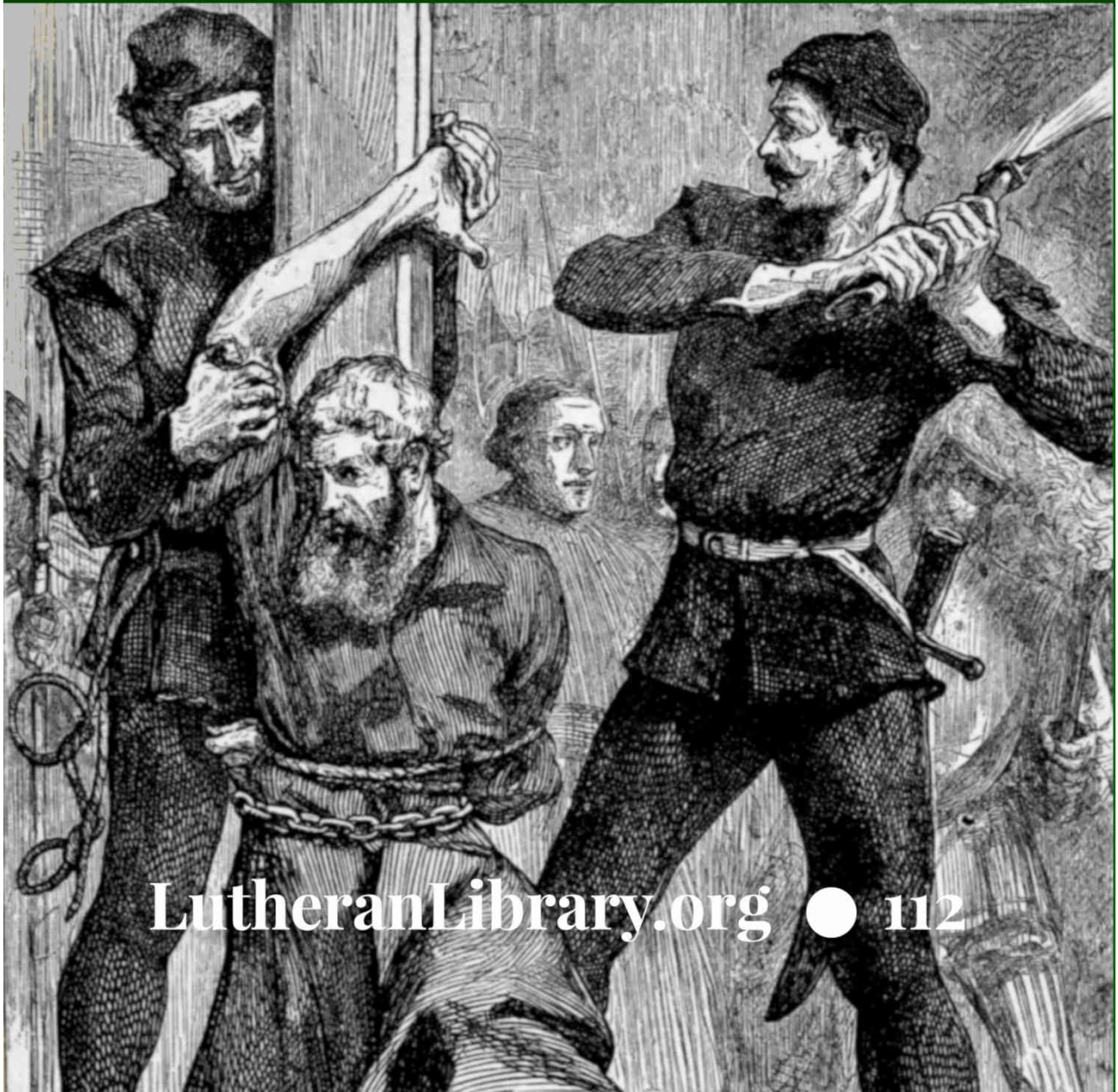


Emanuel Greenwald

Discourses on Romanism and the Reformation



Discourses on Romanism and the Reformation

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Discourses on Romanism and the Reformation

By Rev. Emanuel Greenwald, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF
THE HOLY TRINITY, LANCASTER, PA.

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Preface by Lutheran Librarian

In republishing this book, we seek to introduce this author to a new generation of those seeking authentic spirituality.

Emanuel Greenwald, D. D. (1811-1885) was “a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.” He trained under the renowned Dr. David F. Schaeffer, “walking 14,000 miles in getting his education”.

Rev. Greenwald was the first president of the Board of Trustees of Capitol University, Columbus and established the first English Lutheran church of Columbus. As first editor of the *Lutheran Standard* he fought the “New Measures”. He served the latter part of his life as pastor in Easton, PA, and as president of the East Pennsylvania Synod. “Yet, warrior as he was to the end, battling during his last days against vice, Atheism and Romanism, he never forfeited the respect of good men by coarseness of language or unseemly ebullitions of temper. Like John, he was a ‘son of thunder,’ and at the same time a ‘beloved disciple’”.

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Preface

THE OCCASION which led to the preparation and delivery of these Discourses, was the advent of a Jesuit Missionary, and the holding of a Jesuit "Mission" in Lancaster in the month of September 1879, at which the doctrines and character of Luther and the Reformation were severely criticized. The "Mission" was conducted with unusual eloquence and skill. It awakened a considerable spirit of inquiry in the community. Large audiences, even of Protestants, thronged to hear, and a few were misled by the ingenious arguments employed, to adopt the sentiments advocated. It seemed that the attack upon the Lutheran Reformation, Protestant doctrines, and the Protestant Churches, should not be permitted to pass unnoticed. A course of Sunday Evening Sermons was, therefore, inaugurated, and for seven Sundays, beginning October 5th, the large Church of the Holy Trinity was crowded each evening with a most attentive and deeply interested audience. The Vestry of the Church, as well as many others, have earnestly advised the publication of the Sermons. They are, therefore, submitted to the public in the hope that they may serve to promote in some degree, the cause of Evangelical truth, and with the fervent prayer that the blessing of our dear Lord Jesus Christ may accompany them.

EMANUEL GREENWALD

Lancaster, Pa., November 17, 1879.

1. St. Paul's Church Of Rome

Romans 1:7. – To all that be in Rome

HAVE THE READERS of the New Testament ever considered the bearing which the fact referred to in the text that St. Paul wrote this Epistle to the Church at Rome, has upon the claim of the Papacy that St. Peter was its Bishop, and Pope? The only Epistle to the Romans which the Word of God contains, was written, not by St. Peter, but by St. Paul. Let us look at some facts of great significance. We wish to make the text the basis of some remarks upon the relation of St. Peter and St. Paul to the Church at Rome.

First: We do not certainly know that St. Peter ever was at Rome at all. We do know that St. Paul was there. No one doubts St. Paul's having been at Rome. There are great doubts whether St. Peter ever was there. Romanists claim that tradition proves that St. Peter was at Rome. But many very learned men, after having carefully weighed all the evidences in favor of this tradition, have come to the conclusion that St. Peter never was at Rome. Men so eminent for critical research as Spanheim of Holland, Flaccius of Germany, and Barrow of England, together with many other eminent divines, maintain that St. Peter never was at Rome. The Waldenses, an ancient Christian Church in Italy who date back their history many centuries before the Reformation, positively deny that St. Peter ever was at Rome. To these may be added such names as Marsilius, Michael, Salmasius, Baur, Schwegler, De Wette. The distinguished Historian Neander, who had been at first inclined to accept the tradition in favor of Peter's residence at Rome, on a careful reexamination of the arguments in favor, and in opposition to it, expresses himself doubtfully about it. Even such historians as accept it are not confident about it. Dr. Schaff, in his History of the Apostolic Church, after sifting, and comparing, and analyzing it, comes to the meager conclusion that Peter was not the founder of the Church at Rome, that he was not the first bishop of Rome, that he did

not go there in A. D. 42 or 43 as Romanists claim, that he was not bishop of Rome 23 or 25 years as they pretend, that he must have come to Rome in the last half of A. D. 63, or beginning of A. D. 64, and that “we can hardly extend his sojourn there beyond a year.” The trifling remark of the erratic Whiston, about “weak Protestants,” who deny that Peter was at Rome, is deserving of no attention whatever. Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Papias, and Justin Martyr, of the Apostolic age, are appealed to as proof. But Clement says nothing whatever about Peter having been at Rome. The word used by Ignatius, that is pressed for this purpose, by no means necessitates his personal presence there. The testimony of Papias is confessedly obscure, and is not found at all in the fragment of his writings that has come down to us. Justin Martyr makes not the most distant allusion to Peter’s being at Rome. Irenaeus and Caius of the 2nd Century ascribe the founding of the Church at Rome as much to Paul as to Peter, and mention no time when either was there. The other earlier writers quoted as proof, such as Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria. Cyprian, and Origen, lived in the 3rd Century. Eusebius, Jerome, and Augustine were all of the 4th Century after Christ. They almost uniformly mention, not Peter only, but Paul also, in connection with the Church at Rome, whether as founding it, as being the bishop of it. or as suffering martyrdom for it. When all that these writers testify in this matter, is carefully weighed, and all their errors and fabulous stories are eliminated, the whole amounts only to a probable conjecture, not to absolute certainty.

But there is no uncertainty about St. Paul’s residence at Rome. No one has ever intimated any doubt, even the smallest, about St. Paul’s having been there. Both Scripture and tradition make such plain and direct mention of St. Paul’s being at Rome, that no one has ever had, for a moment, any doubt about that fact.

But the question of the divine appointment of the papacy is not settled by the mere fact of St. Peter’s having been in Rome. He may have been in Rome, and have been pastor of that church, and have been put to death there, and yet not have been Pope. We may concede this, and still reject the papacy. Our Romanist friends know this very well. St. Paul was certainly there, was the minister of the church there, suffered martyrdom there, and yet they do not admit that these acknowledged facts prove that St. Paul was Pope. But, to use the language of Rev. Dr. Butler, Prof. of Ecclesiastical

History in the Divinity School of Philadelphia, uttered when standing in the Legation of the United States, at Rome,

“If the Papacy had not been a gradual growth, rather than a manufacture or an invention, it would seem as if St. Paul and not St. Peter would have been designated as the Prince of the Apostles, and head of the Church, with his see at Rome. A far more powerful argument, independent of Romish tradition, could certainly be constructed for the claims of the former than of the latter.”¹

St. Paul is expressly, and by way of eminence, called “the Apostle of the Gentiles,” that is, of the nations. St. Peter was never so called. If St. Peter was Pope, the title would have been applied to him rather than to any other of the apostles. But it is never applied to him. St. Peter is never called “the apostle of the nations,” as he really would have been, if Pope, Vicegerent of God, over the whole Christian Church, and Vicar of Christ on the earth. St. Paul is so called, not St. Peter.

Of St. Paul it is expressly said that he had “the care of all the Churches.” This was never said of St. Peter. He never had the care of all the Churches. If Pope, the care of all the Churches would have, by virtue of his office, devolved on him. As this was never said of him, it was never true of him, and therefore, he never was Pope. But if this would have been said of St. Peter, as it is said of St. Paul, we would never hear the last of this passage from the lips of Romish priests, as proof that St. Peter was the first Pope, and as the head of the Christian Church in the whole world, and Vicar of Christ, was the shepherd of all the Churches. But this is said of St. Paul, not of St. Peter. The papists have certainly made a mistake. It must be St. Paul whom they mean, and who was the first pope.

St. Paul traversed nearly the whole of the Roman world, planted churches every where, visited country after country, and spake personally to the churches every where with the most positive apostolic authority. Having the care of all the churches, he acted as general superintendent over the churches, and was literally the Catholic Bishop of the whole Church. Of St. Peter’s travels we only certainly know that he went from Jerusalem to Joppa, from Joppa to Cesarea, from Cesarea back again to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to Antioch. And ancient Church tradition makes it very

uncertain whether St. Peter was ever out of Palestine, or farther than Asia Minor. He was “the apostle of the Jews,” and to the Jews in their own land, he mainly confined his labors. The great missionary apostle who had the care of all the churches, in all the nations, was St. Paul. He presided with wonderful zeal and power over all the church. If there was a first Pope among, and over the apostles, and over the Church, it must surely have been St. Paul.

St. Paul, feeling that he was the Apostle, not of one country, but of many countries, wrote fourteen Epistles, and sent them almost broadcast over the widely extended countries of Asia and Europe. Peter wrote only two Epistles, and those only to the “strangers, or dispersed Jewish Christians.” Paul’s Epistles are the Encyclical Letters that one who felt that “the care of all the Churches,” rested upon him, would naturally feel called on to address to them. He was a vigilant Catholic Bishop of the entire Church Catholic. He had a weighty charge. He felt his responsibility. He was faithful to the functions of his great office. He superintended with consummate ability and vigilance, his vast diocese.

Particularly, St. Paul addressed the only Epistle to the Romans that we have. The language and tone of the Epistle are such as one would use who felt “that he had over them a divinely commissioned superintendence.” St. Peter sent no Epistle to the Church at Rome. He did not care for that Church as St. Paul did. St. Paul was their bishop, and cared for their spiritual interests with much faithfulness. We fear that Rome has made a mistake. Not St. Peter, but St. Paul must have had the headship of the Church, and been the vicar of Christ, and as such, was the Bishop of the Church at Rome.

St. Peter was married. His wife’s name, we are informed by St. Clement of Alexandria, was Perpetua, and that they had a daughter born to them, whose name was Petronella. His wife traveled with him on his missionary tours, as we learn from 1 Cor. 9:5. It is also said that he had a son whose name was Marcus, and he calls him at the end of his first Epistle “Marcus my son.” Now, the Popes must not marry. They are compelled to be celibates. The Papists tell us they were always celibates. They certainly have made a mistake. It was St. Paul that was unmarried, and had no wife. St. Peter had a wife and children. St. Peter like Luther, or Luther like St. Peter, thought with the almighty God himself, that it is “not good for

man to be alone.” Romanists contradict this, and think they know better. But as between St. Paul and St. Peter they certainly have made a mistake.

St. Paul in this Epistle to the church that was at Rome, makes no allusion to the presence of St. Peter there, as Pope, or otherwise. In the last chapter of this Epistle, he seems to greet by name, nearly every one he knew that lived at Rome. He designates by name twenty-nine different persons, besides “brethren, and saints, and households,” but never once does he name St. Peter. This is strange. The Romanists tell us that St. Peter became Bishop of Rome in the year of our Lord 43, and was Pope at Rome 23 years. St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans was written A. D. 58. If St. Peter was Pope, he had been Pope at Rome fifteen years, when this Epistle was sent to Rome by St. Paul, and Rome was St. Peter’s papal residence. If the tradition, on which Rome relies, is true, St. Peter was now not only Bishop of the Church at Rome, but the divinely appointed head of the whole Christian Church in the world. Is it supposable that St. Paul would write an Epistle to the Church at Rome, address it “to all that be in Rome,” send greetings in it, to more than twenty-nine persons by name, and perhaps to a score of others to whom he specially refers without giving their names, and yet make not a single allusion even, to their bishop of fifteen years’ standing, and who was at the same time, the Pope of the whole of Christendom? Would not this be unaccountably strange? It is also worthy of remark, that whilst he so offensively ignores the Pope who lived among them, and who was over them by divine appointment, he arrogates to himself the authority to instruct and direct them. He does all this over the head of St. Peter, the Pope, who was among them, and had been for fifteen years. Would not such conduct be not only discourteous, but rebellious? It was his duty, as a loyal subject of the Pope, to recognize him in some way, in an Epistle addressed to the Pope’s particular flock. It is absolutely incredible that St. Paul should not have recognized him either as Pope of the whole Christian Church, or as Bishop of the particular Church at Rome, or in some way alluded to him, in this Epistle, if St. Peter was then at Rome in either of these capacities. The Romanists certainly are mistaken. St. Peter never was at Rome – certainly he was not Pope – he positively was neither Pope, nor present at Rome when St. Paul wrote this Epistle to the Church in that city.

It is deserving of particular notice that in this Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul claims for himself the office of the Apostle and bishop of the Gentile churches. He does it in three different passages of this Epistle. He says: "I speak unto you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles; I magnify my office." Oh how this passage would be quoted, and reiterated, and rung out into the world, with all possible eloquence, by the priestly conductors of "Missions" throughout Christendom, if it could be found in one of St. Peter's Epistles! It would be regarded by them as proof positive that St. Peter was Pope. But St. Peter never makes such a claim. But St. Paul does. Why is it not quoted as proof positive that St. Paul was Pope? Ah, this does not suit their purpose. It would contradict the groundless, unscriptural invention, which the Romanists have manufactured to bolster up their system.

Look still further at what St. Paul says concerning himself:

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God, concerning his Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name."

These are remarkable words. Christ gave him his office, it was the apostleship, it was to extend to all nations, those nations must render him obedience, he had charge of the faith, he acted in Christ's name. Could any claim be greater? If St. Peter had used these words concerning himself, we Protestants would never hear the last of them. The words, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church," which are so constantly pressed, and misconstrued, and misapplied, to bolster up the papacy, would be almost wholly laid aside and forgotten, and we would scarcely hear them, if such a passage as this of St. Paul's could be found in one of St. Peter's Epistles. It would be such a strong argument, too, that I know not how we could gainsay it. But because it is St. Paul and not St. Peter that uses this language, and makes this claim, we never hear any thing of it from priestly lips.

Read again from this epistle "to all that be in Rome." After saying that he had received "the apostleship for the obedience of the faith among all nations," which is making the widest possible claim for his office, he adds,

“among whom are ye also, the called of Jesus Christ.” Having said these words, he invoked upon them “Grace and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,” the true apostolic benediction, worthy of being uttered by the head of all the churches. Here he directly declares that the Church at Rome was within his ecclesiastical province, that he had jurisdiction over them, that they must render him “obedience in the faith,” that he was specially their apostle, that they must duly heed what he was about to say to them, and that in virtue of his authority over them as their apostle, he gives them the apostolic blessing. Now, all this would be very strange if St. Peter was at that very time present with them, their bishop and Pope, the head of all the churches, in the world, that all Christendom owed him obedience as Pontiff, and that it was his especial prerogative as Pope, to dispense the grace conveyed by pronouncing his blessing as Vicar of Christ among men. Was there a schism in the papacy? Were there two popes? Did both Paul and Peter claim the obedience of the Romans? Was there a quarrel between them? Did St. Paul write to Rome, and come to Rome, and both in his Epistle to the Romans, and in the Acts of the Apostles, where his visit to Rome is recorded in full, totally ignore St. Peter, say nothing about him, make no allusion to him, render him not even common courtesy, pass him disrespectfully by, and claim for himself the entire obedience of the members of the Church at Rome? Did he do all this to beard St. Peter in his papal palace, and for the purpose of having a fight with him? By no means. No one ever dreams of such a thing. But how else can we think about St. Paul’s claims, and St. Paul’s procedure, if at that very time St. Peter was at Rome, had been their pastor and bishop for fifteen years, and was the divinely appointed head of the whole Christian Church in the world? The only sensible conclusion we can come to is that St. Peter was not at Rome, was not their pastor or bishop, was not Pope or the divinely appointed head of the whole Christian Church. The Romanists certainly have made a mistake.

St. Paul’s pretensions and claims for himself, are still more noticeable when he says in this Epistle to the Romans: “Nevertheless, brethren, I have written unto you the more boldly, in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given unto me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified of the Holy Ghost. I have therefore, whereof I may glory, through Jesus Christ, in

these things that pertain to God.” Here he repeats the claim he had made before. He was the minister or apostle of God to the Gentile nations and therefore to them at Rome, this office was given him not of his fellow disciples, or of the church, but of God, he dispensed the grace of the Gospel of God by virtue of this office, through his ministrations the Gentiles were brought in and were acceptable to God, that as having this apostleship and ministry he had written to put them in mind, and in doing so he spoke boldly as became one who had such a high office, and such apostolic authority. If St. Peter had written those words and made this claim for himself, the Romanists would every where quote them as proof positive that he was the Pope, that Jesus Christ had given him universal jurisdiction, and clothed him with papal authority, that God had specially put him at the head of the Christian Church among all the nations of the world, that no faith and worship would be acceptable that failed to acknowledge such headship in St. Peter, that no Gospel of God was canonically ministered, the authority for which did not come officially by ordination from our Holy Father, Pope Peter I., and that it would be Protestant heresy in any man to ignore his claims, and arrogate to himself the apostleship, and speak to the church at Rome about obedience to the faith which he preached, and refuse to bow the knee before him, and kiss his toe, and call him “our Lord God the Pope,” the infallible head of the Christian Church in the whole world, and the vicar and vicegerent of Jesus Christ on the earth! But as these are St. Paul’s words, the Romanists say nothing about them. It is wondrously strange that St. Paul should send such an encyclical letter to Rome itself, wholly ignoring St. Peter, who had been according to their false traditions, not only at Rome when this letter of St. Paul’s reached that city, but had been their bishop for fifteen years, and had been the divinely appointed and universally acknowledged Pope from the time that Christ said to him, “Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church.” It is passing strange. Was Paul a Protestant who protested against Peter’s arrogant claims? Or was he a heretical Lutheran who ignored the Pope altogether, paid no regard to his anathemas, burned his bulls if he had the opportunity, and magnified his own office as a minister called of God, and owing allegiance, not to the Pope, but to Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the Church, to whom be glory forever? Rome has surely made a mistake. Rome has forgotten. It was St. Paul, and not St. Peter, whom Jesus Christ had appointed to the apostleship over them.

When we examine at some length, the kind of instruction and admonition which St. Paul gives to the Church at Rome, in this Epistle to them, we note still further the claim to authority which he makes, as the Apostle who had the great care of their faith and life. He says: "I thank my God through Jesus Christ, for you, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Son, that without ceasing, I make mention of you in my prayers: making request, if by any means, now at length, I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God, to come to you; for I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted with you by the mutual faith of you and me. Now, I would not have you ignorant, brethren, how that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, but was let hitherto, that I might have some fruit among you also, as among other Gentiles." These would be strange words to write to a congregation, over the head of their pastor, who was the Pope, or Vicar of Christ on earth, and had been for fifteen years. If St. Peter was at Rome when this letter arrived, and was read to them, he must have stared in utter astonishment, at the bold presumption of a man who could so coolly usurp St. Peter's office, take his place, and talk about imparting to them some spiritual gift, and having some fruit among them as among other nations, as if St. Peter, the Pope, had failed to give them all that they needed in the way of infallible doctrines, and gifts, and blessings, for the very purpose of imparting which he had been made Pope, and had his papal residence among them. It is wonderful to observe the fashion in which St. Paul sets St. Peter aside, and assumes himself "the duty of oversight and ministrations." "It is incredible that St. Paul should have written in this strain if St. Peter had been bishop of Rome, and Vicar of Christ."

Let us now go still further into the interior of this great Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, and learn what were the doctrines which he impressed with the whole force of his character, upon their minds and hearts. We may say in very few words, that the one object which St. Paul kept in view from the beginning to the end of this Epistle, was, to teach, and defend, and illustrate the working of the doctrine of justification by faith. He first proves that the self-righteous Pharisee, and the proud and haughty Greek, were alike sinners, under condemnation, and with no hope of justification by their own works. The effort to convince them of this

humiliating truth, as put forth in the first part of the Epistle, is a master piece of successful reasoning.

Then the statement of Christ's redemption by His vicarious obedience of the broken law, and by His substituted suffering on the cross, as furnishing the only ground of hope for the remission of sins, and the believer's justification before God, on that ground alone, is made with a clearness, and directness of application, that places St. Paul in the front rank of profound divines.

Hear his eloquent words: "The just shall live by faith." "We know that what things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, for all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely (without merit) by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Here is justification not by works but by faith alone – not by merit but by grace alone – not by our own righteousness but by the righteousness of Christ alone, which is alone acquired by faith. The several parts of the true evangelical doctrine of justification by faith are so clearly stated in this passage, that there can be no misunderstanding it. Justification is our acquittal before God's judgment. Acquittal requires perfect innocence or righteousness as the ground of it. We are not righteous but guilty. We are therefore under condemnation. The perfect righteousness on the ground of which we are justified is not our righteousness, but Christ's righteousness. It is declared or reckoned to the believer. Faith is therefore the means or instrument of its appropriation. The result is the remission of sins, and our acceptance, and peace with God. This faith, of course, must be a living faith, and good works are not its life, but the evidences of its life, and they will necessarily follow, not as

procuring our justification, but as proving the fact of our faith, for a dead faith which hath not works, is no faith. This is the Gospel which St. Paul preached to the Church at Rome, by this Epistle to the Romans, many chapters of which are employed by him in stating, defending, applying, and answering objections to it.

It is deserving of distinct remark that he condemns in the strongest terms the persons who reject this doctrine of justification by faith alone. He mourns with unutterable sorrow over those of his own countrymen, who “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

Such is the doctrine of St. Paul as he taught it to the Romans. It is that “Christ alone, received by faith, is the righteousness of man.” But such is not the doctrine taught and held by those who now constitute the Church of Rome. St. Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, and true Vicar of Christ, who cared for all the churches, and kept them in the true faith of Christ, made this doctrine ring out in eloquent tones that reverberated among the seven hills of Rome. And the same doctrine was sacredly held, and cherished, and trusted in, by the Church of Rome then, by Clement, St. Paul’s successor, and for several centuries afterwards. The present Pope who claims to be the infallible vicegerent of Christ, directly contradicts St. Paul, teaches another faith, another way of justification, and thunders forth the severest anathemas against those who believe the doctrine of St. Paul, that we are justified by Christ’s righteousness alone appropriated by faith. St. Paul’s way of justification, and the Pope’s way of justification, are quite different things.

Luther in his Commentary on Galatians has very clearly stated the doctrine of the Romanists on this subject. In remarking on Gal. 2:16 he says:

“Wherefore, the wicked and pernicious opinion of the papists is utterly to be condemned, who attribute the merit of grace and remission of sins to the work wrought. For they say that a good work before grace is able to obtain grace of congruence, (which they call *meritum de congruo*) because it is meet that God should reward such

a work. But when grace is obtained, the work following deserveth everlasting life of due debt and worthiness, (which they call *meritum de condigno*.) As for example, if a man, being in deadly sin, without grace, do a good work of his own natural inclination; that is, if he say or hear a mass, or give alms, and such like, this man of congruence deserveth grace. When he hath thus obtained grace, he doth now a work, which of worthiness deserveth everlasting life. For the first, God is no debtor; but because he is just and good, it behoveth him to approve such a good work, though it be done in deadly sin, and to give grace for such a service. But when grace is obtained, God is become a debtor, and is constrained of right and duty to give eternal life. For now it is not only a work of free will, done according to the substance, but also done in grace, which maketh a man acceptable unto God, that is to say in charity.”

“This is the divinity of the anti-Christian kingdom, which here I recite, to the end that the disputation of Paul may be the better understood (for two contrary – things being set together may be the better known,) and moreover, that all men may see how far from the truth these blind guides and leaders of the blind have wandered; and how, by this wicked and blasphemous doctrine, they have not only darkened the Gospel, but have taken it clean away, and buried Christ utterly. For if I, being in deadly sin, can do any little work, which is not only acceptable in God’s sight of itself, and according to the substance, but also is able to deserve grace of congruence, and when I have received grace, I may do works according to grace; that is to say, according to charity, and get of right and duty eternal life. What need have I now of the grace of God, for forgiveness of sins, of the promise, and of the death and victory of Christ? Christ is now to me unprofitable, and his benefit of none effect; for I have free will and power to do good works, whereby I deserve grace of congruence, and afterwards, by the worthiness of my work, eternal life.”

“Hereby it plainly appeareth, that the pope, and his bishops, doctors, priests, and all his religious fraternity, had no knowledge, or regard of holy matters. For if they had seen, but, as it were, through a cloud, what Paul calleth sin, and what he calleth grace, they would

never have compelled the people to believe such abominable lies. By deadly sin, they understood only the external work committed against the law, as murder, theft, and such like. They could not see that ignorance, hatred and contempt of God in the heart, ingratitude, murmuring against God, are also deadly sins, and that the flesh cannot think, speak, or do any thing, but what is devilish, and also against God. If they had seen these mischiefs, fast rooted in the nature of man, they would never have devised such impudent and execrable dreams touching the desert of congruence and worthiness.”²

St. Paul denies that a man can obtain remission of sins by his own merit, He teaches “that believers obtain the remission of their sins through Christ, by faith alone, without any merit of their own.” In the Romish Confutation of the Augsburg Confession, delivered to the Diet at Augsburg soon after the Confession was read, June 25, 1530, they “insolently reject these two tenets: first, that we deny that man can obtain remission of his sins through his own merit; and secondly, that we hold, teach, and confess that no one is reconciled to God, or obtain remission of his sins, but through faith in Christ alone.”³ In other words, St. Paul teaches, and we hold because St. Paul teaches, that no man can obtain remission of sins through his own merit. Rome condemns this, and teaches that a man can obtain remission of sins through his own merit. St. Paul teaches, and we hold because St. Paul teaches, that no one is reconciled to God or obtains remission of his sins but through faith in Christ alone. Rome condemns this, and teaches that he can be reconciled to God and does obtain the remission of his sins, otherwise than through faith in Christ alone. Rome has sadly fallen away from St Paul’s faith. The Church at Rome as St. Paul instructed it, had the true faith. The Church of Rome as the present Popes constitute it, have another faith, condemn St. Paul’s faith, and therefore, have not the true faith. The Church at Rome as St. Paul constituted it was the true Church because it held the true faith. Rut the Church of Rome as the present Popes constitute it is not the true Church because they do not hold the true faith, reject with haughty insolence the true faith, and anathematize and condemn Lutherans, and all Protestants, who hold the true faith. The issue is directly and squarely made between St Paul’s Church of Rome, and the Pope’s Church of Rome. I hold to St. Paul’s Church of Rome. May God have mercy upon all deluded souls who hold to the Pope’s Church of Rome.

The practical religious life enjoined upon the Church at Rome by St. Paul, is equally deserving of attention, with the doctrinal instruction which he gave them. He inculcated the doctrine of justification by Christ's righteousness alone, apprehended by faith, but by a faith that worketh all manner of righteousness. When he established the doctrine in the first five chapters, so firmly that it could not be shaken, he proceeds with all his accustomed clearness and force of argument, to combat the objection that we may "continue in sin that grace may abound." In other words, that salvation by grace alone, and not by any merit of our own, does not relax the power of strict holiness in the heart, nor give license to sin. He requires absolute deadness to sin, and that "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus must make us free from the law of sin and death." The true spiritual life in the soul is Christ's life in it, the Spirit of Christ dwelling therein. He sums up the definition of true religious faith and devotion in the well known sentence: "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." His was not a religion of mere ceremony and form, of genuflection, and pilgrimage, and pictures, and processions, and images, and rosaries, and parade, and crossings, and bowings, and holy water, but of true believing, spiritual feeling, sanctified dispositions, sound devotion, genuine holiness, godly, righteous living. Such was the practical instruction which St. Paul gave to all that were in Rome.

But what is the religion that now prevails there? How are the teachings which he uttered, observed there now? We may answer by quoting at some length, from the Lectures of Dr. Butler, delivered only 17 years ago in the city of Rome, under the flag of the United States, floating over the Legation. Unless protected by that flag, the symbol of liberty and tolerance, he would not have dared to utter such sentiments, within a few rods of the Vatican, and in Rome the heart of the papal system. They were delivered at a time when things did not seem to go well with the Pope, and popery. His temporal power was in danger, and soon after he lost it altogether. He ascribed his misfortunes to the decay of faith, and the spread of irreligion among the people. From his high papal throne, overlooking his wide domain, and lamenting the desolations in his dominions, he issued, with all the pomp of papal formality, his ghostly remedy for the revival of faith and sanctity in the minds of the faithful. With all my hearer's ingenuity they could not guess what he, who claims to be the Vicar of Christ, and

Vicegerent of God over the Christian Church in the whole world, recommended in such a serious emergency as this. Let us hear Dr. Butler:

“The Church of Rome still exists. A Bishop of Rome occupies the see which seems not to have been constituted, or at least occupied, at the time in which St. Paul wrote his Epistle. A few months since he proclaimed the sorrow which he felt at the palpable decay of faith, the spread of practical irreligion, and of speculative infidelity, throughout Italy and the world. He addressed to the faithful, animated exhortations to second his efforts to win back the favor of God, and to revive faith and sanctity in the minds of men. We know, from St. Paul’s Epistle what exhortations he would have addressed to the Saints in Rome at such a crisis. He would have exhorted them to earnest prayer to the Father, through the Son, for the converting, reviving, and sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost to be poured out upon priests and people. He would have reminded them of their high privileges as the freely forgiven children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus, and of the obligation, through the constraining love of Christ, to live holily and unblamably, and in a spirit of true consecration to God and love to man. Were these, or similar, exhortations addressed by the Bishop of Rome to the saints that are in Rome?”

Nothing of the kind. Shall I tell you what was the great and powerful remedy, which the “holy Father of all the faithful,” proposed as the most effectual of all the remedies he knew, or could suggest at such a dreadful time as this? I know that the faces of Protestants will burn with shame, and even the cheeks of intelligent Romanists, ought to blush, when I name it. It was in all seriousness this:

“They were enjoined with their presence, and faith, and prayers to attend a spectacle, for healing the evils of the times and propitiating the favor of heaven. A picture of the Savior would be carried by Pope and cardinals, priests and monks, with banner and music and incense, and the pomp of gilded vestments, from the Basilica of St. John Lateran to that of Santa Maria Maggiore. It was this picture in which the hope of the restoration of faith and holiness seemed to be reposed. It was said to have been outlined by St. Luke for the Virgin Mary,

three days after Christ's ascension; to have been miraculously colored in the night; to have been carried during the siege of Titus to Pella and subsequently to Constantinople; to have been taken away in the seventh century by the persecuted Bishop of Constantinople, and consigned to the sea, over which it passed, in a perpendicular position, to Ostia, in Italy, 16 miles from Rome, in twenty-four hours, when, seeing the Pope ready to receive it upon the shore, it rose and placed itself in his hands. The Bishop of Rome's method of reviving faith and religion was the transfer of this picture from the Basilica of St John Lateran to that of Santa Maria Maggiore. It evidently differs from the method which would have been adopted by St. Paul. He knew of no such means of grace.”⁴

When the day came, it was a wonderful spectacle. It was one of the grandest of the many grand shows of the Pope, and cardinals, and priests, and monks, and people in the holy, papal city of Rome. My hearers need not fear that I am slandering the papacy by these statements. The whole took place only a little more than a dozen years ago, and during the pontificate of Pope Pius IX.

