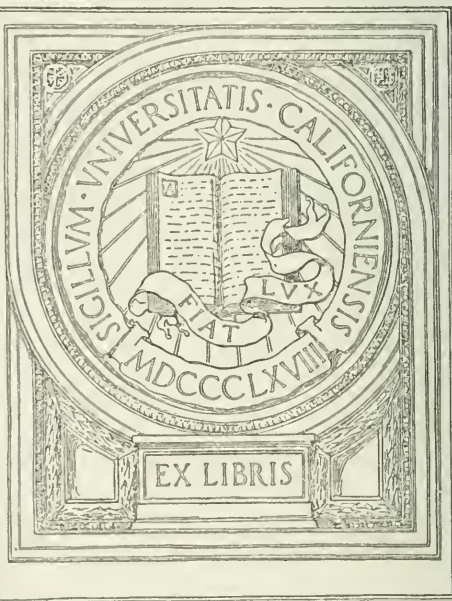


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BLUNDERS AND FORGERIES.

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR.*



HISTORY OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST  
IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Two Vols. Demy 8vo. 18s.



LONDON :  
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER, & CO., LTD

# BLUNDERS AND FORGERIES:

## *HISTORICAL ESSAYS*

BY

REV. T. E. BRIDGETT,

OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MOST HOLY REDEEMER.

"What blunderer is yonder that playeth diddil,  
He fyndeth false mesures out of his fond fiddil."  
SKELTON (*The Crowne of Lawrell*).

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER, & CO. LTD

PATERNOSTER HOUSE, CHARING CROSS ROAD.

1891.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE seven Essays that make up this volume are reprints, enlarged or curtailed, of papers that have appeared in various Reviews and Magazines. I have selected them as bearing on one subject—misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the Catholic Church, for the most part as regards historical facts. There is, however, a notable difference between the two parts into which the volume is divided. In the second part I expose some deliberate perversions of truth, forgeries conceived in open-eyed malice, and handed on to our own days by prejudice wilfully blind. But the first part treats merely of blunders, neither conscious lies nor yet innocent mistakes. To err is human, but there is always blame attached to blundering. In the examples which I have given, the blame varies from that of haste, or undue self-reliance, to that of prejudice and willingness, or even eagerness, to believe evil.

Several of the writers whose blunders I have exhibited are eminent in literature, and of course far



superior to myself in general learning; yet a common sailor may set right a philosopher or a statesman as regards nautical terms and facts. My contention throughout the volume is this, that the landsman should not swagger about the deck as if he were bred to the sea, while he cannot distinguish between a binocle and a binnacle.

There is a well-known saying attributed to a great scholar: Verify your quotations. Quotations must not only be verified, but traced to their origin. The last Essay in this volume will show that writers of our own day, who take pride in accuracy, are perpetuating old calumnies because, while they verify the correctness of their quotations from Strype, they are content to take on trust the references of Strype himself. A second rule, not less important to the historical or theological student, is: Consult. "There is no such folly," writes Mr. Mozley, "no such cause of utter breakdown and disgrace, as the silly pride of doing things quite by oneself, without assistance."<sup>1</sup> In addition, then, to the various historical points recorded in my Index, there is a general maxim enforced throughout these Essays, and which is one of charity as well as of accuracy, a maxim I would willingly have printed on my title-page: CONSULT AND VERIFY, VERIFY AND CONSULT.

<sup>1</sup> Reminiscences of Oriel, p. 358.

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*PART I.*  
BLUNDERS.



# BLUNDERS AND FORGERIES.

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## ESSAY I.

### *A MARE'S NEST—A PRIEST WITH TWO WIVES.*

THE Rev. W. Stephens published, in 1876, "Memorials of the South Saxon See and Cathedral Church of Chichester." In his notice of Ralph Neville, who was bishop from 1222-1244, he "paraphrases, in an abridged form," some familiar letters written to that prelate by his steward. The bishop was residing in London, engaged upon his duties as Lord Chancellor, and his steward, an ecclesiastic, makes him acquainted with the temporal administration of his estates, and incidentally with some diocesan news. In the midst of a letter, detailing the havoc committed by the foxes, and asking for dogs to hunt them down, he writes (in Mr. Stephens's version): "I think you ought to know that the Vicar of Mundham keeps two wives; he pretends to have a papal dispensation, contrary to the statutes of a general council."<sup>1</sup>

Such a plum as this could scarcely escape the fingers of the "little Jack Horners" who review for the weekly periodicals. Thus the notice of Mr. Stephens's book in

<sup>1</sup> Memorials, p. 80.

the *Spectator*,<sup>1</sup> though a very short one, finds room for the "curious report," and for the remark that "The Vicar seems to have been in his way an Infallibilist," to which wise or witty reflection it is strange that the reviewer did not also add another—that the bishop's steward seems to have been a Gallican, in placing the authority of a general council above that of the Pope.

The letter which Mr. Stephens abridges was first printed by Dr. Shirley, in his "Collection of Royal and other Historical Letters illustrative of the reign of Henry III.," edited by him for the Master of the Rolls; and the learned editor was himself so struck by the paragraph that, in the preface to his second volume, he especially mentions "the report of the audacious chaplain who keeps two wives and claims a papal dispensation" among the "details which bring home with vividness the domestic life of the period,"<sup>2</sup> a remark which shows that learned editors may make sad blunders no less than anonymous reviewers.

It would be well if those who deal in ecclesiastical documents of the middle ages would remember that every profession has its technical language or its slang phrases, the force of which has to be carefully learnt; and that the proper persons from whom to learn it are generally those who have inherited the profession and its mysteries. This very obvious reflection would have saved Dr. Shirley from falling into a trap, by interpreting a technical phrase literally, and thus mistaking two benefices for two women, and a pluralist for a bigamist.

A remark of an Archbishop of York, who lived only a few years before the period at which the Chichester

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 6, 1877.

<sup>2</sup> At p. xxv.



steward's letter was written, may be here appropriately quoted. William of Newburgh states that Archbishop Roger was a great enemy of monks, and that he once said that his predecessor, Turstin, had never more grievously erred (*nunquam gravius deliquisse*) than when he built the Monastery of Fountains. When he noticed that the bystanders were scandalised at this word: "Bah!" he said, "you are laymen if you cannot perceive the meaning of a word."<sup>1</sup>

Before establishing the metaphorical character of the Vicar's wives, let us ascertain the exact text under discussion. It is thus printed by Dr. Shirley: "*Nolo domine excellentiam vestram [latere quo] d . . . . quidam capellanus, Willelmus Dens nomine, vicarius ecclesie de Mundeham, duas habet uxores, ut dicitur, quarum . . . . ns apud Cicestriam. Qui quidem Wilhelmus literas detulit a summo pontifice, ut dixit, sed in partibus Sussexiæ . . . nt quod nunquam literæ illæ a conscientia domini papæ emanaverunt, sed contra statuta concilii generalis fuerunt impetratæ. Unde,*" &c.<sup>2</sup> "Your excellence ought to be informed that a certain chaplain, William Dens by name (or William Tooth), has two wives, as the saying is, of whom . . . at Chichester. This William has brought letters from the Sovereign Pontiff, so he has said, but in the parts of Sussex . . . that those letters never emanated from the conscience of the Pope (or, never came from the Pope duly informed), but were obtained contrary to the decrees of the general council. Hence, if it seems good to your holiness, please to make known to your

<sup>1</sup> *Laici estis, nisi percipere potestis vim verbi. De Rebus Anglicis, l. iii cap. 5.*

<sup>2</sup> *Letter 230th, vol. i. p. 277.*

official whatever you may determine in this matter." The original of this letter is preserved in the Record Office, and is partly illegible. The gaps, marked above by dots, are a little more than an inch in length. The word *quarum*, printed by Dr. Shirley, can no longer be deciphered; but that is unimportant, for the words *duas habet uxores* are quite distinct.

But it is very important to remark that the translation adopted both by Dr. Shirley and Mr. Stephens is misleading to the mere English reader. *Duas habet uxores* is simply "has or possesses two wives." If those wives are figurative, the expression will mean "holds" two benefices. If it is not figurative, it may well be translated "keeps" two wives. But let it be remembered that the original is more ambiguous than the word used by these authors.

But it is still more important to notice that Mr. Stephens has omitted altogether the words *ut dicitur* which follow *uxores*. As he was only abridging, he no doubt passed them over as unessential. I suppose he considered them as equivalent to *ut fertur*, "as it is reported." Probably this was also the view of Dr. Shirley, who speaks of "the report," though his words may refer to the report of the steward to the bishop rather than to the rumour current in Sussex.

Yet, when I shall have shown how common was the use of the metaphor of "having two wives," the reader will probably agree that the words should be thus translated: "The vicar has two wives, *as the saying is*," and not "as is reported." I will not, however, insist on this translation, but will argue out the matter even in the other interpretation.

Let us, then, first consider what are the intrinsic pro-

babilities of the case. That there should have been a clerical delinquent in the thirteenth century is, of course, just as natural as that he should be found in the nineteenth. That a priest at that date should have wished to call his concubine his wife was far more natural then than now, since history bears abundant witness to the attempt. But where did Dr. Shirley find anything to show that it was according "to the domestic life of the period" for priest or layman to claim to have two wives at once? However, had this been all, the interpretation might have stood. Extraordinary or monstrous impudence, though it does not illustrate the manners of any period, is at no time impossible. The incestuous Corinthian who claimed to have his father's wife is no fair specimen of the first Christians, yet he was found in the early Church.

It is not supposed—at least I trust it is not, even in the nineteenth century—that any pope really did grant to William Tooth a licence to marry two wives at once. But the notion that any English priest dared openly claim to have received such a grant from Innocent III. or Gregory IX. is just as absurd as it would be to imagine that the incestuous Corinthian gave out publicly that his conduct had been specially authorised by St. Paul.

But there are other expressions in the letter which should have made Dr. Shirley pause. What general council had forbidden clerical bigamy? What general council had forbidden popes to dispense with priests to retain two wives at once? What example is there of a pope of the thirteenth century granting a priest a dispensation to have even one wife? The truth is that, if the grave Dr. Shirley, and the facetious writer in the

*Spectator*, had only asked themselves what was the general council alluded to by the Chichester steward, they would have found a clue to the mystery. They would have discovered, or recollected, that only a few years before, in 1215, the fourth Lateran Council had been held under the presidency of Innocent III., and that in this council the decrees against plurality of benefices, already issued by the third council of Lateran, in 1179, had been renewed. They would then, perhaps, have conjectured that the two wives were really two churches, parishes, or benefices; and they would have been strengthened in this view when they noticed that the council of Lateran had reserved to the Pope the power to dispense in this decree. Then all would have been plain. William Tooth held two benefices, contrary to the decree of a general council, which the bishops were just then busy in enforcing; but he claimed a papal dispensation. This was no very monstrous claim, but it was reported in that part of Sussex that he had got his dispensation by false representations, and that it was invalid.

There is not a particle of doubt that this is the real meaning of the letter, and it may, perhaps, be interesting, and even useful, to trace the rise and progress of the metaphor used by the bishop's correspondent, and to show that the interpretation I have given is not merely plausible, but perfectly natural, and indeed the only possible interpretation.

The letter of the steward is without date, but, in the very year in which Ralph Neville became Bishop of Chichester, 1222, a great national council had been celebrated in Oxford under Archbishop Stephen Langton. In this council an abuse, the reverse of that of

uniting benefices, though proceeding from the same source of avarice, had been condemned. The wording of this decree will make it clear that the steward was not making use of a new or unusual metaphor when he spoke of the two wives of the Vicar of Mundeham.

“According to canonical decrees,” so runs the 13th canon, or as the Latin might be freely but accurately translated, “in the language of canon law (*juxta canonicas sanctiones*) a similarity is sometimes remarked between carnal and spiritual matrimony. Hence, since nature does not allow one wife to be shared by two husbands, it is altogether unfitting that the Church of God, which ought to be the one bride of one husband, should be, as it were, the concubine of many.”

The metaphor here referred to is not unfamiliar to us at the present day. Burnet, in his “History of the Reformation,”<sup>1</sup> tells us that Bishop Fisher used to say that his church was his wife, and that he would never part with her because she was poor. The same thing is reported of him in a contemporary account preserved in the Vatican, and published by Mr. Pocock.<sup>2</sup> It is probable that it was in direct imitation of this example that Thomas Wilson, the Protestant Bishop of Sodor and Man, when Queen Caroline offered to translate him to a richer see, replied, “I will not leave my wife in her old age because she is poor.” Pope Callixtus III., when Bishop of Valencia, had used very similar language.<sup>3</sup>

The metaphor is thus elaborated in the third Provincial Synod celebrated by the English Catholic hierarchy in 1859: “As the Bishop’s diocese is the spouse to

<sup>1</sup> Book III., vol. i. p. 708.

<sup>2</sup> Records, vol. ii. p. 554.

<sup>3</sup> Rainaldus, *an.* 1458, n. 4.

whom God has united him in the bonds of conjugal love; and as no more precious diadem can crown her than the ecclesiastical virtues everywhere resplendent, no more beauteous zone can gird her than a circling band of pious clerics, he will not be able to offer her a more acceptable gift than a holy household."

The origin of this metaphor is to be found in the fact that the bishop or pastor represents our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Bridegroom of the Church; but, perhaps, its great prevalence in canon law, whenever the question of plurality of benefices is under discussion, may be due to the letter of St. Jerome to Oceanus, in which he discusses at considerable length the meaning of the words of St. Paul (1 Tim. iii. 2; Tit. i. 6), that a bishop must be "the husband of one wife." Amongst various interpretations, he alludes to one which he acknowledges to be forced: "Some," he says, *coacte*, "interpret wives as churches, husbands as bishops, so that churches are called bishops' wives. According to this sense, the Apostle would mean that a bishop is not to be translated from one see to another, ne virginis pauperulæ societate contempta, ditioris adulteræ quærat amplexus."<sup>1</sup>

However far-fetched might be this interpretation, it was too convenient to be neglected, at least as an accommodation of holy words, when the endowments, first of bishoprics and afterwards of parishes, introduced the abuses of translations and pluralities. Thus Gerbert, afterwards Pope Silvester II., who died in 1003, writes on the words, "Husband of one wife," as follows: "If we look to the mere letter, these words forbid a man who has been twice married to be ordained a

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 69.



bishop; but if we ascend to a higher sense, they *forbid a bishop to usurp two churches*; and if you will go still deeper into the very heart of the matter, they warn the bishop, lest, after having espoused the true Catholic dogma, he take up heretical opinions.”<sup>1</sup> This treatise of Gerbert was soon attributed to St. Ambrose, and being full of weighty matter, pithily expressed, was frequently quoted, and texts from it introduced into the canon law.

But it was believed in the middle ages that the convenient metaphor was derived from higher and earlier authorities than even St. Jerome or St. Ambrose. The famous Isidore Mercator, in the ninth century, gives, in his decretals, letters which he attributes to Popes Evarist and Callixtus.

Pope Evarist has a long drawn-out comparison between the duties of husband and wife, and the reciprocal duties of a bishop and his church. From this foundation he concludes that a bishop must not leave his diocese to take another, and compares such conduct to divorce and adultery.

Pope Callixtus is made to say: “As a wife must not be led into adultery, and as she must not be judged or governed except by her own husband, so also the *bishop's wife*, which is his church or parish.”

These passages, being attributed to popes and martyrs, were received with the greatest veneration, and are found in all subsequent collections of canons, as in that of Burchard, Bishop of Worms, who died in 1025, as well as in Gratian.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> De dignitate sacerdotali, in Appendice Operum S. Ambrosii (Ed. B. n.).

<sup>2</sup> Causa 7, qu. 1, can. 39.



Another great authority, who had given popularity and weight to the metaphor, was Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims in the ninth century. He is writing about Actard, who, having been Bishop of Nantes, had been chosen Archbishop of Tours, and who wished to retain his old see along with the new one. Amongst other things, Hincmar says: "In a letter of Pope Nicholas, of happy memory, to certain bishops of Bulgaria,<sup>1</sup> it is related that the Greeks raged against him, because, like his predecessors, he had commanded them to refrain from their wives, whereas they wished to ordain by the canons that it is lawful to have wives. But we Gallic bishops of the present day endeavour to make new canons to allow us, by a spiritual adultery, which is worse than carnal incontinence, *to have at the same time two wives*—that is, two sees, or at least a wife and a concubine; or while our first wife lives, though sickly—that is, while our church is suffering from persecution or spoliation, to unite to ourselves another wife.<sup>2</sup>

From the eighth century downwards the metaphor became habitual and commonplace. The *Regula Canonicorum* of St. Chrodegand, in the eighth century, says: "Let not a priest have more than one church, as a man one wife." A council of Rheims, of the year 813, decreed: "As in each church there ought to be a priest, so the church, which is his spouse or wife—*quæ sponsa vel uxor ejus dicitur*—may not be divided between several priests." This canon found its place in Gratian,<sup>3</sup> in Burchard,<sup>4</sup> and in Ivo of Chartres.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Migne has *Belgium*.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. 31.

<sup>3</sup> Causa xxi. qu. 2, canon: *Sicut in unaquaque*.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. iii. cap. 45.

<sup>5</sup> Pars, iii. cap. 49.

Still more apposite is a decree of a council of Nantes: "As a bishop may have but one city, and a man but one wife, so a priest but one church," quoted by Burchard.<sup>1</sup> The eighth of the canons made in England in the time of Edgar adopts the same language: "We teach that no priest wilfully desert the church for which he was consecrated, but hold it as his lawful wife." An English episcopal charge of the tenth century says: "To no altar-thane is it allowed to marry. The church is the mass-priest's wife."<sup>2</sup>

The figures of wife, divorce, adultery, bigamy, became so well known that at last literal prohibitions began to be understood metaphorically. Thus, one of the apostolic canons says: "Let not a bishop, on pretext of piety, cast away his own wife, and if he does so, let him be excommunicated." The meaning of this canon was that, when a married man had been elevated to the episcopate, as was frequently the case in early days, although henceforth he was obliged to live in continence, yet he could not put his wife away from him, as if the marriage was dissolved by his ordination, nor expose her to the perils of the world. But as time went on, and men were no longer or very seldom ordained in their wife's lifetime, this canon came to be understood in a purely metaphorical sense, and to be quoted as if it had been originally made against bishops who should forsake their dioceses. Though it is given in its literal sense in Gratian,<sup>3</sup> yet by Burchard of Worms,<sup>4</sup> and by Ivo of Chartres,<sup>5</sup> it is quoted as if it had only reference to a diocese.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iii. cap. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Thorpe ii. 334.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pars. Dist. 28, ch. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. i. cap. 78.

<sup>5</sup> Decreti Pars. v. cap. 184.

St. Ivo of Chartres, a contemporary of St. Anselm, and a great authority on canon law, thus writes in one of his epistles: "As to the priest who resigned the church which he governed, not being compelled to do so, into your hands, and who now seeks, by the help of laymen, to ascend into the chamber of the spouse whom he repudiated as unworthy of him, I answer, that he must stand by his own judgment, and not presume to commit adultery with the wife whom he divorced, during the lifetime of the priest who is now united to her."<sup>1</sup> When the notorious Ralph Flambard, Bishop of Durham, by the influence of William Rufus, of whom he was the agent, was thrusting himself into a Norman diocese, the same Ivo opposed the attempt. This is the language of his letter to the Archbishop of Rouen and the Bishop of Evreux: "Since from the very infancy of the world carnal bigamy was blamed in Lamech, how can it be praised in the Church, which is the spouse of Christ? Let, therefore, Ralph, Bishop of Durham, be expelled from his second see, *that no bigamy be admitted*. I speak to those who are not ignorant of the law."<sup>2</sup>

One more example of the conventional metaphor—and an English one—will bring us almost to the time of the Chichester letter. William of Newburgh composed his chronicle towards the end of the twelfth century. Writing of Walter of Coutance, named Bishop of Lincoln, in 1182, he says: "But he did not long remain there. Being shortly elected to the Bishopric of Rouen, he bade farewell to his new spouse, being attracted by the greater charms of another."<sup>3</sup>

It must be remembered that these and similar passages, however little known to modern reviewers and

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 131.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. 153.

<sup>3</sup> De rebus Anglicis (lib. iii. c. 8).

editors, were constantly under the eyes of the bishops and their officials in the thirteenth century. During that period a most determined stand was made in England against the abuse of pluralities. It was an age of legislation, especially in England, as a glance at the synodal decrees, collected by Wilkins, will prove. John of Athona, or Ayton, a canon of Lincoln, writing about 1290, says: "In no other country, as I conceive, are so many laws made, and are they so little observed, as in England."<sup>1</sup> But whatever was the success or failure of the efforts of Councils, at least the subject of pluralities and the metaphorical language in which they had been condemned by the canons, were as familiar as household words to the ecclesiastics of those days; and writing to one another, they would make use of the metaphor, even without a word of context to indicate that it was metaphor, yet without the slightest danger of misunderstanding.

The national council of Oxford, of 1222, has already been quoted, in which the "language of canon law" about priests' marriages to their figurative wives is alluded to and repeated. In 1237 another national council was held in London, at which St. Edmund presided. Ralph Neville, Bishop of Clichester, was present. The 13th constitution of this synod is as follows: "As regards residence of rectors in their churches, we have need to make provision rather by active measures than by statutes, since there are councils of Roman Pontiffs speaking more clearly than light on this subject. We say exactly the same regarding those who, *in violation of a constitution of a general council,*

<sup>1</sup> In his commentaries printed at the end of Lyndwood, p. 36 (Ed. 1679).

*without a special dispensation of the apostolic see, presume to the ruin of their own souls to hold, at the same time, two or more dignities, rectories, or benefices with cure of souls.*" It should be noticed that the Chichester steward repeats almost word for word in his letter a part of this canon, and this would suffice to show—could any doubt remain—what general council and what dispensations he alludes to when he speaks of the two wives of the Vicar of Mundeham.

I think I am now justified in assuming that the words *ut dicitur* which follow *uxores* are intended to qualify that word, and to give it a metaphorical sense. They are equivalent to "as we say," or "as the phrase runs," or "as the proverb has it." For if we suppose that they mean simply "as is reported," and are intended to qualify the verb *habet*, then one would think it was the duty of the steward to make sure of the fact before denouncing a priest to his bishop. But again, does the writer show that the matter is only a rumour, when he immediately affirms that the vicar "has brought letters from Rome," and that the force of those letters is publicly discussed? According to the really absurd supposition of Dr. Shirley, the vicar is living openly with a wife at Mundeham, and not content with carrying on an intrigue at Chichester, he has there a second wife publicly known as such, and he justifies his bigamy before the outraged public by shaking in their faces his papal dispensation. In this theory we can only conjecture that William Tooth's reason for going to the expense of a double household was his fear lest the two ladies should quarrel if inhabiting the same harem; though whether the Pope's dispensation would have made the priest's life any more easy between the two,

though kept apart, must be decided by those who hold this novel view of mediæval polygamy.

To those, on the other hand, who have some real acquaintance "with the domestic life" and ecclesiastical life "of the period," and who know the strange subterfuges to which the clergy often had recourse in order to evade the prohibition of the general council of Lateran, there is no difficulty either in understanding that the two benefices lay geographically apart, or that the steward has just detected the existence of the second one at Chichester. One of these devices was to make over nominally a rectory to another person, retaining nearly all its fruits as vicar, while holding a second rectory or vicarage elsewhere. It was to prevent this that the immediate successor of Ralph Neville, St. Richard of Chichester, met it by a declaration that the prohibition against pluralities extended to two vicarages no less than to two rectories, or to a rectory with a vicarage. To detect the evasions and devices of avaricious ecclesiastics in this matter was one of the principal duties of the archdeacons or vicars-general in their visitations. The following points were to be inquired into, in 1252, in the diocese of Lichfield: "Whether any vicars make themselves rectors or *e converso*? Whether any, by long farming of a benefice, make themselves rectors or vicars? Whether any act as rectors or vicars, without having received institution from the bishop or other proper authority?"<sup>1</sup> And Archbishop Peckham, in 1279, issued a constitution at Reading, in which he requires the bishops to keep a correct list of the number and name of the churches in

<sup>1</sup> Burton Annals, p. 297 (Rolls Ed.). See similar questions in Bishop Grossteste's Letters, Letter 154.



their dioceses, the surnames and Christian names (cognomina, agnomina, vel prænomena) of the rectors, dates of collation, and titles, the age also of rectors or possessors of churches, their degree or order, and whether they are beneficed elsewhere, whether they have a dispensation for plurality, &c.

One other point remains to be noticed in this simple affair, out of which so much mystery has been made. Why, it may be asked, should the steward have doubted of the Pope's dispensation, if there were no greater stretch of papal prerogative involved than permission to enjoy two benefices? The answer is very easily given. Such dispensations were not given without a sufficient reason, and innumerable efforts were being made to get dispensations at Rome by fraudulent means, and it was the wish of the Roman Pontiffs that their dispensations should be carefully scrutinised, that their validity or invalidity might be detected.

"It is a maxim in law," says Burnet, "that if the Pope be surprised in anything, and bulls be procured upon false suggestion or untrue premises, they may be cancelled afterwards."<sup>1</sup> Much more, of course, was this the case with regard to rescripts like that in question. It was not even necessary for the Pope to cancel such a document. A bishop might declare it invalid, though, of course, an appeal would lie to the Holy See. Thus Pope Alexander III. had written to the Bishop of London in 1180, to say that it sometimes happens that the Pope writes to a bishop to give a benefice, and that he does this, perhaps, in ignorance that such a cleric already possesses a benefice. He wishes it, therefore, to be understood that, in such a case, if a cleric has a

<sup>1</sup> History of Reformation, i. 81 (Ed. Pocock).



benefice sufficient for his support, he should not receive another, unless in the Pope's letters express mention is made of the former one, *nor in any case if there should be scandal in obeying.* And the very Pope in whose reign the Chichester letter was probably written, Gregory IX., had, in the year 1234, incorporated this letter of his predecessor in his Decretals.<sup>1</sup>

Pope Innocent III. had also written in 1201, regarding the invalidity of his rescripts when obtained by false statements.<sup>2</sup> And the same Pope, in 1199, had used the following vigorous language on the subject in writing to the Archbishop of Milan: "Since we are wont so to word the rescripts of the Apostolic See, that of our own clear knowledge we take care that nothing be inserted in them which is faulty in law, we are moved to no little wonder, that as often as we address our letters to you or to your subjects, you write back that you are surprised, just as if we issued a command to do something wrong. Thus, you write to us, that since P., a cleric, has already a sufficient benefice in the church of N., you are surprised that we have sent letters to the provost of M. for his admission into that church. Now, had you paid proper attention to the wording of our letters, you would have found nothing in them that ought to have offended you. For, since in our letters there is no mention made of that prebend, and he is not called a canon, nor even a cleric, in them, and since, also, in our letters the condition was expressly inserted, 'if he is worthy to obtain an ecclesiastical benefice,' from these things you might have understood in what way

<sup>1</sup> L. III., tit. v. cap. 6. *Cum tenemur.*

<sup>2</sup> Decret. L. I., tit. iii. cap. 20, *Super licentis.*

those letters were obtained (*qualiter literæ ipse fuerant impetratæ*)."<sup>1</sup>

As this rebuke had just been republished by the reigning Pontiff, it will be seen that the steward of Chichester was by no means doubting the prerogatives of the Sovereign Pontiff, but, on the contrary, exercising a very proper vigilance, in obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff, when he suggested that perhaps the rescript of which the Vicar of Mundeham boasted was obtained obreptitiously or subreptitiously, and thereof of no value. Such, he says, was the report in that part of Sussex, and therefore he calls the bishop's attention to the matter. He does not deny the existence of the letters of dispensation, nor does he say they are a forgery, but that it is the common opinion of the Sussex ecclesiastics that they will not bear inspection, and that the Pope must have been misinformed when he issued them to the Vicar of Mundeham.

