

institutions were originally designed as sacred retreats from the fashions and pomp of the world; they soon, however, degenerated into the abodes of vice and crime, and became the banking-houses of all Catholic Europe. The novice was required to surrender, not simply himself, but also his possessions to the care of the holy brethren. Great sums were appropriated to them by the wealthy, and even governments assisted in annexing to them rich domains of landed property. "Time," says Gibbon, "continually increased, and accidents could seldom diminish, the estates of the popular monasteries; and in the first century of their institution, the infidel Zosimus has maliciously observed, that for the benefit of the poor, the Christian monks had reduced a great part of mankind to a state of beggary." And yet he adds in a note, "the wealth of the eastern monks (of whom the above remark was made) was far surpassed by the princely greatness of the Benedictines."⁵

State patronage, however, and monasteries, will by no means account for the vast wealth of the Roman Catholic communion. To ascertain this, we must descend into the deep caverns of superstition — we must follow all the windings of papal fraud and imposition — we must dig into her mines of relics — we must descend into purgatory, and look amid its fires; and, as if this were not enough, we must ascend up into heaven, and there, from amid the thrones of saints and intercessors, we must follow the golden streams that issue forth, and which, by means of priestcraft, are poured into the coffers of the Papacy; yes, heaven, earth and hell, are all laid under contributions by the inventions of this tyrannical religion, to sustain the power and increase the wealth of the hierarchy.

The following is the testimony of one who had for years been a Roman Catholic priest. "Look," says he, "at all the Roman institutions; from its chief tenets, the real presence of God in the eucharist, and the infallibility of the church, down to the holy water and the wax-taper, and there is not one of them which is not either a means of grasping money, or power, or of entrapping the female sex! Ask," continues he, "of popery, who

218

instituted the belief of the real presence of God in the wafer? He will answer, Christ himself, when he said in the last supper — 'hoc est corpus meum.' Popery knows well the falsity of this answer; but in accordance with this creed, it has established the mass, which produces immense sums of money to the whole priesthood. Why has popery established indulgences? In appearance, it is a means of atoning for one's sins; but in reality, it is to coin money from the sins of men. Why has popery instituted those thousand corporeal mortifications? In appearance, to show a great aversion to earthly pleasures; but in reality, to have an occasion for selling dispensations to many people, who have neither the courage nor desire to practice mortifications. Why has popery established those intimate relations between saints and men upon the earth, through relics, images, adorations, and a thousand other superstitions? In appearance, to help us in the great work of our salvation; but in reality, to place itself as an intermediate between saints and men, and to sell their intercession; to make money with all these practices and beliefs, and root more deeply its power in each mind."⁶ Nor are facts like these supported by the testimony of a single priest — it is the testimony of all history. "Many of the peculiar and prominent characteristics in the faith and discipline of those ages," says Hallam, "appear to have been either introduced, or sedulously promoted, for the purposes of sordid fraud. To those purposes conspired the veneration for relics, the worship of images, the idolatry of saints and martyrs, the religious inviolability of sanctuaries, the consecration of cemeteries — but above all, the doctrine of purgatory, and masses for the relief of the dead. A

creed thus continued, operating upon the minds of barbarians, lavish though rapacious, and devout though dissolute, naturally caused a torrent of opulence to pour in upon the church. Donations of lands were continually made to the bishops, and still, in more ample proportions, to the monastic foundations. Large private estates, or, as they were termed, patrimonies, not only within their dioceses, but sometimes in distant countries, sustained the dignity of the principal sees, and especially that of Rome. The French monarchs of the first dynasty, the Carolingian family and their great chief, the Saxon line of emperors, the kings of England and Leon, set hardly any bounds to their liberality, as numerous charters still extant in diplomatic collections attest. Many churches possessed seven or eight thousand mansi: one with only two thousand, passed for only indifferently rich. And, as if all these

219

methods for accumulating what they could not legitimately enjoy, were insufficient, the monks prostituted their knowledge of writing to the purpose of forging charters in their own favor! If it had not been," says the same author, "for certain drawbacks, the clergy must one would imagine, have almost acquired the exclusive property of the soil. They did enjoy nearly one half of England, and, I believe, a greater proportion in some countries of Europe." In a note he also states, that "according to a calculation founded on a passage in Knyghton, the revenue of the English church in 1337, amounted to seven hundred and seventy thousand marks per annum;"⁷ that is, according to the estimate of the same author, about fifty-three million nine hundred thousand dollars! Nor is this all: the Pope came in for his share of the spoils. Besides tithes, Peter-pence, etc., which he usually received from the English church and government, in his war with the Emperor Frederic, he laid a special tax upon the church of England. "The usurers of Cahors and Lombardy," says Hallam, "residing in London, took up the trade of agency for the Pope; and in a few years, he is said partly by levies of money, partly by the revenues of benefices, to have plundered the kingdom of nine hundred and fifty thousand marks; a sum, equivalent, I think, to not less than fifteen millions sterling at present."

But let us adduce other testimony. Hume, in his History of England, states, that "among their other inventions to obtain money, the clergy had inculcated the necessity of penance, as an atonement for sin; and having again introduced the practice of paying them large sums, as a commutation, or species of atonement for the remission of those penances, the sins of the people by these means had become a revenue to the priests; and the king computed, that by this invention alone, they levied more money upon his subjects, than flowed by all the funds and taxes into the royal exchequer."⁸ The same author states, that during the reign of Edward III., A.D., 1253-55, Otho, the Pope's legate, "carried more money out of the kingdom than he left in it." About this time, the chief benefices in England were conferred upon Italians, most of whom were non-residents. A complaint was consequently entered by the king and nobility before the Pope, at a general council held at Lyons, "that the benefices of the Italian clergy in England, had been estimated, and were found to amount to sixty thousand marks a year, a sum which exceeded the annual revenue of the

220

crown itself." Instead, however, of this complaint arresting the rapacity of the Pope, "Innocent exacted the revenues of all vacant benefices; the twentieth of all ecclesiastical revenues without exception, the third of such as exceeded a hundred marks a year, and the half of such as were possessed by non-residents. He claimed the goods of all intestate clergymen; he

pretended a title to inherit all money gotten by usury; he levied benevolences upon the people; and when the king prohibited these exactions, he threatened to pronounce upon him the same censures, which he had emitted against the Emperor Frederic.”⁹

During the reign of Henry IV., A.D., 1413, “the Commons,” says the same author, “made a calculation of the ecclesiastical revenues, which, by their account, amounted to four hundred and eighty-five thousand marks a year, (about thirty-three millions nine hundred and fifty thousand dollars,) and contained eighteen thousand four hundred ploughs of land. They proposed to divide this property among fifteen new earls, one thousand five hundred knights, six thousand esquires, and a hundred hospitals; besides twenty thousand pounds a year which the king might take for his own use. and they insisted, that the clerical functions would be better performed than at present, by fifteen thousand parish priests, paid at the rate of seven marks a piece of yearly stipend.” According to this estimate of the House of Commons, the Roman Catholic religion taxed the English public in the reign of Henry IV., about twenty-six millions six hundred thousand dollars of our money more than the support of the gospel in that kingdom required! This is also exclusive of the proceeds from the lands! Can any one imagine a greater oppression? Can any one conceive of a wider departure from the simple and unpretending religion of Jesus? And to make the picture still more dark, all this went to a priesthood, who, for the greater part, led vicious and dissolute lives.

The fiscal condition of the Catholic church in England during the reign of Henry VIII., and in the year 1538, when the monasteries and other religious institutions were suppressed, may be learned from a work in the British Museum, published in 1717. This work is termed, “A summary of all the religious houses in England and Wales, with their titles and valuations at the time of their dissolution.” The number of such houses “is stated to be one thousand and forty-one; the aggregate annual valuation of them at the same period was 273,106 pounds, reckoning only the rent of

221

the manors and produce of the demesnes, and excluding fines, heriots, renewals, dividends, etc. This sum would be represented in 1717, a little less than two hundred years afterwards, as stated by the same authority, by 3,277,282 pounds, as a consequence of the decrease in the value of money. Assuming that the decrease has been the same in the last century, it would now be represented by about 20,000,000 pounds; or \$96,000,000.

“The proportion of the land of the country, held by the church at that time and of which the monks were lords, is stated at fourteen parts in twenty. In 1815, the annual assessed value of the real property of England and Wales, as stated in parliamentary records was 51,874,490 pounds. Fourteen twentieths of this sum, being the ancient proportion of the church revenues, would be about 34,500,000 pounds, or, \$166,987,168! a sum, three fourths as large as the present annual revenue of the government of Great Britain, from all its sources and for all its purposes. Besides, too, this amazing absorption of the public wealth by the regular orders of the priesthood, there were four orders of mendicant monks, who not only lived on the residue of the property of the country, but abstracted large sums for their pious purposes. It is also stated by the same authority, that the Grand Duke of Tuscany — which is a district of Italy one hundred and fifty miles by one hundred — once ascertained and published, that the Church of Rome absorbed seventeen parts in twenty of the revenue of the land within his jurisdiction”!¹⁰

Here then, is the state of things, at the time of the Reformation. Was ever an event more needed than that Reformation? Here we see the professed ministers of Christ, who himself "had not where to lay his head," not only lording it over princes in power and authority, but actually undermining their thrones and all national prosperity, by an accumulation of wealth truly fearful.

But it is alleged, that Popery has changed, that it is not now so exorbitant. Let us see. "In France," says the same author, "under the old regime in 1789, the annual revenues of the church were 405,000,000 francs; or, 16,200,000 pounds; or, \$77,760,000. Under the present system it is but \$6,182,400, and divided among Catholics and Protestants according to their numbers." That is, when the Catholic church in France had full sway,

222

and only as late as 1787, that church levied upon the country, 71,577,600 dollars, beyond the sum which is appropriated at present for the support of religion in France.

The state of things is no better in Spain. "The sum which the church property of Spain would yield, after providing for the decent maintenance of the clergy, was calculated by the Cortes of 1822, when joined to certain royal domains, lying useless to the state, to amount to 92,00,000 pounds; or, \$441,600,000! The present entire annual revenue of the Spanish church, is 10,514,000 pounds; that of the state as lately reported by Count de Toreno, is about 5,000,000 pounds;"¹¹ that is, the Spanish church absorbs twice the income of the kingdom of Spain! The question naturally rises here, what becomes of so much money? The proper answer, no doubt is, that it requires all this capital to forge the bolts and bars, and to weld the chains, by which 200,000,000 of people are kept subject to a system of priestcraft and superstition, the most monstrous and terrific that has ever existed upon the earth. There is probably not a country on the globe, where the power of such capital is not felt. See at present, even in these United States, what European and priestly-gotten wealth is accomplishing! See the splendid cathedrals, the noble churches, the costly buildings, which these hidden streams of money are starting up among us!

Besides this general use of such funds, it requires vast resources to support Popery. Superstition is always an expensive system. Truth is simple; and requires but small means. Error, however, is complex and involved, and demands the glitter of much gold and silver to sustain it. The number of ecclesiastics in Spain as estimated within a few years past, is 160,043. Besides these, there are lay-assistants to the amount of 90,346; making a total to be provided for of 206,002. When the population of Spain is divided by this sum, it will give one ecclesiastic or lay-assistant, to about every sixty-seven persons. Now, how is it possible for sixty seven persons, large and small, either to take up the whole time of a religious teacher, or to render him a support? Add to this the princely mode of living among bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and popes, and we shall soon see, that the popish system is and must be, not only the most tyrannical system on the globe, but also, the most expensive.

223

But let us go to Rome itself. See there the successor of St. Peter occupying the throne of the Caesars — not only the king and sovereign of the States of the Church, but the emperor over far and distant nations. Look at the Vatican, look at St. Peter's! What wealth, what immense

wealth exhibits itself around the very seat of him, who styles himself, the vicegerent of Christ on earth! Nor is this all; all kinds of superstitions are practiced in Rome for the sake of getting money. "I thought," says, Dr. Sturtevant, writing from Rome, "when I last wrote to you, that I had some faint glimpse of the deceits and delusions practiced on the followers of popery. I could see depths, frightful and immense, of treasures of gold and silver, which papal imposition had extorted from the ignorant and superstitious, to pamper and uphold the dominion of the prince of darkness; but I had not fathomed the greatest reservoir of all, I mean indulgences. No measures also are untried, that crafty policy suggests, to solicit contributions for the relief of suffering souls in purgatory. Agents bearing lanterns with a painted glass, representing naked persons enveloped in flames, parade the streets and enter houses with tales that alarm, and appeals that excite the compassion of these holy souls. So great is the dread of purgatory, that besides the satisfactions they make in their lifetime, many deluded souls leave large legacies to the church to procure masses daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly, as far as their money will go. Many would rather starve their surviving families, than neglect the souls of the departed. This doctrine is a mine as profitable to the church as the Indies to Spain."¹² All this takes place under the eye, and by the authority of the Pope; yea, he himself is the chief tradesman in such things. The same writer speaks of the Pope himself, as at one time clothed "in robes of white and silver;" at another as decked "in scarlet and gold." The crowns and miters of the bishops and cardinals who attended his Holiness, were also "glittering with jewels and set with precious stones." Surely, we have here almost the exact counterpart of what John predicts — "And the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls." And if we consider the vast treasures of the Roman Catholic priesthood in all countries, and the wonderful resources of Roman Catholic institutions, the exclamation "so great riches!" used by the inspired writer, will not be found inappropriate.

224

Thus have we ascertained another coincidence between Antichrist and the Papacy. Antichrist was to revel in wealth, and glitter in jewelry and pearls. He was to possess the riches of the nations. Rome has enjoyed all these for centuries. Seated as a queen, this idolatrous church has decorated herself for the espousals of all the kings and princes of Europe, and of the world. She has had no mean lovers; for the great and the noble, conquerors and sovereigns, have all bent at her feet and reveled in her smiles. But this very glory in which she arrays herself, these meretricious ornaments in which she displays herself before the nations, only proclaim with the tongue of living thunder, that she is not the spouse of Christ; and that the day of her doom is approaching, when "the voice of the bride will no longer at all be heard in her; and when the light of a candle shall no longer at all shine in her." Hasten it, O Lord, in its time, and let all the powers of Antichrist fall before thy victorious truth!

225

CHAPTER 10 ANTICHRIST THE POSSESSOR OF GREAT POWER

A LARGE number of scriptural predictions concerning Antichrist, refer to the extent and greatness of his dominion. Daniel asserts that "his look was more stout than his fellows:" that is, that the evil power spoken of, should be an object of greater notoriety, than the other ten kingdoms, with which it was to be associated. The saints of the Most High were also to be "given into his hand," for a period of twelve hundred and sixty years; and even then, were to

be delivered from his hand only by some remarkable interpositions of God himself. Daniel 7.

The Apostle Paul describes the same wicked king, as “opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped,” 2 Thessalonians 2:4: that is, as elevating himself to the very pinnacle of power both in church and state. The Apostle John, however, is more explicit in his description. In reference to this same evil king, or Antichrist, represented as a beast rising out of the sea, he says: “And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat and great authority.” The dragon here referred to, is pagan Imperial Rome. Antichrist, therefore, occupying the very metropolis of the old Roman Empire, was to possess both its authority and power. But this is not all; “power was given him,” says John, “over all kingdoms, and tongues and nations.” Since the previous description represented the power of Antichrist, as co-extensive with that of the Roman Empire, it is probable, that the “kindreds, and tongues and nations,” here spoken of, were such as were previously subject to Roman authority. But the direct power of Antichrist was to be as absolute as his dominion was extensive. “And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” All the offices and privileges of society, were to be interdicted to all, be they sovereigns or subjects, high or low, who should not yield implicit obedience to this tyrannizing power. The means, too, by which this evil king was to exercise such dominion is also foretold.

226

“The ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings; these have one mind, and shall give their power and strength to the beast.” Revelation 13:17.

Antichrist is himself but “a little horn,” — his regal power is small; but, by means of the ten greater horns, or kingdoms, which with himself arose out of the ruins of old Rome, he exercises an absolute sovereignty over the earth. Such are some of the many predictions concerning the power and dominion of Antichrist. Nor can one well avoid exclaiming while reading such prophecies, Surely John must be the historian and not the prophet, of modern Europe! But the infatuation of the human mind, when under the influence of error, is amazing. The Jews, even while crucifying the true Messiah, were looking for a messiah to come and Papists, while exhibiting in their own system, and especially in their head, all the full-drawn features of the scriptural Antichrist, are yet speaking of Antichrist as something future.

We are now prepared to meet the Papist on his own ground. He boasts of antiquity, of universality, of authority, and of unity. All these in a certain sense we grant him. But, then, these very things are the evidences of the antichristian character of his whole system. They are the marks of “the beast,” they are the boastings of the “little horn;” they are the exaltations of “the man of sin;” they are the divinely inspired criteria, by which the people of God are to know and avoid Antichrist.

That Jesus Christ did not lodge either supreme spiritual, or supreme temporal power, in the hands of any one man, must appear evident to every candid reader of the New Testament. It is true, that during the lifetime of our Lord, and for some time afterwards, Peter, because more bold and fervid, and because he was older probably than the other Apostles, acted a more conspicuous part than his brethren. Equally true, however, it is, that the Apostle Paul, because yet bolder and more daring than even Peter, and possibly more endued from

heaven, is represented in the later periods of the inspired history, as taking the lead of all the Apostles in the Christian ministry. But neither of these Apostles is spoken of as being the head over the other. Nor were they, or either of them, promoted in the apostolic office, above their fellow Apostles. As witnesses of the life, character, doctrines, death and resurrection of their

227

common Master, the Apostles were all on an exact equality. As publishers of his gospel to mankind, they had all received, not a similar, but the same commission. As sharers in the influences and gifts of the Holy Spirit, they had all partaken of one common baptism. And as planters of churches, and overseers, of the flock of Christ, they were all equally interested, equally esteemed. No disparity is there among them, except in gifts and natural endowments, except in grace and its manifold operations. In office they were one, in honor one, in love one. They were one family, one brotherhood, one Apostolate.

