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Catholicism and Reason

Being an Essay

BY

HON. HENRY C. DILLON

LOS ANGELES, CAL.



International Catholic Truth Society

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I. THE CHURCH AS THE SOLE WITNESS TO AND DEFENDER OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

I am a Catholic because I believe the Holy Catholic Church was founded by God, in the person of His Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, upon the Rock, in the person of St. Peter, Chief of Apostles, and its first visible head. Faith leads me to Her, and reason approves the choice.

Man is a religious animal. He believes in himself as a moral being. He clings to this belief as tenaciously as he clings to life. He believes that in some mysterious way he came forth from God, and the best thoughts and efforts of his life are employed in the effort to bring himself into harmony with the Author of his being. His faith has had its periods of exaltation and depression. At the threshold of the twentieth century the signs point to another revival of his faith. Rationalistic as well as theistic philosophers see this, and tell us that man's rising faith will culminate in a na-

tural religion—that is to say, in a code of morals based upon our natural relations, upon the rewards and punishments of this life, and from which all creeds and revelations will be expunged. Man is still the proper study of mankind. Whether he was fashioned in the sea or on land, whether the first cell from which he began to differentiate was protoplasm or dust, still

The hand that made him was Divine.

The moment we admit the Divine origin of man, we admit a Divine purpose in his creation, and the necessity of ascertaining and obeying the Divine Will. Religious man will not be satisfied that this Will has not in some special and authoritative way been revealed to mankind, in manner and form to be intellectually grasped and understood, and in such abundance as to satisfy the cravings of the human heart.

Natural religion does not satisfy this craving. It does not call forth the soul's affirmation, which is Emerson's definition of truth. Knowledge of our relationship to all created things and of the benefits which arise from understanding nature's laws, aids us in the battle of life and maintains the survival of the fittest, but it does not make the survivor happy, nor even satisfied with himself, when he reflects upon the human wrecks which line the shores of time. And what shall we say of the victims of this cruel law, who fall and are trampled under the feet of the victorious survivor. Is any mercy or pity found for them in natural law or natural religion. Faith, hope and charity are out of place in such a system. To lend a helping hand is contrary to the doctrine of survival of the fittest, and to love thy neighbor as thyself is to backslide into Christianity. The teachers of this natural religion tell us, indeed, that all vice is to be avoided, but in the same breath they tell us that evil (vice), if any there is, is a schoolmaster bringing us to God. Under such a schoolmaster vice loses its "frightful mien," and young and old are lured to destruction before they discover the awful falsehood of this modern serpent.

By refusing to see anything but the outside, the material, natural religionists deny the inside, the spiritual nature of man, a more stupendous fact than the outside, and thus deny that there is any law in the spiritual world, in the face of all its manifestations. In its final analysis natural religion is atheism. Its advocates say in effect: "We are the only gods there are," and generally end by extolling and worshipping themselves. In politics we find its adherents generally advocating the doctrines of state socialism and anarchy. In ethics their name is legion. There is no heresy that ever attained sufficient importance to merit the condemnation of the Church that is not taught by one sect or an-

other of these natural religionists. Strangely enough most of them claim to be theists, but, when driven to a definition of their god, we find they not only deny the Three Persons of the God-head, but deny to their deity any personality whatever. Their theism, therefore, consists in name only. Indeed, such a thing as natural theism is both an impossibility and a contradiction of terms. In his work entitled: "Is Life Worth Living?" Mr. Mallock says: "A purely natural theism, with no organs of human speech, and no machinery for making its spirit articulate, never has ruled man, and, so far as we can see, never possibly can rule him."

But the experiment is going on. Protestantism has yielded the citadel to the assaulting scientists. Unable to agree upon any interpretation of the Bible among themselves, their learned theologians have at length basely admitted that the Holy Book is not the inspired Word of God, and that, consequently, there exists no authoritative exponent of the Christian religion. The most prominent among Protestant divines are found to contradict one another about the very rudiments of the faith. To such a state of impotence and intellectual bankruptcy has Protestantism come at last that Professor Schurman, president of the Philippine Commission, tells them plainly that it will be useless for Protestant Churches to send missionaries to the natives of these islands, unless they will agree in advance upon some one branch of Protestantism, and present that and that only. The learned professor knows that such an agreement is impossible. It may have been only a clever and unanswerable way of advising them to stay at home, and let the Catholics work out what they have so well begun. It may have been the expression of a belief, only too common now among great men of the earth, that all religions are equally bad, and only useful to the politicians as a means for controlling the people. There is a belief also quite common now, that secular thought has in our day gained a decisive victory over Christian theology, and that the sacred writings have been forced to a level with fairy tales. This, however, is but a superficial view. What has really happened is this: Secular thought has annihilated Protestantism, not Christianity.

The fundamental principle of the sixteenth century reformers was, that the Bible contains in itself a clear indication of what the Christian religion is, and contains in itself inherent proofs of its verity. Its second principle was that the beliefs and practices of Christ's earliest followers proved the correctness of the new creed. As Protestant sects, however, differentiated from the parent stem and split into a thousand fragments, each with a new creed, it destroyed the second principle and reduced it to an absurdity.

Scientific study and criticism have destroyed the other, until at last Protestant dogma has been rendered as Mr. Mallock well says: "Not only untenable but unthinkable." Protestantism, as an intellectual system, and in its higher walks, has practically abandoned its former belief in a supernatural religion, and is gradually substituting for it this so-called natural religion. Those who still insist upon the Divine origin of man, without which they realize religion of any kind is impossible, and who will seek for some revelation of the Divine Will, claim a *quasi* revelation. They find it written upon the rocks. They read it in the stars. They have expounded it, written innumerable books about it, and from time to time, have revised their scientific conclusions and adjusted their new creeds to fit the new facts as they came to light. Indeed, they have not scrupled, at times, to bend the facts to fit new theories.