“All the statements above mentioned, elaborately and diffusely narrated, are found in a printed document, scattered all over Rome, at the time of the exposition of the picture, entitled. ‘Origine della S. Imagine’, and concluding with the words ‘Con permesso.’ The crowds who attended its transfer and its exposition were immense. During the last days the press of people toward the picture, with rosaries, crosses, jewels, handkerchiefs, books and other articles, kept two priests constantly employed in touching them to the glass in front, by which a miraculous virtue was supposed to be imparted to them; and the Swiss guard could with difficulty keep the crowd back from the altar. The exposition continued from the 6th to the 13th of September 1862.”

But was this remedy successful? Did it revive faith and piety? Did it secure the divine favor? Yes, it was thought so. They were largely proclaimed and published at the time. Dr. Butler, who was present at Rome at the time, who

made personal inquiry, and who visited the localities mentioned, makes the following statements:

“In the little town of Vico Varo, in the Sabine Mountains, in a miniature chapel, I saw, last spring, a picture of the Virgin Mary. It seems that this picture has for some months been in the habit of rolling up its eyes, and changing perceptibly its color. The eyes are not only rolled up and down, but sometimes move sideways, and occasionally the eyelashes move. This is received as evidence that the Virgin Mary has heard the supplications of the faithful, and that she will intercede with her Son to intercede with the Father to avert the evils which threaten the Church of Rome and the world, and to bestow upon them anew his blessing. Another picture in the same region makes the same miraculous manifestations. Homage to a picture of the Savior, painted by St. Luke, to act as the effectual prayer; and pictures of the Madonna, that roll their eyes up and down, and occasionally sideways, and a movement of the eyelids, as answers to the prayer, – this is the method of seeking and proclaiming spiritual blessings adopted by the present Church of Rome. Such tokens of divine favor as these, following the act of faith, of carrying in solemn state the picture from one basilica to another through the streets of Rome, are of such a kind as would not have been appreciated by St. Paul. He evidently knew nothing of such methods of reviving faith, and procuring the divine blessing.”

Let it be remembered that all this occurred, not in the middle ages, usually called the dark ages, nor in the interior of Mexico or South America among half civilized Indians, but only seventeen years ago, in the city of Rome, among polished Italians, and during the pontificate of one of the best of their popes, Pio Nono. Neither is it a Protestant slander, as such statements are often called by Romanists, for the facts are so notorious that they cannot be for a moment disputed.

“In view of these new methods of the Church of Rome, it is scarcely necessary to ask if the truths which St. Paul so earnestly labored to implant have lived, and made thrive, and borne holy fruits where they were so early introduced? Alas! there is not one of them

which the Church of Rome accepts. There is not one of them which she does not reject. Justification by faith only, over which holy Paul lifted a glowing anthem, Rome visits with anathema. How is it with the errors against which St. Paul so strenuously labored? Rome adopts them. She preaches the merit which Paul denounced. And what in the place of Paul's fundamentals are hers? Dogmas of which there is not the shadow of a trace in his Epistle. The supremacy of St. Peter and his Vicarate of Christ, Transubstantiation, the Immaculate conception of the Virgin, Papal Infallibility, the Invocation of Saints, Purgatory, Auricular Confession, Masses for the dead, Indulgences, the worship of Mary, repeating Pater Nosters and Ave Marias and counting them by the beads on the Rosaries, Penances, Works of Supererrogation, Meriting remission by Works, – these are the chief doctrines of the true faith, and the chief works of the true Church as Rome teaches."Of all these fundamental dogmas, we find in the Epistle of St. Paul, which he intended to be the chart and guide of the Church of Rome through all time, that there is not a word – not a word! Simply to state such a fact is more impressive than it could be made by the most mournful and impassioned declamation."

Dr. Butler concludes his Lecture with the following very beautiful and striking reference.

“There has recently been found beneath the Church of San Clemente in Rome, a larger and nobler edifice upon which the present edifice, much less homogeneous and complete than the former, has been erected. That original Church, itself founded on the ruins of pagan structures, was filled up with rubbish, and so completely hidden from view, that its existence was unknown for ages. The descriptions of the original edifice have been misappropriated to the second and meaner structure. It is now in the process of excavation, and as one pillar after another of precious and polished marble is disclosed, its superiority has become more and more apparent. And so, under the present Church of Rome, there lies buried and filled with superstitious rubbish and forgotten for ages, a nobler and purer Church, the Church of St. Paul and of Clement. But instead of

uncovering to the light its walls, which are salvation, and its gates which are praise, instead of disclosing its pure altars and its polished pillars, Rome piles new rubbish on, and packs it down, and does not permit her children even to know of its existence.”⁵

But blessed be the Lord God of truth, we have both the Epistles of St. Paul, and the Epistles of St. Peter, which join together in most delightful harmony in teaching the same blessed doctrines of salvation, not by merit but by grace; not by works but by faith; not by the intercession of Mary but by the intercession of Christ; not by the invocation of saints, but by the worship of God in Christ; not by the carrying of images and pictures, but by the spiritual devotion of true and believing hearts; not by error but by truth; not by a fallen Church, but by the true Church which God hath planted, of which Jesus Christ is the only Head, in which God’s Word is preached and believed, in which the holy Sacraments are rightly dispensed, and in which the only true and living God is correctly worshiped in spirit and in truth. Blessed are all they who hold to the faith of St. Paul, and not to the dogmas of the Popes. Blessed are all they who are in the Church, as St. Paul would constitute the Church, as the Church of Rome was when St. Paul constituted it, and as it has been reconstituted, and restored to primitive purity, and truth, and freedom, by the great and ever blessed Reformation.

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1. Dr. C. M. Butler’s St. Paul in Rome.↩
 2. Luther on Galatians, chapter 2:16.↩
 3. Melancthon’s Apol. Augs. Conf. Article 18.↩
 4. Dr. Butler’s St Paul in Eome.↩
 5. St. Paul in Rome.↩

2. The Papacy

Luke 22:24 – 26. – And there was a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The Kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

THE DESIRE FOR POWER is very natural to the human breast. One man wishes to be not only greater than another, but to domineer over the other. This is not represented as a good, but as an evil ambition in man. Christ rebuked it. It early manifested itself in the Church. It existed in the hearts of the disciples, who were chosen by our Lord himself as His apostles. One desired to be greatest, and there was a strife among them which it should be. Which one aspired to this position and authority over the rest we are not informed. But it was one of the twelve. The contention was very sharp. As more than one of them desired the precedence, it could not be decided among themselves. When it came to the notice of Jesus, He at once reproved them, and denounced the unholy ambition that found a place in their hearts. He declared peremptorily that there should be no lordship among the Apostles. One should not be exalted to a position of superiority, so as to exercise authority over the others. He referred to the usage of the heathen around them, who aspired to despotic power, and tyrannized over those who were brought into a state of subjection. As to the Apostles, however, He expressly said: “But ye shall not be so.” In His college of Apostles, the lowest should be the greatest, and the servant should be the chief.

Whilst Christ was personally present with the Apostles, He was able to keep this vaulting ambition in subjection. His earnest and pointed rebuke of it, as it exhibited itself in them had the effect of keeping it within bounds for

ages after His ascension. Indeed, for several centuries it was comparatively quiet, and gave the Church no very special trouble. But it afterward developed itself rapidly, and obtained large proportions. In the course of some centuries it resolved itself into the imagined primacy of St. Peter, and in the succession and lofty pretensions of the Pope of Rome.

The public mind has recently become a good deal interested in the discussion of the subject of the pretensions of the Church of Rome, provoked by a certain "Mission" that was held here a short time ago. I had prepared an unpretending sermon for last Sunday Evening, on the relation of St. Paul and St. Peter to the Church at Rome, to which Church, St. Paul had addressed his Epistle to the Romans, because I thought I saw in the fact that the only Epistle to the Church of Rome which we have, was written, not by St. Peter, but by St. Paul, opened the door for the discussion of the question, whether St. Peter really had ever been at Rome, and was its Bishop, and was Pope over all Christendom. I was greatly surprised at the interest which the announcement to the Congregation in the morning, that I would preach it in the evening, awakened, and at the large attendance present to hear it. It proved to me that there is a want here. The community is excited on the subject. A spirit of inquiry is abroad. People desire information. It is our duty to endeavor to give it. When truth is attacked, truth must defend itself. And let it be well understood, that we did not begin this controversy. It was begun by our opponents. We are the defendants in this case.

The claims of "The Papacy" will be the subject of discussion this evening. So,

The Papacy

One of the most vital questions at issue between us and the Church of Rome, commonly known, because it arrogantly claims to be, the Catholic Church, relates to the primacy and power of the Pope. It is the Church of Rome itself that makes this question so vital. The Lutheran Church exists without a Pope at the head of it. Other Churches exist without a Pope, or primate, or Vicar of Christ, or Vicegerent of God, at the head of them. We, who are outside of the Church of Rome, might be able to conceive that the Church of Rome, too, might exist without such Pope, or Vicar, or

Vicegerent of God, at the head of it. But the Church of Rome will not consent to such a thing. The Church of Rome cannot exist without the Pope, any more than I could live and act without my head. If you cut off my head, I am a corpse. If the Pope were taken away from the Church of Rome, it would be without a head. In its own opinion it would die. The existence, and power/and jurisdiction of the Pope, as the head of the Church, is therefore made a vital question by the Church of Rome itself. To deny and reject the office and jurisdiction of the Pope, is to deny and reject the Christian faith. It is made by the Church of Rome, an article of faith, and none can deviate from it, or reject it without loss of salvation.

Some of my hearers may deem this a strong assertion. It is not too strong. It is the doctrine of the Church of Rome.

As I do not wish to make any assertion, or make any charge without proof, I will quote on this subject, from the “dogmatic decrees of the Vatican Council 1” published in the third session, held April 24, 1870 at Rome. It is as follows:

"Wherefore, resting on plain testimonies of the sacred writings, and adhering to the plain and express decrees both of our predecessors, the Roman Pontiffs, and of the General Councils, we renew the definition of the ecumenical Council of Florence, in virtue of which, all the faithful of Christ must believe that the holy Apostolic See, and the Roman Pontiff, possesses the primacy over the whole world, and that the Roman Pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and is true Vicar of Christ, and head of the whole Church, and father and teacher of all Christians; and that full power was given to him in blessed Peter, to rule, feed, and govern the universal Church by Jesus Christ our Lord; as is also contained in the acts of the General Councils and in the sacred canon.

“Hence we teach and declare that by the appointment of our Lord, the Roman Church possesses a superiority of power over all other Churches, and that this power of jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiff, which is truly Episcopal, is immediate; to which all of whatever rite and dignity, both pastors and faithful, both individually and collectively, are bound by their duty of hierarchical subordination and

true obedience, to submit, not only in matters which belong to faith and morals, but also in those that appertain to the discipline and government of the Church throughout the world, so that the Church of Christ may be one flock under one supreme pastor, through the preservation of unity both of communion and profession of the same faith with the Roman Pontiff. This is the teaching of Catholic truth, from which no one can deviate without loss of faith and salvation.”

Here it is declared as plainly as words can say it, that “no one can deviate” from or reject the notion that “the Roman Pontiff possesses the primacy over the whole world,” and is appointed, by the Lord to be the “true Vicar of Christ, and head of the whole Church,” “without loss of faith and salvation.” If we do not believe it we cannot be saved. This is the plain and positive statement officially put forth by the last great Vatican Council held at Rome only 10 years ago. And the chapter which contains this statement closes with these words: “If, then, any should deny that it is by the institution of Christ the Lord, or by divine right, that blessed Peter should have a perpetual line of successors in the primacy over the universal Church, or that the Roman Pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter in this primacy, let him be anathema.”

All this is plain enough. The Pope claims to be by divine appointment and right, the head of the Church, and therefore essential to its existence. It cannot be disbelieved without loss of salvation. And all who deny it, are anathematized with eternal damnation. All this is very clear. No Pope, no Church. No Pope, no salvation.

Now, we come up squarely to this statement, and deny it in toto. We say it is false from beginning to end. There is no ground of truth for it either in the scriptures, or in history. It is wonderful what a huge fabric is here erected, that is so baseless as to any foundation for it to rest upon.

Let us examine its pretensions. If this is proved to be false, the whole system falls. It is the vital point, kill it, and the whole dies. It is the head of the papal system, by its own confession. Cut it off, and there remains a headless corpse.

One. This decree says that it “rests on plain testimonies of the sacred writings.” How is this? Does it? If so, where? We examined, on last Sunday

Evening, St. Paul's Epistle to the Church at Rome, the only inspired Epistle addressed to that Church, and you will bear me witness, that it says nothing of the kind. Where does St. Paul allude, even in the most distant degree, to any thing of the kind? Does he give intimation, in the faintest measure, of a Pope at all? Of a Vicar of Christ? Of a primacy of Peter and his successors over the whole world? Of a human head of Christ's Church? It is incredible that he should ignore it, so completely as he does, if it is a dogma of the Christian religion, so essential to salvation, as this decree declares it to be. If no one can "deviate from it without loss of faith and salvation," as this decree declares, how could St. Paul omit to mention it, in an Epistle, the whole end and object of which is to teach the way of faith and salvation? How can St. Paul be excused for not giving it the prominence which would be due to it, if the denial of it, on the part of any, would subject them to God's anathema, and the eternal damnation which, of course, results from God's anathema? That St. Paul does not even allude to it in the remotest degree, in this Epistle to the Church at Rome, especially sent to instruct them in faith and salvation, is conclusive evidence that it is not true; that it is false; that it has no warrant of God's word to rest upon. This, of course, is negative testimony, but so strong as to amount to positive proof.

But let us look still further at the claim that this Romish dogma, "rests on plain testimonies of the sacred writings."

The text declares positively that Christ forbade that one of the Apostles should be lord over the others. He wants no lordship. He denounces the desire for it, as a heathen wish. He declares that such lordship is such as the heathens exercise. It must not exist in the Christian Church. His Apostles must have none of it. Now, this popish decree is a direct and positive contradiction of Christ. It says that one Apostle must be lord over the others. It declares that such lordship is of divine appointment. Christ, the Son of God says, No. Rome says, Yes. No contradiction could be more palpable. Christ calls it a Gentile, heathen custom. Rome calls it the very head and front of Christian doctrine. Christ denounced it, and said it must not be tolerated in His Church. Rome says no one can be saved that does not believe it, and all will be damned who deny it. As between Christ and Rome the issue is squarely made. Which shall we believe, Christ or Rome?

On another occasion, when this same evil passion had manifested itself among the disciples, Christ most effectually rebuked it, by taking up a little

child and setting it in the midst of them, and declaring that unless they became converted from this evil heart, and became like this little child in its unambitious feelings, they could not only not be greatest, but would not even enter into the kingdom of heaven. And in the very face of this action and declaration of the Lord of the church himself, comes this miserable decree of the Popes, and declares directly the verse, that none can get into the kingdom of heaven, but those who believe that Christ appointed Peter to be the greatest of the disciples, lord over the others, and primate over all the churches in the whole world. It would seem that this was uttered in direct defiance of the Lord's most positive prohibition. Christ says: None shall be greatest among you. Rome says, Peter shall be the greatest among you. Whom shall we believe, Christ or Rome?

We have a notable passage written by St. Paul concerning his own relation to Peter, and the other Apostles, and to the liberty from any pontifical control which he asserted for himself and others, and even for the boldness with which he rebuked Peter for his dissembling and want of straight forward honesty, that is directly to the point which we are now discussing. He says, Galatians 2nd chapter:

“Then fourteen years after (the beginning of his ministry) I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means, I should run, or had run in vain. Rut neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out my liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage. To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you. But of those who seemed to be somewhat, whosoever they were, it maketh no matter to me; God accepteth no man's person, for they who seemed to be somewhat, in conference added nothing to me. But contrariwise, when they saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) And when James, Cephas

and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. * * * But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"

This is a very suggestive passage. It teaches many things. It teaches us:

1. St. Paul was neither ordained nor confirmed nor established by St. Peter, nor does he in any way acknowledge Peter as necessary to confirm him. On the contrary he directly opposes the idea that he owed any allegiance or subjection of any kind to St. Peter. He neither received any thing from St. Peter nor was dependent in any respect upon St. Peter. If St. Peter was Pope by divine appointment, St. Paul would never have spoken of himself, or of St. Peter in the independent strain in which he indulges.
2. He freely preached the Gospel a long time before he had any interview with St. Peter, or held any consultation with him about what he was to preach. He would not have done this, if St. Peter was Pope and head of the whole church throughout the world by divine right. It would then have been his duty to have consulted St. Peter before he took the first step in his ministry.
3. He charged St. Peter with dissimulation, and called him publicly to account for it, before the whole church. This was a strange reversing of things, if St. Peter was the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, the Primate of all the Apostles, and the head of the church in the whole world. The subject called his master to account! The subordinate charged his lord

with sin! Would St. Peter have submitted to all this, if he had been divinely appointed to be Pope? No, never. He would very quickly have showed St. Paul his proper place.

4. John, and Peter, and James are expressly mentioned together as equals. They were “of reputation,” it is true and “seemed to be pillars,” but James was not the lord over John, nor Peter over James. John and James were equally “pillars” with Peter. They were equals. None was even “primus inter pares” – first among equals. They were wholly equals. St. Peter had no primacy.
5. St. Paul contended for “liberty.” He would not surrender his “liberty” to any one, “no not for an hour.” He acknowledged no right in St. Peter, or in any one else to hold him in “subjection.” If St. Peter was Pope by divine appointment, St. Paul not only asserted his independence in a way very disrespectful to St. Peter, but offensive to Christ himself. If Christ had appointed St. Peter to be primate, then he had divine authority, and it was in St. Paul, not only a defiance of St. Peter, but an offence against Christ, for him to declare in the bold way in which he did, that he would “not give place” to any one, “no not for an hour,” that he “withstood Peter to the face,” and accused him of “dissimulation.” If St. Peter was truly appointed by Jesus Christ to be Pope, St. Paul would never have either expressed himself, or acted, in this way.

It is very plain from these passages that the “sacred writings” do not teach the Romish dogma that Jesus Christ appointed “the blessed Peter,” to be “the Prince of the Apostles, the true Vicar of Christ, and head of the whole Church, 11 and his successors after him, to inherit the same office. It is a groundless claim. It is a Romish fiction. It has no scriptural warrant. When the papal decree declares that this dogma”rests on the plain testimony of the sacred writings,” it utters what is not true.

It may be replied, and it is replied that the proof of it is found in Christ’s declaration to St. Peter: “Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church.” It requires a wonderful amount of overstraining, to get out of this passage, the huge dogma of the papacy, Peter the Pope, all his successors Popes, Primate of all the Apostles, Vicar of Christ, head of the whole Church in the whole world. These are extraordinary conclusions to draw

from such premises. Peter is never called a “rock.” It is expressly said: “And that rock was Christ.” 1 Cor. 10:4. The “Stone” which the builders refused, and which is become the “head of the corner,” is not Peter, but Christ. Peter himself says so. Acts 4:10, 11. 1 Peter 2:4–8. All this is very clear.

When it is said that the Church is built on the “foundation of the apostles and prophets,” it is their doctrine, and not their persons, that is meant. The whole of the Apostles are expressly mentioned, and not one of them alone. The plain meaning is, that all the Apostles and prophets, being inspired of God, and preaching the doctrines of Christ by divine inspiration, the Church is built not on human opinions, but on divine doctrines, taught by divine authority, and by divinely inspired men. Every Christian Church at its organization was based on these doctrines, laid them down as the principles on which the congregation was founded, and the members being well grounded in these doctrines, and holding them firmly, the Church was “built on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets.” We say, the Church is founded on the Word of God, and by that expression we mean the doctrines of the Apostles and prophets, as God revealed His holy Word through them to the world. Peter of course was one of the holy Apostles. What he taught was true and divine. When a church was organized and founded on the divine doctrines which he taught, it had a divine foundation. But the same was true of all the other Apostles. It was equally true of James, and John, and Paul, and all the rest. It was as true of them as of Peter. Not more true of Peter, than of James, and John, and Paul. They were all “Apostles and prophets.” The Church was built, not on one of them alone, but on all of them. They believed as Peter believed, that Jesus was “the Christ the Son of the living God.” They held the same divine doctrine, and made the same noble confession of it. Peter, on this occasion, was only their spokesman, and the confession of one was the confession of all. All this is very plain, and it is wonderful that any intelligent reader of the scriptures, desirous of being rightly instructed, and not having a special object to bolster up, could possibly misunderstand it.

Not only Protestant divines hold this view of this address of our Lord to Peter. It is so obviously the correct view, that fair minded Roman Catholic writers themselves, are compelled to express the same views. Let me cite for the information of my hearers an extract from a work by a learned

Roman Catholic author, written only ten years ago, entitled the “Pope and the Council.” It is a work of great ability, and of unusual fairness. Says the writer: “Of all the fathers (of the first 450 years after Christ) who interpret these passages in the Gospel, Matt. 16:18 and John 21:17, which contain the words of Christ to Peter, not a single one applies them to the Roman Bishops as Peter’s successors. How many fathers have busied themselves with these texts, yet not one of them whose commentary we possess, Origen A. D. 230, Chrysostom 370, Hilary 360, Augustine 390, Cyril 350, Theodoret 400, – not one of these, and many others, has dropped the faintest hint, that the primacy of Rome is the consequence of the commission and promise to Peter! Not one of them has explained the “rock,” or foundation, on which Christ would build His Church, of the office given to Peter to be transmitted to his successors; but they understood by it either Christ himself, or Peter’s confession of faith in Christ, or both together. Or else, they thought that Peter was the foundation equally with all the Apostles, the twelve being together the foundation stones of the Church, as it is said in Rev. 21:14,

“And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.”

The fathers could the less recognize in the power of the keys, and the power of binding and loosing any special prerogative or lordship of the Roman Bishop, inasmuch as – what is obvious to any one at first sight – they did not regard a power first given to Peter, and afterwards conferred in precisely the same words on all the Apostles (Matthew 16:19, 18:18.) as any thing peculiar to him, “or hereditary in the line of Roman Bishops.”¹

These are true and honest words. There is no question of their correctness. The claim of the Popes, founded on this declaration of Christ to Peter, is an afterthought. It was not so understood by Christ, or by Peter, or by any of the other Apostles. It was not so understood by the Church for 450 years after Christ, or until Leo I. first gave it this application. It was pressed into a service that is wholly foreign to its original design. The Bishop of Rome had grasped power, and he wanted some excuse for his inordinate ambition, and he pressed this passage into his service, by misconstruing its meaning, and misapplying it to another object than that for which it was uttered. All intelligent and fair minded biblical interpreters,

whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, understand the case to be so. I think this disposes of the argument that the pretensions of the Roman Pontiff are founded upon the scriptures. The scriptures certainly know nothing of a Pope. If the belief in the divine appointment of a Pope, or primate of the Apostles, or Vicar of Christ, or human head of the Church in the whole world, was such an essential doctrine, that our salvation depended on it, and that the rejection of it made it certain that we would be damned, as this decree of the Vatican Council asserts, we surely would have more of it in the New Testament, than these few faint indications, that are only obtained by pressing them out of their original application. But except in these, which certainly have another meaning and application altogether, we have in all the books of the New Testament not a word. In all St. Paul's Epistles we have not a word. Even in the two Epistles of St. Peter himself we have not a word. This would be inexplicable if, as the Roman dogma asserts, our eternal salvation depended on it. We may be sure that the whole thing is – what shall I call it? Will you consider me uncharitable if I call it a huge falsehood? Pardon the strong assertion. But it is not too strong. Judged in the light of the “sacred writings,” the whole thing is really a huge falsehood.

Two. But the Vatican decree founds the pretensions of the Roman Pontiff upon History, as well as upon the “sacred writings.” Let us see what History says on this subject. In order to do away with all prejudice against the historical facts which I will cite, I will quote mainly from Roman Catholic sources. No one can, therefore, charge the proof I will call forth as being tinged by Protestant prejudices.

First. It is a fact of history that the Bishops of Rome did not convoke any General Council of the Church during the first three or four centuries after Christ. The first Council that met at Jerusalem during the lifetime of James and Paul, to determine some questions relating to the circumcision of the Gentile converts to Christianity, was not called by St. Peter, nor did St. Peter preside at it as its President. St. James presided, and pronounced the “sentence” of the Council. “All great Councils to which Bishops came from different countries were convoked by the Emperors, nor were the Bishops of Rome ever consulted about it before hand.”² If the Bishop of Rome had been divinely appointed head of the Church, and Vicar of Christ on earth, he alone would have authority to call a General Council of the Church. The Church of Rome now, never presumes to convoke a General Council except

by the Pope. If St. Peter had been Pope he would, of course, have done the same. That he convoked no Council is conclusive proof that he was not Pope, and that no General Council was ever called by the Bishops of Rome until after many centuries after Christ, is equally proof that the Bishops of Rome were not then Popes.

Secondly: It is a fact of history that not only were General Councils held during the early centuries after Christ, without being convoked by the Bishops of Rome, but they were not “allowed to preside personally, or by deputy, at the General Councils, thus convoked without their authority.” At Nice in A. D. 325, at the two Councils of Ephesus in A. D. 431, and 449, and at the Fifth General Council in A. D. 553 assembled at Constantinople, others presided. Only at Chalcedon A. D. 451, and at Constantinople A. D. 680 did the legates of the Bishop of Rome preside. And it is clear that the Bishops of Rome did not claim this as their exclusive right, from the conduct of Leo I. in sending his legates to Ephesus, although he knew that the Emperor had named, not him, but the Bishop of Alexandria to preside.”³ This fact is proof positive that the Bishops of Rome were not of divine right, and by divine appointment, the primates of all others, and heads of the Church in the whole world, otherwise it would have been a criminal usurpation of their divine prerogative to deny them the right, either in person, or by deputy, to preside at the General Councils.

Third: It is a fact of history that “neither the dogmatic nor the disciplinary decisions of these councils required the confirmation of the Bishops of Rome, to give them validity, for their force and authority depended on the consent of the Church, as expressed in the synod, and afterwards in the fact of its being generally received. The confirmation of the Nicene Council by Sylvester, Bishop of Rome, was afterwards invented at Rome, because facts would not square with the newly devised theory.”⁴ This fact is proof that the Bishops of Rome were not the primates over the other Bishops, Vicars of Christ by divine right, and heads of the Church in the whole world. If they were, none could have denied them the prerogative to confirm the decisions of Councils, nor would those decisions have had validity without such confirmation.

Fourth: It is a fact of history that "for the first thousand years after Christ no Bishop of Rome ever issued a doctrinal decision intended for, and addressed to the whole Church. Their doctrinal announcements, if designed

to condemn new heresies, were always submitted to a synod, or were answers to inquiries from one or more Bishops. They only became a standard of faith, after being read, examined, and approved at an ecumenical Council.⁵ This fact is a direct argument against the pretension that the Pope is such by divine appointment and right, and is primate, and Vicar of Christ who represents Jesus Christ as the head of the Church in the whole world, and is the infallible teacher and guide of men in the faith.

Now these four great facts of history, thus clearly laid down, and attested by a learned and candid Roman Catholic author, cannot be questioned. They are facts. They are conclusive as against the papal pretensions.

Dr. Schaff, in his "History of the Vatican Council," has investigated this subject with his accustomed careful research. The results which he announces, are sound and conclusive. As they furnish great strength to my argument, I will quote some passages at length. He says:

"Ancient Creeds, Councils, Fathers, and Popes can be summoned as witnesses against the Vatican dogma.

"1. The four ecumenical Creeds, the most authoritative expressions of the old Catholic faith of the Eastern and Western Churches, contain an article on the 'holy Catholic and Apostolic Church,' but not one word about the Bishops of Rome, or any other local church. How easy and natural, yea, in view of the fundamental importance of the Infallibility dogma, how necessary would have been the insertion of Roman after the other predicates of the Church, or the addition of the article; 'The Pope of Rome, the successor of Peter and infallible Vicar of Christ.' If it had been believed then as now, it would certainly appear at least in the Roman form of the Apostles' Creed; but this is as silent on this point as the Aquilejan, the African, the Gallican, and other forms.

"2. The ecumenical Councils of the first eight centuries, which are recognized by the Greek and Latin Churches alike, are equally silent about, and positively inconsistent with, Papal Infallibility. They were called by Greek Emperors, not by Popes; they were predominantly, and some of them exclusively, Oriental; they issued their decrees in their own name, and in the fullness of authority, without thinking of

submitting them to the approval of Rome; they even claimed the right of judging and condemning the Roman Pontiff, as well as any other Bishop or Patriarch.

"In the first Nicene Council there was but one representative of the Latin Church (Hosius of Spain); and in the second and fifth ecumenical Councils there was none at all. The second ecumenical Council (381), in the third Canon, put the Patriarch of Constantinople on a par with the Bishop of Rome, assigning to the latter only a primacy of honor; and the fourth ecumenical Council (451) confirmed this canon in spite of the energetic protest of Pope Leo I.

"But more than this: the sixth ecumenical Council, held 680, pronounced the anathema on Honorius, 'the former Pope of old Rome', for teaching officially the Monothelite heresy; and this anathema was signed by all the members of the Council, including the three delegates of the Pope, and was several times repeated by the seventh and eighth Councils, which were presided over by Papal delegates.

"3. The Fathers, even those who unconsciously did most service to Rome, and laid the foundation for its colossal pretensions, yet had no idea of ascribing absolute supremacy and infallibility to the Pope.

"Clement of Rome, the first Roman Bishop of whom we have any authentic account, wrote a letter to the Church at Corinth – not in his name, but in the name of the Roman congregation; not with an air of superior authority, but as a brother to brethren – barely mentioning Peter, but eulogizing Paul, and with a clear consciousness of the great difference between an Apostle, and a Bishop or Elder.

"Ignatius of Antioch, who suffered martyrdom in Rome under Trajan, highly as he extols Episcopacy and Church unity in his seven Epistles, one of which is addressed to the Roman Christians, makes no distinction of rank among Bishops, but treats them as equals.

"Irenaeus of Lyons, the champion of the Catholic faith against the Gnostic heresy at the close of the second century, and the author of

the famous and variously understood passage about the potentior principalitas (proteia) ecclesiae Romanae, sharply reprovved Victor of Rome when he ventured to excommunicate the Asiatic Christians for their different mode of celebrating Easter, and told him that it was contrary to Apostolic doctrine and practice to judge brethren on account of eating and drinking, feasts and new moons. Cyprian, likewise a saint and a martyr, in the middle of the third century, in his zeal for visible and tangible unity against the schismatics of his diocese, first brought out the fertile doctrine of the Roman See as the chair of St. Peter and the center of Catholic unity; yet with all his Romanizing tendency he was the great champion of the Episcopal solidarity and equality system, and always addressed the Roman Bishop as his ‘brother,’ and ‘colleague’; he even stoutly opposed Pope Stephen’s view of the validity of heretical baptism, charging him with error, obstinacy, and presumption. He never yielded, and the African Bishops, at the third Council of Carthage (256) emphatically endorsed his opposition to Stephen. Firmilian, Bishop of Caesarea, and Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, likewise bitterly condemned the doctrine and conduct of Stephen, and told him that in excommunicating others he excommunicated himself.

“Augustine is often quoted by Infallibilists on account of his famous dictum, *Roma locuta est, causa finita est* – i. e. Rome has spoken, the case is ended. But he simply means that since the Councils of Mileve and Carthage had spoken, and Pope Innocent I. had acceded to their decision, the Pelagian controversy was finally settled (although it was after all, not settled till after his death, at the Council of Ephesus.) Had he dreamed of the abuse made of this utterance, he would have spoken very differently.”⁶

This sententious utterance of Augustine is abused by being misapplied even to this day. The “causa” – case – was this. The heresy of Pelagius was vigorously opposed by Augustine. The doctrines of Pelagius were condemned as heretical by the Eastern Church, in the Councils of Mileve and Carthage held in Africa. It was appealed to the Western Bishops, against the decision of the African Bishops who both in the Councils of Mileve and Carthage warned the Western Bishops not to receive the appeals

from their decrees, and that they should send no more legates or commissaries to them. Still the appeal was received, and Coelestius the associate of Pelagius appeared personally in Rome to plead the cause of Pelagius. When, however, Augustine and the African Bishops heard through Innocent I. the Bishop of Rome, that the majority of the Western Bishops too, had condemned Pelagius, he triumphantly exclaimed: "Rome has spoken" – we have heard from the Western Bishops, and they too have decided against Pelagius – "the case is ended" – the condemnation of Pelagius is complete. The expression does not mean, as Romanists now use it, "The Pope is infallible, his dictum ends all controversy, and the whole Church must submit to what he says." Well does Dr. Schaff pronounce this an "abuse" of his utterance, of which Augustine never "dreamed" when he made it. Says Bishop Strossmayer: "That the Patriarch of Rome had, from the earliest times, tried to draw to himself all the authority, is an evident fact; but it is an equally evident fact, that he had not the supremacy, which the Ultramontanes attribute to him. Had he possessed it, would the Bishops of Africa, St. Augustine first among them, have dared to prohibit the appeals from their decrees to his supreme tribunal?" When this sentence from Augustine is construed in the light of the warning of this Council, of which Augustine was Secretary, it has a very different meaning from that which Romanists now give to it.

It may interest my hearers to hear more of the celebrated speech ascribed to Bishop Strossmayer, Bishop of Bosnia and Sirmia, and delivered in the Vatican Council. Many Bishops, who during the discussion of the Infallibility dogma, spoke against it with great boldness, backed down after it was adopted, recanted all that they had said, and made their peace with the Pope. It is even said that Strossmayer, "the boldest of the bold in the minority," has since denied that he even "said one word to diminish the authority of the holy see." But this speech is no doubt authentic, nevertheless. Its historical facts, by whomsoever uttered, cannot be disputed. He said:

"Precedence is one thing – the power of jurisdiction is another. For example, supposing that in Florence there was an assembly of all the Bishops of the Kingdom, the precedence would be given to the primate of Florence, as among the Easterns it would be accorded to the Patriarch of Constantinople, and in England to the Archbishop of

Canterbury. But neither the first, nor the second, nor the third could deduce from the position assigned to them a jurisdiction over their colleagues.

"The importance of the Bishops of Rome proceeded not from a divine power, but from the importance of the city in which they had their seat.