Here all is simple and straightforward, in perfect accordance with the language, laws, and circumstances of the times; and yet we are asked to believe that the same Gregory IX., who was the unbending upholder of ecclesiastical discipline, and who had so severely rebuked the concubinage of some English clerics,<sup>2</sup> had been prevailed on by some plausible representations to grant a licence to the Sussex priest to keep not one but two wives! They know little, indeed, of the freedom of ecclesiastical criticism in those days who imagine that the language of the bishop's correspondent would have been merely the suggestion of a doubt as to fact or law. John of Salisbury, and even Robert Grossteste, were

<sup>1</sup> Decret. L. I., tit. iii. cap. 77. *Cum adeo*.

<sup>2</sup> See his letter to the Bishop of Coventry in Shirley (i. 560).

quite as much Infallibilists as the Vicar of Mundeham or any modern ecclesiastic; but had a pope issued a dispensation to a priest to have two wives, or even one, they would have written letters which would have made the ears tingle of those who read them.

The discussion which we have been pursuing may seem to some a very big wheel on which to break so slight a butterfly, but the butterfly, if left uncrushed, would lay eggs, and we should be infested with caterpillars. Besides this, it was worth while to choose an example from a writer so learned and justly respected as Dr. Shirley to show that there are certain technical matters, as regards Catholic history, which require technical education for their proper understanding, and that he who ventures to interpret them without it, or without consulting those who possess it, will probably fall into a trap.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In connection with the subject of this paper, I may mention an amusing misconception related by Erasmus (Ep. 979). He had complained in one of his books that whereas a "bigamist," or one who has been twice married, is irregular, and may not be ordained, there was little scruple in allowing one bishop to hold simultaneously four or five dioceses. But he was too great a purist to use the ordinary word *episcopatus*, which is (he says) neither Greek nor Latin. His expression was that he might have "*quatuor aut quinque si libet episcopas*." This greatly scandalised one of his critics, who thought he meant *concubinas*, and naturally accused him of an abominable calumny. There was some excuse for this blunder; for though *ἐπισκοπή* is good Greek for bishopric, *episcopa* was a novelty in Latin.

## ESSAY II

### THE SANCTITY OF DIRT.

AN ANSWER TO THE RIGHT HON. DR. LYON PLAYFAIR, M.P

“When the civilisation of the Egyptians, the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans faded, the world passed through dark ages of mental and physical barbarism. For a thousand years there was not a man or woman in Europe that ever took a bath. Only think what must have been the state of Europe when thirty-three generations were like Oppian, and never once washed, if their historian, Michelet, is to be believed. No wonder that there came the wondrous epidemics of the Middle Ages, which cut off one-fourth of the population of Europe—the spotted plague, the black death, sweating sickness, and the terrible mental epidemics which followed in their train—the dancing mania, the mewing mania, and the biting mania. But even when the Middle Ages had passed away, and the sun of civilisation was again rising over the gloomy darkness of these centuries, what a heritage of filth-produced disease still remained. . . . Go back only to the time previous to the Reformation, and you can have no difficulty in understanding why luxury and squalor produced the plagues of the times of the Tudors and Stuarts. . . . Filth, instead of being abhorred, was almost sanctified. The monks imitated the filthy habits of the hermits and saints of early Christian times, for the early fathers commended them. Even St. Jerome used to praise the filthy habits of hermits. He especially commends an Egyptian hermit, who only combed his hair on Easter Sunday, and never washed his clothes at all, but let them fall to pieces by rotteness. St. Anthony never washed his feet. St. Thomas à Becket, when martyred, had under garments in a state which makes one shudder in the remembrance. And so the monks, up to the time of the Reformation, and indeed in part up to the present day, thought, or professed to think, that by antithesis, pollution of the body indicated cleanliness of the soul. Practically, indeed, it helped to it; because the odour of sanctity which infested these old monks and hermits, helped to keep them apart from the temptations of the world, for the world scarcely cared to come into too close contact with these odoriferous saints. But this association of filth with religion was unhappy in its consequences, for men ceased to connect disease with uncleanness, and resorted to shrines and winking virgins for cures of maladies which were produced by their own physical and moral impurities.”—*Speech of the Right Hon. Dr. Lyon Playfair, M.P., at Glasgow, October 5, 1874, on the Progress of Sanitary Reform.* (Hardwick, 192 Piccadilly.)

IN the address of Dr. Playfair to the Social Science Congress at Glasgow, on sanitary reform, there is much that is original and excellent, and for which every sen-

sible man will be grateful. In the remarks that I am about to make I confine my attention to a portion of his address which is not excellent, not original, and which every truthful man must regret—his observations on the Middle Ages, and on the connection between their supposed filthiness and the Catholic religion then dominant. Mr. Hallam, in his supplementary volume on the Middle Ages, wonders that ecclesiastics have been so warm in defending those ages from the charge of ignorance, since the ignorance, whatever it may have been, was not caused, but rather mitigated, by the action of the Church. The same remark might perhaps be made with regard to mediæval filthiness. Why should an accusation of the nature of Dr. Playfair's rouse the zeal of a Catholic clergyman? Is it the duty of the Church to introduce sanitary reforms? Is she responsible for the dirtiness of her barbarous or semi-barbarous children? Did she invite into Europe the hordes of wild men who overthrew Roman civilisation? Is it not enough that she converted them, mitigated their cruelty, taught them letters, and gradually formed them into the nations of modern times? Was it her business to cut and comb their hair, wash their bodies, and supply them with clean linen? I reply that, as a matter of fact, Dr. Playfair has blamed the Catholic Church for the dirt of the Middle Ages. The dirty millennium which he depicts is exactly coincident with her unrivalled supremacy in Europe. The state of things he imagines is pointedly said to have been "previous to the Reformation," as if that event set free, not only the thoughts of men, but the choked up fountains of water; and if dirt and disease still prevailed in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they

were but a "heritage of the centuries of gloomy darkness" when the Catholic Church bore sway. The fathers of that Church laid down filth-producing principles: the saints of that Church were filthy; and the monks were and are filthy. "Filth was associated with religion." "Filth was almost sanctified." These are definite and grave charges. They touch the Church, too, in a tender point. When she has been accused of superstition and idolatry, she has been accustomed to point to her works of charity, and to reply: "He that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him." But if Dr. Playfair's charges were well founded, a part at least of her defence would fail. The frightful epidemics of the Middle Ages would be upon her conscience. Should she say, "I did it in ignorance of science, I knew not the consequences," such a plea would ill befit her claim of divine guidance. If her teaching directly leads to consequences disastrous to the human race, it can scarcely have come from a beneficent Creator. To have invented hospitals, and orphanages, and asylums is much; but to have spread pestilence through the nations and blighted them physically and mentally, more than cancels such benefits. The Catholic Church just now is attacked on many sides. I do not think, therefore, that I shall be accused of officious zeal if I endeavour to check the spread of a new calumny—for calumny of the most reckless kind is certainly contained in Dr. Lyon Playfair's accusations.

Two matters have then to be investigated. First, were our mediæval ancestors really so dirty? Secondly, did the Church teach them to be dirty? These two questions are quite distinct. Men may have been dirty, and yet the Church free of all blame in the

matter. Or they may have been clean in spite of the Church's teaching. Let us inquire into facts and principles. As to their dirtiness, Dr. Playfair makes a broad assertion: "For a thousand years there was not a man or woman in Europe that ever took a bath." Is this true? If it is true, was it because the Church forbade or discouraged baths?

### 1. *Antecedent Improbability.*

Not a bath for a thousand years! In the whole of Europe! Not a man or woman! Ever! Here are startling assertions. As they were made by a scientific man in the presence of scientific men, most readers will suppose that they had been well considered before being written. Yet the words are but a thoughtless echo. "*Pas un bain en mille ans!*" wrote M. Michelet some years since in *La Sorcière*. Dr. Playfair has taken his history at second-hand, and at a very untrustworthy source. A little reflection would have raised a doubt in his mind. Dr. Playfair knew how fond the Romans were of baths. He has justly praised them for their "sanitary works" and "hygienic appliances." He would doubtless also have recollected, had he weighed the subject in his mind, that the Germans were accustomed to take warm baths immediately after rising, according to the testimony of Tacitus.<sup>1</sup> And since the Catholic nations of mediæval Europe were composed in great measure of these two races, Dr. Playfair might naturally have inquired by what influences they were led to relinquish what they had hitherto prized. By

<sup>1</sup> "Statim e somno lavantur, sæpius calidâ" (Tacitus, Germania, cap. xxii.).



the influence of their new religion, he says. But even supposing that their new religion had commanded them to abstain from warm water, is it not strange that it should have been so faithfully obeyed, that not a man or a woman ever violated the prohibition for a thousand years? This is certainly a triumph of the Church such as none of her panegyrist has yet dared to claim for her. If Dr. Playfair will look into John of Salisbury's *Nuga Curialium* he will find that our ancestors were not without some acquaintance with ancient Greek and Roman manners, that if they had little science they had some cultivation in the arts, and some appreciation of the amenities of life. They sometimes strove to revive all the luxuries of pagan Rome. They even gave Horatian banquets. Did no one ever attempt to revive the Roman bath? Grant that it was looked on as a sin, yet was there no man or woman in Europe bold enough so far to rebel against the Church's laws as to indulge even once in the luxurious crime of a warm bath? O ye knights and soldiers, ye rich merchants and fine ladies, ye kings and queens of mediæval Europe, we had thought you, in spite of your faith, somewhat self-willed and rebellious, and requiring now and then to be coerced by the censures of the Church for your obstinate clinging to tournaments, to usury, to concubinage, and adultery, and the rest; but we must make amends to you, for at least in the matter of warm baths—so says modern science—you were as guiltless as the angels in heaven!

Certainly the charge is antecedently improbable. Even could I discover no positive proof of the use of the bath in the Middle Ages, yet unless I could find clear evidence of the abolition of the ancient pagan



practice, together with clear legislation against its revival, I should not be able to persuade myself that the mere glorification of dirty saints had produced so remarkable a revolution. And even though the clearest denunciations of the sinfulness of baths were forthcoming, yet I should expect to find many instances recorded of the rebellion of human nature against such a discipline; and I should curiously seek, in the penitential codes, to know what punishment was inflicted on the rebels. Has Dr. Playfair consulted the writings of the fathers, the legislation of councils and popes, the penitential codes? Has he looked into monastic records or saints' lives? I think not. He only quotes examples of two Egyptian hermits, and one English saint of the twelfth century. This is a slender foundation on which to base so serious a charge as that which he has directed against the whole of Europe, and a thousand years of its history. I must, then, do what Dr. Playfair has not done. I must cast at least a glance into these various sources of information. I am no antiquarian. I have no note-books stuffed with curious details of mediæval life. I have never examined the question of European cleanliness; but having met some years since with M. Michelet's accusation against the Church, I have noted a few facts in my reading which I should otherwise have probably overlooked; and if my information is scanty, it would seem that any information may be of value when such statements as that of Dr. Playfair can be made before a scientific congress and pass uncontradicted.

*2. Baths never Abolished.*

Dr. Playfair has not restricted his statement to warm baths, yet I will not seek to take advantage of that circumstance. To sustain his charge against the Church it would, indeed, be necessary to prove that she forbade her children to bathe in rivers or in seas; but I suppose Dr. Playfair would not venture on such a statement. "This country once gloried in her beautiful rivers," he says, "but they are now mere open ditches which pollute the districts through which they flow." No doubt! And all Europe in the Middle Ages was watered by pure streams, and mediæval youths, at least, could swim and wash in them. And was it forbidden to warm this water in the winter? Where is the evidence of this?

Again, what are we to say of medicinal springs and wells? Dr. Playfair, as a medical man, has examined and reported on them; has he never looked into their history? Many, still in use, were known to the ancients. Has he any proof to adduce that for a thousand years they ceased to be frequented, and were restored to humanity by modern science? Catholics, he thinks, when they were ill, "resorted to shrines and winking virgins" for their cure. But is there not a St. Anne's well at Buxton?<sup>1</sup> Is there not a St. Anne's well at Great Malvern? Were these names

<sup>1</sup> In 1536 Sir William Bassett was employed by Thomas Cromwell, Vicar-General of Henry VIII., to suppress superstition in Derbyshire. He not only took down the statue of St. Anne, and the votive offerings, but stopped the bathing. "My Lord, I have also locked up and sealed the baths and wells at Buxton, that none shall enter to wash them, till your Lordship's pleasure be further known." See "Wright's Letters on the Suppression of Monasteries" (Camden Society), p. 143.

given by modern Protestants or by ancient Pagans? There is a St. Winifred's well, too, in North Wales, and there are Lady wells everywhere. Indeed, it has been a custom to accuse Catholics of superstitiously connecting, not filth, but pure wells with religion. Which charge is to prevail? It is hard to have to bear both at once.

I will pass on to warm baths used specially for cleanliness. I suppose that Dr. Playfair alludes to these only, when he affirms that no man or woman ever used one in Europe for a thousand years. But when did this dirty millennium begin? when did the clean centuries come to an end?

The Rome of the Emperors had splendid bathing establishments, as it had splendid theatres for gladiatorial combats. The Church, from the conversion of Constantine, strove against the theatres, and they resisted all her efforts for a century. It was not until A.D. 404, when the Monk Almachus rushed between the combatants, and was slain in his attempt to stop the effusion of human blood, that they were finally abolished by a decree of the Emperor Honorius. But no martyr or confessor is honoured for denouncing the Roman baths, no decree of Emperor was issued to abolish them.

Towards the end of the fifth century St. Sidonius Apollinaris, who, before he was made Bishop of Auvergne or Clermont, had been Senator and Prefect of Rome, and whose father and grandfather had been Christians, writes verses in praise of the elegance of the baths in his villa in Gaul. He says that finer ones are not to be found at Baie. In a letter to his friend Domitius he enters into more details, and we

find that water was brought from a mountain summit, that the baths were both hot and cold, and especially that they were Christian. There are no immodest paintings on the walls, he says, nor combats of gladiators, but only a few elegant verses inscribed.<sup>1</sup> Evidently, Christianity had purified but not abolished baths.

Nor did the advent of the Barbarians make any change. Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus was principal minister of Theodoric, and Prefect of Rome under Athalaric. He died in 562. His writings were esteemed second to none in the Middle Ages. Our own Bede calls him a doctor of the Church. This eminent Christian becomes quite eloquent in praise of the Roman aqueducts, which carry cleanliness through the city as the muddy waters of the Nile carry fertility through Egypt; and he warns the city architect to keep them in good repair.<sup>2</sup> From a letter written by him as secretary to Athalaric, we find leave of absence given to an officer to go to the baths at Baiæ, which are minutely described and greatly extolled. Again, as secretary to King Theodatus, he gives leave to Count Vuinusiadus to visit the baths at Bormio, in order to cure his gout.<sup>3</sup>

Cassiodore built a monastery, into which he retired in later life. Amongst other things, such as laboratories and observatories, he took care to construct baths, "with water so clear running through them"—these are his own words—"that it might serve for drinking as well as for bathing."<sup>4</sup> This did not prevent him from having the reputation, and with some even the honours, of a saint.

<sup>1</sup> Sidonius, *Carmen*, XVIII. Ep. lib. ii. : 2. Ed. Simmond.

<sup>2</sup> Cassiodorus, *Variarum*, lib. vii. n. 6: Ed. Garetius.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, lib. ix. 6; lib. x. 29.

<sup>4</sup> *Lib. div. lit.*, cap. 29.

St. Gregory of Tours, in his history, makes frequent mention both of public and monastic baths in Gaul.

A poet of the sixth century, Venantius Fortunatus, an Italian priest residing in Bordeaux, where Leontius was bishop, describes the beauty of a small town called Bissonum a few miles distant, where Leontius had restored some old portico and made beautiful baths—

“*Reddit interea prisco nova balnea cultu  
Quo recreant fessos blanda lavacra viros.*”<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps it may be said that these were the last remains of Paganism. But when, I ask, did these come to an end? The year 800, and the establishment of the Christian Empire of Charlemagne, bring us far into Dr. Playfair's millennium. Yet, on opening the works of Alcuin—our own Saxon Alcuin, the friend and adviser of Charlemagne and the master of the Palace school—I find a copy of Latin verses which that good priest wrote for his royal and noble pupils in praise of warm baths; and Eginhard, in his life of Charlemagne, tells us the nature and magnificence of the baths built by the Emperor at Aix-la-Chapelle.

“He used to invite to take baths with him not only his sons, but his friends and courtiers, and sometimes even his soldiers and bodyguard, so that often a hundred and more were in the bath at once.”<sup>2</sup>

Nor were baths merely an Imperial luxury. An author who lived some time between the eighth and the tenth centuries at Rennes, in Brittany, in relating an incident connected with St. Melanias, writes as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> *Poems*, lib. ii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Eginhard, *Vita Karoli*, sec. xii.

“It is the custom of Christians, who everywhere venerate the Lord’s day in honour of His resurrection, on Saturday to take a bath, by which they cleanse and refresh their bodies after the labours of the week ; and instead of their soiled clothes to put on clean ones, that they may enter the Church, which is the Palace of the heavenly King, more clean in body as well as in heart.”<sup>1</sup>

This is the language of a monk in the very darkest of the Dark Ages. This was, according to an eye-witness, the conduct of Christians in those days. Dr. Playfair says that no man or woman ever took a bath for a thousand years. The eye-witness says that in the tenth century Christians generally took a bath every Saturday. Could the same be said at the present day?

M. Viollet le Duc, a French architect, who is one of the highest authorities on mediæval subjects, tells us that—

“In the twelfth century bath-rooms were built in houses as at the present day, though they were probably more commodious than ours.”

And he thus sums up the result of his architectural researches :—

“From all the quotations which I have given we may conclude that, during the Middle Ages, the use of baths as they are now taken was very common ; that there were public bathing establishments, in which there were vapour baths, and everything that belongs to the toilet, where refreshments could be had and where people could even spend the night ; that in the castles and great houses there were rooms set apart for baths, nearly always in proximity of the bedrooms ; that the use of baths during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was much less common (*beaucoup moins répandu*) than it had been before that period, and was confined almost exclusively to the higher classes.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bolland, Acta SS., tom i. p. 334.

<sup>2</sup> Dictionnaire de l’Architecture Française, art. *Etuve*.

M. Viollet le Duc's testimony refers more directly to France. Mr. Wright has made a special study of the *History of Domestic Manners and Customs in England*; and in his book on this subject he arrives at conclusions very different from those of Dr. Playfair. "We know," he writes, "from many sources, that washing and bathing were frequent amongst the Saxons." And again, of a later period:—

"The practice of warm bathing prevailed very generally in all classes of society, and is frequently alluded to in the mediæval romances and stories. . . . People sometimes bathed immediately after rising in the morning, and we find the baths used after dinner and before going to bed. A bath was also prepared for a visitor on his arrival from a journey."<sup>1</sup>

After statements so explicit and wide-reaching of well-informed antiquarians, it is unnecessary to give instances, yet the following may impress the general fact on the imagination and memory. Venerable Bede, in his description of Britain, writes: "Warm fountains and the streams of warm baths flowing from them, in different parts of the country, with various distinctive qualities, are useful to every age and sex; for as St. Basil says, 'Water receives certain fervid influences by the metals through which it permeates, and becomes not only warm but hot.'"<sup>2</sup>

Henry of Huntingdon, in 1146, after referring to this passage of Bede, remarks that in his day the virtues of the hot springs and their use still continued. Alexander Neckam, about the year 1200, in his poem "De Laudibus Divinæ Sapientiæ," writes very fully of the sulphur springs at Bath.<sup>3</sup> "The warm springs (thermæ)

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 59 and 260.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, Hist. Eccl., i. 1, quoting St. Basil. Hæsem. iv. 6.

<sup>3</sup> See his treatise in the Rolls Series.



of Bath are not inferior to those praised by Virgil. They are good for worn-out old age, for the bruised and broken and weak, and for all whose diseases are caused by cold. Steadfast nature here anticipates human labour, and art only aids the laws of nature. The powers of nature precede, the industry of man is added, and from the union of both a noble work arises. People say that subterranean fires cause the water to boil in metallic caldrons far down in the earth. In such matters there are always tales and popular errors. But, in any case, we know the place to be sulphureous. Nevertheless every kind of sweet odour is redolent there—cinnamon, myrrh, cassia, &c.; for devotion there pours out a sweet odour to the Lord:

‘Nam suavem Domino devotio reddit odorem,  
Et floret sancta religione locus.’<sup>1</sup>

In another place the same author describes the therms at Paris,<sup>2</sup> which from the Mount of Mars are conveyed by art even under the river Seine—

“Est ibi thermarum munitio maxima quondam,  
Quæ Monti Martis ferre solebat opem ;  
A quo sub terris ad Thermas ars iter aptum,  
Duxerat, atque tuas, Secana, subtus aquas.”

Allusions to these hot baths occur frequently in popular literature. Thus William de Waddington, at the end of the thirteenth century, tells some stories of departed souls having to do their penance by serving the frequenters of the baths. The old French verse may be literally rendered: “There was a priest, his name was Felix; close by where he lived there was

<sup>1</sup> Treatise in Rolls Series, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 454.



a boiler of hot water, where the people used to go to bathe—

‘Un boillun de chaut ewe surdeit,  
Ou la gent se alerent bainer.’”

One day when he went there a man met him who served him just as he liked, but he never asked who he was. This man took off the priest's boots, and he gave him his dress when he rose from the bath, &c. And in another place a second story, which Robert Mannyng de Brunne thus puts into English—

“For there beside in a path  
Was a wasshyng at an hote bath,  
‘Terines’ men call that watyr wasshele  
For many one had thereat their heal.  
Then the holy bishop St. Germyne  
Came thither to be washed therein,” &c.<sup>1</sup>

The point to be remarked is not so much the legend, though it is instructive that souls should be divinely deputed to serve hot baths, not for their own scalding but for the bathers' cleansing and healing. Such legends, however, presuppose the use by the people of baths, and that, too, with the encouragement given by priests and holy bishops.

Consequently, we come incidentally on instances of bath-taking in the Middle Ages quite as frequently as in modern times. In the “Life of St. Elphege,” written by Osbern, it is said that in 1023, on the vigil of Pentecost, King Cnut sent for Archbishop Egelnoth to London. When his arrival was announced the king was just entering the bath—in *balnea forte descen-*

<sup>1</sup> See “Handlyng Synne,” by Robert de Brunne, edited for the Roxburgh Club by Ed. Furnival, pp. 319, 340.

denti—and he immediately came out—sine mora de lavacro surgit.

Among the list of articles given in a roll preserved in the Queen's Remembrancer Office are two folding chairs, with washing bowls and a bath. These formed part of the travelling furniture of Joanna, daughter of Edward III., on the occasion of her journey to Bayonne for her marriage. It would be easy but wearisome to multiply such examples.

### 3. *Baths never Discountenanced.*

Dr. Playfair is perhaps already sufficiently refuted, but let us now see whether the Catholic Church discouraged baths; whether she taught principles on the sanctity of dirtiness, which make the use of the bath an imperfection, if not a sin.

And, first, I gladly admit that her doctrine is not that of ancient or modern Pagans. She did not teach that to have had a good wash makes one nearer heaven, like a Protestant clergyman at a Church Congress at Brighton. She knew well that Dives, in spite of baths and fine linen, went to hell; and Lazarus, in spite of the dirt he contracted from lying in rags on the pavement, went to heaven. Yet she did not, on that account, teach that dirt is necessary to sanctity or a help to it.

The Latin Church—and it is of Europe that Dr. Playfair spoke — counts four great Doctors. The simplest way, therefore, to ascertain the Church's doctrine, since no Council has spoken on the subject, will be to let St. Ambrose and St. Jerome, St. Augustine and St. Gregory speak in her name.

St. Augustine tells us how, in his great sorrow at his

mother's death, he had recourse to a bath, having heard that its Latin name was derived from a Greek word signifying refreshment; but that he found in it no relief. In the "Book of Confessions," where he relates this, he accuses himself of faults so slight that to others they would be imperceptible, but he does not accuse himself for taking baths, though the instance related was doubtless no solitary one.

In the rule he drew up for nuns, he writes:—

"Let the washing of the body and the use of baths not be too frequent, but keep to your old regulation of taking them *once a month*. But if any sickness demand a more frequent use, let it be done according to the prescription of the doctor; and even if the sick nun be unwilling, in such matters she must obey her superioress. But, on the other hand, if she wish it, and it is judged hurtful by the doctor, she must not follow her own inclination."<sup>1</sup>

St. Jerome does not write about ordinary civil life, nor about monastic discipline, but in the directions which he gives to consecrated virgins and widows, living in the world, he certainly dissuades them from the luxury of Roman baths, served as they were by eunuchs, and public to all. Even though his counsels were taken in a strieter sense, they can neither be interpreted as opposed to cleanliness, which can be obtained without such means, nor can they be drawn into a general rule, since the saint often says that there is one rule for ascetics and another for seculars.

St. Ambrose does not write on this subject; but in commending the modesty of Susanna, he finds no fault with her for taking a bath.