Religious man is not and never can be satisfied with such revelations. To command his belief and respect the revelation must be infallible. If it is not infallible, it is no revelation at all. If the revelation claimed is so written upon the rocks and in the stars as to be difficult to distinguish, hard to understand—if it means one thing to this reader and another to that, it might just as well have never been made at all. Revelation, in order to be, in any sense, infallible to us as intelligent beings, must be a testament duly authenticated and interpreted by competent authority. Herein lay both the error and the condemnation of Protestant Christianity. Starting out as the purifier of a supernatural religion as taught by the Roman Catholic Church, and protesting against the idea that any authority was ever given to that Church by our Lord and Saviour to declare the will of God, it first claimed the Bible, and the Bible only, as interpreted by private opinion, to be the seat of authority in religion. Now, after four hundred years of incessant war against the Mother Church, in the dawn of the twentieth century, Protestantism ends this controversial war by using private opinion to destroy the Bible itself. Doctor De Costa's recent lectures on this subject are sufficient to convince any one that I have not overstated the fact. What irony of Fate! The Roman Catholic Church, denounced by Protestants as the suppressor of the Holy Bible, is now beheld as its sole defender against Protestant attacks. "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding fine." Protestantism was compelled to base its dogmatic teaching upon one of the most fragmentary of books, containing, as its sacred writers themselves declare, but a small part of the Gospel delivered to the Church by her Divine Head. "If they were written," says St. John (xxi 25), "the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written." Repudiating and protesting against an

authoritative and divinely commissioned interpreter of the Sacred Writings, they were warped and twisted by rival theologians to sustain innumerable and contradictory doctrines, to the great scandal of Christianity, and ending finally and logically in the disintegration and destruction of Protestantism itself.

The New Testament could not prove itself, and the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, the only witness by whom it could be proven, was discredited and denounced by the proponents of the Divine Will, as unworthy of belief. What happened when Protestant Christianity presented this Will to the Court of Higher Criticism and asked to have it admitted to probate? What was its reply in answer to the question: "Have you the Will of God in your possession?" It presented its latest revised edition of the New Testament and said: "We thought we had it, but, for all we know, it may be a forgery. Take it and examine it for yourself. If it does not prove itself there is no other evidence!" The case is closed. The evidence of the only surviving witness is not heard. The book it put upon the rack. It is tried in the fire. It is referred to the critics. The referees report that the book does not contain within itself sufficient evidence to establish either its Divine origin or Protestant dogma. The Will is rejected. It is right here that the Catholic Church comes to the rescue of the Holy Bible and the Christian religion. In answer to the same question the Church testifies with uplifted hand:

"I am a living witness to this Will and testament. If there be any ambiguity in the writing, I can explain it and am authorized so to do. I was present when God Himself, in the person of the Man Christ Jesus, walked the shores of Galilee preaching this Gospel. I saw those miracles performed. I was with Him when He was baptized by John in the Jordan, and I know the meaning which He attached to that sacred rite. I sat with Him at the Last Supper and partook of the Bread of Life, and know the meaning which He attached to the words, 'except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.' I wept with Him in the garden of Gethsemane, stood with Him before Pilate, was last at the cross and first at the sepulchre. I know that He rose from the dead, appeared to His disciples, and instructed His Church fully as to the true meaning of all He had said and done. I saw Him give to Peter the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, heard Him say 'upon this rock I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it.' It was to me He said when He instituted the Sacrament of Penance, 'whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.' Sacredly have I executed this awful power, and never

has the confessional been betrayed. To me He made the promise of God the Holy Ghost, Who should lead me into all truth and enable me to teach it infallibly to the end of the world. I saw Him ascend into heaven. Upon the day of Pentecost I received the Holy Ghost, and from thence hitherto I have been Divinely assisted in declaring the Will of God in all matters appertaining to faith and morals to the children of men. Peter and Paul and all the apostles and sacred writers who heard the word of God from the Blessed Saviour's lips were my sons. I witnessed their martyrdom for testifying to the truth of this Holy Gospel. Their writings were committed to my care, and here they are. I know they are not forgeries."

The Court of Higher Criticism hears with consternation this startling and unexpected evidence. It is seen at once that it can not be contradicted. There are not and never have been any witnesses to the contrary. There is but one more question the court can ask, viz.: "How am I to know that you are telling me the truth?" The question is incompetent and irrelevant. The testimony is given. The witness may be cross-examined, but, until contradicted and overthrown, the testimony must be accepted and believed. The witness, however, waives all objections and shows its credibility. 'Consider my age,' she says, "look into my eyes. Read the history of my life, and you will know that I never told a lie. What I tell you to-day I have borne witness to before Kings and Emperors and before all men for nineteen centuries. I have sealed it with the blood of my martyrs. Neither fire nor sword, imprisonment nor torture have ever caused me to tell a different tale. Roman Emperors persecuted me in vain. The barbarians of the north, progenitors of the learned critics of to-day, came down to destroy me, but returned home to bless. They carried back with them the Glad Tidings which has made of them the great nations of to-day. Does it seem to you, O Critics, an incredible thing that God should thus prolong my life? It was to this end that I was created. It was God himself, in the person of our Blessed Lord, who commanded me to preach this Gospel to all nations and to every living creature, and promised to be with me to the end of the world. Do you know that, for like reasons and purposes nations are born to carry out His Divine Will, and live on from age to age, and are prospered, punished and destroyed in accordance with their faith and perseverance in good works? Thus it hath pleased Almighty God from the beginning to speak with the tongues of men and work with their hands. Kings, Emperors, generations pass away, 'but My word shall not pass away.' It is handed down by word of mouth. The continuity of my life has not been broken. Is it a surprising thing

that our Heavenly Father, after creating man for a Divine purpose, should make provision for retaining in the world a knowledge of Himself and of His Will with respect to His creation? It is idle to ask if He might not have chosen some other way, if He might not have been content with what was written upon the rocks and in the stars. The fact is (and it is with facts we are dealing) He has seen fit to introduce such a power into the world, and has invested it with the prerogative of infallibility in religious matters. Reason approves the plan and we see at once that such a provision is a direct, immediate, active and prompt means of withstanding every attack which can be made upon the Christian religion; and we see also that it is a weapon which Protestant Christianity is powerless to wield in its defense."