"I have said that from the very first centuries the Patriarch of Rome aspired to the universal government of the church. Unfortunately he very nearly reached it; but he had not succeeded assuredly in his pretensions, for the Emperor Theodosius II. 390 made a law by which he established that the Patriarch of Constantinople should have the same authority as he of Rome. – Leg. cod. de sacr. etc.

"The Fathers of the Council of Chalcedon 451 put the bishops of the new and the old Rome in the same order on all things, even ecclesiastical (Can. 28.)

"The Sixth Council of Carthage forbade all the Bishops to take the title of Prince of the Bishops or Sovereign Bishop.

"These authorities, and I might add a hundred more of equal value, do they not prove with a clearness equal to the splendor of the sun at noonday, that the first Bishops of Rome were not till much later, recognized as universal Bishops, and heads of the Church? And on the other hand, who does not know, that from the year 325, in which the first Council of Nice was held, down to 580, the year of the second ecumenical Council of Constantinople among more than 1109 Bishops who assisted at the first six General Councils there were not more than nineteen Western Bishops?

"I come now to speak of the great argument used to establish the primacy of the Bishop of Rome.

"By the rock (pietra) on which the Holy Church is built, you understand Peter (Pietro.) If this were true, the dispute would be at an

end; but our forefathers – and they certainly knew something – did not think of it as we do.

"St. Cyril 350 in his fourth book on the Trinity, says – ‘I believe that by the rock you must understand the unshaken faith of the Apostles. St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers in his second book on the Trinity says: – The rock (pietra) is the blessed and only rock "of the faith confessed by the mouth of St. Peter; and in the sixth book of the Trinity, he says: ‘it is on this rock of the confession of faith that the Church is built.’ ‘God,’ says St. Jerome in the sixth book of St. Matthew, ‘has founded His Church on this rock, and it is from this rock that the apostle Peter has been named.’ After him, St. Chrysostom says in his fifty-third homily on St. Matthew, ‘on this rock I will build my Church– that is, on the faith of the confession. Now what was the confession of the Apostle? Here it is – Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.’

"Ambrose, the holy Archbishop of Milan, 380 on the second chapter of the Ephesians, St. Basil, of Seleucia, 360, and the Fathers of the Council of Chalcedon, 451, teach exactly the same thing.

"Of all the doctors of Christian antiquity, St. Augustine, 390, occupies one of the first places for knowledge and holiness, listen then to what he writes in his second treatise on the first Epistle of St. John, ‘What do the words mean, I will build my Church on this rock? On this faith, on that which said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.’

"In his 124th treatise on St. John, we find this most significant phrase: ‘On this rock which thou hast confessed I will build my Church, since Christ was the rock.’

"The great Bishop believed so little that the Church was built on St. Peter, that he said to his people in his 13th Sermon, ‘Thou art Peter, and on this rock (pietra) which thou hast confessed, on this rock which thou hast known, saying: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, I will build my Church above myself, who am the Son of the living God; I will build it on me, and not on thee.’

"That which St. Augustine thought upon this celebrated passage, was the opinion of all Christendom in his time. Therefore, to resume I establish. –

"1. That Jesus Christ had given to His Apostles the same power that He gave to St. Peter.

"2. That the Apostles never recognized in St. Peter the Vicar of Christ and the infallible doctor of the Church.

"3. That St. Peter never thought of being Pope, and never acted as if he were Pope.

"4. That the Councils of the first four centuries, while they recognized the high official position which the Bishop of Rome occupied in the Church, on account of Rome, only accorded to him a pre-eminence of honor, never of power, or of jurisdiction.

"5. That the holy fathers in the famous passage, 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church,' never understood that the Church was built on Peter, (super Petrum) but on the rock (super petram) that is, on the confession of the faith of the Apostle.

"I conclude victoriously with history, with reason, with logic, with good sense, and with a Christian conscience, that Jesus Christ did not confer any supremacy on St. Peter, and that the Bishops of Rome did not become sovereigns of the Church but only by confiscating one by one all the rights of the Episcopate.

"History is neither Catholic, nor Anglican, nor Calvinistic, nor Lutheran, nor Arminian, nor Schismatic, nor Greek, nor Ultramontane. She is what she is – that is something stronger than all Confessions of Faith of the Canons of the Ecumenical Councils."

The rise and progress of the papacy is a mere human event, a gradual growth a usurpation of power, a consummation of the ambitious aspirations of proud men, the result, too, of the political rivalry of the different parts, and great cities, of the Roman Empire. In the course of the ages, the bishops

of such cities as Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Rome, and others, aspired to higher positions, and claimed greater respect, and honor, and power, than the bishops of other cities. And particularly during the long contest between the Eastern and Western parts of the Roman Empire, the Bishops of Constantinople and of Rome, alternately claimed precedence, until the contest was finally settled by the Emperor Phocas, who in A. D. 606 declared in favor of the Bishop of Rome, by giving him the title of “Caput omnium ecclesiarum,” or head of all the churches. It was by no divine appointment at all. It was the result of intensely human feelings. It was a high pinnacle aimed at by ambitious men, and when they reached it, it was by human and not by divine methods. Christ’s words to Peter, “on this rock I will build my church,” conferred no divine appointment, and imparted no divine right. The use of them was an afterthought. A reason was wanted for an unreasonable thing, a justification for a grasping ambition, and these words answered the purpose better than any thing else at command.

The history of the rise of the papacy is an interesting chapter in Ecclesiastical History. Let me dwell at some length upon it. One of the most candid and accurate Church historians is. Dr. John Henry Kurtz, Prof, of Theol. in the University of Dorpat, Livonia, Russia. I will take him from among other ecclesiastical historians, as my chief authority in the statements I will now proceed to make.

In the Apostolic age of the church, the Apostles ordained pastors in newly organized churches, who bore the common name of Elders, or Presbuteroi, from their age and dignity, and of Bishops, or Episcopoi, from the nature of their office. Originally these two terms designated the same persons, as we learn from the New Testament, from Clement of Rome, and others. In the Second Century, the Episcopate became more and more a settled institution in the Church. As time passed, the Bishops of the chief cities, acquired more and more power and authority. The Bishops of towns took precedence of those in rural districts so too, the Bishops of capital cities, called Metropolitans, acquired precedence over those of provincial towns and cities. The first time that the title Metropolitan, occurs in Church History, is in the decrees of the Council of Nice in A. D. 325. There came to be also gradually a distinction among Metropolitans. Those who presided over such Churches as had been organized by the Apostles themselves, as

for example Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Rome, and Alexandria, deemed themselves entitled from that fact, to take precedence, and claim pre-eminence over others who were not founded by the Apostles. In A. D. 312 Constantine the Roman Emperor became converted to the Christian faith, and was the first Christian Emperor. The fact of the Emperor of the great Roman Empire being a Christian, gave greatly increased interest to the rivalry among the Metropolitan Bishops. Up to this time, the pre-eminence lay between the three Bishops of Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome. The Second General Council held at Constantinople, in A. D. 381, assigned to the Bishop of Constantinople the first rank after the Bishop of Rome. The Bishop of Constantinople bore the title of Patriarch. The Bishop of Rome refused this title in order not to be on the same level with the Bishop of Constantinople, and therefore, chose in preference the title Papa, in Greek Papas. The contest now mainly lay between the Bishops of these two chief cities. When the Emperor held his imperial court at Rome the Roman Bishop was in the ascendancy. Rome, too, was on account of its natural situation, as the only great city in the West, the seat of both political and ecclesiastical power. When the Emperor resided at Constantinople, the Bishop of that city claimed the pre-eminence. The Fourth General Council held at Chalcedon, A. D. 451 placed the Patriarch of Constantinople on a footing of perfect equality with his colleague of Rome. The same Council also raised the Bishop of Jerusalem, whom the Council of Nice had in A. D. 325 already declared as entitled to special honors, to the dignity of Patriarch, and invested him with supremacy over the whole of Palestine. Still, some Metropolitans, and among them especially those of Salamis in Cyprus, of Milan in Italy, of Aquileia and of Ravenna both also of Italy, refused to acknowledge that their Sees were, in any sense, subject either to the Patriarch of Constantinople, or to the Papa of Rome. No doubt, too, the continued residence of the Western Emperors at Rome from A. D. 395 to 476, eighty one years, and during the duration of the Western Empire, had also much to do with the increase of the power and authority of the Bishop of Rome. From the sixth Century the Papas of Rome began to confirm the election of oriental Metropolitans by sending them the insignia, called the Pallium. Still, the Bishop of Rome was not yet acknowledged as primate or chief of all the other Metropolitan Bishops. From this period it was considered to be necessary for the validity of a General Council, that all the five Patriarchs of Jerusalem, of Antioch, of Alexandria, of Rome, and of

Constantinople, should be represented in it. But when the Saracens, the Mohammedans, overran the East, and the Mahomet's Crescent took the place of the cross, and the churches were turned into mosques – when in A. D. 637 Jerusalem, and in 638 Antioch, and in A. D. 640 Alexandria became subject to them, the Patriarch of Constantinople remained the sole representative of that dignity in the eastern portion of the Roman Empire. His Roman colleague was his only rival. But Constantinople was no longer able to compete with Rome. Rome's pretensions to the primacy had rapidly grown into favor, and as early as A. D. 606 the murderer and usurper Phocas, the Emperor, had settled the seemingly interminable dispute by interdicting the use of the proud title, "Episcopus universalis," or Universal Bishop, by the Bishop of Constantinople, and by acknowledging the Bishop of Rome as "Caput omnium ecclesiarum," or head of all the Churches.⁷

Such is a rapid, but truthful, and reliable sketch of the rise and progress of the papacy. I have with care and impartiality examined the claim of the Roman Pontiff both as it is professedly based in the decree of the Vatican Council on the "sacred writings," and on the verdict of History. What are the conclusions which we have reached?

1. The Romish pretension in behalf of the Papacy is not sustained by the Word of God. The Vatican decree declares that it rests upon "the plain testimonies of the sacred writings." We have failed to find them. There is no such Word of God. On the contrary, the Word of God directly condemns the entire principle on which the papacy rests. Christ did not so organize His Church. No "Thus saith the Lord" was ever uttered in behalf of it. Christ wanted no lordship among His Apostles. Rome positively contradicts Christ. Christ and Rome are squarely in opposition to each other. We hold with Jesus Christ. We have no fellowship with Rome.
2. The early ages of the Church knew nothing of the primacy of the Bishops of Rome. This is as clear as any fact ever settled by the verdict of History. If this is not made plain, then there is nothing historically reliable. For several centuries not one of the Bishops of the great cities and centers of influence, made any pretension whatever to be preeminent over others, or to take precedence of the others. When in course of the centuries this claim was made by any one of them, it was

resolutely and squarely denied by the others. Particularly there is not a word in any of the fathers that this claim was made in behalf of St. Peter and his successors. Candid Roman Catholic writers themselves testify to this fact. The claim of the Vatican Council, in this respect, is a fable from the beginning to the end of it.

3. The Papacy was a gradual growth amid the conflict of human passions in the breasts of ambitious men. It would seem that no reader of History can fail to see this. Power passed from the many to the few. The Bishops of the chief cities claimed precedence over the rural Bishops. Then the struggle commenced among themselves. For a long time the contest lay between Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Rome. Then it narrowed itself down to a duel between Constantinople and Rome. Finally Constantinople was beaten, and Rome triumphed. This is briefly the history of the Papacy. It is so plainly written on the pages of History, that even a blind man can hardly fail to see it.
4. The true faith and the true Church do not include the Papacy as a necessary part of it. The true faith was held for centuries, and the true church existed for centuries, when there was no primate, nor vicar, nor human head of the Church. The true faith and the true Church do not need it. Christ is the only Head. He has not given His honor to another. He has not made a man His “Vice God” as the Popes insolently style themselves. Even Gregory the Great, one of the best and greatest of the Bishops of Rome, A. D. 590 – 604, “repudiated with horror” what is now “known as the Papal system,” and “he would not endure that so wicked and blasphemous a title,” as that of “Ecumenical Patriarch” should be “given to himself, or to any one else.”⁸ Now, the decree of the Vatican Council very complacently says: “All the faithful of Christ must believe that the Roman Pontiff possesses the primacy over the whole world, and that the Roman Pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles and is true Vicar of Christ, and head of the whole Church, and father, and teacher of all Christians.” We shudder at such an arrogant claim made by a mere human being. Well may this Vatican decree speak of “hierarchical subordination” – “*officio hierarchicae subordinationis.*” It is indeed, and by its own confession, the most despotic hierarchy that ever placed its iron heel

upon the necks of men. The true faith, and the true Church will have none of it.

5. The decree of the Vatican Council that declares that no one can reject its dogma concerning the papacy “without loss of faith and salvation” “and that anathematizes all who deny it with eternal damnation”, is utterly untrue and pernicious. How baseless this arrogant assumption is, I trust, all understand, who have followed me in the argument of the present discourse. Rome has lost none of its bitter, intolerant, persecuting spirit. It unchurches all Christians in the whole world, and anathematizes with eternal damnation, all believers in Christ, and professors of His holy name, every where on the earth, east and west, who do not bow the knee to the Baal which it enthrones, and whom it requires all men to own and worship. It ought to require more than the insidious eloquence of a wily Jesuit to allure intelligent Protestants into the admission of claims so arrogant, and so preposterous.

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1. The Pope and the Council, page 74.↩
 2. The Pope and the Council, page 63.↩
 3. Ibid.↩
 4. The Pope and the Council,↩
 5. Ibid.↩
 6. Schaffs Hist. Vat. Council, pages 92 – 94.↩
 7. Dr. Kurtz’s Text Book of Church History, pages 165–169.↩
 8. The Pope and the Council, page 68.↩

3. Doctrines Of The Church Of Rome

Matthew 15:9. – Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

IN MY TWO previous discourses on Romanism I have discussed as thoroughly as is at this time deemed necessary, the claims of the Roman Pontiff to be the successor of St. Peter, the primate of all ministers, the Vicar of Christ on earth, and head of the church in the whole world. Although the decree of the Vatican Council declares that “none can deviate from” this dogma “without loss of faith and salvation,” and anathematizes all who deny it, I think it must have been clear to all who followed the discussion of it, that the dogma is not sustained either by scripture, or by Church History.

I propose in the present discourse to enter into the interior of the Romish system, and examine some of the peculiar doctrines that distinguish it. A religious system is known by the doctrines it holds. All who belong to it are supposed, of course, to hold these doctrines. The Roman Church has its peculiar doctrines. We may know what they are. It is very possible that some persons who are led into the Church of Rome, do not investigate its doctrines as carefully as they should. It is also to be feared that the most repulsive of those doctrines are glossed over in such a way that their real nature is not always understood. I will make no charges that are not well sustained. I will refer to official sources for information concerning them.

It will be borne in mind that we are preaching these sermons in self-defense. We have been severely attacked, and we are defending ourselves from the attack. We dare not be silent when truth is attempted to be overthrown.

The years move on, and men change, but principles, whether true or false, do not change. The Reformation is as much needed now, as it was when Luther nailed the 95 Theses on the Church door at Wittenberg. The conflict between Rome and the Reformation, is an irrepressible conflict. Romanism is really the same now as ever. It is its boast that it never changes. In a purely Protestant community, we do not see Romanism as it is exhibited in Italy, Spain, Mexico, and other countries. Its ugly features are kept back. It will not bear examination. It expresses itself very freely about us. Let us examine it with the same freedom.

1. The Council of Trent has placed the apocryphal books on an equality with the inspired Word of God

It has done this because the apocryphal books apparently give countenance to some of the false doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome. But the apocryphal books are no part of the inspired Word, and never were. Some of them are useful as ancient writings, but they have no valid claim to be ranked among the inspired Books of the Bible. The reasons against the divine inspiration and canonical authority of the Apocrypha are these: None of them are extant in Hebrew, all of them are in the Greek language, except the Fourth Book of Esdras, which is in Latin. They were all written after the prophetic vision closed in Malachi. The last chapter of Malachi indicates that no prophet would appear until John the Baptist. The Jews unanimously agree that the prophetic spirit ceased with Malachi. All the apocryphal books were written after the Old Testament canon was closed. Not one of the writers of these apocryphal books makes any claim to divine inspiration. They were never received into the sacred canon by the Jewish Church, as all the other books of the Bible are. Christ never sanctioned them. Not a single quotation from them is to be found in Christ's discourses, or in the Gospels and Epistles of the Apostles, as from the other books of the Old Testament.

Both Philo and Josephus, the well known Jewish historians, who flourished in the first century of the Christian era, are silent concerning them. They are not mentioned in the catalog of inspired writings made by

Melito, Bishop of Sardis, who flourished in the second century, nor in those of Origen in the 3rd century, of Athanasius, Hilary, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Gregory Nazienzen, Amphilochius, Jerome, Rufinus, and others, all of the 4th century. Jerome expressly says that they were read “for example of life, and instruction of manners, but were not applied to establish any doctrine,” and declares “the Church does not receive them among the Canonical books.” This was said by the translator of the Bible into the Latin Vulgate, the only version of the Bible which the Romanists acknowledge, and therefore, his testimony ought to be conclusive. Notwithstanding, these and other testimonies against them, the apocryphal books were put into the Bible by the Roman Council of Trent only since the Reformation. But they are no part of the Word of God, and never were. And the reason of their admission by the Council of Trent, seems to be, that they wanted some proof that it is proper to pray for souls in purgatory, and they found something in the second book of Maccabees that appeared to favor it. But this book was not written by any inspired prophet, is the work of some Hellenistic Jews of Alexandria, contradicts the first book of Maccabees, is un-chronological and inaccurate in its facts, and is at variance with the inspired Word of God. It is wholly unreliable, for any statement of doctrine, and its relation of facts must be received with great caution.¹ The inspired scriptures only, “are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.” The Apocrypha is not.

2. The Roman Church regards oral tradition as of equal authority with the written Word of God

Indeed, it would seem, as if they held tradition not only of equal, but of superior authority, to that of the Word of God. If a direct and positive statement of God’s Word is quoted in refutation of any of their dogmas, they prefer their Church’s tradition, rather than the positive declaration of God’s Word to the contrary. The short answer is: The Church says so, and that is enough for me. Since the late Vatican Council has voted the dogma of Papal Infallibility, every Romanist, to be consistent, must take this ground. He needs no other Rule of Faith. He has in the Pope a perpetual

divine oracle. “He may say, I believe, not because Christ, or the Bible, or the Church, but because the infallible Pope has so declared and commanded.” The Pope “as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself off that he is God.” As in the time of Christ “they make the Word of God of none effect by their tradition.” The arguments against the Romish doctrine of oral tradition, among others, are these:

First. The Scriptures do not ascribe authority to oral tradition. What St. Paul means by the passage (2 Thess. 2:15 and 3:6.) is all his instructions, oral and written, communicated to those very people themselves, not handed down. On the other hand Christ rebuked this doctrine of the Romanists in their predecessors, the Pharisees, Matt. 15:3, 6. Mark 7:7.

Second. There is no reason why God would supplement the sure Word of God with a rule of faith so variable and unfixed as tradition. His Word is certain, definite, complete, and perspicuous, whereas tradition, from its very nature is indeterminate, and liable to become adulterated with every form of error.

Third. The authority of scripture does not rest on tradition, as Romanists assume. We receive the Scriptures as the Word of God not on the authority of tradition, but because God spake by the mouth of the Apostles and prophets as is evident from the nature of their doctrine, from their miracles, from their prophecies, and from our personal experience and observation of the power of the truth. Even if the fact assumed was true viz. that we know the scriptures to be from God, on the authority of the Church’s testimony alone, the conclusion sought to be deduced from it would be absurd. The witness who proves the identity or primogeniture of a prince, does not thereby acquire a right to govern the kingdom, or even to interpret the will of the prince.

Fourth. The whole ground upon which Romanists base the authority of their tradition, is invalid. History utterly fails them, as for more than three hundred years after the apostles they have very little, and that contradictory, evidence for any one of their traditions.

Fifth. Their practice is inconsistent with their own principles. Many of the earliest and best attested traditions they do not receive. Many of their pretended traditions are recent inventions unknown to the ancients.

Sixth. Many of their traditions, such as relate to the priesthood, the sacrifice of the Mass, and many others, are plainly in direct, opposition to the scriptures.²

We do not need Romish tradition. We have in the sure Word of God, a certain and safe rule of faith. “If they speak not according to this word,” we can detect the error. The word of man may deceive me. Oral tradition may not be faithful or reliable. God’s Word, I know to be true and certain. I know oral tradition to be deceptive. I cannot trust my salvation upon that.

3. The Church of Rome has a very defective doctrine concerning the nature of original sin, or the natural depravity of the human heart

In the doctrinal system of Rome, “original sin is not an inborn evil or sin, but merely a defect, an encumbrance which has come upon us from Adam, but of ourselves we are not involved in sin and inherited wrath.” “The scholastics treat of original sin, as if it were but a trivial, slight defect, and do not understand what original depravity is, or in what light the holy Fathers considered it.” “In speaking of original sin, they omit the most essential part of it, and take no notice at all of our real and principal misery, namely, that we human beings are all born with such a nature, that we neither know, see, nor observe God or his works, that we despise him, that we do not fear nor trust in him’ sincerely, and that we hate his judgments.”³ It is therefore with them only “an inborn weakness of nature,” and not sin.

It is a very superficial, shallow thing, as they define it. Instead of the great evil that it is, it is represented only as a weakness. It is almost excused by this Semi-Pelagian definition. Instead of this half apology for sin, hear the full, positive definition of it as uttered in our Augsburg Confession: “All men who are naturally engendered, are conceived and born in sin, that is, they are all from their mother’s womb, full of evil desires and propensities, and can have by nature, no true fear of God, no true faith in God; and this innate disease or original sin, is truly sin, which brings all those under the eternal wrath of God, who are not born again by Baptism, and the Holy

Spirit.” Here is a definition that means something. It is what the Word of God teaches. It puts man very low down, and makes him depend for all his justification and holiness on the grace of God alone. No wonder that, with such lax views of sin, Rome makes justification to be by works. Here is the secret of the evil of nearly all that follows, in the Romish system. It starts out with wrong and defective views of the evil in man’s heart, that grace is to make good. It makes man naturally better than he is. The remedy then is superficial, because the evil is so. Man can work out, by his own merits, his salvation, because there is not so much to work out. It flatters human pride, whereas the Scriptures, and our Evangelical doctrine, humble man in the dust, from which only the unmerited grace of God can lift him up. In the Evangelical system, original sin is sin. In the Romish system it is only a weakness. This difference accounts for every thing that follows. If man is not very sick, it does not require much to make him well.

4. The Roman Church teaches according to her Semi-Pelagian theory, that man is justified not by faith alone, but by works also

On the subject of justification, the doctrine of the Reformation and that of Rome are directly antagonistic. The distinction between them is vital. The one is of faith only, the other is of works also. The one is of Christ’s righteousness alone, the other is of human merit also. The one is all of God, the other so largely of man as to overshadow that which is of God. In its practical working in the heart, the one makes Christ’s righteousness all, and the other places human merits on the top.

Hear our noble Augsburg Confession on the doctrine of justification:

“We cannot obtain righteousness and the forgiveness of sin before God, by our own merits, works, and atonement, but we obtain the remission of sins, and are justified before God, by grace, for Christ’s sake, through faith, if we believe that Christ suffered for us, and for His sake our sins are remitted unto us, and righteousness, and eternal life are bestowed on us.”

These are noble words, and teach a most precious doctrine of salvation for us poor sinners. This doctrine alone, can give true peace to the heart. It is the doctrine of Christ, of Paul, of Peter, of all the Apostles. It is the doctrine of the Fathers, of the primitive Church, of all who hold the true faith of the Gospel. It was long buried under the rubbish with which the Church of Rome had covered, and hidden from sight, for so many ages, the pure Gospel of Christ. It was brought out from its obscurity by Luther, and forms the keynote of the Reformation. It is the great article by which the true Church must stand or fall.

Says the great Danish Theologian Dr. Martensen:

“The doctrine of Justification by faith alone, is rightly looked upon, as the corner stone of the creed of the Evangelical Church because in it the Reformers laid hold upon that which makes Christian faith a saving faith. This doctrine, is the great doctrine of Christ, and His holy Apostles, is Christ’s righteousness reckoned to the humble believer as his own, and though long lost in the teaching of the Church, was restored to the world in the 16th century. It not only led men back to the true source of doctrine, the Word of God, but it also led them back to the inmost and living source of religious consciousness, which in the Romish church had been for the most part hidden beneath the rubbish of tradition and human teaching. Pelagian objections against this doctrine spring from a conscience which has never really experienced the sense of sin – which has not experienced the struggle in which man alone learns to feel the absolute majesty of the law, that holy ideal far above him, by which alone in the consciousness of unworthiness and guilt, man feels himself surrounded by the terrors of eternity; a conflict which may vary outwardly according to the varieties of human character, but whose inward reality none can be ignorant of, who personally participates in the blessings of salvation. As to the Romish Church, she has weakened the high solemnity of this doctrine by her Semi-Pelagian theory, and this theory she must confess, has been practically renounced in the stern realities of life and death, by many of her very members, who, in the inmost experience of their souls, have borne witness to the efficacy of the evangelical doctrine.”

This is a very important fact. The Church of Rome rejects the doctrine in her creed, but thousands of devout and earnest souls, even in her own communion, who want better food to nourish and comfort them, than that which her professed system furnishes, have struggled up from darkness into light, and through the super-incumbent errors that envelope them, and find in this doctrine the practical relief which they need.

“Not only,” continues Martensen,

“have the great teachers of the middle ages, an Anselm, and a Bernard, not only have the host of witnesses who are called forerunners of the Reformation, given their testimony for this doctrine, but the history of the pastorate, the cure of souls, within the Romish Church, abundantly proves that the evangelical doctrine alone can give real comfort to troubled and helpless consciences. Thus it brought peace to Luther, when, as a monk, and experiencing great struggles of soul, he was referred to St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans by an old Augustinian brother, in proof that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Even the custom in the Romish Church, of holding a crucifix before the dying, symbolizes this doctrine. For what else could this custom mean, if it has any meaning at all, and is not a mere superstition, except that the man now in the solemn hour of death, must rely, not upon his own merits, not upon the merits of the saints, but solely upon the crucified Christ, as the Only Mediator?”⁴

This doctrine is so true, and so fully meets the great want of the soul, that even Roman Catholics cannot be prevented by the errors with which their system surrounds it, from seeing its truth, and experiencing its preciousness. How much happier would they be if the impurities that obscure it were removed, and they could see and enjoy it in true scriptural light and beauty as held and experienced in the Protestant Church.

5. The Church of Rome requires compulsory enumeration of all sins in confession

The Church of Rome requires compulsory enumeration of all sins in confession and assures those who confess, of the efficacy of priestly absolution, irrespective of the disposition of those who confess. No man has the right or the power to forgive sins, but God only. A minister as God's messenger of mercy and peace to men, may say to penitent and believing men, "your sins are forgiven of God, for Christ's sake." But this is declarative only. It is the Gospel promise of mercy announced to those who by faith accept it. It declares the divine promise of pardon to those who truly repent of their sins, and believe in Christ This is proper. We preach "repentance and remission of sins, in Christ's name, to all nations." To "preach remission," is to console the broken-hearted, who mourn with godly sorrow on account of their sins, with the assurance from God's Word, that Christ has forgiven them their sins. They may not doubt it. This the Lutheran Church has always held and always practiced. Such "absolution, however, is nothing but the Gospel, a divine promise of grace, and the favor of God, to truly penitent and believing hearts." [Melanchthon's Apology.]

Romish Confession and Absolution is quite a different thing from this. It is a compulsory, slavish, enumeration of all sins, great and small, to the priest, in auricular confession, "Oh how miserably have they perplexed and tormented many a pious soul, by teaching that confession must be complete, and that no sin dare remain unconfessed, for how can we ever be sure that we have confessed all?" [Melanchthon's Apology.] It is a grievous burden upon the conscience. It worms out of timid, shrinking, sensitive persons the secret thoughts, and most hidden feelings of their hearts, and thus ensnares their consciences. It becomes an engine of intolerable oppression. It does violence to the modesty of virtue. It puts people under the power of an unscrupulous priest. The Confessional in the Romish Church is a dark and polluted chapter on the pages of History. It diverts attention from repentance toward God, to the enumeration of sins to man. It changes the true feeling of hearty sorrow and confession to God, into the fear, anxiety, and apprehension inseparable from a verbal enumeration of offenses at the confessional, to a listener on the other side of the separating partition.

It diverts the mind from the hope of forgiveness from God to the absolution pronounced by a man. It ascribes the efficacy of forgiveness not to faith in Christ, but to the word of a priest. It leads the person confessing to rely upon the act performed, *ex opere operato*. It leads impenitent and

unreformed men to a state of security in the perpetration of sins. . It takes repentance out of the heart and places it upon the lips. It is a strong temptation to deception. It lulls the consciences of sinners to sleep. It “makes God submissive to the priests, whose pronouncements of forgiveness God must acknowledge, even when they absolve men whom God’s righteousness could not absolve, or when they refuse absolution to men whom the grace of God would certainly forgive. It teaches men to believe that God has surrendered his judgment into the hands of fallible priests, who have to contend with their own passions, and yet who, according to their own contracted views and the ever changing emotions of the human mind, can bestow grace, and invoke wrath, and consequently, eternal salvation, or everlasting misery upon their fellow men. Forgiveness is a transaction between the divine love and the heart of the sinner. The sinful priest dare not interfere between them, and prescribe to the love of God, whose sins should be forgiven, or whose should be retained. This is superstition, in which God is made an idol, which draws away the heart of the sinner from God, and fixes upon man, the priest.⁵ It changes evangelical repentance into priestly imposed penances, endured. It is followed by”acts of atonement performed by the penitent, which are prescribed by man, as necessary to the expiation of punishment and are trusted in as a compensation for guilt.” It leads to the notion of meriting the forgiveness of sins by penances imposed and submitted to. It quiets the aroused consciences of criminals, who feel secure that the priest will not inform on them, and they make an easy bargain by undergoing penance, and receiving pardon. Says Bretschneider, "In order to be saved, a mere verbal acknowledgment of sins is required, or the ‘external evidences’ of a ‘proper state of mind’ upon which this efficacious absolution always follows. This is very convenient for persons of high and low degree, who indeed wish to die happy, but also wish to spend their whole lives in dissipation. In what sense does this confession in the Romish Church redeem men from sin? She forgives sins without end, and secures the sinner from the punishment of them in eternity without it being at all necessary that he should be delivered from the dominion of sin. He can tranquilly indulge his lusts and evil desires, all his days, the Priest who carries the keys of heaven will without fail unlock the gates for him in his dying hour. Is it not plain that thus the genuine reformation of men is really superfluous, and that absolution in the Romish Church does not promote the object of Christianity, which is to

reform men, and make them new creatures in Christ Jesus, and then only to promise them forgiveness and eternal life? Is it not plain that Confession as practiced in the Romish Church is an institution which delivers men, not from the dominion of sin, but rather lulls the consciences of sinners to sleep, and yet after all, by the power of the priest, conveys the most depraved to heaven? Is there any thing of blessed efficacy in this priestly power? No, no it is not saving but ruinous, and leads not to salvation but to destruction.⁶ These are the earnest words of one who knew well whereof he affirmed.

6. The Roman Church teaches that “the Mass is an unbloody sacrifice for sins”

The Roman Church teaches according to the decree of the Council of Trent, that “the Mass is an unbloody sacrifice, in which the priest offers to God the same Christ who hung upon the cross, as an atonement for sins and transgressions even if they be enormous.” It is further declared that in this sacrifice of the Mass, “the priest offers not only for the sins of the living” and in the place of punishments and penances, and for other necessities, but also for the departed but not yet wholly purified souls in purgatory.”

“The principal idea which lies at the bottom of the whole affair is this, that the priest in performing the service of the Mass, offers the body of Christ as a sacrifice to God anew.”

Now, we deny the whole thing in toto. St. Paul expressly declares: “We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once for all.” It is once for all. Not often but once. The atonement was made once, and needed not to be made again. It was made by Christ himself, and is complete. “It is finished,” as Jesus himself said of it on the cross. It is declared again and again, by St. Paul, and by St. Peter, that Christ offered himself “once” – not often, but once only. Not a single passage from the New Testament can be shown, in which it is said, or even intimated that the sacrifice of Christ is to be repeated. On the contrary it is expressly reasoned by St. Paul that the sacrifice of Christ differs from the priestly offerings of the old Testament in this, that whereas they had to be made often, Christ’s sacrifice was only made once, and that sufficed for all, completed the whole system of

sacrifices for sin, “made an end of sins” finished the atonement, and opened the holy of holies for all the world. The application of the atonement to men by the Holy Ghost, goes on to the end of the world, but the atonement itself by the one sacrifice of Christ, was finished by his death, and is not repeated. If there is any thing clearly taught in the scriptures, it is this. The Church of Rome in this sacrifice of the Mass, comes up squarely to the Word of God, and contradicts it. The Word of God says: Christ was offered “once for all.” Rome says, No. The Word of God says “once.” Rome says thousands on thousands of times. Christ said: “It is finished.” Rome says: it is not finished. Between Rome, and Christ and His Word, there is a direct contradiction. We believe Christ. We do not believe Rome. St. Paul says of Christ: “By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” Rome says: No, they are not perfected forever, they must first pass through the fires of Purgatory, where they are purified and perfected, and by the sacrifice of the Mass, they are lifted out of purgatorial fires, and are placed among the sanctified in heaven. I cannot conceive how any two systems could be more directly contradictory of each other, than are those of Christ and Rome.

But how did it come to be so? The early Church knew nothing of priestly sacrifices, under the New Testament dispensation. The Lord’s Supper was not a sacrifice in which Christ was offered. It knew nothing of Purgatory, from which souls were released by the sacrifice of the Mass. All these things came with the lapse of ages, as corruptions crept into the Church.

"From the 4th Century onward the Bishops in the Christian Church, were regarded as counterparts of the Old Testament priesthood, they were no longer considered to be, what the Apostles ordained that they should be, viz. preachers of the Gospel, teachers of truth, examples of piety, and overseers of the Church. But they were regarded as mediators between God and man, who sacrifice to God for men, make God propitious, and thus procure for them grace and pardon from God.

