devotion guilty of manifest extravagance, no matter how eminent the man, or how widely popular the book, the Church always leaves a loophole for disowning him, and we are at once told that the infallible authority has spoken by no such medium. But why has she not? Does it not seem strange that a communion possessing the high attribute of infallibility should make no use of it in the instruction of her people? It cannot be said that this neglect does not lead to ignorance and error on the part of the people. I need take no other example than the case already mentioned of "Keenan's Catechism," where a book circulated by thousands, with the highest episcopal approbation, went on, year after year, teaching doctrine which has now to be withdrawn as false. [190-92]

b. It may be said, it is not from books at all that the Church means her people to learn. To the people the voice of the Church is only the voice of the priest. Ordinary laymen certainly cannot study decrees of Popes or Councils, or works on scientific theology. They must take the doctrines of their Church as their authorized teachers expound it to them. Well, are those teachers infallible? Why, no, is the answer; but practically the people have the full benefit of the gift of infallibility. It is true their priest is not infallible; but they know that, if he teaches any heresy, he will be suspended by his bishop: if the bishop neglect his duty, he will be called to account by the archbishop: if the archbishop be heretical, he will be removed by the Pope. [193]

#### Modern Revelations- Purgatory

C. On the authority of what is called a revelation, but what we should call a dream, historical facts have been asserted without a particle of historical evidence, or in the teeth of historical probability. These alleged revelations are the foundation of new doctrines. I do not think that in the Roman Catholic controversy sufficient attention has been given to the place which modern revelations have now taken as part of the foundation of their system. [200]

1. When it is pointed out that popular Romanism is full of superstitions and of belief in what sober, thoughtful Roman Catholics own to be lies, we are told "these things are not part of the faith of the Church; she has never authoritatively affirmed any of them: the religion of the vulgar is always apt to run into extremes: you must excuse these things in consideration of the real piety which is at the bottom of them." [202] But let popular belief come first, and scholastic definition and apology will come in its own good time afterwards. I have already remarked how seldom the infallible authority is exercised to guide men's belief as long as it is doubtful; but usually only comes in when all controversy is over, to ratify the result which public opinion had already arrived at. Is it, then, only the duty of the head of the Church to declare the belief held by his people when it becomes general, or is he to exercise no superintending care over the influences which form the belief he may afterwards have to declare? If the Pope's infallibility reaches so far as to qualify him for guiding the Church at this stage, he always omits to exercise it. [203]

2. Both within and without the Church of Rome it has constantly happened that persons of an excitable and enthusiastic frame of mind, whose thoughts have been much occupied about religion, have supposed themselves to be favoured with miraculous communications from God. [203] There is in the Roman Church an amazing amount of literature recording revelations such as I have described; but whether these revelations are genuine or not the Pope will not tell. [204]

a. On Purgatory more than on any other subject the evidence of revelations deserves to be listened to, for the whole faith of the Church of Rome on this subject has been built upon revelations, or, as we should call it in plain English, on ghost stories. For hundreds of years the Church seems to have known little or nothing on the subject. Even still the East has lagged sadly behind the West in her knowledge, and the reason is, that the chief source of Western information is a Latin book, the dialogues of Gregory the Great, a work of which the genuineness has been denied by some, merely because it seemed to them incredible that so sensible a man should have written so silly a book. But no one acquainted with the eccentricities of the human intellect can rely on such an argument, in the face of positive evidence the other way. Gregory, believing twelve or thirteen centuries ago that the end of the world was at hand, and that the men of his age, by reason of their nearness to the next world, could see things which had been invisible to their predecessors, collected a number of tales of apparitions which, being received on his authority, have been the real foundation of Western belief in Purgatory. [206]

b. Abbe Louvet (*Le Purgatoire d'après les révélations des Saints*, [Purgatory, according to the Revelations of the Saints] per M. l'Abbe Louvet, Missionnaire Apostolique: Paris, 1880) made a systematic treatise on Purgatory, based on modern revelations. [205] It appears that Purgatory is but one division of the subterranean regions. At the centre of the earth is the place of the damned; above it lies Purgatory, divided into three regions, for the special torments of each of which I must refer you to Louvet. Above Purgatory is the limbus infantum, inhabited by unbaptized infants; above that the limbus patrum, now empty, but formerly dwelt in by the souls of the patriarchs until the descent of our Lord to release them. I am sorry to tell you, though you might have gathered it from something that I have said already, that the lowest division is largely tenanted by the souls of priests and bishops, monks and nuns: the bishops with mitres of fire on their heads, a burning cross in their hands, and clad in a chasuble of flames. But it will shock you to hear that in that region are the souls of many popes who, with all the treasure of the Church at their command, were either so thoughtless or so unselfish as to make no provision for their own needs. For example, Marie Taigi saw the soul of the venerable Pius VI come to the door of Purgatory (in 1816), and be sent back again into the abyss, his expiation not being yet finished. [207-08] The great

pontiff, Innocent III, who held the Lateran Council, who passed for a saint in the eyes of men, and did so much for the reform of the Church, appeared to St. Lutgarde, all surrounded by flames, and on her expressing her astonishment, informed her that he had narrowly escaped from hell, and that he had been condemned to suffer in Purgatory till the end of the world. He earnestly entreated her prayers, whereupon St. Lutgarde, with all her nuns, set themselves with all their might to make intercession for his deliverance; but no sign came that their prayers were answered, and, for all we know, after five centuries the poor wretch may be still plunged in those horrible pains from which he begged earnestly to be delivered. "This example," says Bellarmine, "fills me with real terror every time I think of it." [208-9]

c. Louvet, who builds his speculations solely on the evidence of canonized saints [211], makes a calculation, by the help of his revelations, how long an ordinary Christian may expect to have to stay in Purgatory. A Christian of more than usual sanctity, who has never committed a mortal sin, who has carefully avoided all the graver venial sins, and has satisfied by penance for three-fourths of the lighter sins into which frailty has led him, must expect to spend in Purgatory 123 years, 3 months, and 15 days. [209]

3. These extracts give you a very faint idea of the mass of information about Purgatory made known by revelations which respected priests, writing with all the air of grave historians, relate for the edification of their flocks, in books bought up by thousands. A companion volume to that on Purgatory might easily be made on the revelations about the Virgin Mary, in which the modest doctrine of the Council of Trent, that it is useful to invoke her intercession, is rapidly being improved into the doctrine, that no one who does invoke it can be lost, and no one who does not can be saved. One would think we had a right to know from the infallible authority whether these revelations and the doctrine which they contain ought to be received or not; but he remains silent. All the time, on the strength of stories which the supreme authority will neither affirm nor deny, beliefs are being silently built up in the Church on which he is likely hereafter to be asked to put his seal. [213] Surely if Christ has left a vicar upon earth, what more appropriate function can he have than that of informing the world how to distinguish the voice of Christ from that of false pretenders who venture to speak in his name? Anyone who claims to have received a revelation from God must be either as much deluded as Johanna Southcote, or as much inspired as St. Paul. If there be any in the later Church to whom God has made real revelations, we are bound to receive the truths so disclosed with the same reverence and assent which we give to what was taught by the Apostles. It is important for us to know whether the book of God's revelation has closed with the Apocalypse of St. John, or whether we are to add to the inspired volume the revelations of St. Francesca, St. Gertrude, and St. Catherine. If these last are real revelations, they who reject them are doing their souls the same injury as if they rejected the books of Scripture. We look to the infallible authority for guidance, but he owns himself to be as helpless as ourselves to distinguish the true prophet from the false pretender, and gives us leave to believe or reject as we like. [214-15]