Is such testimony incompetent? Surely not. It is not to be excluded upon the ground that it is hearsay. "The first degree of moral evidence, and that which is most satisfactory to the mind," says Mr. Greenleaf in his work on Evidence (Chapter V, Sec. 98, 11th Ed.), "is afforded by our own senses; this being direct evidence of the highest nature." We are compelled to use such a testimony, because it is the best obtainable, and our courts daily admit evidence of a similar character, such as general reputation, reputed ownership, public rumor, general notoriety: ('I Greenleaf's evidence § 101.') The principle upon which such evidence is admitted is "the concurrence of many voices to the same fact." (Ibid). Accordingly hearsay evidence as to pedigree from servants as well as members of the family, neighbors and friends is received. General repute in the family, which is but another term for tradition, may be proved in the same manner. Entries in the family Bible or missal by a deceased parent are competent evidence as to births, marriages and deaths. (Ibid. § 104). Particularly is this true, and such evidence is considered greatly strengthened by the fact that long publicity has been given to such traditions and long acquiescence in their acceptance by large numbers of persons, which is pre-eminently true of the New Testament. (Ibid. §§ 104, 105, 108). Again, this book is historical; it has been kept and preserved by proper authority, viz.: the Roman Catholic Church, and, when authenticated by her, is admissible on that ground also. (Ibid. §§ 496, 497).

There is no living witness to-day by whom the Declaration of Independence can be proven. The instrument has faded away and become illegible, as I myself saw but a few days ago in Washington. But a living body known as the Supreme Court of the United States was created with power and authority to establish its identity. It can declare what is the Constitution of these United States, and

it alone can interpret its meaning, and when it does, that interpretation must be accepted as final. Yet there is not one of the judges by whom that august tribunal speaks who could personally testify to the genuineness of the writings themselves. Such power and authority exists, *ex-necessitate*, and must be obeyed or anarchy will prevail. When that court of last resort says: This is the Constitution and this is what it means, the decision must be accepted as final. It is easy to deny; easy to create doubt, and difficult to have proof always ready at hand. In this way clever writers have clouded the fame of Shakespere, and cast doubt even upon the existence of Jesus Christ. The assaults of such quibblers have little weight and soon die away.

God, who in time past spoke by the mouths of His holy prophets, now speaks to us by the mouth of our Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII. His voice comes to us through the past, along the unbroken line of his predecessors, and the Church knows and bears witness that the voice at the other end of the line, is the Voice of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and "that voice is none other than the Voice of God."

Is it an incredible thing that the Sacred Scriptures should not contain the whole of God's revelation to man? Do we not know that the Divine Will respecting the creation and duty of man was delivered verbally to the patriarchs and prophets, to the Jewish Church, long before a word of the Old Testament was written? In like manner the Christian Church was founded by the Divine Master Who never wrote a word upon anything more enduring than the sand which the winds blew away. It is a disputed question to-day whether there is extant even a copy of any part of the New Testament older than the third century. You naturally ask whether fallible man can be depended upon to faithfully and accurately hand down such a message? We know that the Iliad of Homer was thus handed down. Is it, therefore, impossible or improbable to human reason that God's Word should be thus handed down?

Protestantism fails as such a witness. Its age lacks fifteen hundred years of reaching back to the Saviour's birth. It has no conscious memory, no *memorabilia* of those times. There is no tradition of it in the family of her sects. It is an incompetent witness, and utterly unreliable, because no two of its sects agree on what Christ taught as His religion. It also fails as a defender of the faith, because it has no organization to hold it together, no dogmatic principles to steady it, no authoritative moral teacher to guide it, and no devotional life sufficiently attractive to hold its members together and maintain its life. Both as witness and advocate it has failed in its proof and defense of the Christian religion.

II. THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE.

The conflict between science and religion is imaginary. Secular thought has not overthrown, and cannot overthrow the Christian religion. The Roman Catholic Church is the repository of the faith, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against her.

Truth is the attribute of God. To Him error is impossible. God cannot contradict Himself. The facts of creation, the revelations of His boundless love for man, His power and majesty, His purposes with respect to man concerning his creation and destiny, his fall and redemption, whether gleaned from the indirect revelations of nature or direct revelations to man, will never contradict each other, when read aright and correctly understood. Science has been quick to dogmatize. She has not hesitated to "rush in where angels fear to tread," and teach theology to the Church. She has rushed to the jury room and brought in verdicts before the evidence was all in. She has been intolerant, bigoted, fierce in denunciation, and wanting in charity. The Church welcomes truth from whatsoever quarter it may come, because it is the Voice of God, saying, "Come, this is the way; walk ye in it." Take for example the well-worn tale about Galileo. The astronomical system which prevailed down to the seventeenth century, commonly called the geocentric or Ptolemaic, was one which strongly appealed to the senses and was fortified by all the wisdom of the Arabians, the Chinese, the Persians and Europeans, and is taught by the Mohammedans of to-day. The illusion is still kept up, and we daily repeat the error when we say the sun rises and sets. Language must be understood, says the law, according to its common acceptation, and it was in this sense that revelation was addressed to man, not for the purpose of teaching astronomy but the duty of man. It was not necessary to man's happiness that he should be taught how the world was made, but it was of the utmost importance that he should be told whence he came, why he fell from his once glorious estate, and how Paradise could be regained. In order that we may rightly understand the attitude of the Church towards scientific truth and Galileo, it must be remembered that Nicholas Cusa, an Archdeacon and member of the Council of Basil in 1431, had taught that it was the earth and not the sun that was in motion, and that the true system of astronomy was the heliocentric and not the geocentric. In this he anticipated Galileo by two hundred years. In that great Council of the Catholic Church he maintained this doctrine and was supported by Cardinal Cesarini. He was summoned to Rome, before Pope Nicholas V, and received the highest honors. He was made a Cardinal. Nor must we forget