“And this is now the principal distinction between the Protestant and the Romish worship. The service in Protestant Churches consists mainly in the reading of God’s Word, confession of sin, praise and thanksgiving, and preaching of the Gospel, by which faith is promoted, the mind is informed, devotion an the heart is awakened, the will is inclined to forsake sin and live holy, and the soul is led to Christ and to trust in His redemption made

on the cross for salvation. On the contrary, the Romish service is almost wholly sacerdotal, priestly, and is intended mainly to propitiate God and render Him gracious, as if He was not gracious in Christ, before. Preaching is in it a subordinate service, at every service there is required the sacrifice to be offered, and this is performed by the priest's celebrating the Lord's Supper for himself, and thus a continual sacrifice is offered to God,"⁷ as if Christ had not offered that sacrifice on the cross "once for all." On these plain declarations that Christ offered himself "once for all," and that "by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," we reject entirely the whole system of priestly sacrifices offered by the Church of Rome in the Mass. The Mass is no propitiatory sacrifice. It is absurd to regard the priestly eating and drinking the Lord's Supper in the view of the Congregation, or privately, as offering Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice. It requires a lively imagination to see any such sacrifice in the thing. Through the Lord's Supper as a means of grace, God conveys to us, not we to God. In it He gives His body and blood to us. We offer no sacrifice of His body and blood to Him. The Mass is no unbloody sacrifice in which the priest offers Christ to God. This is a sad perversion of the nature of this holy sacrament.

Particularly we reject the pretense that this sacrifice of the Mass releases souls from Purgatory. We believe in no Purgatory. There is no Purgatory. Jesus and His Apostles, who so often, and extensively speak of a future state, and have brought life and immortality to light, say not a word about Purgatory. If Purgatory existed they would not have ignored it so completely" as they do. When they describe the state of the soul after death? they do it in such a way as proves that there is no Purgatory for pious souls. Of poor Lazarus Jesus says: "And it; came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom." He did not go into Purgatory to be tortured with fire, but into Abraham's bosom where he was "comforted." To the I thief on the cross Jesus said: "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." This man was a robber, whose soul, we might I think, was less purified than that of a godly man. He went i through Christ's mercy, into Paradise, and not into Purgatory. i St. Paul said that when he would be absent from the body he would be "present with the Lord, which is far better." St. Paul j did not expect to go to Purgatory before entering heaven. He expected to go at once to be "present with the Lord." When the Romanists refer to Maccabees in proof of Purgatory, we reply that the Book

of Maccabees is no part of the inspired Word of God, but belongs to the Apocrypha. It is, therefore, worth no more than any other human opinion. An Apocryphal book can establish no Christian doctrine. The Savior's declaration that the sin against the Holy Ghost "shall not be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come" is quoted as proof for Purgatory. But even Romanists do not say that sins are forgiven in Purgatory, but that souls are purified by fire. St. Fulgentius of the 4th Century says of this passage: "By these words our Lord did not intimate that any sins will be forgiven in the world to come which have not been forgiven in this life." Thus one of the saints of the Roman Calendar directly contradicts the Roman interpretation of the passage. It is only a strong way of saying that the sin is never forgiven. The passage of St. Paul is quoted: "The fire shall try every man's work," as proof. But St. Augustine of the 4th Century gives the true explanation when he says: "The fire of tribulation shall try every man's work." The Word of God does not teach the Romish dogma of Purgatory.

We reject Purgatory for the great reason: "It is derogatory to the doctrine of Christ's perfect redemption for us. If Christ died for us, and redeemed us from sin and hell, as the scriptures teach, then the idea of further meritorious sufferings detracts from the perfection of Christ's work, and places merit still in the creature, which is directly contrary to the whole plan of salvation through Christ." St. John declares: "The blood of Jesus Christ, his son cleanseth us from all sin." Not from a few sins but from all – not from a part but from the whole. The true believer has Christ's perfect righteousness. He needs no better, and he can have no better righteousness. His righteousness is perfect, for it consists of Christ's perfect merits acquired by faith. He needs no Purgatory. In the wedding garment which Christ furnishes, he is fit to appear at once at the marriage feast of the Lamb. The song of the saved will be "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." It is a thorough washing, from our sins, in his own blood. It leaves no stain. It cleanses. It cleanses from "all sin." It leaves none for Purgatory. It is effectually done. Not fire, but Christ's blood, does this. The soul that is "redeemed by Christ's most precious blood," "sanctified by the Holy Ghost" by the application of that blood, "crucified with Christ so that the body of sin is destroyed," "delivered from the body of this death through our Lord Jesus Christ," and "purified by faith," needs

nothing more to fit it for heaven. Its way to the skies at death is direct, and not by the fictitious, roundabout way of Purgatory.

Purgatory is a fiction, and a fraud. "Masses cost money. The priests do not make it an easy matter to get out of Purgatory. One mass is not enough. The poor are oppressed to pay for masses. For the rich who can pay for many masses, many masses are said, and must be paid for. For rich princes, as in Roman Catholic countries, they are read by thousands."⁸ A certain priest in Lancaster, whose church was much in debt, issued an immense number of tickets for Masses, to pay off the debt. They were bought by the poor deluded people, in large numbers. If he said all the Masses for which he sold tickets, he was kept busy doing little else all his life time, and by speaking as fast as his tongue could utter, at that. I knew a poor man in my native place, who made his living by going about town selling apples. He was a devout Romanist. He died. His son who was also a Romanist, paid the priest sum after sum until it amounted to \$24 to pray his father's soul out of Purgatory. He was a poor young man, and paid all that he could afford. The priest was still not satisfied, declared that his father's soul was not yet out of Purgatory, and wanted more money. The eyes of the young man began to open to the imposture of the thing, and he came to the Lutheran pastor in whose study I was reading, to ask his advice, as to what he should do. The pastor told him the whole thing was a fiction, and a deception, that he should go home, and not pay the priest another penny for masses. He took his advice, and from that time forward abandoned Romanism altogether.

It is a very uncomfortable doctrine. A few years ago, I read a notice of a Mass being said for the repose of the soul of one of their most prominent bishops, who had died many years before. I involuntarily exclaimed "What, is he not yet out of Purgatory?" It will be remembered that after the death of Pio Nono, Masses were every where said for the repose of the soul of the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, and the infallible head of the Church in the whole world. There seems to be no positive salvation even for an infallible Pope. It is a very unsatisfactory doctrine. If we have Christ we do not want it. With it we never can be certain of salvation. Many years after our pious loved ones have died in the Lord, we cannot say that they are at rest. All is uncertainty. The priests leave us in dreary darkness. Rut so it is. When we once let go the good Word of God, and the sure way of salvation through

faith in Christ's perfect redemption for us, we are out at sea, and the ministers of a false religion are miserable comforters. A wise man will not let himself be deceived by them.

7. The Roman Church teaches the Invocation of Saints

The Roman Church through its Council of Trent says: "The Bishops shall teach that the Saints intercede with God for men, that it is good and useful humbly to invoke them, and to take our refuge in their intercessions, merits, and assistance, for the attainment of blessings from God through His Son Jesus Christ." The Romish Catechism says: "The holy Church with great propriety directs her thankful prayers and intercessions to the most holy mother of God, that she may by her intercessions reconcile us sinners to God, and obtain for us temporal and eternal blessings." This is strange language to utter and print for the eyes of intelligent Christian people. God says: "'Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.'" But Rome says: Call upon Mary and the Saints in the day of trouble, they will intercede with the Son, that He may intercede with the Father for you. This is a very roundabout way when the true way is so direct. The Word of God says: "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Rome says: We have Mary and the saints as advocates with our Advocate to influence Him to do what he is seated at the right hand of the Father to do, to intercede with the Father. Our Advocate, Jesus Christ needs to be admonished of His duty as intercessor, by His mother and the saints. Negligent intercessor! Vigilant saints! They love us better than He does, and by their prayers to Him, must stir up His sluggish love for us. Rome goes even further than this. By Mary's intercessions she "reconciles sinners to God." She takes the place of Christ. She is our Mediator. She reconciles sinners to God. She saves us. We need no other Savior if she does all this. Mary is enough. Heaven save us from such perverted Christianity!

It is wonderful to what extent Mariolatry is carried in the Church of Rome. A book was published in New York in 1852, with the approval of "John (Hughes) Archbishop of New York," entitled "Glories of Mary." It

was written by Alphonso de Liguori, who was enrolled at Rome as a saint in 1839, it being then declared by the Pope as a necessary condition of his being “canonized,” that “there is nothing censurable in any thing he has written.” On the very second page of this book we find these words: “If Jesus is King of the whole world, Mary is also queen of the whole world; therefore, says, St. Bernardine of Sienna, all creatures who serve God, ought also to serve Mary; for angels and men, and all things that are in heaven and on earth, being subject to the dominion of God, are also subject to the dominion of the glorious Virgin. Hence Gueric, abbot, thus addresses the divine mother: ‘Continue, Mary, continue in security to reign. Dispose according to thy will of every thing belonging to thy Son; for thou being mother and spouse of the King of the world, the kingdom and ’power over all creatures is due to thee as Queen” – and so on through this whole book of 790 pages. Here are some such sayings with which it is filled: “All obey the commands of Mary, even God himself.” (p. 202.) “Mary is omnipotent, since the queen, by every law, must enjoy the same privileges as the king.” (p. 203.) “The prayer of Mary has the force of a command with Jesus Christ.” (p. 729.) What shall we think of a Church which, so far from rebuking those who use such language as this, canonizes the author, proclaims them saints, who are to be followed in their examples, and even prayed to themselves?⁹

After I had preached this sermon, I was favored through the mail, by some unknown Romanist friend, with a copy of the October number of the “Ave Maria, a Catholic Journal devoted to the honor of the Mother of God,” and published at Notre Dame, Indiana. From an article entitled: “The Divine Maternity of the Virgin Mary,” I take the following extract: “In addition to the title of the Mother of God, Holy Church has ever used from antiquity, and given to the Blessed Virgin, other honorable, and distinguished titles. Hence, according to tradition, Mary being acknowledged far more innocent and unspotted than all other virgins, is called Queen of Virgins (Regina Virginum.) She being also judged to have a faith more shining and perfect than that of the Patriarchs and Prophets, is called Queen of Patriarchs {Regina Patriarcharum) and Queen of Prophets (Regina Prophetarum.) The zeal of Mary being more ardent than that of the Apostles, she is called Queen of the Apostles (Regina Apostolorum.) The fortitude of Mary in her sufferings being superior to that of the Martyrs, she is styled Queen of Martyrs (Regina Martyrum.) The

purity and love of Mary being found distinguished and privileged above that of the angels, she is called Queen of Angels (Regina Angelorum.) All forms of sanctity being comprised in Mary, she is, as it were, the ocean of all created sanctity, and is therefore called Queen of all Saints (Regina Sanctorum omnium.) Besides, the Church, on account of the grace communicated to Mary by the Holy Trinity venerates her as Mother of divine grace; Mother, most pure, most chaste, undefiled, untouched, admirable; Mother the most renowned, most perfect, most powerful, most merciful, most faithful. Moreover she is styled, Mirror of Justice, the Seat of Wisdom, the Cause of our Joy, the Spiritual Vessel, Vessel of Honor, the Illustrious Vessel of Devotion, the Mystical Rose, the Tower of David, the Tower of Ivory, the House of Gold, the Ark of the Covenant, the Gate of Heaven, the Morning Star, the Health of the Weak, the Refuge of Sinners, the Comforter of the Afflicted, the Help of Christians. All these different forms of addressing the Blessed Virgin Mary are found in the Litany which is generally sung by the faithful in all the Catholic Churches.”¹⁰

We are not uttering a Protestant slander, as we would in all probability be charged, by the publication of this extract. It is from a regular Romanist Journal, on the cover of which these words are printed: “The Ave Maria, a Catholic Family Magazine, blessed by our late Holy Father, Pius IX. by His Holiness Pope Leo XIII. and encouraged by Many Eminent Prelates.” It is therefore, “By Authority.”

“A Rosary is a series of Prayers, and a string of beads, by which they are counted. A Rosary consists of fifteen decades. Each decade consists of ten Ave Marias, marked by small beads, preceded by a Pater noster, marked by a larger bead, and concluded by a Gloria Patri.” (Webster’s Unabridged.) The Pater noster, is the Lord’s Prayer – Our Father. The Ave Maria, is as follows:

“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women; and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.”

The Rosary consists, therefore, of decades, each decade containing eleven prayers besides the Gloria, which is not a prayer, but a song of praise. Of

these eleven prayers ten are addressed to Mary, and one to God the Father – ten Ave Marias to one Pater noster. This is the proportion – ten to one – ten prayers to the Virgin for one to God. It is very humiliating to see intelligent men turn from the pure worship of God, through Christ, in the Protestant Church, and go to counting the beads on their Rosaries, and repeat ten Ave Marias to one Pater noster – ten prayers to Mary to one to God, mentioning in prayer Mary's name ten times to once that they mention the name of God. It is strange. This is called the 19th Century, and we live in a land of Bibles, and Schools, and Churches. But when a man shuts his eyes it is dark at noonday.

To call on the name of God, is to worship Him. To call on the name Mary, is to worship her. And she is worshipped. In Roman Catholic countries, as in Italy, Spain, Mexico, South America, and others, "Mary is God, and worship is simply the adoration of the Virgin." Says an intelligent writer, who had been for some time a resident of Italy: "Mary is the first name that is lisped in childhood, the last that is uttered by the quivering lips before they are closed in death. Around the neck of the infant just born, is suspended a small image of the Virgin. When the babe seeks the breast, it must first kiss the image, and thus literally does it draw in the adoration of Mary with its mother's milk. When that babe grows up to youth's estate, he beholds the shrines of the Virgin on every high way, in every street, in every church, in the theaters, in the courts of justice, in all conceivable places. To Mary he sees all knees bent, from those of the Pope in the Vatican, to those of the brigand on the Campagna. The supplicating whine of the wrinkled hag begging for alms at the Church door, is for the sake of Mary. The song of the peasant girl as she gathers the grape in the autumn is in praise of Mary."¹¹ From the highest to the lowest classes, prayers are offered to Mary, her praises are sung, her blessing is invoked, her intercession is begged, her virtues are recited, and to her worship shrines are consecrated, and altars are erected. Where one prayer is offered to God, ten are offered to Mary.

"He who seriously believes that Mary and the saints hear his prayers, must also believe them to be, and does believe them to be, omnipresent and omniscient beings. This necessarily follows. Mary is invoked, and Ave Marias are said to her, in Italy, Austria, France, Spain, The West Indies, The Sandwich Islands, China, East India, North America, Ireland, Brazil, Mexico, all over the world, where

ever there is a Romish Church. Either Mary must be a God present at all those places, at the same moment, to hear those invocations, or she must be like God, omniscient, to know all these prayers, sighs, and vows, otherwise she can know nothing of all these, and of course, can render no assistance.”¹²

What is this but to deify a creature? What is this but to assign divine attributes to a woman? What is this but to make Mary a goddess? Is not this idolatry? If this is not the sin of idolatry, what is it? Idolatry is the worship of a creature, instead of, or more than, the Creator. Prayer to Mary, the uttering of Ave Marias, calling on Mary for her mediation and blessing, is worshiping her. It is worship rendered to a creature. Where ten prayers are offered to Mary to one that is offered to God, the creature is worshiped more than the Creator. This is the sin of idolatry. God save us all from the guilt, and the punishment of the dreadful crime of idolatry!

What is the result of our discussion tonight?

It is a fair and truthful exhibit. I have drawn from Romish sources, and quoted from their own official documents. That these are the doctrines of the Church of Rome cannot, and will not be denied. These are really the doctrines of the Church of Rome as I have stated them. Rome will not attempt to deny them. But as they are sore spots, she may attempt to cover them up, or gloss them over. Eloquent Jesuits, holding “Missions,” may succeed in making “the worse appear the better reason.” But earnest inquirers who are accustomed to examine all things thoroughly, by looking a little beneath the surface, are not so easily deceived.

It may be appropriate to institute the inquiry: Do all who hold to the Church of Rome, really believe the doctrines officially taught by their own church? It is perhaps doubtful. It would seem that intelligent minds are likely to profess their creed with large mental reservation.

But will well informed Protestants, exchange the sound doctrines of the Word of God, renounce the true faith in which they have been reared, and in which their fathers lived and died, and adopt in their stead such unscriptural, corrupt, and superstitious notions, as those which we have

discussed to night? Is the Word of God nothing to them? Is the faith of the Reformation nothing to them? Is the example of godly and sainted forefathers nothing to them? Is truth nothing to them? Is the safety of their souls in life and in death, nothing to them? Will they risk the comfort and peace of the true faith, and the true church, for a faith so false, and a church so unsound as the Church of Rome?

It is commendable when we see a man rising from darkness up to light. But it is pitiful when we see a man descending from light down to darkness.

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1. See Home's Introduction, Vol. 1. and 4.↩
 2. Hodge's Outlines of Theology.↩
 3. Melancthon, Apol. Augs. Conf. Art. Orig. Sin.↩
 4. Martensen's Christian Dogmatics.↩
 5. Bretschneider's Henry and Antonio.↩
 6. Bretschneider's Henry and Antonio.↩
 7. Ibid.↩
 8. Bretschneider.↩
 9. Both Sides, by Thomas S. Bacon.↩
 10. Ave Maria, Oct. No. 1879, page 828.↩
 11. Dr. J. A. Wylie's Awakening of Italy↩
 12. Bretschneider.↩

4. Rome: A Persecuting Church

Rev. 17:6. – Drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

JESUIT MISSIONARIES and Roman priests who advocate the claims of their Church, say, among other things that instead of the Church of Rome being a persecuting Church, as is charged, she is the persecuted Church. To sustain this assertion they have referred, among others, to the riot that took place in Philadelphia, many years ago, during the Native American excitement that then prevailed in this country. Three things were forgotten to be mentioned, however, in connection with that riot. First: that it was a riot by a mob, and not the action of the authorities either in Church or State. Second: that it was put down by Protestants. Third: that the exciting cause that aroused the passions of the rioters, was the very fact that the church of Rome is a persecuting church. The knowledge of its intolerant spirit, and the fear that if it gained power, it would again, as in its past history, kindle the fires of persecution, here as elsewhere, were taken advantage of to inflame the passions of the multitude. Had Rome been the tolerant and non-persecuting church which she wishes us now to believe, there would have been no materials for the inciters to the riot to work upon, and there would have been no riot. This proof quoted in behalf of the position that Rome is not a persecuting, but a persecuted church, fails utterly.

The toleration of Protestants in Maryland by Lord Baltimore, the first Governor, who was a Roman Catholic, is also cited as a proof of the tolerant spirit of the Roman Church. The facts, however, hardly warrant so strong a conclusion. After a contest of several years with the colonists, and particularly with Clayborne of Kent Island, Lord Baltimore was compelled to concede to the colonists the right to initiate legislation, and frame their own laws. As the Romanists were then in the majority in the colony in 1639 the Assembly established the Roman Catholic religion as the State religion.

The law establishing the Roman Catholic religion, as the religion of the State, granted, indeed, permission in words, to others than Roman Catholics, to worship God according to the dictates of their consciences but it at the same time, forbade Protestants, as well as Roman Catholics, to eat meat in Lent, under penalty of a fine. This, of course, was an intolerant act, and persecuted Protestants who followed the dictates of their consciences, in the matter of observing Lent as prescribed by the Romish Church. In the mean time a large Protestant immigration entered Maryland, laid out the city of Providence, afterwards called Annapolis, and they became so numerous that the county of Anne Arundel was chiefly settled by them. In 1649, their influence was so largely felt, that by an Act of Assembly the offensive provision in regard to fasting in Lent, was repealed by a law which declared that

“no person or persons whatsoever, professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall from henceforth, be any way troubled, molested, or discountenanced for and in respect of his or her religion, against his or her consent.”

It was the Assembly that enacted this law of toleration, and its enactment was largely due to Protestant influence, that was already powerful in the State. The facts of the case diminish very much the credit which the Romish, Church takes to itself about it.

It is rather a new, and hitherto unaccustomed language to hear from the lips of Romish priests, when they speak of the virtues of toleration, and claim that they are the tolerant and the persecuted people. This is a new role that is being played on the theater of the world's history. We have all along been under quite a different impression. We still think that the former impression is the correct one. We would be very happy if this impression could be removed. We congratulate our Romish friends on the change of tone. We hope they will hold on to it. It would be a blessed change for the world, if the Church of Rome would cease to be the persecuting church which History informs us it has always been, since its Bishops have become Popes. We confess we are not sanguine however. We fear the old intolerant and persecuting spirit is still the inherent and governing spirit of the system.

Protestantism is tolerated in the city of Rome; not very graciously however. It was not tolerated there at all before the Italians themselves rose against their own Pope, and wrested his temporal power from him. Before that, Protestantism was kept outside the walls, or a Protestant service might be held in the legations under the flags of the United States, and of England, the symbols of liberty, not otherwise. It was only when Cadorna's cannon, fired by rebellious children of the Holy Father, battered down the gates of Rome, that Protestantism entered; and it remains, because Cavour's noble maxim, "A free Church in a free State," directs the policy of the government of Victor Emanuel and his successor. No thanks to the Pope for that, however. He is as intolerant now as ever. He sulkily buried himself in the Vatican, and protests to this day against all that has occurred. The new role is not played voluntarily in Rome. It is played by Jesuits in the United States, not in Rome. Rome has two faces, one for the United States and another for Italy. Where Protestantism creates public opinion, the role is played, because intolerance is there unpopular. Where Rome creates public opinion, no eloquent eulogies upon the beauties of toleration are heard, because there the thing itself is unknown.

When Luther arose and preached against the miserable corruptions of the Church of Rome, in his day, which were so notorious that they were confessed and lamented even by Romanists themselves, his life was in constant danger, and if the good Elector Frederick of Saxony had not protected him with all his power and wisdom, he would have met a violent death long before the Reformation was completed. Rome was a persecuting Church then.

When the Edict of Worms was issued against Luther and all who adhered to him, declaring him severed from God's Church "and commanding under pain of punishment for high treason and the severest proscription of the empire, that no one shall afford him lodging, food, drink, or protection, or in word, or deed, secretly or openly adhere to him, aid, or assist him r but if any should get him into their power, to take him captive,, and deliver him well secured to his imperial majesty. All his coadjutors, adherents, harborers, supporters, patrons, and followers shall be taken captive, and their property seized and confiscated" – the Church of Rome was a persecuting Church then.

When during the lifetime of Melanchthon, Francis I. of France made the famous declaration that “if he thought that the blood in his arm was tainted with the Lutheran heresy he would order it to be cut off, and that he would not spare even his own children if they entertained sentiments contrary to those of the Holy Catholic Church,” and when he carried out this spirit by burning alive multitudes of Lutherans for their faith, Rome was a persecuting Church then.

When the bloody Queen Mary burnt Ridley and Cranmer at the stake for their Protestant faith, and two hundred and seventy-seven other persons, bishops, preachers, and laymen, women and children, and aged persons, on account of their adherence to the pure doctrines of the Gospel, Rome was a persecuting Church then.

When in the Netherlands, the Emperor Charles V. enforced 'the Edict of Worms against all who held the doctrines of Luther, and executed it with such severity, that thousands of ministers and people perished by the sword and at the stake in horrible suffering as martyrs for the Evangelical faith, Rome was a persecuting Church then.

When Philip II. of Spain by means of the Inquisition inflicted on that benighted country, the most dreadful cruelties upon hundreds and thousands of persons in order to suppress the doctrines of the Reformation, Rome was a persecuting Church then.

When in poor Ireland, “where in the early centuries primitive Christianity existed, established by the good St. Patrick, and where it flourished until the 7th Century when the papal yoke was forced upon the people by the sword, and there began a series of dreadful persecutions of those who would not worship images, and bow down to the infallibility of the Pope, or listen to the drivel of the Romish priest, and which continued down to, and through the reign of King James,” Rome was a persecuting Church then.

When, including the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve in Paris in 1572, perhaps 100,000 Huguenots were murdered in the unhappy country of France, on account of their Protestant faith, Rome was a persecuting Church, then.

When the bones of the Waldenses and Vaudois whitened the mountains and valleys of Piedmont, after having been followed, and hunted, and put to death like wild beasts by hundreds and thousands, by the minions of Rome, because they would read the Bible, and worship God in their simple Christian faith, Rome was a persecuting Church then.

When in 1864 Pope Pius IX. in his Encyclical Letter of December 8th, pronounced his anathemas on all who maintain the liberty of the press, the liberty of conscience, and the liberty of speech, I am rather inclined to think that the Church of Rome is a persecuting Church still.

When Pope Pius IX. issued his famous Syllabus in 1864, for the action of the Vatican Council, in which he condemned all who deny that the Church of Rome may employ force in the execution of her dogmas, I am afraid Rome has not changed, but is a persecuting Church still.

And even in this year of grace, 1879, when the new law enacted in Belgium, that removes the state schools from under the authority of the Roman Church will be put in operation, and the Roman Bishops have resolved to obstruct the new law in every possible way, having instructed the priests to refuse absolution to all who patronize or countenance the state schools, the children, and parents, and teachers who disobey are to be put under the ban, and the teachers are required to resign under pain of excommunication, I am afraid that notwithstanding the disavowal of Jesuits and Bishops, Rome is, as ever, a persecuting Church still.

I have my fears that the Church of Rome is still a persecuting Church, both from the facts to which I have now referred, and from the well known claim which that church makes that, whilst Protestants change, she never changes. What Rome, therefore, once approved, she always approves. She claims to be so certainly right, that she is never in the wrong. If, then, to persecute, and kill, and burn, Luther, and Cranmer, and the Waldenses, and the Huguenots, and the Spanish Jews, was once right, it would seem, that it must be always right. At least I have, in all my reading, never seen a line emanating from Holy Mother Church, in which she confessed her error, or retracted a wrong, or admitted that she transgressed the line of her authority, when she imprisoned, and tortured, and confiscated the property, or burned the bodies of heretics. As long as no such confession, or retraction, or admission of wrong is announced, we are, I think, permitted to take for

granted that no such confession, or retraction, or admission of unwarranted assumption of power and authority, has ever been made. A church that never changes in any thing, will not change in this.

My fears that the Church of Rome is still as ever, a persecuting Church, are not allayed by what has emanated from the official head of that Church within the last ten or fifteen years. On the 8th day of December 1864, only fifteen years ago, Pope Pius IX. issued a most important official document, entitled “Syllabus Errorum” or the Papal Syllabus of Errors. It is a formal enumeration of errors of our times, which are anathematized and condemned by the Church of Rome. Among other things enumerated as errors, and which are condemned by the Pope, together with those who hold them, are the following:

No. 23. “That the Roman Pontiffs and Ecumenical Councils have exceeded the limits of their power, have usurped the rights of princes, and have even committed errors in defining matters of faith and morals.”

This is declared to be an error, and those who hold it are condemned.

No. 24. “That the Church has not the power of availing herself of force, or any direct or indirect temporal power.”

This too is denounced as an error, and those are anathematized who hold it.

No. 78. “That it has been wisely provided by law, in some countries called Catholic that persons coming to reside therein, shall enjoy the public exercise of their own worship.”

This too is stigmatized as an error, and those who maintain it, are condemned.

Now what is the meaning of these ‘three articles, of the Popes’ Syllabus?

First: No Roman Pontiffs, however cruel and despotic, have ever exceeded the limits of their power, when imprisoning, torturing, murdering, and burning heretics.

Second: The Roman Church has the power, and ought to exercise it, of employing force in executing her dogmas.

Third: That no persons residing in a Roman Catholic country shall be tolerated in the exercise of their own Protestant, or other, worship.

These principles are very clearly laid down, and asserted in the Pope's Syllabus sent forth to the world, from Rome, only fifteen years ago. As the Vatican Council that met in 1869 and 1870 declared the Pope to be infallible, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, and as this Syllabus was issued officially, and *ex cathedra*, by Pope Pius IX. it is as plain as the sun at noon-day, that Popery has not changed, has confessed no error, has recalled no act of intolerance or persecution, but on the contrary, has confirmed all the despotic, and cruel, and bloody deeds of the past, and is to-day, the same persecuting, intolerant, and vindictive church it has always been. The principles, the will, and the spirit, are the same now as ever. It only lacks the power to carry them out. The Reformation, thanks to God, has broken its power. Protestantism has created a public sentiment of tolerance, which even despotic Rome, and bloody Popes, are compelled to respect. No thanks to Rome that the world does not now, as in centuries past, witness the burning of heretics.

Let us now, in the light of the Pope's Syllabus reaffirming all the past in the history of Rome, and of papal infallibility voted by the Vatican Council, and bearing in mind the unchangeable character of Romanism so recently and so solemnly declared, proceed to examine in detail some great and well known facts of History. I have merely glanced at a number of the acts of persecution of the Roman Church, but we will be able to understand its persecuting spirit better, when we go into details, and thoroughly examine the particulars of some prominent event of this kind. There are many that might be selected. I will select the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, on the 24th day of August 1572. It occurred only 55 years after Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg, and 26 years after Luther's death. It, indeed, is so near to the Reformation as to be almost a part of its eventful history.

After we have become familiar with the details of the horrible Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, we will then very briefly sketch the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, by Louis XIV. of France, and the cruel persecution

of the Protestants that followed. The latter event is intimately connected with the preceding, and indeed must be considered in connection with it, in order to have before the mind the full knowledge of the one historical fact, the persecution of the Protestants of France.

It will be necessary for us to glance at the state of the Protestant Church as it existed in France previous to the Massacre.

In consequence of the doctrines of Luther having been propagated by his numerous writings which were circulated everywhere, and were read with avidity, many minds in France were led to see the errors and corruptions which he exposed, and to embrace the truths which he taught. When, subsequently, Calvin added his preaching and writings to those of Luther, large numbers of Frenchmen renounced their connection with Rome, and embraced the Reformation. Individual Protestants in large numbers appeared in France who held Protestant doctrines, congregations were organized in many places, and the Reformed Churches gained numbers and strength. But the demon of Popish persecution soon arose, and priests and kings combined in the bloody effort to suppress by force, what could not be put down by argument. Under the three successive kings of France, Francis I. Henry II. and Francis II. many thousands of Protestants were put to death by the sword and by fire.

Notwithstanding these fierce persecutions by the Romish power the number of Protestants continued to increase and so many ministers and congregations existed in 1559, that the first Protestant Synod in France, was formed, and met in Paris, and adopted what is known in Church History as the *Confessio Gallicana*. Even a powerful branch of the royal family, the Bourbons, Anthony of Navarre, and his spirited wife Jeanne d' Albert, Anthony's brother Louis Bourbon, and Prince Louis of Conde, and besides these of the royal family, many other persons of eminence in the State, such as Admiral Coligny, several members of the Parliament, and others, embraced Protestantism.

The progress of the Reformation among the people, and particularly, the favor with which it was received by persons of high position in the State, awakened the bitter hostility of the advocates of the Roman Church, the chief among whom were the Guises, of the ducal house of Lorraine. The Government was in the hands of the enemies of the Protestants, and they

used it with fanatical zeal for the suppression of the Huguenots, as the Protestants were called. They arrested the Huguenots, cast them into prison, confiscated their estates, executed large numbers, and employed every cruel art for the purpose of “destroying them altogether.” There was a chamber in every Parliament established to examine and punish the Protestants, called by the people, the burning chamber, because all who were convicted of heresy, were burnt.

The sufferings of the Protestants became so insupportable at length, that they were compelled to take up arms to defend themselves. From this time, for a number of years, the history of the Huguenots is a record of blood. Excesses were committed on both sides, as was always the case when human passions swayed in men’s breasts, and craved revenge on the one hand, and thirsted with fanatical fury, for blood on the other. After a number of years of hostilities and bloody persecutions, a truce was declared, and a treaty of peace was concluded at St. Germain in 1562. This treaty secured to the Protestants the free exercise of their religion, and many persons who had secretly held Protestant ideas, but who had been deterred by fear from the open avowal of them, now came forward, and espoused the cause of Protestantism. This so enraged their adversaries, who had all along been much dissatisfied with the ordinance of toleration, that they assembled in large mobs, disturbed the Protestant services, burned their humble houses of worship with all the people in them, or murdered those who attempted to escape. At Vassy in Provence, where the Protestants were gathered for worship in a barn, a most fearful carnage was perpetrated, by which a large number of Protestants were cruelly massacred, by order of the Duke of Guise.

Religious and civil war now broke out afresh, and raged for some years with great violence. Peace was twice concluded, but was of short duration, when the flame of war burst forth anew. During all these warlike commotions, the Protestant cause gained strength, until the third peace of St. Germain was concluded in 1570, which secured to the Huguenots, liberty of conscience, and the exercise of their religion, only Paris and the residence of the Court, were excepted. As a pledge of peace, four important fortresses were given to them, and as a final act by which permanent peace was to be secured, Charles IX. the King of France and head of the Romish party, proposed a marriage between Prince Henry, Son of the Queen of

Navarre, one of the chief members of the Protestant Church of France, and Charles' own sister Margaret. Navarre, it will be borne in mind, was a province of France, at the foot of the Pyrenees mountains, with the title of a Principality. Although belonging to France, it had a sort of sovereignty of its own, and Henry's mother was called Queen of Navarre. When Henry was yet a mere child, his mother embraced the Protestant doctrines and cause, and carefully reared her son in the same faith. She and her son Henry, together with the Admiral Coligny, and the young Prince of Conde, were the acknowledged heads of the Protestant party in France.

A marshal was despatched to invite the Queen of Navarre, and her son Henry, to the court of Charles, and to urge the projected nuptials as the surest pledge of reconciliation and peace between the two religious parties. It is an established fact of history, that the motive that underlay this proposal of marriage, was hostility to the Protestant religion. The plot was to assemble the chief Protestants in Paris, and destroy them at one blow.

The Queen of Navarre was not anxious for the marriage of her son with the Princess Margaret. She seems to have entertained very just apprehensions concerning the result of the negotiations for the marriage.