St. Gregory writes as Pope, with authority, and he

<sup>1</sup> St. Aug. Ep. 211, Ed. Ben.

falls within the thousand years of evil note. This is his language :—

“ It has been reported to me that some perverse men have been giving out that no one ought to take a bath on the Lord’s day. Now, if the bath is taken for mere luxury, I do not grant it to be taken on any day. But if it is taken for the requirements of the body, then I do not forbid it even on the Sunday. It is written : ‘ No man ever hated his own flesh, but nourished it and cherisheth it’ (Eph. v. 29), and again : ‘ Make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences’ (Rom. xiii. 14). He, therefore, who forbids the care of the flesh in its lusts, certainly permits the care of the flesh in its needs. Surely, if it is a sin to wash the body on the Lord’s day, then it must be a sin also to wash the face. But if leave is given for a part of the body, why not for the whole, when it is needful ?”<sup>1</sup>

This is the most authoritative declaration we have on the subject of baths. It is that of a Pope and a Doctor. Surely no one will pretend that the authority of St. Gregory was not great in the Middle Ages. He wrote the above when the old Roman civilisation was coming to an end; and he lays down the principles which always governed the Church in her endeavours to reform the world—distinguishing between the Pagan luxury which he reproveth, and the natural cleanliness which he commends.

Dr. Playfair will, of course, know far better than I the history of the practice of medicine, and may therefore be able to correct me when I suggest that physicians rather than priests were the enemies of frequent bathing. The words just quoted from St. Augustine, that the doctor might restrict the use of the bath, cannot perhaps be adduced in proof; but I find in old calendars such medical rules as the following :—

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<sup>1</sup> St. Greg. Ep. lib. xiii. 1.

“*January.*—Balnea tutius intres et venam findere cures.

“*March.*—Balnea sunt sana sed quæ superflua vana.

“*May.*—Scindatur vena sed balnea dentur amœna.

“*July.*—Venam non scindat et balnea cuncta pavescat.

“*August.*—Balnea non curet nec multum comestio duret.”

Hence warm baths were held in horror by the faculty in the hot months of the year. In the “*Liber de Calchou, or Register of the Abbey of Kelso,*” there is a “*Noble Tretyse agayne the Pestilens.*” It was written by the “*gud phesician, John of Burdouse.*” When the pestilence reigns men that will be kept from the evil must not only avoid outrageous excess in meat and drink, but “*na oyse na bathys, na swete nocht mykill*” (neither use baths nor sweat much), “*for all this*” (says John) “*opens the pores of the body and makes the venomous air to enter, and destroys the lively spirit.*”<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, Bishop Ramieus of Arusiens, in Dacia, wrote in Latin a book against the plague, of which more than one translation was printed long before the Reformation. Mr. Philip Bliss, in giving an account of this book, says: “*Among other remedies cleanliness, constant washings, and temperance are strictly enjoined;*” and this good bishop, well knowing how much the well-being of the body depends upon the ease of the mind, tells his patients that “*to be merry in the heart is a great remedy for health of the body.*”<sup>2</sup> But this is a digression. Let me return to the fathers of the Church.

<sup>1</sup> *Liber de Calchou* (Bannatyne Club), ii. 448.

<sup>2</sup> Bliss's *Reliquiæ Hearnianæ*, p. 447, *note*.

#### 4. *Apparent Exceptions.*

No doubt, at the same time, Christian writers, while allowing and even praising cleanliness, have extolled those who, in certain exceptional circumstances, have endured dirt as a penance of the flesh. Let this not be misunderstood. They have never praised the love of dirt for its own sake. They have never praised the endurance of dirt from sloth and immortification. They have never recommended neglect of the person as a general mortification. But they exhort Christians, especially those who lead an ascetic life, not to be too delicate and fastidious. They have praised some who, by an exceptional impulse, and living apart from others, have mortified their flesh after this fashion, as in the case of St. Hilarion and Blessed Benedict Joseph Labre, and certain hermits and recluses. The case of St. Thomas of Canterbury, mentioned by Dr. Playfair, was an exceptional one. His biographers tell us of his luxurious habits in his youth; and they relate that when he changed all this, after being made bishop, the weakness of his stomach still obliged him to live on delicate food and wine. Hence he was not judged to be an austere man, even by those who lived with him; and when they found at his martyrdom that his body was covered with a hair shirt, which had remained long unchanged, they were filled with admiration at the circumstance, which showed both his real spirit of mortification, and the humility with which he had so long concealed it.

But against this singular example let me set another one, also belonging to English history. St. Thomas, as

I have said, had been brought up in the luxury of the court, but St. Wilfrid had learnt monastic discipline from his youth. His biographer, Eddi, also a monk, relates that he not only cherished moral purity, but that "every night both in winter and summer it was his custom to bathe his body in holy water, until Pope John counselled him to discontinue the practice in his old age."<sup>1</sup> I am far from pretending that his was a typical case, but it deserves to be cited in proof of the sanctity of cleanliness quite as much as that of St. Thomas in proof of the sanctity of dirt.

The truth is that cleanness and dirt are matters morally indifferent—that is to say, their moral goodness or badness depends upon their use. In the case of St. Wilfrid great cleanness of body was cultivated, not without some mortification in winter, in honour of chastity and in honour of the priesthood. In the case of St. Thomas discomfort of the body was endured to chastise over-sensitiveness and former indulgence, and also in honour of the priesthood.

The endurance of dirt could only be a virtue as fasting is a virtue. Just as fasting presupposes the natural desire of food and the denial of this appetite, so endurance of filth presupposes the natural desire of cleanliness. It may be indeed said that many persons do not care to be clean, and are dirty from sloth. I admit it; but I deny that such dirtiness was ever praised as a virtue in priest or layman, monk or hermit.

<sup>1</sup> "Corpus in aqua benedicta et sanctificata nocturnis horis indefinenter testate et hieme consuetudinarie lavavit." Cap. 22. (See Lives of Archbishops of York, Rolls Series, p. 32.)



5. *Monastic Baths.*

I have already said that greater indulgence was granted to seculars than to monks and nuns. To show, therefore, the full extent of the mistake of Dr. Playfair, I will examine the constitutions of the religious orders of Europe.

Though St. Augustine wrote in Africa, yet his rule was greatly followed in Europe, not only by the Augustinians, but by others also, as Premonstratensians and Dominicans. We have already seen that he grants the use of the bath once a month, and oftener when necessary.

St. Benedict, the great monastic legislator, writes:—

“The use of baths is granted to the sick as often as they require it; but to those in good health, and especially to the young, it should not be granted too frequently (*tardius concedatur*).”

According to the addition made in the time of the Emperor Lewis, the frequency of the use was left to the judgment of the prior.

By St. Isidore's rule in Spain, baths were to be reserved for the sick, and then used without scruple. The rule of St. Cæsarius of Arles was exactly similar; so was that which St. Leander, in Spain, drew up for his sister. These rules were gathered together by St. Benedict of Anianum.

Lanfranc, when Prior of Bee, drew up a directory for every day in the year. From this we find that on the vigil of Christmas, and on the Wednesday in Holy Week, all the monks of the monastery took a warm bath. When he became Archbishop of Canterbury this direc-



tory was adopted in all the great Benedictine abbeys in England.

No monastic rule was so austere in early days as that of the Irishman, St. Columbanus, and it was maintained very rigidly in many Continental monasteries. Yet in the life of St. Godwin it is related, as the most natural thing in the world, that one morning when the Bishop St. Lambert had been kept out in the snow during a winter's night, the brethren hastened to prepare a bath for him and a change of clothes; this was in 680.<sup>1</sup>

Petrus de Honestis of Ravenna, who drew up his rule in the twelfth century, writes that baths must not be refused to the brethren for the preservation or restoration of health, but only to those who ask them too often out of luxury.

St. Bernard, who may be considered the founder of the Cistercians, is the author of the saying, "I ever liked poverty, but never dirt."

Towards the end of the ninth century, Grimlaic, a French priest, drew up a rule for recluses or hermits strictly enclosed or walled up near a church. It will surprise some to learn that in the cell was a small bath or tub (*dolium*) supplied with water, that, as often as need was, the priest might wash and bathe. "Perhaps," says Grimlaic, "some will say St. Anthony never bathed. To this I answer shortly, If St. Anthony never bathed, neither did he ever sing mass. Hence the use of the bath is committed to the discretion of priests, that with due cleanliness they may celebrate the sacred mysteries."<sup>2</sup> What words could better prove that dirtiness

<sup>1</sup> Bol. Acta SS., tom. ix. p. 710.

<sup>2</sup> Grimlaic's Rule, ch. 51, in Migne's Patrologia, tom. ciii. pp. 570-664.

was never counted a virtue by itself, nor recommended as a penitential exercise indiscriminately ?

### 6. *Mediæval Purifications.*

This would perhaps be the place to say something of certain purifications which were prescribed by the early penitential codes, and of the use of which we find traces all through the Middle Ages; but the nature of this subject prevents me from entering into detail. However, as Dr. Playfair has praised the purifications of the Levitical Code, I recommend the subject to his investigation. To put him on the track, I advise him to begin by reading the answers of St. Gregory to the questions of St. Augustine of England, as well as the Canons of the Greek Archbishop of Canterbury in the seventh century, St. Theodore. His investigations will probably lead him to deride and reproach the Church for prescribing baths; but in any case he will see how wide of the truth he was when he reproached her for forbidding them.

Perhaps, without offending delicacy, I can mention certain ceremonial or sacred purifications. A king before his coronation was directed to bathe and put on a dress of scrupulous cleanness. "Ipso prius, ut moris est, balneato, et induto mundissimis vestibus, calceato tantummodo caligis."<sup>1</sup> The order of Knighthood of the Bath was so called because of the solemn bathing of the candidate. The king's nobles presented him with the various articles of dress, after taking him from the bath and laying him in bed. Surely these ceremonies, approved and blessed by the Church, could

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Lacy's Pontifical, p. 137.

not lead the nobility to think that she had set her ban against the bath?

It is a long step from kings and knights to madmen, and perhaps the baths prescribed for the latter should scarcely be called ceremonial. It seems rather that cleanliness was considered a natural remedy for rabies, but that its efficacy was dependent on or heightened by prayer. In any case, a bath of holy water was prescribed for these poor maniacs. "Deinde lavantur in aqua sic benedicta furiosi, qui sanitatem ex hujusmodi lotionem consequi solent."<sup>1</sup>

I have shown the perfect liberty of the laity, and the modified liberty of the monastic orders. I will now go a step farther, and consider the state of the criminal classes in the Middle Ages.

### 7. *Penitential Discipline.*

It is well known how severe for many centuries was the penitential system of the Church, yet I have looked in vain through many collections of canons, made in different ages and countries, without finding abstinence from the bath imposed on the penitents, even for the greatest crimes. I say *imposed*, for it is once or twice recommended as a very severe penance for enormous crimes. Thus St. Dunstan has sketched a perfect penitent atoning for great sins, and among his austerities

<sup>1</sup> See Martene, *De Antiquis Eccl. Ritibus*, tom. iii. p. 530, and elsewhere; also in Bollandists' *Acta SS.*, tom. lviii. p. 853. An Italian author has written a large volume, *De Sacris Balneis*, from which an enemy might extract materials for an attack on the Church's excessive trust in the virtues of water, with far more plausibility than Dr. Playfair and others have indicted her for love of dirt.

he mentions his not sleeping on a soft couch, or entering a warm bath.<sup>1</sup>

In the terrible penance imposed by St. Paulinus, of Aquileia, on Heistulf, who, after murdering his wife, had falsely accused her of adultery, he has the choice of entering a monastery, or of doing a far severer penance in his own house. Amongst other things it is enjoined that he must never use a bath; but when this decision was received into the canon law, the gloss was added, "except for necessity."<sup>2</sup> It must be remembered that such penances, though imposed by the Church, were sanctioned by the civil power as adequate atonement for crimes against society; they must therefore be compared with modern prison discipline. Let those who have read what Howard found in modern prisons judge whether a bath "in case of necessity" was granted to the prisoner, and whether the Church of the Middle Ages is to be aspersed for encouraging filth by those who have just cleansed the Augean stables of their own prisons.

Let it be also remarked that the use of baths must have been very common in those centuries, when it was considered one of the severest of all punishments to be deprived of them. In Dr. Playfair's theory of the dirty ages it would have been a grievous penance to be compelled to take a bath.

### 8. *Care of the Poor.*

It may, perhaps, be asked what provision was made for the poor. If baths were accessible to the rich,

<sup>1</sup> The words will be found in Wilkins' *Councilia*. A translation of this penitential has been made by Thorpe.

<sup>2</sup> See Migne, *Patrologia*, tom. cxix. p. 196.

if they were provided for monks and nuns by their monasteries, if they were forbidden to none, were any positive measures taken to put them in the reach of the poor?

I might perhaps ask in reply, What means are now used to procure baths for the labouring poor? They will be found very scanty; yet now that our towns and cities have grown so populous, now that our streams are poisoned with sewage and the refuse of factories, the want is far greater than in former times.

Besides, I am considering this question only as it regards the Church, and because it has been made a charge against her that she, by her teaching or her action, prevented cleanliness or encouraged dirt. Having disproved this charge, I am not bound to show that the Church took positive action in the matter of baths. Water was generally accessible enough, and the means of warming it were not hard to procure. It is well known that the Church encouraged almsgiving, the feeding of the hungry, the clothing of the naked, the visiting of the sick and of prisoners, and hospitality to the stranger and the homeless. These works were almost unknown in heathen times; they became frequent under the influence of the Church. But baths were common in heathen times, being the result, not of charity, but of natural care of self. It would seem then that the Church was not called to show herself zealous in such a matter. Might she not have left it to men's own self-love, or was it not at most a matter for the civil power?

And yet in so far as it is a work of charity to help those who cannot help themselves, or even those who neglect themselves, I have no doubt that a little re-

search into the good deeds of our ancestors will prove that they did not reject the washing of the dirty from their list of works of mercy any more than the feeding of the hungry.

In the first place, I may argue from the ancient Catholic practice of washing the feet of the poor. Among Dr. Playfair's Scotch auditors there must surely have been some to whom the memory of St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland, occurred, when the President of the Health Department of the Glasgow Congress was declaiming against his ancestors. They may have remembered how she and her good husband Malcolm used every day in Lent to wash the feet of the poor and serve them at table before they sat down to their own repast. No doubt it is one of the sophisms of the day that such works as these were not done for the sake of the poor, but as pompous displays of ascetic devotion. Let those who think thus go to the *Life of St. Margaret*, written by Theodoric, an eye-witness. Let them read how the holy Queen prepared dainties for the little orphans whom she had collected, how she set free the captives and restored them to their families, how she established hospitals and hostelries, how she sat by the roadside to be accessible to the complaints of the poor, and they will probably modify their opinion about such acts as the washing of the feet. It was assuredly a ceremonial observance rather than a work of mercy; for if cleanliness had been the main motive, the Queen could have sent one of her menial attendants to do the work. But it was a ceremony intended by Him who first instituted it, as well as by those who have since observed it, to teach the duty of works of mercy to the poor, and—what is especially to my pur-



pose—it indicated by its very nature that to procure cleanliness is one of those works of mercy.

It will not then be a digression to relate at least one example of the spirit taught by such ceremonies. Leprosy is said—I know not with what truth—to have originated, or at least spread, from dirty habits. Now if there was one form of disease which inspired our forefathers with compassion more than another, it was this hideous leprosy. From St. Margaret of Scotland, her daughter Matilda—the “Good Queen Maud,” wife of Henry I. of England—had learnt that compassion, together with other virtues:—

“She visited the sick and poor with diligence,  
Clothes, meat, and bedding new and undefiled,  
And wine and ale she gave withouten doubt,  
When she saw need in countries all about.”<sup>1</sup>

Her younger brother, David, afterwards King of Scotland, often related to St. Aelred, his intimate friend and biographer, the following anecdote:—

“When I was a young man at the Court (of Henry), one night that I was in my lodgings, occupied, I forget how, with my friends, I was sent for to the Queen’s apartments. I found the house full of lepers, and the Queen standing among them. Putting off her mantle, and girding herself with a towel, she began to wash the feet of the lepers, and when she had dried them, taking them in both her hands, she kissed them devoutly. I said to her: ‘Lady, what are you doing? Certainly, if the King knew this he would never press his lips to yours, defiled as they are with those lepers’ feet.’ She looked up with a smile, and said, ‘Who does not know that the feet of the King Eternal are more to be desired than the lips of a mortal king? I called you, dear brother, that I might teach you to act in the same way. Take then a basin, and do as you have seen me do.’ At these

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<sup>1</sup> Hardyng, quoted by Miss Strickland.

words," continued David, "I was greatly alarmed, and replied that I never could suffer it; for as yet I knew not the Lord, nor was His spirit as yet revealed to me. So when she insisted (to my shame I tell it) I only laughed, and went away to my companions."<sup>1</sup>

This beautiful name, "the feet of Christ," was often given, in the ages of faith, to the poor; and, in washing the repulsive bodies of the lepers, our forefathers were strengthened by the thought that they were washing His feet. That they did wash the bodies as well as the feet of the lepers, is certain, and many such acts are on record in the "Lives of the Saints," collected by the Bollandists. In the life of Blessed Anfrid, Bishop of Utrecht in 1008, it is circumstantially related how he went to the river, drew water, warmed it, poured it into a tub, and then laid a poor leper in the bath, washed him with his own hands, placed him in his own bed, and next day dismissed him with a new suit of clothes.<sup>2</sup>

St. Radegund, who, from being Queen of France, became a nun, not only built a bath for the use of her community, but had one also for the use of poor women. Her biographer, St. Venantius Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers, and a contemporary, has left on record how

<sup>1</sup> This is somewhat differently related by Miss Strickland, who has been misled by Robert of Gloucester. There is no doubt that St. Aelred's version is correct, since he had heard it frequently from David's own lips, with whom he was most intimate. Aelred's history has been overlooked by Miss Strickland. Miss Strickland is doubly wrong in saying that he who refused could not have been David, "who would have given his aid right willingly," and that it must have been his elder brother, King Alexander the Fierce. Fierce as was Alexander to some, St. Aelred, who knew him, says that he delighted in nothing more than "in *washing*, feeding, and clothing the poor."

<sup>2</sup> Boll. Acta SS., tom. xiii. p. 436.



every Thursday and Saturday, girding herself with a rough bathing towel, she washed the poorest and filthiest of the beggars, using soap, moreover, and giving them clean and new garments.<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Wulfstan and the Abbots of Evesham, Chertsey, Bath, Pershore, Winchcomb, and Gloucester entered into an association, binding themselves to fidelity "to our temporal lord King William, and to Matilda the lady . . . and that each, besides getting a hundred masses said, shall bathe a hundred needy men, and feed them and shoe them."<sup>2</sup> When Raimond, Count of Bigorne, in the tenth century, refounded the Abbey of St. Savine in the Pyrenees, one clause of his donation was that the monks should ever maintain public baths:—"Mansiones ad balneandum competentes semper in eodem loco conservent."<sup>3</sup>

At Coventry a Guild maintained a lodging-house for the poor with thirteen beds. One of the officials was a woman to wash their feet.<sup>4</sup> Are such things done for our modern wanderers? Would it not then have been in better taste had Dr. Playfair sought to show how the Church gave lessons, or at least hints, by which we may profit, than to hold her up as the enemy of what she has ever cherished?

#### CONCLUSION.

I am, of course, not contesting the connection between the fearful plagues of Europe and the prevalence

<sup>1</sup> Boll. Acta SS. tom. xxxvii. p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> *Diplomaticum Anglicum*, p. 616. By B. Thorpe.

<sup>3</sup> See *Architecture Monastique*, by M. Albert Lenoir, p. 370. This book contains much information about monastic baths.

<sup>4</sup> *English Guilds*, by Toulmin Smith, p. 231.

of dirt from imperfect drainage or scanty water supply. That is a scientific question which I leave to scientific men. I contest merely the connection between the Catholic religion and the prevalence of dirt. As one whose work has been for years among the poorest and dirtiest of the dwellers in our large cities, I have long been convinced that no small portion of the drunkenness of the poor is the result of filthy occupations and squalid homes. Knowing, therefore, how gladly the Catholic clergy will welcome every measure of sanitary or moral reform, I am pained at seeing the Catholic Church treated as a foe, when she has been, and is still, a most cordial ally.

## ESSAY III.

### A DOZEN DOGBERRY-ISMS.

THERE are few characters of Shakspeare's creation that cause more genuine mirth than Dogberry and Verges, the foolish constables in the play, *Much Ado about Nothing*. It is not so much their stupidity, their blundering, or their self-conceit that are ludicrous, as their seriousness and unsuspectingness of the fun they create. Now, it has often seemed to me that Protestants miss some of the very best literary fun in the language because they are not aware how many Dogberries there are among historians. Just as a foreigner, imperfectly acquainted with our language, and assisting at a performance of Shakspeare's play, might well catch the wit of Benedick and Beatrice, while he would only wonder at the laughter caused by the dialogue of the constables, so Protestants, from an imperfect acquaintance with Catholic matters, may "miss the fun," when respectable authors blunder, with ludicrous gravity and with perfect good faith, over some technical Catholic phrase or historical allusion.

However, I am not here concerned with Dogberries, but with Dogberryisms. I am not going to record the blunders of silly authors, but the foolish slips of clever and learned writers, not mere slips, but foolish and faulty slips, the punishment of undue trust in their own cleverness and learning.

I. *Indulgence to Sin.*

Here, then, is a fair sample of Dogberryism:—

A work well got up, and of considerable pretension, appeared in 1870, on the "History and Antiquities of Coventry." The author, Mr. Poole, thus writes regarding the Miracle-Plays of the Middle Ages: "These sacred mysteries were introduced at Chester some time before they were got up at Coventry, and it is alleged that Ranulf Higden, a Benedictine monk, had to visit Rome three times before he could get the Pope's permission to have the plays done in English. It also appears that by this time the head of the Church had come to the conviction that the effect of these performances was far different from that hoped for on their first introduction—the religious edification of the people; for the moral deterioration resulting therefrom had become so manifest, that a thousand days' pardon from the Pope, and forty days' pardon from the bishop of the diocese, was necessary to wipe out the sin of attending them. But the evil had gone too far to be put down, and the only alternative was the granting of pardons or indulgences to excuse an offence so habitual that the temptation to its commission was irresistible."<sup>1</sup>

This was written by an educated man, and a painstaking and generally competent historian, and yet Mr. Poole must not be offended if I say that I can find no better illustration of his attack on the citizens of Chester than that of Dogberry against the villains arrested in Messina.

<sup>1</sup> Coventry, History and Antiquities, p. 38.

*Don Pedro.*—"Officers, what offence have these men done?"

*Dogberry.*—"Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things; and, to conclude, they are lying knaves."

*Don Pedro.*—"Whom have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? This learned constable is too cunning to be understood. What's your offence?"

Yes! what was the offence? Mr. Poole, reading of indulgences, feels sure there must have been offences; and finding the indulgences granted to those who frequented the miracle-plays, he concludes that the miracle plays were the "habitual offence and irresistible temptation." I cannot help conjecturing that the historian of Coventry must have had in his mind the famous Coventry pageant of Lady Godiva and Peeping Tom, and that he has thrown back, in his mind, the riot and indecencies of this entertainment, of Protestant origin, upon the pious and edifying representations which were the delight of Catholic times. Catholics, at least, do not require to be told that, though indulgences suppose offences to have been committed, yet they are neither given for their commission nor in palliation of them, but are granted to encourage works of charity and piety, among which was reckoned assisting at a Scriptural pageant.

Dogberry might, indeed, have brought a true charge against the authorities in Coventry, of late years, that they had "belied a lady" as well as a nobleman, for most assuredly the amiable and holy Leofric, husband

of the Lady Godgifu or Godiva, never exacted from her the abominable sacrifice which the modern pageantry commemorated, and which Tennyson's poem has so marvellously depicted.<sup>1</sup> As to the miracle-plays, they represented the Life and Passion, Death and Triumph of our Divine Redeemer, the joys and sorrows of His blessed mother, or other pious incidents in the legends of the saints. For being present at these representations indulgences were granted; not to all, but to those only who rendered themselves capable of the grant. And for this it was required that the candidate should confess his sins with true contrition and purpose of amendment, make restitution of any ill-gotten goods, seek reconciliation with any whom he had offended, grant pardon to his enemies, and, in a word, set his whole life in order. It is now, and was then, and ever has been, an undisputed maxim among theologians, and a public doctrine impressed upon the people, that no indulgence could be gained by any who were not already reconciled to God—not, as Mr. Poole supposes, obstinately bent on satisfying their own sinful desires, but, on the contrary, penitent for past sins, and resolved on a virtuous life. The indulgence was a remission of the temporal penalty, still, perhaps, due to those forgiven sins. Surely it is unworthy of an historian, writing at the present day, to repeat exploded fables originated by we know not what calumniator, in the heat of controversy two centuries and more ago. Even

<sup>1</sup> See Freeman's *Old English History*, p. 278. He calls it a "silly story." It is first mentioned by Roger of Wendover, but Peeping Tom is of post-Reformation origin, as is the pageant. Lady Godiva *denuded* herself of her jewels and personal property to endow the Church. An expression misunderstood may have been the origin of the legend.

Luther, who, in the most unmeasured language, poured out contumely against indulgences, never pretended they were permissions to commit sin. He denied that they have any value at all, and asserted that they were fictions and devices to raise money; but there he stopped. The nearest approach to the later calumnies which can be found in the writings of Luther is the following, which it may be worth while to give, both because of the answer it elicited, and because it shows how very different were the objections of those who knew the workings of Catholic doctrine and discipline from the dreams of those who only read of them in books.

Luther writes in his Defence, or "Assertion," of the articles which Leo X. had condemned: "Even if indulgences were anything, what would they be but remissions of good works? For, are they not supposed to remit works of satisfaction? And what are works of satisfaction but good works and good sufferings? So that, even thus, if indulgences were really something, they would be more pernicious than now that they are nothing. What more wicked fraud, then, than to remit men's good works, and to grant them freedom to be indolent, under pretext of piety, only to suck money out of them?" Luther understood the Catholic doctrine that, when the guilt of sin has been remitted, there may be, and generally are, relics and penalties which must be cleansed away in this life or the next. He knew how this doctrine was urged to induce men to fast, to pray, to give alms, to do works of mercy, to deny themselves and be patient in afflictions. Since, therefore, it was also taught that an indulgence remits a part at least of such penalties, Luther, with his usual



sophistic rhetoric, tries to set one doctrine in opposition to the other, that he may ridicule them both. But of course it is a very different thing to pretend, as Luther does, that an indulgence makes Catholics less austere, or less fruitful in works of mercy than they otherwise would be, or at least ought to be, and to assert, as some Protestants have done, that an indulgence is a direct permission to sin, a license to do wrong without its being wrong, or, as Mr. Poole seems to think, a tolerance of sin, and an attempt to make it not less wicked but less penal.

I fear that the exposure of Dogberry's blunder is involving me in a serious discourse instead of a merry laugh. But, in truth, while I cannot but smile at such curious stumbling over words, my heart is sad to think that prejudice, not stupidity, has caused the stumbling. I would fain say: "Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter . . . but in faith honest." But is it honest to write about Catholic matters without having an even elementary knowledge of them—a knowledge which may be obtained in every Catholic manual, and perhaps in every respectable Protestant cyclopedia?