Copernicus. In the year 1500 he was a professor in the Pope's university, lecturing on his new astronomical theory to more than two thousand pupils. His great work was dedicated to the reigning Pontiff, Paul III, who loaded him with honors, and finally caused him to be retired on a pension for life. Now why was it that Galileo, who long afterwards taught substantially the same theory, met a different fate in 1632? It was because he was proud, wilful and obstinate, like St. George Mivart of our own day, and insisted that there was a conflict between science and religion, and that he was right and the Church was wrong. He invaded the domain of theology by insisting that he had found a revelation in the stars that contradicted the revelation to the Church. By the use of the telescope he was simply convinced of the truth of the Copernican system. The Church had found no fault with that, and only wanted the hot-headed Galileo to wait until all the facts were in evidence, when he would surely find, as we have been finding every day since, there would be and is no conflict in the revelations of God. Cusa and Copernicus advanced their theory modestly as a probability, and waited for further facts. Lord Bacon, the first teacher of the inductive school of philosophy in England, rejected Galileo's theory with scorn, and so did Descartes. Even Martin Luther said of him: "This fool wishes to reverse the entire science of astronomy." Neither Cardinal Bellarmine, nor Pope Paul V, denied his theory, but when he undertook to interpret the Scriptures; when he went beyond the limits of physics and mathematics and invaded the prerogative of the Church, he was called upon to halt, and it was for this he was condemned. It was not his theory, but his keen satire and sarcasm which excited and inflamed his opponents. His punishment has been greatly exaggerated. His prison was the palace of the Tuscan ambassador, where he roamed at will. In addition to this pleasant detention, he had the companionship of his two daughters, who were nuns. In fact, the only part of his sentence which ever occasioned him any inconvenience consisted in being required to recite the Seven Penitential Psalms once a week for three years, and I doubt very much whether he did that.

We find no difficulty in our day in reconciling the Copernican system with Holy Scriptures. They speak of the earth, sun, moon and stars as they appear to the human eye. They use the language of common understanding, not to teach the natural sciences, but to usher man upon the stage of life, to tell him the story of his fall through disobedience and his redemption through righteousness. The Church, moved and inspired as it is by God, is never in a hurry. She will bide her time until all the evidence is in and weighed in the balance. Confident that God is with her, that the gates of hell can

no more prevail against her in the future than in the past, she will pursue the even tenor of her way until it shall please her Divine Head to demonstrate the harmony which exists between truth in the natural world with like truth in the spiritual world. It is not true, however, that the heliocentric system was ever denied by a Papal Bull, in passing upon Galileo's case. The judgment was pronounced by the Court of Inquisition, and was in no sense a Papal document. Protestants, however, should not complain of the difficulties which beset Galileo in convincing the world of his day of the truth of his discoveries. A Protestant tribunal in 1596 had already set the example by condemning the theories of Kepler, as well as the man himself. The Academical Senate of Tubingen, by its Theological Faculty, thirty-seven years before the judgment in Galileo's case, unanimously decided that Kepler's book, which affirmed the elliptical form of the planetary orbits, and thus confirmed the theory of Copernicus and Cusa, contained a deadly heresy. The book was heretical, they said, because it contradicted that passage in the Sacred Scriptures, where it is related that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still. Kepler had contended that, as the Bible addressed itself to mankind in general, it spoke of things in the life of man, as men in general are accustomed to speak of them; that the Bible was in no respect a Manual of Optics or Astronomy, but had much higher objects in view; that it was a blameable abuse to seek in it for answers to worldly things; that Joshua had wished to have the day prolonged, and God had responded to his wish in some miraculous way, which was not a proper subject for scientific inquiry. With a body of theologians whose central dogma was the right of private interpretation of the Scriptures, such an argument should have some weight. But instead, his bold attempt to fight the ministers of Protestantism with their own weapons only increased their displeasure and his condemnation. Had it not been for the intervention of the merciful Duke of Wurtemberg, who was personally attached to Kepler, he would have suffered personal violence. His book was suppressed, however, and he prudently submitted to the injunction. To his friend Mastlin, he wrote: "I hold it for the best to imitate the disciples of Pythagoras, and keep silence on the discoveries I have made, lest, like Apian, I lose my situation, and be doomed to die of hunger." In the end, he fled from Wurtemberg, but—shades of Luther! to whom did he fly for refuge?—to the Jesuits of Gratz and Ingoldstat, who, Protestant though he was, to the last, honored his great talents and received him with open arms, because of the great service he had rendered to science.

The conduct of these Jesuit Fathers is exemplified and followed

in every Catholic school, college or university in the world. And why? Because the Church is not opposed to science.

The Constitution of the Vatican Council contain these words: "The Church, far from being opposed to the progress of human arts and sciences, assists and encourages them." The great universities of Europe are all Catholic in their origin, and most of them were established before the so-called Reformation began. In these, to quote the words of Carlyle, "nearly all the inventions and civil institutions whereby we yet live as civilized men, were originated and perfected."

Catholic savants are delving into every field of knowledge to-day, hunting for the truth, welcoming it when found, but jealous with the jealousy of God, that it shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. In all the learned walks of life Catholics are conspicuous. In peace and war their names are enrolled high in the Temple of Fame. Her sculptors, painters and musicians have given to the world their unrivalled works, breathing the very atmosphere of heaven. Her architects and builders have covered the earth with magnificent temples which Protestants have been glad to appropriate, but could not equal. She also has her inventors and discoverers. Not only is the world indebted to her for the preservation of the Bible and the Christian faith, for the fine arts and ancient learning, for schools, colleges, universities, hospitals and asylums, but also for the material and worldly things of which our Heavenly Father knoweth that we have need.