But after much negotiation, her objections and fears were overruled, and the marriage was agreed upon. The Queen left Navarre to visit Paris, in order to be present at the solemnities. She arrived several weeks before the time appointed, intending to pass the time that intervened until the nuptial ceremony, as the guest of the King and his Queen mother. But in less than three weeks, she was suddenly attacked with severe illness, and in four days she was a corpse. "The suddenness of her death, gave rise to suspicions of its not being natural, and the horrible event which succeeded it, confirmed them. As she was the principal support of the Protestant party, it was deemed improbable that their enemies would suffer her to live, when they were endeavoring to destroy all the Protestants with one blow. Yet to have comprehended the Queen in the general massacre, would have rendered them odious to the whole world. A less evident method of procuring her death, was therefore requisite, and even some of the best and most candid Roman historians acknowledge the imputation of her being poisoned, as an undoubted fact. History names Catharine de Medici, the mother of Charles, as the authoress of the crime, her perfumer Rene, as the agent, and a pair of poisoned gloves as the instrument."¹

As the arrangements for the marriage of her son had already made considerable progress, the death of the Queen did not long postpone it. After the death of his mother, Henry assumed the title of King of Navarre, and the preparations for the marriage proceeded rapidly. Henry's strongest and ablest statesmen and commanders were the Admiral Coligny, and the Prince of Conde, both ardent Protestants. Both were specially and earnestly invited to come to Paris, to be present at the marriage of Henry, their King. Charles the King of France, "wrote in terms of great affection and earnestness to the Admiral, representing that the marriage was fixed for the middle of August, and that however brilliant would be the company assembled at its solemnization, Coligny's attendance was indispensable to render the festivities complete." Notwithstanding these professions of affection, many of all classes, of the Protestants, apprehended treachery. The Admiral was very earnestly warned against the danger, and entreated to remain away.

Even after he arrived in Paris, he continued to receive warnings from his friends, that the professions of friendship for him and his cause, were not sincere, but that treachery was to be apprehended. But he dismissed all fear, and declared himself fully confident that the royal word was sincerely uttered, and might be relied on.

Similar attempts to inspire the young King of Navarre with suspicion of danger were equally unsuccessful, and at the commencement of August he arrived in Paris, where he was either awaited, or joined, by the noblest members of his court, and professors of his religion. All things were at length ready for the nuptials.

On the 18th of August, the Royal Cortège escorted the bride with great pomp to the Choir of St. Denis, where the bridegroom, attended by a magnificent retinue, led her to the high altar, and withdrew during the performance of Mass, in which, as a Protestant, he would not join. When Mass was over, he rejoined his bride, and the marriage service was then read, according to a form mutually agreed upon, on a lofty scaffolding raised before the portal of the Cathedral, in the full view of the populace, and the historian tells us that the bride exhibited during the ceremony, a petulant disgust sufficiently portending the hopelessness of all future nuptial happiness.

The festivities in honor of the marriage were continued during the week following that in which it was solemnized. – But even during these outward demonstrations of joy, the malignant passions of the hypocritical movers in the scheme, were secretly preparing the way for a most bloody gratification. On pretense of protecting the Protestants who were present at the marriage, from the revengeful spirit of the Guises, who had come to the nuptials accompanied with a powerful retinue of armed men, under the pretext of swelling the pomp of these nuptials, King Charles proposed to Admiral Coligny, that with his consent, he would quarter a regiment of King Charles' soldiers in the city as a guard. He even named certain officers as commanders, whom he knew to be acceptable to Coligny. This artful representation of Charles produced the desired effect. The Admiral was deceived by these professions of friendship. The soldiers were introduced into the city, and distributed in various districts where they could subsequently be used to the best advantage in the perfidious and bloody scheme of assassination, for which they were intended to be the instruments.

“On the morning of Friday after the marriage, Coligny, having transacted some business with the Duke of Anjou in the Louvre, afterwards accompanied the King to the Tennis Court of the palace. From this, after remaining awhile to witness the play, he, in company with a dozen friends, withdrew in order to go to his own house to dinner. As he passed on foot along the street, he was occupied in reading a paper which had been put into his hands, with the design, it is supposed, of slackening his pace. At a certain spot, opposite to a house occupied by a bitter enemy of the Protestants, the report of fire arms was heard, and the Admiral was struck by two bullets, one burying itself very deeply in his left arm, the other shattering the fore finger of his right hand. Without any change of countenance, he pointed to the house from which the shots had been discharged, requested some of his attendants to inform the King of the occurrence, and with the assistance of his servants, walked on to his hotel, which was but a few paces distant. To some one who expressed a hope that the bullets might not have been poisoned, he tranquilly replied, "God's will be done."²

The King of Navarre, and the Prince of Conde were at once made acquainted by a messenger, who was dispatched to them, of the attempted assassination of the Admiral, and they hastened, with all speed to where he was, in his hotel, in great suffering. They found him under the surgeon's hands, who, on a careful examination of the injuries he had received, found that the bullet in the left arm could be extracted, but that the finger of his right hand was so badly shattered, that amputation was necessary. This was immediately done, but he was put to great agony during the operation, in consequence of the bluntness of the surgical instruments used. Merlin, his chaplain, read to him during the painful operation, some appropriate consolatory passages of scripture, and Coligny responded with great fervor: "My God, abandon me not in this so great trouble, nor let Thy mercy forsake me."

When the operation was over, and Coligny was resting somewhat more comfortably, although still in much pain; the King of Navarre and the Prince of Conde left him, to return to the palace. Here they at once demanded an audience of King Charles, and besought permission for themselves and their followers to retire from the Capital, as it was obviously hazardous for them to remain there any longer. The King became greatly enraged at this request, protested with many oaths, in his usual profane manner, that he was as much hurt as they were, at the murderous attempt upon the life of Coligny, promised to punish with the utmost severity, the guilty assassins, and begged them to remain in Paris to witness the execution of his promise. They unfortunately permitted themselves to be persuaded to remain, being deceived by the King's apparent earnestness and sincerity. On pretense of searching for the assassins, and preventing their escape, the King ordered the city gates to be closed, and vigilantly guarded, thus preventing the Protestants from leaving Paris, and enclosing them in the net that had been artfully spread for their destruction.

On the morning of the 23rd of August, the surgeon pronounced the Admiral to be free from all immediate danger, and expressed confident hopes of his recovery. Numerous friends, overjoyed by this unexpected report, volunteered to pass the night in his house, but their services were declined as needless. Five Swiss halberdiers³, in the King of Navarre's service, patrolled the Admiral's court yard; his chaplain, surgeon, three intimate friends, and five or six inferior attendants slept or watched in his

chamber, and the attachment of royal archers, sent by King Charles as a guard, blockaded all the approaches to his residence. Such was the situation, when the great bell on the tower of the royal palace, at midnight, proclaimed the signal for the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1572.

At the signal, for which it seems, all was prepared, and in readiness, and the populace were waiting, the Duke of Guise hastened with a numerous detachment of soldiers, to the Hotel of the Admiral. The royal archers who blockaded all the approaches, made no resistance, but joined their forces to his. The few Swiss guards were easily overpowered, and had hardly time to sound the alarm to the inmates of the house, when the soldiers of the Duke of Guise, rushed in. An officer at their head entered, with his drawn sword, into the chamber of the old Admiral, who, sitting calmly in his easy chair, supporting his wounded arm on pillows, said to their leader: "Young man, my grey hairs ought to command thy respect; but do as thou pleasest; thou canst shorten my life only a few days." Upon this, the wretch deliberately put the point of his sword to the breast of this noble man, and pierced him with several stabs, until the blood covered his person, his chair, and the floor. The soldiers, following the example of their leader, continued to thrust their swords into his body, even when death had already done its work. They then lifted up the body, and threw it out of the window into the court yard below, where it was kicked and trampled on for three days, by the bigoted populace, who had collected there in immense numbers as soon as the midnight bell gave them the signal. His head was cut off the body, and carried by an Italian to Catharine, the King's mother, who ordered it to be sent to Rome as a welcome present to the Pope. The body was then dragged through the streets by the infuriated rabble, and finally, torn and mangled, it was hanged to a gibbet on Montfaucon. The King went to see it there, and as it was already much decayed, some of his attendants turned from the revolting spectacle. The King laughed at them, and said, quoting the dissolute Roman Emperor Vitellius, "the smell of a dead enemy is always agreeable."

The Massacre soon became general in every part of Paris. The populace were maddened with religious fury, and like bloodhounds, that became still more furious by the taste of blood, they ravaged every part of the city in

pursuit of the hated Protestants. Wherever one was found, he was dragged forth, and butchered with the most savage ferocity.

In the midst of the horrible butchery, Charles caused the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Conde to be brought to him, and after telling them that the severities then exercised against their party, were necessary for the peace of his Kingdom, and his own security, he added that they were exempted from the general fate by the great regard he bore for them as princes of his blood, and the hope he had that they would deserve his mercy by their fidelity to him, and by the abjuration of their heresy. The King of Navarre thought proper to temporize, and gave him reason to hope that he would comply with what he required. But the Prince of Conde answered, that he was accountable to God alone for his religion, that his possessions and his life were in his power, and he might dispose of them as he pleased, but that no menaces, nor even certain death, should make him renounce the truth. So bold an answer enraged the King to the most violent degree, and he swore that if the Prince did not abjure in three days, he should die. Guards were set over him and the King of Navarre; their attendants were for the most part murdered, and persons were put over them who were entirely the tools of the priesthood, and of the King.⁴

The King of Navarre was long detained in Paris, under strict surveillance, but finally escaped. The Prince of Conde eluded his keepers, and took refuge in Germany.

Some of the Protestants who were in the suburbs taking the alarm at the noise they heard, escaped, but as they passed the river Seine, it is said, the King himself shot at them, and cried to others to follow them, and kill them without mercy.

The King still continued to dissemble, however, and wished to deceive the courts of other nations, as to his part in the horrible tragedy. His design was originally to attribute the Massacre to the revenge of the Huguenots against the Duke of Guise for the assassination of the Admiral, but as they took no such revenge, the expedient failed. He however “wrote with the same hand with which he had shot at the poor flying Protestants, to several princes and foreign States, disclaiming his having any share in the horrors of that business, and charging it on the family of the Guise, as the effect of their private revenge.”

The dreadful Massacre was continued so long as a single Protestant of whatever age or sex was to be found in Paris. The river Seine, that runs through Paris, says an eye witness of the horrid scene, “was almost covered with dead bodies, and the streets ran with blood. The rage of bigotry is so early imbibed that children of ten years old dragged babes in swaddling clothes through streams of blood to be slaughtered and the inhuman bigots, killed infants who, too young to be susceptible of fear, played with the beards of their butchers, as thinking them in sport, till they felt the fatal stroke. The cruelties then committed are too numerous to be enumerated, and many of them too horrible to relate. The screams and groans of the dying, and the loud imprecations of the murderers, so far overcame every other sound, that in the streets people could not sometimes distinguish the voices of those who spoke.”⁵

Such is the testimony of history.

The destruction of the Protestants was not confined to the city of Paris, but extended throughout the country. Two days before the Massacre began in Paris, orders had been sent into every province of France, that a simultaneous rising against the Protestants should take place on that day, and in most of the great towns, these orders were too faithfully obeyed. Writers differ in their computation of the numbers killed on the occasion. One historian says 30,000, others 70,000, and another 100,000, including those who fell throughout the Kingdom of France. The infuriated Romanists were so diligent in their search that the number that escaped was incredibly small.

“The King was soon brought to acknowledge that he had ordered the Massacre, and even to glory in it. He went to the courts of Parliament the third day, declared it was by his command, and pretended it had been done in consequence of a conspiracy formed by the Admiral and his adherents, against his person. In order to give a show to the statement, processes were commenced against them, although they were then already slain, and condemnation given, which however imposed on no one, as there was not the least color for the accusation. Some of the French writers, indeed, pretend that the Massacre was not long premeditated but was the effect of a sudden resolution formed in consequence of threats uttered by some

of the Huguenots on account of the assassination of the Admiral. But every circumstance of the affair so strongly contradicts the supposition, that one cannot but feel some surprise that they should expect to gain belief.”⁶

I must now pass over the history both of the civil and religious events in France, until Henry, now King of Navarre, became King of France, as Henry IV. By the celebrated Edict of Nantes, which he proclaimed in 1598, he secured to the Protestants their civil rights, confirmed to them the free exercise of their religion, and gave them equal claims with the Romanists, to all offices and dignities. This continued until the reign of Louis XIII. the weak and bigoted son of the liberal and magnanimous Henry IV. One of the chief objects of his despotic first minister, Cardinal Richelieu, was to subjugate the Protestants, deprive them of their rights and privileges, wrest from them their fortresses, and compel them to abjure their faith. When all Richelieu’s stratagems to seduce them into the Romish communion were unsuccessful, he adopted the most inhuman laws which rage and bigotry could dictate, and the most oppressive measures that malice could invent, to damp their courage and bring them under the yoke of Rome. The French bishops distinguished themselves in this horrid business of persecution and cruelty, so that numbers of Protestants sunk under the weight of despotic oppression, and yielded up their faith to armed legions that were sent to convert them, and many thousands fled from France into adjacent countries, but the greatest part persevered with a noble and heroic constancy in their attachment to a pure faith, and in their renunciation of the doctrines and worship of a corrupt and idolatrous church.

When, at length, every method which artifice or perfidy could invent, had been practiced in vain against the Protestants, under the reign of Louis XIV. the bishops and Jesuits, whose councils had peculiar influence in the cabinet of that prince, judged it necessary to extirpate by fire and sword, this resolute people, and thus to ruin effectually the Reformation in France. Their representations had such an effect upon the credulous mind of Louis, that in 1685, trampling on the most solemn obligations, and regardless of all laws, human and divine, he revoked the Edict of Nantes, and thereby deprived the Protestants of the liberty of serving God according to the dictate of their consciences, and the simple forms of their warship, took from them their civil rights, and exposed them to the fiercest persecution of

their enemies. The consequences were not only destructive of Protestantism, but of the true interests, and real prosperity of the French nation. Whilst thousands perished by fire and sword, and the sad scenes of imprisonment, torture, confiscation of property, and the murder and burning of innocent people, were enacted all over the land, thousands upon thousands were compelled to abandon their homes, and take refuge in other countries. The persecution of the Protestants before and after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes cost France more than half a million of her best and noblest citizens.⁷ France made a great mistake. In crushing Protestantism out of her country, she destroyed the elements of her greatest prosperity. France feels the effects of her mistake to this day.

From this hasty sketch of the events that succeeded the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, we must now return, and conclude our remarks upon that horrid tragedy.

It will be remembered that the head of the great and good Admiral Coligny was sent to Rome by King Charles' mother, Catharine de Medici. It was thought to be an acceptable present to the Pope. And so it was, as will now appear.

What I am about to relate is an essential part of my argument. Without it, the whole might be attributed to the political schemes of the French King. But the fact which I will now mention, fastens the responsibility of it on the church of Rome, as her act and deed, and illustrates the bloody spirit that has always ruled within her pale. She endorsed it fully, and made the horrid tragedy her own.

Pope Gregory XIII was at this time in the papal chair. When the head of Admiral Coligny was received at Rome, with the news of the bloody Massacre, the Pope proclaimed a jubilee, ordered cannon to be fired in honor of it, went in solemn procession, with cardinals and monks, to the church of San Louis, and there caused a Te Deum to be chanted in praise and thanksgiving to God for the horrid deeds which his partisans had perpetrated at Paris. This fact will not be denied. It is the testimony of all the historians who relate the event of the Massacre.

Even the American Cyclopaedia, – a work that is so much under Romish influence, that the confidence of many readers of it, has been shaken as to the reliability of its statements when any facts bearing on that church, is

concerned, – even this work is compelled to say: “A solemn Te Deum over the event was sung at Rome, by the order of Pope Gregory XIII.” The Cyclopaedia then attempts to break the force of this fact, by alleging a conspiracy, which is wholly unsupported by History, for the only conspiracy in the case, was the horrid conspiracy to murder the Protestants.

Now, this Te Deum at Rome by order of the Pope, fastens the responsibility of the horrid deed on the church of Rome. The Pope sanctioned it, approved it, glorified it. The Pope gave it the official endorsement of the Church of Rome, of which he was the acknowledged head. What he did, his church did. The Pope made a day of jubilee of it, rejoiced over it amid the thunders of cannon, paraded the streets of Rome in full canonical vestments, held a long procession of priests with crosses and banners, made the church reverberate with the sounds of the organ and the choir in glad anthem, and praised and thanked God with the grandest Hymn of Praise that the Christian Church knows, the glorious Te Deum, for an event that closed the eyes, and shut the mouths, and stilled the hearts of perhaps 100,000 Protestants, and that was deemed to promote in the highest degree, the interests of Popery, and the Church of Rome.

Let it be borne in mind that Rome never changes, because she professes never to err. Rome has never condemned the act of Gregory XIII. No subsequent Pope or Council of the Church of Rome, has announced that his official act then performed, was an error or was wrong. What he did, his church did. He was its recognized and infallible head, and the act of the head, was the act of the body. His act bound his church. No individual person sustains to any other church in the world, the same relation, which the Pope does to the Church of Rome. By its own decretals, and especially by the decrees of its most recent Council, the Pope includes in himself the church, and the official acts of the Pope, are the acts of the church. The responsibility of the horrid and bloody Massacre of St. Bartholomew’s Day, is fastened upon the Church of Rome, so positively and firmly, that it cannot be shaken off. It was not the act of Charles King of France only, but of the Pope, who approved and glorified it, and of the church which he represented, of which he was the infallible head, and in whose interests this revolting crime was perpetrated. It seems to me impossible for any candid and fair-minded reader of History to come to any other conclusion. I am sorry that this is the right and true conclusion. It is a dark spot on the page

of History, that every one must wish was not there. It is also a dark spot on the Church of Rome, and it must give no one any pleasure to see it there. The effort to hide it, or explain it away, or excuse it, is very natural. But falsehood will not explain it away. To apologize for it will not explain it away. I wish the bloody spot could be wiped away. But it cannot. There it is, and angels and men must be ashamed of it.

But it may be asked: Why narrate these things on the present occasion? Why not permit such horrid facts to pass into oblivion? What benefit to us can be derived from the record of scenes so terrible as these? We answer: –

We read history to our profit, when we look behind the facts, to the causes that led to them, and when we trace events to the principles that produced them. We speak of the spirit of the age, and many persons who hear or read of St. Bartholomew's Day, ascribe it to the spirit of that age, and as the spirit of our age is different, they think we have nothing further to do with it. But the spirit of every age is the result of the principles that are dominant in that age. The spirit of our age is tolerant, because the principles that are predominant in the breasts of men, are so. The predominant political principles are those of American freedom, and the governing religious principles are those of Protestantism. This is admitted by every one. No intelligent observer fails to see this. The principles of political liberty announced July 4 1776 in Philadelphia, are to-day, the aggressive political principles that are imperceptibly giving tone to government and law all the world over. And the religious principles confessed at Augsburg June 25 1530, have become predominant in the world, have softened the fierce spirit of Romanism itself, and they hold its persecuting power in check, to-day, by the tolerant spirit of the age, which is their natural and blessed fruit. We wish to call particular attention to this position. We would give all possible emphasis to the declaration that the spirit of the age, is the result of the dominant principles of the age. And the political spirit of this age is that of liberty, because the dominant political principles are those of freedom; and the religious spirit of the age is that of tolerance, because the dominant religious principles are those of Protestantism. This position is so strong, that I think it is impossible successfully to assail it.

The spirit of the age becomes then the test of the character and working of the political and religious principles of the age. The despotic political

principles, and the bitter, intolerant religious principles of the age of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, account for the sanguinary spirit that led to, and justified, the horrible scenes that were then witnessed in Paris, and throughout France. Is not this a just and logical conclusion? Where is there any error in the reasoning? Every thinking, and fair-minded man must admit that I am right in my argument. It follows then that the spirit of that age proves that both despotic government in politics, and Popery in religion, are false in theory, and wrong in practice. Let the same principles both in politics and religion prevail now, that prevailed then, and we will see the same spirit of the age that prevailed then prevail now, and the same sad and horrible scenes will be enacted now, that were enacted then. Bring back the dominant principles, and you will also bring back the dominant spirit, and you will have again the persecution that flows from such spirit of the age.

I have no animosity toward the individuals that entertain the principles of Popery. I respect and esteem many most excellent persons, who rise above the system of Popery, although professedly connected with it. Although within the pale of the Church of Rome, they are among our best and most valuable citizens, because they breathe, not the Romish, but the Protestant spirit of the age. The spirit of the age, resulting from Protestant principles, being dominant, is stronger than the spirit naturally flowing from their own principles, since those principles are not dominant. But whilst I have no personal animosity against any one, I have a very earnest controversy with their principles nevertheless. I trace all the cruel and bloody scenes described in this discourse, to the predominance of those principles. The like causes will always produce like effects. Restore the predominance of those principles, and we will again have those dreadful scenes, and the page of future history will be as black as the pages of history past.

We do no injustice to truth when we hold that the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day proves that Romanism is false and dangerous, and ought not to be adopted as the principles to be held by any person who consults his truest interests for time and eternity. My reasoning is just, and the conclusions I have stated, are right, and neither can be successfully controverted. And when in connection with this bloody tragedy, we take the Syllabus of Pope Pius IX in which he claims that the Roman Church has the

power to use force, and the right to the temporal power to enforce her edicts, and at the same time anathematizes all who hold that Roman Pontiffs in past years have exceeded the limits of their power in enforcing their edicts, we have a case that may well make Protestants tremble if Romanism should ever again obtain the ascendancy in the world. We have reason to dread the unchecked power of such a despotic hierarchy as, in all past history, the Church of Rome has proved itself to be. It makes the same pretensions still. It claims now as ever the right to use force. It anathematizes all who deny this right. The Church of Rome has given us not the smallest ground to believe that it has changed its spirit, acknowledged any error, or that, if it again had the power, it would not be the same persecuting, bloodthirsty tyrant it has always been.

In the light of such events as those which we have described, we learn the true value of the glorious Reformation of the 16th Century. If God had not restrained the malice and the power of its enemies, it would have been crushed in the birth, and the world would probably have groped its sad way in religious darkness, and political oppression up to the present time. By this Massacre of the Protestants, and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the power and progress of the Reformation in France, were broken, and France has been suffering the sad penalty for its error ever since. Even up to a few years past, we have seen in the corruption of religion, the intolerance of the hierarchy, and the degradation of the people, in such countries as France, Spain, and Italy, the bitter fruits of the criminal mistake they made in closing their states against the entrance of Protestant ideas, and banishing them by fire and sword, when they had succeeded in obtaining a limited admission. Whereas, in such countries as Germany, and Sweden, and England in Europe, and the United States in America, we note the beneficent effects of the full adoption of those ideas, in the purity of religion, the liberty of the Church, the free institutions of the state, and the intelligence, security, and happiness of all classes of the people.

Truth, and liberty, and right have always had to undergo a severe struggle in this fallen world. It is strange that it should be so. But the fact is so nevertheless. In every age the cause of truth, and liberty, and right, has had to contend with powerful, opposing forces, that resisted its progress, and sought in all possible ways to crush it. Its martyrs are counted by thousands. Its noble votaries have perished on the cross, on the field of

battle, in street massacres, in the gloomy dungeon, by the tortures of the Inquisition, amid the snows of Siberia, and in the flames of the stake. Truth, and liberty, and right were crucified on Calvary when Christ died, and have been crucified afresh in every age since, in the fierce and bloody persecutions that have been inflicted upon His true followers.

But though crushed to the earth, truth, and liberty, and right will rise again. They cannot be finally killed. They are mighty forces in God's universe, and though crushed for a season, they will in the end prevail. The memory of their bitter persecutors will rot, or their names will be mentioned with execration by future generations, whilst their votaries, that offered up their lives in their defense, will be honored as earth's noblest benefactors, and their names will be held in everlasting remembrance.

Patriots have toiled, and in their country's cause
Bled nobly, and their deeds, as they deserve,
Receive proud recompense. We give in charge
Their names to the sweet lyre. The historic muse,
Proud of the treasure, marches with it down
To latest times; and sculpture in her turn
Gives bond in stone, and ever during brass
To guard them, and to immortalize her trust:
But fairer wreaths are due, tho' seldom paid
To those who, posted at the shrine of truth,
Have fallen in her defense. A patriot's blood,
Well spent in such a strife, may earn indeed,
And for a time insure, to his loved land
The sweets of liberty and equal laws;
But *martyrs* struggle for a brighter prize,
And win it with more pain. Their blood is shed
In confirmation of the noblest claim -
Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
To walk with God, to be divinely free,
To soar, and to anticipate the skies.
Then let them be remembered. Write their names
High on the scroll of fame. Make known their deeds
To future generations. Emulate
Their zeal for God, their love of truth and right;
And cherish, e'en at greatest sacrifice,
The faith for which they died.

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1. Smedley's Hist. Ref. Rel. in France.↩

2. Smedley's History.↵
3. A soldier armed with a halberd, a weapon consisting of a long handle ending in a combined spearhead and battleaxe (Shorter Oxford).↵
4. Life of Theod. Aggrippa D'Aubigne.↵
5. Life of Theo. Ag. D'Aubigne.↵
6. Life of D' Aubigne.↵
7. Mosheim's EccLes, Hist.– Encyclopedia Americana Art. Huguenots↵

5. Necessity Of The Reformation

Thess. 2:3. – Except there come a falling away first.

THE REFORMATION of the 16th Century is one of the most prominent events in the history of the world. It was rendered necessary by the deplorable corruptions into which the Church had fallen. The effects of the Reformation are apparent now in both Church and State. It inaugurated a new era in civil, as well as in religious life. It changed the dominant principles that ruled in the breasts of priests, and princes, and people, and the necessary result was the prevalence of a new spirit of the age, both in religion, and in politics.

In order properly to appreciate the value of the Reformation, we must know why it was rendered necessary. Reformation implies something that needed to be reformed, amended, changed, made better. What was this? What was there in the Church that was wrong and needed to be righted – something evil that ought to be amended – something bad that had to be made good again?

The text speaks of a “falling away.” It is a prophetic reference to the times and events that preceded the Reformation. Before the end of the world, and the second coming of Christ, there would be the appearance of the “Man of Sin,” who would sit in the place of God, “exalt himself above all that is called God,” “sitting in the temple of God,” “shewing himself that he is God,” calling himself the Lord “God,” and being the Vice-God. This would be the “falling away” of the text – falling away from the doctrine of God – falling away from the pure truth of God – falling away from the sanctity of the service of God. It would be just the existence of the corruption in the doctrine and life of the Christian Church, which called for

the Reformation, and made it necessary. And as it was predicted, so it came to pass.

We can only estimate correctly the Reformation, when we rightly understand the state of things in the Church which called for it. If it was not necessary, it ought not to have taken place. If there were no great evils to be rectified, the Reformation was not needed. And the evils that called for it, must have been of the most serious and aggravated nature, otherwise so great a remedy as the Reformation was not justifiable. What were those evils? In what consisted the “falling away” from the purity and simplicity of Christ, which constituted the necessity of the Reformation? The answer to these questions will constitute the theme for discussion this evening. I will indulge in no offensive personalities; I will misrepresent nothing; I will set nothing down in malice; but I will deal in well known facts of history, which no intelligent man can dispute. My discourse will consist largely of word for word quotations from standard Church historians.

First: The Gospel as a system of faith and salvation was essentially corrupted. As represented in the Church of Rome, during the centuries just before the Reformation, Christianity was another Christianity than that which was taught by Christ and His apostles. Nothing can be more pure and simple than the Gospel as it proceeded from its divine Founder. It was a system of pure faith, and a pure life. Its worship was pure, and its manners were simple. It revealed to men, a way of salvation through the grace and mercy of God in Christ, and it answered the question of the anxious soul that asked “What must I do to be saved?” by pointing it to the “Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.” From this purity and simplicity, the Church had sadly departed. It was corrupt in its head and body. Justification by being made righteous in Christ’s righteousness alone, by faith, was not taught, but was anathematized. The true way of salvation by grace, was hidden by being covered up with rubbish. Conversion as a change of the heart and nature of man, so that he should become spiritually a new creature in Christ Jesus, was practically unknown. The worship of God “in spirit and in truth,” was so much corrupted as to resemble the heathen rather than the Christian worship. The Gospel as seen in Christ, and as seen in the Popes, the professed Vicars of Christ, was essentially another Gospel. Few of its original features remained visible. It no longer answered the end for which it had been revealed. It was darkness and not light. It

anathematized that which it should have blessed, and it glorified that which it ought to have denounced. It preached another way of salvation than that which Christ preached, and it led the inquirer to human methods, rather than to divine methods, of attaining eternal life. It was not Christ, but Anti-Christ.

Let me quote, on this point, the language of the learned and truly great Ecclesiastical Historian, Dr. John Lawrence Mosheim, whose work has always been a standard in Church History. He says:

“The public worship of the Deity was now no more than a pompous round of external ceremonies, the greatest part of which were insignificant and senseless, and much more adapted to dazzle the eyes than to touch the heart. Of those who were at all qualified to administer public instruction to the people, the number was not very considerable; and their discourses, which contained little beside fictitious reports of miracles and prodigies, insipid fables, wretched quibbles, and illiterate jargon, deceived instead of instructing the multitude. Several of these sermons are yet extant, which it is impossible to read without the highest indignation and contempt. Those who, on account of their gravity of manners, or their supposed superiority in point of wisdom and knowledge, held the most distinguished rank among these vain declaimers, had a commonplace set of subjects I allotted to them, on which they were constantly exercising the force of their lungs, and the power of their eloquence. These subjects were, the authority of the holy mother church, and the obligation of obedience to her decisions; the virtues and merits of the saints, and their credit in the court of heaven; the dignity, glory, and love of the blessed Virgin; the efficacy of relics; the duty of adorning churches, and endowing monasteries; the necessity of good works (as that phrase was then understood) to salvation; the intolerable burnings of purgatory; and the utility of indulgences. Such were the topics that employed the zeal and labors of the most eminent doctors of this century; and they were, indeed, the only subjects that could tend to fill the coffers of the church, and advance her temporal interests. Ministers who would have taken it into their heads to inculcate the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, to exhibit the example of its divine Author, and the efficacy of His mediation, as

the most powerful motives to righteousness and virtue, and to represent the love of God and mankind as the great duties of the Christian life, would have been very unprofitable servants to the church and to the papacy, however they might have promoted the cause of virtue and the salvation of souls.”¹

Next: The Papacy was a corrupt and unmitigated despotism. The chief corruption existed in the head, and extended from thence to the members. In order to enable my hearers to form an intelligent conception of the corruption that existed in the Church, and that called for reformation, we must not limit our view to a few years, but take a survey of the space of several centuries, before the date of the Reformation. The corruption of the Church was not then only begun, but dates back a long time. . It had become a chronic disease. It was an evil of long standing. Let us take a rapid glance at the history of the Popes, at the darkest period of the dark ages. We might select almost any part of this period, and the same dark picture would meet the eye. But let us take the space of time extending from A. D. 904 to A. D. 1085, a period of little more than 180 years. Persons who are not familiar with history, will be astounded at the sketch which I will now proceed to give.

The history of this period, is the record of the fierce contest between the Popes and the Emperors for superior power. The Popes claimed that the Emperors were subject to them. The Emperors refused to acknowledge their jurisdiction in their temporal affairs.

For half a century, from 904, the papal chair was filled with Popes, by “Theodora, the concubine of Adalbert, Margrave of Tuscany, a beautiful and noble Roman, but steeped in lowest vice, and her equally infamous daughters, Marozia, and Theodora.” These Popes were “the paramours, the sons, and the grandsons” of these abandoned women. And these Popes “surpassed each other in vileness and wickedness of every kind.” I quote the very words of the historian,. Prof. Kurtz of the University of Dorpat. First was Pope Sergius III. who was Pontiff from 904 to 911. “He was the paramour of Marozia.” John X. came next, “whom the elder Theodora summoned from his see at Ravenna, as the distance of that city from Rome put some restraint on her infamous connection with him.” As John turned against these women after the elder Theodora’s death, “Marozia had him

cast into prison and smothered.” He was succeeded by John XI. “the son of Pope Sergius and Marozia.” Alberic, John XI.’s brother, rebelled against his brother John, and took his temporal power from him. Octavianus “son of Alberic, and the most dissolute of that race,” became Pope at the age of 18, and took the name of John XII. in 955. In the civil Wars of Italy, Pope John XII. opposed Berengar II. King of Italy, and invoked the aid of Otho I. Emperor of Germany. Otho conquered Berengar, and was crowned as Roman Emperor, by Pope John XII. in St. Peter’s Church at Rome, in 962. Otho had hardly left Rome to return to Germany, when Pope John XII. changed sides, and entered into alliance with Berengar, to expel the Germans from Rome. Otho hastened back, and deposed the Pope John XII. “as guilty of incest, perjury, blasphemy, murder, and other crimes,” in 963. “Crescentius, a son of Pope John XII. by the younger Theodora, now gained the ascendancy.”

This is a specimen of the history of the Popes for the years intervening between A. D. 904, and A. D. 963, only 59 years. It is not a very favorable exhibition of papal sanctity. And the history of the Popes from that time to Leo X. at the dawn of the Reformation, is no improvement.

One of the most energetic Popes, was a Roman monk named Hildebrand, who became Pope in 1046, and took the name of Gregory VII. Henry IV. was Emperor of Germany. The Emperors claimed the right to superintend the affairs of the Church in their own dominions. Hence arose a fierce conflict between Pope Gregory, and the temporal authorities of the Empire. The Pope denounced all priests and bishops as guilty of simony, who accepted their sees and pastorates from the Emperor, and not directly from the Pope himself. This was the struggle. The history of this contest will give my hearers some idea of the arrogant and haughty spirit that governed in the breasts of those professed vicars of the meek and lowly Jesus of Nazareth.

If Gregory had confined his efforts to the suppression of the sale of ecclesiastical benefices, and the licentiousness of the clergy, two great evils of his time, he would have accomplished a good work for the church. But whilst these were the ostensible objects toward which his vigorous efforts were directed, it is obvious that his ambition aimed at other attainments beside these: “Not content,” says Mosheim, “to enlarge the jurisdiction, and to augment the opulence of the See of Rome, he labored indefatigably to render the universal Church subject to the despotic government and the

arbitrary power of the pontiff alone, to dissolve the jurisdiction which kings and emperors had hitherto exercised over the various orders of the clergy, and to exclude them from the management or distribution of the revenues of the church. The outrageous pontiff even went farther, and impiously attempted to subject to his jurisdiction the emperors, kings, and princes of the earth, and to render their dominions tributary to the See of Rome. Such were the exploits that employed the activity of Gregory VII. during his whole life, and which rendered his pontificate a continual scene of tumult and bloodshed.”