Should any Protestant inquirer suspect that the doctrine on indulgences has been purified by the Council of Trent because of the outcry of the Reformation, I assure him that the practice indeed was reformed, but the doctrine taught now was always taught. In proof of this I will quote the answer to Luther of one who was his contemporary, and whose noble freedom of speech, whose saintly life and death, suffered for conscience, put him far above the suspicion of palliating evil. This witness is John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, whose zeal was aroused by Luther's



mendacity, and who, in 1523, published a reply to the work of Luther from which I have just quoted. He first reminds the German reformer of his inconsistency; since by his new doctrine about justification he gives a plenary and universal indulgence from all temporal penalties whatever, making every pardoned soul free from every debt to the justice of God. If, then, Luther's argument against the use or grant of indulgences were good, it would tell tenfold against himself. But Fisher answers more directly that the object of the Pope is not to make Christians slothful in good works, but, on the contrary, more alert in the service of God, from finding themselves so mercifully freed from debt. And lest this should be called an empty theory, he appeals to experience. "Indulgences," he says,<sup>1</sup> "are never granted except in favour of some good work which has the form of piety."<sup>2</sup> Now, whoever is penitent for his past sins, is in that state of charity in which he is capable of merit; and, therefore, when he undertakes, in such a state, the prescribed work for the glory of God he will merit an increase of charity. Besides this, it must be remembered that the hope of gaining an indulgence causes many to raise their souls to God, and to prepare themselves to gain it by a good repentance and confession, which they would not have done had they not been urged by the grant of the indulgence. And, again, the renewal of

<sup>1</sup> *Assertionis Lutheranae Confutatio*, fol. 90 (ed. 1523).

<sup>2</sup> He means that the work required as a condition for gaining the indulgence must be good in itself, as taking part in a crusade against the Turks, assisting at a miracle-play, and the like. But as these works were not necessarily good, but might be badly done, he says they must at least have the form of piety, the candidate for the indulgence supplying the substance.

faith in God, which the gaining of indulgences requires, is no slight spiritual fruit. Christ promised to St. Peter and his successors that they should loose sinners from every bond.<sup>1</sup> A sinner, conscious to himself of his fearful sins, and knowing what penalties he must have incurred, draws near and asks from the Sovereign Pontiff the pardon which Christ has authorised him to give, and believes without the slightest doubt in Christ's word. Such faith, when joined to charity in the sacrament of penance, will not only insure him remission of pain, but a large grant of grace from God." Fisher then goes on to show that the gaining of indulgences leads to joy, to peace, to longanimity, patience, benignity, and all the other fruits of the Holy Ghost. And if these fruits are not found in all, if many abuse these pardons, in that they think more lightly, perhaps, of sin now that indulgences are so commonly granted, and the old canonical penances remitted, this is merely what may be said of the clemency of God. The ingratitude of sinners who abuse that clemency is greatly to be deplored, but God's clemency must not, therefore, be abolished or denied. This is what the martyred Fisher thought of indulgences at the beginning of the sixteenth century; and that the priests and people of Chester and Coventry were well instructed in the nature of true repentance, Mr. Poole may assure himself if he will study in Wilkins' "Concilia" the treatise on the sacrament of penance, which Alexander Stavenby, bishop of those cities in the thirteenth century, had drawn up for the use of his diocesans.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi. 19.

*2. A Critic at Fault.*

Let me pass to a second example of Dogberryism. The numerous writings on antiquarian subjects of Mr. Thomas Wright, M.A., F.S.A., are extensively known, and in general deserve their reputation. It is only when he has to speak of the Catholic Church that he is bitter and unfair. Yet in the passage I am about to quote he is not led astray by bitterness, but blunders from self-sufficiency.

In 1842, Mr. Wright was employed by the Council of the Royal Society of Literature to compose his "Biographia Britannica Literaria." It was to be a standard work, a work of reference, the leisurely production of a scholar superintended by other scholars. Giving, then, an account of St. Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury and Bishop of Sherborne, who died in 709, Mr. Wright discourses as follows: "Aldhelm's writings, popular as they once were, exhibit a very general want of good taste. For an example of this we need only cite one of the embellishments of his metrical treatise, *De Laude Virginum*, where he tells the story of St. Scholastica, how, when she had failed by her arguments and persuasions in prevailing on her brother to embrace Christianity, she fell on her knees in prayer by his side: how a fearful storm immediately burst over the house, and how the unbelieving brother was convinced by the miracle. A better poet would have dwelt upon the terrors of the storm—on its effect upon the house which held Scholastica and her brother—and on the qualms which the roaring of the thunder and the flashing of the forked lightnings struck into his heart.

But Aldhelm loses sight of his immediate subject in his eagerness to describe a *real* storm. It is true he tells us there was wind, and thunder and lightning, and that they affected both heaven and earth; but he finds out that there was rain also, and that the earth was moistened, and he goes out of his way to calculate its effects in swelling the rivers and flooding the distant valleys, all which circumstances have nothing to do with the virgin saint or her unbelieving kinsman. Aldhelm certainly describes a storm, but it is not a storm made for the occasion. The lines taken by themselves are comparatively a favourable specimen of the poet's talents."<sup>1</sup>

I will not say that the above is comparatively a favourable specimen of Mr. Wright's critical talents, but rather—to borrow Dogberry's phrase—that it is "flat burglary as ever was committed." "Unbelieving brother!" "Arguments and persuasions to embrace Christianity!" Why, the brother in question is no other than the famous St. Benedict, at the time of this history an old man, and an abbot renowned for sanctity. As to the storm, overflowing streams and impassable roads had everything to do with the occasion, and were the very answer to St. Scholastica's prayer, whereas "roaring of thunder and flashing of forked lightnings," which Mr. Wright desiderates, were no more the substance of the miracle than "qualms of conscience" were its effects. For the sake of those of my readers who may be unfamiliar with the life of St. Benedict, I will transcribe from the "Dialogues of St. Gregory the Great" the history of which St. Aldhelm made a metrical paraphrase:—

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<sup>1</sup> Biographia Britannica Literaria, vol. i. p. 45.

“The sister of St. Benedict, called Scholastica, dedicated from her infancy to our Lord, used once a year to come and visit her brother. To whom the man of God went, not far from the gate, to a place that did belong to the abbey, there to give her entertainment. And she, coming thither on a time, according to her custom, her venerable brother, with his monks, went to meet her, where they spent the whole day in the praises of God and spiritual talk, and when it was almost night they supped together. And as they were yet sitting at the table, talking of devout matters, and darkness came on, the holy nun, his sister, entreated him to stay there all night, that they might spend it in discoursing of the joys of heaven. But by no persuasion would he agree unto that, saying that he might not by any means tarry all night out of his abbey. At that time the sky was so clear that no cloud was to be seen. The nun, receiving this denial of her brother, joining her hands together, laid them upon the table, and so, bowing down her head upon them, she made her prayers to Almighty God, and lifting her head from the table, there fell suddenly such a tempest of lightning and thundering, and such abundance of rain, that neither venerable Bennet nor his monks that were with him could put their head out of the door. The man of God, seeing that he could not, by reason of such thunder and lightning and great abundance of rain, return back to his abbey, began to be heavy, and to complain of his sister, saying: ‘God forgive you, what have you done?’ To whom she answered: ‘I desired you to stay and you would not hear me; I have desired our good Lord and He has vouchsafed to grant my petition; wherefore, if you can now depart, in God’s name return to your

monastery, and leave me alone.' And so by that means they watched all night, and with spiritual and heavenly talk did mutually comfort one another."<sup>1</sup>

It would seem, then, that Mr. Wright's criticism of St. Aldhelm's taste, however just in principle, was singularly misapplied; for St. Aldhelm has carefully avoided the snare, which might have entangled many a modern poet, of dilating on the terrific peals of thunder, and has confined himself to that which concerned his subject, the downpour of rain and the swollen streams.

It need scarcely be said that the poet does not enter into the same detail as St. Gregory, otherwise Mr. Wright could not have made the mistake he did. The story was so well known to his readers that St. Aldhelm only treated it by allusions. He does not give the name of the brother, yet he calls him *fidus frater*, her faithful, or at least her trusted brother, and certainly says nothing of a nature to suggest Mr. Wright's strange imagination, that he was an unbeliever refusing to embrace Christianity. He says also that the story of St. Scholastica's triumphant prayer had attained a world-wide renown. Why, then, did not Mr. Wright, before penning his criticism, make some endeavour to ascertain the original form of the story? Why did he not read some life of St. Scholastica? If he had consulted Butler's "Lives of the Saints," he would have found the story related almost as in St. Gregory. But no! Had it been a legend of Venus or Diana, of Proserpine, or of Friga—in a word, of heathen goddess or nymph, Greek or Roman, Celtic or Scandinavian—he would have carefully verified every allusion, he would

<sup>1</sup> St. Gregory's Dialogues, book ii. ch. 33.



have been ashamed to be found tripping in pagan mythology. But it does not occur to him to inquire into the legend of a saint. He needs no apparatus of learning. He can interpret everything by intuition, if, indeed, he should deign to interpret it at all, which is almost too great a condescension.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. *A Visionary Theory.*

This is the way in which Catholic hagiology is generally treated, and hence comes Dogberryism. Take the following passage from a grave and very learned work, dedicated by permission to her Majesty the Queen, "The Saxons in England," by Mr. Kemble. The author has been discussing with much erudition and ingenuity the religious belief and superstitions of the pagan Saxons. With these he compares the doctrines which prevailed after their conversion to Christianity. He speaks with great severity and disgust of certain visions of the pains of the next world, seen by a man named Drithelm, and which are related by Venerable Bede in his "Ecclesiastical History." Hereupon Mr. Kemble philosophises as follows:—"No doubt the distempered ravings of monks, made half-mad by inhuman austerities, unnatural restriction, and wretched themes of contemplation, would in themselves be of little worth. We can comprehend the visions of a St. Francis of Sales, an Ignatius Loyola, a Peter the Hermit, a Santa Teresa, or even more readily those of a Drithelm or a Madame Guyon; but how shall we understand the record of them

<sup>1</sup> Since writing the above, I find that Lingard, in his "Anglo-Saxon Church," has called attention to Mr. Wright's blunder. It is not improbable that I have been anticipated in other instances. But of this I am ignorant.

by a Bede or a Fénelon?"<sup>1</sup> Mr. Kemble's meaning seems to be, that *we* Protestants, freed from superstition as we are, or *we* men of literature and philosophy, can comprehend any mental aberrations of crazy monks and nuns, so that when we read the visions of a St. Francis of Sales, a St. Ignatius, and the rest, we at once render ourselves an account of the wretched origin of such phantasmagoria. But there is a subject which almost baffles our philosophy — the shocking power which Catholicity exerts of warping minds otherwise intelligent, such as those of Bede and Fénelon, until they become the dupes of fanatics, and record their ravings with respect. Before examining Mr. Kemble's instances, let me say that what fills me with wonder is the power of prejudice and self-conceit, to reduce writers like Kemble, Hallam, or Macaulay to Dogber-ryise whenever they try to construct brilliant theories about Catholic faith or history. "What an array of names has Mr. Kemble here drawn out! What wide reading, what penetration, what philosophy he displays!" will be the reflection of many a reader. And yet there is scarcely a name on the list which does not show that Mr. Kemble was writing at random, what St. Paul calls "the vain babbling of those who understand neither the things they say nor whereof they affirm." What does he mean by choosing, out of the long calendar of Catholic saints, St. Francis of Sales, the accomplished nobleman and saintly Bishop of Geneva, as an example of a *monk* driven half-mad? St. Ignatius certainly had revelations, but it was on his first conversion to God, and not as the result of a long course of monastic discipline; and they had far more to do

<sup>1</sup> Kemble's *Saxons in England*, vol. i. ch. xii. p. 386.



with the life of our Lord than the pains of hell. Peter the Hermit is famous for rousing Europe by his report of infidel atrocities, not for visions of the other world. And as to Drithelm, whose visions were the occasion of all this theorising, alas for theory! for when he had the visions related by Bede he was not a monk at all, but a pious layman, a married man, and the father of a family.<sup>1</sup> I may add, that any one who should seek, by a careful reading of Venerable Bede, really to comprehend Catholic matters, instead of thinking that he already comprehended them, would find that the austere monks and nuns whom he commemorates are all remarkable for their sweet and hopeful spirit. Their favourite subject of conversation and contemplation is the kingdom of heaven, just as we have seen in the interview of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica. Sweet music and angelic voices are heard by their brethren and sisters as they pass out of this world. Our Protestant historians are free to call these contemplations dreams, and the music high-wrought fancy; but, at least, they are not "distempered ravings," nor did they arise from "wretched themes of contemplation."

It is, indeed, a singular proof how carelessly Mr. Kemble must have studied his facts before spinning his theory, that while the monks, who practised "inhuman austerities" and the rest, are represented by Bede as rapt in heavenly joys, the revelations of future wrath are reported by him to have been granted to pious laymen or to profligate sinners. One of these latter was an officer of King Coenred, who during his life had always refused confession and amendment of

<sup>1</sup> Bede's Ecclesiastical History, book v. ch. 12.

life, even at the king's repeated instance,<sup>1</sup> and at his death sees fearful visions and dies in despair. Another example is thus related by Bede:—"I knew a brother myself—would to God I had not known him—whose name I could mention if it were necessary, and who resided in a noble monastery, but lived himself ignobly. He was frequently reprov'd by the brethren and elders of the place, and admonish'd to adopt a more regular life; and though he would not give ear to them, he was long patiently borne with, on account of his usefulness in temporal works, for he was an excellent carpenter. He was much addicted to drunkenness and other pleasures of a lawless life, and more used to stop in his workhouse day and night than to go to church to sing, and pray, and hear the Word of Life with his brethren. For which reason it happened to him, according to the saying that he who will not willingly and humbly enter the door of the church, will certainly enter the door of hell against his will, and be condemned for ever. For he, getting sick, and being reduced to extremity, called the brethren, and with much lamentation, and like one damned, began to tell them that he saw hell open, and Satan at the bottom thereof, as also Caiaphas and the others that slew our Lord, by Him delivered up to avenging flames. 'In whose neighbourhood,' said he, 'I see a place of eternal perdition provided for me, miserable wretch!' The brothers, hearing these words, began seriously to exhort him that he should repent even then whilst he was in the flesh. He answered in despair, 'I have no time now to change my course of life, when I have myself seen my judgment pass'd.' Whilst uttering these words he died without

<sup>1</sup> Bede, book v. ch. 13.

having received the sacred Viaticum, and his body was buried in the remotest part of the monastery; nor did any dare to say masses, or sing psalms, or even to pray for him."<sup>1</sup>

How different is all this from the theory of Mr. Kemble. The vision of hell is seen, not as the result of "inhuman austerities and unnatural restrictions," but of a life which knew neither austerity nor restraint; not by a mind crazed with "wretched themes of contemplation," but by a man who shunned the church and neglected the Word of Life: so that the reflection of Venerable Bede, after relating this history, is the very reverse of what occurred to the modern writer. He remarks that whereas the bright soul of St. Stephen saw the heavens open, and the glory of God revealed, the dark soul of the sinner saw the darkness of hell. Such critics as Mr. Wright and Mr. Kemble would do well to remember a saying of St. Jerome about Victorinus, a famous heathen rhetorician, who in his old age became a Christian, and thereupon wrote a commentary on St. Paul's Epistles. Referring to these, St. Jerome says that, engaged as Victorinus had been all his life in secular literature, he was little acquainted with Holy Scripture; "and no man, however eloquent, can discourse well on matters of which he knows nothing."<sup>2</sup> Dogberry was of a contrary opinion: "To be a well-favoured man," he says, "is the gift of fortune, but to write and read comes by nature."<sup>3</sup> This view is shared by many as far as regards Catholic matters.

<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiastical History, book v. ch. 14.

<sup>2</sup> "Nemo noscit quamvis eloquens de eo bene disputare quod nesciat." S. Hieron, *Prof. Com. in Ep. ad Gal.*

<sup>3</sup> Act iii., scene 3.

4 *Ancient Tales.*

If Dogberry does not shine as a critic of style, when his critical faculty is found "beating the air," neither is he a Daniel on the judgment-seat, when he passes sentence on men without weighing facts. Shakspeare had, no doubt, certain justices of the peace in his mind when he described the trial of Conrade and Borachio:—

*Dogberry.*—"We are now to examination these men."

*Verges.*—"And we must do it wisely."

*Dogberry.*—"We will spare for no wit, I warrant you; here's that [*touching his forehead*] shall drive some of them to a *non com.*"<sup>1</sup>

To ourselves, both the self-conceit and the method of conducting the examination are rather a parable of certain literary men dealing with Catholic saints, or popes, or religious orders. I am sorry, indeed, to find Washington Irving guilty of a Dogberryism. The affection I bear him would make me hide this slip of his, but that the lesson I would enforce is derived, not from the blunders of the ignorant and foolish, but from the prejudices of the otherwise amiable and well informed.

Who has visited Newstead Abbey in Nottinghamshire, during the last half century, without recalling the lines in which its noble owner, Lord Byron, sought to palliate his own bold immorality by a sneer at the hypocritical immorality of its former occupants?

"Monastic dome condemned to uses vile!

Where superstition once had made her den,  
Now Paphian girls were known to sing and smile,  
And monks might deem their time was come again,  
If ancient tales say true, nor wrong these holy men."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Act iii., scene 5.

<sup>2</sup> Childe Harold. canto i.

The sarcastic innuendo of the poet so exactly harmonises with the great Protestant tradition, and is so epigrammatic in its character, that it could not fail to be quoted in all local guide-books, and to get fixed in the mind of those who visit the ruins, thus associating for ever the beauties of mediæval architecture with hypocrisy and vice.

Now, what are these "ancient tales," and do they "say true?" Or rather, do the modern writers say true who tell us of the ancient tales? In the year 1780 the lake near Newstead was drained and deepened. In removing the mud the workmen came upon a large brass bookstand in the shape of an eagle, which had once belonged to the abbey, and had probably been cast into the lake by the monks at the dissolution in 1536. The brazier to whom it was sent to be cleaned, in unscrewing the pieces, found that the globe on which the eagle stood was filled with documents belonging to the monks. Washington Irving, in his book on Abbotsford and Newstead, after relating the finding of the lectern and its contents, continues as follows:—"One of the parchment scrolls thus discovered throws rather an awkward light upon the kind of life led by the friars of Newstead. It is an indulgence granted to them for a certain number of months, in which plenary pardon is assured in advance for all kinds of crimes, among which several of the most grave and sensual are specially mentioned. After inspecting these testimonials of monkish life in the regions of Sherwood Forest, we cease to wonder at the virtuous indignation of Robin Hood and his outlaw crew at the sleek sensualists of the cloister." In another place of the same work, Mr. Irving again moralises on this document: "This order,"

he says, "was originally simple and abstemious in its mode of living, and exemplary in conduct; but it would seem that it gradually lapsed into those abuses which disgraced too many of the wealthy monastic establishments; for there are documents among its archives which intimate the prevalence of gross misrule and dissolute sensuality among its members."

It will be noticed that in both these passages Irving writes quite positively, as of a fact known to himself, and admitting of no doubt or denial. He does not say: "It is reported," or "I have been told," but distinctly, "There are documents." You would say he had had the parchment scroll in his own hands, and had carefully read it from end to end: "After inspecting these testimonials of monkish life, we cease to wonder." He gives us to understand that wonder had filled his unsuspecting mind till then, how holy monks could be the object of dislike to Robin Hood and his merry men. But wonder ceased when these damning proofs at last convinced him of the monastic abominations, and he understood that the outlaws of the forest were models of virtue compared with the "sleek sensualists of the cloister."

Unfortunately for this charming bit of scandal, the brass eagle had been given or sold to Southwell Minster, and the parchment scroll had been scrutinised by more experienced eyes than those of Lord Byron or Washington Irving. Mr. Llewellyn Jewitt has published, in the first volume of the "Reliquary,"<sup>1</sup> the following letter from the Rev. J. Dimock, then a minor canon of Southwell, to the Rev. J. Gresley:—"The document found in the ball upon which the eagle

<sup>1</sup> At p. 202.



stands, upon which Washington Irving founded his good Protestant legend, blackening the character of the poor old monks, proved, on examination by a competent reader, to be one of the general pardons which were forced upon the religious houses by Henry V., as a means of raising the wind when about to embark for the French wars. It has about as much to do with the man in the moon as with the Pope; and almost as much to do with the morals of the man in the moon's wife (if he has one) as with those of the Newstead monks. It is simply a sample of State dodgery when intent on plundering the Church."

We cannot, then, hesitate to qualify Irving's assertions as wilful misrepresentations or libels. No doubt he believed what he asserted, but this belief was utterly inexcusable. He certainly would not have written with so reckless a disregard of calumny, had he been treating of any other subject than Catholic monks and Papal dispensations.

When preparing his life of Mahommed, had he come upon a charge against the false prophet or his followers, in itself utterly absurd, and of the most atrocious nature, instead of hastily picking it up, and repeating it positively and minutely, he would have doubted, examined his authority, and made quite sure that he misunderstood nothing. But in writing of Christian men, who made a public profession of following the counsels of their divine Master, he not only makes no such inquiries, but, what is worse, he pretends to have made them. "After inspecting these testimonials," he says, "we cease to wonder." Yet we know that either he had never seen the document at all, or could not read it sufficiently to master its nature.

To use his own expression, these passages of his book throw "a rather awkward light," not on the monks of Newstead, but on the prejudices which warped a mind otherwise amiable and generous.

I have said that I am reminded of Dogberry's examination of Conrade and Borachio.

*Dogberry.*—"Masters, do you serve God?"

*Con. Bor.*—"Yea, sir, we hope."

*Dog.*—"Write down—that they hope they serve God. Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves, and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?"

*Con.*—"Marry, sir, we say we are none."

*Dog.*—"A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him. Come you hither, sirrah [*to Borachio*], a word in your ear, sir. I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves."

*Bor.*—"Sir, I say to you, we are none."

*Dog.*—"Well, stand aside. 'Fore God, they are both in a tale."

*Con.*—"Away! you are an ass."

*Dog.*—"Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years? Oh that the sexton were here to write me down an ass! . . . No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witnesses. I am a wise fellow; and one that knows the law, go to; and one that hath two gowns, and everything handsome about him. Bring him away. Oh, that I had been writ down an ass!"

Washington Irving certainly was not an ass, but a highly accomplished and most delightful writer. The more's the pity that he should have made an ass of himself when passing judgment upon Catholic monks.



5. *Binding to Sin.*

The next example is still more instructive. No one will suspect me of thinking lightly of the talents or the learning of Leopold Ranke, the historian of the Popes and of England. It is for the very reason of the great esteem in which he is universally held that I select him. In the course of his history of the Popes, he has to speak of St. Ignatius and the Jesuits. He explains the constituting principle of the Society as follows: "Obedience usurped the place of every relation or affection, of every impulse or motive that could stimulate man to activity; obedience for its own sake, without any regard whatever to its object or consequences." Now, though this statement is altogether false, and even palpably and ludicrously false to all who know practically what is the life of religious orders in the Catholic Church, and of the Society of Jesus among the rest, yet the above words by themselves would be no more than a mistake. But Ranke adds a long note to show that what he has said in the text is the result of deep and impartial study, and here he commits his Dogberryism. To prove that he has not been guilty of exaggeration or calumny in saying that the obedience of the Jesuits is irrespective of object or consequences, *i.e.*, of right or wrong, he quotes in Latin the words of their Constitutions: "Visum est nobis in Domino . . . nullas constitutiones, declarationes, vel ordinem ullum vivendi posse obligationem ad peccatum mortale vel veniale inducere, nisi superior ea in nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi vel in virtute obedientiæ juberet." "We scarcely know" (he says) "how to trust our eyes in reading this," as if

it was so brutally or blasphemously impious, that unless it were read in black and white, in an undoubtedly authentic volume, it would be utterly incredible that men could have agreed to such a sentence. Then Ranke adds: "And it is in fact possible to extract another meaning besides that suggested on the first perusal. *Obligatio ad peccatum mortale vel veniale* would rather mean the obligation connected with a constitution, so that whosoever should violate it would in one way or other be guilty of a sin. Still it must be acknowledged that the constitution ought to be more explicit. We could blame no one who, *bona fide*, should suppose *ea* to refer to *peccatum mortale vel veniale*, and not to *constitutiones*." <sup>1</sup>

I am inclined to echo Ranke's exclamation: Can one believe one's eyes? Of whom or of what is he writing? Of people who lived a thousand years before the Incarnation? of the Hittites or the Jebusites, who have left no record but some mutilated lapidary inscriptions in enigmatical language? Or have the Jesuit constitutions just been imported from Central Africa, so that we must make what we can of them by our own conjectures, until Africa shall be opened up and we can obtain more certain information from observant travellers? Is there no way of ascertaining the meaning of legal phraseology but by a dictionary and a grammar? Why, the shelves of our libraries are weighed down with Jesuit commentaries on "the religious state," the vow of obedience in general, and their own vow in particular. Was there no Catholic priest or educated Catholic layman in the town where Ranke was writing? Or was

<sup>1</sup> The Popes of Rome, book ii. ch. i., or vol. i. p. 150 in English translation.

the matter so pressing that he had no time to correspond with a professor at a Catholic university? It is as if he had read in an English law-book that "the king can do no wrong," and had straightway written that it was indeed possible, by straining the words, that an innocent sense could be got out of them, but that it must be allowed that the phrase should be less ambiguous, and that he could blame no one who should *bona fide* hold that the English give to their kings unlimited licence, so that they are bound by no law, human or divine. This learned professor does not seem to have once entertained the thought that light could come to him from living Catholics, or that he should stoop to seek it. Hence he has been punished by falling into a blunder which makes him childish and ridiculous. For the passage in question presents no difficulty whatsoever to one who has an elementary acquaintance with Catholic practice or language. The Constitutions declare that though they are holy and necessary, they are not to be considered as precepts made in virtue of the vow of obedience, and involving by their omission or transgression a sin of sacrilege, unless indeed in express words a superior, who has the power of exacting the fulfilment of that vow, declare that it is his intention thus to enforce the observance of some point. In that case there would be sin, greater or less according to the subject matter, in the transgression. As to the superiors requiring the performance of what is morally wrong, the thing is not contemplated for a moment. All theologians who have written on such matters, and among them almost innumerable Jesuits, lay it down as a first principle that there can be no obedience in what is sinful.

Obligationem ad peccatum inducere means simply to impose an obligation (as regards a matter morally good but otherwise free) involving guilt by its neglect. Sub peccato is the more usual phrase. The words may be technical, but are certainly not mystical.