Gerbert, afterwards Pope Sylvester II., A. D. 920-1003, Albert Magnus and his contemporary, Roger Bacon, of the thirteenth century, taught the inductive system of philosophy hundreds of years before Lord Bacon was born. Draper, that eminent Protestant philosopher, writing of Leonardo da Vinci, that universal genius of the fifteenth century, says: "To him and not to Lord Bacon must be attributed the renaissance of science." Time and space forbid me to mention the contributions of her children to the wealth of the world through her travelers and navigators. The names of Marco Polo, Columbus, Da Gama and Magellan recall them all. Need I mention the long list of Benedictines, Jesuits and Augustinians who gave the first impetus to the erection of observatories and the dissemination of astronomical knowledge among the masses, and as well the knowledge of higher mathematics, and all branches of mechanical science. True lovers of science will not hesitate to acknowledge the indebtedness which the world owes to Mersenne, the "Father of Acoustics," to Grimaldi and Descartes on light, Fourier on heat, Galvani, Nolle, Volta and Ampere on electricity, Casselli on the telegraph, to Archbishop Spalatro for the first true

explanation of the rainbow, to Secchi in meteorology, to Schyrle for the double telescope, field and opera glasses, to Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas Aquinas in chemistry, to Father Leurochon who anticipated Watt on steam by one hundred and fifty years and showed its application to motors, to Belasco de Gary, who, in 1543, anticipated Robert Fulton in steamboats, to the Abbe Hautefeuille who anticipated the gas engine, to Fathers Galien and Lana in aerial navigation, to Gutenberg and Caxton in printing and printing presses, and to Agricola in metallurgy. And so I might continue in every branch of science and give the names of illustrious Catholic discoverers, both ancient and modern. Those who wish to pursue this topic and find verification for my statements are referred to that very interesting and instructive work by Father Zahm of Notre Dame University, entitled *Catholic Science and Scientists*. I must add, however, the words of the non-Catholic Gladstone upon the same subject: "The Roman Catholic Church has marched for fifteen hundred years at the head of human civilization, and has driven harnessed to its chariot, as the horses of a triumphal car, the chief intellectual and material forces of the world. Its art has been the art of the world, its genius, the genius of the world, its greatness, glory, grandeur and majesty have been almost, though not absolutely all that, in these respects, the world has to boast of."

I would gladly omit all references to Protestant opposition, not only to science in particular, but to education in general, but justice to my subject and to the cause of truth forbid. My authority will be found in the writings of J. W. Draper and other non-Catholic authors. Luther declared universities to be "synagogues of perdition." "All high schools," he says, "should be razed to the ground." He called Aristotle "a beast," and Galileo "a fool." John Calvin admitted that "so far as science is concerned, nothing is owed to the Reformation." By the year 1525, the great universities at Erfurt, Wittenberg, Leipsic, Rostock, Heidelberg, Freiburg and Basle "seemed dead and buried. The rostrums of the professors and the benches of the students were empty." The same was true of the great university of Vienna. From 7000 students it dwindled to a dozen. The same blighting effect was seen in Switzerland and Holland, and a prolonged period of scientific drouth followed its introduction into England, Scotland and Scandinavia. The spirit of persecution which then dominated Protestantism extended to all matters social as well as religious, intellectual as well as political. Hallam, in his "Constitutional History of England," admits that "persecution is the deadly original sin of the Reformed Churches," Lecky, in his "Rationalism in Europe," says: "Among the early Protestants, persecution was a distinct and definite doc-

trine." Tycho Brahe, the great Danish astronomer, like Kepler, was a martyr of science. His costly observatory was razed to the ground, and his astronomical instruments destroyed by Protestant furies as the "work of the devil." Descartes was persecuted in Holland for advocating the most sublime of all modern proofs of the existence of the Deity. The second Marquis of Worcester in England, as Lord Macaulay says, in his "History of England," "was suspected of being a madman, and known to be a Papist;" and, for such reasons, the honor and rights of discovering the steam engine were stolen from him and given to Watt, whose patent from Parliament is dated over a hundred years later.

But such persecutions have been constant in England and the harvest is not yet ended. Honorable Andrew T. White, President of Cornell University and Ambassador to Germany, has written: "Of all countries, England furnishes the most bitter opponents of geology." On the other hand, speaking of Cardinal Wiseman, he says: "The conduct of this pillar of the Roman Catholic Church contrasts nobly with that of timid Protestants, who were filling England with shrieks and denunciations." With this same bigotry, Harvey, Jenner and Simpson were opposed in medicine. Quinine, first introduced by the Jesuits, was denounced as a Papal device, intended to poison the Protestants.

But they were not all enemies to science. Many had the true Catholic spirit and welcomed truth for its own sake. "The day is near at hand," wrote Kepler, "when one shall know the truth in the book of nature as in the Holy Scriptures, and, when one shall rejoice in the harmony of both revelations." Sir Isaac Newton, with all his knowledge, felt "like a boy playing on the seashore . . . while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered" before him. "The true chemist," says Sir Humphrey Davy, "sees God in all the manifold forms of the eternal world." Such, indeed, has been the testimony of all lovers of truth. From Job, who sang of the "sweet influences of the Pleiades," to Galileo, who viewed them through the first telescope, to Linnaeus, "who traced God's footprints in the works of his Creator," to Humboldt, Herschell, Dana, Faraday, Edison, Marconi, like mountain peaks reflecting the glory of the sun, God handed down the torch of science, and caused them to shed light on His revelations in the rocks and stars;—and all these were distinguished for their belief in God and the ardor of their religious convictions.