His contest with the Emperor, Henry IV. began in earnest in 1075. The Pope issued his edict deposing every bishop and priest who accepted his charge from the State authorities. This edict was put in execution against Henry’s personal advisers. The Emperor, being at the time engaged in a war with the Saxons, suppressed his anger, and dismissed his advisers. When the war was over, however, he restored them. The Pope cited the Emperor Henry, to appear personally before him, under pain of excommunication. Henry gave full vent to his wrath, insulted the Pope’s legates, called a Synod at Worms, and had the Pope Gregory “deposed on charges of tyranny, magic, and adultery. Gregory replied by excommunicating all the Bishops who took part in the Synod, by solemnly deposing and excommunicating the Emperor, and by issuing an Edict freeing all the Emperor’s subjects from their oath of allegiance to him. The papal ban made deep impression upon the princes and people of Germany, and the Bishops submitted, one after another, to the mandate of the Pope. A Diet was called by the Pope, and the election of a new Emperor was discussed. The weak monarch was as much frightened at the peril that threatened him> as he had been formerly imperious and bold, and he was at length willing to humble himself in the most abject manner before his adversary. In the cold winter of 1077, from the 25th to the 27th of January, the Emperor stood barefoot in the garb of a penitent, and fasting the whole day, in the court of the castle of Ganossa. At length the Pope consented to give him absolution, but only on condition of his not assuming his royal dignity, until his cause had been investigated and decided. But Henry broke his promise, accepted the proffered aid of the Lombards, and made war against the Pope. Gregory hurled his anathemas at him, and the struggle waxed hotter and hotter, the Emperor deposing the Pope, and the Pope deposing the Emperor. The armies of Henry, were at length, successful. Rudolf of Swabia, his opponent

in the Empire whom the Pope wished to reign in Henry's place, died soon after the battle of Merseburg, in 1080, and Henry escorted the anti-Pope, Clement III., to Italy. Rome was taken, but still Gregory refused overtures of peace, and shut himself up in the Castle St. Angelo, till the Norman Duke, Robert Guiscard, restored him to liberty in 1084. Gregory died the following year at Salerno."²

This rapid sketch will afford an insight into the haughty spirit of the Popes, and their ambitious aspirations for power. And thus we might go on to describe the papal rule of Hadrian IV. 1154; Innocent III. 1198; Boniface VIII. 1294; Alexander VI. 1492; Julius II. 1503; Leo X. 1513; to the Reformation. They placed the papal power over all the civil power of Kings and Emperors. They aspired to be, not only lords over God's heritage, but lords over the whole earth. I wish I could say that, in this respect, the spirit of Popery is changed. Whatever may be the spirit and action of individuals in the Church of Rome, we must judge it by official documents, and unrepealed official utterances, not by individual opinions and utterances. I have already, in a previous discourse quoted a few items from the Encyclical and Syllabus of Pope Pius IX, issued *ex cathedra* in 1864. I will now cite some additional ones. According to the decree of the Vatican Council of 1870, dogmas so issued by a Pope are infallible. They bind both the Pope and the Church of Rome. I wish all who hear me to mark well these papal utterances. People think we are slandering the papacy when we charge such things upon it. But here it is quoted word for word from the Pope's Encyclical and Syllabus issued only fifteen years ago, and endorsed as infallible by the Vatican Council, only ten years ago. Hear them: He condemns:

1. Those who maintain the liberty of the press.
2. Those who maintain the liberty of conscience and of worship.
3. Those who maintain the liberty of speech. I quote these three articles of the Encyclical, from Lord Gladstone's book entitled: "The Vatican Decrees in their bearing on Civil Allegiance," in which he gives the dates of the official paper from which he quotes. No one has successfully charged this eminent British Statesman with misrepresentation, or misquotation. The Pope condemns
4. Those who assign to the State the power of defining the civil rights and province of the Church.

5. Those who hold that Roman Pontiffs have ever transgressed the limits of their powers, and usurped the rights of princes.
6. Those who hold that the Church may not employ force.
7. Those who maintain that in the conflict of the laws, civil and ecclesiastical, the civil law should prevail.
8. Those who hold that the abolition of the temporal power of the Popedom would be advantageous to the Church.
9. Those who hold that in countries called Catholic, the free exercise of other religions, may laudably be allowed.

The last six are propositions 19, 23, 24, 42, 76, and 78 of the Syllabus of 1864. I quote from the original Latin in my possession, and adopt Lord Gladstone's translation.

We can well imagine that, if the will of the Pope as expressed in these articles of the Encyclical and Syllabus prevailed, and which really express the sentiment that governs the entire mind of the Roman Church, that we would again witness such scenes as I have here briefly sketched. We would be in a sad case in these United States, if there was no liberty of the press, no liberty of conscience, or of worship, no liberty of speech, no power of the State to define the civil rights or province of the Church, no limit to ecclesiastical powers, no free exercise of any other religions than the Romish, and no restraint upon the Roman Church to employ force. It will scarcely be believed that such despotic and offensive claims are made and published to the world at this day. But there they stand on record, printed and published, signed and sealed by "our most Holy Father, Pope Pius IX" in the year of grace 1864.

Rome never changes. Let the same principles be predominant now, as they were in the time of Gregory VII. and the same spirit would prevail, and the same scenes would be enacted, now as then. I know many persons are reluctant to believe this. But why did Pope Pius IX publish these claims, if he did not mean it? Every man that reads can judge for himself. Carry out these claims and you have an unmitigated despotism. Their assertion alarmed even Lord Gladstone of England. They may well alarm the free citizens of America, who are properly very jealous of their liberties.

Further: The gross ignorance of the clergy and the people, indicated a falling away, and rendered the Reformation necessary. It is the general

testimony of historians, that, during the several centuries before the era of the Reformation, the clergy were grossly ignorant. “The ignorance of the clergy,” says Dr. Kurtz of Dorpat, whose work is a text book in Church History, “especially in respect to religious knowledge, proved even a greater hindrance than their immorality, to the progress and prosperity of the Church. The word of God was locked up from the people in a dead language, and only a very small proportion of the clergy were sufficiently educated, or fitted to declare and expound its blessed truths.”³ Mosheim, a standard authority, is still more severe. He says: “The monastic societies, as we learn from a multitude of authentic records, and from the testimonies of the best writers, were at this time, so many heads of lazy, illiterate, profligate, and licentious Epicureans, whose views in life were confined to opulence, idleness, and pleasure.” Again, he says, “The opulent monks exhibited to the world, scandalous examples of luxury, ignorance, indolence, and licentiousness, accompanied with a barbarous aversion to every thing that carried the remotest aspect of science.”⁴

As the clergy, who are usually ranked among educated men, were so extremely ignorant, we can well understand that the people were uneducated. They would not likely be better educated, than their public instructors. Few of the people were able to read, and although the Hohenstaufen, a German family of princes who governed the German Empire during a large part of the 12th and 13th centuries, endeavored to establish elementary schools in Italy, making attendance on them even obligatory, still they did not succeed. The ignorant clergy gave no encouragement to the cause of popular education, but rather exerted their influence against it. “Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people.” The world needed light. The people, oppressed, degraded, ignorant, and in the shadow of a dark night, needed the dawning of a better day, that would enlighten the minds, sanctify the hearts, and elevate the condition, of all classes of the community. The Reformation did this.

Again: The licentiousness of the priests and monks proved a sad falling away, and called for the Reformation. This is described by all reliable historians, and in language that I cannot repeat from the pulpit. And yet my hearers would have no proper conception of the facts of history, if I did not make some statements concerning it. I shall shock, the delicate feelings of my hearers as little as possible, by giving one of the mildest statements of

the historian, and that only in a few lines. Says Dr. John Henry Kurtz, speaking of the priests of that time,

“The moral condition of the clergy was sufficiently sad. The Bishops commonly lived in open concubinage. The lower secular clergy followed their example, and in many cases paid for this indulgence a yearly tax to the Bishop. To this arrangement the people, who distinguished between the office and its holder, made no objection; in fact it secured their wives and daughters from the temptations of the confessional. Thousands of loose women from all countries had assembled at Constance and Basle, during the sittings of the Councils.”⁵

Here I stop. This is only a part of the historian’s statement. That which follows is worse still, bad as this is. If ever a system called for a Reformation, this did. No wonder that such a vile priesthood as this, used every effort in their power to bespatter with their filth, the great and good Luther, who opposed their shameless practices. Bad people think all other people as bad as themselves. That such persons hated and abused Luther, is Luther’s best recommendation. If such men had praised him, we might, perhaps, have suspected him. But such men’s abuse is Luther’s best praise.

Again: The prohibition of the reading of the Bible, proves a falling away from Christ’s teaching, and evinced the need of the Reformation. This was one cause of the gross ignorance of the priests and the people, and of the absurd superstitions inculcated and believed. “In the year 1229 the Council of Toulouse prohibited laymen from possessing the Old and the New Testament, and even from reading the Psalter or the Breviary, in the vernacular. In lieu of the Bible thus withheld, and of the martyrologies, which, being written in Latin, were inaccessible to the masses, the Church introduced in the 13th century, legends in rhyme, composed in the vernacular or common language of the people.”⁶ These rhymes consisted largely of the lives of the saints. But the Word of God was a sealed book. It was not open, but shut. The people were fed on husks and chaff. The true bread of life was withheld. The ignorant priest came between the poor hungry soul and its God. He was blind himself, and he could not lead the blind. No wonder Luther was surprised when he found hid under dust and cobwebs, a copy of the Bible, on the shelf of the Library at Erfurt. He had

never seen the Bible before, and perhaps did not even know of its existence. The Reformation was in that Bible. When this sun was permitted to shine, it could not be dark any more. Popery is darkness. The Reformation is light. Rome shuts the Bible. The Reformation opened it. It was very dark then. It can never be so dark again.

Again: The changing of the pure apostolic worship of God into a mere mass of absurd ceremony, was a mark of the Church's falling away from primitive faith and purity, and a proof of the necessity of the Reformation. When the worship of God no longer consisted of the reading of the scriptures, the singing of Hymns, the offering of simple prayers, and the preaching of the Gospel, the attention of the people must be taken up with something else. Additions were constantly made to the mere ceremonials of worship, in order to exhibit it in a more striking manner to the external senses. These additions were made both by the edicts of the Pontiffs, and by the injunctions of the sacerdotal and monastic orders. Religion had become a raree-show [CARNIVAL]. Worship consisted of a mimic exhibition of sacred things, a spectacular display to captivate the senses. "But these scenic representations", says Mosheim, "in which there was a motley mixture of mirth and gravity, these tragi-comical spectacles, though they amused and affected in a certain manner, the gazing populace, were highly detrimental to true, spiritual devotion. Instead of being useful to the cause of religion, they degraded its dignity, and furnished abundant matter of laughter to its enemies." Such are the observations of a grave historian like Mosheim. He concludes his remarks upon the rites and ceremonies of the 15th century, by saying: "Religion was reduced to a mere show, to a show composed of pompous absurdities, and splendid trifles." Such a caricature of true, evangelical religion greatly needed a Reformation.

Again: Saint worship almost wholly set aside the worship of Christ, and required to be abolished. The eminent Church historian of the University of Dorpat, has these strong words:

"In the fervent homage paid to the saints, the people forgot the worship due to Christ and the Father. Every business and calling, every age and station, had its patron saint, and under every mischance or disease, there was some special saint to whom to apply for relief. The religion of the people was little other than a kind of magic.

Salvation was obtained by indulgences and good works. A large amount of superstition had been imported from heathenism. Belief in witchcraft, amulets, dreams, good and bad omens, fairies, brownies, merged with the dogmas of the Church about saints, angels, and demons, gave rise to a kind of Christian mythology.”

This is a serious charge. Superstition, indeed, is found in people every where. But the difference is, that, whereas Protestantism opposes and diminishes superstition, Romanism encourages and promotes it. The charge is that superstition was so mixed up with the dogmas of the Church of Rome, as that belief in the dogmas involved belief in the superstition. This charge is made by one of our most reliable historians, and sad it is that the facts are as he states them. And it is sadder still that there is not much improvement now, even with the light of Protestantism all about the world. When grave men and women dip their ringers and cross themselves with holy water, and when they use their rosaries, and count one large bead for a Pater noster, and ten small beads for Ave Marias – ten prayers to the Virgin Mary to one to God the Father – there is really not much change for the better even now. The historian in his delineation of the Church of Rome of the present day, might use the same language of Dr. Kurtz, and say: “In the fervent homage paid to the Virgin Mary, and the saints, the people forget the worship due to Christ and the Father.” But it is very strange. The salvation of the souls of men called for a better religion than this.

Again. The worship of images and sacred relics, was another mark of the Church’s falling away from the primitive purity and simplicity of Christ’s teachings, that demanded a Reformation. In the instructions, and in the practice of Christ and His Apostles, we find not a solitary word, nor a single act, tending in the smallest degree to image worship, or to the veneration of relics. Says Mosheim, in describing the state of religion in the centuries preceding the Reformation: “Both Greeks and Latins placed the essence and life of religion in the worship of images and departed saints; in seeking with zeal, and preserving with devout care and veneration, the sacred relics of holy men and women, and in accumulating riches upon the priests and monks whose opulence increased with the progress of superstition. Scarcely did any Christian dare to approach the throne of God, without rendering first the saints and images propitious by a solemn round of expiatory rites

and lustrations [PURIFICATION BEFORE ENTERING A HOLY PLACE]. The ardor with which relics were sought almost surpasses credibility; it had seized all ranks and orders among the people, and had become a sort of fanaticism and frenzy; and if the monks are to be believed, the Supreme Being interposed in a special and extraordinary manner, to discover to doting women, and bare-headed friars, the places where the bones or carcasses of the saints lay dispersed or interred.”⁷

“It was not enough to reverence the departed saints, and to confide in their intercession and succor, but their bones, their clothes, the furniture they had possessed during their lives, the very ground which they had touched, or in which their putrefied corpses were laid, were treated with a stupid veneration, and supposed to retain the power of healing all disorders both of body and mind, and of defending such as possessed them, against all the assaults and devices of Satan. The consequence of this notion was, that every one was eager to provide himself with these salutary remedies. For this purpose great numbers undertook fatiguing and perilous voyages, and subjected themselves to all sorts of hardships, while others took advantage of this delusion, to accumulate riches, and to impose upon the miserable multitude by the most impious and shocking inventions. As the demand for relics was prodigious and universal, the clergy employed all their dexterity to satisfy these demands, and were far from being scrupulous in the methods they used for that end. Many traveled into the Eastern provinces, and frequented the places which Christ and His disciples had honored with their presence, that with the bones, and other secret remains, of the first heralds of the Gospel, they might comfort dejected minds, calm trembling consciences, save sinking estates, and defend their inhabitants from all sorts of calamities. Nor did these pious pilgrims return home with empty hands, for the craft, dexterity, and knavery of the Greeks found a rich prey in the stupid credulity of the Latin relic hunters, and made profitable commerce of this new devotion. The latter were made to pay large sums for legs, and arms, skulls and jawbones, and other things that were supposed to have belonged to the primitive worthies of the Christian Church, and thus, the Latin Churches came to the possession of those celebrated relics

of St. Mark, St. James, St. Bartholomew, Cyprian, Pantaleon, and others which they show at this day with so much ostentation.”⁸

It is humiliating to read the accounts that are given of the various relics that are religiously kept, and venerated, and shown to visitors, in the various Roman Churches in Italy, Spain, and other countries. Pilgrimages are made to them by devout Romanists, from great distances, and the merits and blessings of such visits are supposed to have a very beneficial influence in securing their salvation. In this way the attention of poor deluded souls, who seek after salvation, is diverted from the merits of Christ, and from simple trust in His grace, to a mere mechanical act of no spiritual character or virtue whatever. And all the light and truth of these Bible times, have not been able to do away with this superstitious veneration, and meritorious worship of relics, but in many countries it is practiced with as much blind delusion now as before the Reformation.

Again: The almost universal fear of the fires of Purgatory, and the zeal with which indulgences were sought and obtained to escape it, still further mark the falling away from the truth of the Gospel, of those times. “It is the modern doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, founded on the Canons of Trent”, says Waddington in his Church History, “that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls imprisoned there, are aided by the prayers of the faithful, and the acceptable sacrifice of the altar. Such is the outward profession of the church. The consequence which presently followed from the establishment of a place of temporary punishment, or purification for departed souls, was, that the successor of St. Peter assumed, through the power of the keys, unlimited authority there. By indulgences, issued at the discretion of the Pope, the sinner was released from suffering, and immediately passed into a state of grace.”⁹

The Roman priest who writes for Appleton’s American Cyclopaedia, employs great ingenuity in the attempt to cover over the most offensive features of Popish indulgences, apologizes for indiscretions in their advocacy of them by those who dispense them, admits that it is “easy for the unlettered multitude to confound the remission of the canonical penalty thus obtained for money, with the purchase of pardon for sin,” denies that indulgences are “a pardon for the guilt of sin”, and yet approvingly quotes Pope Benedict XIV. when he explains indulgences by saying: “Whenever a

Pope declares an altar to be privileged, he sets apart, each time the eucharistic sacrifice is offered on it for a departed soul, a sufficient portion of the Church's treasure of merits, to obtain from God, if it so pleaseth Him, the release of that soul from Purgatory."¹⁰ This definition, with all its denials, and admissions, and apologies, justifies all that such writers as Buck and others, have asserted concerning them. Buck uses this language: "According to the doctrine of the Romish Church, all the good works of the saints, over and above those which were necessary towards their own justification, are deposited, together with the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, in one inexhaustible treasury. The keys of this were committed to St. Peter and to his successors, the Popes, who may open it at their pleasure, and by transferring a portion of this superabundant merit to any particular person for a sum of money, may convey to him, either the pardon of his own sins, or a release for any one in whom he is interested, from the pains of Purgatory. Such indulgences were first invented in the Eleventh Century by Pope Urban II. Pope Leo X. in order to carry on the magnificent structure of St. Peter's at Rome, published Indulgences, and a plenary remission to all such as should contribute money towards it. Finding the project take, he granted to Albert, Elector of Mentz, and Archbishop of Magdeburg, the benefit of the indulgences of Saxony, and the neighboring parts, and farmed out those of the other countries to the highest bidders; who to make the best of their bargain, procured the ablest preachers to cry up the value of the ware."¹¹

Waddington, in his Church History, gives the form of the Indulgences as thus dispensed by Pope Leo X. through Albert, Archbishop of Magdeburg, and sold by John Tetzel in Germany. It varies only in one slight sentence, from the form as given by Robertson in his History of Charles V. It is as follows:

"May our Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon thee, and absolve thee, by the merits of His most holy passion. And I, by His authority, that of His blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and of the most holy See, granted and committed to me in these parts, do absolve thee first from all ecclesiastical censures in whatever manner they have been incurred; and then from all thy sins, transgressions, and excesses how enormous soever they maybe, even from such as are reserved for the cognizance of the Apostolical See, and as far as the Keys of the holy

Church extend. I remit to you all punishment which you deserve in Purgatory on their account, and I restore you to the Holy Sacraments of the Church, to the unity of the faithful, and to that innocence and purity which you possessed at Baptism; so that, if you should die now, the gates of punishment shall be shut, and the gates of the Paradise of delight, shall be opened. And if you should not die at present, this Grace shall remain in full force when you are on the point of death. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Well does Waddington remark:

“This Indulgence, in spite of the ambiguity of one or two expressions, is nothing less, when fairly interpreted, than an unconditional permission to sin for the rest of life, and as such, it was assuredly received by those classes of the people, for whom it was chiefly intended.”¹²

When reading this form of Indulgence, we learn, too, the value to be attached to Appleton’s American Cyclopaedia’s assertion:

“In no supposable case, can Indulgence be pardon for the guilt of sin, even to the most heart-stricken penitent, still less a prospective pardon for future sins, or a license for committing them.”

It suits the purpose of a Roman priest now to say this, but such was not the opinion held of them, by Leo X. who issued them, by Tetzel who sold them, or by the poor, deluded people who paid their money for them. In view of this abominable traffic, surely all must admit, that the Church needed a thorough Reformation.

I will only yet remark at this time, that *the bloody measures by means of the Inquisition*, adopted by the Church of Rome to suppress what Rome was pleased to call heresy, prove the deplorable falling away from the peaceful and saving character of primitive Christianity. Christ’s religion proclaimed “Peace on earth, good will to man.” He suppressed in the bud, and with the severest reproof, the manifestation of a persecuting spirit in His disciples, when, on a certain occasion, they desired to command fire to descend from

heaven to consume a certain Samaritan village, for an insult to their Master. He denounced their proposal by indignantly declaring that they knew not what manner of spirit they were of. But Rome was as much, and more, a stranger to Christ's spirit, than they were. Rome did not hesitate to employ fire and sword to destroy purer and better people, who served God with a purer and better faith, than Rome.

“The immediate cause of the erection of the Inquisition, called the tribunal of faith, was the sect of the Albigenses, who occupied the south of France, and refused to submit to the Roman hierarchy, and aimed to restore the simplicity of primitive Christianity. The persecution of these people, in the 12th and 13th Centuries, made the south of France a scene of blood. The project of extirpating heresy, and of suppressing any members of the Church of Rome, who might rebel against her despotic authority, by means of the Inquisition, was conceived by Pope Innocent III. who ascended the papal chair in 1198, and was completed by his immediate successors. This tribunal, the Holy Inquisition, or the holy office (*sanctum officium*) was under the immediate direction of the papal chair; it was to seek out heretics, and adherents of false doctrines, and to pronounce its dreadful sentence against their fortune, their honor, and their lives, without appeal. The process of this tribunal, differed entirely from that of the civil courts. The informer was not only concealed, but rewarded, by the Inquisition. The accused was obliged to be his own accuser, and suspected persons were secretly seized, and thrown into prison. No better instruments could be found for Inquisitors, than the mendicant orders of monks whom the Pope employed to destroy the heretics, and to watch over those Bishops who rebelled against the intolerable despotism of the Popes. Pope Gregory IX. in 1233 completed the design of his predecessors, and as they had succeeded in giving these inquisitorial monks, who were wholly dependent on the Popes, an unlimited power, the Inquisition was successfully introduced into several parts of Italy, and into some provinces of France. This tribunal was admitted into Spain in the middle of the 13th Century, where it did its bloody work for many centuries. Thomas de Torquemada, Prior of the Dominican convent at Segovia, and father confessor to the Cardinal Mendoza, was appointed the first Grand

Inquisitor in 1478. He had 200 familiars, and a guard of 50 horsemen, but he lived in continual fear of poison. The Dominican monastery at Seville soon became insufficient to contain the numerous prisoners, and at the first auto da fe, or act of faith, seven apostate christians were burnt at the stake, and the number of penitents was much greater. Above 17,000 persons were arrested, and more than 2000 of them, were condemned to the flames, and were burnt at the stake, the first year, and immense numbers out of fear, fled to the neighboring countries for safety. According to Llorente, who had been Secretary of the Inquisition for many years, the number of victims of the Spanish Inquisition from 1481 to 1808, amounted to 341,021. Of these 31,912 were burnt, 17,659 were burnt in effigy because they could not lay hands on them, and 291,456 were subjected to severe and painful sufferings as penance.”¹³

Such a cruel and inhuman Church was the Church of Rome, just before the Reformation, and it preserved the same persecuting and bloody character many centuries after the Reformation. The Inquisition, which continued down to 1808, and was only closed in France under the iron will of Napoleon Bonaparte, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew’s Day in 1572, and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, are some of the most prominent and bloody proofs of the persecuting spirit of the Church of Rome. Its bitter persecuting spirit has never been changed, or confessed to be wrong, or condemned as contrary to the Gospel, or opposed to the genius of the Church Catholic. It is only held in abeyance, because the principles of Protestantism have become predominant in the civilization of the world, and these predominant principles have produced such a tone, and public spirit every where, in all civilized, Christian countries, that the persecuting spirit of Rome, can no more find a sphere in which it can operate. It is not able to carry out its persecuting spirit even in countries called Catholic, because Protestant nations are represented in them by their legations, who protect their citizens when unjustly treated. The fierce temper of this unmitigated despotism is still there, and it occasionally crops out, but it is restrained and held in check by Protestant civilization and it cannot persecute, and imprison, and shed blood, and burn at the stake, as formerly. Some think the nature of this cruel hierarchy is changed, and that it is now mild and gentle. But public safety demands that the restraints of a pure

Christian civilization be still kept on it, and that the check of predominant Protestant principles, and Protestant spirit of the age, be kept strong enough to render it powerless for mischief. Surrounded by these restraints, and held in check by these influences, it is comparatively harmless, but the safety of the world requires that it should not again have the power it once had. We would deprive it of no liberty. Let it be “a free Church in a free State” as any other. Let Romanists be as free to worship in their way, as any other. Let no one molest them, or interfere with their liberty of conscience, or of speech, or of the press, in any respect. The only restraints we would put on Romanism are the restraints of a prevalent, pure, Christian civilization which it dare not outrage. The only barriers which we would erect are Protestant principles, and a Protestant spirit of the age, pervading Church and State, which Romanism is not strong enough to break down. Keep these chains on it, and keep it behind these strong bars, and we are not afraid of it, even when it does claim as in the Syllabus of Pope Pius IX. and in the decrees of the Vatican Council, to have the right to use force, and to employ the temporal power to enforce its edicts, and even if it does utter its anathemas against all those who hold that the Roman Pontiff ought to become reconciled to modern civilization as in No. 80 of the Syllabus. This is the old growl of the unchanged despot, but thank God, the spirit of this Protestant age, produced by the predominant Protestant principles of the age, will not let it rend, and tear, and devour, as it once did, and as it still would do, if there was no Protestant spirit of the age to restrain it. Thanks, under God, to the blessed Reformation for that. Now, I have a few brief remarks in conclusion.

1. Bad as the state of the Church and religion was just before the Reformation, and as we have faithfully and correctly described it, there were still some faithful ones left. God had not utterly forsaken His Church. There was still a remnant of true believers, and of devout men, even if the number was small. The state of the Jewish Church was once so low, that Elijah was greatly discouraged, and lamented: “Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thy altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life.” But God answered him: “I have reserved unto myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” Even so at the worst period of Popish oppression and Romish corruption, there were such holy men as Anselm, Bernard, Thomas a

Kempis, Staupitz, and hundreds, and even thousands of others, who maintained a pure faith, and sound piety amid prevailing errors and corruptions. God permitted His Church to fall very low, but He did not utterly forsake her. In due time, He wrought deliverance, and brought salvation.

2. A number of attempts, too, were made by godly men, who saw and bewailed the evil of the times to stem the flood of corruption, and correct the ills which the Church was suffering. These attempts were many. The record of their exertions, their sufferings, their martyrdom, and their failure, is a most interesting chapter in Church History. The evil was too great, and the enemy was too strong for them. We propose to devote an entire discourse to its consideration.
3. The facts detailed in this discourse have made very plain the great necessity for the Church's Reformation. Such glaring evils dared not be permitted to continue. They must be rectified. How fiercely soever Jesuit missionaries may abuse Luther and denounce the Reformation, the common voice of mankind proclaims, that the Reformation was absolutely necessary, that indeed the life of Christianity depended on it, and that Luther was the man of God called forth to do it. He was the right man in the right place. It would have been sad indeed if there would have been no man to do that work. It was a great and glorious work. The world is reaping the benefit of it now. Romanists who abuse him, and the Roman Church that denounces his work, are made better by it, in spite of themselves. It was not of man, but of God. God raised him up to do His work. To God, then, be all the glory of the work.

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1. Mosheim's Eccles. History.↩
 2. Kurtz's Church History.↩
 3. Kurtz's Church History.↩
 4. Mosheim's Eccles. Hist.↩
 5. Kurtz's Church History.↩
 6. Kurtz's Church History.↩

7. Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. ↩
8. Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. ↩
9. Waddington's Church History. ↩
10. Appleton's Am. Cyclop. Art. Indulgence. ↩
11. Buck's Theol. Diet. Art. Indulgence. ↩
12. Waddington's Church History. ↩
13. Encyclopedia Americana, Art. Inquisition. ↩

6. Reform Before The Reformation

Hebrews 11:39-40 – And all these, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

THE APOSTLE PAUL describes the case of many persons who lived before the dawn of the Christian era. They had some glimmering light, and they lived up to it. They felt after something better than the light they possessed, and strove to attain it. They were dissatisfied with the state of things that prevailed around them, and they exerted themselves to bring about a better state of things. They made extraordinary sacrifices, and endured most painful sufferings, in behalf of the faith they held. And yet they were not permitted to witness the realization of all their fond hopes. They were not permitted to see the breaking forth of the full day. They died whilst it was yet twilight. The redemption of the world did not come during their life time. The privilege of living to see that day, was reserved for another generation.

I propose, to night, to relate the efforts that were made by many persons who lived before the Reformation, to correct the abuses that had crept into the Church of Rome. They saw and lamented the evils that prevailed. They raised their voices against them. They made efforts to arrest them. They suffered and died in the work of reformation. But they were not successful. The powers of evil were too strong for them. They died without witnessing the purification of the doctrines and practice of the Church, for which they labored, and even laid down their lives. That privilege was reserved for others that would come after them. The era of the Reformation was yet future. It came in due time, but not whilst these earnest men lived.

The history of the efforts at the reformation of the Church that were made before the time of Luther, is very interesting, and also instructive. As the subject is not often discussed in the pulpit, the whole may be new to some of my hearers.

The first unscriptural practice of the Romish Church, that met with strong opposition was the use and worship of images. This was vigorously opposed even by Charlemagne, who contributed so greatly in other respects, to the temporal power of the Popes. His son who succeeded him, imitated his father's example, and several Bishops of the Empire, exerted themselves with great zeal to suppress them. Agobard, Archbishop of Lyons, wrote several books against the use of images in Churches, and Claudius, Bishop of Turin, even exceeded Agobard in his opposition to them. Claudius rose above his age, in the true knowledge of evangelical doctrine, and taught that "man is justified without any works of his own, only through the mercy of God in Christ." But to such an excess had image worship been carried, and so strongly were priests and people determined to retain them, that they rose in popular tumults against Claudius, and his life was only preserved by their fear of the army. The combined efforts of the emperors and of these noble Bishops, were unable to correct this evil. These events occurred as far back as the 9th Century.

When we pass onward to the 12th Century we come to Bernard of Clairvaux, a monk of singular piety and purity of character and life. He was an earnest advocate of the claims of the Popes, and of the doctrines of the Roman Church. He did not venture to deviate from any of its dogmas, nor would he break with the Pontiffs. But whilst he upheld the papal authority, and adhered to all the doctrines of his Church, he boldly exposed the vices of the Popes, and the corruptions of religion as practiced by priests and people. He did not hesitate to reprove Pope Eugenius III. on account of his worldly ambition, by which he embarrassed and degraded the Roman See, and he exhorted him to attend to his spiritual duties, and leave to Kings and their ministers, the jarring contests about earthly superiority. In plain and burning words he reproved the venial excesses of pontifical usurpation. He, at the same time, exposed the neglect of spiritual duties by the Bishops, and monks, and priests, their rapacity, their insatiable greediness for power and wealth, their pride and splendor, their gluttony and drunkenness, their revelry and voluptuousness, their laxity and immoral examples. It is

remarkable that Bernard's rebukes were taken in good part by both Popes and monks, but they produced no permanently beneficial effects. For many of the Popes that came after Eugenius III. in the persons of Innocent IV. John XXII. Alexander VI. Julius II. and others, were still more degenerate than Eugenius, whom he rebuked so plainly. The festering sore was too deep and malignant for such rebukes as Bernard administered to cure it, outspoken as he was. It needed such drastic remedies as Luther administered to do it.

In the early part of the 11th Century appeared a religious sect called Catharoi, that excited some attention. They were charged with unsound, heretical opinions, and no doubt they departed in some things from true, evangelical doctrine. But the chief motive that swayed their minds, and led to their organization, was opposition to the hierarchical system of the Popes of Rome. They appeared in various places in Italy, and in France, and rapidly spread. The explanation of their existence and rapid increase, is to be found in the failure of the Church to satisfy the wants of the souls of men. They groped in the dark, with no true light to guide them, and were thus misled into errors often worse than those against which they contended. No doubt, they were in many respects calumniated by their enemies, who attributed to them opinions which they did not hold, particularly as we only know them from the representations of their enemies. Large numbers of them were brought to the stake and burnt. They gave themselves up willingly, and with great heroism, to suffer as martyrs for their opposition to the ecclesiastical system of Rome, and the errors of the Roman Church. The difficulty with nearly all these reformers was, that they had no proper instruction. They knew very little of the word of God which was a sealed and unknown book. Their own plain Christian judgment told them that the Church of Rome was utterly corrupt, but what to substitute in its place, they knew not. When therefore, they fell away from Rome, they were utterly in uncertainty, and substituted mystical and fanatical notions, that were little or no improvement on the evils which they sought to rectify.

About the year 1110, another sect of reformers arose in Languedoc and Provence, of which a priest named Peter de Bruys was the founder, From him they were called Petrobrusians.

“He made a laudable attempt to reform the abuses, and remove the superstitions that disfigured the beautiful simplicity of the Gospel, but after having engaged in his cause a great number of followers during a laborious ministry of twenty years, he was burned at St. Giles’, in the year 1130 by a turbulent populace, instigated by the Romish clergy, whose traffic was in danger from the enterprising spirit of this reformer.”¹

His religion was grossly fanatical, but the evils that excited his opposition were real, and needed reformation. Like others before and after him, those evils were too strong to be overthrown by the weapons he was enabled to bring against them.

Peter de Bruys had scarcely perished, when another sect of reformers arose, called Henricians, after a monk named Henry of Lausanne.

“It was, no doubt, a rare thing to see a person who was at the same time, monk and hermit, undertaking to reform the superstitions of the times, yet such was the case of Henry who left Switzerland, traversed France, reaching Toulouse in 1147, exercising his ministerial function with the utmost applause from the people, and declaiming with vehemence and fervor, against the vices of the clergy, and the superstitions they had introduced into the Christian Church.”²

He was banished from one place to another, and finally arrested, and brought before Pope Eugenius III. who committed him to a close prison, in which he soon afterwards died. We do not know much about the peculiar doctrines, held and taught by the Henricians, but they were, no doubt, very defective in many respects, as nearly all those of the reformers of that time, were. But we do know that they censured with great severity, the licentious manners of the priests and monks, and opposed the corruptions that prevailed in the religion and morals of all classes of the people. But they were not more successful in making any permanent impression than those that preceded them.