4. I ought not to dismiss this subject of revelations without reminding you of the first occasion when an attempt was made to impose such private revelations as a rule of faith on the Church: the montanist heresy. The Montanists were perfectly orthodox. They had not the least desire to alter the ancient faith of the Church. They only aimed at a development of Christian doctrine. They held that the recipient of a Divine revelation was not justified in looking on it as given only for his private edification. It was both his privilege and his duty to make known to the Church what God had taught him; and any who refused to hear rejected a message from God. So the Montanist prophecies came to be written down and

circulated as demanding to be owned as God's word. It was felt that their prophecies were encroaching on the supreme authority of scripture, and that they were presuming to add to what had been written. From the time of the breaking out of Montanism, greater care was taken than had been used before, to prevent any unauthorized uninspired composition from seeming to be placed on a level with Scripture. And so the Epistle of Clement, the Shepherd of Hermas, and one or two writings more, which had been admitted into Church reading, were then excluded, and fell rapidly into such neglect, that copies have scarcely survived to our day. It is the real truth that those who accept these modern revelations and draw proofs of doctrines from them, have really a different Bible, not only from us, but from the Council of Trent. [215-17]

5. Other examples of personal revelations revered by Catholics include:

a. The miracle of La Salette, 19 September 1846, when two children minding cows claimed to have seen the Virgin Mary. She discoursed to them on the sins of France, and gave them messages in the name of her Son. The children told the story: the matter was noised abroad; the place soon became crowded with visitors; chapels arose, inns were opened, medals were struck, the sale of the water of La Salette soon came to be gainful traffic, for it had not only virtue in curing diseases, but a few drops even operated the conversion of an obstinate sinner, in whose liquor it had been mixed without his knowledge. [218] Some of the clergy of the neighboring dioceses declared the whole apparition to be an imposture. It was asserted that the virgin who appeared to the children was a certain Constance Lamerliere, a nun, half knave, half crazy, who could be proved to have purchased the dress in which the Virgin appeared, and whose connection with the apparition could in other ways be proved. This was stated so persistently that Constance Lamerliere was forced to accept the challenge, and bring an action for defamation of character; but the Court decided against her, and the decision was confirmed on appeal. [219-20]

b. Bernadotte of Lourdes (Bernadotte Soubirous) was a poor girl of fourteen, who, on February 11, 1858, while picking up dry wood, claimed to have seen a beautiful lady robed in white, with a blue sash. On being asked who she was, the lady answered, "I am the Immaculate Conception." She invited the girl to drink at a fountain. The child, seeing no fountain, scraped away some earth with her hands. A little water filtered through the orifice: it increased gradually in volume, became perfectly clear, and now supplies to the faithful millions of bottles, which are in large demand for the purpose of effecting supernatural cures. [220] There is a number of incredulous people who object that the witness to the Lourdes miracle is a child subject to hallucinations. What I complain of is, that when there is an infallible guide he will not interfere to clear our doubts. [220-21] If the Pope is unable to arrive at certainty about things alleged to have taken place in his own lifetime, how can he expect to be more successful about things that happened centuries ago? [E.g., whether or not the body of the Virgin was miraculously taken up to heaven—the assumption of Mary—is a question of fact.] [222]

Pope Sixtus V's Bible

D. I will now add cases where the infallible guide has actually struck into wrong paths, and has been compelled, with very lame apologies, to retrace his steps. [225]

1. One example where a Pope was compelled to retire with disgrace, after having attempted to thrust his infallibility into a sphere in which it failed to secure correctness, is the department of Biblical criticism. The Council of Trent having stamped the Vulgate as "authentic," ordered that a correct edition

of this authorized Vulgate should be published. But little was done in fulfillment of this decree for nearly forty years, when the task was undertaken by Pope Sixtus V, a Pontiff who seems really to have believed in his own infallibility. He employed a Board of learned men to act as revisers, but in complete subordination to himself. In his preface he claims the superiority to them which he exercised, as resulting from the singular privilege which he enjoyed as successor to Peter. Accordingly, he tells with complacency of the labor which, among all his other apostolic cares, he had spent on this work, day after day, and for several hours each day, reading the collections and opinions of others, and balancing the reasons for the various readings; the plan of the work being, that while his learned revisers collected the evidence, it was for him alone to decide on the validity of their arguments, and determine by his absolute judgment what reading was to be preferred to what. When the work was printed he examined each sheet with the utmost care, and corrected the press with his own hand. [225-26]

2. The edition appeared in 1590, with a Constitution prefixed, in which Sixtus affirmed the plenary authority of the edition for all future time. "By the fullness of apostolic power," he says, "we decree and declare that this edition, approved by the authority delivered to us by the Lord, is to be received and held as true, lawful, authentic, and unquestioned, in all public and private discussion, reading, preaching, and explanations." He forbade expressly the publication of various readings in copies of the Vulgate, and pronounced that all readings in other editions and manuscripts, which might vary from these of this Sixtine edition, should have no credit or authority for the future. It was forbidden to alter the version in the smallest particle; and any person who should violate this Constitution, it was declared, would incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul; and was threatened with the greater excommunication, not to be absolved except by the Pope himself. [226]

3. This was the language of a man who really believed in his infallibility. But a glance at the volume was sufficient to convince any moderately learned man of the folly, not to say impiety, of such boastful presumption. [226]

a. A closer examination showed those competent to judge that the edition had graver faults than could be accounted for by printer's carelessness. Sixtus had changed the readings of those whom he had employed to report upon the text with the most arbitrary and unskillful hand; and it was scarcely an exaggeration to say with Bellarmine that his precipitate self reliance had brought the Church into the most serious peril. The death of Sixtus removed all constraint, and the learned divines whose opinions had been overruled represented the true state of the case to his successor. [227]

b. There was then much embarrassment how to correct these undeniable errors. Bellarmine's way of solving the difficulty was to lay the blame upon the printers, although in his autobiography he makes no secret that those errors had been deliberately introduced by Sixtus himself, which he recommended should be imputed to the carelessness of others. Indeed Bellarmine's original proposal was a delightful illustration of the skill which the Order to which he belonged is popularly believed to possess, in knowing how to insinuate a falsehood in words consistent with truth. [227]