Much less did Jesus entrust to the hands of any one, or even all of his Apostles, supreme temporal authority. He taught them, that "his kingdom was not of this world," and "to render unto Caesar the things that were Caesar's." The Apostles, too, following the instructions of their Master, enjoined it upon their disciples, "to be subject to the higher powers," assuring them, that "the powers that be are ordained of God," and were therefore entitled to obedience and respect from all Christians. Romans 13. "Whoever has read the gospel," says a Catholic writer, "knows, that Jesus Christ founded no temporal government, no political sovereignty. St. Peter and his colleagues were sent, not to govern, but to teach; and the authority with which they were invested, consisted only in the light and benefits which they had to diffuse. Every one knows, he continues, that before Constantine, the Christian churches were only particular associations, too often proscribed, and always strangers to the political system. The popes (bishops) in those times of persecution, and of fervor, certainly did not aspire to the government of provinces. It was enough for them to have the power of being virtuous with impunity. They obtained on earth no crown, but that of martyrdom."¹

Such was the state of original Christianity. No supreme spiritual, or supreme temporal power, was placed in the hands of any one man. The Apostles, as such, were on a perfect equality. The same equality was maintained among the ministers who succeeded them. The churches were separate associations, each possessing its own local officers, and each independent of the rest. Nor was Christianity united to the state; it was enough, that it was tolerated by the civil authority.

228

It is a singular phenomenon, however, in the history of the world, that the system of religion which Jesus taught, of which he was himself the pattern, and which he left to mankind as a rich legacy — that a religion so pure, so unostentatious, so separated from the insignia of power, that such a religion should have been so perverted in the hands of wicked men, as to become the greatest engine of power, the world has ever known; that its very doctrines, and promises, and revelations, its officers and organization, its rewards and its hopes — that all these, so full of grace, so redolent of heaven, should be formed into a great system of terror, in which the powers of three worlds are made to rest in fearful suspense upon the consciences of mankind! This transformation, we say, is wonderful, is wonderful indeed. And yet it is a transformation which has actually taken place; yea, upon which the eyes of men for

more than ten centuries have been quietly gazing.

The power of the Papacy is three-fold, indicated, as some say, by the triple crown, which the Pope wears as the badge of his dominion. The first of these is regal, or that which he wields over the “states of the church.” The second is pontifical; or that which he exercises as supreme head of the church. The third is imperial, or that which he would exercise over the nations of the earth.

It is not intended to dwell upon the first of these powers. According to most historians, the Pope became a temporal prince in the year 754, by a grant from Pepin, king of France. This temporal dominion, the Pope has possessed ever since. In itself it may be considered a small matter; the prince of a petty state, is not likely to exert any great influence any way, upon the history and destiny of nations. Even this fact, however, has in it a remarkable fulfillment of prophecy. “I considered the horns,” says Daniel, “and behold there came up among them another little horn; before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots.” This prediction accurately describes the Papacy as a temporal sovereignty. It came up among, or as some say, behind, or according to others after, the first ten horns upon the Roman beast. The Pope as a temporal prince, is located on the very apex, if we may so say, of the head of the beast, he is the central power. He came up too, later than the rest; the ten Gothic kingdoms, having been previously formed. He also arose imperceptibly into this condition. Even to this day is it debated, precisely when the Pope

229

became a temporal prince. The fact then, that the chief pontiff of Christendom is the sovereign also of a petty kingdom, though in itself unimportant, yet is essential to the scriptural evidence, that the Papacy is Antichrist. It is one of those personal and smaller matters, which as strongly as any thing else, indicate the fulfillment of a particular prophecy. It is, however, the possession by the Papacy of the supreme spiritual, and the supreme temporal power, which must chiefly engage our attention. We are to survey the Pope, not as a petty Italian prince, but as the chief pontiff and the august emperor of Christendom. It is in the occupancy and exercise of these two offices, that the Papacy has disturbed, or rather molded, all the political and religious systems of Europe; and it is in its assumption of these fearful powers, that its antichristian character is most discernible.

The spiritual government at Rome may be divided into four periods — the congregational and presbyterial, the episcopal, the patriarchal, and the papal.

The original church government at Rome was congregational and presbyterial. The supreme power was in the church, or body of believers; the officers of the church were presbyters and deacons. The Epistle to the Romans is addressed by Paul “to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints.” Romans 1:7. Again the Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians is from “the church of God which is at Rome.”² If then, Paul wrote not to one man, or to a body of men, but to the church generally; and if Clement wrote not in his own name, but in the name of the church at Rome, it is evident, that at that time, the supreme spiritual power at Rome, was in the Roman church; that is, in the body of believers in that city.

The church at Rome, however, was organized as other apostolic churches, with bishops, or elders, and deacons. First, there is no good reason, why this church should be organized

differently, and we know that other churches were so constituted. Philippians 1:1. Acts 20; 1 Timothy 3. Secondly; we have the testimony of Clement that this was the case. "The Apostles thus preaching," says he, "through countries and cities, they appointed the first fruits of their conversions to be bishops and ministers (elders and deacons) over such as should afterwards believe, having first

230

proved them by the Spirit." This however was done by the vote of the brotherhood. "Wherefore," continues Clement, "we cannot think that those can justly be thrown out of their ministry, who were either appointed by them, (the Apostles) or afterwards chosen by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole church. But we see how you (the Corinthians) have put out some from the ministry, which by their innocence they had adorned."³ The original ecclesiastical government then at Rome, as in all the early churches, was congregational and presbyterial; that is, the power was in the people, but was ordinarily exercised by presbyters or elders.

The next form of this government was episcopal. It is evident, that between the close of the first century and the beginning of the fourth, most, if not all, of the early churches assumed the episcopal form. Some one of the congregational presbytery had been made permanent moderator, or sole head over the rest. As proof of this, let the following testimony of Jerome be considered: we quote from Bishop Hopkins's "Church of Rome in her primitive purity." "With the ancients," says this learned father, "presbyters and bishops were the same; but, by degrees, in order that the plants of dissension might be rooted up, the care of government was committed to one. Therefore, as the presbyters know themselves, by the custom of the church, to be subject to him who may be set over them, so should the bishops know, that they are superior to the presbyters, more by custom, than by the truth of our Lord's disposition; (*magis consuetudine quam dispositionis dominicae veritate*) and that they ought to govern the church in common:" (*et in commune debere ecclesiam regere.*)⁴

The fourth form of the spiritual government at Rome, was patriarchal. Constantine, wishing to adapt the ecclesiastical to the civil polity, introduced a new arrangement in ecclesiastical government. This gave rise to the appointment, throughout the Roman empire, of bishops, archbishops, metropolitans, exarchs, and patriarchs. Under this new economy, Antioch, Alexandria, Rome, and afterwards Constantinople, became each the seat of a patriarch. Between these patriarchs, there arose of course some rivalry. The Roman patriarch, however, was generally superior, chiefly because he lived at the capital of the empire. When, however, ancient Byzantium, under the new name of Constantinople,

231

became also the seat of civil authority, the two patriarchates of the two capitals of the empire, soon overshadowed those of Alexandria and Antioch. Rome, then, had but one rival, the patriarch of the eastern empire. As that patriarch was powerfully supported by the eastern court, it was far more difficult to gain ascendancy over him, than it had been over other rivals. Power between these two ecclesiastical potentates was well nigh balanced for several centuries. At length, however, in the ninth century, a rupture took place between them, which divided Christendom into the eastern or Greek, and the western or Latin church.

Besides the rivalry here alluded to, the Roman patriarch had other obstructions to his

absolute headship over even the western church. These obstructions were found in the rights of metropolitans, and other subordinate presiding church officers. Each bishop and archbishop had his prerogatives: each state claimed for the church established in it, certain privileges. All these must be removed before the Roman bishop could become the absolute autocrat of the Latin church. "Their first encroachment of this kind," says Hallam, "was in the province of Illyricum, which they annexed in a manner to their own patriarchate, by not permitting any bishops to be consecrated without their consent. This was before the end of the fourth century. Their subsequent advances, however, were very gradual. About the middle of the sixth century, we find them confirming the elections of the archbishops of Milan. They came by degrees to exercise, though not always successfully, and seldom without opposition, an appellate jurisdiction over the causes of bishops, deposed or censured in provincial synods. Valentinian III., influenced by Leo the Great, one of the most ambitious of pontiffs, went a great deal farther, and established almost an absolute judicial supremacy in the Holy See. 'We decree this,' says the emperor, 'by' a perpetual sanction, that it is lawful for French bishops, as well as for those of other provinces, in violation of an ancient custom, to attempt nothing, without the authority of that venerable man, the Pope of the eternal city; but, let whatever the Apostolic Seat has sanctioned, or may have sanctioned, be to them all for law."⁵ This occurred in the year 455; and although there was resistance to this imperial decree, yet it shows what the designs both of the Emperor and the Pope were.

232

Gregory I. greatly increased the power of the Roman See. "He dwelt," says Hallam, "more than his predecessors, upon the power of the keys, as exclusively, or at least principally, committed to St. Peter. In a letter to the Spanish churches, he uses the following language. — "a sede apostolica, quae omnium ecclesiarum caput est" — "from the apostolic seat, which is the head of all the churches." This was at the close of the fifth century. The celebrated edict of Phocas, in 606, constituting the Roman bishop the head of the church, is well known. In that decree it is asserted, that "the name of universal becomes only the Roman church, as that which is the head of all the churches, and is appropriate to none but the Roman pontiff."⁶

It is strange to observe here, that the very supremacy which emperors and popes were pressing upon metropolitans and other bishops, those bishops were themselves inviting. In a synod of French and German bishops held at Frankfort, in 742, it was decreed, that as a token of their subjection to the See of Rome, all metropolitans should receive from the hands of the Pope, the pallium, as a badge of office — "metropolitanos pallia ab illa sede quaerere, et per omnia praecepta S. Petri canonice sequi." It was in the latter part of this century, that one Isidore Mercator, or Peccator, who was either a sycophant of the Pope, or the rival, possibly, of some metropolitan or other church dignitary, issued the Decretals of the early popes or bishops of Rome. These Decretals were a summary of the pretended decrees which Anaclet, Clement, Euaristus, and other popes, to the time of St. Sylvester, had passed. They were all fabrications of the grossest kind. In them, however, the greatest possible amount of power was conceded to the popes of Rome. "Every bishop was amenable only to the immediate tribunal of the Pope. Every accused person might appeal directly to the chief pontiff. New sees were not to be erected, nor bishops translated from one see to another, without the sanction of the Pope." "They also forbid the holding of any council, even a provincial council, without the permission of the Pope."⁷ "Upon the so spurious decretals," says Hallam, "was built the great fabric of papal supremacy, over the different national churches; a fabric which has stood after its foundations crumbled beneath it." It is evident,

however, that the churches of Europe must have been previously prepared for the yoke, or such gross

233

fabrications never could have been made the means of enforcing such bondage.

But one more step was needed to complete the spiritual ascendancy of the Roman hierarchy; he needed agents, amenable only to himself, and who should go or come according to his will. These he found in several monastic orders, whom he freed from all subjection to metropolitans and bishops, but held in entire subserviency to himself as sole head of the church. These were his most faithful and devoted allies; and as many of them had great power over the people, and even over kings, the authority of the Roman prelate became supreme throughout Christendom. Thus did the little church planted in apostolic days beside the throne of the Caesars, struggling itself through centuries for a bare existence, watered by the tears and cemented by the blood of martyrs — thus did this little church, prostrate at first before the imperial throne, climbing up afterwards around that throne, and subsequently occupying the seat of that throne, thus did it become mistress of Christendom, and its pastor, monarch of the world! How little did the first band of Christian disciples at Rome, meeting, it may be, in a garret, or a retired chamber, how little did they anticipate a result like this! How little did they desire it! Their form of government was entirely different. With them, power, (if it deserved the name) was in the hands of the brotherhood. The church as composed of individual members, was supreme. Their discipline was exercised by faithful presbyters; men chosen by themselves, and under whose teachings and control, they enjoyed both liberty and order. With them, there was no pomp, no show. No St. Peter's excited the wonder of travelers; no Vatican received their humble pastors. The crown was on no head, the sword in the hand of none. Nor did they boast of supremacy over their brethren; they were satisfied to be themselves Christians. Such was the Roman church in her infancy; such in her purest, and really apostolic days. With this church, we claim fraternity; and although Rome to us is no more a veneration, than Ephesus or Antioch, or any other of the early churches; yet, amid all the rubbish of the Papacy, and the solemn mockeries of Antichrist, yea, beneath, it may be, the very chair of St. Peter, there is dust, forgotten dust, that we do esteem. It is the dust of those tried and worthy men, who planted the Roman church; who were living examples of Christian doctrine and practice in that church; who studied the Scriptures

234

daily, and met each night for prayer; who despised tyranny, but rejoiced in the freedom of the gospel; who lived in love and fellowship with Christ; such men, we repeat it, we love; their principles we love; their names we venerate. But, with Rome as she now is, with Rome as she has been for more than a thousand years, we can have no sympathy, no fellowship, no common interest. Our prayer is, that she may be overthrown, and that her arm of iron may be removed from oppressed Christianity.

We are now to consider the imperial, or supreme political power of the Papacy. This power was the result chiefly of the spiritual headship of the Papacy over Christendom. Had the popes been but the temporal lords of their own small territory, or but the metropolitans of a particular district, their authority would have been limited. As temporal princes, they could have claimed obedience only from their own subjects; and as the occupants of an episcopal

see their supervision could have extended over none but the churches of their own diocese. But when the Pope was constituted supreme pontiff, especially when he was considered as the Vicar of Christ upon earth, and his decisions regarded as final and infallible, a supremacy over thrones and kings was the inevitable result. Politics and religion cannot be kept entirely separate. There are many points at which the state must touch the church, and there are many moral questions which must relate to princes and cabinets. Even were the church and state entirely distinct in their general administrations, one infallible and supreme head of the church, would be at least liable to interfere with the free and regular exercise of the civil government. In cases, however, where church and state are united, the interference is inevitable, and must be frequent. Now in Europe, from the days of Constantine, there was the closest union between religion and politics. Long before the downfall of the Roman Empire, this system was adopted. And when that empire sunk, and the modern kingdoms of Europe arose on its ruins, neither prince nor bishop thought of a separation between these two systems. A national, or rather an imperial religion, every where existed. The consequence of this was, that while popes and bishops were in a certain sense, held as the subjects of kings and princes, the latter were also considered spiritually as the subjects of the former. Possibly, some might imagine, that such mutual subjection might be maintained without detriment to the peace of society. Such, however, the history of Europe has proved, is not likely to be the

235

case. Especially is it not likely to succeed on such a magnificent scale, as was attempted in Catholic Europe. There are too many national interests and prejudices, too many kings and bishops, too many passions and motives to ambition, for a scheme like this to exist without agitation, without tyranny and rebellion. Hence, the history of Europe throughout the papal supremacy, exhibits not the smoothness of a lake unruffled by the passing breeze, but the turbidness of a sea, dashed and tossed by conflicting winds. Papal unity in these times was but one perpetual struggle; and papal harmony, but the symphony of uninterrupted discords. The result, however, of such struggles and agitations, at least for centuries, was the gradual but complete ascendancy of papal power over the sovereigns of Europe.

Nor was the high political power of the Pope, the result alone of his pontifical station; that station itself was made the abode of certain divine attributes. The popular idea was, that God and St. Peter were ecclesiastically one. The Pope, personally, might be but a man; he might have faults, yea great faults; yet, as Pope, he was God's representative, Christ's vicar; he could not err; and his will was supreme in heaven, as well as on earth. His anathema was held in the utmost dread; and his interdict subjected even the greatest princes to the deepest humiliations. At his command all the services of religion were arrested; marriages, masses, and even burials were prevented. Subjects were freed from their allegiance to their lawful sovereigns, and even the assassination of the prince was considered a virtue.

Among the proximate causes which advanced the power of the Pope, Daunou, mentions the following. "The political revolutions which followed the dethronement of Augustulus, the accession of Pepin to the throne of France, and of Charlemagne to the Empire; the weakness of Louis le Debonnaire, the division of his states among his children, the imprudence of some of the kings who invoked the thunders of the Holy See against each other; the fabrication of the Decretals, the propagation of a canonical jurisprudence, quite contrary to the ancient laws of the church; the rivalries between the two houses of Germany, the projects of independence conceived by several of the Italian cities, the crusades, the inquisition, and the innumerable

multitude of monastic establishments; these," says this Catholic authority, "are the causes which brought on,

236

established, aggrandized, and so long sustained the temporal power of the Popes, and facilitated the abuse of their spiritual functions."⁸ Thus did the state of things both without and within the church, the agitations of the political system, and the doctrines of the religious, unite in the elevation of the Papal See above the capitals of Europe. Nor should we omit in this catalogue of causes, the ambition of the Roman Pontiffs themselves. Gregory VII., Innocent III., Julius II., and Boniface VIII., were as ambitious of power, as all Alexander, a Caesar, or a Napoleon. Their desire was, not simply supremacy in the church, or even in Europe, but supremacy throughout the world.