About this time, in the early part of the 12th century, appeared an earnest man, named Rupert, Abbot of Deutz, whose mode of reform was different from that of all others, and of a much higher order. He insisted on the necessity of the study of the Word of God. “To him the Bible appeared the

great text book for all ages and people, and the field where the precious pearl of salvation lay concealed, which every person, whose vision faith had enlightened, might there discover. He wrote commentaries, on most of the biblical books, and he rejected the doctrine of Transubstantiation, as held by the Church of Rome.” He passed away however without having produced any marked impression upon the evil which he sought to remove. Harder sledgehammer blows than any that he could administer, were needed to demolish the giant evils of the times.

“As the clergy of this age took little care of the sick and dying, and deserted those who were infected with those pestilential disorders that were then prevalent, some compassionate and pious persons of Antwerp formed themselves into a society for the performance of these religious offices which the sacerdotal orders so shamefully neglected. In the prosecution of this agreement, they visited and comforted the sick, assisted the dying with their prayers and exhortations, took care of the interment of those who were cut off by the plague, and on that account, were forsaken by the terrified clergy, and committed them to the grave with a solemn funeral dirge. It was with reference to this last office, that the common people gave them the name of Lollards or singers. The example of these good people had such an extensive influence, that in a little time, societies of the same kind, consisting both of men and women, were formed in most parts of Germany and Flanders, and were supported partly by their manual labors, and partly by the charitable donations of pious persons. The magistrates and inhabitants of the towns where these brethren and sisters resided, gave them peculiar marks of favor and protection, on account of their great usefulness to the sick and needy. But the clergy, Whose reputation was not a little hurt by them, and the Mendicant friars, who found their profits diminished by the growing credit of these strangers, persecuted them, and accused them to the Popes of many vices and intolerable errors.”³

Many of them suffered severely. But useful as they were, they accomplished little toward the reformation of prevalent errors and vices in the Church.

A singular set of fanatical people were developed by the evils of the times. It is wonderful how fanaticism will manifest itself, when there is a lack of the instruction and true spiritual food which the soul craves. A set of persons sprang up called Flagellantes, or persons who inflicted blows upon their own persons.

“Long trains of Flagellantes, with faces covered, wandered from country to country, amidst weeping, lamentation, and the chant of penitential hymns, continually applying as they marched, the scourge to their own backs. These revolting processions had suddenly appeared in Italy in the 13th Century, and they again paraded the cities of Europe, on different occasions during the 14th Century, especially in 1348, and 1350, during the ravages of the”Black Death.” The Flagellantes made their appearance along the banks of the Rhine, whence growing like an avalanche, they passed through Germany, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Sweden, and England. The paroxysm lasted for three years. Many of them were condemned to the stake by the Inquisition.”⁴

They were a set of miserable fanatics, cast up by the dark and filthy waters of the times. They ignorantly thought in this way to correct the prevalent evils of a false religion, by making still more miserable fanatics of themselves. It proved how low religion had sunk, and how ignorant good meaning people were. They felt that something ought to be done to be different from what they saw around them, and to correct the evils of the times, but as to what that something was, that ought to be done, they knew not. All sorts of absurd things were thrown to the surface.

We come now to a more important movement, and sect of people, who rose in opposition to the despotic hierarchy, and corrupt practices of Rome. The Albigenses existed in the 12th and 13th Centuries in the south of France. Their purpose was to oppose the tyranny of the Pope, and to restore the simplicity of primitive Christianity. They were attacked by the army called the army of the cross, organized by Pope Innocent III. in 1209, at Toulouse, in the territory of Count Raymond, who tolerated them. The war was carried on with a degree of cruelty that cast a deep shade over those who perpetrated it. Count Raymond was compelled to suffer the most disgraceful penance, and to be publicly whipped on his bare back by Milo,

the papal legate. The town of Beziers, was taken by the legates Milo and Arnold, and 60,000 persons put to the sword. The persecution of these people did not cease until after hundreds and thousands had fallen, and the most beautiful parts of Provence and Upper Languedoc had been laid waste. Wherever one could be found in any hiding place, he was arrested, and brought before the horrid Inquisition, and the remainder that was left after the bloody war, were burnt at the stake. The name Albigensis disappeared after the middle of the 13th Century.

The Vaudois, or Waldenses are by some identified with the Albigenses, but by others, and more correctly, they are regarded as separate sects of people. They came prominently forward to notice in the 12th century, but they had been in existence long before in Piedmont, and “there are some who believe that they have enjoyed the uninterrupted integrity of their faith even from the Apostolic ages.”⁵ They are in existence to this day, and since Italy has thrown off the temporal sovereignty of the Pope, and under Victor Emanuel, and his successor, “a free Church” is tolerated in “a free State,” they have come down from their mountain fastnesses, and have established churches and schools all over Italy.

“In their contempt of the degenerate clergy, and their opposition to the Roman priesthood, the Waldenses resembled other sects of the middle ages; but, going beyond the design of their founder, which was merely to improve the morals of men, and preach the Word of God freely to every one in his native language, they made the Bible alone the rule of their faith, and rejecting whatever was not founded on it, and conformable to apostolic antiquity, they gave the first impulse to a reform of the whole Christian Church, renounced entirely the doctrines, usages, and traditions of the Roman Church, and formed a separate religious society. They were therefore excommunicated as heretics at the Council of Verona, in 1184, but they did not suffer a general persecution until the war against the Albigenses, after they had spread and established themselves in the south of France, under the protection of the Counts of Toulouse and Foix. At that time many Waldenses fled to Arragon, Savoy, and Piedmont. Spain would not tolerate them. In Languedoc they were able to maintain themselves till 1330, in Provence under severe oppression till 1545, when the parliament at Aix, caused them to be

exterminated in the most cruel manner. In the middle of the 14th Century they went to Bohemia, where they were called Grubenheimer, because they used to conceal themselves in caverns. They found a retreat fortified by nature, in the valleys of western Piedmont, where they founded a distinct Church, which has remained to the present day. Their doctrines rest solely on the Gospel, which with some Catechisms, they have in their old dialect, consisting of a mixture of French and Italian.”⁶

It is the testimony of all historians that the Waldenses were distinguished from their Romish neighbors from the time of their origin, by their pure morals, and their industry, and their consistent piety. But like all persons before them, and since, who have opposed the errors and corruptions of the Roman Church, they have been bitterly persecuted. The attempt made at the time of the Lutheran Reformation to overthrow it, was also directed toward the extinction of the Waldenses. They were wholly extirpated in France, and they only preserved their existence in Piedmont by hiding in their mountain fastnesses, like the hare from the bloodhounds on its track. They were totally exterminated in the marquisate of Saluzzo. The court of Turin gave them assurances of religious freedom, “but they were treacherously attacked by monks and soldiers, treated with brutal cruelty, and many shamefully murdered.” Many thousands were burnt at the stake by the Inquisition, for no other crime but the purity of their faith, and the holiness of their lives, whilst they refused to bow to the cruel hierarchy of Rome, and opposed the errors and corruptions of Popes, and Priests, and people. The history of the Waldenses is a continued record of persecution, and bloody massacres.

The Waldenses were heroic martyrs for the truth. They bore noble testimony against the despotism and corruptions of Rome. They lived up to their own holy doctrines. They willingly endured the loss of all things, and laid down their lives for Christ. But they were unable to stem the flood of corruption that rolled all about them. They could die themselves, but they could not kill the wickedness in high places. They could reform their own lives, but they could not reform the corrupt Church of Rome. It needed harder blows than they were able to give.

About this time a man appeared in England whose name is well known in Church History, in connection with a purer faith, and a holier life than were held and practiced by the Roman priests around him. His name was John Wickliffe. He was born in Yorkshire about the year 1324. He was a man of learning, and a Professor of Theology at Oxford.

"His earlier life was distinguished by a bold attack on the corruptions of the clergy, and he was known to hold many anti-papal opinions, but he was not yet committed in direct opposition to Rome. Soon afterwards he formed part of an embassy to Avignon, instructed to represent and remove the grievance of the Anglican Church.

It was not until his return from that mission, when his language was heated by long treasured indignation, or by the near view of pontifical impurity, that his language incurred the displeasure of the hierarchy of Rome. He was cited before a convocation held at St. Paul's in 1377, and it seems probable that he owed his preservation to the powerful protection of John, Duke of Lancaster. At the same time the Vatican thundered, Wickliffe was accused of heresy, and Pope Innocent III. hurled his bull against him. But the papal bull was so little regarded at Oxford, that it was even made a question whether it should not be ignominiously rejected: and when the offender was afterwards summoned to Lambeth, he was dismissed with a simple injunction to abstain from diffusing his opinions. But the Pope and his myrmidons continued eager and constant in pursuit of him, and it was only owing to the circumstance that there was a schism in the papacy itself, one Pope reigning at Rome, and the other at Avignon, that cheated persecution of its intended victim."

"As long as Wickliffe confined, or nearly confined, his vehement opposition to the vices of the clergy, or the anti-Christian spirit of the court of Rome, so long he obtained many and powerful disciples, and could count on their attachment and fidelity. But no sooner did he attack the false doctrines of the Roman Church, than the enthusiasm, and the number of his followers declined, and even his protector, the Duke of Lancaster, strongly enjoined him to desist. He rejected transubstantiation, questioned the fact of purgatory, rejected auricular

confession, held indulgences to be nothing but ‘subtle merchandise of anti-Christian clerks whereby they magnified their own fictitious power, and instead of causing men to dread sin, encouraged them to wallow therein like swine.’ He opposed celibacy of the clergy, monastic vows, and the vain and fantastic ceremonies of the Church. In consequence of these opinions, he was cited before the Convention at Oxford, and banished from that city. He retired to Lutterworth, and after two more years actively employed in the offices of piety, he died in peace. After an interval of thirty years, his enemies, who did not burn him whilst living, when assembled in the Council at Constance, published that memorable edict, by which the body and bones of Wickliffe were to be taken from the ground, and thrown away from the burial of any Church. The decree met with a tardy obedience. After the space of thirteen years, the remains were disinterred and burnt, and the ashes cast into the adjoining brook.”⁷

[This was] a poor, silly exhibition of spite that showed the persecuting spirit of the Roman Church, even more odiously than the burning of his living body would have done.

Although Wickliffe did not accomplish what he wished in the reformation of the Church during his life time, yet his writings, and particularly his translation of the Bible, aided in preparing the way for the Reformers that came after him.

We now come to a name still more prominent in history than that of Wickliffe, namely that of John Huss. He was a Bohemian, born in 1369. He was a Professor in the University of Prague, became the rector of it, and was also confessor to Sophia, Queen of Bohemia, and preacher in the Bethlehem Chapel at Prague. He had passed, like Luther, through deep personal religious experiences, which the defective teaching of the Church of Rome did not relieve. His sense of his own sinfulness was very great, and he could only find peace and comfort for his mind, in the doctrines of grace, and from justification by faith in a crucified Savior. Instead of being properly taught this, by those whose duty it was to teach it, he had, like Luther, to work his way in darkness, and doubt, and perplexity, up to it.

He perceived the corruption that prevailed in the Church, as well as the errors in doctrine, and he preached against them in his chapel, with great

energy.

“The Archbishop of Prague laid an accusation against him at Rome, and prohibited his preaching in the Bethlehem Chapel. The Pope cited him to Rome, but on the intercession of the King, and the University, a temporary truce was concluded between Huss and the Archbishop of Prague.”⁸

This truce did not last long.

“The Pope John XXIII. sent his emissaries into Bohemia to preach a crusade against the King of Naples, and to offer for sale, the usual indulgences to all who would embark, in it. Huss preached against them, and the people boldly interrupted the papal missionaries in their harangues. Three of the offenders were seized, and privately executed, but the blood which flowed from the prison into the street, betrayed their fate. The people rose, and having gained possession of their bodies, carried them in procession to the various Churches, chanting sacred anthems. They then buried them in the Bethlehem Chapel, with the offerings usually placed on the tombs of martyrs.”⁹

“The Pope now, in 1413, excommunicated Huss, and laid Prague under an interdict as long as it sheltered the reformer. Huss appealed to the tribunal of Jesus Christ, and retired from Prague to his birthplace.”¹⁰

The Council of Constance assembled soon afterwards, and it issued an immediate summons to Huss to appear before it.

“Obedient to this order, and thinking himself secured from the rage of his enemies, by the Safe Conduct which had been granted to him by the Emperor Sigismund, both for his journey to Constance, his residence in that city, and his return to his own country, John Huss appeared before the assembled Churchmen to defend his cause. By the most scandalous breach of public faith, his Safe Conduct was disregarded, he was thrown into prison, declared a heretic, because he disobeyed the order of the Council which commanded him to plead

guilty against the dictates of his conscience, and he was burned alive on the 6th of July 1415.”¹¹

My hearers may perhaps be interested in hearing the sentence that was passed upon Huss. It is a very suggestive document.

“When he was conducted before the Council on the morning of July 6, 1415, then holding its 15th session, and after various articles of accusation had been read, a sentence was passed to the following effect: ‘That for several years, John Huss has seduced and scandalized the people by the dissemination of many doctrines manifestly heretical, and condemned by the Church; that he has obstinately trampled upon the Keys of the Church, and the ecclesiastical censures; that he has appealed to Jesus Christ as sovereign Judge, to the contempt of the ordinary judges of the Church, and that such an appeal is injurious, scandalous, and made in derision of ecclesiastical authority; that he has persisted to the last in his errors, and even maintained them in full Council. It is therefore ordained that he be publicly deposed and degraded from holy orders as an obstinate and incorrigible heretic’ The prelates then proceeded to the office of degradation. He was stripped one by one, of his sacerdotal vestments; the holy cup, which had been purposely placed in his hands, was taken from them, his hair was cut in such a manner as to lose every mark of the priestly character, and a crown of paper was placed on his head marked with hideous figures of demons, and that still more frightful word ‘Heresiarch,’ heretic. The prelates then piously devoted his soul to the infernal devils – ‘animam tuam devovemus infernis Diabolis’ – he was pronounced to be cut off from the ecclesiastical body, and being released from the grasp of the Church, he was consigned as a layman, to the vengeance of the secular arm. It was in the character, then, of ‘advocate and defender of the Church,’ that the Emperor now took charge of the culprit, and commanded his immediate execution.”¹²

“The last, which was not perhaps the bitterest, of his sufferings, was endured with great constancy, and in a most peaceful and blessed spirit. On his way to the stake, he repeated pious prayers and

penitential Psalms, and when the order was given to kindle the flames, he only uttered these words: ‘Lord Jesus, I endure with humility this cruel death for Thy sake, and I pray Thee to pardon all my enemies.’ The executioners performed their office, the martyr continued in fervent prayer, and it was not long before a rising volume of fire and smoke extinguished, at the same time, his voice and his life. His ashes were carefully collected and cast into the lake, so that his followers might not bury them. But the miserable precaution was without all its effect, for his disciples scraped up the earth from the spot of his martyrdom, moistened it with their tears, and laid it reverently away in a martyr’s sepulchre.”¹³

“In less than a year from the execution of John Huss, the same scene of injustice and barbarity was acted a second time, though with some variety of circumstances, on the same polluted theater. Jerome, master in theology in the University of Prague, and a layman, was the disciple of Huss. Huss was superior in age and authority, but Jerome was held to be more learned and eloquent. While the former presided in the chair, the latter delivered his lectures in the schools; and the same opinions were taught with equal zeal and effect, by the one as by the other. Accordingly, Jerome was summoned to Constance, soon after the meeting of the Council, and he appeared there on the 4th of April 1415, not unprepared for the treatment that awaited him. At his first audience, on May 23, 1415, he exhibited great firmness, but at the second, which took place only thirteen days after the burning of Huss, he submitted after much insult and intimidation, to make a formal retraction of his opinions.”

His conscience smote him. He was heartily sorry and ashamed on account of his weakness. He earnestly entreated to be granted another audience before the Council. It was finally accorded to him. When he appeared before the Council,

“he recalled with sorrow and shame, his former retraction, and openly attributed the unworthy act to its real and only motive, the fear of a painful death. When he was brought to the stake, and bound to the post around which the faggots were piled, the executioner would

have kindled the faggots behind his back. ‘Place the fire before me,’ he exclaimed, ‘if I had dreaded it, I could have escaped it.’ He was burnt May 30, 1416.”¹⁴

Rome would tolerate no reform. She was wedded to her errors and corruptions. She would burn alive all who taught the true faith of Christ, and His Apostles. Her hands are red with the blood of the holy martyrs. With contemptible hypocrisy, her Jesuit missionaries excuse her persecuting spirit, and apologize for her crimes, by alleging that those infamous burnings were not done by the ecclesiastical, but by the temporal, power. But when the prelates of the Council of Constance, gave John Huss, and Jerome of Prague over to the temporal power, both parties understood well enough, why. Both acted in concert, and both were the agents of a corrupt, persecuting Church. The attempt to shift the responsibility for the burning of these martyrs, from the Church to the State, is too glaringly absurd, and only covers those who make the attempt, with disgrace for their shameless hypocrisy. It is strange that even a Jesuit, can make it, and look his audience in the face without blushing.

In close connection with the reformation doctrines and preaching of John Huss, and as the result of the movement he inaugurated, were the Bohemian Brethren. They demanded the communion in both kinds, the preaching of the Word of God plainly to the people, and that the clergy instead of employing their zeal in the attainment of riches and power, should turn their thoughts to objects more suitable to their profession, and to be ambitious of living as became the successors of the holy Apostles. They insisted on reducing the religion of Jesus to primitive simplicity, on destroying the despotic power of the Popes, and in changing the form of divine worship from unmeaning ceremony to a more simple and edifying service. They suffered much hardship and oppression, yet their numbers steadily increased, through their constancy in their faith, and the purity of their morals. They hailed Luther’s movement with hearty rejoicing.

“It is true that the evangelical principles of their faith, were not unmixed with some erroneous notions, but it is no less certain that when Luther was engaged in the accomplishment of his mission, he was welcomed by a numerous body of hereditary reformers who rejected, and whose ancestors had rejected, the sacrifice of the Mass,

Purgatory, Transubstantiation, prayers for the dead, the adoration of images, and who confirmed their spiritual emancipation by renouncing the authority of the Pope.”¹⁵

We pass next to a celebrated Italian champion of reform in the person of Jerome Savonarola, who was born at Ferrara in 1452. He was of an illustrious family. He became a Dominican monk, and assumed the character of a prophet. The subject of his preaching was “reform and penitence – reform in the discipline of the Church, in the disorders of the clergy, in the morals of the people – reform instant and immediate, ere the tempest of the divine vengeance, which was already impending over Italy, should descend and overwhelm it. He made no appeals to reason, none to the ordinary principles, or even passions of men. It was in the name of heaven, that he commanded them to amend; it was inspiration from above which he claimed; the unerring prescience of imminent calamities, which filled him with eloquence, and armed his eloquence with authority and terror. It was the word of an offended God clothed in thunder, announcing the approach of desolation.”

His preaching thrilled the masses of the people, and stirred them to the wildest excitement. “It was in vain that the Pope thundered from the Vatican. It was in vain that the clergy refused to bury the bodies of any who believed the announcement of the prophet. The people thronged to listen to his sermons, and rushing from the churches, assembled on the streets, crying ‘viva Christo!’”¹⁶

His enemies, supported by the Pope and the priests, waited for an opportunity to destroy him. That opportunity came. “He was seized, imprisoned, tortured, and immediately on the arrival of two papal legates from Pope Alexander VI, he was condemned to death, and burnt at the stake. His ashes were cast into the river Arno” so that they could not be buried. His followers became scattered, and no permanent results followed his preaching.

We must yet mention Erasmus, the distinguished scholar, born in Rotterdam in 1467. He, with John Reuchlin, contributed largely to the revival of learning, and in a degree,, to the reformation of religion.

“His writings rendered the highest service to the first reformers, he stigmatized numerous abuses, he rejected the scholastic divinity, and recommended and facilitated the study of the Bible, and the Fathers, he covered with ridicule and contempt, the vices of the monks, and their love for the ignorance in which they grovelled. By such means as these, he contributed to the success of the Reformation, even more perhaps than he himself designed. For though by no means indifferent to the interests of religion, he was fearful of all great practical changes, and could never shake off that irresolute timidity, so commonly associated with literary habits.”¹⁷

He never really broke with Rome. He could not be the great Reformer of the Church. He was no Luther.

Such is a rapid sketch of the efforts at the Reformation of the errors and corruptions of the Church, that were made before the time of Luther, and of the men by whom they were made. I have purposely done little more than quote literally the testimony of our well known, standard Church Historians. Every fact stated, is therefore supported by unquestionable proof. It is a mournful history. It suggests some reflections:

1. The sad fate of Reformers. Evil becomes strongly entrenched in Church and State. It is hard to eradicate it when it once gains possession. To rectify the wrong is at once a difficult and a thankless task. Men felt that there was great corruption in the Church, and many made efforts to correct it, but they were hated, maligned, imprisoned, tortured, and burnt at the stake. It was to benefit and save others, that they labored and died. The welfare of thousands and millions was involved in the result of their efforts. They were noble benefactors of their race. But they were ill requited for their pains. They perished in a noble cause. Their names should be held in grateful remembrance. Although unsuccessful, they merit the respect and gratitude of posterity.
2. Reformation must not be superficial. Radical evils call for a radical remedy. The change of some of the outward forms of corruption, will not remove the corruption itself. Depravity of the nature, requires the regeneration of the nature. Whilst some of the noble men whose

history and labors we have sketched, seemed to have some conception of the real nature of the evil, and the true remedy for it, others, and the largest number, only saw the external symptoms of it, without perceiving how deep in the doctrinal system of the Church of Rome, the disease was seated. It needed a thorough change of the heart of the system. Some of those noble men, came very near having a proper conception of the Church's needs, yet failed either to attain a full appreciation of its wants, or knowing, were unable to accomplish what they clearly saw ought to be done.

Rome prated much about Augustine, and yet it was thoroughly infected with the heresy of Pelagius. It was unsound in doctrine, and therefore it was corrupt in practice. The difference between the Reformation of Luther, and the reformations proposed by most of the men that preceded him was this: they for the most part, labored to rectify the manners of their age without changing its doctrinal system; he struck at the root of the mischief in the false doctrines which Rome held. The Church must have a purer faith, before it could have a purer practice.

3. Rome does not reform. No truth is more strikingly taught by the history of the efforts, and sad fate, of the reformers before Luther, and of the treatment of Luther himself, than this. The Church of Rome has in it no principle of Reform. As a system it does not become better. It boasts that it never changes. What it once was, it always is. It may bend, for a time, to a force too strong for it to resist, but of itself, and in its essential nature, it never changes. During all the centuries in which these noble men lived and labored, and suffered and died, to reform the evils that existed so notoriously, Rome in its head, and heart, and membership, held fast to the evils, would tolerate no reform, persecuted to death those who sought to correct the wrongs, and it held on firmly to all its corruptions, to the end. There was no reform in it.

The same is true still, for there is no reform in it now. Some men erroneously think it is now changed. But it is a mistake. It is the same now as always. It has retracted no error. It has renounced no false doctrine. It has abandoned no wrong practice. It has relinquished no haughty claim. It has recently, in the decrees of the Vatican Council, re-affirmed all that has

preceded. It has in the strongest manner, by a solemn Syllabus issued by Pope Pius IX, anathematized all who hold that the Roman Pontiffs have transgressed the limits of their power, Prop. 23 – all who hold that the Church (of course, the Roman Church, for the Pope acknowledges no other) may not employ force, Prop. 24 – all who hold that the State may define the civil rights and province of the (Roman) Church, Prop. 19 – all who hold that the civil immunity of the (Roman) Church and its ministers depends upon civil rights, Prop. 30 – all who hold that the instruction of youth separate from the (Roman) faith and from the power of the (Roman) Church, may be approved, Prop. 48 – all who hold that knowledge of philosophy, of morals, and of civil law may decline to be guided by (Roman) ecclesiastical authority, Prop. 57 – all who hold that marriage has any binding force that is not sacramentally contracted (of course, by a Roman priest) Prop. 73 – all who hold that the (Roman) religion should not be held as the only religion of the State to the exclusion of all other modes of worship, Prop. 77 – all who hold that persons coming to reside in Roman Catholic countries, may enjoy the public exercise of their own worship, Prop. 78. As the Pope acknowledges no Church but the Roman Church, to be a Christian Church, I have properly so translated the word.

These monstrous propositions are cited from the Pope's own official document, and the numbers given, so that every one may turn to the original, and satisfy himself that the citation is correct. Now, we must take a church, or any other organized body at its own official utterances. A church is governed by its Creed, its Constitution, its laws, its official declarations. So is every organized society, or body of men. It is not what the individuals say, as individuals, by which our opinion of it is to be formed. We ask what is its Creed, its Constitution, its official character? What are its official, authorized utterances? What claims do its official and duly authorized heads make for it? The Pope is the official head of the Church of Rome. It claims divine authority, and even infallibility for its official dogmas. Just 15 years ago, this official, divine, and infallible head uttered the things I have quoted above, in formal propositions, advancing these outrageous claims, and anathematizing all who do not hold and allow them. The Pope is not a child to amuse or frighten the world with words which he does not mean. Nor are we children to be scared by blustering that is not meant to be taken as uttered. Rome certainly means what it so solemnly utters. By its official utterances then, issued Ex Cathedra, put forth a few years ago only, at

Rome, by its official head, it has re-affirmed all the corrupt and false doctrines, and all the despotic and hateful claims, of the past, has justified all that the past has done, claims to have the same power, and the right to use the same force, and to be the same despotic autocrat in Church and State that Rome always was. It tells, in short, that it has not changed, does not change, and will not change. Since Protestantism is now paramount in the world, and its principles give tone to the spirit of toleration that governs the world, Rome does not put any man to death for exposing its errors. I can speak as boldly as I please about it, and Rome dare not touch me. But why? Not because Rome has changed, but because Protestantism has created such a public sentiment, that Rome feels it to be for her own interest not to touch me. A stroke at me, would be a blow at herself. This is the reason, and the only reason. Rome is just what she always was. Give her again the power, and we would again see the enforcement of the power. Take Protestantism away, and the scenes of persecution, described on the dark pages of history, would be re-enacted. Nothing is surer than this.

4. God only could help. And He did help. Vain was the help of man. In due time He helped. He waited long, but in His own time He helped. The work was His. It was too great for man. God alone could do it. And He did it. He raised up the man of His right hand, and it was done. We now enjoy the benefit of the doing of it. The world is now rid of Popish darkness, and corruption, and the fierce spirit of Roman power. It is under restraint. It deserves no thanks for it. It has done nothing to deserve thanks. It will not admit that it has made any change to merit any thanks. So be it. Protestantism is paramount. It keeps Romanism in check. It dare not do as it once did. It can slay and burn no longer. God be thanked for it.

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1. Mosheim's Eccles. History.↩
 2. Mosheim's Eccl. Hist.↩
 3. Mosheim.↩
 4. Kurtz's Church History.↩
 5. Waddington's Church History.↩

6. Encyclopedia Americana Art. Waldenses.↵
7. Waddington's Church History.↵
8. Kurtz's Ch. Hist.↵
9. Waddington's Eccles. Hist.↵
10. Kurtz's Ch. Hist,↵
11. Mosheim's Eccles. Hist.↵
12. Waddington's History of the Church.↵
13. Ibid.↵
14. Waddington's History of the Church.↵
15. Waddington's Church History.↵
16. Waddington's Church History.↵
17. Waddington's Church History.↵

7. Historical Sketch Of The Reformation

Psalm 80:17 – 19. – Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself. So will we not go back from thee. Quicken us, and we will call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.

I PROPOSE to occupy the evening hour in giving a rapid sketch of that memorable event in the History of the Church, the Lutheran Reformation of the 16th Century. We have already devoted an evening to the consideration of the Evils in the Church that made the Reformation necessary; and another to the account of the Efforts at Reform that were made by various parties and sects during the centuries just previous to the Reformation by Luther. We have now come in the order of events, to the great Reformation itself. So many events crowd into the History of the Reformation, that it may be difficult to compress into one discourse, a complete account. But we propose to give as full an outline as the time will allow.

The text describes the great event to which this History relates. There was a vine that God had planted. It had been devastated, and wasted, and plucked, and devoured. It was in a sad state of adversity. It needed deliverance and a deliverer. In due time God raised up a deliverer, and with him deliverance came. He that was thus raised up was “the man of God’s right hand.” God made him strong for the work that God had for him to do. By his instrumentality the adverse course of events, was turned back into the channels of safety. By the vital doctrines of the primitive Church, and the true, evangelical Church life being restored, God quickened, revived, and saved the Church – the vine that God had planted, but that had almost perished. It had been sadly plucked, and wasted, and devoured, but it was

now happily delivered. God turned us again, and caused his face to shine, and we were saved.

The instrument chosen by Providence for the great work of the Reformation of the Church from the errors in doctrine, and the corruption in practice, with which it had been so long afflicted, was Martin Luther. He was born at Eisleben in Saxony, November 10, 1483. He was of humble parentage, his father being a miner by trade. His parents were devout members of the Church of Rome, and they reared their child in all the strictness of the Romish religion. They removed from Eisleben to Mansfeldt, and there young Luther enjoyed the advantages of the school at that place until he was 14 years old. From this school he was transferred to Eisenach, where he made commendable progress in the learning of those times. Here he supported himself, in part at least, by singing from door to door, and accepting the aims that were bestowed upon him. He attracted the attention of a kind-hearted woman, Ursula Cotta, whose name is well known as the patroness of Luther. From Eisenach he went to Erfurth, where he entered the University at that place, in which he completed his preparatory education. His father had intended him for the legal profession, but his finding a copy of the Bible in the University Library, and the assassination of one of his intimate College friends, as also the terror produced by being overtaken by a terrific thunder storm, all combined to turn his attention in the direction of the Church, and unknown to his father, and contrary to his wishes, he entered the cloister, and became an Augustinian Monk, in 1505. The discipline of the cloister was excessively severe, and with fasting, and other bodily mortifications, Luther was almost reduced to the brink of the grave. His mental conflict was terrible. His excessively rigorous observance of the rules of monastic life, could administer no relief to his troubled mind. His soul needed, what did not exist in the religious instruction of the times. The Superior of the cloister, and his other spiritual advisers, knew nothing themselves, of the true way of salvation through Christ, and they could not administer to a heart burdened with its own sinfulness, by pointing it to the Savior. It was Staupitz, the Vicar General, a man informed and experienced beyond his times, that finally imparted to Luther the instruction which he needed, and he found comfort and peace for his soul in the great doctrine of Justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ alone.

This soul experience of Luther was of great value to the work of the Reformation. From his own heart's needs, and his own experience of the efficacy of the grace of Christ, he appreciated at its proper value, the great doctrine of Justification by faith, and the kind of Reformation which the Church needed. It contributed largely in giving shape and character to the whole of Protestantism.

Here it will be in place to draw an outline of the character of Luther. It may, perhaps, best be done in the words of the great Church historian, Mosheim. Says he:

“The qualities or talents that distinguished Luther, were not of a common or ordinary kind. His genius was truly great and unparalleled; his memory vast, and tenacious; his patience in supporting trials, difficulties, and labors, incredible; his magnanimity, invincible and unshaken by the vicissitudes of human affairs; and his learning most extensive considering the age in which he lived. All this will be acknowledged, even by his enemies, at least by such of them as are not totally blinded by a spirit of partiality and faction. He was deeply versed in the theology and philosophy that were in vogue in the schools during this century, and he taught them both, with great reputation and success in the University of Wittenberg. As a philosopher, he embraced the doctrine of the Nominalists, which was the system adopted by his order, while in divinity, he followed chiefly the sentiments of Augustine, but in both, he preferred the decisions of Scripture, and the dictates of right reason, to the authority and opinions of fallible men. It would be equally rash and absurd to represent this great man as exempt from error, and free from infirmities and defects; yet if we except the contagious effects of the age in which he lived, and of the religion in which he had been brought up, we shall perhaps find few points of his character, that render him liable to reproach.”¹

This is a noble and well merited testimony by a learned Historian, whose work has long been a standard book of Church History, in behalf of the high character of Luther for learning, integrity, and purity of heart and life. It may be proper for me to dwell a few moments longer on the vindication of Luther's character, before I proceed with the history. The emissaries of

Romanism delight to vilify Luther's character. It has been recently done in this place, in the most offensive manner, by a Jesuit emissary sent here to advance the cause of Rome. It is charged that Luther's motives in opposing the sale of Indulgences, were impure and unworthy, and arose from the affront put upon the Augustinian order of monks, of which Luther was a member, by the Pope in taking away from his order, the business of selling Indulgences, and giving it to the Dominicans. This charge was started by Hume, and has been repeated ever since against the clearest testimony to the contrary. The fact is that for 300 years, the Dominicans had always been the sellers of Indulgences. It is untrue, therefore, that the Augustinians had been usually employed in the business. It is further true that the sale of Indulgences had become so odious, that instead of Luthers's taking it as an affront that he and his order were not employed in selling them, that respectable persons at that time, both of the Augustinian and Dominican orders of monks, were so disgusted with the whole business, that they were unwilling to have any thing to do with them. And it is a final fact, and one that clinches the falsehood of the charge, that "the very commission which is supposed to have excited the envy of Luther, was offered by Leo, to the General of the Franciscans, and was refused, both by him and his Order." This fact is stated by Walch, a very trustworthy Historian, whose statements will not be disputed. This charge is therefore plainly false, and falls to the ground.

It is amusing, rather than otherwise, to listen to the abuse that is heaped on the head of Luther. My hearers have no doubt often heard from Romish lips, some such words. But in order that all may know how Jesuits speak about that great and good man, I will quote a delectable excerpt from Damianus, one of the first historians of the Society of Jesuits, from his work "Synoptical History of the Society of Jesus," published in 1640. Here are some of his expressions: "Luther subdued by rage, ambition, and lust, quits a religious life." – "Sacriligious Luther contracts an incestuous marriage with a holy Virgin of God" – "Luther declaims like a fury against the Holy See." – "Luther detracts from the veneration and worship of the sacred rites of the Church." – "The sacrifice of the mass, the eucharist, the mother of God, the tutelary saints, the indulgences of the Pontiffs, were attacked with fury by Luther." – "Luther, the disgrace of Germany, the hog of Epicurus, the destroyer of Europe, the accursed portent of the universe, the abomination of God and man."² Such are the choice expressions used by a

Jesuit historian to designate Luther and his work, and they are reiterated now by priests and emissaries who claim that they never use hard words in their controversies with their opponents.