#### The Condemnation of Galileo

E. I will mention one other department from which the Popes have had to retire with their prerogative of infallibility sorely discredited. In ordinary cases, as I have so often said, their policy has been to avoid committing themselves; but in some rare instances the case appeared to be so plain as to make caution unnecessary. [228]

1. One of these cases was when the notion was first seriously entertained by men of science, that the sun, not the earth, is the centre of our system, and that the earth, instead of being stationary, is in rapid motion. Such an idea was so opposed to reason and common sense, so contrary to the opinion entertained for many ages by philosophers, so at variance with the plain words of Scripture, that the Church authorities felt they were quite safe in putting down teaching at once heretical and absurd. [228-29]

2. The present case is one of the most unpleasant that Roman Catholic controversialists have got to meet, for they cannot but be conscious that the best apologies they can offer are extremely unsatisfactory. They could save themselves all trouble if they would frankly say, "Our Church made a great mistake two hundred and fifty years ago. She then imagined statements to be heretical which we now know were not only not heretical, but were perfectly true. She is a great deal wiser now." Perhaps the theory of development may be improved into a form which will allow that confession to be made. But if that time comes, we need dispute no more about the Church's infallibility: the whole claim will then have been given up. [229]

3. Galileo had already a high place in the scientific world, when, in 1609, he was the first to turn a telescope on the heavens. All Europe soon rang with the news of the surprising announcements he was able to make, which entitled him to rank as the greatest philosopher of his age. The new facts thus brought to light speedily removed all doubts in Galileo's own mind as to the truth of the theory which Copernicus had put forward concerning the motion of the earth. One of the first of his discoveries, that of the satellites of Jupiter, put the controversy concerning the true system of the universe in a new position. The old theory was that stars and planets all went around the earth. Here was a clear case of exception; for these four newly-discovered stars unquestionably made their revolutions, not around the earth, but round Jupiter. The sight of this planet, attended by its four satellites, was alone sufficient to shake the confidence of astronomers in their belief that the earth was the most important body in the universe; while the spectacle of these bodies performing in perfect order their revolutions round one celestial body could not but suggest an analogy revealing the true relation of the planets to the sun. Again, when the theory was first put forward that the planets are bodies which only shine by the reflected light of the sun, it was objected that, if this were the case, Venus ought to present the same phases as the moon, changing from full face to a crescent, according as we saw more or less of the side illuminated by the sun. Copernicus made an unsuccessful attempt to explain this difficulty; but when Venus was looked at through a telescope, she was seen actually going through those changes, the seeming absence of which when sought for by the naked eye had been considered a fatal objection to the Copernican theory. [230]

a. Galileo was a firm believer in the truth of Scripture, and as soon as he came to believe that the Copernican theory was true, he could not help also believing that it was not contrary to the Bible. Accordingly, in 1613, he wrote a letter, defending this view, to Castelli, who was Mathematical Professor at Pisa. He said that the Bible was beyond doubt infallible; that though the Scripture could not err, its interpreters might. Clearly we are not to interpret every word of Scripture literally. There were obvious reasons why, in speaking incidentally of the sun, or of the earth, or other created bodies, the Scriptures should conform to popular language. [231 ]

b. This letter was the occasion of the first collision between Galileo and ecclesiastical authorities; for though it was a private letter, a copy fell, either through indiscretion or treachery, into the hands of

Dominicans at Florence, one of whom denounced it to the Holy Office at Rome. And naturally it gave much offence that a layman should presume to teach theologians how to interpret Scripture. [231-32]

c. The reason why Copernican speculations about the earth's motion had been tolerated by ecclesiastics, while the writings of Galileo on the same subject were rigidly condemned, was that Galileo's predecessors, in order to avoid shocking existing prejudices, had taken some pains to represent the notion of the earth's motion, not as a true account of what actually takes place, but as a mathematical fiction imagined for the more convenient calculation of the places of the heavenly bodies. There is, you know, great virtue in an if. Theologians insisted on saying, without contradiction, that the earth does not move; but they had no objection to allow mathematicians to amuse themselves with the problem, If the earth and the planets went round the sun, what appearances would the planets, on that hypothesis, present? Galileo found that the answer to that question was, Exactly the appearances which we observe now; while, on the contrary, the observed appearances were not explained by the older theory. He could not then resist the conviction that the Copernican doctrine of the earth's motion was no mere mathematical fiction, but the absolute truth. [233]

d. All Galileo contended for was toleration for his own belief. He only endeavoured to make out that there was nothing in the Bible that forbade him to believe that the earth moved. And unless he imagined that the same thing could be scientifically true and theologically false, how was it possible for him, who believed that nothing false is taught as an article of faith in the Scriptures, when he had come to believe that the doctrine that the earth does not move is false, to avoid asserting that the doctrine that the earth is at rest is not taught in the Bible as an article of faith? [233-34]

e. Nothing is so puzzling as a real love of truth to people who are not possessed of it themselves. The good old orthodox theologians of Galileo's day could not imagine what motive the philosopher could have for persisting in saying that it was the earth which went round the sun, and not the sun which went round the earth. That he should say so, merely because he was convinced it was true, was quite beyond their comprehension. It must be from love of opposition, from a wish to insult them, from sheer obstinacy, from self-conceit, or some other unworthy motive. [234]

4. When Galileo's letter was brought to notice of the Roman Inquisition there was great unwillingness to deal harshly with the philosopher, who was then at the height of his reputation, and who had many and powerful friends at Rome itself, where he had recently exhibited his telescope, amid general admiration. In every criminal trial there are two questions—a question of law, and a question of fact. In the case of trial for heresy, the question of fact is, What are the words which the accused person has spoken or written? the question of law is whether these words contain heresy. [234-35]

a. The Inquisition was able to pronounce Galileo's acquittal on the question of fact. The document submitted to them only purported to be a copy of a letter written by Galileo: where was the original? It could not be produced. No doubt, if the Inquisitors had been malevolently disposed, they might have resorted to such further inquiry as would either have brought the letter home to Galileo, or at least would have proved that it truly expressed his sentiments. But they were content, in the absence of positive evidence, to pronounce a verdict of Not Guilty; only they took care that the verdict should be, Not Guilty, but don't do it again. [235]

b. They obtained a report from their "qualifiers," which ran in the following terms—(1). The proposition that the sun is the centre of the world, and immovable from its place, is absurd, philosophically false,

and formally heretical, because it is expressly contrary to Holy Scripture. (2). The proposition that the earth is not the centre of the world, nor immovable, but that it moves, and also with a diurnal motion, is also absurd, philosophically false, and theologically considered at least erroneous in 6th. [235]

c. Galileo was not required to make abjuration, or to do penance, because he had not been convicted of heresy; but, by order of the Holy Office, Cardinal Bellarmine summoned him before him, and admonished him in the name of the Pope and of the Holy Office, under pain of imprisonment, that he must give up the opinion that the sun is the centre of the world and immovable, and that the earth moves, and must not hold, teach it, or defend it either by word or writing; otherwise proceedings would be taken against him in the Holy Office. Galileo submitted, and promised to obey. [235]