The evolution of truth in the material and spiritual world presents a striking parallel. The history of creation as written upon the rocks and in the stars was all recorded there, before man trod the earth. Its development has been gradual. God's method of

unfolding it to our vision has been the same as that employed in the development of infallible truth through the Church. "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now," was a declaration of this Divine method of evolution by the Saviour Himself. From time to time, as man became prepared for it and the necessity existed, he was made acquainted with the science of navigation, with steam and electricity. It was necessary for man's complete development that he should be encouraged, spurred on to greater and nobler deeds. In order to be prepared for that angelic state towards which he is advancing, he must know whence he came and whither he is tending. This knowledge is not written upon the rocks nor in the stars. It is the subject of direct revelation. From time to time God has revealed this truth, and as rapidly as man was prepared to receive it and profit by it. To the patriarchs and prophets and priests of the Jewish Church, much of this truth was revealed. The fact that paradise was lost and must be regained was a revelation of truth ingrained into the Jewish Church. They were taught to look forward to the birth of a new Adam, who would withstand all the temptations of the devil, who would bruise the serpent's head, who would be a perfect example of obedience to God's Will, who would be Immanuel, God with us, and save the people from the penalty incurred by man's first disobedience. The rulers of the Jews at the dawn of the Christian era failed to comprehend this revelation. They wanted a king who would command their army and deliver them from the Romans. They were not over anxious to be delivered from their sins. Not being prepared in their hearts to receive the truth, they crucified their Lord and Saviour, and thus the great truths surrounding His birth, developing His life, and made clear by His death, were left to be revealed and taught through the Church which He founded. God's Will entire was thus delivered. His Church became the repository of all truth concerning the faith that should be believed, and the morals that should be practiced by man. From time to time, as the occasion demanded it, and as man became prepared to receive it, this faith has been declared by the Church, evils have been denounced and men and nations held to strict accountability.

That there is and should be such a power in the world follows logically from a belief in God, the Creator and Preserver of mankind. In order to obey God, we must know His Will. There must of necessity, therefore, be a medium through which that Will becomes articulate, and that medium must have power and authority and wisdom from on high to infallibly declare that Will. The rest is a matter of history. The Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic

Church needs no apologists. The continuity of her life from the beginning has been demonstrated so often that denials have ceased, and new methods of attack are now resorted to. Chiefest and cheapest of these is the oft repeated prophecy that her race is run, her career ended, that she has become corrupt, moribund and is about to die. I hope it may not prove tiresome to here repeat what Lord Macaulay, the Protestant historian, has written in reply to such prophets in his day. "There is not, and there never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church. The history of that Church joins together the two great ages of human civilization. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when cameleopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are but as of yesterday when compared with the line of Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in unbroken series from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the 19th century, to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice comes next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared to the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigor. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustine, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age. Her acquisitions in the New World have more than compensated for what she has lost in the old. Her spiritual ascendancy extends over the vast countries which lie between the plains of the Missouri and Cape Horn, countries which a century hence, may not improbably contain a population as large as that which now inhabits Europe. The members of her communion are certainly not fewer than a hundred and fifty millions; and it will be difficult to show that all other Christian sects united amount to a hundred and twenty millions. Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca.

And she may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's. . . . Four times since the authority of the Church of Rome was established on Western Christendom has the human intellect risen up against her yoke. Twice that Church remained completely victorious. Twice she came forth from the conflict bearing the marks of cruel wounds, but with the principle of life still strong within her. When we reflect on the tremendous assaults she has survived, we find it difficult to conceive in what way she is to perish."

III. THE CHURCH'S PRACTICAL LIFE.

The Catholic Church is not wanting in her daily bread or spiritual life. Her doctrines and ritual are not contrary to reason. They satisfy the cravings of the human heart. Why all men should be Catholics.

Thus far I have endeavored to show why Protestantism has failed in its defense of the Christian religion; why it has been unable to meet the objections of secular thought, and why Catholicism alone is able to give a reasonable and unassailable answer to these objections. In the word *Protestantism* I include all forms of Christian belief which, although differing widely among themselves, yet unite in rejecting the jurisdiction of the Pope and in denying the doctrine of infallibility. Outside of all Protestant denominations, however, and gathered together in common centers of thought, in societies, clubs, lodges and other organizations, are men and women of earnest minds and sincere purposes, intent upon doing the best there is in life, and admiring much they see in the work which the Catholic Church is doing in the world, who hold aloof from her communion, because they imagine her forms and ceremonies are but empty sounds, vain repetitions, signifying nothing. To them her doctrines are without meaning, her ceremonies are heathenish superstitions, and her organization a slavish tyranny, dwarfing the mind and impeding the growth of civilization.

They will not taste and see how glorious and satisfying is the bread of life with which she feeds her children. They will not drink of the water of life which she gives freely. They will not submit to the restorative of penance which she administers, nor lead the life which, in her wisdom and experience, has been found to be most conducive to the growth of a better man and a better woman. In

politics such men are willing to be governed by experience. In law they are willing to be controlled by precedents. In medicine they are willing to take the doses prescribed by those who are skilled in the diseases of the body. But when it comes to their immortal souls and the life beyond the grave, they believe that every man should be his own lawyer, his own doctor, his own priest, and interpret the laws of God to suit himself. They are willing to admit that such a course can only result in anarchy when applied to government, and in death when applied to medicine; and yet, will put up with any old or new thing which offers a nostrum for the health and welfare of the soul, provided only, it be not the one recommended by the Catholic Church.

They can believe in one government, composed of three co-ordinate powers, the President, the Congress and the Supreme Court. They can see three leaves of clover growing upon the same stem, and understand how they can be one shamrock. They can believe with Democritus, that the world, including every creature in it, and especially man, is God. They can believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, and yet reject as the veriest nonsense, the doctrine that these three persons can, in any reasonable or mystical sense, be one God.

Thinkers of this class can readily believe, upon rational grounds, how Almighty God could create man out of the dust of the earth, but are unwilling to believe that He did, even when the revealed word of God asserts it, the Church confirms it, and there is no evidence to the contrary. They can understand how the same Omnipotent Being could take upon Himself the form of man and be born of a Virgin, and present himself to the world, and live the life of a perfect man for our example, and die upon a shameful cross for our redemption, and yet, in the face of all the testimony, refuse to believe that He did. They assume it to be unreasonable and unjust, that God should so love the world as to give His only Son to die upon the cross for our redemption.

Others see no inconsistency in believing in God, and disbelieving that He has revealed Himself to man; in believing that He had a purpose in creating man, and disbelieving that He has revealed what that purpose was. All men recognize the necessity of a power to finally and infallibly declare what the law is, and yet, how many declare it to be rank tyranny to permit a church, founded and empowered by God Himself, to interpret His laws. They can readily understand how God could found such a church and give it such authority, and yet, in the face of all history, in the face of the fact that she never made a mistake or told a lie, refuse to believe that He did.