### 6. *Idiot Superstition.*

Another specimen of the self-reliant erudition that leads to blunders occurs in one of Mr. Brewer's learned and brilliant "Introductions to the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII." He is treating of the Duke of Buckingham, who was put to death in 1521 by the king on a charge of treason. "If we may judge from his papers," writes Mr. Brewer, "his employments during his retirement were as far removed from treason or plots against the state as any employments could well be. Next to making religious offerings at different shrines on every holyday, for which the duke seems to have entertained a kind of passion, his chief delight was in training horses or purchasing dogs or falcons." To this passage Mr. Brewer appends the following note. "Here are a few: To Our Lady of Kingswood; to St. Aldhelm of Malmsbury; to St. Ann in the wood; to Our Lady of Belhouse, Bristol; to Prince Edward at Tewkesbury; to two idiots—then regarded with superstitious reverence—one at Drinkwater,<sup>1</sup> and another belonging to the abbot of Chichester."<sup>2</sup>

These items are gathered by Mr. Brewer from the steward's accounts; and a man's petty cash-book, whatever light it may throw upon his character, is surely a

<sup>1</sup> Not at Drinkwater, but "one Drinkwater."

<sup>2</sup> Introduction to vol. iii. p. cxxii.

very insufficient record of his occupations or his aspirations. I can see no proof that the Duke of Buckingham had a passion for shrines, unless a traveller's bills prove that he has a passion for hotels. The duke was constantly moving about, and was entertained at various monasteries, which in those days were the hotels of travelling nobles no less than houses of relief for the neighbouring poor. There is no entry in the steward's accounts of payment of expenses incurred by the duke's hosts. The least, therefore, he could do was to make offerings at the shrines. He did not select these and send messengers to them on pilgrimage. In that case there would have been some ground for Mr. Brewer's remark regarding the "passion for shrines."

This, however, is a mere difference of opinion, nor am I finding any fault with Mr. Brewer's view. But his assertion about the idiots is a different matter. What right has he to say that "idiots were regarded with superstitious reverence?" This is a pure assumption, a reckless assumption, to account for an abbot keeping an idiot. I have no doubt whatever that the idiot was the professional fool; but were these idiots mere objects of charity and compassion, they were certainly in no other sense objects of reverence; and in that case not superstition, but "religion pure and undefiled," would have been exercised in their relief.

The entries in the duke's accounts on this subject are as follow. In 1508 he gives "to an idiot" of the abbey of Glastonbury 20d. In 1520, "To one Drinkwater, an idiot, at the vies, 20d. To an idiot of the abbot of Chichester, 4d; and to *another like fool* of Sir Edward Wadam, 4d." The words then, fool and idiot, whatever their meaning, were at that time interchange-

able. The idiot Drinkwater, "at the vies," receives five times as much as the other fools. "The Vies" was the ancient form of the town Devizes; but I should conjecture here another sense. The Vice was the clown or buffoon of the old moralities. Perhaps, then, the word may here mean a masque, for in January 1521 we find the entry, "To certain Frenchmen and two Frenchwomen playing before the duke the Passion of Our Lord *by a vise*, 40s." Hence the idiot was one who could take a part in a play. Even in our own legal language an idiot is not one entirely destitute of reason, but one who is void of sense, judgment, and self-control from his birth. He may be otherwise smart and witty enough. A man might therefore play the idiot and be a merry fellow.

Mr. Oliphant remarks that the word idiot was in the earliest copy of the "Cursor Mundi," but was afterwards changed into "fole."<sup>1</sup> Yet the older use of the word remained, for in the will of T. Goldesburgh (now in Somerset House), of the very year of Buckingham's death, 1521, there occurs the following item: "To Richard Carlton my Idyot;"<sup>2</sup> who was clearly the family buffoon. Addison also used the word in the same sense. In the 47th number of the *Spectator* he writes: "It was formerly the custom for every great house in England to keep a tame fool dressed in petticoats, that the heir of the family might have an opportunity of joking upon him, and diverting himself with his absurdities. For the same reason *idiots* are still in request in most of the courts of Germany, where there is

<sup>1</sup> Old and Middle English, p. 567.

<sup>2</sup> Information received by the courtesy of Dr. Murray, editor of the *Philological Dictionary*.



not a prince of any great magnificence who has not two or three dressed, distinguished, undisputed *fools* in his retinue, whom the rest of the courtiers are always breaking their jests upon."

Mr. Brewer, then, has mistaken a professional idiot, a butt of raillery, for an object of compassion. This is only a slip; but to invent a superstition and charge it offhand upon the Church by way of an easy explanation can hardly be qualified as an innocent mistake.

### 7. *Religious Tolerance.*

Who would imagine that anything deserving the name of Dogberryism could be found among the writings of Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy? If there is any name that we connect with vast erudition and almost unvarying accuracy, it is his. I should say, however, that the following illustration belongs to the early years of Sir Thomas. It was in 1835 that he published for the Government the "*Rotuli Litterarum Patentium.*" Among these is one of King John in 1201: "*Sciatis nos dedisse licentiam Petro Buillo transferendi se ad quam voluit religionem*"—*i.e.*, of entering any *religious order* whatsoever, or of passing from his own to any other. This is the ordinary use of the word *religio*. Yet Sir Thomas Hardy must certainly have understood it in the modern sense of religion when, in his Introduction,<sup>1</sup> he selected it as a curious illustration of "*religious toleranc.*" John would probably have had no objection to his subjects becoming Jews or Moham-medans. He is said to have contemplated such a course himself, and to have been in communication with the

<sup>1</sup> *Rotuli Litt. Pat.*, *Intro.* to vol. i., part 1, p. xvii.



Emir of Morocco. Yet this was certainly not the licence granted to Peter.

In the same year, 1835, the Rev. W. L. Bowles, M.R.S.L., published the "Annals and Antiquities of Lacock Abbey." Having to explain the words of a monastic rule forbidding those who make profession in the order "to pass to another religion," Mr. Bowles makes the following reflection: "Thus in the Church of Rome a still stronger term was in use for different monastic societies than in these days of modern toleration is even applied to the sects into which the Christian Church is now divided." The meaning of this reflection apparently is that Catholics were so bigoted that, though they could not attain uniformity, they applied stronger terms of reproach to varieties of discipline than Christians now do to the utmost divergence in doctrine. Anglicans would not say that Scotch Presbyterians are of a different religion from themselves; yet Augustinians would have said this of Benedictines. Now, even in 1835, Mr. Bowles should have known that the various "religions" or religious rules and orders were approved in the Church, though it was not thought advisable that members should run from one to another on light pretexts, any more than the commanders in our own army approve of frequent changes from regiment to regiment.

#### 8. *Serving at Mass.*

A blunder nearly akin to the preceding is made by Canon Jenkins in his "History of the Diocese of Canterbury." He quotes Cardinal Pole's inquiry, "Whether there is, in every parish church, at least one clergyman

serving at the mass in a clean and decent surplice." From this he deduces "the completeness of the destruction of the vestments and instruments of the Roman service" during the reign of Edward VI. "When we read how vast a number of the ancient vestments were still in existence in 1552, this visitation question, only four years after, seems suggestive of a sad destruction."<sup>1</sup>

The facts were, no doubt, as Canon Jeffries states; but, unless I entirely misread him, he implies that the "clergyman serving at mass" is the parish priest, and that he says mass in a surplice in default of other vestments. Otherwise how can the absence of vestments be deduced from this ordinance? Now, the cleric "serving at mass"—*i.e.*, assisting the celebrant priest, was merely the parish clerk, having the tonsure, or at most the minor orders, and his dress was cassock and surplice.

Assuredly Cardinal Pole never gave leave to any priest to say mass without alb, maniple, stole, and chasuble. The difficulty at that time was to get servers who could repeat the Latin responses. The mass had been interrupted since the death of Henry, and the tradition had been lost. Therefore in another place the Cardinal orders the children to be taught to serve mass at school.

From a somewhat similar misconception a very painstaking antiquary, seeing that a foundation was made in the time of Mary for the support of "the priest and minister," *i.e.*, the mass-server, thinks that the founder was hesitating between the Catholic term *priest* and the

<sup>1</sup> History of Diocese of Canterbury (S.P.C.K.), p. 263.

Protestant term *minister*, or was at least uncertain which might prevail!

### 9. *Confession Rolls.*

The Rev. H. Maxwell Lyte published, in 1875, a "History of Eton College." It is in almost every point excellent; yet ignorance of Catholic ways has betrayed him on one occasion. The *Consuetudinarium* used in Henry's time contained the following direction: "On Ash Wednesday the boys go to the church about ten o'clock, and during mass choose their confessors from among the masters and chaplains of good repute, and since medicinal confession is good for sinners, they have recourse to God's mercy. The church monitors give to the confessors the boys' names written on rolls. Within the four following days they expiate their sins by confession."<sup>1</sup> The Latin has "Puerorum nomina censores templi conscripta rotulis confessionariis tradunt. Intra quatuor dies proxime sequentes peccatorum confessione peccata expiant." To a Catholic all is simple. The boys had liberty to choose their confessors, but that each confessor might know the amount of work before him and make the necessary arrangements, the monitors took down, during or after mass (*tempore sacri peragendi*), the names for each confessor, and the confessor very probably had to mark off each name as the penitent presented himself, to see that the duty was not evaded. But Mr. Lyte thus translates:—"The names of those *who received absolution* were inscribed on tablets, and the next four days were devoted to penitential exer-

<sup>1</sup> History of Eton College, p. 150.

cises." There is no word about receiving absolution, nor are confessors allowed to state whether absolution has been given or refused. That is the penitents' secret. The four days were spent in confession.

Mistranslations like the above are constantly made by our historians. It is not often that, like Mr. Lyte, by printing the original Latin they supply the means of correction.

#### 10. *The House of Herod.*

The following is another instance of the small pitfalls which beset the feet of the unwary and self-confident. Dr. Shirley has edited a book called "*Fasciculi Zizaniorum*," written by Thomas Netter (or Waldensis) against Wickliffe and the Lollards. He met the words, "*Herodii domus dux est eorum.*" What was he to make of them? A mere unlearned Catholic priest would have at once recognised words familiar to him from the recitation of the Psalms. They are part of the seventeenth verse of the one hundred and third psalm,<sup>1</sup> and are translated in the Douai version, "the highest of them is the house of the heron." But herodius is not the classical name for a heron. It is a mere Latin adaptation of the Greek word used in the Septuagint, and Dr. Shirley did not recognise it nor the Scriptural allusion. He therefore had recourse to a conjectural emendation, and substituted *Herodis* for *Herodii*. His author, he thought, had sarcastically called the English court the "house of Herod;" and as there was clearly a hit at Wickliffe, Dr. Shirley drew from this reference

<sup>1</sup> According to the Anglican division, the 104th, v. 17, the words are translated "The fir trees are a dwelling for the stork."

the conclusion that Wickliffe was already court chaplain when the tractate was written.<sup>1</sup> Now, would not the use of a Latin concordance or a reference to Ducange have prevented this rather laughable mistake?

### II. *An African She-goat.*

The Rev. F. C. Hingeston published in 1858 John Capgrave's book on the Illustrious Henries. At page 35 of the first volume Capgrave quotes Godfrey of Viterbo's account of the treatment after death of the body of the Emperor Henry IV., who died excommunicated. The body had been exhumed by order of the Pope.

"Filius ossa patris doluit fore cum sceleratis,  
Ossa patris minat nimia commotus in ira.  
Affra capella fuit, quæ patris ossa tulit."

This Mr. Hingeston translates—

"The son could not endure to leave his sire  
To lie with the accurs'd, but bore him thence  
And curs'd the mute corpse in his great rage :  
A she-goat's skin receives his father's bones."

In the index he tells us that *capella* is a she-goat, but the word *Affra* he leaves untranslated and unexplained. If *capella* is a goat, no doubt *Afra* should be translated African, and a reason should be given (1) why the body was wrapped in a goat's skin; (2) why in a she-goat's skin; and (3) why in an African she-goat's skin. This is very mystical, and foundation enough for a new charge of superstition against the mediæval Church. But what if *Afra capella* means simply the chapel of St. *Afra*, and not an African she-

<sup>1</sup> Fascic. Zizan., p. xix. and p. 14.

goat! Certainly Ducange gives us no instance of the use of such a word as *capella* for *caprea*, while *Afra capella* for *Afræ capella* is not a very grave poetical licence for a mediæval poet. I do not mean to disparage Mr. Hingeston's learning, or the care with which he has edited Capgrave; but as he rebukes more than once his "gross blunders," he might have kept his own foot out of the trap. The singularity of the royal winding-sheet should have warned him to inquire whether *Afra* had not more than one meaning. The index of Butler's "Lives of the Saints" would have solved the mystery at once. But, after all, what need was there for conjectures? Had the learned editor consulted Floto's "History of Henry IV." he would have found that the emperor's body lay in a stone sarcophagus in the unconsecrated chapel of St. *Afra*, on the north side of the Marienkirche at Spiers, for the space of five years.<sup>1</sup>

#### 12. *Bishop-Sons.*

Mr. Thorpe, the learned translator and editor of our Anglo-Saxon laws, finds that a large penalty was imposed for the murder of a *bishop's son*. He jumps to the conclusion that there were many bishops in those days who, like modern Anglican prelates, were the respected fathers of large families; for why otherwise should there be special legislation in protection of their offspring? But would not a little prudence and consultation have saved him from printing this hasty conclusion? He would soon have discovered that, as Anglicans have god-fathers and godsons in baptism, so have Catholics also

<sup>1</sup> Heinrich der Vierte, ii. 420, ed. 1855 6.

in confirmation; and as confirmation is administered by a bishop, the godson in confirmation was called "bishop-son" by the Anglo-Saxons. A letter of St. Boniface would have shown him that there was an impediment to marriage between a godfather and his spiritual daughter by confirmation; and by parity of reason a peculiar guilt in the murder of one's bishop-son.

The moral from all these instances, which might be indefinitely multiplied, is the folly of thinking that the knowledge of Catholic matters comes by intuition. Far from being surprised at these blemishes, I am in admiration that they occur so seldom, considering the self-reliance with which historians plunge into the technicalities of ritual, law, and history.

Bishop Burnet, in his preface to his "History of the Reformation," writes as follows: "I had two objections besides the knowledge of my own unfitness for such a work. One was my unacquaintedness with the laws and customs of this nation, not being born in it. . . . My acquaintance with the most ingenious William Petyt, counsellor of the Inner Temple, cleared this difficulty." Well for Burnet, and well for many others, not being brought up in the Catholic Church, yet wishing to write about it, if they had shown similar prudence, and sought the advice sometimes of a Catholic counsellor.



## ESSAY IV.

### *A SAINT TRANSFORMED.*

A CURIOUS change is taking place in the minds of many Anglicans. When Elizabeth first established her new hierarchy its members little cared to claim descent from the previous occupants of ancient sees. Pilkington, the first Protestant Bishop of Durham, spoke with great contempt and in abusive language of St. Wilfrid, St. William, Lanfranc, St. Anselm, St. Thomas, and St. Edmund.<sup>1</sup> Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury, considered it a sad but undeniable fact that they had all been drowned in damnable idolatry for eight centuries at least. And the rest expressed similar opinions. Now, on the contrary, Protestant bishops take every opportunity of proclaiming themselves the legitimate representatives of the ancient ecclesiastical rulers of England. Canon Perry dedicates his life of St. Hugh "To the Right Reverend Christopher Wordsworth, D.D., Bishop of Lincoln, the successor of St. Hugh, alike in his virtues as in his see." Is this repentance? Is it a turning of the hearts of the children to the fathers? No. The lives of the English saints, which have appeared of late years from the pens of Anglican clergymen, are very different from those which in 1840-45 foretold the issue of the Oxford movement in

<sup>1</sup> Works, p. 587. Parker Soc. Ed.

reconciliation with the Church. With an air of conscious superiority, intellectual and spiritual, recent authors have condescended to choose some men of ancient fame, to rescue them alike from the superstitious veneration of Catholics and the unreasoning vituperation of Protestants, to mete out to them praise and blame, admiration and pity, in equal portions. The modern Anglican considers himself the patron, not the client, of the mediæval saint.

One of the most offensive examples of this species of writing is the recent "Life of St. Hugh of Avalon."<sup>1</sup> It contains, indeed, some interesting and well-written pages. Had Canon Perry not had a real admiration for St. Hugh he would doubtless not have occupied himself with his biography. Yet, when he meets with anything that goes against his Protestant prejudices, it never occurs to him to pause to consider for a moment that *perhaps* the man whose virtues he has been relating *might* be right, and he himself mistaken. He blames at once either the saint or the doctrines and influences that warped his otherwise fine character. But worse than this. His praise is coloured by Protestant prejudice quite as much as his blame. Having undertaken to write a life which as a whole is intended to be laudatory, he naturally does not like to find many facts contrary to his ideal, and is on the look-out for traits of character which may assimilate his hero, in some respects, to the admired Protestant type. Hence he has made several curious blunders, and attributed opinions and acts to St. Hugh quite at variance with historic truth. Thus, having narrated St. Hugh's eagerness to obtain relics, as related by the saint's

<sup>1</sup> By George G. Perry, M.A., Canon of Lincoln. Murray. 1879.

companion and biographer, Abbot Adam, Canon Perry thereupon makes the following reflections:—

“We wish we could think that it was of himself that he was writing rather than of Hugh, when he gives us so many and such disagreeable stories as to the Bishop’s hunting after relics, his eagerness to possess the teeth or some bone of dead saints—an eagerness which occasionally led him into acts of positive dishonesty, as though any means were justifiable for one to obtain possession of these coveted, but somewhat nauseous treasures. The caring for such things seems to exhibit the Bishop to us in a point of view which contradicts some of the most prominent and admirable parts of his character. He who could despise reputed miracles, could rise superior to the superstition of the necessity of receiving the Holy Communion fasting, who showed in so many ways his superiority to the opinions of his age, is yet represented as running with puerile eagerness from one shrine to another, and striving by every possible means to add to his collection of the bones of the saints. We gladly turn from such matters to record some more agreeable incidents.”<sup>1</sup>

Exactly so. But Canon Perry would have acted more wisely and consistently had he turned away altogether from “dead saints,” like St. Hugh, to record matters where he would find less to blame, and whereon his praise would be more correctly bestowed, than it has been on the Catholic Bishop of Lincoln.<sup>2</sup> If he is in search of a priest of the Middle Ages, who rose

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 301, 302.

<sup>2</sup> As Mr. Perry is not afraid to repeat the language of Vigilantius about the “bones of dead saints,” and “nauseous treasures,” we need not be afraid to address to him the language of St. Jerome’s reply: “Thou lookest upon him as dead, and therefore blasphemest. Read the Gospel: ‘God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.’ . . . Is it ill done then of the Bishop of Rome, that, over the *venerable bones*, as we think them, over *vile dust* as you think it, of the departed Peter and Paul, he offers sacrifice to the Lord, and accounts their tombs Christ’s altars?”—*Idr. Vigil.*

superior to his times by such strength of mind as is implied in making light of miracles and breakfasting before communion, why does he not write the life of Wickliffe rather than that of a canonised saint? I will show presently that St. Hugh neither "despised reputed miracles" nor "rose superior to the superstition of receiving Holy Communion fasting." So that if, in his modern biographer's judgment, these are "some of the most prominent and admirable parts of his character," since they have no existence except in the imagination of Canon Perry, he ought not to set them over against those other traits of character, which he truly describes, but which offend and disgust him.

I do not care to exonerate St. Hugh from the charge of setting great value on relics. He would, no doubt, have willingly pleaded guilty. What Canon Perry says about his "positive dishonesty" is another matter. In a note he gives as an example how the saint, being at Fescamp, cut open a silken covering of a relic of St. Mary Magdalen, and then bit off a portion of it.

"The monks were horrified" (says Canon Perry) "at seeing the bishop put the bone into his mouth and bite off a piece of it, which he slipped into the hand of his attendant chaplain, bidding him carefully preserve it. To the monks, who were greatly scandalised, he made a plausible excuse, but he kept the relics, which, even in a mercantile point of view, were most valuable property."<sup>1</sup>

Now the "mercantile point of view" does not seem to have occurred either to St. Hugh, to the monks, or to the writer of the saint's life, who was the very chaplain who received the relic. As Canon Perry

<sup>1</sup> P. 301.

omits to give the "plausible excuse," it may be as well to state that the monks were scandalised, not at the theft of the relic, which was made quite openly, but at the apparent irreverence of biting it. St. Hugh's answer was this:—

"If we have so lately taken with our fingers, however unworthy, the Body of the Saint of saints, and after It has touched our teeth and lips, have even swallowed It, why may we not confidently handle the members of His saints, since we do it both for their veneration and our own protection? And why may we not, when we have a chance, make them our own, that we may preserve them with due honour."<sup>1</sup>

But we are not concerned to defend St. Hugh against Canon Perry's blame, so much as against his praise. He has been much struck with two passages in the life of St. Hugh as written by Adam, in which he thinks that he has discovered an anticipation of Protestantism—contempt of reputed miracles and irreverence towards the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Let us examine these two instances, though the result may be to lower the saint in the eyes of some who have just learnt from Canon Perry to admire him. The saint's contempt for miracles is thus related by Canon Perry:—

"A still greater proof of true courage, because it shows a moral courage very rare in the men of his generation, was the way in which Hugh behaved when invited to inspect an alleged miracle. A priest once called upon him to inspect a miraculous appearance in the chalice, where it was said that the actual conversion into flesh and blood of part of the Host could be seen with the bodily eyes. Hugh indignantly refused to look at it. 'In the name of God,' he said, 'let them keep to themselves the signs of their want of faith.' He wanted no material proof of the virtue of the Blessed

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<sup>1</sup> *Magna Vita S. Hugonis*, p. 318. (Rolls Series.)

Sacrament; neither would he suffer his attendants, who were eagerly curious to examine the prodigy, to inspect the chalice. To a man so far raised above the common level, the ignorance and materialism of the priests with whom he had to do must have been a constant source of annoyance.”<sup>1</sup>

Before giving a correct version of this history, I must explain what Mr. Perry means by the “materialism” of the priests, which he considers so annoying to St. Hugh. He evidently means their belief in transubstantiation; for, in a previous chapter, in analysing a work of Giraldus Cambrensis, he says, “A great portion of his treatise is occupied with the many revolting details which spring from the *material* view of the Holy Sacrament;”<sup>2</sup> and, again, “So completely *material* is the view taken of the Eucharist, that it is held that certain material conditions, even under circumstances of the greatest necessity, are required for a valid sacrifice.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, as against the material view of the priests of the Middle Ages, Canon Perry records that his patron—I beg his pardon, his client—“wanted no material proof of the virtue of the Blessed Sacrament.” The point, then, of the anecdote is that St. Hugh believed in the *virtue* of our Lord’s Body, while his attendants, unable to rise so high, believed in the Real Presence, with an ignorance and materialism which must have been very annoying to so enlightened a man.

We turn to the “Magna Vita” to examine this strange phenomenon, a Catholic canonised saint transformed into a half-Calvinist. Certainly, if Canon Perry’s history is to be trusted, he has found a miracle little less wonderful than that of the Host partly con-

<sup>1</sup> P. 235.

<sup>2</sup> P. 146.

<sup>3</sup> P. 147.

verted into flesh. The story, however, as told by Adam reads very differently.<sup>1</sup> St. Hugh was journeying from Paris to Troyes in the year 1200, when he arrived at the little town of Joi. According to his custom, he invited the parish priest to dine with him ; but he, a very old man, absolutely refused this honour. He came to the saint in the afternoon to explain the cause of his refusal, which was his unworthiness, and to ask the saint's prayers. He was too overcome with shame to tell his story to the bishop himself, but to his attendants he gave the following narrative :—When he was a young priest, he said, he had committed a crime, and then dared to celebrate mass, without penance or confession. One day when his guilty conscience was reproving him in the very act of consecration, he was tempted by a thought of incredulity. He said to himself: "Can I believe that He who is the Splendour and the spotless Mirror of eternal light allows His Body and Blood to be really consecrated, handled and received, by such a filthy sinner as I am?" While he was revolving these stupid thoughts (*stolida*) in his mind, the moment came for dividing the sacred Host. He broke it, and blood began to drop from the division, and the particle in his hand took the appearance of flesh. In affright he let it fall into the chalice. He dared not touch it, but covered the chalice with the paten and finished the prayers. After the people were gone he went to the bishop, confessed his sin, and told of the miracle. Since that time the miraculous appearance in the chalice of the half of the Host converted into flesh and the blood which had flowed from it, had always continued, and people flocked from all parts of the country to see it, and

<sup>1</sup> *Magna Vita S. Hugonis*, p. 243. (Rolls Series, 1860.)



to praise God, who alone works wonders. Such was the story of the old priest of Joi, and he asked those to whom he related it to beg the bishop's prayers for himself, and to invite him and his suite to come and behold the miraculous appearance. Those who carried the story to St. Hugh were surprised at his answer. "Well," he said, "in the name of the Lord, let them have these signs of their infidelity. But what are they to us? Shall we wonder at some partial representations of this divine gift, who daily contemplate with the most faithful gaze of our souls this heavenly sacrifice whole and entire? Let him examine with his bodily eyes those little fragments, who does not gaze upon the whole with the internal eyes of faith." Saying this he gave his blessing to the old priest and dismissed him. He thus reproved the curiosity of his attendants, and not only strengthened them in faith, but said to them that what faith teaches ought to be held by the faithful as more certain than what the visible light of day shows to us. This is a very different history from that of Canon Perry. St. Hugh shows no "contempt of reputed miracles." There is not a word to show that he either doubted of the reality of the miracle, or that he did not consider it a divine work. What he said was this:— His faith was so strong that he needed no miracle to confirm it. He believed, without a doubt, that our Lord's whole Body and Blood were in every consecrated Host. Why should he then go and gaze upon a particle? Such ocular proof might be necessary to men of little faith. What was it to him? Had it not been granted by God as a sign to an unbeliever? Let the unbeliever, then, keep his sign and be thankful to God for it. It was out of no contempt of miracles in general,

or of this one in particular, that St. Hugh acted as he did. Had our Lord shown some sign to a saint in reward for his faith and devotion, he would have felt very differently, and perhaps gone to witness the prodigy, not as needing it to strengthen his faith, but as a token of God's love.

There is a very similar history related in Joinville's "Life of St. Louis." "The holy king related to me," he writes, "that the Albigeois once came to the Count de Montford, who was guarding that country for the king, and desired he would come and see the Body of our Saviour, which had become flesh and blood in the hands of the officiating priest, to their very great astonishment. But the Count replied, 'Ye who have doubts respecting the faith may go thither; but, with regard to me, I implicitly believe everything respecting the Holy Sacrament according to the doctrines of our Holy Mother Church. In return for this faith, I hope to receive a crown greater than the angels, who see the Divinity face to face, which must make them firm in their belief.'"<sup>1</sup> It is not at all unlikely that, as this event happened only a few years later than that related of St. Hugh, the Count de Montford may have heard of the Bishop of Lincoln's answer, and consciously imitated him. In any case he was influenced by a similar motive; for as the reported miracle had evidently been granted merely to silence or convert the heretics, he deemed it unworthy of his Catholic faith even to appear to put himself on their level. But de Montford did not "despise reputed miracles" any more than St. Hugh. They both despised infidels and heretics, and men whose

<sup>1</sup> Joinville's *Memoirs of St. Louis IX*, p. 361. Bohn's *Chronicles of the Crusades*.

faith *in what the Church teaches* requires confirming by new evidence.