5. But it was not enough that Galileo should be personally warned against holding the heliocentric theory of the universe; the whole world must be similarly instructed. On March 5th, 1616, the Congregation of the Index, a Committee of Cardinals appointed by the Pope for the prevention of the circulation of dangerous books, published the following decree—"Since it has come to the knowledge of this Holy Congregation that the false Pythagorean doctrine, altogether opposed to the Divine Scripture, of the mobility of the earth and the immobility of the sun, which Nicolas Copernicus, in his work *De revolutionibus orbium caelestium*, and Didacus Stunica in his *Commentary on Job*, teach, is being promulgated and accepted by many, as may be seen from a printed letter of a certain Carmelite Father (Foscarini)...wherein the said Father has attempted to show that the said doctrine is consonant to truth, and not opposed to Holy Scripture; therefore, lest this opinion insinuate itself further to the damage of Catholic truth, this Congregation has decreed that the said books, Copernicus *De revolutionibus*, and Stunica on *Job*, be suspended till they are corrected, but that the book of Foscarini...be altogether prohibited and condemned, and all other books that teach the same thing." [236]

a. The Congregation of the Index continued its war on the Copernican theory for about two centuries. The Index of 1704 contains the comprehensive prohibition, "all books that teach the mobility of the earth or the immobility of the sun." [237]

b. These prohibitions continued in force for a century longer. At the beginning of the present century the astronomer Lalande, made great exertions at Rome to have the names of Galileo, Copernicus, and Foscarini, removed from the Index; but in vain. Accordingly, the Index for 1828 contains the names of these three culprits; but the prohibition against all books teaching the mobility of the earth was quietly dropped out of the later editions of the Index. It was only on the accession of Gregory XVI, the predecessor of Pius IX, that the important step was taken, and the attempt to insist on believing on the immobility of the earth was finally abandoned. For the first time for some two hundred years an Index of prohibited books was published, in which no confession of previous error was made, but the names of Galileo, Copernicus, and Foscarini, were silently withdrawn. Even then there were some at the Papal Court who regarded this a weak-minded concession to modern prejudice. [238]

6. Galileo went back to Florence disheartened at the condemnation of the Copernican doctrines, but professing outward submission to the Papal decisions. It would be unreasonable to suppose that he accepted them in his heart. [240]

a. In a tract which he published on the motions of comets, he says: "Since the motion attributed to the earth, which I, as a pious and Catholic person, consider most false and not to exist, accommodates itself so well as to explain so many and such different phenomena, I shall not feel sure but that, false as it is, it

may not just as deludingly correspond with the phenomena of comets." He preserved the same verbal conformity to the commands of his superiors in the work which he published in 1632, which was the cause of his subsequent troubles. He gave it the form of a dialogue, which enabled him to state the arguments on both sides without committing himself to an adoption of either; and he said that he proposed to discuss the Copernican system as a mere mathematical hypothesis, and to show, not its absolute truth, but its superiority to some bad arguments by which it had been assailed. [240]

b. The disguise, however, was found to be a little too thin. Pope Urban VIII recognized in the arguments put into the mouth of the silly speaker some which he had formerly used himself in discussion with Galileo. [240]

c. The sale of the dialogue was forbidden, and a summons was served on Galileo ordering him to appear before the Inquisition at Rome. He made every effort to escape obedience, pleading inability to undertake the journey (a more formidable business then than now), on account of his age (he was seventy), and the bad state of his health, and asking for at least a reprieve. His excuses were not accepted by the Pope, who said he might come in a litter if he pleased; but come he must. The Florentine Inquisitor visited Galileo, and found him confined to his bed, and professing himself unable to take the journey in his then state of health. A certificate was forwarded, signed by three of the most eminent medical men in Florence, to the effect that Galileo was suffering from hernia, and could not be moved without danger to his life. The answer from the Inquisition was, that if he did not come the Pope and the Holy Office would send down a commissary and a physician of their own, whose expenses would have to be defrayed at Galileo's cost. If they should find him able to travel they were at once to deprive him of his liberty, and send him up in irons; if they should find that the move would involve danger of life, they were to send him up bound and in irons as soon as the danger was over.

1). Under this persuasion Galileo was induced to face the journey to Rome, where he met with as much indulgence as the rules of the Inquisition permitted. Until personal examination was necessary, he was allowed to lodge in the Florentine ambassador's palace, but on condition that he was to observe strict seclusion, and receive the visits of none but intimate friends. When personal examination was necessary, the three or four weeks he spent within the walls of the Inquisition were not passed in any close or unwholesome dungeon, but in the apartments of the Fiscal of the Inquisition, where the attendance of his own servant was allowed him. Even this mitigated confinement had an unfavourable effect on his health.

2). The result of the trial is well known. Galileo pleaded in vain that he had not infringed the injunction laid on him by defending an opinion already condemned, and the condemnation of which had been made known to him. When he urged that he had left the question undetermined, and had only discussed the probability of the Copernican hypothesis, he was told that therein he had committed a grave error, for that an opinion can in no manner be probable which has already been declared and defined to be contrary to the Divine Scriptures. The Inquisitors were certainly justified by the evidence when they arrived at the conclusion that there were very strong grounds for suspecting that Galileo held the heretical doctrine of the earth's motion, and also the heresy that an opinion can be held and defended as probable after it has been declared and defined to be contrary to Holy Scripture. Accordingly, in order to remove from the minds of all Catholic Christians this vehement suspicion legitimately conceived against him, he was ordered to swear that with a sincere heart and faith unfeigned he abjured, cursed, and detested the above-named and all other heresies; and to swear

further that for the future he would not assert, either by word of mouth or in writing, anything to bring upon him similar suspicion. And in order that his grave and pernicious error might not remain altogether unpunished, that he might be more cautious for the future, and be an example to others to abstain from offences of this sort, his book was prohibited by public edict; he was condemned to the prisons of the Holy Office during the Pope's pleasure, and was commanded for three weeks to recite the seven Penitential Psalms once a week. [241-42]

7. Galileo made his abjuration accordingly, but for the remaining eight or nine years of his life never completely recovered his liberty; for though his confinement was as little disagreeable as such a thing could be, he was never permitted to have quite free intercourse with his friends. [242]

a. He was not permitted either to reprint his old books, or to print new ones. When he died, his power to make a will was disputed, and the question was raised whether his body might be placed in consecrated ground. That was decided in his favour; but when the Grand Duke proposed to raise a marble monument to him, he received a message from the Pope that such an intention, if carried out, would be most pernicious, and that he must remember that Galileo during his life had caused scandal to all Christendom by his false and damnable doctrine. [242-43]

b. Galileo was informed that the opinion which he really held had been pronounced heretical, and that if he again taught it, he would be treated as a relapsed heretic. [245]

c. The ecclesiastical authorities at the time, no doubt, thought they had gained a triumph when they obtained Galileo's abjuration; but that abjuration remains their lasting disgrace. [245]