The gradual development of this wonderful system of power, will now be considered. From the days of Constantine, Christian bishops, and especially Roman bishops, exerted more or less influence upon the policy of the country. "Even under the Roman Emperors," says Hallam, "they had found their way into palaces; they were sometimes ministers, more often secret counselors, always necessary but formidable allies, whose support was to be conciliated, and interference respected."⁹

After the fall of the throne of the Caesars, the civil obedience of the bishop of Rome became after a short interval, subject to the eastern Emperor, and to the Exarch of Ravenna, as his lieutenant. The veneration, however, of the new Gothic kingdoms for their spiritual head, and the ancient habit of the west in rallying around a western political center, together with some difference of doctrine between Rome and Constantinople, well nigh counterbalanced the authority of the successors of Constantine; and while they exalted the Pope, made his subjection to a distant sovereign, rather tacit, than efficient. Hence the readiness of the Papal See to constitute a western emperor in the person of Charlemagne; and hence the haughty language it sometimes employed toward the eastern court. The following is an extract of a letter to Leo III., from Gregory II., whom Gibbon styles, "the founder of the papal monarchy," and whom also Catholic writers are in the habit of representing as a mode of patience and loyalty. "You now accuse," says Gregory, "the Catholics of idolatry; and by the accusation you betray your own impiety and ignorance. To this ignorance we are compelled to adopt the grossness of our style and arguments. The first elements of holy letters are sufficient for your confusion; and were you to enter a grammar school, and avow yourself the enemy of our worship, the

237

simple and pious children would be provoked to cast their hornbooks at your head. You assault us, O tyrant, with a carnal and military hand; unarmed and naked, we can only implore Christ, the Prince of the heavenly host, that he will send unto you a devil, for the destruction of your body and the salvation of your soul. Abandon your rash and fatal enterprise, reflect, tremble, repent. If you persist, we are innocent of the blood that will be spilt in the contest; may it fall on your own head."¹⁰ Such was the language of Gregory II. to the greatest emperor of Christendom, and also his own lawful sovereign. Gregory III. his immediate successor, went still further, and excommunicated the whole sect of the Iconoclasts, and Leo among them.¹¹

The authority of the popes over the new kingdoms was of a more decisive character. The first remarkable interference of this authority in political matters occurred in France. Pepin, the son of the celebrated Charles Martel, was exercising the authority, but durst not usurp the name, of king. This name belonged to Childeric, a regular descendant from Clovis, who had established the French monarchy. The case was referred to Pope Zacharias. He decided that Childeric, the lawful sovereign, should be shorn and placed in a convent; and that Pepin should assume both the name and the insignia of royalty. True, the decision in this case was but that of a supreme judge, giving his opinion in a question of doubt and perplexity.

But what right had a Christian pastor to decide who should reign over a political kingdom? If the reference was a matter of policy on the part of Pepin, and of conscience on the part of the French, it was also one of power in the hands of the Pope. His sentence was authoritative, and it was final. Hence Eginhard, the biographer of Charlemagne, says that Pepin was made king — “*jussu et auctoritate Pontificis Romani*” — “by the command and authority of the Roman Pontifex.” This occurred about the middle of the eighth century.

Fifty years after the important decision above alluded to, that is, on Christmas day, A.D. 800, Pope Leo III. crowned Charlemagne, the son of Pepin, Emperor of the West. Daunou affirms that this was done, not by the Pope, alone, but by “all assembly of the clergy, of the nobility, and of the people of Rome.”¹² Anastasius, however, affirms, that Charles was made emperor — “*Dei nutu atque B. Petri clavigeri regni coelorum*” — “by the will of God and of the blessed Peter, the keys-bearer of the

238

kingdom of heaven.” “On Christmas day,” says Grimshaw, “when the monarch was attending mass in St. Peter’s church, at Rome, the supreme Pontiff advanced, and placed upon his head an imperial crown; and having conducted him to an imperial throne, declared, that he should thenceforth be styled Emperor and Augustus.”¹³

As the chair of St. Peter had virtually made both a king for France, and an emperor for the west, the subsequent subjection of these thrones to the dictation of the Pope, would seem to be a matter of course. The son and successor of the late emperor, was the first to experience evils of this kind. Louis I., surnamed Le Debonnaire, divided his kingdom among his three sons, Lothaire, Pepin, and Louis. The birth of a fourth son, by a second marriage, Charles the Bald, was the means of associating the three first against their father and the last. In these royal controversies, not only the prelates of France, but the Pope also took a prominent part. Gregory IV. allied himself to the three rebellious sons. He entered France in person, and without the permission of Louis. He caused the army of Louis to desert him, and became thus the means and instigation of the dethronement of the son of Charlemagne. It was at this time, that in a letter to the bishops, he uses the following insolent language: — “Know ye that my chair is above the throne of Louis.” “It would be painful” says Daunou, “to trace the details of the well known humiliations of Louis I. How Hebo, his creature, and other bishops condemned him to a public penance; how upon his knees before these prelates he recited publicly a confession of his crimes, among which he enumerates the march of his troops during the carnival, and the convocation of a parliament on holy Thursday; how, dragged from cloister to cloister, to Compeigne, to Soissons, to Aix-la-Chapelle, to Paris, to St. Denis, he seemed destined there to terminate his days.” Such was the son of Charlemagne in the hands of the ecclesiastics, who had aspired to control the throne of France and of the empire.

Louis II. was equally subservient to the power of the Pope. "He went on foot before the pontiff, served him as an esquire, and led his horse by the bridle!" Charles the Bald, in a submissive letter to the clergy, affirmed, that, "the bishops are the throne where God sits to render his decrees!" The power of the Pope, however, was far superior at this time to that of either bishops or kings. An experiment was made of that power. Lothaire, king of Lorraine, and great grandson of Charlemagne, had repudiated his

239

wife, Theutberge. This repudiation had occurred after a lawful examination before a council of bishops. The Pope, however, Nicholas I., thought proper to annul the whole proceedings. He ordered the king to take back the wife from whom he was lawfully divorced; threatened him with excommunication if he refused; sent a legate to compel compliance with his mandate; and even proceeded so far as to depose two of the bishops, who sat in one of the councils by which the divorce was granted. Lothaire was forced into obedience, although ably defended by his brother, the Emperor Louis. Thus did the arbitrary will of the new sovereign of the Seven Hills, control at once, emperors and kings, councils and bishops! This occurred about the year 863.

Under the Pontificate of John VIII., Charles the Bald was made emperor, when his brother, the king of Germany had superior claims to that office. The language used by the pontiff on the occasion, is significant: "We have judged him worthy of the imperial scepter — we have elevated him to the dignity and power of the empire — we have decorated him with the title of Augustus."¹⁴ In a council at Troyes, in France, over which this same pope presided, besides various excommunications against persons of distinction, it was decreed, "that bishops shall be treated with respect by the secular powers, and that none shall be so bold as to sit in their presence, unless they shall be directed to do so."

Such were the perpetual collisions between the civil and ecclesiastical powers in France, during the Carlovingian race of kings. The officers of the church, instead of being subject to civil rulers, arrogated to themselves a vigilant supervision over those rulers, crowns were conferred by popes; and thrones made vacant by their simple volition. No doubt, the contests between the descendants of Charlemagne had a powerful tendency to promote the frequent exercise and gradual ascendancy of ecclesiastical power. There were many other causes, however, conspiring to the same result. The general ignorance that prevailed, the gross superstitions that were practiced, the erroneous notions entertained of the office and prerogatives of church-officers — especially the almost divine homage paid to the Pope — all these tended to lower the civil and exalt the ecclesiastical authority. The Papacy had not as yet, however, reached its full grown stature. Other centuries were required for this.

240

Before we trace its fuller developments, however, through these centuries, it will be proper to notice an event which powerfully accelerated its advancement. This event was the fabrication of two documents, the objects of which were to elevate the power of the Pope to the highest possible pitch. The Decretals and the Donation of Constantine were both invented, it is thought, in the eighth century. The former, which we have already noticed, was designed to establish the absolute supremacy of the Pope in the church, the latter to give him supreme

control in the state. The following is a quotation from the latter document. It employs the language of Constantine the Great. "We ascribe to the See of St. Peter, all dignity — all power — all imperial power. Besides, we give to Sylvester and his successors our palace of Lateran — we give him our crown, our miter, our diadem, and all our imperial vestments — we remit to him the imperial dignity. We give, as a pure gift, to the holy pontiff, the city of Rome, and all the western cities of Italy, as well as the western cities of other countries. In order to give place to him, we yield our dominion over all these provinces, by removing the seat of our empire to Byzantium, considering that it is not right that a terrestrial emperor should presume the least power, where God has established the head of religion."¹⁵ This document is admitted, by all Catholic writers at the present time, to be a mere forgery; and yet, so ignorant were men in the middle ages, and so blinded by papal authority, that it was universally received as authentic. "This donation," says Daunou, "obtained belief so long, that in 1478, Christians were burnt at Strasburg for having dared to doubt its authenticity!" It is easy to see what an exaltation of papal power, what a stretch of papal ambition, would naturally arise from a popular and general belief like this.

In the tenth century, we have another most painful instance of the deep humiliations to which the throne of France was again subjected by the Pope of Rome. Hugh Capet had supplanted the Carolingian line of kings, and established the Capuriah — that which continues to the present time. His son and successor, Robert, had married Bertha, his cousin of the fourth degree, to whose son also, by a previous husband, he had stood as god-father. The validity of this marriage, although authorized by seven bishops, was denied by the Pope. As the king was unwilling to put away his wife, he incurred from the holy see the sentence of excommunication,

241

and his kingdom was laid under an interdict. "It was the first time," says Daunou, "that the church of France saw herself under an interdict, or received the injunction to suspend the celebration of divine offices — the administration of the sacraments to adults — the religious burial of the dead." Such was the effect of this sentence of excommunication, that the king of France was deserted by all his attendants and domestics, save two servants, who are said, on the authority of a cardinal,¹⁶ to have cast to the dogs what provisions were left from the royal table, and also to have purified by fire every vessel the excommunicated monarch touched! Humbled by such rigorous treatment, Robert was compelled to yield, and Gregory V. had the satisfaction to see both bishops and king subservient to his pontifical mandate.

Thus were matters preparing for a universal Theocracy. The full conception of that theocracy, and its partial completion, was the work of the celebrated Hildebrand. "The idea," says Daunou, "of a universal theocracy, had taken in his ardent and severe mind, the character of a passion. His whole life was consecrated to this enterprise."¹⁷

To accomplish this vast scheme, Hildebrand attempted, first, to make the church independent of the state, and next to extend the power of the church gradually, but universally over the state. To render the church less dependent upon civil authority, he virtually abolished the right of layinvestiture required every bishop to come to Rome for consecration, and established a new mode of electing the Pope. The power of nominating a successor in the chair of St. Peter was at this time in the emperors of Germany. According to the decree however, of Nicholas II., of which Hildebrand was the real author, "the cardinal bishops were to choose the

supreme Pontiff, with the concurrence, first of the cardinal priests and deacons, and afterward of the (Roman) laity. Thus elected, the new Pope was to be presented to Henry, and to such of his successors, as should personally obtain that privilege."¹⁸ To render his authority yet more efficient, Gregory had a special legate or representative, clothed with extraordinary powers, in each country of Europe. These legates collected taxes, intimidated bishops, and kept even kings in awe. They were ready at any moment, either to report misconduct to Rome or to fulminate from their own seats, in the name of the Pope, the anathemas of the Holy See.

242

There are twenty-seven maxims, ascribed to Gregory VII., from which the character of his administration may fairly be inferred. The following are a few of them: —

“That the Pope has the right to depose all princes, to dispose of all crowns, to reform all laws. That he can never err, that he alone can nominate bishops, convoke councils, preside at them, dissolve them: that princes must kiss his feet, that by him subjects are absolved from their oath of allegiance; in a word, that there is but one name or power in the world, viz., the Pope.”

Nor did Gregory simply write maxims. His acts corresponded with his creed. “It would be necessary,” says Daunou, “to enumerate all the princes who reigned during the time of this Pope, in order to furnish the list of those, who were smitten, or menaced by him with excommunication. Sardinia and Dalmatia, he considered only as fiefs, dependent on the tiara. To Demetrius of Russia, he wrote: “We have given your crown to your son.” Nicephorus Botiniaries, the Greek emperor, he commanded to abdicate his throne. Boleslas, king of Poland, he declared fallen, adding that Poland should no longer be a kingdom. Solomon, king of Hungary, he bid go to the Hungarian old men and learn, that their country belonged to the Roman Church. To the Spanish princes he wrote, that St. Peter was their lord paramount, having the right to the revenues of all their little states. Robert Guiscard he punished by anathemas. From the Duke of Bohemia, he exacted the tribute of a hundred marks of silver. Philip I. of France he denounced as a tyrant, plunged in crime and infamy; and upon William the Conqueror, he enjoined it as a duty, to render homage for his kingdom, to the Apostolic See. The greatest trophy, however, of the ambition of Gregory, was the Emperor Henry IV. Contrary to the new doctrines of Papacy, Henry had made some investitures; this was a capital offense. Gregory dispatches two legates to Germany, to summon the emperor to appear at Rome, to answer in person to the Pope, for the crimes alleged against him. The emperor refused. This refusal led to a rupture between the two potentates, in which Henry was excommunicated by the Pope in the following words: —

“On the part of God Omnipotent, and by my plenary, authority, I forbid Henry, the son of Henry, to govern the Teutonic kingdom,

243

and Italy. I absolve all Christians from the oaths which they have made to him, or which they shall make to him. It is forbidden to every person to render him any service as to a king.”

The humiliations of Henry, consequent upon this sentence of excommunication, are thus described by Hallam. “Gregory was at Canossa, a fortress near Reggio, belonging to his

faithful adherent, the Countess Matilda. It was in a winter of unusual severity. The emperor was admitted, without his guards, into an outer court of the castle, and three successive days remained from morning till evening, in a woolen shirt, and with naked feet, while Gregory, shut up with the countess, refused to admit him to his presence. On the fourth day he obtained absolution, but only upon condition of appearing on a certain day, to learn the Pope's decision, whether or no he should be restored to his kingdom, until which time he promised not to assume the ensigns of royalty."¹⁹ Such was the height of power, to which the Papal See had advanced, towards the close of the eleventh century. Gregory VII. however, only drew the outlines of a dominion, which his successors, and especially Innocent III., were to establish and complete. We have already noticed how the Donation of Constantine and the Decretals of Isidore tended to augment papal power. We must now notice another instrument of the same kind. This instrument is "the Digest of Gratian." This Digest consists of a compilation of various canons for the regulation of ecclesiastical polity. It was divided into three parts, the first treating of ecclesiastical persons, the second of judgments, and the third of sacred things. Its popularity and influence were wonderful. "It was explained," says Daunau, "in the schools, cited in the tribunals, and invoked in treaties. It had almost become the public law of Europe, when the return of light dissipated, by slow degrees, the gross imposture." The character and design of this celebrated Digest may be learned from the following.

"By it," continues the same author, "the clergy were held not to be amenable to answer in the secular tribunals: the civil powers were subjected to ecclesiastical supremacy: the state of persons, and the acts which determine it, were regulated, validated, or annulled, by the canons and the clergy; the papal power was enfranchised from all restrictions; the sanction of all laws of the church was ascribed to the Holy See, that See itself being independent of the laws published and confirmed by itself."

244

Such was the jurisprudence, by which papal authority was carried to its summit, throughout Europe, a jurisprudence, whose origin was fraud, whose popularity was based upon ignorance and superstition, by which all civil rights were trampled in the dust; and whose sole object was, the independent establishment of one vast papal monarchy. This new system of law was first published by a Benedictine monk, in the year 1152. Pope Eugene III. gave it at once his pontifical sanction, and thus constituted it the law of the church; and virtually the law of Europe.

We are now about to stand upon the summit of papal ascendancy. For nearly nine hundred years, that is, from Constantine the Great, to Pope Innocent III., the bishop of Rome had regularly been rising in influence and power. For about six hundred years, that is, from the grant of Pepin to the same pontificate, had this bishop not only been a temporal prince, but had been gradually establishing his authority over the thrones and crowns of all other temporal princes. At that period, when other kingdoms have usually begun to wane, and to feel the decrepitude of age, the papal power was only in its strength, exhibiting a healthfulness which indicated the absence of decay, and wielding an influence at once absolute and formidable to the kings of the earth. "The noonday of papal dominion," says Hallam, "extends from the pontificate of Innocent III. inclusively, to that of Boniface VIII.; or in other words, through the thirteenth century. Rome inspired during this age all the terror of her ancient name. She was once more the mistress of the world, and kings were her vassals."

The empire of Innocent III. and of the popes of the thirteenth century, was as great, if not greater, than that of the old Romans under Trajan and Adrian. By the conquest of Constantinople, the east had been brought into subjection to the Pope. Nations farther north than ever acknowledged an emperor or a consul, bowed to the chair of St. Peter; while westward, the broad Atlantic only was the boundary of the Pope's dominion. Africa was in possession of the infidels, but even here the crusaders took several of their strong holds.

But the dominion of the popes was as powerful as it was extensive. Innocent established himself in Italy more firmly than his predecessors. "He abolished the consulate, and arrogating to himself imperial rights, he invested the prefect with his powers. He installed public officers, and

245

received the oaths of the senators. Out of Rome also, Orbitello, Viterbia, Umbria, Romagna and the Marche d'Ancona, acknowledged Innocent III. as their sovereign. Reigning thus from sea to sea, he conceived the hope of conquering Ravenna, of getting fully the inheritance of Matilda, and of getting more in subjection to him the two Sicilies."²⁰

The authority of Innocent, however, extended beyond Italy. "In one year" says Daunou, "Innocent III. gave three crowns, that of Wallachia, of Bohemia and of Arragon. He also conferred that of Armenia."