Adam, who was present on the occasion related of St. Hugh, makes the following reflection:—"From this and other words of his I am perfectly confident that not on one occasion only, as has been before related, but often it was granted to him, with the unveiled face of the interior man, to contemplate in a singular manner those things which, though invisible to us, we are all taught to hold with most sincere faith." The event to which Adam here refers has been related by him at considerable length, and it ought to have shown Canon Perry how little St. Hugh despised visions or miracles or apparitions in the sacred Host. A young cleric of holy life having been sent by repeated heavenly voices to speak to St. Hugh on the sad state of some of the clergy, whilst assisting at St. Hugh's mass twice saw the sacred Host in his hands assume the form of a lovely child. When he told his message and his vision to the saint they long wept together: the holy bishop bade him keep secret what he had seen, and counselled him to enter a monastery, "since it was not fit that he who had seen and heard such things should remain among the vanities of the world."<sup>1</sup>

It is evident, then, that Canon Perry has completely mistaken the meaning of St. Hugh's exclamation: "Bene, inquit; in nomine Domini habeant sibi signa infidelitatis suæ." What the saint said of one miracle, which God had worked as a rebuke to an unbelieving priest, Canon Perry has taken as a general maxim, as if the saint had some kind of Protestant unbelief in the power or will of God to work miracles, an unbelief

<sup>1</sup> Magna Vita, lib. v. cap. 3.

which it pleases some to call enlightened faith. This one saying of St. Hugh is the only ground on which Canon Perry asserts that he "attributed the craving after miracles to a want of faith,"<sup>1</sup> which may or may not be true, according as it is understood. Certainly there is nothing whatever to justify Canon Perry in saying that the "details of the miracles, said to have been worked at his tomb, seem to accord but badly with the simple and truthful character of the bishop."<sup>2</sup> There is a double insinuation in these words quite unwarranted. The first is, that there was either some trickery in the performance, or some falsehood in the record, of the prodigies which testified to St. Hugh's sanctity. The second is that St. Hugh was a man who would have disbelieved such facts, or rebuked such narrations, regarding another saint. It is clear, from the account given of him by Abbot Adam, that he would have taken great care to make sure of the miraculous facts, and to guard against imposture; but if once he recognised the hand of God, he would have rejoiced and publicly called on others to share his joy. And this is what happened after his own death. The author just mentioned tells us that when his body was exposed in the cathedral of Lincoln, before burial, it was announced that a woman long blind had recovered her sight by the touch of his body. Some immediately cried out that the bells must be rung and the *Te Deum* chanted. But Adam and the Dean, with whom he was conversing, would by no means allow it (vehementer dissensimus), for the woman was not known, and might be imposing. They insisted that the truth in such cases should first be diligently examined, and not

<sup>1</sup> P. 365.

<sup>2</sup> P. 328.

published until it had been most certainly proved.<sup>1</sup> The author adds, that in the case just mentioned the long antecedent blindness and sudden cure of the woman were afterwards established beyond doubt.

We may now pass to Canon Perry's second instance of St. Hugh's superiority to his own age, or, in other words, his precocious Protestantism, in the matter of contempt for the Church's discipline. He writes as follows:—

“ Hugh would sometimes sit from early morning until late into the darkness of night without breaking his fast, intent upon his labour. But though he was careless of himself, he had thought for others, and during the hot weather would oblige the priests who said mass at great Church ceremonials to take some food before the celebration, though this was utterly shocking to the prejudices of his day. Rising in this, as in most other matters, superior to his time, Hugh would reprove the scruples of those who regarded such a direction with horror.”<sup>2</sup>

These words contain a mistake, which is likely to get widely circulated, and though it is of no importance to us that High Church clergymen may be emboldened by it to take their sacramental bread and wine after breakfast, still it is as well that St. Hugh should not be regarded as a contemner of the Church's discipline. How eagerly Canon Perry's statement will be caught up may be seen from a review of his book in the *Academy* of July 19, 1879. Mr. J. Bass Mullinger, the reviewer, is so pleased with the saint and his new biographer, that he recommends schoolmasters to give this book to their boys instead of the “brilliant but misleading fictions of Scott's ‘Crusaders,’ or ‘Ivanhoe!’” The reviewer, among the other excellent points

<sup>1</sup> P. 376.

<sup>2</sup> P. 227.

of St. Hugh's character, mentions that "ascetic though he was, he thought it far better that a priest should break his fast before communion than be tasked beyond his strength in the performance of his functions." Evidently the thing is already growing. Mr. Mullinger's statement is far wider than Mr. Perry's. The latter limits the breakfasting to "hot weather" and "great Church ceremonials," the former allows a general discretion to the priests to take care not to overtax their strength, and assures them St. Hugh was quite decided on the matter. He thought it "far better" to say mass with a full stomach than to endanger health. And this, too, "ascetic though he was;" as if the fast of asceticism which is undergone in order to subdue the body to the soul were identical with the fast of reverence which is prescribed for communicants. And yet the account given of St. Hugh's opinions and conduct, both by Mr. Mullinger and Mr. Perry, is as truly "misleading fiction" as anything of Scott's, though certainly not so "brilliant." What Adam, the contemporary biographer of St. Hugh, says, is this—not that the saint ever dispensed a priest to offer mass, or either a priest or layman to receive communion after breaking fast, for the saint had neither will nor power to do this, except for viaticum—but that he allowed or obliged *occasionally* his assistant priests, deacons, or subdeacons to serve at mass after a slight refec-tion, but of course without communicating. First, I will give an exact translation of Adam's words, and then explain whatever may be obscure to modern readers.

"Very often" (he says) "in the great heats of summer he forced some of the ministers of the altar to taste a little bread and wine.

For he feared lest, being overcome by the heat, the fast, and the labour, they might not, after such oft-repeated circuits (as they make) in the dedication of churches, be able to assist and minister to the celebrant of the solemnities of the mass, without danger. And when he perceived that, after having at his order tasted bread, some of them felt a horror and a dread of touching during the canon the sacred chalice, or the Lord's winding-sheet (*i.e.*, the corporal), he reproved them as men of little faith and discretion, who had neither learnt to obey a superior without hesitation nor could penetrate the reason of a prudent command (*circumspectæ jussionis*)."<sup>1</sup>

Several things must be at once evident to any one who considers *attentively* what is here said. First, those who broke their fast were not the "celebrants of masses," they were "some of the ministers of the altar," which is especially the name given to deacons and sub-deacons, or to the priests who take the functions of deacons and sub-deacons at mass. And though the celebrant may also be called the minister of the altar, yet here the ministers are distinguished from the celebrant and have to assist him. Next, it is quite clear that they were not communicants. Otherwise the author, instead of relating their dread of touching the corporal and chalice (which are the especial functions of the deacon and sub-deacon) would have told of their horror at receiving our Lord's body and blood after eating. Further, the peculiar occasions on which St. Hugh departed from the ordinary rule are mentioned. He did not publish a general dispensation to all the ordinary ministers of the altar. It was only to some (*quosdam*)—to those, namely, who had to assist at his Pontifical Mass, after having taken part in the laborious ceremonies of the consecration of a church in

<sup>1</sup> *Magna Vita*, p. 140.



summer. The frequent circuits (*toties repetitos circuitus*) are not frequent journeys in the country, but the circuits made round the church, both inside and outside, and round the altar with a thurible. The ceremony of consecrating a church with several altars may last from three to five hours. Besides the numerous circuits made by the assistant priests in company with the bishop, at each altar, after a certain point in the service, a priest with a thurible continues the incensation begun by the bishop, moving round and round, or from side to side, not for a few minutes only, but for an hour or more. It was probably those to whom this function fell who were excused from the fast, when, besides the part they took in the consecration of the church, they had to assist the bishop afterwards in the Pontifical Mass. Now, the command of the bishop that they should take a little refreshment was a *circumspect* one, not merely because the heat, fatigue, and giddiness caused by this long and peculiar function was a sufficient reason for dispensing, but especially because the bishop only dispensed in a matter to which his power extended.

Since the Church, guided in this by the Holy Ghost, requires that the priest who celebrates mass, and the people who communicate, should be fasting from midnight at least, it is absolutely necessary that this rule should be enforced with the utmost rigour. Were there the least loophole of interpretation, or could circumstances justify a dispensation, in a very short time the exceptions would become so numerous that the rule itself would disappear. Hence, from the earliest ages to the present day, one exception only has been admitted which lends itself to no abuse—viz., the case of

those in extreme and dangerous sickness.<sup>1</sup> The obligation is of course ecclesiastical, not Divine, and as such it is in the competence of the Sovereign Pontiff to relax it. But it is only on the rarest occasions that he has exercised this power. The authority of a bishop does not extend to the relaxation of a law so stringent and universal. Had, therefore, St. Hugh obliged priests who celebrated late masses to spare themselves by violating the rule of fast, his command would not have been circumspect but sinful, and his clergy would not have been free to obey him. It was otherwise as regarded the assistant priests, deacons, and sub-deacons. The custom which then existed, that they should be fasting when serving at mass, was not of the same stringent nature as the law which bound the celebrant and the communicants. In the earlier ages, indeed, they communicated with the celebrant; but in the time of St. Hugh this was no longer the case, though those at least who acted as deacon and sub-deacon were still expected to be fasting. It was from this custom rather than obligation that St. Hugh dispensed. It is evident that the exercise of such a dispensing power was then unusual; but the saint had good reason for chiding the reluctant and scrupulous. If they could not appreciate his reasons, they might have trusted his judgment.

At the present day, the custom or law of fasting, as regards the assistants at the altar, is no longer known, though that which binds the celebrant is rigidly observed. And this confirms what has been said regarding the necessity of rigour. History shows that where

<sup>1</sup> I do not allude to abnormal cases, such as concluding the sacrifice when a celebrant falls ill at the altar, or consuming the sacred species to save them from profanation, &c.

a dispensing power was once admitted, the gradual, but inevitable result in such a matter, was the final cessation of the law, or inobservance of the custom. Dispensation was given at first only under rare and urgent circumstances. But when a precedent could be found, and the authority of a saint alleged, the dispensations would be given and asked, under circumstances always less and less urgent; and thus becoming always more and more frequent, in no considerable time they were looked on as a matter of course, or, in other words, the law ceased to bind. So would it have been with regard to the celebrant's fast had St. Hugh acted as his modern biographer supposes. The law of fasting does press hardly on priests, and still more so on bishops. Were exception lawful in any case, there are many, very many circumstances in which it could be lawfully granted. Frequently both bishops and priests have to remain without tasting food or drink until two o'clock in the afternoon. To fast until one o'clock is a usual occurrence. And often the distress of the long fast is increased by hours of labour or journey, by weakness or racking headache. There can be little doubt that the health of the clergy does suffer from this discipline. Yet if a remedy is desirable, it must be sought, not in a dispensation, which would soon lead to the destruction of a most wise, reverent, and holy discipline, but in a movement on the part of the laity. It is for their convenience that the priests say mass so late. In some cases this is necessary; but in very many the late mass is imposed on the clergy merely by the indolence and luxurious habits which now prevail.

However, I have not to discuss the reasons of the Church's discipline, but matters of historical fact. The

blunder of Canon Perry was not simply the result of inadvertence, but of that self-satisfied erudition which disdains to seek instruction. He was not obliged to know Catholic discipline; but if he chooses to write the life of a Catholic saint, he must not think to interpret it aright by his own lights.<sup>1</sup>

That Canon Perry should have blundered over one author is bad enough; but his determination to find Protestantism in mediæval writers is so great, that he has repeated the blunder where not even a shadow of ambiguity or difficulty exists. He points out that Gerald Barry, a contemporary and friend of St. Hugh, held exactly the same lax views as the Bishop of Lincoln about pre-communion fasting. Yet, in the work to which reference is made, Gerald says that no one except in danger of death may receive after breaking his fast: "Nullus nisi jejunos accipiat excepto mortis urgentis periculo."<sup>2</sup> Nor does he contradict himself in the place indicated by Canon Perry. He merely remarks that if a priest

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Perry, in a letter to the *Tablet*, Nov. 1, 1879, defends his interpretation as "possibly the correct one," because for a very long period it was a common practice for priests to celebrate with the bishop, for which he refers to Martene. Such erudition is misleading. There was no such thing as concelebration in England in the twelfth century, except at ordinations. Mr. Dimock, who edited the Latin "Life of St. Hugh," has been far more modest and careful, and he has avoided such errors. His marginal abridgment of the passage of Adam, over which Canon Perry has stumbled, is as follows: "His consideration for others compelling them to take food even before the celebration of mass." Though these words have probably misled Canon Perry, still they are accurate; for he does not say "before celebrating mass," which would indicate that they were celebrants. Yet, if the words cannot be charged with error, it would have been well had they been less ambiguous. "Before assisting at mass" would have been a more exact summary.

<sup>2</sup> *Gemma Ecclesiastica*, p. 29. (Rolls Ed.)

acted otherwise, his consecration would be valid, though illicit. "Hanc devotionem sacerdotes omnes exhibeant, ut contriti (et) jejuni celebrent. . . . Si quis tamen pransus celebraret nihilominus conficeret."<sup>1</sup>

The same Gerald, in order to amuse his readers, when discoursing on the necessity of clerical science, has given a list of blunders in translating Latin committed by illiterate priests. These were, of course, jokes current at the University of Paris, where Gerald had been educated, or in clerical circles all over Europe, just as at the present day the supposed blunders of undergraduates are collected in the "Art of Pluck," or as good stories of Scotch and English ministers are strung together in books of anecdotes. One priest, for instance, confounds Barnabas with Barabbas, and instructs his audience that "he was a good man and a holy, but he was a robber." Another, referring to our Lord's words to Simon the Pharisee about the two debtors, was unable to distinguish between the Latin numerals quingenta (500) and quinquaginta (50), and translated them both fifty. A shrewd magistrate who was present, on hearing Simon's reply that the debtor to whom most was forgiven would love the creditor most, objected that both were forgiven the same amount. The priest, however, was equal to the occasion, and silenced his objector by saying that in one case they were pence sterling, in the other pence of Anjou. Canon Perry has given a few of these stories to illustrate the extreme ignorance of the clergy in the twelfth century. It is to be hoped that no future historian will illustrate the literary attainments and critical acumen of Anglican clergymen of the nineteenth

<sup>1</sup> Gemma Ecclesiastica, p. 25.

century by means of the real blunders of Canon Perry.

I have shown that St. Hugh did not merit the praise bestowed on him by Canon Perry, but I do not so much care to defend him from blame, since the qualities which fall under the Canon's censure are often pre-eminently Catholic. Yet the censor's judgments are not always consistent, and when placed side by side present a strange contrast. Take his account of the entry of St. Hugh into the Carthusian order. In very early life he had been placed with the Canons Regular, but on making acquaintance with the Carthusians, when he was already a deacon, he felt greatly attracted to their austere life. As Mr. Perry puts it:—

“The useful occupations in which Hugh was now engaged did not satisfy his mind. He craved for something higher, more romantic, more difficult, in the way of religious life. . . . For Hugh had completely imbibed the prevalent opinion of his age, that there was no true religion without complete self-immolation.”<sup>1</sup>

His prior became aware of his desire, and exacted from him an oath that he would not carry out his project during his (the prior's) lifetime. Hugh, accustomed ever to yield to obedience, took the oath. But on calm reflection he considered that he was not bound by it, since it interfered with a higher state of perfection, and his prior had no right to require it from him. Canon Perry, after relating this conduct of the saint, writes as follows:—

“No plain person would hesitate to pronounce this a sinful action, yet the biographer of Hugh, in his too eager desire to

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<sup>1</sup> Pp. 176, 177.



make everything redound to his honour, pretends that he acted by an inspiration from on high. What is more remarkable is that the saint himself, when appealed to in after life as to whether he had ever felt any scruple as to thus breaking his oath, declared that it had never caused him any regret, but only joy. No doubt there is something to be alleged in excuse for Hugh as to this transaction. In the notions of those days plain morality held but a very low place as compared with the glories of the "spiritual life," and Hugh may have been utterly unable to see how any irregularity which led directly to great spiritual triumphs was to be condemned."<sup>1</sup>

I can only say that, if no better apology than this is forthcoming for St. Hugh, then Canon Perry requires to apologise for writing his life. Why choose for the subject of biography, among innumerable Christian men and women, one who is "utterly unable" to see that he must not do evil that good may come; one who can see no harm in what every "plain person" will condemn without hesitation; one whose first principles about morality and the spiritual life were confused and topsy-turvy? To Catholics, indeed, who share St. Hugh's inability to take the unhesitating view of all plain persons, it will appear that the saint requires no apology. He broke no onerous contract, and he considered that an oath thus taken indiscreetly, and which was a hindrance to higher good, could have no binding force before God. I must add that I have been so accustomed to hear the conduct of such men as Cranmer and Luther lauded, that I am perplexed at this sudden outburst of Protestant zeal for the binding power of a promissory oath. But in a later page Canon Perry seems himself to have forgotten what he has said of St. Hugh's utter inability to take straightforward views

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 179, 180.



and of his contempt for ordinary morality in comparison with the spiritual life. For after relating how St. Hugh, when bishop, would retire periodically to the Carthusian monastery for prayer and mortification, he says—and here he copies the Catholic biographer, though not quite accurately :—

“ Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth would speak, and his words would come forth like new wine, fiery and sweet, tempered with the honey of heavenly wisdom. To the laity, and to secular persons unable to practise the more perfect life, he would speak in this wise : ‘ Not alone monks and hermits shall obtain the kingdom of God. God will not require of any man to have been a monk or hermit, but to have been truly a Christian. That which is truly indispensable in all is that they shall have had love in their hearts, truth in their mouths, purity in their lives.’ Upon this teaching he would constantly dwell. He would tell the married that if they lived virtuously they were to be held no way inferior to virgins.”<sup>1</sup>

As regards this last saying, it is another proof how incompetent is Canon Perry to write a Catholic biography. He intends to set down what he finds in his authorities, but he cannot understand it, and, therefore, cannot reproduce it correctly. To say that virtuous married people are to be held no way inferior to virgins is either to assert what has no meaning, or what is a heresy. If such a proposition is meant to regard *persons* it is foolish, for a married person may be, of course, far superior in virtue, in grace, in charity, in merit, and in glory, to a virgin. But if it is intended to speak of the *state* of marriage as compared with that of virginity, then it is a plain contradiction of the words of our Lord and of St. Paul to assert that the

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 247, 248.

married state is in no way inferior to virginity. St. Hugh, however, said something very different. "He taught married persons," says Abbot Adam, "that if they restrained themselves within the limits of what was allowed them, they would not be deprived of the beauty of chastity, but would receive the glory of eternal beatitude together with both the virgins and the continent." Here is a perfectly Catholic statement that there is a conjugal as well as a virginal chastity, not that they are of equal excellence, though they will both find a reward in eternal glory. St. Augustine had long ago put the matter clearly in his own pithy language: "Minorem locum habebit mater in regno cœlorum, quoniam maritata est, quam filia, quoniam virgo est. Si vero mater tua fuerit humilis, tu superba, illa habebit qualemcumque locum, tu nullum locum."<sup>1</sup> But to go back to St. Hugh's instructions, how does Canon Perry reconcile the statement that to the end of his life St. Hugh, being under the influence of low Catholic morality, never could see the evil of breaking an oath, though every "plain person" understands its sinfulness now without hesitation, through the higher Protestant instincts, with his other statement that the saint's constant teaching was that it is truly indispensable in all to have *truth in their mouths*, as well as love in their hearts? And why does he in one place represent the saint as making naught of ordinary morality in comparison with the spiritual life, and in another place make him exalt ordinary Christian life to the same level as that of virgins? And if he was so intoxicated with the "glories of the spiritual life" as to lose common sense, how is it that all this sober teaching

<sup>1</sup> Serm. 354. Ad continentes.

came from the abundance of his heart, just when he had drunk deepest of that life in a time of retreat?

This is but a specimen of the contradictions into which a writer must fall who tries to praise a Catholic saint from a Protestant point of view. The book abounds in contradictions. They begin in the dedication, in which Dr. Wordsworth, who has throughout his life been possessed with a mania of reviling the Holy See, and proving that the Church of Rome is the Babylon of the Apocalypse, is represented as the successor of the virtues of St. Hugh, who was a most devoted adherent and subject of the See of Rome. Over and over again Canon Perry asserts the corruptions and degradation of the English Church were due to its slavery to Rome; yet, over and over again he brings facts which show it was the influence of the Holy See which alone rescued it from the tyranny of kings and the corrupting influence of courtly bishops. He tells us how much better fitted secular canons must be to advise bishops than monks—"growing up in a routine of duties which narrowed and dwarfed the mind, without any opportunity of seeing the world and studying the manners and minds of men."<sup>1</sup> And yet not only the subject of this biography was a monk, but all the greatest of his predecessors, and very many, if not most, of the great bishops of England; while the chroniclers, whose keen remarks on "the manners and minds of men" he frequently quotes with approbation, are nearly all monks.

There is, in fact, an unreality, an inconsistency, I had almost said an insincerity, about these Anglican accounts of Catholic saints, which must necessarily

<sup>1</sup> P. 11.

tend to utter confusion as to doctrine, and consequently to indifference; while this giving of alternate praise and blame is destructive of any consistent standard of right and wrong. In a chapter devoted to the state of the clergy in the time of St. Hugh, Canon Perry has gathered out of a treatise of Giraldus a long list of possible, or actual, abuses or irreverences committed against the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. He remarks that "Such tricks played about the holiest things gives us a very low idea of the reverence and devotion of the time."<sup>1</sup> In this remark every Catholic will cordially agree, provided only that the historical authority of Giraldus is admitted. But we know too well his reckless exaggerations about Ireland to trust him easily when he speaks of England, or even of his native Wales. Admitting, however, the facts as Canon Perry gives them, on the testimony of Gerald Barry and Walter Mapes, how do they in any way bear out Canon Perry's view, that such deeds were the result of the low material views of the Eucharist—*i.e.*, as he explains, of the belief in Transubstantiation? Nestorians used to write in language very like that of Canon Perry, regarding the "many revolting details which spring naturally from the material view of"—the Incarnation! And many infidels have enumerated the crimes of Christians as an argument against their faith. Christians at the present day take the name of their Redeemer in vain, abuse His festivals by profligacy and by quarrels, and persecute each other through a misconceived zeal for His glory. Suppose now that Canon Perry, instead of raking up the crimes of Catholics in the twelfth century,

<sup>1</sup> P. 148.

should have the moral courage to write a book like that of Giraldus, enumerating the crimes of men of his own time and his own Church, and should denounce them in the same bold and perhaps exaggerated language used by the priestly writers of the Middle Ages. And suppose that some writer of the twenty-fifth century, wishing to depict the life and times of Dr. Christopher Wordsworth, should discover this imaginary treatise of Canon Perry, and should pick out all its worst passages, and string them together, and call it a picture of the English Church in the nineteenth century. Suppose he should also indulge in reflections that such abominations are just what might be expected from the gross material belief in the Incarnation which was then prevalent in the Church of England. And if, after these reflections, he should go on to eulogise Dr. Wordsworth, in spite of his having held the same views of the Incarnation which the author has pronounced low and degrading, and should do this by catching at certain words and acts which he could twist into proofs that he was in reality superior to the superstitious views held by his Church in the nineteenth century, and did not really believe in the material view of the Incarnation at all—would Canon Perry consider this a fair proceeding? Yet if a writer in the twenty-fifth century should do this, he will simply follow the precedent set him by Canon Perry. For St. Hugh held exactly the same faith about the Blessed Sacrament and the Holy Mass which was held by the sordid and unworthy priests whom he denounced and suspended. But they joined to a true faith, irreverence, avarice, and impurity, whereas St. Hugh shows in his life what should be the conduct

of a true priest to whom such mysteries are committed. That is the simple, straightforward view taken by St. Hugh's contemporary biographer, Abbot Adam. I have shown how different, and consequently how inconsistent and how false to history, is the view worked out by Canon Perry.

## ESSAY V.

### “INFAMOUS PUBLICATIONS.”

MR. GERALD FITZGIBBON, Master in Chancery, published, in 1872, a pamphlet entitled “Roman Catholic Priests and National Schools.” His object was to call public attention to certain “Infamous Publications,” by Roman Catholic priests. He says that he became aware of these publications for the first time on reading Mr. Lecky’s “History of European Morals.” He quotes from Mr. Lecky the following passage:—

“It was the custom then (*i.e.*, in the twelfth and following centuries), as it is the custom now, for the Catholic priests to stain the imaginations of young children by ghastly pictures of future misery ; to imprint upon the virgin mind atrocious images, which they hoped, not unreasonably, might prove indelible. In the hours of weakness and of sickness their overwrought fancy seemed to see hideous beings hovering around, and hell itself yawning to receive its victim. Few Englishmen, I imagine, are aware of the *infamous publications*, written with this object, that are circulated by the Catholic priests among the poor. I have before me a tract ‘for children and young persons,’ called ‘The Sight of Hell,’ by the Rev. J. Furniss, C.S.S.R., published ‘*permissu superiorum*,’ by Dully, Dublin and London.”

From this Mr. Lecky makes extracts, which we shall see later on.

“Of this terrifying theology,” says Mr. Fitzgibbon, “I knew nothing until I read Mr. Lecky’s note. But



I am not so indifferent to the condition of my fellow-creatures, both present and prospective, as to be satisfied with reading the small portion set out in his note, of what he designates as the ‘Infamous Publications’ to which he refers. I have, therefore, read all the books written by Father Furniss.”

Fermenting with this newly-acquired knowledge—

“Protestants and Dissenters,” he cries, “believing that both you and your representatives in Parliament were ignorant of the kind of lessons prepared for the schools now imperatively, not to say insolently, demanded at your expense, I felt it as a duty to communicate to you the knowledge of these books to which my own attention was but recently and accidentally called.”