8. Did the Inquisitors, acting under the Pope's authority, and with his personal concurrence, oblige Galileo to profess belief in what we now know to be false; and if so, how can Infallibility be claimed for an authority guilty of such a prodigious blunder? [246]

a. The tribunal of the Inquisition never dreamed of setting itself up as an authority for pronouncing on the progress of science. In knowledge of the science of astronomy they must have been perfectly well aware that Galileo was infinitely their superior. What they thought they did know better than he was how to interpret Scripture. It was as theologians they interfered; and interfered, as we now know, wrongly. And indeed how could science ever have come to its present state if they could have had their way? Every good Catholic was forbidden even to read a book which taught the mobility of the earth. [246]

b. The Inquisitors did not claim to know more about scientific arguments than Galileo, but they did claim to know better than he how to interpret Scripture. Yet it turns out now that, with regard to the interpretation of Scripture, Galileo was right, and they were wrong. The condemnation of Galileo has been a good deal discussed with reference to the question of the Pope's personal infallibility. You will see now that it cuts much deeper, and affects the question of the Church's infallibility, speaking by no matter what organ. The Council of Trent declared that it is the province of Holy Mother Church to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. Now there are many texts of Scripture which we hold that the Roman Church interprets wrongly; but we have no means of forcing her to own that we are right and she wrong. We have the means in the case of such texts as "He hath made the round world so fast that it cannot be moved." From such texts it was inferred in the sixteenth century that the physical fact of the immobility of the earth was a revealed truth. Everyone entitled to speak on behalf of

"Holy Mother church" asserted it. If general consent, universal long tradition, absence of opposing view, can prove any interpretation of Scripture to be lawfully imposed by the head of the Church, this certainly was so. And yet it has now to be confessed that interpretation was wrong. It must be owned, therefore, that whatever respect the Church may claim when she interprets Scripture, she is not infallible, and that the Church of a more learned age may wisely review and correct the decisions of its predecessors. [246-47]

c. Yes; but it will be said that the Church's infallibility when she interprets Scripture is limited to questions of faith and morals, and that the question of the earth's mobility is not one of faith. But this is to accuse the heads of the Church in Galileo's time of a far graver mistake. It is surely a less error to decide a question that belongs to your province wrongly, than not to know what belongs to your province and what does not. If modern apologists are right, the Church in Galileo's time not only was wrong in pronouncing it to be heresy to hold that the earth went round the sun; but was utterly wrong in imagining that either of the opinions—the sun goes round the earth; or the earth goes round the sun—possibly could be heresy, the whole subject being outside the domain with which faith has to deal. On the contrary, the Church in Galileo's time held that it was of faith to maintain the absolute correctness of everything asserted in express words of Scripture, and that the doctrine of the earth's fixity was so asserted. [247-48]

d. Either the earth moves, or it does not. If it moves, theologians were wrong in inferring from Scripture the God had revealed that it is at rest; if it does not move, the Copernicans had wrongly interpreted the indications of their science. You know how the matter has ended. Roman Catholics and Protestants are now agreed that the theologians of two hundred years ago were wrong in the system of astronomy which they imagined they had derived from the Bible; and Roman Catholics and Protestants agree in adopting the principles of Scripture interpretation which Galileo taught the theologians of his day. [232]

9. It remains to discuss how the condemnation of Galileo directly affects the question of Papal Infallibility. It is certain that the decrees of the Inquisition and of the Congregation of the Index expressed the sentiments of the individual Pope who was the prime mover in the whole business, and who even personally presided at some of the meetings. But on various pleas it has been contended that the tribunal which published the decrees was not the Pope speaking infallibly. That he did not speak infallibly then we need not dispute; but if he did not speak infallibly then, it will be impossible to know that he ever speaks infallibly. [248]

a. The Popes appear to think the gift of infallibility quite too precious for everyday use, and that when a disputed question arises it is the hardest matter to obtain a decision on it from the infallible authority. But there are some occasions which would extort speech from the most taciturn of human beings; and I imagine that the most silent of men might be induced to speak, if he saw a fellow-creature about to be severely punished, perhaps burned alive, in his name, and by his alleged authority, upon a charge of heresy which he had the means of infallibly knowing was no heresy at all. It cannot plausibly be maintained that a Church possessing an infallible guide to secure her from heresy should appoint a special tribunal for the expulsion of heresy, and that that tribunal, acting under the very eyes of the Church's head should be left in uncertainty what is or is not heresy. [249-50]

b. It is said, however, that the Pope is both teacher and governor of the Church, and that though infallible as teacher, he may err in the steps he takes as governor, for the preservation of the Church's discipline. But when the punishment of heresy is concerned, it is impossible to separate his disciplinary

from his teaching power. It may be assumed as certain that the Pope would not punish a man for heresy without having first ascertained that the doctrine which he held was heresy; and the Pope could not teach the world more distinctly that a certain doctrine is heretical than by setting the example of punishing a man for holding it. [250]

c. It is nothing less than a gross libel on Pope Paul V, who was Pope in 1616, to assert that he did not bring all the resources of his infallibility into play in the case of Galileo. I need not tarry over the plea that either Paul in 1616, or Urban in 1633, erred but only as a private doctor, not as a Pope speaking *ex cathedra*. With regard to the question when the Pope speaks *ex cathedra*, the only rational distinction is between his official and non-official utterances. We do not hold the Papacy responsible for everything Urban may have said in conversation to Galileo; but in all the transactions which I am discussing it is clear that neither Urban nor Paul acted as a private doctor, but as Pope. [250] I need not linger over a plea in which some Romanists find much comfort, that the condemnation of Galileo does not contain what is called the customary clause of Papal confirmation at the end. We may be sure that Paul V did not knowingly omit anything necessary to give validity to his sentence; and the fact is, that the "custom" in question has come in since Paul's time, and that this clause does not appear in previous decrees of the Congregation of the Index. (No decree of the Index has been found with the clause earlier than January 17, 1729.) [251]

d. Assuredly Galileo and the Copernicans of his day were not allowed to suppose that to persist in their heresy would be to resist anything short of infallible wisdom. They were pressed with the words of the Bull of Sixtus V, by which the Congregation of the Index was remodeled: "They are to examine and expose the books which are repugnant to the Catholic doctrines and Christian discipline, and after reporting them to us, they are to condemn them by our authority." What was done by the Inquisition in Galileo's case was not a mere verdict on a matter of fact on which the judges might pardonably go wrong, but it was the decision by the Pope's authority on a question of doctrine. Pope Urban made that decision his own by directing (in 1633) that in order that these things might be known to all, copies of the sentence on Galileo were to be transmitted to all Apostolic Nuncios, and all Inquisitors of heretical pravity, especially the Florentine Inquisitors. These were to summon the professors of mathematics and to read the sentence for their instruction. This sentence refers to the interference of the Congregation of the Index as made "to the end that so pernicious a doctrine" as the Copernican "might be altogether taken away and spread no further to the heavy detriment of Catholic truth." It states that the Congregation was held in the Pope's presence in which Galileo was ordered to give up this false opinion. It relates that Galileo had been formally made acquainted with "the declaration made by our Lord the Pope, and promulgated by the Sacred Congregation of the Index," the tenor whereof is that the doctrine of the motion of the earth and the fixity of the sun is contrary to the sacred Scriptures, and can neither be defended or held. It may be added that the desired Papal confirmation in express terms was given by a later Pope, Alexander VII, in 1664, who republished and confirmed the previous decree. [251-52]