The power of this pontiff, however, was more felt in abasing than in giving crowns. The three most powerful sovereigns during the pontificate of Innocent, were Otho IV. Emperor of Germany, Philip Augustus, king of France, and John, king of England. Otho he excommunicated, Philip he not only excommunicated, but laid his kingdom under an interdict; and John he brought to the deepest possible humiliation. The crime of John was his opposition to an appointment, which the Pope had made, of an archbishop of Canterbury. The pontiff first laid an interdict upon the kingdom of John; he next excommunicated the monarch, delivering him over to the wrath of God; he then deposed him, as no more fit to occupy the throne of England. And as if this were not enough, he even ventured to cede to his rival Philip, the entire dominion of the English monarch. The Pope however, had in England one of his "legates." Pandolph undertook to effect a reconciliation between the pontiff and the king. He advised John to receive from the Pope as a pure gratuity and in the most humble manner, the kingdom from which he had been deposed. The following is the account which Daunou gives of this affair. "John upon his knees before Pandolph, put his hands between those of this priest, and pronounced, in the presence of the bishops and lords of his kingdom, the following words: "I, John, by the grace of God, king of England, and lord of Ireland, for the expiation of my sins, of my free will, and with the advice of my barons, give to the Roman church, to the Pope Innocent and his successors, the kingdom of England and the kingdom of Ireland, with all the rights attached to the one and to the other. I will hold them hereafter of the Holy See, of whom I will be a faithful vassal, faithful to God and to the Church of Rome, to the sovereign Pontiff, my lord, and to his successors lawfully elected. I bind myself to pay every year a rent of a

246

thousand marks of silver (about sixty three thousand dollars,) that is. to say, seven hundred for England and three hundred for Ireland."²¹ The money was immediately paid. The legate

having kept the scepter and crown of the monarch five days, returned them as a pure gift. He then left England, and entering France, forbade Philip to wage war upon England, as now a fief of the papal autocrat.

But Innocent went further. As if the powers of excommunication and interdict, were not adequate to his purposes, he employed two other modes of executing his will. These were, crusades and the inquisition. The crusades had hitherto been employed only against Mohammedans. Innocent turned them against Christians. The Greek church was the first to experience the dreadful effects of this mode of conversion. Constantinople was taken, its palace rifled of its treasures, French emperors appointed, while Innocent congratulated himself by saying — “God, wishing to console the church by the union of the schismatics, has caused the empire to pass from the proud, superstitious, and disobedient Greeks, to the humble and submissive Latins.”

The Albigenses were the next class of Christians to experience the vengeance of a crusade. Innocent ravaged their country, transferred the territory of Raymond, their protector, to Monfort, and reduced to desolation and ruin, these once flourishing provinces. Nor was this all. Whatever Christian prince now began to prove refractory, was threatened, not simply with excommunication and an interdict, but with a crusade. Thus did this Pope ingeniously turn toward the household of faith, that tremendous power, which had hitherto been directed only against the infidels of Asia.

But there was another instrument wielded, indeed originated, by this sagacious pontiff — the Inquisition. The object of this barbarous tribunal, was not simply to ascertain heresy, but to eradicate it from the conscience and heart. For accomplishing this work, the Apostles had depended upon truth accompanied by the Spirit of God. Not so Pope Innocent and his illustrious successors. They resorted to torture, and to torture of the most dreadful character. The suspected person was confined to a most loathsome dungeon, from which the light was excluded. He was subjected to the most rigorous treatment. He was frequently brought before his

247

spiritual judges, and every effort was made to force him to the confession of his heresy. If obstinate, he was tied, suspended by a pulley and suddenly dropped down, often to the dislocation of his bones, or the fracture of his limbs. He was compelled to drink great quantities of water, until unnaturally distended, when an iron bar was placed across his stomach and pressed by great weights. Or, if this kind of torture did not answer, he was gradually roasted before slow fires. These tortures were varied, according to circumstances, and they were also protracted more or less according to the perseverance or timidity of the subject. In all cases however, they were horrible and excruciating to the last degree. Multitudes perished under them, and multitudes who endured them, were only transferred from this dreadful court, to meet a yet more terrible death. Innocent was the author of this institution. “The friars Raynier, and Guy, and the arch-deacon Peter of Castelnau, are the first inquisitors,” says Daunau, “known in history. Innocent enjoined it upon princes and people to obey them; upon princes to proceed against the heretics denounced by these missionaries; upon the people to arm themselves against princes who were indocile, or had too little zeal.”²² The first inquisitorial commission was sent by Innocent into Languedoc, to extirpate the heresy of the Albigenses. Proving useful here, it was subsequently introduced into all the

countries of Italy, except Naples; into the kingdoms also of Spain and Portugal, and attempts were made to erect it in all the other kingdoms of Europe.

Such was the pontificate of Innocent III., the haughtiest, and probably the most successful of the popes. "A pope," said he, "a vicar of Christ, is superior to man, if he is inferior to God. He is the light of day; the civil authority is but the fading star of night."

We cannot here pursue a minute history of the popes, or point out the almost innumerable instances in which they domineered over the princes of the earth. We refer the reader on this subject to the standard histories on modern Europe, and to authors who have made it their business to delineate the usurpations and blasphemies of this proud and insatiable power. Let us, however, notice some of the doctrines taught by those famous instruments called papal bulls.

248

In a bull of Boniface VIII., against Philip IV., is the following language. "God has established me over the empires to pluck up, to destroy, to ruin, to dissipate, to edify, to plant." In another, called *Unam Sanctum*, Boniface thus expresses himself: "The temporal sword ought to be employed by kings and warriors for the church, according to the order and permission of the Pope. The temporal power is subjected to the spiritual power, which institutes it, and judges it, and which God alone can judge. To resist the spiritual power, then, is to resist God, unless we admit the two principles of the Manicheans."²³ Pope Pius V., in the bull in which he excommunicated Queen Elizabeth, expresses himself thus: "He that reigneth on high hath constituted one (the Pope) prince over all nations, and all kingdoms, that he might pluck up, destroy, dissipate, ruate, plant, and build."²⁴ Sixtus V. also, in the bull in which he excommunicated the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Conde, asserts, that "the authority given to St. Peter and his successors, excels all 'the powers of earthier kings and princes."²⁵

Such have been the gradual development, and the ultimate height, of the papal empire. Presiding at first, but as a Christian pastor, over a small congregation, the Roman bishop rose by degrees, and under a great change of circumstances, became the supreme political, as well as the supreme spiritual, head of Christendom. Indeed, much more than this is true; as vicar of Christ, as the sole and supreme representative of the Eternal, the Pope has arrogated to himself honors and prerogatives not less than divine.

Were this system carried out, the world would be subject to one man, and that one man would become the universal object, not only of civil and ecclesiastical, but also of religious homage. Every throne on earth would be extinguished but that of the Pope; every capital would be destroyed but that of the Pope; every system of religion would be annihilated but that of the Pope. It is impossible that a system of this kind should always exist. Man could not bear, God would not suffer, its perpetual continuance. Such a system is monstrous, is unnatural, is contrary to every political, social, moral, and religious interest of mankind. It withers the heart, it paralyzes society, it degrades man, it insults God. Hence, about the beginning of the fourteenth century, causes began to work, whose tendency was the gradual, but ultimate overthrow of this whole system. These causes began in politics, began in education, began in religion, began

249

in everything. Public sentiment, that had long favored the Papacy, had come to its flood, and an ebb of human opinion began, adverse to the whole system of spiritual despotism. These causes, with great and powerful auxiliaries, are still at work; and although there have been obstructions in their way, still are they destined to operate till the entire papal fabric shall only be among the legends of the past. Cold, and long, and dreary, it is true, has been the winter, through which the church and society have passed. But the spring has dawned, the summer is approaching, the warming sunbeams are falling, the earth is relaxing, the fields are smiling, and no power of man can prevent the rich harvest of blessings, that God is about to bestow on a ransomed and love-lit world. True, the papist would still carry us back to his dreary Decembers — to his dark and gloomy winters; he would still surround us with snow, and frost, and death. But no, the voice of God has gone forth; the Spirit of the Eternal is moving on the hearts of men, and retrogression is impossible. Onward is the watchword, and onward all things will go; the Papacy to destruction, the church and society to liberty, salvation.

But let us now apply to our subject the facts we have here contemplated. The book of God foretells, that after the apostolic days, somewhere in the approaching future, a great power should arise, arrogating to itself divine honors, “exalting itself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped,” possessing “great authority,” having “power over all kindreds, and tongues and nations; and causing all, both small and great, to receive a mark in their right hands or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark.” This power was also to have its seat at Rome; it was to be a nominally Christian power, for it was “to depart from the faith.” It was to be in itself a small power, “a little horn.” but to derive its strength from the kingdoms around it; “these kingdoms having one mind to give their power and strength to the beast.” Such are the predictions; but where shall we find the facts? We cannot find them in imperial Rome; for this power was to arise upon the ruins of the empire, and it was to continue in existence twelve hundred and sixty years, which the Roman empire did not. We cannot find them in any one, or even in all the kingdoms of Europe; we cannot find them among the Lutherans or the Calvinists. Hence Romanists, dissatisfied with all applications of these prophecies to the past, refer them to the future. They speak of Antichrist

250

as yet to come. But, then, they forsake the prophecy; for it is certain that Antichrist was directly to succeed the downfall of the Roman empire. Where, then, is Antichrist? Let facts speak; let Europe, which has been down-trodden so long by papal power, testify. Let prostrated crowns, and abased monarchs, bear witness. Let the blood of martyrdom be heard — all these declare, that if there can be an Antichrist, the papal autocrat is he.

251

CHAPTER 11 ANTICHRIST DISTINGUISHED FOR CRAFT AND PRETENDED MIRACLES.

IN the “little horn” upon the head of the fourth beast in Daniel’s vision, were “eyes like the eyes of man.” This peculiarity was seen by the prophet in none of the other ten horns. These eyes were the symbols of knowledge and sagacity. And as the “little horn” indicated not a good, but a wicked power, they were designed to express the cunning and craft, which such wicked power would employ, in persecuting the saints and in opposing God. The Apostle Paul gives

us the idea more literally. He describes the man of sin as coming “with all deceivableness of unrighteousness” (en pash spath thv adikiav), and as “speaking lies in hypocrisy, (en uJpokpisei yeudologwn.)

That these passages refer to Antichrist, even Romanists themselves admit. “The little horn,” says the Commentator on the Doway Bible, “is commonly understood of Antichrist.” The same authority says, “The man of sin agrees to the wicked and great Antichrist, who will come before the end of the world.” The difference between this commentator and ourselves is, that, while he considers Antichrist as yet to come, we affirm, that he is even now in the world.”

If then, these passages refer to Antichrist, they teach, that cunning and craft are to be among his chief characteristics. That these traits are more notorious in the papal church, than in any other establishment ever known among mankind, needs scarcely to be affirmed. The evidences of their existence have filled its history for more than a thousand years.

The first instance we notice of the craft of this church is, in its mode of interpreting the holy Scriptures. That the Scriptures are to be interpreted like all other books, is evident. Although the truth in them is inspired, that is, delivered from heaven, yet the language is human. The very object of this volume is, to make known to man, in his own modes of speech, the will of God for his direction and salvation. The Papacy, however, considers this book of such difficult interpretation, that, withholding it

252

from the people generally, it only furnishes such portions as its forced, though *infallible* interpretations, have so far glossed, that the original meaning is entirely concealed.

We shall notice only two of the unnumbered perversions of this kind. In Matthew 16:18, Christ addresses Peter in the following language: “And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” This text has been used by Catholic writers as the very foundation of their papal system. “It is proved,” says Dens, “that Peter received supremacy from Christ above the other Apostles from Matthew 16:18, where the supremacy is promised, and John 21 where it is conferred.”¹ The passage referred to in John is the following: “Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained unto them.” This latter passage, in which Christ addresses the apostles in a body, and in which he conferred upon them, if anything, equal authority, is said to teach Peter’s supremacy above his brethren. Surely, if this was the time, when Peter had conferred upon him the supremacy previously promised, he never received it at all. And as the text quoted to prove that Peter received the supremacy has failed, so, no doubt, will the text said to contain the promise of supremacy, also fail.

1. This supremacy is not contained in the words of this text. There is evidently a wide distinction between the word Peter (Petrov) and the two words, “this rock (tauth th petra) used in this verse. They are not the same, either in our English version, or in the original Greek.² The nearest that these words can approximate to identity, is in the following version of the text — ‘Thou art a stone, and upon this rock I will build my church.’ Now it is certain, that if Christ had intended to say, that his church should be built upon a stone, he would have used the same word in both parts of the sentence. But he affirms that his church shall be built, not

upon a stone, but upon a particular rock. Nor is this all — the word Peter here is evidently used as a proper name, and not as a collective noun. If then Christ had intended to affirm, that he would build his church upon the apostle he would have used the following mode of address: 'Thou art Peter, and upon thee will I build my church.' Where that apostle is meant in the next verse, this is the mode of expression: "I will give to thee the

253

keys, etc." Besides the fact, too, that these words are really different in themselves, the sense of the passage requires, that they should be different. Suppose them identical; then Christ is made to say, that his Church shall be built on Peter. Now, besides the positive falsehood, if not blasphemy, of such a declaration, there is absurdity in the very idea. How can a church, or government of any kind, be built upon a man? Romulus, though the first king, was not the foundation of the Roman government.

Nor are the kings of England or France the foundation of the respective monarchies in those countries. The foundation of a government is its constitutional laws; the foundation of a church is its fundamental doctrines. It is absurd to speak of any man as the foundation of either church or state; a man may be a founder, or a builder, or a ruler, but never a foundation. But admit this absurdity; place Peter as the foundation of the church; then we deny that he can be its ruler. There certainly is some difference between the foundation of a house, and its master. If Peter therefore be at the foundation, he cannot also be at the head of the church. The very ground therefore, which these critics take, defeats their object, and renders Peter's primacy, as contained in this text, impossible.

2. Nor does the context show that the primacy of Peter is contained in these words. The following verse has been quoted with this intention: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Now, there certainly must be a wide difference between occupying the foundation of a house, and carrying its keys. The two offices cannot be performed by the same person;³ if Peter therefore be the foundation, he cannot be the keys carrier, and if he be the keys-carrier, he cannot be the foundation. To suppose therefore, that our Lord intended to convey the same idea, by two such different and opposite figures, is to suppose him ignorant of the meaning of language. Nor can such supremacy be inferred from the preceding verses. Christ had asked the question — "Who do men say, that I, the Son of man, am?" The reply of the apostles was, "some, John the Baptist, some, Elias, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He then asked the apostles themselves, as to their belief in the matter, — "But who say ye that I am?" Peter, more promptly than the rest, exclaimed: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." — "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona;" says Jesus, "for flesh and blood hath not revealed it (viz. that I am the Christ, the Son of the living God) unto thee,

254

but my Father, which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, thou art Peter, (that is, by this confession, thou well deservest the name I have given thee) and upon this rock (the truth which thou hast confessed, that I am the Christ) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Such is evidently the meaning of the passage. Hence at the conclusion of the conversation, Jesus charged his disciples, that "they should tell no man that he was Jesus, the Christ." This was the truth after which the Savior was inquiring; it was the truth which Peter confessed; it was the truth which Christ affirmed had been revealed to him

by his Father; it was the truth which he wished, for the present, to be kept secret; — and it is the truth upon which the Christian church, both was to be, and is founded.

Roman Catholic writers tell us, that Christ used the Syriac word, *Cephas*, which has no variety of gender. Admit it. They still have to prove, that by the use of the word *Cephas* in the second instance, Christ did not mean a rock, but the apostle of that name. Matthew, however, must have understood the Syriac. He was also inspired in writing the Greek. Why, then, does he render the second *Cephas* by *petra*, and not by *petron*? If he believed his Master meant the same thing, in the twofold use of the term *Cephas*, why did he use, in the second instance, a word which always signifies a rock, but never the apostle Peter? This supposition makes even this inspired writer to err, worse than a mere tyro in the use of language. Thus, it is impossible, upon any rational mode of criticism, to wrest out of this passage the primacy of the apostle Peter. It is not there, nor the promise of it.

3. Nor can such primacy be educed from this passage through the analogy of Christian doctrine. Were the primacy of Peter of the importance ascribed to it by Papists, then might we expect to find it so interwoven with Christian doctrine in the Holy Scriptures, as to leave no doubt of its reality. We find it, however, not even hinted at in the doctrinal portions of the New Testament. “Other foundation,” says Paul, “can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 3:11. In the book of Revelation, too, where John speaks of the twelve foundations of the holy city, he does not represent the name of Peter as the only one written on those foundations; but “the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

255

Revelation 21:14. The apostle Paul also represents converted gentiles, as being built, not upon Peter, but

“upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.” Ephesians 2:20.

Let it be observed here, too, that neither John nor Paul represents the apostles, or the apostles and prophets, as the foundation either of the church or holy city. John speaks of the names of the apostles only as being written on the twelve foundations. And Paul draws, in 1 Corinthians 3, a very broad distinction between the foundation, which all apostle lays, and an apostle himself. The primacy of Peter, then, is no such article of Christian faith, that one must infer it from Matthew 16:18, because, by a great perversion of language, it may be inferred from that passage.

4. Nor can the primacy of Peter be inferred from this passage, from any thing afterwards recorded, either in the life of this apostle, or in the history of the early church. What sovereignty did Peter exercise, either at Jerusalem, at Antioch, or anywhere else? Was he a very Pope, and were the other apostles but cardinals around him? Every one knows the entire falsehood of such a supposition. The apostle Paul declares, that “he was not a whir behind the very chiefest of the apostles.” 2 Corinthians 11:5. And in enumerating church officers, he places at the head of the list, not Peter, but the “apostles” jointly. “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles.” 1 Corinthians 12:28.