He considers that his discovery throws quite a new light on the question of National Education:—

“I therefore say to all, whether Protestants, Presbyterians, or Roman Catholics, who would not send their children to the priests’ schools to learn the terrifying theology which they claim a right to teach, that the time has come, and the battle is at hand, in which it *must* be decided whether your children and your children’s children are to be the religious and rationally adoring worshippers of an Almighty whose attributes are infinite wisdom—inexhaustible goodness and mercy—boundless benevolence—and forbearing grace and indulgence to the frailties of His fallen creatures—or whether they are to be the benighted, quailing, terrified, and conscience-stricken slaves of a crafty and mendacious priesthood. These are the issues to be decided in this battle of the *priests*, which *must* now be fought, and which must decide tremendous issues.”

What, then, has Mr. Fitzgibbon discovered? What are these “Infamous Publications” which have excited such horror in his soul, and have aroused him to go forth to battle? They are the well-known work of the Jesuit Father Pinamonti, called “Hell opened to

Christians," and ten little "Books for Children," by the late Father Furniss, of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

These books treat of many things besides hell. Their venerated author, who had consecrated the last fifteen years of his life almost exclusively to the care of children, has poured out his piety and the tenderness of his loving heart in the first two books, called "Almighty God," and "God Loves Little Children." Few men have ever loved and laboured for children as did Father Furniss. But as it suits the purpose of Mr. Fitzgibbon to represent the good priest as a kind of ogre or child-devourer, he has carefully abstained from quoting either of these books, though he says that he has read them. He has made no attempt fairly to represent Father Furniss's moral or dogmatic teaching. But he has searched through his books for extracts which would *tell* with his Protestant readers, even for mere expressions on which he could found a charge or an insinuation. Thus, if Father Furniss speaks of a child having "the misfortune to fall into mortal sin," Mr. Fitzgibbon prints the word *misfortune* in capital letters, because it suits him at that place, where he is giving the history of a horrible and deliberate murder, to *insinuate* that Father Furniss considers such mortal sin as rather a weakness than a crime. On the other hand, where it suits him to accuse Father Furniss of absurd and atrocious rigorism, he himself speaks, as we have seen, of God's "forbearing grace and indulgence to the frailties of His fallen creatures;" and then, because Father Furniss has spoken of a child in hell as "it," Mr. Fitzgibbon fastens on this pronoun, prints it for half a page in capital letters, and not merely

insinuates, but declares, that Father Furniss must speak “of an infant so young, as not to be, as yet, entitled to be designated as a person—*i.e.*, a rational and accountable agent.” Candour would have taught Mr. Fitzgibbon that, as Father Furniss is writing for children of both sexes, he uses sometimes the convenient “it” to be more general, and not in order to designate infancy. Mr. Fitzgibbon has here made, not a mistake, but a deliberate perversion, for Father Furniss expressly explains that he is only speaking of children old enough “knowingly and willingly to break God’s commandments.” Mr. Fitzgibbon has also read the examination which precedes the final sentence to hell, in which the plea of ignorance (a good plea sometimes) is supposed, *in the case*, not to be valid. But, in reading this examination, Mr. Fitzgibbon was looking, not for explanations of difficulties, but for materials of accusation. He therefore finds a paragraph called “Examination about sins,” and another called “Examination about good works.” Father Furniss has, of course, only enumerated such sins or good works as belong commonly to children. Remembering how Jesus Christ has taught us that, on the one hand, we shall give account even for “an idle word” at the day of judgment, and that, on the other hand, even “a cup of cold water, given in His name, will not lose its reward,” Father Furniss has placed in his catalogues sins great and small—mortal and venial—as well as good works of various kinds and degrees. Mr. Fitzgibbon reads these catalogues. Works of piety neglected or performed come first, as belonging to the first table of the law. This will serve his purpose. So, referring to the examination about sins, he writes:—“The first

and most prominent in this category of offences are stated to be ‘morning prayers and night prayers, how often not said? Curses, little and great—mass not heard on Sundays—behaving bad in chapel.’”

Mr. Fitzgibbon says nothing of the sins which immediately follow in the list, which are “disobedience to parents; quarrels, fighting, hatred, revenge; immodesties in thought, word, and action; reading bad books; going into bad company; stealing, if it was only a pin.”

How shall we qualify Mr. Fitzgibbon’s conduct in calling those sins which he selects the “most prominent in the category,” in order that he may insinuate that Father Furniss thrusts little children into hell for nothing worse than omitting their prayers, or looking about them at mass-time?

Or again, how, but by retorting his own epithet of “mendacious,” shall we qualify his conduct in composing his next paragraph? Wishing to insinuate that priests, like the Pharisees, “tithe mint, anise, and cummin, omitting the weightier things of the law, judgment and mercy and faith,” Mr. Fitzgibbon quotes from the list of good works the following:—

“Every prayer the child said in its life—how often, on awakening in the morning, it made the sign of the cross, and said, ‘Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.’ How often it said its morning prayers; how often it made the sign of the cross before and after meals; how often it said, ‘My Jesus, I do all for you;’ how often it said its night prayers, and examined its conscience; how often it heard holy mass; how often it went to confession and holy communion; how often it made a visit to the blessed sacrament, and to the image of Mary.”

Here Mr. Fitzgibbon ends his quotation, and makes

this remark:—“Such are the first and most conspicuous in the list and record of the good works for which the child is to get credit.” He knew full well that, *immediately* after this list of acts of piety proper to children, Father Furniss gives the following:—“Every good work it did to the poor, how often it was obedient to its parents, how often it was kind to its companions, how often it read good books.” It would not serve Mr. Fitzgibbon’s purpose to let his readers know that priests teach charity, kindness, obedience to parents, love of reading, so he deliberately *suppresses evidence*. Mr. Fitzgibbon has had the bad taste to write, that if any of the Roman Catholic judges on the Irish Bench can believe the doctrines taught by Father Furniss, he is “disqualified for the seat of justice.” I will not say that any one who can sift facts and report on evidence as Mr. Fitzgibbon does, is unfit to be a Master in Chancery, but merely that I hope that no case in which Catholics are interested may ever be dependent on his fairness.

So much for our author’s method. As to the topics he discusses, they are many, besides the doctrine of hell, which first moved his bile. He touches on purgatory, masses for the dead, emblems of devotion, assassination, confession, home rule, without any particular order. I cannot follow him over his whole ground. I will deal with some of his minor accusations, however, before I enter upon the main topic—the *infamy* of picturing hell to children.

Some of my readers may, perhaps, remember how the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance laid his lance in rest to do battle with the giants, whom his distempered fancy made him see before him on the plain, slinging

their arms about with bloodthirsty violence. They were but harmless windmills after all, grinding corn for the people's food, and the poor knight-errant, struck by one of the sails, happily escaped from the encounter with a tumble on the ground and a broken rib. Mr. Fitzgibbon has also mistaken windmills for giants. If, instead of standing aloof from the millions of his fellow-countrymen, he would have gone to witness a Children's Mission, that he might test his theories by facts, he would have seen hundreds of sweet, bright-faced, intelligent, happy children throng with eagerness to the sermon, and when the sermon was over, and the preacher of God's terrors passed through the church, he would have seen these little ones, not shrinking from him in dread, but importuning him with smiles for a word or a blessing; and we should never have read those silly words about "benighted, quailing, terrified, and conscience-stricken slaves of a crafty and mendacious priesthood."

He might also, by the same easy process of verifying his theories, have learned another fact which good sense alone would have taught one less prejudiced. Mr. Fitzgibbon, throughout his pamphlet, imagines that priests must make great income from the sale of "emblems," *i.e.*, scapulars, medals, crosses, and the like. Had he asked any priest he would have been told that commerce, *i.e.*, to buy in order afterwards to sell at a profit, is forbidden to priests and nuns; and that especially to sell anything that has been *blessed*, with a charge for the blessing, is simony, forbidden by canon law as well as by the law of God.

Of course Mr. Fitzgibbon would not have believed a "mendacious priesthood" asserting anything. But a few hours' observation of the ragged children flocking



to a mission, in a church where no entrance charge is made, and receiving *presents* of such emblems from nuns and priests and pious laymen, when unable to purchase in the shops, would have opened even *his* eyes to the fact that to work for children must entail much expense and bring no profit to the priest.

Mr. Fitzgibbon is especially fired with indignation at the thought that “emblems” may be blessed, and may impart a blessing to those who use them. I extract a passage from his pamphlet, which is about the most curious specimen of misconception arising from prejudice that I have met with in controversial literature:—

I know not to what extent these emblems are a source of revenue to the Church, but that the use of them is held to be of paramount importance may be inferred from the evidence of Mr. Grace as well as from that of the Cardinal. A power in the clergy to impart the virtues ascribed to these emblems, and the power to refuse, imports an extent of despotic authority, derived from God, from which no believer can possibly escape. When the view of death presents itself to the prostrate invalid, and a crucifix is offered to him, to which ‘the strange undefinable power of ecclesiastical benediction, in his behalf, has communicated the body, soul, divinity, of the Incarnate Word, by an action more stupendous than the creation of the world, whereby the departing soul can speak up to heaven, and be heard and obeyed there, whereby it can spend the satisfactions of Jesus as if they were its own, and can undo bolts and bars in purgatory, and choose by its determinate will whom it will liberate, and whom it will pass over’—what price, in worthless worldly wealth, can possibly be adequate to the value of such an emblem, especially when offered to him on his death-bed!!!”

Catholic readers will be startled at the supposed quotation in the above passage. They will wonder where Mr. Fitzgibbon heard of the mysterious crucifix



“to which ecclesiastical benediction has communicated the body, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ.” I must solve the riddle for them. The words in inverted commas are Mr. Fitzgibbon’s *interpretation*—made, I believe, in good faith—of a passage in one of the Christian Brothers’ books, which he has himself correctly quoted at page 60. The extract is as follows, and is itself borrowed from Father Faber’s “All for Jesus.”

“What goes to the saving of the soul?”

“The book answers—

“All sorts of things—water—oil—candles—ashes—beads—medals—scapulars—have to be filled with a strange undefinable power by ecclesiastical benedictions in its behalf. The body, soul, divinity of the Incarnate Word have to be communicated to it over and over again, till it becomes quite a common occurrence, though each time it is in reality a more stupendous action than the creation of the world. It can speak up to heaven, and be heard and obeyed there. It can spend the satisfactions of Jesus, as if they were its own, and can undo bolts and bars in purgatory, and choose, by its determinate will, whom it will liberate and whom it will pass over.”

Mr. Fitzgibbon, to whom, naturally enough—living as he does isolated from nearly all Christendom—all these theological and technical expressions are as great a jargon as his own law terms would be to a young lady fresh from a convent-school, rashly tries to interpret them without a guide. The first clause asserts that various material things may, by the benediction of a priest, be filled with a strange, undefinable power. This, according to Father Faber, is *one* of the helps God has given the soul for its salvation. The next is the institution by Jesus Christ of the Holy Eucharist. This is expressed in the second clause—“The body,

soul, divinity of the Incarnate Word have to be communicated to it—*i.e.*, to the Christian soul, over and over again.” The third is prayer—“It can speak up to heaven and be heard and obeyed there.” The fourth is indulgences—“It can spend the satisfactions of Jesus,” &c. . . . We need not say that Father Faber’s rapid summary, of which the above is only a part, is not made for the instruction of the ignorant, but as a reminder to the well-instructed. Each phrase is the abridgment of a treatise of theology.

I do not, assuredly, blame Mr. Fitzgibbon for not being able to understand these phrases, but I do blame him for not asking an explanation, before he rushed into print, from some of “that class of Roman Catholics, long and deservedly respected, and justly claiming credit for a full measure of learning and intelligence,” of whom he speaks in another place.

They would have told him that the second, third, and fourth clauses of the quotation are not, as he supposes, an amplification of the first, but distinct propositions. They would have informed him that the pronoun “it,” in the second clause, refers to the *soul*, not to water, oil, and the rest, and that there is no ecclesiastical benediction to which the power is attributed of communicating the body, soul, and divinity of the Incarnate Word to a crucifix!

No doubt, such inquiry from living Catholics might not have converted Mr. Fitzgibbon to their faith, yet it would have prevented him from misrepresenting their doctrine, and attributing to them what never entered into any brain but his own. It would have taught him that the notion of a dying Catholic purchasing, at the cheap cost of all his worldly wealth, the marvellous

crucifix, is a supposition in which he need not have indulged; and it would have spared the three notes of exclamation with which he very properly qualifies it.

Let us suppose a parallel case. A priest unlearned in the law, finds in a legal handy-book the following account of the Court of Chancery:—

*Qu.*—“What goes to the protection of an orphan?”

*Ans.*—All sorts of officials—Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors, and Masters in Chancery, have to receive a strange, undefinable jurisdiction in courts of equity in its behalf. Petitions have to be filed, affidavits made, injunctions granted; demurrers or disclaimers may follow; counsel will plead; interlocutory decrees will be pronounced; facts have to be cleared up; Masters in Chancery may examine these for years before they report. The report may be excepted to, disproved, and overruled; or may be confirmed and made absolute.”

What would Mr. Fitzgibbon think of an ignorant priest, who, having stumbled on the above passage, should found upon it a tirade against Masters in Chancery, and paraphrase it after this fashion:—

“Masters in Chancery have to receive an undefinable jurisdiction, by which *they* file petitions, make affidavits, grant injunctions and demurrers, disprove and overrule reports, or make them absolute.” And if, after this lucid *interpretation*, he should exclaim: “Such a power in the Masters in Chancery, to grant or refuse injunctions, imports an extent of despotic authority, derived from the crown, which no citizen can possibly escape?” Mr. Fitzgibbon may be assured that the above is not one half so foolish as his own language.

There are many other blunders, equally ludicrous, which I have not space to notice. One, however, there is which cannot be palliated by ignorance of theology. He writes:—

"The portion of the Irish people, for whose edification these books were fabricated, are assumed to be of Celtic race. Dissenters from Roman Catholic doctrines are all confounded together, and spoken of as the Saxon invaders, and oppressors of the Celtic Irish."

Knowing that Father Furniss, the author of "these books," was himself an Englishman, of an old Yorkshire family, and that his principal labours were in England, not in Ireland, I was astonished to learn that he speaks of "Saxon invaders" of Ireland. He was too well read in history to confound Saxons with Normans, and though he loved the Irish, he was too fond of his own country to make an Englishman, whether Saxon or Norman, a synonym for a Protestant. I have looked in vain through Father Furniss's books to find any expression on which Mr. Fitzgibbon could base his assertion.

But enough has been said on these incidental matters to show the animus of this author, as well as his incompetence to deal with questions of theology. Let us come now to the substance of his pamphlet.

Its object is to show that the teaching of Roman Catholic priests is so "hideously blasphemous," and so "marvellously adapted to promote and encourage the gratification of diabolical appetites," such as that of murder, that it is a crime in any government to subsidise schools under the control of priests. As one, therefore, of that small redeeming class of Irishmen "to whom nothing is so congenial as peace and tranquillity, nothing so essential as friendly intercourse, mutual confidence, universal toleration, and consequent liberty of thought and useful action," Mr. Fitzgibbon "has felt a goading sense of duty to raise his voice," at

the evident risk of his reputation and even of his life<sup>1</sup> against the "debasing impressions and demoralising despotism of the Roman Catholic priesthood, with which the rising and future generations in these islands are now menaced."

Having finished his task, he exclaims:—

"Is it not time for every man who is yet alive, and who has anything to lose, to get off the nightmare which paralyses him, and to speak out—to get upon his feet—and to strike in defence of his liberty, his property, and his life !!"

Evidently Father Furniss, whether he succeeds or not in terrifying children, has terrified at least one grown-up man!

Two Catholic doctrines developed by Father Furniss seem principally to have offended Mr. Fitzgibbon—that which declares hell to be the penalty for even one mortal sin unforgiven, and that which pronounces that the most grievous mortal sin is forgiven at once to the true penitent.

From these two doctrines preached to the people—so says our Master in Chancery—come by logical sequence all the murders in the country.

How so? it will be asked.

Do you not see, says Mr. Fitzgibbon, that the murderer, thirsting for vengeance, and having heard that one mortal sin condemns to hell, waits till his enemy has committed even the least of that kind, such as losing mass, and immediately shoots him, that he may send him to hell. Having done this, and thereby slaked his thirst for blood, he remembers the second doctrine, that even the greatest mortal sin, such as the murder he has

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 87, 88.

just committed, will be forgiven at once to the contrite sinner, and therefore—but we must let Mr. Fitzgibbon tell us, in his own words, how the Catholic murderer proceeds:—

“His hands reeking with the blood of his victim, the murderer is to extend them towards heaven and say, ‘O my God, I am very sorry that I have sinned against Thee, *because Thou art so good*, and I will not sin again.’ As it may be some days or a week before he can go to confession, which is the *second* part, and the final completion of the remedy for mortal sin, he must instantly, after saying the act of contrition, *intend or resolve in his mind* to go, as soon as he can, to confession; upon forming which resolution he is, on pain of committing another mortal sin, to believe, *and not even to doubt*, that, by the act of contrition and the intention to confess, ‘he has become the child of God again!’”

No Catholic needs to be told what an utter parody this is of the moral teaching of the Church and of the Catholic conscience. But on what passage of Father Furniss is it founded? Mr. Fitzgibbon quotes the following:—

“Jer. viii. : *Shall not he that falleth rise again?* If you catch a fever, you get rid of it as soon as you can. If you break your arm, you get it mended as soon as you are able. Do at least as much for your soul as for your body. If you commit a mortal sin, and you die with that mortal sin on your soul, you go to hell for all eternity! Therefore, do not keep that horrible monster, mortal sin, in your soul for one moment. But you say ‘What must I do? which is the way? how am I to get the sin forgiven?’ Listen, and you shall hear what you must do: *Make an act of contrition directly, and go to confession as soon as you can.* Remember these two things.

“1. *After mortal sin make an act of contrition directly.* Do not delay for a day, an hour, a minute, a moment. Say any act of contrition—for example the act of contrition of blessed Leonard: ‘O my God, I am very sorry that I have sinned against Thee,

because Thou art so good, and 'will not sin again.' But you say, 'What is the use of making an act of contrition directly after a mortal sin? I know I can get my sin forgiven by going to confession, but what is the use of making an act of contrition until the time comes when I can go to confession?' I will tell you the use of it. It may be some days, it may be a week, before you can get to confession. Do you think God wishes you to remain in mortal sin for a week, or until the time comes when you can go to confession? Certainly He does not. But can you get your sin forgiven before you go to confession? Certainly you can. But how? Through the great mercy of God, at any moment of the day or night, whenever you will, if you make a sincere act of true contrition, with the intention of confessing it, at that moment God forgives the sin, and you become the child of God again. How good God is, that a sinner should not be obliged to remain in mortal sin, and a state of damnation, one moment longer than he wishes it himself! St. Thomas says: 'However little the sorrow may be, if it is only true contrition, it takes away the sin.' Q. 1, 3, 4. But you ask, what does St. Thomas mean when he says, 'that this sorrow must be true contrition?' He means just this, that you must be sorry for offending God *because He is so good*, and resolve not to offend him again. St. Alphonsus says the same.

"II. *Go to confession as soon as you can.* Besides making an act of contrition directly after mortal sin, you should go to confession, and *confess the sin as soon as you can.* First, because you are obliged to confess every mortal sin. Jesus Christ has instituted the sacrament of penance, to forgive all mortal sins to those who are contrite of heart, and confess them sincerely. John xx. : 'Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them.' Secondly, although you may hope that the mortal sin has been forgiven, if you made a sincere act of contrition, still you feel more secure about the forgiveness of it after you have received absolution in the sacrament of penance."

The only remark I will make on this paragraph, and on Mr. Fitzgibbon's strange deductions from it, is, that surely, if this doctrine is so criminal, Father Furniss



ought not to be singled out for reprobation as having taught it.

Mr. Fitzgibbon mentions a Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin—the most Rev. Dr. Murray—“whose memory is, and will for generations be, justly respected by the friends of toleration and of Christian charity.” I know not whether Mr. Fitzgibbon will modify his estimate of Dr. Murray, or whether, on the contrary, he will recover from his fears of the effects of Catholic teaching, when I tell him that the venerated prelate taught precisely the same doctrines as Father Furniss on the matters in question, and in still more powerful language. Dr. Murray has left behind him two volumes of sermons. There are, amongst others, discourses on judgment, and on hell, which in vividness of description equal or surpass the language of Father Furniss. They differ only in style, as the language of a bishop addressing his flock must differ from that of a priest writing for children.

I recommend to Mr. Fitzgibbon’s meditation the following passage:—

“Sinners! you have lent me your attention while I spoke to you of the overwhelming anguish of those companions in crime who have gone before you into eternity. Allow me now to say of yourselves, and I say it with a bleeding heart, that while you continue in your present state of enmity with God, though you may have incurred the guilt of but one mortal sin, it is as certain as the Word of God is true, that you deserve the same miserable doom—that, were you at this instant to die, you would fall with the rapidity of lightning into the same horrible dungeon of torment and despair. What, then, my brethren, let me ask you, is this scene of woe the place in reality on which you fix your choice for your everlasting habitation? With the graces of your God ready to support you in the way to heaven, with the invitations of Divine mercy sounding in your ears, and the glories of

His kingdom beaming on your view, do you really choose to mark out your dwelling in eternal flames? And when the prophet says: 'Which of you can dwell with devouring fire?' (Isaias xxxiii. 14), are you ready to step forward and say: 'Yes, I am he who can not only brave the hottest vengeance of the Omnipotent, but who, in preference to the joys of heaven, which I reject, choose to plunge into the fiery gulf for ever!' O senseless man! escape it while you may: you stand on the verge of a precipice; one instant may complete your irreparable ruin. Is it not owing to the undeserved mercy of God that you are not now overwhelmed with despair among the damned? Have you not reason to say with David: 'Unless the Lord had been my helper, my soul had almost dwelt in hell' (Ps. xciii. 17). Are you sure that He will wait for you one week, one hour more? Are you sure that in one hour more the smoke of your torments will not already be ascending before His throne! Oh, let this instant assure your return to God: put it not off till to-morrow: to-morrow may be too late . . . Walk not in the way which led them to destruction. Again, I say to you, let this day, this hour, assure your sincere and final return to God. From this moment make a total and eternal divorce with sin; weep over your past transgressions in sentiments of deep compunction; fly to the saving tribunal of penance, where the blood of Jesus is still ready to plead for your pardon."<sup>1</sup>

Such is the language of the venerable pastor, whom Mr. Fitzgibbon has justly praised. Will he now venture to call him, like Father Furniss, an abettor of murder, or to class his discourses with the books of Father Furniss, as "infamous publications?"

But, should he be resolved to include both bishop and priest in common reprobation, he must go further still. St. Peter is also, and still more, an abettor of murder on the same grounds. We suppose that no one who bears the name of Christian will deny that the Jews, who clamoured for the death of Jesus Christ,

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Murray's Sermons, i. 110-112.

were as bloodthirsty and more guilty than even the assassins of Irish landlords. Now it happens that in the Acts of the Apostles we have the abridgment of some sermons addressed by St. Peter to those very Jews. If Mr. Fitzgibbon is indignant with Father Furniss that he says so little against murder, when writing for children, who are not much addicted to that crime, what will he say of St. Peter's address to the crucifiers of the Son of God? The first sermon is recorded in the 2nd chapter of the Acts of the Apostles: —“Ye men of Israel,” he says, “hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved among you by miracles . . . you, by the hands of wicked men, have crucified and slain.” When he had finished his sermon, his hearers (I quote from the Protestant version) “were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the Apostles: Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them: Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children . . . then they that gladly received his word were baptized.”

Father Furniss, addressing baptized Christians, says —“After every mortal sin repent and confess, and you shall receive pardon.” St. Peter, addressing unbaptized Jews, says—“After your sins, murder included, repent and be baptized, and you shall receive pardon.” Confession has been called a laborious baptism. Therefore, if Mr. Fitzgibbon is angry with Father Furniss for his easy terms of pardon, what will he say to St. Peter?

The second sermon is very similar. After reproaching the Jews for preferring the murderer Barabbas to

Jesus Christ, and of murdering the Author of Life, St. Peter thus proceeds. He first palliates their guilt, and then promises immediate pardon to repentance:—"And now, brethren, I know that you did it through ignorance, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all the prophets, that His CHRIST should suffer, He hath so fulfilled. Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. You are the children of the prophets and of the testament which God made to our fathers, saying to Abraham: *And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.* To you first God raising up His Son hath sent Him to bless you: that every one may convert himself from his wickedness."

Had Mr. Fitzgibbon lived in the days of St. Peter, and been among his opponents, say, for example, among the disciples of Simon Magus, he might, by the same mode of reasoning he now adopts and with more plausibility, have proved that the Acts of the Apostles was an "infamous publication," and that life was not safe where men like St. Peter were allowed by the government to promise blessings to repentant murderers.

I am not aware that Mr. Lecky attributes to pictures of hell the extreme social consequences which the imagination of Mr. Fitzgibbon has conjured up. With the former they are consigned to infamy, as "atrocious images" which, once impressed upon the mind, will take effect in "hours of weakness and of sickness." This, of course, must be said on the supposition that there is no hell, otherwise, as St. Chrysostom argues, "If the thought of hell were not very useful, God would not have threatened it."

Shakspeare knew better than Mr. Lecky or Mr. Fitz-

gibbon the power of this thought, *when entertained*, to deter from crime, as also the wretched care some men take not to entertain it, when he put into the mouth of Autolycus, the “snapper-up of unconsidered trifles,” the following prescription for a roguish life: “AS FOR THE LIFE TO COME, I SLEEP OUT THE THOUGHT OF IT.”<sup>1</sup>

These authors are worse than Shakspeare’s rogue, inasmuch as they would rid men of the troublesome thought of hell, not only in sleep but in waking hours. Mr. Fitzgibbon gives to his own pastors the (I suppose) well merited praise that—

“They make sparing and rare allusions to that ‘hangman’s whip’—the fear of hell. They do not presume to depict the torments reserved for the wicked. They pretend not that any human being ever had the privilege of seeing the dungeons of hell, and of returning to describe the torments there inflicted. They presume not to pronounce against any man, or class of men, the dreadful judgment of never-ending torture; and they caution all others to beware of committing such an offence—telling the proud in spirit ‘not to judge lest they be judged.’”

Thus, then, unless Mr. Fitzgibbon belie the gentlemen whose cause he defends, an Episcopalian Church in Ireland must exactly verify the satire of Pope—

“To rest, the cushion and soft dean invite,  
Who never mentions hell to ears polite.”

Catholic priests, however, who believe that at least one “human being,” whom they can trust, He who called Himself the Son of Man, our Lord Jesus Christ, did see the dungeons of hell, and did describe the torments there inflicted, are not so sparing of their own delicacy, or of that of the souls committed to them; and they do “presume to depict the torments reserved

<sup>1</sup> *Winter’s Tale*, act iv. sc. 2.

for the wicked." Catholic priests also, though they judge no individual soul, have no hesitation in declaring to their hearers "what classes of men" will be doomed to never-ending torture. They tell their hearers that "he that believeth not the words of Jesus Christ shall be condemned." They tell them what kind of men shall "be cast into the exterior darkness where is weeping and gnashing of teeth." They tell them to what classes of men, placed on His left hand at the judgment day, Jesus Christ will say, "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels." They say, with St. Paul: "Know ye this, and understand that no fornicator, or unclean, or covetous person (which is a serving of idols) hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words. For because of these things cometh the anger of God upon the children of unbelief. Be ye not therefore partakers with them."