10. To conclude, then, the history of Galileo makes short work of the question: Is it possible for the Church of Rome to err in her interpretation of Scripture, or to mistake in what she teaches to be an essential part of the Christian faith? She can err, for she has erred. She has made many errors more dangerous to the souls of men, but never committed any blunder more calculated to throw contempt on her pretensions in the minds of all thinking men, than when she persisted for about two hundred years in teaching that it was the doctrine of the Bible, and therefore an essential part of the Catholic faith, that the earth stands still, and that the sun and planets revolve daily round it. [252] How can

infallibility be claimed for authority which made the gross mistake of teaching that the doctrine of the earth's immobility was "necessarily involved in the biblical statements." If it be the province of Holy Mother Church (as the Council of Trent declared) to judge of the true sense and interpretation of Scripture, how was it that in this case the true interpretation of Scripture was taught, not by the Pope or his Cardinals, not by any one entitled to speak on behalf of Holy Mother Church, but by a layman; and how was it that the ecclesiastical authorities instead of gratefully adopting the right method of interpretation, rebuked their instructor for his presumption, ordered him to be silent, and condemned him to imprisonment for as long a period as the Pope might choose to detain him? [260-61]

#### Ex Cathedra

F. Advocates of infallibility assert that the pope only speaks infallibly when he speaks ex cathedra. Everyone can understand that there is a clear distinction between legal decisions pronounced by a judge on the bench and opinions on points of law which he may have expressed in private conversation. So we readily admit that, supposing the pope to possess the gift of Infallibility, that attribute is not to be expected to attach to things occasionally said by him in his private capacity, and not in that of public teacher of the Church. [434] But this is no justification for a number of arbitrary rules which have been invented for distinguishing when the pope speaks ex cathedra—rules as to which the advocates of Infallibility have been able to come to no agreement. And yet it has been necessary to invent such rules, in order to relieve the papal see of the responsibility of a number of decisions which everyone owns to be erroneous. [434-45]

1. To my mind, the only common-sense view is, that the pope speaks ex cathedra whenever he clearly speaks in his official capacity: that is to say, whenever, either spontaneously, or in answer to questions addressed to him as pope, he publishes in writing his decisions on a question of doctrine. If you try beyond this to introduce conditions for ex cathedra utterances, these are mere crotchets of theologians. The case is just the same as if a physician set up to be infallible, and, after a number of patients had died under his treatment, you endeavoured to frame a set of rules, distinguishing by the kind of paper they were written on, or the manner in which he had affixed his signature, the prescriptions in which he was to be regarded as speaking as a private person from those which he had given as the infallible physician. [435]

2. One theory made it necessary to an ex cathedra utterance that the decree should be made in council. In point of fact the earliest papal decisions were always so made. The reason of this was the pope's personal authority was not, in early times, so strong that he could afford not to back it up with the opinion of others. When the pope sent his decision to the East, for instance, he used to summon previously a council of all the bishops within reach, so that he might speak in their name as well as in his own. This conciliar form, belonging to many of the earlier papal utterances, has been imitated in later times by papal allocutions being addressed, in the first instance, to an assembly of cardinals or other bishops. But it is clearly inconsistent with modern ideas of papal infallibility to make the presence of a council necessary. Suppose some of the council should not agree, would the decree be less binding? If the council added nothing to the authority of the decree, why summon them to hear what might in no way concern them? [435-36]

3. Received Roman Catholic theory does, indeed, recognize one case where the absence of sufficient care deprives papal utterances of the attribute of infallibility: It is held that the "obiter dicta" in such an utterance may be erroneous. This distinction prevails in our own law courts. Though the judgment of a

Court of Appeal binds inferior courts, yet if the judges in pronouncing sentence express an opinion on a subject not immediately before them, that goes for nothing, it being possible that if they had heard the question properly argued they might have changed their sentiments. [436]

a. Thus, Pope Nicolas I was consulted by the Bulgarians whether a Jew or a Pagan could give valid baptism. He replied in the affirmative, but further volunteered the information that the baptism would be equally good, whether given in the name of Jesus alone or in that of the Three Persons of the Trinity. [436-37]

b. This is now given up as clearly erroneous teaching, but is excused as an "obiter dictum,"! the Pope having gone out of his way to answer a question he had not been asked. [437]

c. As regards this particular case, remember that the Roman Church holds that an unbaptized person cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven, and that baptism in the name of Jesus alone is valid. It follows that if the Bulgarians accepted the instruction officially given them by the Pope, hundreds of them may have imagined themselves baptized when they really were not, and then, for want of baptism, their souls must have been eternally lost. Now, it seems to me monstrous to imagine that anyone could be damned for following the guidance of him whom Christ had appointed as teacher of the Church. So that if I believed the pope to hold this office I should find myself constrained to believe that the rule of Nicolas was right. No evasion as to the form in which the instruction was conveyed will suffice. If the Pope be Christ's Vicar, it is incredible that he could be permitted officially to mislead His people into error inconsistent with their salvation. [437]

4. The Vatican Council of 1870 made what must be regarded as an attempt to answer the long unsettled question, What is the test of an ex cathedra utterance? It declared that the pope speaks ex cathedra "when, performing his office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, in virtue of his apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the universal Church." The condition here indicated is derived from Bellarmine, who makes it a condition for an ex cathedra decree that it should be addressed to the whole Church, or that it should proclaim a moral law to the whole Church. All these conditions are generally invented in order to save the Church from being bound by some palpably erroneous papal decisions. [437-38]

5. Roman Catholics are now generally agreed on the principle that the pope is infallible, [but] the greatest differences of opinion will be found among them as to whether any particular papal utterance is infallible; and any Roman Catholic who does not like to accept any decision of the pope need have no difficulty in producing a parallel case of some previous decision to all appearance possessing the same claims to reverence, but which is now acknowledged to have been wrong. So that, in short, I do not know how to sum up the Roman Catholic doctrine on this subject except by the formula, The pope is always infallible, except when he makes a mistake. [444]