Thus have we shown, from the words themselves, from the context, from the analogy of

Scripture doctrine, and from subsequent facts, that the primacy of Peter is neither contained nor promised in this text. Yet, Papists deduce from it the three following conclusions: — that Peter was constituted head of the church, that this supremacy was set up at Rome, and that it has been left in that city as a legacy to all succeeding — I know not whether to say — apostles, bishops, or popes!

The other passage of Scripture which Papists have forced into their service, is that contained in Matthew 26:26-28.

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them

256

saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” To most readers this passage is perfectly simple and of easy comprehension. No one but a Papist would ever imagine, that by the expressions, *this is my body*, (touto esti to swma mou,) — *this is my blood*, (touto gar esti to aiJma mou) — that Christ meant his literal body and blood. The body of Christ was then before the very eyes of the disciples unbroken; his blood was in his veins unshed. It must therefore, have been perfectly manifest to the apostles that their Master was speaking figuratively, and not literally. But, upon this simple language, have Romanists founded the monstrous doctrine of *transubstantiation!* The following is a decree of the Council of Trent: “Whosoever shall deny that in the sacrament of the most holy eucharist are contained truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore the entire Christ, but shall say that he is in it only as in a sign, or figure, or virtue; let him be accursed.”⁴ Here, not only are the words of Christ literalized, which they were not intended to be, but they are transcended. The most rigid interpretation that can be adopted, would only require that the bread should be the body, and the wine the blood of Christ. But even this literalism did not satisfy Rome. She must have also the “soul” and “divinity” of our Lord — yea, the *entire Christ.*” Nor is this all: the entire Christ, she teaches, is contained in each fragment of the bread, and in each drop of the wine. Nor is even this all; the bread and wine, thus converted into the entire Christ, even in their minutest particles, are offered to the people to be adored with the worship of *latria*, that which is paid to God only! Nor is even this all. The sacrifice of the mass is next offered, for the living and the dead. Here is certainly one of the most extraordinary bundles of absurdities, which ever entered into the head of mortal. Bread and wine, converted by a priest into something like a thousand Christs at a time! And as this is a daily service, performed in many places over the earth, and also in past generations, many millions of times, almost as many Christs have thus been formed, as there are particles of sand on the banks of the Tiber! How shocking to common sense is such a doctrine! And yet, this is the Papal mode of interpreting Scripture! No wonder that Papists prohibit the common reading of the word of God; for even the most superficial acquaintance

257

with this holy volume, would be sufficient to overthrow their entire System.

The two texts of Scripture we have been considering, through the gross perversions of their

meaning by Papists, have given rise to the *Pope* and the *Mass*, those tremendous agents of papal power and papal superstition. The same mode of interpretation is pursued, in deducing from the oracles of God, scriptural authority for all their various inventions and superstitions. Thus it is coolly affirmed; by Dens, that since the candlestick in the Jewish tabernacle had seven branches, therefore, there are seven sacraments; and that since Peter alone of all the apostles walked with Christ on the water, therefore, we may infer his primacy.

A second instance of the craft of the Papacy, may be found in its use of tradition as a divine rule of faith. One would imagine, that its convenient mode of interpreting Scripture would answer all its purposes. But no, the Bible, even when eclipsed and surrounded by papal interpretations, still emits too much light upon the consciences of these crafty men, to allow all their gross departures from its teachings. They need, therefore, another and a yet more flexible rule of faith. Hence, tradition is placed upon equal footing with Scripture in matters of faith and practice. But even tradition, and especially early tradition, is too inflexible for them. They must, therefore, invent some method to divest it of its power of reproof. What is that method? Peter Dens shall inform us: "Whatever the Catholic church holds, or decrees as such, is to be regarded as tradition."⁵ This is perfectly legitimate; for if the church has the right to make tradition its rule of faith, instead of the Scriptures, it certainly must have the right also, to mold and fashion that tradition as it pleases. Here then is another abyss of papal fraud. This crafty power passes off to hundreds of thousands of men, its own fabricated traditions, as containing that will of God, which they are bound to obey! Here are the eyes of "the little horn," where "the man of sin," coming in "all deceivableness of unrighteousness."

But neither perverted Scripture, nor perverted tradition could give to this wicked power sufficient liberty. It had recourse, therefore, to positive and barefaced forgeries. The chief pillars of papal usurpations in the middle ages were the false Decretals, and the Donation of Constantine. These two instruments gave to the Pope unlimited power, in both church and state;

258

and yet, they were both mere fabrications! "No one," says Hallam, "has pretended to deny for the last two centuries, that the imposture of the Decretals is too palpable for any but the most ignorant ages to credit."⁶ "The falsity of the Donation," says Daunou, "according to Fleury, is more generally admitted, than that of the Decretals of Isidore; and if the Donation of Constantine should yet obtain any credit, it would be sufficient to transcribe it, in order to show it to be unworthy of belief."⁷ Here, then, are two celebrated forgeries, known to be such by the papal hierarchy, and yet for centuries appealed to, for the support and extension of papal authority over the liberties both of church and state!

But the power of the Pope needs to be extended in another direction. It is not enough to annihilate the independence of thrones, and the freedom of the people of God; the infernal regions must be entered, and the fires of purgatory kindled. "Purgatory," according to Beilarmine, "is situated in the center of the earth; it forms one of the four compartments into which the infernal regions are divided. In the first of these the damned are placed; the second is purgatory; in the third reside the spirits of infants who died without baptism; the fourth is *limbus*, the abode of the pious who departed this life before the birth of Christ, and were delivered by him when he descended into hell. The pains of purgatory are so horribly severe that no sufferings ever borne in this world can be compared with them. How long they

continue is not known; but it is thought that the process of purification is very gradual, and that some will not be thoroughly cleansed till the day of judgment.”

This is the doctrine which the Council of Trent enjoins, shall be “everywhere taught and preached” (*doceri et ubique praedicari*). But no such doctrine as this, is contained in the word of God. The blood of Christ, we are there assured, “cleanseth us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7. The apostle Paul also teaches that “there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” Romans 8:1. He also asserts that for such “to be absent from the body, is to be present with the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 5:8. A wonderful salvation would that of Christ be, indeed, if after souls had taken refuge in him as their Savior, they must still be sent down to the infernal regions, to suffer in the fires of purgatory, the expiation of their offenses! Such a doctrine is a reproach upon Christ, is contrary to the whole teaching of the Scriptures, is calculated to enslave even those who

259

are pardoned, and is, moreover, subversive of the entire scheme of salvation by grace. There is no grace in it, as certainly there is no truth. Why then such an invention? Simply to increase the power and wealth of the Roman priesthood. These are the motives; and if these could cease to operate, the fires of purgatory would long since have been extinguished. Look next at the long catalogue of sacred relics. The apostle Paul taught, that in his day, as now, “the fashion of this world passeth away.” And Isaiah had affirmed even before Paul, that “all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field.” Moses too had declared earlier still, “dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return.” These physical laws, however, seem to have had no application to the bones of saints, the wood of the Savior’s cross, or even to his coat. All these, and tell thousand others like them, are carefully preserved by pious Roman Catholics, as mementos of ancient piety, and objects of religious homage! “They show at Rome,” says a modern traveler, “the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul encased in silver busts and set with jewels; a lock of the virgin Mary’s hair, a vial of her tears, and piece of her green petticoat; a robe of Jesus Christ sprinkled with his blood, some drops of his blood in a bottle, some of the water which flowed out of the wound in his side, some of the sponge, a large piece of the cross, all the nails used in the crucifixion; a piece of the stone of the sepulcher on which the angel sat; the identical porphyry pillar on which the cock perched when he crowed, after Peter denied Christ; the rods of Moses and Aaron, and two pieces of the wood of the real ark of the covenant.”⁸ Now can anyone imagine, that Papists who have the least intelligence can possibly believe that these are *bona fide* relics! They know that they are not. Why then are they employed as objects of religious veneration? To delude the vulgar, to extort money from them, and to deepen the shades of that already too dark superstition, in which Catholic ecclesiastics are made to move, as supernatural beings! O Popery! Popery! Thou hast an awful doom before thee, when the Judge of all shall tear off thy mask, and reveal thy nakedness to an abhorring world! These are only a few of the many “lies spoken in hypocrisy” by which this unnatural and wicked system is sustained. This whole papal fabric is based in fraud, is pillared on falsehood, is defended by deceit, and propagated by hypocrisy.

260

We now proceed to consider the miracles performed by the Papacy, as proof of its antichristian character. The Apostle Paul represents Antichrist as coming “after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs and lying wonders.” — (*shmeioiv, kai perasi yeudouv.*)

It is a remarkable fact, that while all other sects and religious parties believe that miracles have long since ceased, the ends having been answered for which they were appointed, papists still pretend, that miracles are performed in their communion. Were such miracles real and not pretended, and were they, moreover, performed by holy men, and in the cause of truth, the Romish church would stand out before the world, as a divinely constituted body, and as having the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. But, if these miracles are base impostures, and if they are performed by wicked men in defense of error, then do they proclaim with the voice of thunder, that the Papacy is Antichrist, and that the Roman church is but marking herself with the signs of the beast.

That the Papacy sanctions modern miracles is certain. What is the doctrine of transubstantiation, but a standing recognition of miraculous power in the Romish priesthood? Can we imagine a greater miracle, than the formation of a "whole Christ," from a piece of bread? Neither Moses, nor Elijah, nor Peter, nor Jesus, performed so wonderful a miracle as this. Extreme unction is also attended with miraculous effect. "Whosoever shall alarm," says Trent, "that the sacred unction of the sick does not confer grace, nor forgive sins, nor relieve the sick, (*nec alleviare infirmos,*) but that its power has ceased, as if the gift of healing existed only in past ages; let him be accursed." Every saint, too, who is canonized at Rome, must have performed miracles, previously to his being admitted to such exalted honor. "Before a beatified person is canonized, the qualifications," says Buck, "of the candidate are strictly examined into, in some consistories held for that purpose; after which one of the consistorial advocates, in the presence of the Pope and cardinals, makes the panegyric of the person who is to be proclaimed a saint, and gives a particular detail of his life and miracles; which being done, the holy father decrees his canonization, and appoints the day."⁹ Such canonization, however, cannot take place until fifty years after the candidate's death; when, as one would think, it must be a pretty difficult task, either to establish or disprove the reality of his miracles.

261

As specimens of the miracles performed in the papal church, we give the following. "At Hales," says Hume, "in the county of Gloucester, there had been shown, during several ages, the blood of Christ brought from Jerusalem; and it is easy to imagine the veneration with which such a relic was regarded. A miraculous circumstance also attended this miraculous relic; the sacred blood was not visible to any one in mortal sin, even when set before him; and till he had performed good works, sufficient for his absolution, it would not deign to discover itself to him. At the dissolution of the monastery, the whole contrivance was detected. Two of the monks, who were let into the secret, had taken the blood of a duck, which they renewed every week: they put it into a vial, one side of which consisted of thin and transparent crystal, the other of thick and opaque. When any rich pilgrim arrived, they were sure to show him the dark side of the vial, till masses and offerings had expiated his offenses; and then finding his moneys or patience, or faith nearly exhausted, they made him happy by turning the vial."

This is a specimen of a *bona fide* Roman Catholic miracle! For several generations, had our English ancestors paid their homage at this celebrated monastery. They revered the very earth on which such a holy building stood. They venerated the monks resident here, as men of peculiar sanctity, and as the intimate friends of the Deity. They especially worshipped the holy relic, and felt, whenever they saw the precious blood, that their sins were all forgiven.

They left their offerings and gifts with a cheerful heart, and returned to their homes, not only to tell the glad story, but also to forward other pilgrims to the holy spot. And what does the whole turn out to be? The blood of a duck every week renewed! A base trick of designing and covetous monks! Surely, we must blush for humanity at a scene like this. All this is done, too, under the holy sanctions of religion, and as carrying palpable evidence to the heart of every beholder, of the truth of the gospel, and the authority of the papal church.

The same historian furnishes another example of the same kind of miracles. “A miraculous crucifix,” says he, “had been kept at Boxley in Kent, and bore the appellation of the ‘rood of grace.’ The lips, and eyes, and head of the image, moved on the approach of its rotaries. Hilsey, bishop of Rochester, broke the crucifix, at St. Paul’s cross, and showed to the whole

262

people, the springs and wheels by which it had been secretly moved.”¹⁰ Here was another papal wonder. Multitudes had worshipped this crucifix, as they would Christ himself. They had felt all the emotions of joy and astonishment while gazing upon it. They had enriched its keepers, and blessed their own consciences with the tokens of pardon and salvation. And what is this great wonder? The mere mechanism of Romish priests, to enforce superstition, to exalt themselves, and to enrich their fraternity. And yet these are the proofs incontrovertible — the miracles which papists boast as affording divine testimony to the purity and authority of their system! From the benefits of such miracles, may God ever deliver his church and people!

The two following miracles are taken from the Roman Breviary. “St. Francis Xavier turned a sufficient quantity of salt water into fresh, to save the lives of five hundred travelers, who were dying of thirst, enough being left to allow a large exportation to different parts of the world, where it performed astonishing cures! St. Raymond de Pennafort laid his cloak on the sea, and sailed thereon from Majorca to Barcelona, a distance of a hundred and sixty miles, in six hours!”¹¹

These are but a few of the myriads of similar miracles which Popery tolerates, which Popery practices, and of which Popery boasts! That they are incredible, every one can at once perceive — that they are not only superstitious, but fraudulent, none can doubt. Why then their existence? Why, they were invented, ages past, to support the church and to make gain. They are a part of the transmitted commerce of mystical Babylon. But for such miracles, much of the trading capital of Rome would be left in the market. The business, therefore, must be kept up; and as long as there are devotees simple enough to credit such things, there will, of course, be found priests wicked enough to defend and practice them. And there is another reason: — Rome must fulfill her destiny; she must correspond to every prophecy concerning her; and one of these prophecies is, that she will practice, through the working of Satan, “signs and lying wonders.” Here, then, we have two additional marks of Antichrist most strangely meeting in the Papacy. Antichrist was to practice craft and deceit, above all other powers. For these things Rome has been unrivaled in the history of human governments. Antichrist was also to perform “lying wonders,”

263

and “signs;” he was to be notorious for false miracles. Such miracles are every where characteristic of the Romish communion. If, then, scriptural predictions are expected to have

their fulfillment in corresponding facts, what set of facts can more clearly indicate the fulfillment of prophecy, than these to which we have alluded? Strange, strange indeed, must it be, that all the prophecies concerning Antichrist, should point directly to Rome, and yet Antichrist not be at Rome! But these prophecies do not lie; nor can we well be mistaken in their application. They refer to the Papacy — they proclaim the Pope as Antichrist. The conclusion may be personal, it may appear invidious, but it is inevitable: the Pope is as truly Antichrist, as Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ.

264

CHAPTER 12 ANTICHRIST A REPROBATE

BY reprobation, we mean that judgment of God whereby some men, on account of their sin, are given up to a course of presumptuous wickedness and to final destruction. Reprobation refers both to individuals, and to whole classes of men. Pharaoh was a reprobate; for this is what is meant by God's "hardening his heart." Exodus 14:4. Judas was also a reprobate; hence he is called by Christ, "the son of perdition." John 17:12. The Canaanites were reprobates; hence they were doomed by God to utter destruction. Deuteronomy 7. The apostle Paul also represents the gentile world generally, as in a state of reprobation. Romans 1. He also speaks of the unbelieving Jews as in a similar condition. Romans 11. Reprobation, however, as applied to the Jews and gentiles in these passages, refers not to races, but to generations of men. The gentile world was ultimately brought under the light of the gospel, and multitudes of them became the children of God. The Jews are also to be reclaimed; for blindness has happened to them only "in part;" that is, for a certain fixed period. The reprobation, however, of Antichrist is of a worse character. Like Pharaoh, like Judas, like the ancient Canaanites, his reprobation is unto perdition. Hence he is called "the son of perdition," 2 Thessalonians 2:3; and is said to "go into perdition." Revelation 17:11. We are not to understand by this, that all the individuals attached to this Antichristian system will perish. By no means. As the apostle Paul said of his Jewish brethren, even so say we of Papists, that "there is a remnant among them according to the election of grace." Romans 11:5. "The apostle," says Dr. Hill, "is not to be understood as meaning, by the strong expressions he has subjoined to this prophecy, that all who ever believed the errors of Popery are certainly damned. We believe that many worthy, pious men, by the prejudices of education and custom, have been so confirmed in doctrines, which we know to be erroneous, as to be unable to extricate themselves."¹ Still, however, the errors of Antichrist are so radically subversive of the gospel, the whole system is so extravagant and enormous, that the great body of its adherents are not only given up of God now, but will hereafter suffer his severe wrath. This is a matter of express and positive prediction —

265

"and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all may be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thessalonians 2:11,12.

Reprobation, so far as it is accomplished in this life, relates to the mind, the heart, the will, the conscience and the actions of men. In his description of it in Romans 1, the Apostle represents God as giving men up to "a reprobate mind;" to "vile affections;" and to "do those

things which are not convenient.” In 1 Timothy 4:2, he also includes in reprobation, “a seared conscience;” and in Romans 9:18, a hardened heart, of powerful self-will. These are apt, all of them, to follow each other in regular order. Where the mind is “reprobate,” the affections will be “vile;” where the conscience is “seared,” the will will be stubborn; and where all these exist, the actions will be wicked. What a catalogue of crimes arises from a fountain like this, any one may learn, by reading the latter part of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

The reprobation of Antichrist is contained in these words — “and for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion (energeian planhv) that they should believe a lie.” Macknight renders the passage thus: “And for this cause God will send to them the strongworking of error to their believing a lie.” Doddridge paraphrases it thus — “God will in righteous judgment give them up to a reprobate and insensible mind, and will send upon them the energy of deceit; he will suffer them to deceive others, till they are themselves deceived, so that they shall believe the lie they have so long taught.” The expression is remarkably strong; and it teaches, that those who are involved in this judicial sentence of God, will be buried in an almost hopeless delusion.