It must be constantly borne in mind that this paper is dealing with Catholicism and Reason. I am not speaking from the standpoint of theology. In discussing the subject of the Sacraments, I am not dealing with the theological aspects of them, nor with the Divine command which established them. I am dealing with the fact that they are all reasonable and beneficial from a material and practical standpoint. The Sacraments of Baptism, Penance, Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony are designed to promote holy living and holy dying. They are parts of the life of the Church, by means of which her children are educated, sustained and fortified against the assaults of the devil, and led from the cradle to the grave. They find their warrant in the commands of the Saviour. They are necessary to salvation, and all those who follow them most closely and devoutly will testify to their helpfulness and restraining power in leading a good life.

Of all these, the one most stubbornly attacked is the Sacrament of Penance. The confessional, to all such, is the great enemy of personal liberty. It is a common belief that the priest gets hold of secrets in this way, which enables him to get such a hold upon his flock that his will becomes supreme in all matters where he chooses to exercise it. We all know that when a child does wrong, the best thing for that child to do is to confess the wrong. When a man injures his neighbor we all admit that the right and manly thing to do is to apologize, that is, confess the wrong and make restitution. We only differ as to the person to whom the confession should be made. Shall the child confess to the parent only? Shall the man confess to his injured neighbor only? Our answer is that such a confession is only partial. An injury has been done to God as well as to man. The rights of the neighbor have been invaded, but a law of God has also been broken. The Protestant remedy for this latter infraction is to kneel down in our closet and pray God for forgiveness. But this does not humble pride. It is too much like keeping it to oneself. Besides, we miss thereby the wise and fatherly counsel of the priest, who is experienced in all diseases of the sin-sick soul. Moreover, we must do penance. It is not enough to confess our sins, to apologize and to make restitution. We must do something which will be a helpful restraint against committing them again and this self-inflicted punishment is called penance. Let anybody try it fairly and honestly and he will find, as I have, that it makes him a better child, a better father, a better neighbor, a better citizen and a more honest man.

And now, in answer to the *sic semper tyrannis* argument, which is usually the last refuge of the assassin, let me warn all objectors of the standing "defi" of the priesthood, that there never has been

a case of violation of the secrecy of the confessional. Even the ex-priests and renegades, who have disgraced their sacred office by entering the lecture field against it, refuse to divulge its secrets, and concur in the declaration that the secrets of the confessional have always found a safe depository in the faithful breast of the priest.

I have never heard of but one that approached a violation and that was so unique that I must tell it, even at the cost of being charged with dealing in old chestnuts. A little boy went with his mother to confession. After she retired her little son asked if he might go in. To this his mother consented and the little fellow went in, well pleased because he knew and loved the priest. The good father told him to kneel down and say a little prayer, and then tell him all about it. The little man said the prayer, but when it came to confession, he said he didn't like to tell. The priest said: "All right, my son, if you have nothing to tell, you can go back to your mother." This made the lad all the more anxious to make his confession. He had a well defined idea about the confession in his own mind, but like many of our objectors, he was afraid the priest would give it away. So he said: "But will you ever tell if I do?" The priest assured him that he would not. Still the little lawyer thought it best to put the father under oath. "Will you hope to die if you do?" said the young inquisitor. "Yes," solemnly replied the much-amused priest. "Well, then, I'll tell you. Up in that apple tree by your barn there's a bird's nest with three eggs in it. Now don't you tell." The boy was given some further instructions on the subject of confessions in general and sent away with the priest's blessing.

Not long afterwards this same priest was preaching on the subject of the confession, when this same boy was present. The father was treating of many erroneous views of the Sacraments and illustrated his point by telling of the little boy's confession, but, of course, without mentioning any names. The little fellow, however, was too much excited and indignant to keep his seat, and before his mother could restrain him, he cried out: "There, I knowed you'd tell it." It was a long time before he could be brought to see that he, and not the priest, was the one who revealed the secrets of the confessional. He didn't know enough to keep still.

The ceremonies and ritual of the Catholic Church have long been a great stumbling block to many good people. They are called "heathenish," "ludicrous," "trappings of the sanctuary," and many other things calculated to bring them into disrepute. Many learned writers have thought they had dealt them both a death blow by showing that similar vestments and ceremonies were in use among the Egyptians, Persians, Greeks and Romans, long anterior to the Christian era. For the sake of the argument I shall not claim anything

for Divine authority for such things in the Jewish Church, nor for the fact that they were not abolished by the New Dispensation, any more than the sacrifice was abolished. Both were changed in kind. New vestments, new ceremonials, a new ritual, a new priesthood, a new and unbloody sacrifice were substituted for the old. The Jewish Church borrowed from the Egyptians, but the laws of Moses prescribed the use. All nations have partaken in the revelations of God. All are His children. He does not desire the death of any, but that all may inherit eternal life. Nevertheless, under His Divine inspiration and direction. He saw fit to choose one out of many nations to be His chosen people. Obedience was God's first command. For disobedience, Adam was rejected, and the Jews lost their power and prestige. While they continued God's faithful servants they were heirs to all there was. They might sip honey from every flower, gather wealth from all the earth, profit by the discoveries and inventions of their neighbors, take and use all things lawful for the greater glory of God and the adornment of His sanctuary. And this is what they did. They ransacked the earth to make of Solomon's Temple a fit habitation for the Great Jehovah.

There is development, according to scientific writers, which takes place in organisms as they rise in the scale of existence, and this law, they say, applies to social organisms as well as to individuals. This process, they say, consists in changes from a condition of heterogeneous homogeneity to one of homogeneous heterogeneity. These great words being translated mean, when applied to a subject, that the Holy Catholic Church, as an organism, did not spring like Minerva, full grown and full armed from the brain of Jupiter, but followed a process of natural selection and growth, called evolution. Chosen as a bride of Christ the Catholic Church may lawfully take for her adornment the wealth and beauty of the world. Architecture, music, the fine arts and sciences have all contributed in their way, and still contribute to the beauty of holiness and the glory of our sanctuaries, that they may be fit habitations for Him that created the heavens and the earth and all that therein is.