6. I think it admits of historical proof that the Church of Rome has shrunk with the greatest timidity from exercising this gift of infallibility on any question which had not already settled itself without her help, and that on several occasions, where the Pope ventured to make decisions, these decisions are now known to have been wrong, and the case has to be met by pitiable evasions. [172] When we find in the bosom of the Church of Rome disputes and perplexities, as in other Churches; that the infallible authority is not invoked to solve them; that its interference is late and vacillating, and sometimes

erroneous, have we not a right to conclude that the Church of Rome herself does not believe in the infallibility which she claims? [173]

7. If you are fully persuaded that a man on any subject knows a great deal more than yourself, you do not want to stop his mouth. The more he speaks the better you are pleased, and you willingly give up your own previous opinion when he tells you it is wrong. It is quite different when a man who is your superior in authority wants to interfere with your opinions on a subject which you believe he knows no more of than yourself. Then you want him to hold his tongue. If he does speak, you, perhaps, refuse to listen to him, and if he sees that you are likely not to be afraid to make your dissent public, then, if he wants his authority to be respected, he will probably have the good sense to discover that to hold his tongue is the most discreet course. You may test in this way whether the Church of Rome believes in her own infallibility. Do the members of that church show that they believe they have got an infallible guide, who on things of faith knows much better than themselves; and do they accordingly, when they have a theological problem, meekly come to him to be told the solution of it, or do they work out the problem for themselves, and merely invoke the higher authority to reduce their opponents to submission? And does the higher authority himself speak with the confidence of superior knowledge, or rather, with the caution of one who knows that his subjects would not believe in him if he pronounced their opinions to be wrong, and who must take care not to strain his authority too far, lest he should cause a revolt? Examine the history of any dispute in the Roman communion, and you will find that the heads of the Roman Church act exactly as the leading members of the Synod of the Church of Ireland would act in a like case, neither showing any belief in their own infallibility themselves, nor any expectation that their followers would believe it; proscribing only such opinions as had become offensive to the great majority of their body, but restrained by a wholesome fear of schism from straining their authority too far. [178-79] It is clear that the pope does not really believe in his own infallibility. [215]

a. Even if the pope had faith in his own infallibility, he had no confidence that his people had, and so had to consider the dangers of a schism that might result from an unacceptable decision. [258-59]

b. Distress at an ex cathedra decision, and unwillingness to accept it, is very inconsistent on the part of a "Catholic," and very wrong. [259] Catholics who have no real faith in the Pope's infallibility have no right to complain if other people think so too. [260]

8. Men impatient of doubt are eager for some guide who can tell them with absolute certainty which is in the right; and when such a guide is offered them in the Church of Rome, they gladly accept the offer without too rigid inquiry as to her power to fulfil her promises. But what must be their disappointment when they discover that she has no rule for determining controversies save that by which non-theological disputes are terminated; namely, she lets the disputants fight it out: if owing to the number, or ability of its advocates, one side gets the predominance she will give it encouragement; and if within 400 years, more or less, its opponents are reduced to absolute insignificance, then she will pronounce their opinion false. Such an authority as this no more deserves to be called a guide than, to use an illustration employed by Professor Huxley on a different subject, a coach dog deserves to be called a guide, who watches which way the machine is about to turn, and then runs on loudly barking before it. [261]

The Fall of Liberius

G. I come now to the Arian controversy and the fall of Liberius. [425]

1. Liberius, to his credit, made at first a noble resistance to the pressure put on him by the Arian Emperor Constantius. He defied his threats and submitted to exile; but in his banishment he was purposely insulated from other confessors. His Church at Rome was committed to another, Felix, who was consecrated by three Arian bishops. And it was this which seems more than anything else to have wrought on the constancy of Liberius—he being separated from his see, and knowing that his place there was occupied by another. After two years' banishment he seems willing to submit to anything in order to obtain restoration. Jerome tells us that Fortunatian, bishop of Aquileai, who had lapsed in Arianism, seduced him and constrained him to the subscription of heresy. He became the bearer of the letter of Liberius to the emperor. The heretical creed was offered to Liberius by Demophilus of Constantinople, one of the worst of the Arians. Liberius writes to the Arians as his most beloved brethren the presbyters and his fellow-bishops, the bishops of the East. He apologizes to the bishops for ever having defended Athanasius, on the ground that bishop Julius, his predecessor, had so done; "but having learned," he says, "when it pleased God, that you have condemned him justly, I assented to your sentence. So, then, Athanasius being removed from the communion of us all, so that I am not even to receive his letters, I say that I am quite at peace and concord with you all, and with all the Eastern bishops through the provinces. But that you may know better that in this letter I speak in true faith the same as my common lord and brother, Demophilus, who was so good as to vouchsafe to exhibit your Catholic creed, which at Sirmium was by many of our brethren and fellow-bishops considered, set forth, and received by all present: this I received with willing mind, contradicted in nothing. To it I gave my assent: this I follow; this is held by me." [426] St. Hilary interrupts the account thrice with the words, "This is Arian faithlessness;" "anathema, I say to thee, Liberius and thy associates;" "again, and a third time, anathema to the prevaricator Liberius." [426-27]

2. One of the apologies made for Liberius' prevarication is that he erred only as a private doctor, and not as the teacher of the Church. Exactly the opposite I believe to be the case. I do not think there is any evidence to lead us to think that in his private capacity he thought less highly of our Lord than any of us do. In his heart, I doubt not, he condemned Arianism. It was in his official letters, addressed to all the bishops of the East, and intended for publication by them, that he gave to Arianism all the weight of his official position, treating the questions that had been raised about our Saviour's person as matters on which different opinions might be held without necessitating any breach of communion. Take, however, the most favourable view of his conduct, and it is plain that in the Arian dispute it was not the bishop of Rome who was the teacher and guide of the Church: that duty was performed by Athanasius, the bishop of Alexandria. [429]

#### Zosimus and the Pelagian Heresy

H. We come now to the Pelagian controversy, and have to inquire whether it was the bishop of Rome who, on the questions then at issue, taught the Church how to believe. [430]

1. An African council had condemned Pelagius; but he had been pronounced orthodox by another council at Diospolis in Palestine. The African bishops appealed to Rome, and obtained Pope Innocent's approval of their decisions. But a letter and confession of faith, which Pelagius sent to Rome, did not arrive until after Innocent's death, and the question came for further hearing before his successor, Zosimus. Caelestius, the doctrinal ally of Pelagius, appeared in person at Rome, and, having made his profession of faith, was carefully cross-examined by the Pope. Zosimus arrived at the conclusion that Caelestius and Pelagius had been unjustly accused; and he wrote to the African bishops two letters

expressing this opinion—the first after his interview with Caelestius, the other after receiving the letter of Pelagius. He strongly censures the two bishops, Hetos and Lazarus, who had played the part of accusers, describing them as turbulent mischief makers, whose own election to the episcopate had been annulled, and whom he had excommunicated. He lectures the African bishops on the duty of not being hasty in believing evil of their neighbours. He only wishes they could have been present to hear the professions of Caelestius and Pelagius. Those who had been there had been moved almost to tears that men of such perfect orthodoxy ("abolutae fidei") should have been so unjustly defamed. [430-31]