We have already shown that the previous part of these predictions refers to the Papacy. Of course then this passage must have the same application. Nor will it be found upon examination, that other features in this system of evil have been better described by the apostle than that of its actual reprobation. God has sent upon the champion, and abettors of this system “strong delusion,” and there can be but little doubt, that they have been permitted to believe “a lie.”

266

1. The first mark of reprobation is, a darkened or reprobate mind. The evidence which the apostle gives of the existence of such a state of mind, is idolatry. “Professing themselves to be wise, they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man.” Now whatever plea Papists may employ for using in their acts of worship images of the saints, and even of Christ, there certainly can be no apology for representations of the “incorruptible God.” But they do make and tolerate such images even of the Deity himself. “When the Deity is thus represented,” says a decree of Trent, “it is not to be supposed that the same can be seen by our bodily eyes, or that a likeness of God can be given in color or figure.”² The catechism uses the following language:- — “To represent the persons of the Holy Trinity by certain forms, under which, as we read in the Old and New Testaments, they deigned to appear, is not to be deemed contrary to religion or the law of God.”³ Peter Dens also asks the following question: “Are images of God, and of the most Holy Trinity, proper?” The answer given is — “Yes: although this is not so certain as concerning the images of Christ and the saints; as this was determined at a later period.”⁴ Here then, are three respectable witnesses, yea, standard authorities, proving that the church of Rome does “change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man.” Now, Paul declares, that such conduct is evidence of a darkened mind, and that it is a characteristic feature in God’s judicial reprobation. As certain then, as that Rome sanctions this gross idolatry, is it that she is reprobate in mind.

2. Another mark of reprobation is vile affections. “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies.” Probably no three causes have ever led to more fearful scenes of licentiousness, than monasticism,

nunneries, and the celibacy of the Roman clergy. And if to these causes we add the virtual subversion of the law of God by the Papacy, and the facilities of absolution, and even of indulgences, we shall at least see a machinery at work, which under ordinary circumstances, would inevitably lead to fearful results; and if we are to credit history, and especially the testimonies of many, who have themselves been behind the curtains, our inferences will scarcely reach the realities that occur under this dreadful system of delusion. Those who may wish to know more on these subjects,

267

we refer to Peter Dens, "De Pollutione," etc., to the narratives of Gavin, "the Confessions of a Catholic priest;" and other works of a like nature. They will here find specimens of "vile affections," strong enough certainly, to show that this feature of reprobation is not wanting in the papal system.

3. A third mark of reprobation is great perversity of which an invincible adherence to error. This is the cardinal feature, in the reprobation, predicted of Antichrist. "And for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." Nor can there be found on earth, a people more fixedly set in their errors and superstitions, than papists. This is the boast of their church. And even, when contradicted by innumerable facts, they still repeat in triumph the adage, "Once a Catholic, always a Catholic." To any one who considers the papal system, and who reflects upon the mode of education employed by Romanists, such rigid adherence to their system can be readily accounted for. indeed, it is wonderful, that any of them are ever converted. They are born and raised behind walls of error heaven-high. How then are they to escape? This very boast however, of papists, is but another indelible feature of their judicial reprobation. If their system held them with a less grasp — if there were only a little liberty granted, there might be some hope. But "the strong delusion" is upon them; and God only can so far remove it, as to call some of his elect even from these iron walls of Satan.

4. A fourth sign of reprobation is a seared conscience — "Having their conscience seared with a hot iron." Conscience has more or less restraint upon most men. It often makes even the daring transgressor quail beneath its just and retributive scourges. But human nature may proceed to that degree of wickedness, that even conscience will neither upbraid nor admonish. This is always the case under God's fearful sentence of judicial reprobation. A long course of sin, like iron, heated seven times, sears the sensibilities of this inward monitor, and destroys its power of vital action. No condition of the soul is worse than this; yet, this is the predicted state of conscience in Antichrist. And what conscience, pray, have the leading actors of the Papacy had, for centuries on centuries past? Can there be any conscience in men who openly set aside the revealed authority of Jehovah? Any conscience, where a mere man is made to exercise the prerogatives of the Son of God? Any conscience, where the most barefaced idolatry is set

268

up under the sanctions of Christianity? Any conscience, where every sort of fraud is used to obtain the money of poor deluded mortals? Any conscience, where men are deliberately seized, and tortured, and killed, in the name of Christ! Any conscience, where crimes of the blackest dye are perpetrated under covert of oaths, and vows, and the mask of religion? Surely, if ever conscience were "seared with a hot iron" — if it were ever destroyed, it must be

in the breasts of such men.

5. A fifth mark of reprobation as given in the Scriptures, is depraved and wicked actions. The following is a list of those actions as furnished by the Apostle Paul. "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents; with. out understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." How far the crimes, here specified by the Apostle, are to be found amid papal influences and institutions, let those judge who are best acquainted with this system of priestcraft and oppression. Some of these crimes are written upon the front of Popery in bold relief. Among these are the following — covetousness, malignity, murder, deceit, boasting, inventing of evil things, disobedience to parents, covenant-breaking, and unmercifulness. With these sins the history of the Papacy abounds. Thus have we discovered in the Papacy, all the marks of God's judicial reprobation. The understanding has here been darkened, the heart given up to vile affections, the will has been rendered stubborn, the conscience has been seared, and the life filled with unrighteous deeds. But is this reprobation to be final? Is there to be no reformation, no return to right principles? The prophecies answer these questions in the negative. Antichrist is "the son of perdition" — the "Lord is to consume him with the spirit of his mouth, and to destroy him with the brightness of his coming." When too, we consider the actual state of Popery, we discover in it those fixed elements which at once render the hope of reformation fruitless, and ultimate destruction inevitable. Popery itself, as well as prophecy concerning it, declares, that it is to be destroyed, not reformed.

269

If Popery be ever reformed, such reformation must arise from one of three sources — it must either originate in the system itself, or it must arise from without that system, or it must come from heaven.

1. Such reformation cannot arise from within the system of Popery itself. The principles, the very frame-work of this system are such, that its reformation is utterly impossible. True, Papists may be more moral in one age than in another, they may be less superstitious in some countries than in others, and there may be made some external and unimportant changes in some of its ceremonies and customs; but a radical and thorough reformation, such as the word of God requires, never can be made in it, without the abandonment of the whole system. Take its fundamental doctrine, that the Pope is the vicar of Christ on earth. How can this article be changed, so as to agree with Scripture, without destroying the very fulcrum of the papal system? Take the doctrine of transubstantiation. How can this creed be reformed, but by denying the doctrine itself? Look at the doctrines of purgatory, of absolutions, of indulgences. What reformation can be made with respect to these, but to renounce them? Consider the whole system of saint and image worship. How can this be reformed? In no manner whatever. It can only be abandoned. What are we to say, too, of its traditions and seven sacraments? How are they to be reformed? They cannot be. What is here needed is a forsaking of the ground taken by Romanists. And so throughout. The position assumed by the church of Rome, ensures the destruction of that church, in one or the other of two ways. Either its advocates, as Luther and the Reformers, must forsake the establishment and thus let it perish, by desertion, or they must adhere to it, till God shall vindicate the rights of his own truth and name. Many, no doubt, will pursue the former method; but the body will perish

with the system.

2. Nor can the Papacy be reformed from any thing without itself, Even in the freest countries on the globe, the Papacy is a consolidated and isolated system. Its arms of iron grasp all its own interests within itself, and it seeks seclusion from all others. Civil governments can have but little influence in changing its character. Older than all modern systems of civil polity, compactly framed together, claiming even superiority above the state, Popery receives upon its indurated exterior the influences of civil government, as the massy rock does the passing stream: such waves come,

270

meet, are broken to pieces and fall backward, leaving the unmoved rock still cold and fixed on its original basis. Nor can Popery be reformed from the influence of Protestant churches. There is literally “a great gulf fixed” between it and them. It is not only forbidden to other ministers to enter a popish pulpit, but even their members are forbidden to enter the doors of other churches. Nor can Popery be reformed by the Bible; — that word is itself a prisoner within the iron walls of this dreadful system. Nor can Popery be reformed by’ the circulation of tracts and books; — all tracts and books, containing any thing contrary to its own system, are strictly forbidden in their Index Expurgatorius. When a pope can say, even in relation to the circulation of the Holy Scriptures: “Bible societies fill me with horror; they tend to overthrow the Christian religion; they are a pest which must be destroyed by all possible means:”⁵ when even a pope can speak thus, and speak thus of the Bible, what hope can we have for Papists in the circulation of books? True, individuals may thus be converted; but the Papacy will remain unchanged. Nor can philosophy and science reform the Papacy; if so, the doctrine of transubstantiation had long ago been renounced as unphilosophical and absurd. Nor can the general intercourse of other Christians, and of citizens generally, reform the papal system. All this is counteracted by the confessional, whose province it is to guard the entrance-doors of heresy and change. Thus is there no external source, from which influences may come to reform this monstrous system of error and tyranny. A stone may now and then be removed from its place in this great temple of error; occasionally a pillar may fall; but the old building stands, sunk, like the pyramids of Egypt, in the sands of its own superstitions, venerable for age, a monument of oppression and of pride; the gray relic of the past, the wonder of the present, and the prophet of the future; there it stands, and will stand, till God shall shake the earth, and thus, by his power dash it to pieces.

3. Nor will the Papacy be reformed from heaven. The conversion of the gentiles to Christianity, took place, according to the previous decree and promise of God. Long before Peter preached to Cornelius, had the Spirit of God said concerning the Messiah, “I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the gentiles.” Isaiah 12:6. And the ingathering of Israel to the same Messiah, which is yet to take place, is also included in

271

the purposes of God. Romans 11. But the decrees and purposes of God, concerning Antichrist, have no such promises of grace and mercy. Here the cloud is without a bow, the night without a star.

“And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying,

Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." Revelation 18:21

Utter destruction is to be the end of this system, and of all who adhere to it. As Sodom and Gomorra, the old world and the Canaanites, were all made so many examples of the righteous judgments of God, so will it be with Rome. Unreformed, and unreformable, she will go "into destruction," to meet the solemn doom from that righteous Judge, whose truth she has despised, whose name and authority she has trampled under foot, and whose "glorious gospel" she has made but the theater of her pride, her avarice, and her various abominations.

Here, then, is another mark of Antichrist, deeply branded upon the forehead of the Papacy. Antichrist was to be a reprobate, given up of God to a course of the most presumptuous wickedness, and doomed to ultimate destruction. The Papacy, we have seen, is reprobate, and its advocates are under "strong delusion;" they believe "a lie," and seem to be left of God to wander in the mazes of superstition and error, to that fearful doom which is before them. From that doom, with which the *body* is to meet, may God by his grace, avert the wandering feet of many a poor, benighted victim of this unnatural and unchristian system!

272

CHAPTER 13 THE DOWNFALL OF ANTICHRIST

PROPHECY never leaves the church in despair. Whatever evils it may foretell, it always represents them as in the hand of God, and as overruled by him to ultimate good. Hence, it predicts not only the rise and character of evil powers, but also their overthrow. This rule has special application to Antichrist. The holy prophets of old saw this power arise; they saw it arrogating to itself all dominion and rule; they saw it trampling upon the earth, and destroying the saints; they saw it arrayed in purple and enriched with jewels. But the Spirit carried their minds further, and revealed to them its utter destruction, and the subsequent triumph of the glorious kingdom of the Son of God. Indeed, the prophets, like ancient Israel, seem to have been traveling through a dreary wilderness, while wandering over the domains of the man of sin, only, that they might rest themselves, and teach the church to rest in that promised country — that Immanuel's land — which lay beyond those barren wastes. Their prophecies ultimately terminate in Christ, and are lost only in the blaze of his everlasting reign.

1. In predicting the downfall of Antichrist, the sacred prophets teach us, first, who is to be its author. This is the Lord Jesus Christ. "Whom," says Paul, "the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." John also declares — "These (the beast and his allies) shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they that are with him, are called, and chosen, and faithful." Revelation 17:14.

Daniel also refers to the same thing, when he speaks of "one like the Son of man," receiving at the overthrow of the "little horn," dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him. Daniel 7:14. The great adversary, then, of Antichrist is Christ himself. True, the Son of God, for wise purposes, has permitted Antichrist to usurp great authority; he has suffered him, for a long period, to trample upon his truth, and to persecute his church. But the day of

vengeance will come at last, when he shall receive double for all his pride and wickedness, and when the insulted Redeemer will pour upon him the just retaliation of that wrath, with which he has been anathematizing the saints of the Most High.

1 While, however, the Lord Jesus Christ is to be the immediate author of the overthrow of Antichrist, still here, as elsewhere, he will employ various instruments for that purpose. The first of these instruments will be his own glorious gospel. “Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth” — (tw pneumatō tou stomatōv autou) Macknight renders the passage thus — “Him the Lord will consume by the breath of his mouth;” and remarks, “so pneuma should be translated in this passage, where the preaching of true doctrine, and its efficacy in destroying the man of sin, are predicted.”

The errors of Popery arose, for the most part, in times of great ignorance. And as from their very nature they could not stand the light, it became the settled policy of Romish ecclesiastics, to exclude that light as much as possible from the minds of men. The conversion of the preacher into the priest, the saying of mass in the stead of proclaiming salvation, the invention of numerous and burdensome ceremonies, the introduction of saint and image worship, and especially the interdicts placed upon the reading of the Scriptures; all these were so many means invented by crafty men, to shut out the light of the gospel from the dupes of this dreadful delusion hour, the remedy, and the only remedy for evils of this nature, is the general diffusion of the Holy Scriptures and their glorious doctrines, through all those countries where these delusions exist. This is the first step; and it is that which God usually employs first in the overturning of the kingdom of darkness. Previous to the overthrow of Judaism, as a system of error, an unusual amount of light was poured upon the national mind. John, Christ, the apostles, all labored, and the most of them died in this work. A chosen number were thus called out, from the great body of the nation, in whom the succession of truth was to continue, and a fuller vindication was thus given to the providence of God, in the overthrow and dispersion of the rest. Christ could thus say, without the possibility of contradiction, “This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.”

It was, too, by this means primarily and chiefly, that the Reformation from Popery in the sixteenth century occurred. A few individuals, by the Spirit of God became experimentally acquainted with the truth of God’s word. This truth they began to proclaim to others. This truth, by the translation of the Scriptures into the language of each nation, they placed in the hands of others. This truth, in every possible way, they defended and maintained; and for it many of them were carried to the stake, or perished in dungeons.

There can be but little doubt, therefore, that in the final overthrow of the Papacy, the word of God will precede all other agents. And is not this word going forth at the present time? Are not Bible Societies and their agents, missionaries and their assistants, publishing and scattering the word even within the dominions of the Pope? Is not this word, too, producing its effects? Like its Author, has it not already begun to “purge the papal floor, gathering the wheat into the garner, and preparing the chaff to be burnt with unquenchable fire?” Go forth, thou mighty

instrument of the Lord, thou forerunner of his power, thou leveler of the nations; go forth, and accomplish thine own most glorious work!

It is evident, however, that the Lord Jesus will employ other, and more coercive instruments in the overthrow of Popery. The Romans were employed to disperse the Jews; Constantine was called forth to uproot paganism; Frederick, the Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave of Hesse, Henry VIII., and other European princes, were also employed to protect and extend the great Reformation. Thus is fulfilled the word of Isaiah, "kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers." Indeed, it would seem but a just retaliation, that as Antichrist has employed the civil powers to persecute and destroy the Church, so God, in his providence, should also use the same instruments to afflict and overturn his unrighteous administration.

We are, however, not left, to conjecture on this subject. "But the judgment shall sit," says Daniel, "and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end." (7:26.)

275

Gesenius understands by the word *anyd* (*dhinaa*), not judgment, but judges; "but the judges shall sit." The reference evidently is to those cabinets or councils, which European princes were to assemble in opposition to the pretensions of the Pope. Some such councils have already been held, and by means of them, several states originally papal, are now protestant, and seem destined so to remain. But others will yet be held, whose results will be still more decisive and overpowering to the dominions of the Man of Sin; for Daniel declares that his dominion will thus be "consumed and destroyed to the end."

If, however, any doubt should remain, as to the agency of European princes in the destruction of the Papacy, it will be enough to remove such doubt, to refer to the testimony of John: —

"And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire." Revelation 17:16.

The beast here alluded to, is papal, or rather political Europe; its horns the sovereigns of the several European states; and the whore, the Romish church, which by forsaking Christ and worshipping idols, has become like an adulterous woman, who has departed from her own husband to seek other lovers. These horns, says John, that is, these kings, shall hate the whore, that is the papal church, and shall make her desolate.