The marriage of Luther and Catherine de Bora is made an especial subject of bitter reproach against Luther. That he and Catharine de Bora did not keep the vows of celibacy that neither of them ought ever to have made, that were not holy but unholy, and which it was the duty of both no longer to keep, when they were convinced that those vows were wrong, is not to the reproach, but to the honor of both Luther and Catharine. If ever a marriage was entered into honorably, purely, conscientiously, and with fervent prayer for divine direction, this was such a marriage. All who have read the history of it, that relates the spirit in which it was entered, the devout manner in which it was solemnized, and the conscientious motives that led to it, know this. And when we take into consideration the filthy abominations that prevailed at that time, in the monasteries and convents of the Church of Rome, and the scandalous lives that were led, both by priests and nuns, we do not wonder that such men would endeavor to bespatter with filth, and load with abuse, a pure minded man and woman, like Luther and Catharine de Bora, when entering into an honorable marriage according to the laws of God and man. Nothing better could be expected from that source. The only wonder is that decent men will repeat the slander now.

We will now proceed with our history. The occasion that first aroused Luther's opposition to Rome, was the sale of Indulgences in Germany, by John Tetzel. Leo X. wished to complete the magnificent Church of St. Peter in Rome, and wanted money. He resorted to a usual mode of raising funds, that of selling Indulgences to the people, for the release of their souls, and the souls of their friends, from Purgatory. The depths of Purgatory constituted an exhaust-less mine of gold at that time.

Tetzel was just the man for the business. His bold and shameless impudence, however, outraged all decent minds and hearts, Luther's honest nature revolted at it. He rose, at once, in earnest opposition to it. He preached against it in public, and at the confessional he would not recognize the certificates of Indulgences which the penitents offered to him.

Moreover, to signalize still more forcibly his opposition to the shameless traffic, he nailed, on the 31st of October 1517, 95 Theses on the door of the

Castle Church at Wittenberg, in which he took strong ground against the whole system. They went to the root of the matter. These Theses excited extraordinary attention. Like a match cast into a powder magazine, they produced an explosion that shook the whole Christian world.

An attempt was made to answer Luther's Theses, by Sylvester de Priero, and by Hoogstrat, and subsequently, by a more formidable champion, Dr. Eck. Luther stood his ground, and refuted their arguments with great power and success.

At first Leo X. paid little attention to the controversy, and thought it only a small quarrel among monks. But perceiving at length the large proportions which it was attaining, he summoned Luther to appear at Rome within 80 days, to answer to charges that were entered against him. At this juncture, a wise and noble man appeared upon the scene, to whose prudent and firm counsels, the Reformation is greatly indebted, under God, for its success. It was Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony. He was a strong and good *man. He befriended Luther all through his conflict with Rome, until death removed him. He so stoutly remonstrated against Luther's being dragged to Rome, that the Pope consented to send Cardinal Cajetan as his legate, to hold a Diet at Augsburg, to try the case. Cajetan was imperious, and demanded an unconditional surrender by Luther, of everything involved in the contest. Luther, of course, would not do that, and after a vain endeavor to have his cause investigated according to its merits, he appealed to the Pope when better informed, and left Augsburg.

As Cajetan was an obstinate legate to deal with, the Pope laid the failure of the Augsburg Diet, on his imprudence, and appointed another papal legate of a much more mild and discreet temper. Charles Miltitz, the papal chamberlain, was sent into Germany, on this mission. He was an adroit and insinuating politician. He professed to condemn Tetzal, and to flatter and justify Luther in his opposition to the way in which the sale of Indulgences had been carried on by him. He so won upon Luther, that although he still adhered to the great doctrine of justification by faith alone, without any merit of good works, yet he consented to apologize for the violence of his language in denouncing his opponents, and wrote a very submissive letter to the Pope, promising to be silent if his opponents would be still.

But this truce did not last long. In the nature of things it could not last long. Eck, whom Luther had handled so severely, longed for a chance to humble his adversary, and for this purpose a disputation was arranged between him, and Luther and Carlstadt, to take place at Leipsic. It excited great attention. For eight days the debate was held with Carlstadt, and fourteen days with Luther, on the Pope's supremacy, repentance, indulgences, and purgatory. It was a heated discussion, and the friends of both claimed the victory. The result, however, was beneficial to the Reformation, as light necessarily illumined the prevailing darkness, and the evils of the times were so flagrant, that they could not bear public discussion.

It was immediately after this Leipsic discussion with Eck, I that we hear for the first time the name of Philip Melancthon. He was Professor of Greek in the University of Wittenberg, and a finished scholar. He was a man of great mildness and gentleness of spirit. He became henceforth, a firm friend of Luther, and of the cause of the Reformation. It is remarkable that two men of such opposite tempers, became so intimately associated in the same great work. The friendship that now commenced, lasted with uninterrupted strength until Luther's death.

Events followed each other rapidly in the progress of this history. Eck hastened to Rome chafed and mortified by the treatment which his part of the contest at Leipsic had received from the severe blows administered by Luther. There, he, and others of similar feelings and views as to the proper course to be pursued, so influenced the Court of Rome, that the Pope issued a Bull against Luther, dated June 15, 1520, in which 41 heresies were cited from Luther's writings, and solemnly condemned, his works ordered to be publicly burned, and he himself was again commanded, on pain of excommunication, to appear in Rome within 60 days, confess and retract his errors, and throw himself upon the clemency of the Pontiff.

This was regarded, even by the judicious friends of the Pope, as an unwise and rash proceeding. It produced just the opposite effect, of that intended. Instead of intimidating Luther, it made him still more firm and determined. He now took the boldest step possible. He resolved to cut himself entirely loose from the ecclesiastical system of Popery. For this purpose he had a pile of wood, and other combustible materials, erected on the 10th December 1520, outside of the walls of the city of Wittenberg, and

there in the presence of an immense multitude of people of all ranks and orders, he burned both the Pope's Bull y and the decretals and canons relating to the Pope's supreme jurisdiction. The Rubicon was now passed, and there was no retreat possible. He had taken his stand, and he would not abandon it. He had bidden defiance to Rome, and he would maintain the cause of truth, let what would happen to himself.

The thunders were soon heard from Rome, in reply to this bold step of Luther's. In less than a month after Luther burned the Pope's Bull, a second Bull was issued against him from Rome, dated January 6, 1521, denouncing the papal ban upon him, and expelling him from the communion of the church, for having insulted the majesty, and disowned the supremacy of the Pope.

Luther understood his position thus: – He withdrew from the jurisdiction of the Pope, but not from the Christian Church – the Church Catholic. He made the just and important distinction between the papacy and the Catholic Church. He says:

“The Pope is not *jure divino*, or according to the Word of God, the head of all Christendom, for this belongs to one alone, who is Jesus Christ; but he is only bishop or pastor of the Church at Rome, and of others who have voluntarily, or through human authority (that is, through the political magistracy,) joined themselves to him, not under him, as a lord, but equal with him, Christians, and his brethren and companions, as the ancient Councils and the age of St. Cyprian show. The Pope claims that no Christian can be saved unless he is obedient and subject to the Pontiff in all things that he wishes, says, or does. All of which is nothing else but asserting that even if you believe in Christ, and are in possession of all things in him that are essential to salvation, it avails nothing, and all is vain if you do not hold me as your lord, and are not subject and obedient to me. When at the same time, it is evident, that the holy Christian Church was without a Pope, upwards of 500 years at least; and even to this day, the Greek Church, and those of many other languages, have never been, and are not now, under the Pope. Consequently it is, as has been frequently said, a human device, unadvised, useless, and ineffectual; for the holy Christian Church can exist without such a head, and it might have

existed in better circumstances, if such head had not been reared up by the devil. Nor is Popery of any use in the Church; for it exercises no Christian office, and thus the Christian Church must continue and stand without the Pope. Therefore, the Church can never be better governed and preserved than by us all living under one head – Christ – the bishops being all equal with respect to their office, though unequal with respect to their endowments, and diligently adhering together in conformity of doctrine, faith, sacraments, prayer, and works of love &c. as St. Jerome writes, that the priests at Alexandria ruled the Church in one collective body; and so did the Apostles, and all bishops in the whole circle of Christianity, until the Pope elevated his head above all.”³

This was Luther’s position. And it is the correct one. The church Catholic, and the Pope are distinct things. The Pope is not essential to the existence and integrity of the Christian Church. The Roman Church then, and the Roman Church now, make the two identical. It admits of no distinction between them. With them the papacy is the Christian Church. By the decree of the Vatican Council, the papacy cannot be denied “without loss of faith and salvation.” This is a baseless papal assumption. The papacy and the Church Catholic are two things, and by no means the same. “The papacy, indeed, by the ambitious dexterity of the Roman Pontiffs, incorporated itself by degrees into the Church, but it was a preposterous supplement, and was really as foreign to its genuine, apostolic, and Christ ordained,” Constitution, as a new citadel, erected by a successful usurper would be to an ancient city. Luther set out, and acted upon the distinction. He went out of the usurper’s citadel, but he remained in the ancient and noble city.”⁴ He remained, and no corrupt Pontiff could drive him out. He was a member, not of the Pope’s Church, but nevertheless of Christ’s Church. Is not this distinction real and true? The Roman Church claims to be the Catholic Church, but it never was the Church Catholic. The word Catholic, as you know, means universal, general, the whole. Rut the Roman Church never was the whole Church – the Church universal – the Catholic Church. The Greek Church, for example, which embraced in 1874, a population of 74,800,000 persons, and extending over the whole of Russia, and the Eastern countries of Asia and Greece, never acknowledged the Pope of Rome as the head of the Church. There has always been nearly twice as large a non Romish Christian

population of the world, as Romish. The number of professing Christians outside of the Church of Rome is now, and has always been, greater, than the number within it. The Church of Rome, has, therefore, never been the Catholic Church. It has never been the majority, much less the whole. Greeks, and Armenians, and Waldenses, and Protestants are as much members of the Church Catholic, as the Roman Church. Christ never constituted the Church of Rome the Catholic Church. The Church in all the world, during the first 600 years after Christ, never acknowledged the papacy as the Church Catholic. It is a false assumption, and an arrogant claim on the part of the Pope, and his subjects, that the papacy alone is the Church Catholic and the Christian Church, and that he who has true Christian faith, but is outside of the papacy, is therefore outside of the Christian Church. This is false. True faith in Christ, and Christian Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, makes us members of the Christian Church, the Church Catholic. It is not the profession of belief in the Pope, or submission to the Romish hierarchy, that makes us members of the Christian Church, the Church Catholic. This is a mere human" invention. It is not Christ's ordaining. The Gospel of Christ knows nothing of this Popish assumption. The first 600 years of the Church's life, knew nothing of this Popish assumption. It is the bold, unauthorized, unhistorical, unscriptural assumption of proud and haughty men, who, without any divine warrant whatever, claim to be Christ's vicars and vicegerents over the whole Christian Church in the whole world. Luther understood this.

He separated the Christian Church, the Church Catholic, from Popery. Connection with the papacy, was not necessary to connection with the Christian Church. Wherever the Word and the Sacraments were in their purity, there was the Church. True faith and the true Sacraments make the true Church. He had both. He was therefore in the true Church. All since, and every where, who have the Word of God, and the Sacraments – the true faith and the true Sacraments– are in the true Church. This principle cannot be overthrown. The Romanists attempt to overthrow it, but they cannot. They claim that outside of the Romish Hierarchy there is no salvation. Rut this is the false assumption of a huge, but despotic, and self-constituted hierarchy. God's Word knows nothing of it. The history of the Christian Church in its purest and best days knows nothing of it. Luther was right in rejecting it. The act of burning the Pope's Bull, and the decretals proclaiming the Pope's Supremacy, was his public and formal protest

against it. The position he then took, was the right position. The entire Protestant Church from that day to this, has justified his act, and has maintained the same position.

We must now return to the history. The case was now taken up by the Emperor, Charles V. He had appointed a Diet of the Princes and Estates of the Empire to be held at Worms, January 28, 1521. A papal brief was sent to the Diet in February, urging the Emperor to enforce, with the power of the Empire, the Bull against Luther. Luther was accordingly summoned to Worms, from Wittenberg for trial, as the members of the Diet refused to enforce the Bull without affording Lutheran opportunity to be heard. An imperial Safe Conduct was granted him, but as it was violated in the case of John Huss, Luther's friends were by no means assured of his safety. They remonstrated with him, and wished to prevent his going to Worms. But his fearless spirit defied all sense of danger, and he uttered that memorable declaration that he "would go to Worms if there were as many devils there as tiles on the houses." He pleaded his cause before that grand assembly of Emperor, and Princes and legates, and bishops, and estates with undaunted courage and boldness. He appealed to the Word of God in proof of the truth of the doctrines he taught. He resisted all the threats that were uttered against him to retract any doctrine he held, or thing he had done, unless he could be convinced from the Word of God that it was either untrue or wrong. After making one of the most eloquent and forcible defenses ever uttered before any assembly, he concluded with the well known sentence, that has become immortal: "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, God help me, Amen."

He quietly left Worms, April 26, 1521, and traveled on his way to return to Wittenberg. On the 26th of May, after his friend and protector, the Elector of Saxony, and other princes favorable to him, had left Worms, the papal legate succeeded in obtaining from the Diet, a decree, called the Edict of Worms, couched in the severest terms, pronouncing condemnation against Luther and all his adherents. Could this Edict have been carried out, according to its terms, Luther and all who adhered to him, would have been put to death, their property confiscated, his books burnt, and the Reformation would have been at an end. But this savage decree overreached itself. The times when it was common to burn heretics, as in the case of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, had gone by. The German

Princes were not so easily cowed by the Pontiff and his emissaries, as were the Italians. They felt that they were right, and they dared to maintain it. The noble Elector of Saxony, particularly, was equal to the occasion. He understood well the danger which threatened Luther, and he had prepared a mode of rescue. He sent several masked knights well armed, and their faces concealed by their helmets, to waylay Luther as he quietly traveled on his way. They rushed out from their places of concealment in a dark wood of the Thuringian Forest, with loud voices they arrested and held the driver, seized Luther with feigned roughness, pulled off his robe, put on him a military garb, fastened a false beard on his face, placed him on a horse, rode rapidly a long roundabout way through the forest, and finally reached with him the Castle of Wartburg, where he was concealed.

A few of his friends knew where he was, but the great mass of the people did not. They became very much excited with indignation at the Pope. They supposed that their favorite, was treacherously murdered. The Pope and his cause became doubly odious to the people of Germany, and even Luther's involuntary imprisonment contributed to the success of the cause.

Luther was not idle in this castle, which he called his Patmos. It gave him the opportunity to perform a great work which required leisure, and which his busy life heretofore, did not allow him to perform. The Bible was a concealed book. It was hidden in the dead languages. There were only a few copies on the shelves of the libraries in the Universities, and none in the language of the people. The Reformation was founded on the Word of God. The people ought to have it in their houses, and be able to read it in their own common language. Here was the leisure for him to translate it. He improved the opportunity. He commenced it, and persevered in it, and with the help of competent assistants, it was finally completed. It was a great work. It gave the Bible to the people. It made the Word of God an open book. It enabled every one to read for himself, in his own native tongue, what God has spoken to man. So complete is Luther's translation of the Bible into the German language, that no other has been made, and his translation is the version that is every where read in our German Churches, and by our German families. It was a noble work. His period of forced leisure in the Castle of Wartburg, was well employed.

He was not permitted to remain, however, in his peaceful seclusion. His presence was needed elsewhere. The work of the Reformation missed his cool head, ripe judgment, and judicious counsels. A good cause can be ruined by rushing on too fast, as well as by moving too slowly. Carlstadt and others caused tumults in Saxony by rash and inconsiderate proceedings that tended to mar the beauty of the work, and hinder its safety. Without consulting his wise protector, Frederick, Elector of Saxony, and therefore without his consent, he left the Wartburg, and suddenly appeared in Wittenberg. It was high time. It needed all his powerful influence to quiet the unwise agitation. But by a series of earnest and well directed sermons, he succeeded, and the progress of the Reformation continued as before, steadily moving forward.

In the meantime, the principles of the Reformation spread rapidly. Luther's labors were herculean. The number of books, large and small, which he wrote, was almost incredible. Every where they were read with avidity. Many members of the monastic orders had become so disgusted with the corruption that existed in the monasteries, that they could no longer endure the vile practices that prevailed, and they seconded with great zeal, the efforts of Luther to parity them. Every where, too, among the people, the Reformation was hailed with joy, as diminishing the exorbitant power of the hierarchy, purifying the character of the clergy, making them more faithful to the duties of the instruction of the people, and the proper care of souls, and in every respect providing for the congregations more scriptural doctrine, and sounder religion. The world was waiting for the revival of Christianity, almost with the same spiritual hunger with which it waited for the birth of Christianity. The place was ready for the right man, the man of God's right hand. He was wanted and he came. God sent the right man for the right place.

Several Diets of the Empire were held in succession, one at Nuremburg in 1524, at which the papal legate insisted upon the execution of the Edict of Worms, but as the friends of the Reformation were in the majority, he did not succeed in his purpose. Another was held at Spires in 1526, at which it was at first feared that the Romish party would succeed in having very stringent measures adopted for the enforcement of the Edict of Worms, but which finally resulted in the adoption of a decree that "each State should act in matters relating to the Edict of Worms so as to be able to render a good

account to God, and to the Emperor. Of course, this was a victory on the side of the Reformation.

The Reformation had made such progress in a number of the States of Germany, that the Churches could now be reorganized, and brought under a more healthy constitution and discipline. They were rescued from the jurisdiction of the Pope, and constituted as State Churches, with a Constitution of their own, and an order of government and discipline. Luther, Melancthon, and others were appointed to make a thorough visitation of the Churches and schools to correct abuses, admonish the clergy, instruct teachers of the schools, supply vacancies, and in general, to improve and elevate the character of the Churches. The gloomy experience which Luther thus acquired of the incredible ignorance of the people and their teachers, led him to prepare his two Catechisms in 1529, namely, his Larger and Smaller Catechism, the same that we now have, and use in our Churches.

Whilst such was the successful progress of the Reformation in Saxony, Hessen, Schleswig, Holstein, Silesia, Prussia, and other States and Cities, those who lived in such States as were governed by Romish members of the Diet, suffered the severest persecution. Particularly, Duke George of Saxony, took the lead in persecuting his subjects in his effort to enforce the Edict of Worms. "He imprisoned, scourged, and banished Luther's adherents, and in 1521, had a bookseller, who sold Luther's works, beheaded. Persecution raged most in the low countries, the hereditary territories of the Emperor, not connected with the German empire (where really the first martyrs' blood was shed) but also in the Austrian domains, in Bavaria, and in the territory of the Swabian league. The peasants' war of 1525, added fuel to the persecutions. Under pretense of punishing the insurgents, the executioners went through the land, and along with the guilty, put to death many who were innocent of every crime but adherence to the Gospel. In 1527 and 28 a church visitation was instituted in Austria, similar to that in Saxony, but for the purpose of detecting and punishing heretics. In Bavaria the public roads were guarded to prevent preachers from going abroad into other countries; those caught were first fined, then drowned and burned in large numbers.

“The first martyrs were two young Augustine monks, at Antwerp, Henry Voes and John Esh, whose heroic sufferings (1523) Luther celebrated in a beautiful hymn (“Ein neues Lied wir heben an.”) Their example was followed by Lampert Thorn, the prior of the monastery, who was suffocated in prison. The same year George Buchfueher was burnt in Hungary, and during the next year, a large number of scaffolds and stakes were erected for Protestants, in Austria, Bavaria, and Swabia. The most notable of these was Casper Tauber, who was beheaded and burnt in Vienna. Instead of the recantation he was expected to announce, he bore powerful testimony from the pulpit in favor of evangelical truth. Among later martyrs, Leonard Keener (Kaiser) held a distinguished place. Impelled by filial love to visit his dying father in Passau, he perished there at the stake, with joyful courage, August 16, 1527. A few months previously, George Carpentarius, an ecclesiastic, had obtained the honor of martyrdom at Munich. The Swabian league, after the recess of Spires, revived its cruel order for the extermination of all who held evangelical views. In 1527 the Bishop of Constance had John Hueglin (Heuglin) burnt alive as an opposer of holy mother Church. The Elector of Mayence summoned the Cathedral preacher of Halle, George Winkler, to Anschaffenburg for having administered the communion under both forms. Winkler vindicated himself, and was acquitted, but was murdered on his way home. This led Luther to write his “Traestungen an die Christen zu Halle ueber den Tod ihres Predigers.” In Cologne, on Sept. 28, 1529, Adolf Clarenbach and Peter Flysteden were honored with martyrdom, and the joy and steadfastness of their faith shone forth amid the flames. In Northern Germany no blood was shed, but Duke George drove those who confessed the evangelical faith out of the land with scourges. The Elector Joachim von Brandenburg and his states resolved, 1527, zealously to maintain Romish doctrines. Nevertheless the Gospel took continually deeper root in his territory; and his own wife, Elisabeth, secretly read and admired Luther’s writings, and in her private chamber even received the Lord’s Supper according to the Lutheran mode. But she was betrayed, and the elector raged and threatened to imprison the offender. Disguised as a peasant, she fled to her relative, the Elector of Saxony.”⁵

It became more and more evident that the papal party, instigated by the Pope, were determined to resort to violent measures. They were preparing to make war upon the Princes and States that had adopted the Reformation. They had bound themselves to fall upon Saxony and Hessen, exterminate the Reformation, and divide their territory among themselves. It became necessary, therefore, for the Lutherans to deliberate upon the means of defense. Several of the Princes met for this purpose, and formed a sort of alliance, pledging themselves to sustain each other, in case they should be attacked by the forces of their adversaries.

A very important Diet was held at Spire in 1529. The Emperor, who had previously had his hands full with commotions and troubles in his empire, having settled them in some measure, was now free to give more attention to the religious questions that agitated Germany. He was not himself at this Diet, however, which was presided over by his brother Ferdinand. At this Diet of Spire the Roman party attended in large numbers, and were in the majority. They re-affirmed the Edict of Worms, and passed a decree forbidding any innovations in doctrine or practice, the Romish mass was to be held in all the churches, and the jurisdiction and revenues of the papal Bishops, were to be every where restored. This is well called "the death sentence of the Reformation. 11 The friends of the Reformation remonstrated in vain against this unjust decree. All their arguments and representations produced no effect upon the minds of their adversaries. They then joined in drawing up, and signing, a solemn Protest against this tyrannical decree, and appealed to the Emperor, and to a future General Council. From this protest all who opposed the superstitious communion of the Church of Rome, were called Protestants. The Romanists decreed, the Lutherans protested.

The Protestants immediately sent a commission to the Emperor who was on his way from Spain to Italy, to acquaint him with their proceedings. He became greatly irritated at the spirit and firmness which the commission displayed. He had them apprehended and put in prison for several days. When the Protestant Princes heard of this violent procedure, they knew that evil was intended against them. They therefore consulted at several meetings held at Nuremberg, Smalcald, and other places, as to the best course to pursue in the emergency.

The Emperor Charles V. after an absence of nine years from Germany, promised to attend in person a Diet to be held at Augsburg in 1530. Accompanied by the papal legate Campegius, he entered the city of Augsburg, in great pomp on the 15th of June 1530. The Diet was opened on June 20th. The question of the Reformation was first taken up. At the request of the Emperor, the Lutherans had prepared a statement of the doctrines they held. Some articles that Luther had drawn up at Torgau, were made the basis of this statement of the articles of their faith. They were very carefully elaborated by Melancthon, on consultation with Luther, who remained at Coburg, a short distance from Augsburg. On the 25th of June, 1530, the Diet was assembled to hear them. Two copies were prepared, one in German, and the other in Latin. The two chancellors of the Elector of Saxony, Dr. Baier, and Dr. Brueck stood forth, each with a copy in his hand. The Emperor desired the Latin copy to be read. But the Elector interposed by saying;

“We are in Germany, your majesty, and I hope you will permit us to use the German language, on German soil.”

The Emperor thereupon consented. Dr. Baier then read the German copy in a tone of voice so clear and loud, that he was heard, not only in the hall, but in the court yard beneath. It made a very favorable impression upon the Princes assembled, confirmed the Protestants, and allayed the prejudices of those who had not rightly understood their doctrines. This important paper is since called the Augsburg Confession, and has always been the Confession of the Lutheran Church. It is a noble Confession. It has stood the test of centuries. It was the Confession of a united Protestantism. It would strengthen Protestantism immeasurably if it were now as then, the Confession of the whole Protestant world. Rome boasts of a united Romanism – united in error. On the Augsburg Confession, Protestantism would now as then, be united in truth. May God speed the day! During all this time the Reformation was extending itself in every direction. In Sweden it spread with wonderful rapidity, and the papal empire was in a short time, wholly overturned. The same is true of Denmark. In Switzerland, by the labors of Zwinglius and others, the Reformation obtained firm hold in many of the Cantons. In a part of France, too, particularly as the result of the labors of Calvin, the Reformation gained

power and influence. The doctrines of Luther, too, made many friends in Spain, Hungary, Bohemia, Britain, Poland, and the Netherlands. In England, by the labors of Cranmer in consultation with Melanchthon, Protestantism became the State Church of the country.

Things had now come to a crisis. The Reformation had assumed such proportions, that it ought to have been recognized as a fact accomplished. Those Princes, Churches, and States that had renounced the doctrines of the Church of Rome, and thrown off the jurisdiction of the Pope, ought to have been permitted to do so in peace, and remain unmolested. But this did not suit the despotic genius, and sanguinary zeal of the court of Rome. Nothing but absolute submission to the Romish hierarchy would satisfy the Pope, and his haughty advisers. On the 15th November 1530, a severe decree was issued by the Emperor from the Diet of Augsburg extolling the papal religion, adding new decrees to the Edict of Worms, censuring all the changes in doctrine and worship which the Protestants had made, and peremptorily ordering the Princes, States, and Cities that had thrown off the papal yoke, to return to their allegiance to Rome, on pain of incurring the vengeance of the Emperor, as the patron and protector of the Church.⁶

Things now looked very serious. The Protestants felt that they must either surrender every thing gained, or fight in self-defense. In order to be prepared, they formed a solemn alliance at Smalcald in 1531. During several succeeding years, many leagues, alliances, conferences, and interviews of various kinds were held) and carried on, with a view to a final adjustment of the difficulties. As the Turks threatened all Europe, the Emperor's attention and army were so fully occupied by that danger, that he was unable to carry out his purpose against the Protestants, as he too greatly needed their help against the common enemy. But the long threatened war finally came.

Before, however, it burst forth, Luther who had all along opposed all resort to carnal weapons, peacefully breathed his last, and went to his rest. He died at Eisleben, February 18, 1546, at the age of 63 years. He had for some time suffered great bodily pains, and his strength was much prostrated. He died surrounded by many kind friends, but away from his own home and family, who were unable to reach him in time to witness his last hours. Thus died in peace, a good and great man. His is one of the names that will never perish. So long as a heart exists, that beats in response

to truth and liberty, his name, and character, and work will be held in grateful remembrance. He is one of the world's greatest benefactors. The effort to abuse his character, vilify his motives, and censure his work, only recoils upon the heads of those who make it. Despotism and untruth both in Church and State, necessarily hate a man so sincere in his truth, and so opposed to all tyranny as Luther. But as he passed safely through all the slander of his bitter enemies whilst living, so his character cannot be sullied by their fierce defamation since he is dead.

The long dreaded war commenced. Charles, having gained over young Duke Maurice of Saxony, issued under date of June 20, 1546, a ban edict against the Landgrave Philip, and the Elector John Frederick, as vassals who had violated their duty and their oath. Both armies were in the field, but winter came, on without their coming to a battle. The Landgrave and the Elector retired to their countries. The whole region of the Danube was exposed to the Emperor. One city after another was forced to capitulate, on more or less severe terms.

On the Elbe, John Frederick entered Thuringia in Dec. 1546. At Muehlberghe was overtaken by the Emperor, his troops defeated, and himself taken prisoner, April 24, 1547. Sentence of death was pronounced upon him as a rebel and heretic. It was changed to imprisonment for life on condition that he would surrender his electoral dignity, give up his fortress, and transfer his domains to Duke Maurice. The Landgrave Philip, was filled with dismay when he heard of the surrender of the Elector, and being unable to resist the army of the Emperor, he too was compelled to surrender. His son-in-law, Maurice, interceded for his life. But he was compelled to prostrate himself before the Emperor, in abject submission, demolish his fortresses, give up his arms, and was thrown into prison.

The cause of the Reformation seemed in an extremely gloomy and discouraging condition. The Emperor took advantage of the depressed state of their affairs, to have a formulary of faith drawn up, called the Interim,, and imposed it upon the Protestant Churches. It professed to make some concessions in behalf of sound doctrine, but its concessions were deceptive, and the errors in faith and practice which it retained were positive. Its acceptance by the Churches, was the result of violence. The threats of the Emperor forced them to adopt it. The state of the Protestant Churches was sad, and the prospect for the future, gloomy indeed.

But deliverance came from a quarter that was as prompt, as at was unexpected. Philip Landgrave of Hesse, whom the Emperor kept in prison, was Duke Maurice's father-in-law. He demanded his father-in-law's release from prison without success. His fiery temper would not brook the denial of his demand. As his treachery to the Protestant cause brought it into its present calamitous condition, so in revenge for the insult offered to him by the Emperor, by denying his demand for his father-in-law's release from prison, he rescued it from its peril.

He took his measures with great secrecy and skill. He formed a secret "alliance with the King of France, and several of the German Princes for the maintenance of the rights and liberties of the empire. Encouraged by this respectable confederacy, the active Saxon led a powerful army against the Emperor in 1552, with such astonishing valor and rapidity, that he surprised Charles at Innspruck, where he lay with a small force in the utmost security, and without the least apprehension of danger. This unforeseen event alarmed and dejected the Emperor to such a degree, that he was willing to make peace on almost any conditions, and consequently, he concluded at Passau, the famous treaty of Pacification, with the Protestants," which resulted in the termination at Augsburg, in 1555, of "those deplorable scenes of bloodshed, desolation, and discord, that had so long afflicted both Church and State, by that religious peace, as it is commonly called, which secured to the Protestants, the free exercise of their religion, and established this inestimable liberty upon the firmest foundations."⁷

Such is a rapid sketch of that great event in history known as the Lutheran Reformation. In order to compress it into a single discourse, I have been compelled to condense the statement of that history into the smallest possible space. The principal facts of that history have been, however, so clearly stated, that my hearers have a pretty fair bird's-eye view of that wonderful scene upon the world's theater. I have only time for a very few brief remarks in conclusion.

1. God's hand was in it. Nothing is clearer than this. The evil was too great, and the enemies of the Reformation were too many and strong, for human power to prevail against them. If in regard to any past event of history, we are compelled to say, "It was not of man but of God". It must be said of this.

2. It rescued the true faith. Christian faith was corrupted. The faith of Christ was imperiled. The corruption was at the root. It was not a mere question of outward ceremonies and forms. It was a question of faith, of principle, of doctrine. It rescued the true faith from the errors that had corrupted it. It restored the true faith to the Church. We now have it pure and true. In the Augsburg Confession it was then formulated, and in it, it is now purely confessed by the Church.
3. It established the true Church. True faith makes a true Church. The Church is not true when its faith is not true. All depends upon the faith. There may be Pope, and Bishops, and priests, and an imposing ritual, but if the faith confessed is false, all passes for nothing, and the Church is false. Mohammedanism has its Caliph, the officers of the mosque, and its form of worship, but because its faith is false, it is a false Church. Mormonism has its prophet, its elders, and its worship, but its detestable doctrines make it a false Church. True doctrines make a true Church. Age does not make it. The Pope does not make it. Bishops and priests do not make it. Unity in error does not make it. Much stress is laid on this by Jesuit priests. Because they are united in their errors, and idolatrous worship, they claim to be the true Church. But having the same false doctrine, and the same hierarchical structure, and the same form of superstitious worship, in all ages, and in all lands, do not make it. Corrupt doctrines make a corrupt Church. In order to be the true Church, we must have the true faith. The Church cannot be the true Church that has not the true faith. The Church of Rome was the true Church when Paul was its pastor, and when it believed what Paul taught it. But when it renounced Paul's faith, and anathematized those that hold it as the Popes have done, and still do, it has fallen from the true faith, and it is no longer the true Church. The Reformation raised the Church from its fallen state. It corrected its false faith, and restored its corrupted worship, and we have now the true faith, and the true worship, in the true Church.
4. It delivered the Church from intolerable despotism. The papacy pressed with its iron heel on human souls. It was, and it still is, an intolerable despotism. No man under its tyrannical rule, could say that his soul was his own. Its whole history is a record of oppression and cruelty. The Popes were "lords over God's heritage," as St. Peter

distinctly forbade any persons to be. And they were haughty lords. Their's was insatiable ambition. They had their foot on the necks of men, and they kept it there. They ruled the Church with a rod of iron. But blessed be God, the Reformation took that rod out of their hands. With impotent malice, they still grasp after it, but it is out of their reach. May it remain out of their reach forever!

5. It gave liberty to the nations. The world owes more to the Reformation than the deliverance of the Church from ecclesiastical oppression. It owes to it its civil liberty as well. Indeed, it broke the power of an unmitigated despotism that held every thing in bondage. When its heavy heel was taken off, every thing bounded upward. We feel it in all departments of human life. The liberties of America, the mild constitutional monarchy of England, the progress of free institutions all over Europe, and the breaking up of the temporal power of the Pope itself, in Italy, are owing to its direct influence. And even the liberation of serfdom in Russia, and the wresting of fierce despotic power from the bloody Turk, by the force of the civilization of the age, which is not Romish, but Protestant civilization, are some of the remote and gradually accumulating benefits accruing to the world from the Reformation of the 16th century.

Such gradual crumbling to pieces of heavy yokes, and such gradual lightening of oppressive burdens, by the ever widening civilization of this Protestant age, were not possible under Rome's despotic rule, before the era of the Reformation. It was the Reformation that inaugurated this civilization, and started this ever extending influence in behalf of freedom, and it is felt even in the remote and savage nations of the earth. It is working still, and will always continue to work. Its beneficial influence is more and more felt continually. No event that ever transpired since the birth of Christ, is of more importance to the happiness of the world, than it is. Well may we celebrate it with anthems of hearty praise and thanksgiving to God for its inestimable blessings.

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1. Mosheim's Eccles. History.↩
 2. Viller's Essay.↩

3. Smalcald Articles. Art. 4.↩
4. Mosheim's Hist. Dr. M'Claines' Note.↩
5. Kurtz's Church History.↩
6. Mosheim's Eccles. Hist.↩
7. Mosheim's Eccles. History.↩

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