The power to appreciate the beauty and appropriateness of the ritual of the Church is a matter of education. Many a wise person has stood before some great painting and wondered at the praise bestowed upon it by the guide. I have seen visitors in a great art gallery turn away in disgust from the classic statue of Apollo. I know members of secret societies who take delight in all the robes and paraphernalia of the lodge room, and yet laugh at the Bishop's mitre and the lace embroidered vestments of the priests. The ringing of a bell sounds ridiculous to such persons at the altar, but all

right in the lodge room. Candles and incense are forms of superstition in the sanctuary, but when used at an initiation they have a distinct and appropriate meaning. Holy water and the Sign of the Cross are particularly obnoxious, but all sorts of signs, grips and liquids pass unchallenged, provided only they are used outside of the Catholic Church. Images of the men, who laid broad and deep the Constitution of our beloved country and perished in her defense, adorn our parks and public buildings. We stand before them, hats off, and pay silent homage to their greatness. But when the images of those who gave up their lives in defense of the Christian religion, whose martyr blood became the seed of the Church of the whole earth, are found in our churches, it becomes an act of idolatry. We do not pray to these images; but, believing as we do, that our heroic dead are as much alive as we, it is our custom to ask their intercession in our behalf. We pray for the dead who have gone hence, because we believe in prayer, and because it is an act of filial piety.

I cannot pass the subject of the Sacraments without saying something upon the reasonableness of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Under the Mosaic law divorces were permitted, but ever since our Lord pronounced the words: "Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder," marriage has been held by the Church to be a Sacrament, and the bond of matrimony indissoluble. The reason for it is found, not only in the unhappiness caused to the husband and wife, but most especially in the misery inflicted upon the children. The nation is founded upon the family unit. Anything, therefore, which disrupts the family tends to disrupt the nation. Divorce has been the prolific fruit of Protestantism. In the recent trial of Mr. Roberts, Congressman-elect from Utah, it was shown that the great founders of Protestantism winked at, if they did not favor polygamy. The following letter, translated from the original Latin of Luther's collected works (pp. 119-123, Wurtemberg Edition), addressed to Phillip, Landgrave of Hesse, speaks for itself:

"But if your Highness be fully resolved to take another wife we judge that it ought to be done secretly; that is, that none but the lady herself and a few trustworthy persons obliged to secrecy under the seal of confession, know anything of the matter. Hence it will not be attended with any important contradiction or scandal. For it is not unusual for princes to keep mistresses; and although the vulgar should be scandalized, the more prudent would understand this method of life and prefer it to adultery or other brutal and foul actions. There is no need of being much concerned for what men will say, provided all go right with conscience. Your Highness hath, therefore, not only the approbation of us all in a case of necessity, but

also the consideration we have made hereupon. We are most ready to serve your Highness. Dated at Wittemberg, the Wednesday after the Feast of St. Nicholas, 1539.

MARTIN LUTHER,
PHILIP MELANCTHON,
MARTIN BUCER,
ANTHONY CORVIN,

ADAM,
JOHN LENINGUE,
JUSTICE WINFORTE,
DIONYSIUS MELENTRE."

Calvin also declared: "It is not wise to prohibit the divorced adulterer from marrying again," (Am. Cyclop. Art. "Divorce"). Cranmer and Ridley, at the head of the Reformation in England, sanctioned the lust of Henry VIII. for Anne Boleyn, in order to advance their cause. The rapid growth of divorces in this country gives just cause for alarm. Deducting Catholics, the per cent. of divorces is rapidly approximating the number of marriages. As a consequence of the ease with which divorce can be obtained, marriage is entered into without due care, while the number of those who live in that relation without any marriage at all would stagger belief. The maintenance of the Catholic position on this subject is the only hope of the nation.

We honor the Blessed Virgin because she is the Mother of our Lord, the second Person of the adorable Trinity; and, because He is God, we call her *Mater Dei*, and ask her to intercede for us. It was necessary that she should be immaculate, because she was destined to be the Mother of our Lord. Believing Jesus of Nazareth to be the Son of God, and that miracles can be performed and natural laws suspended, it is neither difficult nor unreasonable to believe that a law of heredity could be and was suspended in her case. Around the Holy Name of Mary clings a love and devotion which has filled and thrilled the earth with poetry, art and song. Protestants have vied with Catholics in paying homage to her name. Can I better close this part of my discourse than by quoting the words put by Longfellow in the mouth of Prince Henry on gaining a view of Italy after passing the Alps:

O, had I the faith, as in the days gone by,
That knows no doubt and feared no mystery!

* * * * *

This is indeed the Blessed Mary's land,
Virgin and Mother of our Redeemer!
All hearts are touched and softened at her name;
Alike the bandit with the blood-stained hand,
The priest, the prince, the scholar, and the peasant,
The man of deeds, the visionary dreamer,
Pay homage as one ever present!
And even as children, who have much offended
A too indulgent father, in great shame,

Penitent, and yet not daring unattended
To go into his presence, at the gate
Speak with their sister, and confiding wait
'Til she goes in before and intercedes;
So men, repenting of their evil deeds,
And yet not venturing rashly to draw near
With their requests an angry Father's ear,
Offer to her their prayers and their confession,
And she for them in Heaven makes intercession.
And, if our faith had given us nothing more
Than this example of all womanhood,
So mild, so merciful, so strong, so good,
So patient, peaceful, loyal, loving, pure,
This were enough to prove it higher and truer
Than all the creeds the world had known before.

To his Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, both through his works and in personal conversations, to Archbishop Keane and Father Chapuis of the Catholic University in Washington, to Father Tabb of St. Charles' College, to the writings of Di Bruno, the non-Catholic Mallock, and Father Zahm, and to the kindly criticism and wise suggestions of Father Clifford of the Cathedral in Los Angeles, I owe most that is good in this paper. I hope that what is bad and indifferent may be charged to the more pressing demands of my profession.

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