It is then among the decrees of heaven, that the princes of Europe are to be the agents whom God will employ in overturning and utterly destroying the papal power. A sort of friendship may be maintained between these princes and the Autocrat of Rome; toleration may for a time be given to papal doctrines, the armistice of centuries may continue a little longer. But when "the words of God are fulfilled," that is, when the prophetic period of twelve hundred and sixty years shall have expired, there will be a crisis, a tremendous crisis. Antichrist will then put on all the remainder of his strength; he will call to his aid those that are still devoted to his cause; he will use stratagem and deceit. But all in vain; for the battle will be the Lord's; and the triumph of Antichrist will be forever destroyed. It is supposed by many expositors, that it is

this scene which is described in Revelation 14:19,20: "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and

276

gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horses' bridles, by the space of a thousand six hundred furlongs." When God overthrew the Jews, it so happened, that they were for the most part, within their capital. The destruction was thus more complete and sudden. So will it be with Antichrist, only a far more dreadful scene will follow. Driven probably, from post to post, the deluded advocates of this system, will, at last, plant themselves upon the strictly papal territory. Rome will be their headquarters. That city, however, will not only be captured but burnt, while a scene of slaughter will follow, truly dreadful to behold. It was not easily, that the bigoted son of Abraham yielded to the Roman arm; and it certainly will not be easily, that the proud vicegerent of Christ, the successor of apostles, the head of the church, the sovereign of kings — it will not be easily, that he and his followers will resign their high pretensions. Resign them, however, they must and will — "for strong is the Lord God who will judge them."

3. The Scriptures also teach the manner in which Antichrist shall fall. He is to fall gradually, but utterly. "And they shall take away his dominion," says Daniel, "to consume, and to destroy it unto the end." The Vulgate renders the latter part of the passage thus, "ad delendum et ad perdendum usque in finem" — "for consuming and destroying it even to the end." The two cardinal ideas in the passage are, that the power of Antichrist is to be destroyed by successive blows, and that that destruction will be in the end complete. The destroying agents are to proceed from destruction to destruction, from uprooting his power at one post, to uprooting it at another, and they are to continue till the work shall have been finished. The apostle Paul also, in the passage already cited, expresses himself in a similar manner. "The word, analwsei (consume)" says Chandler, "is used to denote a lingering, gradual destruction; being applied to the waste of time, the dissipation of an estate, and to the slow death of being eaten up of worms." "If St. John and St. Paul," says Benson, "have prophesied of the same corruptions, it should seem, that the head of the apostasy will be destroyed by some signal judgment, after its influence or dominion hath, in a gradual manner, been destroyed by the force of truth."¹ In the sixteenth chapter of the Apocalypse we have, in the pouring out of the

277

seven vials, seven periods, or gradations, in this progressive destruction of Antichrist.

And how remarkably have these predictions, so far, accorded with the facts! The papal power was at its zenith in the thirteenth century. Every event almost that has occurred since that period, has tended to its gradual subversion. Among the causes of its decline, Daunou mentions the following. "The praiseworthy resistance of Louis IX., the firmness of Philip-le-Bel, the madness of Boniface VIII., the vices of the court of Avignon, the schism of the west, the pragmatic sanction of Charles VII., the revival of learning, the invention of printing, the nepotism of the popes of the fifteenth century, the bold attacks of Sixtus IV., the crimes of Alexander VI., the ascendancy of Charles V., the progress of heresy² in Germany, in England, and other countries, the troubles of France under Henry II., the wise administration of Henry IV., the Edict of Nantes, the Four Articles of 1682, the dissensions which grew out of the

formulary of Alexander VII., and of the bull, Unigenitus, of Clement XI.; finally, the senseless enterprises of such popes as Benedict XIII., Clement XIII., and some other pontiffs of the eighteenth century.” The same author adds: “The papal power cannot survive such shame: its hour is come, and it remains to the popes only to become, as they were during the first seven centuries, humble pastors, edifying apostles. It is a dignity sufficiently honorable.”³ Remarks similar to these last, were made by Machiavelli as early as the sixteenth century. “We shall see,” says he, in allusion to his history, “how the popes, first by their ecclesiastical censures, then by the union of temporal and. spiritual power, and lastly by indulgences, contrived to excite the veneration and terror of mankind: we shall also see, how, by making an ill use of that terror and reverence, they have entirely lost the one, and lie at the discretion of the world for the other.”⁴ There can be but little doubt, that this celebrated historian has specified the primary cause of the overthrow of papal tyranny. That tyranny became itself so burdensome, that a change was demanded for the security, if not for the very existence of society.

In the latter part of the fourteenth century, Wickliffe, commenced his opposition to the Pope. In the early part of the fifteenth century, John Hues and Jerome of Prague were put to death for advocating his sentiments. A century after, Luther began his great work; and from that

278

period till now, a uniform and constant resistance has been given by several nations of Europe to papal power. It is true, that some things have happened favorable to its temporary advancement. The organization of the society of Loyola may be specified as the principal one. But even this society, by its dangerous operation, by its pliable morality, by its very prevalence — yea, by its crimes, has only made Popery more odious in the eyes of mankind. Even the infidelity of France, the French revolution, and the wars of Napoleon, have all tended to the downfall of the Papacy. Thus have the moral and political movements in Europe, for five centuries past, proceeded *ad delendura et ad perdendum*, to the gradual overthrow of the papal power. And although matters have not as yet reached, *usque in finem*, to its entire subversion; yet that result cannot be very far distant.

4. The precise period of the final overthrow of Antichrist, is predicted in the Scriptures in such a manner, as to leave the calculations of even the best qualified persons in some doubt. There can be no question, but that in the Divine mind, the period is accurately fixed; but its revelation is partially obscure, as all such revelations usually are in the holy volume. If prophecy were perfectly plain in all its parts, it would rather be history than prophecy. If therefore our minds cannot know precisely “the times which the Father hath put in his own power,” we should rejoice, that even an approximation to those times may be reached by us. In the mean time, we should patiently wait and hope for the coming of the Son of Man.

In Daniel 7:25, it is said, the saints shall be given into the hand of the “little horn,” until “a time and times and the dividing of time.” In chapter twelve of the same prophecy, the wonders seen by Daniel, were to end at the expiration of “a time, times and an half, and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.” John teaches us also, that “the holy city shall be trodden under foot by the gentiles forty and two months.” (Revelation 11:2.,) that the two witnesses were to prophesy clothed in sackcloth, “a thousand two-hundred and three-score days,” (verse 3); the woman also who fled into the wilderness, was to be nourished there, “a thousand two-hundred and threescore clays,” (12:6;) or for “a time, times and half a time,” (verse 14.) The beast also was to continue “forty

and two months,” (13:5.) Here are no less than seven times, in which the same number is used, and applied substantially to the same event. The period noted in these

279

prophecies is 1260 prophetic days, that is 1260 years. Now, if we could only ascertain the precise point at which these 1260 years began, there would be no difficulty in ascertaining the date of their termination. Writers of prophecy, however, beginning at different periods, end also at different periods. On this subject we refer to the second chapter of this work. There we have ventured the opinion, that between the years 730 and 754 — that is, between the overthrow of the Exarchate and the grant of Pepin, we are to date the rise of the Papacy, as a political power. Daunou fixes it in the year 800; he admits however, that before this, the Popes did exercise a power that was at least “efficient,” if not “independent.” Machiavelli dates the papal power from the subversion of the Exarchate; or at least, from the time that the Exarchate fell into the possession of the Popes. His language is — “No more Exarchs were sent from Constantinople to Ravenna, which was afterwards governed by the will of the Pope.”⁵

According to this calculation, the final overthrow of the papal power will take place in the latter part of the next century. The author however, does not insist upon these dates as correct. It may occur sooner, it will scarcely be delayed later. It is enough to know, that the work of gradual subversion is now in progress; and that the final catastrophe, will take place ere long. “Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus.”

5. The result of the overthrow of Antichrist will be, the establishment upon earth of the glorious kingdom of Christ.

“And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” Daniel 7:27.

As the destruction of the Jewish temple and the dispersion of the Jewish nation, were to precede the universal spread of the gospel, and seemed necessary to its general reception, so the overturning of this nominally Christian, but really antichristian power, appears to be demanded in the providence of God, to the general enlightenment of the world. Nothing, too, especially in Europe, can possibly be conceived of, more favorable to the universal triumphs of truth, than such an event. Were the Pope displaced, were Romanism destroyed, were the worship of saints and relics discontinued, were priestcraft abolished, how rapid, how glorious

280

would be the flight of the true gospel! How would the nations welcome it! How would a liberated world bask in its sun-beams! There can, too, be but little doubt, that the manner in which the Papacy will be overthrown, will give the nations a greater relish for pure doctrines. This power is yet to exhibit some dreadful deeds of oppression. Its iron yoke will yet gall more deeply, its prisons yet groan more dreadfully. And when too, God, in a way remarkably providential — in a way to be seen and known of all, shall so interpose, as to deliver mankind from these, the last struggles, the dying efforts of an old tyranny; how sweet upon the ear will fall the notes of gospel truth! How precious to the heart will be the influences of gospel grace! What countless multitudes will then crowd the temples of salvation, and what marshaling

millions will then bend before Him, who is “the Lord of lords, and King of kings.”

Thus will the downfall of Popery be the signal for the universal triumph of pure Christianity. “The man of sin,” will thus yield to the Man of grace, even Christ our Lord, and the long reign of wickedness be supplanted by the peaceable and righteous kingdom of the Son of God. Scattered Israel will, in the mean time, be regathered, and Jew and gentile, yea, a ransomed world, will rejoice in him, who is the “Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last.”

Thus have we attempted to prove, from its location at Rome, from the time of its rise, from the peculiarity of its character, from its apostasy, from its idolatry, from its blasphemy, from its innovations, from its persecutions, from its riches, from its power, from its craft and pretended miracles, from its reprobation, and even from its begun downfall, that the Papacy is the Antichrist predicted in the word of God. The very same kind of evidence, derived too from the same source, which proves that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, also demonstrates that the Papacy is the Antichrist. The two sets of testimonies stand or fall together. The prophecies that are fulfilled in Jesus are scarcely more numerous, as they are not more explicit, than those fulfilled in the Roman hierarchy. The light of heaven marks out the Roman High Priest as Antichrist; it converges there, and if it finds not there its object and completion, it is difficult, if not impossible to prove the actual fulfillment of any set of predictions whatever. We do not affirm that every individual pope either has been or will be lost. Much less would we affirm, that all who are attached to this

281

dreadful system must perish. We leave individual men in the hands of a just and righteous Judge. He knows their hearts, and will reward them according to their works. It is possible, that even in Rome itself, there may be a “remnant according to the election of grace.” The Spirit of God may pluck souls from perdition, even under the hands of Antichrist. Many too, no doubt there are many in America, many in most papal countries, who are ignorant of the real nature of Popery. They see only its exterior; they have not examined its principles. The condition of such we sincerely pity; and we earnestly pray, that the God of grace may bring them to the light. It is, however, the papacy, the hierarchy, the priesthood of this system, that we designate as Antichrist — that we have proven from the Scriptures to be Antichrist. Just so far as this hierarchical influence extends, just to the degree to which its essential principles go, does Antichrist reign. May that influence be destroyed; may those principles perish; especially, may our free country be resettled from a system, whose dilapidated tyranny in the old world, is seeking its repairs in the new.

282

NOTES

NOTE A

MANY critics suppose, that what is indicated in Daniel’s vision, by the ten horns on the head of the fourth beast, is also signified by the ten toes on the feet of the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar. These ten toes were seen in the vision to be “part of iron and part of clay;” which was interpreted to mean, that the ten kingdoms, indicated by the ten toes, should be

“part strong and part broken.” Some of these ten kingdoms were to possess the Roman iron, but others were to be like “potter’s clay.” The following statements of Daunou, will cast some light upon this subject. “It was,” says he, “in the eighth century, that we perceive the first symptoms of the temporal power of the Roman prelates. The different causes which were to terminate in this result, then began to be perceptible.” Among these causes he specifies the weakness of many of the new governments. “In the mean time, the new thrones which had here and there been erected by some conquering barbarians, began already to totter under their successors, whose ignorance, often equal to that of their people, seemed to invite the enterprises of the clergy.”¹ Here seems to be the clay alluded to in the vision. The firm principles of old Roman character, and the ignorance and impetuosity of the new invaders, constituted, when mixed together, a medley, “part strong and part weak,” which was exceedingly favorable to the triumphs of clerical ambition.

NOTE B

Romanists pretend to make a wide distinction between the homage they pay to God, and that they render to images, relics, saints, etc. They call the one *latria*, the other *doulia*. They have also invented an intermediate degree, which they render to the Virgin, called *hyperdoulia*. These again are divided into absolute, respective, etc. It is evident, however, that such distinctions as these can better be recorded in a theological treatise than observed in daily practice. The heart is deceitful, is fickle. And when the worshipper bows to the cross or an image, or prays to a saint, it is not likely that the nicely distinguished ideas, contained under the words *doulia*

283

and *latria*, can be very strongly apprehended by him. At any rate, such words, being also in a foreign language, must constitute a very thin veil between him and idolatry.

But the distinction here drawn between *doulia* and *latria*, is not tenable. The same Hebrew word *db*[which means to serve or worship, is rendered both by *latreuo* and *douleuo*. And in the New Testament these words are both applied to the service or worship which is rendered to God. In Matthew 6:24; Romans 7:6; Galatians 4:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; are instances in which *douleuo* is employed to express the homage which is to be rendered to the supreme Being. The words are very nearly synonymous, both in their derivation and meaning. *Latreuo*, from which *latria* is derived, according to Wahl and others, has its root, *latria*, which means a hired servant. *Douleuo*, from which *doulia* is derived, has *doulos*, a slave, as its root. If then, there be any difference between them, *douleuo* and *doulia* are certainly words of stronger import than *latreuo* and *latria*. Surely a system must be straitened for authority, when it establishes the worship of images upon a basis of this kind. This is the predicament of men, who violate, and teach others to violate, the express law of Jehovah “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them.”

NOTE C

Professor Stuart in his late work on the Apocalypse, gives a very singular interpretation to this whole subject. According to him, “the beast that was and is not” refers to Nero; the woman in scarlet is pagan Rome; and the ten horns are ten dependent kings, the subjects of Nero’s

authority. He supposes the expression, "the beast that was and is not," to be an ingenious method employed by John to indicate Nero; and he gives a very learned Excursus to show, how prevalent was the report, that after the death of this Emperor, he would revive again. It is very probable, to say the least, and notwithstanding all that the learned Professor has advanced to the contrary, that the banishment of John took place under Domitian, and not under Nero. If so, of course there can be no prophetic allusion at all to the latter emperor in the visions of John. But, admitting that the Apocalypse was given under Nero, is it probable that a reigning emperor would constitute so important a figure in

284

a prophecy evidently designed for future ages? As to the report about Nero's resurrection, is it not much more natural to suppose that a misunderstanding of the prophecy originated the report, than that the report suggested the prophecy? But there are other and stronger objections to this interpretation. Some no doubt will object to it, because it departs so widely from the interpretations given of this vision by English expositors for many centuries past. This, however, we will not urge. The learned professor in his very great zeal to make Nero the hero of these prophecies, makes not only the beast, but one of his heads also, to symbolize him! On verse 8th chapter 17, he says, "Plainly here the reigning Emperor is characterized. The well known harolation respecting Nero, that he would be assassinated and disappear for a while, and then make his appearance again to the confusion of all his enemies, solves the apparent enigma before us." Here he makes the beast, the symbol of Nero. The symbol, however, is changed in his commentary on verse 10th. "Five are fallen viz.: Julius Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius; Nero is the sixth!" Here is certainly a strange confusion of prophetic imagery. The beast represents Nero, and yet his sixth head, also represents him! Nor is the commentary any more satisfactory, where he explains the import of the ten horns. These he affirms are symbols of "ten contemporaneous kings, the dependents of Nero." When, however, he attempts to reconcile with this explanation what is said of the ten horns in verse 16, he appears to be greatly at a loss. "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." In commenting on this verse, the Professor, and possibly for good reasons, adopts the text of Scholtz and Griesbach. This text represents the horns and beast, as confederate against the woman. And the ten horns and the beast — kai qhrion. The common text is, and the ten horns upon the beast — epi qhrion. The common text is that which has been followed by Wickliffe, Tyndale, and Cranmer; and which is also adopted by the versions of Geneva, Rheims and King James. We pass this by, however. That this prophecy foretells the utter destruction of Rome is conceded. "At all events," says he, "heathen and persecuting Rome is to be utterly destroyed." It is evident, however, that neither Nero nor his "contemporaneous kings," utterly destroyed Rome. How is the difficulty

285

to be gotten over? First, an interpretation by Ewald is supposed to be satisfactory. This writer presumes that verse 16 refers "to the predicted return of Nero from the east, after his exile thither and his reunion with the confederate kings of that region, in order to invade Italy, and destroy its capital, where he was assassinated!" With this worse than mythological interpretation, however, the Professor is not altogether satisfied. He, therefore, gives one which he considers better. "The sentiment seems to be, that tyrants like Nero, and persecutors such as his confederates, would occasion wasting and desolation to Rome even

like to that already inflicted by Nero, who had set Rome on fire and consumed a large portion of it? Rome is to be utterly destroyed. The ten horns and the beast, that is, the confederated kings and Nero, were to be the authors of this destruction. When, however, we ascertain the facts, it is tyrants like Nero, and persecutors such as his confederates, who are to accomplish this destruction. Surely, after such an expenditure of learning and pains, one is at least disappointed in a result like this. But even this is not true. What tyrants or persecutors destroyed pagan Rome? If any, they must have been Constantine and Christian bishops! So that, this interpretation fails at every point.

There is another inconsistency into which this learned author falls. In his preface he tells us, that a right interpretation, the Apocalypse can never be given so long as this book is considered as an "epitome of civil and ecclesiastical history." But in his commentary on chapter seven he says, "if we adopt the explanation made out by appeal to historical ground, then all is plain and easy." While thus the Prosestot condemns in others the explanation of these prophecies by an appeal to history, he still makes the same appeal himself, and considers it the only method of arriving at certainty.