2. Notwithstanding, the African bishops stood firm, and in full council passed canons condemning anew the Pelagian errors. Nor did they rely on spiritual weapons only; for an interference of the civil power was obtained, subjecting Pelagius and his adherents to severe penalties, including that of banishment. [431]

3. Then the Pope gave way, and by timely yielding has escaped the stigma of heresy. The accepted Roman Catholic theory is that Zosimus was an orthodox man who, although he fancied he had fully examined into the question, had allowed his simplicity to be imposed on by the cunning of the heretics, until the clear-sighted African bishops set him straight. Suppose we accept this view, yet still we must ask the question, Who then fulfilled the office of guide to the Church? Was it the pope who taught the African bishops, or they who taught him? When I observe how they refused to accept the voice of the oracle until the oracle had given the answer they desired, I am reminded of having heard of a man who never trusted his judgment when he had to make a practical decision, but always tossed up. If the result agreed with his own inclinations he acted on it confidently, feeling that he was not gratifying his own wishes, but obeying the guidance of the lot. If the result was not what he liked, he tossed again. [431]

#### The Condemnation of Honorius

I. The claims of the pope to be the guide of the Church could hardly fall lower than at the sixth council. One of the acts of that council states: "with these we likewise provide that Honorius, who was bishop of Rome, should be cast forth from the Church of God, and anathematized; because we find by his writings to Sergius that he followed his mind in all things, and confirmed the impious dogmas." In another part of the proceedings, where the heretics and their patrons are anathematized by name, we have: "Anathema to the heretic Theodorus: anathema to the heretic Cyrus: anathema to the heretic Honorius;" and this anathema is repeated in two or three other parts of the proceedings. [433] [Honorius was condemned for his views on the Monothelite controversy.]

1. There is an epistle of Pope Leo II confirming the acts of this general council, in which, after anathematizing Theodore, Cyrus, Sergius, and others, he adds, "also Honorius, who did not illuminate this apostolic see with the doctrine of apostolic tradition, but permitted her who was undefiled to be polluted by profane teaching." This condemnation is repeated in the second Council of Nicaea, counted by Roman Catholics as the seventh general. [433] The council reckoned as the eighth general also condemns Honorius. [434]

2. The profession of faith made by the popes on their day of election, from the sixth to the ninth century, contains an assent to the anathema passed by the fathers of the sixth general council on the other Monothelites, and "on Honorius, who fomented their detestable teaching." [434]

3. The condemnation of Honorius was inserted in the Roman breviaries down to the end of the sixteenth century. It has been left out of those published since; but the mere attempt to drop his condemnation out of sight is not enough for the present generation. 1434]

4. We have no interest in debating the personal orthodoxy of Honorius, or in trying him for heresy twelve centuries after his death. The question which has importance for our times is not whether this or that pope was a heretic, but whether it is possible for a pope to be a heretic. The case of Honorius shows that as late as the seventh century no suspicion has entered the mind of the Church that it was not. We need not go behind the acclamations of the council, "Anathema to the heretic Sergius, anathema to the heretic Honorius." If these anathemas are not conclusive against the individual, they are conclusive against the pope. They prove to demonstration that whether Honorius personally deserved condemnation or not, his official position was not regarded in men's minds then, either as securing him against the possibility of falling into heresy, or as protecting him against condemnation if he did. [441 ]

a. When it was suggested that we might content ourselves with the guidance of the Holy Scriptures, Romanist advocates have replied, that though the Bible may be infallible it is not an infallible guide: that is to say, it does not protect those who follow it from danger of going wrong. Surely now we may say as much for the pope. Let him be infallible if you please; let him be in his heart of the most admirable orthodoxy, still he is not an infallible guide if by his public utterances he leads Christian people wrong. [441-42]

b. It is beyond controversy that cases have occurred when Christian people would have gone wrong if they followed the guidance of the bishop of Rome. Even if it were possible to demonstrate that no bishop of Rome had ever entertained sentiments that were to most rigidly orthodox, it remains proved that the pope is not an infallible guide. L442]

## Conclusion

J. We may point out instance after instance in which papal authority has been given to decisions known to be erroneous, and in each case some ingenious attempt may be made to show that the attribute of infallibility did not attach to the erroneous decision; but sooner or later men must awake to see that the result of all this special pleading is that, whereas they expected to find a guide who would always lead them right, they have got instead a guide who can find some plausible excuse to make every time he leads them wrong. [vi]

1. Our very existence proves that if Christ saw fit to found an infallible Church He did not see fit to give her unmistakable credentials. He might, if He had chose, have made her Divine commission as plain as that the sun is in heaven; but, instead of that, He has left the matter, to say the least, so doubtful, that more than half of those who own Christ as their Lord reject the authority of him who pretends to be the Saviour's mouthpiece; and of those who in name acknowledge that authority, it is safe to say that more than half give only nominal submission. It is safe to say it, because it has been the theme of constant lamentations, in the encyclicals of the late Pope and the present, how his authority is resisted in Italy itself and in other countries professedly Roman Catholic. [ 73]

2. There is one piece of vitally important knowledge which Roman Catholics must own God has not given men never failing means for attaining: I mean the knowledge what is the true Church. They must own

that the institution of an infallible Church has not prevented the world from being overrun with heresy. [99-100]

3. In whatever else these Churches disagree they agree in denying that Rome has made out her claim to infallibility and supremacy. It is plain, then, that God has not endowed His Church with credentials so convincing as irresistibly to command men's assent; and according to Roman theory, He works a stupendous miracle in vain. To guard Christians against error, He works a perpetual miracle in order to provide them with an infallible guide to truth, and yet He neglects to furnish that guide with sufficient proof of his infallibility. Nay, He allows that infallibility to be wielded by men who have made themselves so distrusted through deceit and imposture and other evil practices, that a prejudice is excited against their pretensions. This one consideration is sufficient to overturn the a priori proof that there must be an infallible guide. [100]

1. If a person is determined to believe in Infallibility he will do so in defiance of all reason. There are those who have no difficulty in believing that the decisions of a council are infallibly true, even when it has been shown that the arguments which induced the council to come to these decisions are hopelessly bad. Such persons will not be shaken in their belief in the correctness of the pope's decisions by any proof that he has been led to them on false information. Yet if anyone tells us that it is incredible that God would leave His Church without an infallible guide, we can reply that it is quite as incredible that He would permit His appointed guide to proceed by such methods as ought, without a miracle, to lead him to false conclusions, and would take no heed to guard him against giving credence to forgery and lies. [416]

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