NOTE D

The Following is a list of the commandments as used at the confessional. **I.** Thou shalt love God above all things. **II.** Thou shalt not swear. **III.** Thou shalt sanctify the holy days.

286

IV. Thou shalt honor thy father and mother. **V.** Thou shalt not kill. **VI.** Thou shalt not commit fornication. **VII.** Thou shalt not steal. **VIII.** Thou shalt not bear false witness, nor lie. **IX.** Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife. **X.** Thou shalt not covet the things which are another's."² The fact that the second commandment is left out in this list, would seem to indicate, that the Romish priesthood are self-conscious that the practices of the church are contrary to the express law of God.

NOTE E

The following particulars are given by a traveler, as to the manner of spending a Sabbath in the city of Mexico. "At a corner of the great square are suspended huge placards, on which the nature of the day's amusements is depicted in every variety of color. Here is a pictorial illustration of the most prominent attractions of the great theater, which, in common with all the rest, is open twice on this day. A little further on is a full length figure of Figaro, which draws your attention to the fascinating allurements of the opera. The bull-fights next solicit your notice, announcing the most terrific particulars. Endless varieties of other, exhibitions put forth their claims. A balloon ascension is advertised for the afternoon. One would suppose, too, that the old Roman gladiatorial shows were revived; for at one spectacle is a contest between a man and a bear. Cock-fights, dog-fights, and fandangoes are announced in every part of the city. Horse-racing, the circus, jugglers, posture-masters, turn-biers, fireeaters, concerts, fencing matches, pigeon shooting, gymnastic exercises, country excursions, balls graduated to every pocket, form but a fraction of the entertainments to which this day is devoted. The finale of the day is generally wound up by a splendid display of fire-works, and thus ends a Mexican Sabbath!" And yet the same writer speaks of a "crowded cathedral," and

of “unaffected attitudes of devotion!” Jupiter or Mars might be worshipped in this way, but not the God of heaven.

287

NOTE F

Schleusner defines the literal meaning of petrov (*petros*), to be, “Lapidem qui e loco in locum moveri potest” — “a stone which can be moved from place to place.” In this sense the word is not used in the New Testament. The only sense in which it is here employed is, as an appellative, or proper name. In this sense it is always and exclusively applied to the Apostle Peter.

The word *petra* (*petra*), on the contrary, is in no case whatever used as a person’s name. To suppose, therefore, that in Matthew 16:18, it refers to the apostle, is to give it an application which it never has, and of which, considering the gender, it is incapable. In Mark 15:46, this word expresses the rock out of which Joseph’s tomb had been hewn. In Luke 8:6, it expresses the rock on which a part of the seed fell. In Matthew 7:24,25, it is used to denote the rock on which the wise man built his house. In Romans 9:33, and 1 Corinthians 10:4, it is put for Christ himself. It is here, however, not used as a proper name, but as a figure, and applies more to the divinity than to the humanity of Christ. Schleusner says, it is used here “metaphorice et modo plane singulari” — “metaphorically and in a sense evidently peculiar.” Not a solitary instance can be found in which it refers to the apostle Peter, not one.

NOTE G

This position may seem to be contradicted by comparing 1 Corinthians 3:11, with Revelation 1:18, This contradiction however is only apparent. In the first place, it is evident, that many things may be said of Christ, which could be applicable to no other being in the universe. He is divine, yet human — was dead, yet lives; exercises the highest prerogatives, yet has endured the greatest humiliations. Language therefore, which the Scriptures uniformly apply to him, they never apply to another. It is also evident, that the two texts under consideration, apply exclusively to Christ. The first refers chiefly to his atoning sacrifice for sin, the latter to his regal authority in heaven. When the Apostle too, says, “Other foundation (qemelion) can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ,” he evidently refers to the doctrines and work of Christ, and not to Christ personally. It was by his preaching that he laid the foundation of

288

Christianity at Corinth. That preaching however referred to facts and truths. It was therefore, these facts and truths, all of which related to Christ, that he calls “foundation already laid.” Henry explains this language as applicable to “the doctrines of our Savior and his mediation.” Scott refers the phrase to “the person, mediatorial office, righteousness, atonement, intercession and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.” Bloomfield says, “The sense of Jesus Christ here is,” as the best commentators have said, “the history of Jesus Christ, comprehending the doctrines and precepts, the promises and threatenings of the gospel.”

These texts therefore present no objection to the general truth we have here laid down. It certainly is an incorrect mode of speaking, to affirm, that a man is the foundation of a society and yet its ruler. Nor do we recollect, either in common parlance, or in books, to have heard or read a solitary expression of this sort.

THE END

289

FOOTNOTES

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

- 1 In verbo.
- 2 De Resurrectone Carnts, ch. 24.
- 3 Cat. 15. 5.
- 4 Algasiae, Ques. it.
- 5 De Civitate Dei. i., 20,19.
- 6 i. 6 Epis. 30.
- 7 In verbo

CHAPTER 1

- 1 Chris. in loco.
- 2 Lex. in loco.
- 3 In loco.
- 4 Notes on Matthew
- 5 Notes on Luke.

CHAPTER 2

- 1 In loco.
 - 2 On Isaiah.
 - 3 Com. on Matthew
 - 4 Heb. Lex. in verbo.
 - 5 On Isaiah.
 - 6 In loco.
- 290

CHAPTER 4

- 1 Connexions, Part I.
- 2 Cruden on "weeks,"

CHAPTER 6

- 1 In loco.
- 2 In loco.

CHAPTER 8

- 1 Cruden in verbo.

CHAPTER 9

- 1 Tusculan Questions.
- 2 Macaulay — Life of Lord Bacon.
- 3 Macaulay — Johnson.
- 4 Macaulay — Pitt.
- 5 Tusculan Questions. — Happiness.
- 6 Rousseau, Works, Vol. V. pp. 215-218.

CHAPTER 10

¹ Great Teacher, by Harrim, p. 81.

CHAPTER 11

¹ Livy, B. I. c.

vi.

² Magee, I. 200.

³ In loco.

⁴ In loco.

⁵ In loco.

⁶ Chris. i. 132.

⁷ Chris. i. 541.

⁸ Notes on Isaiah.

291

⁹ Rabbi Joseph Crooll. Scott's Works, vol. ix.

¹⁰ Chris. I. 108.

CHAPTER 12

¹ The opinion seems generally to prevail, that circumcision as a Jewish seal was abolished by Christ. Besides, however, the spiritual blessings embraced in the Abrahamic covenant for the world at large, were there not certain peculiar blessings designed for the Israelites as a people? Certainly, all those who consider them at present as in any sense God's peculiar people, must so understand this covenant. Why are they still a distinct people? Why are they to be converted *as a nation*? How is it, that so many believe in their literal restoration to Canaan? All these views seem to rest upon some Jewish peculiarity in the Abrahamic covenant. And if such a feature still exist in that covenant, why is not circumcision still a seal to Israel? The author was apprehensive that he would be almost alone in his opinion. Upon examination, however, he finds himself sustained by several judicious and eminent critics. Grotius and Michaelis, as quoted by Bloomfield, use the following language: "The Jews (i.e. in the days of the Apostles) might adopt circumcision as a national rite; but the Gentiles having no such political reason, could only use it as necessary to justification; which would make void faith and grace, and is therefore strictly forbidden:" (on Galatians 5:2.) Macknight, on the same passage, says: "As the preservation (i.e. after Christ) of Abraham's posterity as a distinct people from the rest of mankind answered many important purposes in the Divine government, their observance of the rite of circumcision, declared by God himself to be the seal of his covenant with Abraham, was necessary to mark them as his descendants, as long as it was determined that they should be continued a distinct people." Dr. Doddridge also expresses a similar sentiment. ² Barrow, 327.

292

³ See Mezeray, Abrege de l'Histoire de France, (Volume 1 page 41, A.D.

400, to A.D. 500,) who expounds the words *vox populi vox Dei* to signify the election of bishops by the people. After alleging that bishops, during this period, were elected by the people, he adds, "La voix du peuple passoit en cela, pour une vocation do Dieu." — [Ed.

Presb. Bd. of Pub.

⁴ Hist. Christian Religion and Church.

⁵ At the close of the first six centuries, the change, though great in some particulars, was small compared with that which followed. See Fleury's Second Discourse on Ecclesiastical History, Art. V. "The bishops," he says, "did not give great attention to the *temporel* of their church, but left the care of it to deacons and stewards, but they did not discharge themselves of the *spirituel* upon any body. Their occupation was prayer, instruction, and correction. They

entered into every possible detail, and it was for this reason that the dioceses were so small, that one single man might suffice for them, and by himself know the whole of his flock. There would be no need for more than one bishop, to do every thing by another and from a distance. It is true, they had priests to relieve them in the *spirituel*, to preside at prayers, and to celebrate the holy sacrifice in case of the absence or sickness of the bishop, to baptize or give penance in case of necessity. Sometimes the bishop even confided to them the ministry of the word; for regularly there was only the bishop who preached. The priests were his council and the senate of the church, elevated to this rank for their ecclesiastical knowledge, their wisdom, their experience.” Abating some of this author’s ecclesiastical technicalities, (such as holy sacrifice, penance, etc.) we may see more of the Presbyterian than of the Palpal organization in these churches. Such small dioceses remind one of parishes; such minute primeval oversight of the flock, strongly resembles the duties of a parish clergyman. Priests who do not preach, but serve as a council for the bishop, are not very unlike the eldership of Presbyterian churches. And the practice of confining the duty of preaching to bishops exclusively, would tend to multiply them so that each congregation might have one. — [Ed. of *Presb. Bd. of Pub.* 293

⁶ Mezeray, speaking of the Church in France, under the reign of Clovis, says, “The titles, *Pope, Futher of the Church, Beatitude, Mbst Blessed, Holiness, Sovereign Pontiff, Servant of the Servants of God, Apostolical*, were common to all bishops.” *Abrege Chronologique de l’Histoire de France*, Volume 1 page 41. A.D. 400 to A.D. 500. The appropriation of these titles to the bishop of Rome exclusively, was the fruit of the ambition of the bishops of that city, which appeared at a later age. — [Ed. *Presb. Board of Pub.*

CHAPTER 13

¹ Christology, Volume 1. p. 123.

² Chris. i. 124.

CHAPTER 14

¹ Chris. i. 59.

PART 2

CHAPTER 1

¹ See Appendix, Note A.

² His. Flor. i. 1.

³ On Proph. 568.

⁴ Sec Appendix, Note B.

⁵ On Proph. 571.

⁶ Barrow.

⁷ P. 155.

⁸ Theol. c.

i, v.

CHAPTER 2

¹ Iren. 1, 5.

² Cyrilli Hieros Catech. 15, c. 6.

³ Observations on Daniel.

294

⁴ Gibbon’s Rome.

⁵ Newton on Proph., Dis. xiv.

⁶ On Proph. Dis.

v.

7 Tacitus i. 1.

8 Gibb. xlix.

9 Gib. xlix.

10 Ibidem.

11 See Appendix, Note C.

12 Geneva and Rome.

13 Court of Rome, 1.

14 Court of Rome.

15 Rome, ch. xlix.

16 Eccle. An. Anne 606.

17 Middle Ages, xvii.

18 Con. viii.

CHAPTER 3

1 Barrow.

2 Idem.

3 Geneva and Rome.

4 Barrow.

5 Some may suppose that the former pretensions of the occupants of the chair of St. Peter, have been relinquished by his more modern successors. Such, however, is by no means the case. In a letter to his brothers, Counts Gabriel, Joseph, and Gaetano Mastai Feretti, dated Rome, June 16, 1846, the recently elected Pope, *Pius IX.*, uses the following language — “The blessed God, who humbles and exalts, has been pleased to raise me from insignificance to the most sublime dignity on earth.” It is evident, therefore, that however weak the more modern Popes are in reality, their opinions as to the exalted dignity of their Stations, are perfectly coincident with the views of

6 Gregory VII. or Innocent III.

295

7 Barrow.

8 Church of Rome compared, p. 29.

9 Supremacy, 17.

10 Le Plat. quoted by Cramp, 341.

11 Letters from Rome.

12 Theol., chap. xl.

13 Theol., ch.

iv.

CHAPTER 4

1 On the Prophecies, Diss.

ii.

2 Council of Trent, Sess. iv.

3 Theol., chap. xviii.

4 Decrees of Trent.

5 Moral Theol. 140-142.

6 On 1 Timothy 2:5.

7 De Invocatione.
8 Moral Theol. c.

xiii.

9 Ib. page 276.
10 De Justificationc.
11 Romans 3:28,

CHAPTER 5

1 Gibbon's Rome, ch. xlix.
2 Protestant, vol. ii. ch. clix.
3 Vol. i. B. V. Refer. to Diod. Sic. I. see. 11.
4 Parkhurst's Lexicon in verbo.
5 Idem.
6 Ibidem.
7 Scssio

v. De Invocatione, etc.
8 Papal Rome as it is, page 136.
296
9 Ursuline Manual, pp. 350, 351.
10 Ursuline Manual, p. 258.
11 Ib. p. 273.
12 Prot. ii., clix.

CHAPTER 6

1 Bishop Hopkins's "Church of Rome," chap. iii.
2 Mor. Theel. on Priinacy.
3 Ibidcm.
4 Voice from Rome, p. 14.
5 Dr. Sturtevant.
6 Court of Rome — Persecutions of Popery.

CHAPTER 7

1 See Appendix, Note D.
2 See Appendix, Note E.
3 Rev. Joseph Blanco White,
4 Preservative against Popery, p. 5.
5 Reformation in Spain, 71.
6 Text-Book of Popery, p. 263.
7 Idem. p. 83.
8 Century xi. Part 2. Section 2.
9 Dens's Theol. chapter 34,
10 De Sacramentis in genere.
11 Theol. chapter 34,
12 Ibidem.
13 Dens' Theol. chapter 34.
14 Dens' Theol. ibidem.
15 Dens, ibidem.
16 Dens, chapter 36.
297
17 Text Book, 163.

- 18 Idem.
- 19 Chapter 38.
- 20 Dens, chapter 39.
- 21 Dens, chapter 41.
- 22 De sacro-sancto eucharistiae Sacramento.
- 23 Dens' Theol. 39.
- 24 Decrees of Trent, ibidem,
- 25 De sacrificio missae.

CHAPTER 8

- 1 Century iv.
- 2 Cent. iv., chapter 3.
- 3 Mosheim, i. 329.
- 4 Contra Gaudentium, Ep. i.
- 5 Century v., chapter 5.
- 6 Rome, chapter 58.
- 7 Persecutions of Popery, p. 20.
- 8 Ibidem.
- 9 Persecutions of Popery, p. 20.
- 10 Idem.
- 11 Court of Rome, p. 129.
- 12 Middle Ages, chapter 1, part 1.
- 13 Middle Ages, chapter 9, part 2.
- 14 Ecclesiastical Hist. Cent. 13.
- 15 Shoberl, p. 60.
- 16 Middle Ages, ix. 11.
- 17 Ibidem.
- 18 Shoberl, p. 60.
- 19 Ibidem.
- 20 Shoberl.
- 21 History of the Reformation, Book xii.
- 22 History of the Rcfformation.
- 23 Grimshaw.
- 24 Court of Rome, p. 209.
- 25 Court of Rome, p. 210.
- 26 Shoberl.
- 27 Lorimer's Protestant Church of France, p. 242.
- 28 Rome, chapter 16.

CHAPTER 9

- 1 Stuart.
- 2 Church Hist., part 2. sect. 2.
- 3 Century iii.
- 4 Court of Rome, p. 3.
- 5 Rome, chapter 37.
- 6 Con. Cath. Priest, pages 5-7.
- 7 Middle Ages, chapter 7.
- 8 Henry II., A.D. 1163.
- 9 Henry III.
- 10 Colton's Four Years, ii. 113.

11 Colton's Four Years, p. 115.

12 Letters from Rome.

CHAPTER 10

1 Daunou, p. 1-3.

2 Epis. Ciera.

3 Epist. to Cor.

4 Page 305.

5 Middle Ages, chap. vii.

299

6 Baronius.

7 Daunou, p. 97.

8 Court of Rome, 253.

9 Middle Ages, chapter 7.

10 Rome, xlix.

11 Daunou, p. 13.

12 Court of Rome, 24.

13 Hist. France, 31.

14 Court of Rome, 47.

15 Court of Rome, 4.

16 Peter Damiere.

17 Court of Rome, 77.

18 Hallam. — Under Alexander III., the laity were excluded, and the consent of the sovereign not required in the election of a Pope. Two thirds of the college of cardinals decided the choice. This is the present mode of electing the Pope.

19 Middle Ages.

20 Court of Rome, 125.

21 Court of Rome, 123.

22 Court of Rome, 130.

23 Court of Rome, 149.

24 Barrow, 19.

25 Ibid. 18.

CHAPTER 11

1 Theol.

iii.

2 See Appendix, Note F.

3 See Appendix, Note G.

4 De sacro-sancto eucharistira Sacramento.

5 Theol. chapter 18.

300

6 Court of Rome, 3.

7 Middle Ages, chapter 7.

8 Cramp. 361.

9 Hist. Eng., chapter 31.

10 Hist. of Eng., chapter 31.

11 Cramp. 365.

CHAPTER 12

1 Divinity, 716.

2 Sessio

V.

3 Catechism, p. 360.

4 Chapter 33.

5 Letter of Pope Plus VII. to Guesen, Primate of Poland, dated 1816.

CHAPTER 13

1 Macknight.

2 Reformation.

3 Court of Rome, 254.

4 Hist. Flor. p. 33.

5 His. Flor. 35.

NOTES

1 Court of Rome, p. 10.

2 Gavin.