I have no intention of composing a treatise on future punishments. The only novelty the subject has received at the hands of Mr. Fitzgibbon or Mr. Lecky is that all attempts to depict the nature of these punishments in human—or, to speak more correctly, in Scriptural and Divine—language, are characterised as *infamous*. This is a serious accusation, affecting the moral character as well as the dogmatic teaching of many millions of men and women. It affects not only Roman Catholic priests of the present day and of past ages, but the majority of Protestant writers and preachers, and the countless multitudes who have believed and repeated the teaching of Catholic or Protestant theologians. It affects especially the writers of both the Old and New Testaments,



and above all, the moral character of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

First, then, I accuse Mr. Fitzgibbon—and I am sorry to add, in this instance, Mr. Lecky—of *bad faith*.

They *must* know that not Catholic priests alone, but Protestant ministers also, have drawn vivid pictures of hell's torments.

They *must* know that such pictures are to be found in the writings of men who were the most opposed to the Catholic Church. To suppose them not to know this, we must suppose them utterly unacquainted with Christian literature. Mr. Fitzgibbon indeed pleads that "of this terrifying theology I knew nothing until I read Mr. Lecky's note." But we shall see evidence that even if he knows nothing of the writers of his own Church, he has read the New Testament, for he frequently appeals to it; and he *cannot* but have seen that there are no more "atrocious images" in the pages of Father Furniss's tracts than in those pages which almost all Christians hold to be inspired.

If, then, as I shall show, and as Mr. Lecky knows well, what he denounces is found in the Sacred Books generally accepted by his country, in the pages of some of her greatest authors, in the founders and most celebrated teachers of her various sects, on what principle of morality, in his "History of European Morals," does he attach the note of infamy to the writings of Roman Catholic priests only? If the whole school has been guilty of the offence, why is the unpopular boy alone selected for the flogging?

But *are* all guilty? Mr. Fitzgibbon will ask. He has been going to Protestant Churches since his boyhood (I suppose), and he tells us that he hears no sermons



preached there describing the tortures of hell. If this is true, I regret to hear it; if untrue, I must leave it to his co-religionists to refute him; but at least *littera scripta manet*, and the published works of men by no means yet forgotten show that he is utterly mistaken when he asserts that "the Episcopalian Protestants of Ireland took shelter under the shade of the till-of-late Established Church from the doctrines inculcated in the books" of Father Furniss.

In fact, there is not a passage in those books on the subject of the pains of hell that cannot be matched, and even surpassed in vividness, or in "atrociousness," if he so please, by passages from the writings of men whom his own Church holds in highest honour.

Had Mr. Fitzgibbon accused Father Furniss of want of *good taste* in developing too minutely Scriptural images, without admitting the justice of the charge, I should not have thought it worth while to discuss it. He accuses, however, not the form but the substance of his teaching. After quoting some descriptions of the fires and dungeons of hell, Mr. Fitzgibbon speaks of the "imputation of *diabolical* cruelty made by these books against the merciful and benevolent Ruler of the Universe." Whether the books of Father Furniss impute cruelty to God I am not now to examine; what I now assert is, that if they do so, it is only in common with the various leaders of the Protestant Reformation or Reformations.

Latimer, for example, writes as follows:—

"I would advise every man to be more careful to keep out of hell than trust he shall find no fire in hell. There is fire burning, there is pain without pleasure, torment without easement, anguish,

heaviness, sorrow, and pensiveness which tarrieth and abideth for all liars and hinderers of the truth.”<sup>1</sup>

Milton was not satisfied with the first Reformation, and wrote a hot appeal for a further and more complete one. In one treatise he “invokes the Immortal Deity to witness” that, “if he uses vehement expressions,” he does it

“Neither out of malice, nor list to speak evil, nor any vain glory, but out of mere necessity to vindicate the spotless truth from an ignominious bondage, whose native worth is become of such a low esteem that she is like to find small credit with us, for what she can say, unless she can bring a ticket from Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley. More tolerable it were for the Church of God that all these names were utterly abolished, like the brazen serpent, than that men’s fond opinion should thus idolise them, and the heavenly truth be thus captivated.”<sup>2</sup>

Milton, then, at least, would not take his doctrines from Latimer. They were the result of his own researches into Scripture, as is proved by his treatise on Christian Doctrine, written in Latin, and translated into English by Charles Sumner, Bishop of Winchester, in 1825, with Preliminary Observations. In this treatise he most explicitly professes his belief in the eternity of hell-fire, which he proves by several texts of Scripture. He even discusses the locality of hell.<sup>3</sup>

But should Mr. Lecky say that it is not the mere statement of the existence of hell which is infamous, but a minute picture of it, I would ask him what passage in F. Furniss’s little books can be compared with the following prayer with which Milton concludes his treatise “Of Reformation in England.” Father Fur-

<sup>1</sup> Latimer’s Remains, p. 236, Oxf. ed.

<sup>2</sup> Prose Works (Bohn’s ed.), vol. ii. 371, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. iv. p. 490.

niss painted hell in the hope that no one who read his book would go there. Milton, on the contrary, actually prays that the fate he describes may soon befall the opponents of his views. Why did not Mr. Lecky inflict his censure on the words of Milton, with which he must be familiar, rather than on the treatise of a little-known Catholic priest?

Here, then, is Milton's prayer:—

“Which way to end I know not, unless I turn mine eyes and lift up my hands to that eternal and propitious throne, where nothing is readier than grace and refuge to the distresses of mortal suppliants. Thou, therefore, that sittest in light and glory, unapproachable, parent of angels and men! next thee I implore, omnipotent King, Redeemer of that lost remnant whose nature thou didst assume, ineffable and everlasting Love! and thou, the third subsistence of divine infinitude, illuminating spirit, the joy and solace of created things! one Tripersonal God-head! look upon this thy poor and almost spent and expiring Church, leave her not thus a prey to these importunate wolves.”

(After a long prayer for the overthrow of Anglicanism and the establishment of Puritanism, he concludes his prayer with a prophecy of what shall be when his prayer is heard.)

“Then,” he says, “they that by the impairing and diminution of the true faith, the distresses and servitude of their country, aspire to high dignity, rule, and promotion here, after a shameful end in this life (which God grant them), shall be thrown down eternally into the darkest and deepest gulf of hell, where, under the despiteful control, the trample and spurn of all the other damned, that in the anguish of their torture, shall have no other ease than to exercise a raving and bestial tyranny over them as their slaves and negroes, they shall remain in that plight for ever, the basest, the lowermost, the most dejected, most under-foot and downtrodden vassals of perdition.”

And the author of this prayer, because he was a

Protestant, is to be extolled by every epithet in the language, and the Catholic priest consigned to infamy, though the latter preached a true doctrine from motives of the purest charity, while the former abused it in a spirit of personal revenge!

Contemporary with Milton lived one whom Mr. Fitzgibbon would scarcely venture to revile, though he seems strangely ignorant of his writings. I allude to Jeremy Taylor, Protestant Bishop of Down and Connor. Were an Irish Episcopalian asked to name one illustrious writer of his Church, he would probably at once select the eloquent Jeremy Taylor. When Mr. Fitzgibbon, rather late in life, first became acquainted, as he tells us, through the writings of Father Furniss, with “terrifying theology,” we are sorry that some better-read friend did not direct him to the works of Taylor. He might have read them in a calmer spirit, and with more profit, than the teachings of a Catholic priest.

So far was Taylor from finding fault with Catholics for their doctrine of hell, that in his great sermon on Christ’s Advent to Judgment he accuses the Church of Rome of too great leniency.

“The Church of Rome,” he says, “among some other strange opinions, hath inserted this one in her public offices: that the perishing souls in hell may have sometimes remission and refreshment, like the fits of an intermittent fever . . . but because this is a fancy, without ground or revelation, and is against the analogy of all those expressions of our Lord, ‘where the worm dieth not and the fire is never extinguished,’ and divers others, it is sufficient to have noted it without further consideration; the pains of hell have no rest, no drop of water is allowed to cool the tongue, there is no advocate to plead for them, no mercy belongs to their portion, but fearful wrath and continual burnings.”

Taylor quotes, in proof of his affirmation, a prayer from a Paris missal printed in 1626, which evidently refers to the souls in purgatory, not those in hell, and some lines of Prudentius. I need scarcely say that, whatever singular opinions may have been entertained by this or that man, the "Church of Rome" holds no such opinions as Taylor supposes. I only note his words to show how far he was from the sentiments which Mr. Fitzgibbon attributes to the Episcopal Church of Ireland, under whose shade, he says, reasonable men have fled from the horrors taught by the Catholic Church. I challenge Mr. Fitzgibbon to find any language so appalling in the writings of Father Furniss as that of the following passage:—

"When the Lion of the Tribe of Judah shall appear, then Justice shall strike and Mercy shall not hold her hands; she shall strike sore strokes, and Pity shall not break the blow. As there are treasures of good things, so hath God a treasure of wrath and fury, and scourges, and scorpions; and then shall be produced the shame of lust and the malice of envy, and the groans of the oppressed and the persecutions of the saints, and the cares of covetousness and the troubles of ambition, and the insolence of traitors and the violence of rebels, and the rage of anger and the uneasiness of impatience, and the restlessness of unlawful desires; and by this time the monsters and diseases will be numerous and intolerable. when God's heavy hand shall press the *sanies* and the intolerableness, the obliquity and the unreasonableness, the amazement and the disorder, the smart and the sorrow, the guilt and the punishment, out from all our sins, and pour them into one chalice, and mingle them with an infinite wrath, and make the wicked drink off all the vengeance, and force it down their unwilling throats with the violence of devils and accursed spirits."<sup>1</sup>

It would be easy to quote passages to the same pur-

<sup>1</sup> Sermon on Christ's Advent to Judgment.

port from hundreds of Anglican writers. But since all Protestants are not Anglicans or Episcopalians, let us pass to other sects.

Time went on, and neither the Calvinism of Latimer, nor the Puritanism of Milton, nor the more polished Anglicanism of Taylor, were acceptable any longer to multitudes who, being separated from the Church of Jesus Christ, are like “children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. iv. 14). But the wind of doctrine of John Wesley, at least, did not blow for the extinguishing of the fires of hell. Among his published sermons there is one on this subject, and I extract a passage from it sufficient to show that “atrocious images” need not be sought for exclusively in the writings of Catholics:—

“There is no grandeur,” says Wesley, “in the infernal region, there is nothing beautiful in those dark abodes; no light but that of liquid flames; and nothing new, but one unvaried scene of horror upon horror. There is no music but that of groans and shrieks, of weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; of curses and blasphemies against God, or cutting reproaches to one another. Nor is there anything to gratify the sense of honour; no! they are the heirs of shame and everlasting contempt.”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Fitzgibbon writes as if all Protestants reject the doctrines which he has selected for denunciation. I do not know the present state of theology among the large and powerful body of Wesleyan Methodists, but it is evident that they cannot agree with him in calling Father Furniss’s pictures of hell “infamous publications,” without branding the writings of their founder with the same censures.

No doubt, as Mr. Lecky says, these are “ghastly

<sup>1</sup> Sermons of Wesley, vol. ii. p. 176.

pictures;" yet they were neither invented by Catholic priests, nor used only by them. If Mr. Lecky believes that no reality corresponds to them, let him give us his reasons for believing so, and let him give some philosophical explanation of the fact that one so loving and gentle as Jesus Christ made use of such "atrocious images;" but let him not pretend to philosophy and impartial research, when he attributes to the twelfth century what is older than Christianity, and when he tries to fasten on Catholic priests an odium which must be borne, if at all, not only by them, but by the greatest and most honoured of almost every Christian sect. One who writes on morals might have remembered the old saying, "Divers weights and divers measures, both are abominable before God" (Prov. xx. 10).

If Catholic priests preach more frequently or dwell more minutely and urgently than Protestants on this fearful subject, it is not for the butchery of the conscience, but for its ultimate tranquillity.

The celebrated Archdeacon Paley also, a man who will scarcely be accused of fanaticism, thus writes in a sermon on hell:—

"Now if any one feel his heart struck with the terrors of the Lord, with the consideration of this dreadful subject, and with the declarations of Scripture relating thereto, which will all have their accomplishment, let him be entreated, let him be admonished, to hold the idea, tremendous as it is, fully in his view, till it has wrought its effect—that is, till it has prevailed with him to part with his sins; and then, we assure him, that to alarm, fright, and horror, will succeed peace, and hope, and comfort, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Having now seen what Protestants have written on the existence and nature of hell, let us see if they have



been less *infamous* than Catholics in declaring for whom it is reserved.

Father Furniss warns the rich. But here I must explain. He did not write for the rich but for children. He knew, however, that sometimes a poor boy may, in course of time, become a rich man. He does not condemn the industry or talent which thus changes his lot, but he warns him of a danger in these words:—

“Perhaps some little boy who reads this book, when he grows up to be a man, may work hard and become rich; now I ask that boy a question. My dear boy, when you shall come to lie on your death-bed, will you say to yourself, ‘I have laboured hard in my lifetime, and worked much, and now I am rich? I am going to die; and, because I am rich, I die contented and happy?’ My boy, I will answer the question for you—‘The rich man died, and was buried in hell.’”

This passage has greatly angered Mr. Fitzgibbon. I would advise him to read the sermon preached by Bishop Andrews before the Court of James I., on the history of the rich man and Lazarus, or the excellent commentary published on the same history by the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Trench. There is not an image in Father Furniss’s chapter on “The History of the Rich Man”—a chapter which seems most to have offended Mr. Fitzgibbon—that may not be found in those writings of prelates of his own Church. But Archbishop Trench goes further than Catholic theologians; for whereas the Council of Florence teaches that those who die in mortal sin go at once *to hell*, and therefore that our Lord, in His picture of the state of “the rich man” after death, paints hell itself, the Anglican theologian, following Bishop Bull and others, considers that there is something far worse to come for

Dives after the general judgment. His words are these:—

“He that had that gorgeous funeral is now ‘*in hell,*’ or in ‘Hades,’ rather; for as ‘*Abraham’s bosom*’ is not heaven, though it will issue in heaven, so neither is Hades ‘*hell,*’ though to issue in it, when death and Hades shall be cast into the lake of fire, which is the proper hell (Rev. xx. 14). It is the place of painful restraint, where the souls of the wicked are reserved to the judgment of the great day; for as that other blessed place has a foretaste of heaven, so has this place a foretaste of hell. Dives being there is ‘*in torments,*’ stripped of all wherein his soul delighted and found its satisfaction; his purple robe has become a garment of fire; as he himself describes it, he is ‘*tormented in this flame.*’”<sup>1</sup>

Such is the language of the ecclesiastical superior whom Mr. Fitzgibbon acknowledges, and the several editions through which his “Notes on the Parables” have passed, and the dignity he attained since he wrote them, show that his words were not rejected by his own communion. Why, then, if Mr. Fitzgibbon is afraid to attack openly our Lord Jesus Christ, the original author of the “History of the Rich Man,” does he not turn his indignation against his own Archbishop’s commentary? What crime has Father Furniss committed that Dr. Trench is not guilty of? In order to impress upon children that “a man’s life consisteth not in the multitude of the things which he possesseth,” Father Furniss has developed in a picturesque manner our Lord’s brief history of “Dives.” He has described his house, how he dressed and feasted, how he got sick, died, and was buried, and then he proceeds as follows (and these are the words quoted by Mr. Fitzgibbon):—

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<sup>1</sup> Trench, Notes on the Parables, p. 471 (3rd ed.).

“But down in hell the soul of the rich man is lying *in a coffin of fire!* Around the coffin, in that room, stood the people of the world, the friends of the rich man. They talked together, they spoke of the coffin. How beautiful it was, they said—what a fine coffin! But in hell the devils were standing round the coffin of fire, and they talked also, and said—What a hot coffin—what a burning coffin this is! How terrible to be shut up in this coffin of fire for ever and ever, and never to come out of it again. Such was the end of the rich man. He lived in riches, and he died, and he was buried in the fire of hell! But why did that rich man go to hell? What was the reason? The reason was, because the rich man did not know the great thing he had to do while he lived. He made a great mistake. He thought the great thing of all was to be rich; and he was rich, and he went to hell.”

After quoting this passage, Mr. Fitzgibbon exclaims:—“Rich men of England, Scotland, and Ireland, who out of your riches replenish the treasury of this realm, are you prepared to draw upon that treasury for the support of State schools in which this view of your predicament—this statement of your destiny—this wholesale damnation of your class, is to be taught, and indelibly impressed upon the infant minds of the poor children in Ireland, who are commanded to believe as a Gospel truth that the tortures prepared for you were visibly demonstrated to St. Frances by the angel Gabriel, sent from heaven for the purpose?”

Mr. Fitzgibbon should know that no such authority is claimed for the visions of St. Frances of Rome as to put them on an equality with the Gospel, and that no Catholic writer who should attempt to do so would escape the severest censure of the Church. Mr. Fitzgibbon also knows very well that there is not a word in the passage he has quoted taken from the visions of the saints. He knows that Father Furniss in this portion

of his book, where *alone* he speaks of riches or of rich men, makes not the most distant allusion to any private revelations, but has taken the Gospel as his only guide. He knows also that Father Furniss does not in any way pronounce the "wholesale damnation" of the rich. In the very page from which Mr. Fitzgibbon has quoted, Father Furniss writes as follows, and I must give the passage at length, because without doing so I cannot convey to my readers the extent of Mr. Fitzgibbon's *dishonesty*, in drawing false inferences and suppressing evidence.

"Sect. xxi. *Can a rich man be saved?*

"Without doubt it is possible for a rich man to be saved, for even among the saints are to be found those who were rich. But they made a good use of their riches; they used it in the service of God; they were kind to the poor; they led good lives. But why is it so difficult for a rich man to go to heaven? Is there something bad in gold and silver? Were not gold and silver created by God like the stones and the trees? Gold and silver are not bad in themselves, but people generally make a bad use of them, and commit sins because they have riches or want too much to get them. Therefore Jesus Christ says: 'Woe to you that are rich' (Luke vi.).

"*A word to the Poor.*

"But it is not only those who have money whom God accounts as rich. At the day of judgment many of the poor will be condemned as rich. But how can a poor man be called rich? he has no money in his pocket, his chest is empty. It is true that he has no money; but it is true also that he has in his heart a great strong desire of money. This great desire of money leads people into many sins. For example, there are many poor men whose thoughts are all about money. Then they forget God, and think no more about going to Mass and the Sacraments. A man is out of work, he loses his wages, he becomes impatient, and blasphemes God. Another man takes a false oath in order to get what does not

belong to him. Here is a man who loves to drink in the public-house, so he steals and robs and cheats, that he may have money to spend in the public-house. There are people who were friends; they had a quarrel about money, and now they have a deadly hatred against one another. So it is money, money, money! and then—curses, false oaths, stealing, cheating, drunkenness, neglect of God and the soul, and then—hell! Therefore, St. Paul says, 1 Tim. vi. : ‘They that will become rich fall into temptation and the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the desire of money is the root of all evil.’”

Let us now hear an Anglican bishop on the same subject:—

“If you call him (*i.e.*, the rich man of our Lord’s parable) to account by the writ of *reddere rationem*, this must be his audit: in purple and linen so much, and in belly-cheer so much; so much on his back and so much on his board, and in them endeth the total of his receipts; except you will put in his hounds too, which received of him more than Lazarus might. Therefore is this party now in the gulf, because living himself was a gulf. Remember this, for it is a special point. For if our purple and fine linen swallow up our alms, if our too much lashing on to do good to ourselves make us in a state to do good to none but ourselves, if our riotous wasting on expenses of vanity be a gulf and devour our Christian employing in works of charity, there is danger in *receptisti*, even the danger of ‘Now, therefore,’ a gulf thou wert and into a gulf shalt thou go.”

Bishop Andrews preached the above, and much more to the same purpose, before the Court, yet he was not accused of infamy by any Master of Chancery of that day.

Bishop Sherlock, too, in the presence of the monarch whom Irish Protestants venerate so much, William III., and of his consort, preached a series of discourses on the future judgment. He speaks often of hell, and

frequently in words and images like those of Father Furniss. Yet their majesties took no offence, but asked him to publish the sermon in which he thus spoke :—

“Consider this, ye rich and great men, who are so apt to forget God and a future judgment : *Riches profit not in the day of wrath* ; they cannot bribe God as they do men ; no power can prevail against the Almighty ; proud and swelling titles are mere empty bubbles, which burst and vanish into nothing in the next world : men ye are, and ye shall die like men, and shall be judged like men, and have much more reason to think of judgment than other men have, for ye have a greater account to give, and are in more danger of giving a very bad account, if you do not frequently and seriously think of judgment.”

Nor has Archbishop Trench been accused of “ wholesale damnation of the rich,” nor could such accusation be made without gross injustice ; yet his words are more open to such a charge than those of Father Furniss ; for, in explaining the sins which brought the rich man to hell, he says :—

“It cannot be observed too often that he is not accused of any breach of the law ; not like those rich men in St. James (v. 1-6), of any flagrant crimes. . . . There is nothing to make us think him other than a reputable man, one of whom none could say worse than that he loved to dwell at ease, that he desired to remove far off from himself all things painful to the flesh, to surround himself with all things pleasurable.”<sup>1</sup>

Certainly quite as little as these or any other writers does Father Furniss either calumniate the rich or flatter the poor. Surely, then, the “infamy” is altogether in Mr. Fitzgibbon, who tries, by presenting false issues, to move the prejudices of those rich Protestants who may read his pamphlet, and who know nothing

<sup>1</sup> Trench on the Parables.

of the writings of Father Furniss, nor, indeed of the teaching of Catholic priests.

I must give one more instance of Mr. Fitzgibbon's fairness. Father Furniss, among other pictures, represents a girl in hell who has been a prostitute on earth. After describing her feet as especially tormented, because they first led her into the ways of sin, he introduces the following imaginary dialogue between her and the devil:—

“ ‘Oh! that in this endless eternity of years, I might forget the pain only for one single moment.’ The devil answers her question. ‘Do you ask,’ he says, ‘for a moment, for one moment, to forget your pain? No, not for one single moment, during the never-ending eternity of years, shall you ever leave this red-hot floor!’ ‘Is it so?’ the girl says, with a sigh that seems to break her heart. ‘Then, at least, let somebody go to my little brothers and sisters, who are alive, and tell them not to do the bad things which I did; so they will never have to come and stand on the red-hot floor.’ The devil answers her again, ‘Your little brothers and sisters have the priests to tell them those things. If they will not listen to the priests, neither would they listen even if somebody should go to them from the dead.’”

Of course this dialogue is merely an imitation of that described by our Lord between the rich man and Abraham. The rich man had asked for one drop of water to cool his tongue, and was refused. The girl asks for one moment of relief for her feet, and is refused. The teaching of Father Furniss is identical with that of Jesus Christ. The rich man then prays for his brothers, and is told that his brothers have sufficient means of grace. The girl prays for her brothers and sisters, and receives the same answer. But here Mr. Fitzgibbon detects what he thinks a weak point, of which he can take advantage. Our Lord makes Abraham reply: “If they



hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead ;” which Father Furniss thus transforms : “ Your little brothers have the priests to tell them those things. If they will not listen to the priests, neither would they listen even if somebody should go to them from the dead.” “ Thus,” exclaims Mr. Fitzgibbon, “ substituting the priests for Moses and the prophets.” And then he adds : “ It is the main object and purpose of these books, plainly discoverable from the whole tenor of them, to exalt the priests, and to impress upon the infant mind a deep and indelible conviction that they, and they alone, have the power to save the soul from the tortures and eternal perdition described in this hideous detail.”

Now, what crime has Father Furniss here committed ? The “ hideous detail ” is substantially not his, but our Blessed Saviour’s. Father Furniss substitutes such expressions as Christian children will understand, in the place of expressions that were adapted to the circumstances and education of our Lord’s Jewish hearers. He says nothing here about the power of the priests, except that they faithfully preach what Moses and the prophets, and our Lord Jesus Christ, taught. Certainly, when our Lord said : “ They *have* Moses and the prophets,” he made no distinction between those who had them by private reading, or those who had them by public teaching. It was in this last way that the majority of the Jews had them, that is, knew their doctrine, as St. James informs us : “ Moses, of old time, hath in every city them that preach him in the synagogues, where he is read every Sabbath ” (Acts xv. 21). Who, then, but a caviller would lay hold of a change of word that implies no change of meaning ?

I can conceive no sadder spectacle than that here given us by Mr. Fitzgibbon. Our Lord is teaching us that forgetfulness of that hell, revealed in Holy Scripture, brought the rich man into endless torments. A faithful priest of the Catholic Church is doing his best to enforce the same lesson. Knowing how, in the great cities of England, Scotland, and even Ireland, quite young girls are being led into every foul corruption, and addressing these poor children, already fallen or in danger of falling, Father Furniss puts before them both the terrors and the mercies of God. Mr. Fitzgibbon hates the “hideous detail” of this lesson. He has not the courage to say so directly of our Lord’s teaching; so by absurd cavils and misrepresentations he attacks the very same thing in the priest which he affects to revere in the Master.

I have certainly nothing but loathing for the blasphemies of Shelley, but I respect him for his consistency compared with Mr. Fitzgibbon. Shelley calls the God of the Bible “a vengeful, pitiless, and almighty fiend,” but he represents Moses, who made known to us this God, as a bloodthirsty impostor, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who appealed to Moses, and revealed to us more fully both the mercies and the terrors of the God of Moses, he calls “a village demagogue.” Here is, at least, consistency in horrid blasphemy.<sup>1</sup> But Mr. Fitzgibbon, who, throughout his pamphlet, heaps epithets just as blasphemous on the God of Catholics, pretends to do so in the name of the “patient, the gentle, the all-perfect suffering Lamb—the infinitely benevolent Redeemer.”

It is really sickening to any straightforward honest

<sup>1</sup> The above expressions are in *Queen Mab*.

man to hear the modern teachers of God's pure benevolence—opponents not only of *eternal* torments, but of any future torments whatsoever—daring to appeal to the spirit of the Gospel and of Jesus Christ. Was not Jesus Christ first announced by His precursor as having the winnowing fan in His hand, about to burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire? (Matthew iii. 12). And are we not told by His Apostle to expect Him at His second coming “in a flame of fire, yielding vengeance to them who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction, from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His power” (Thess. i. 8, 9).

Who is there, forsooth, among Catholics, who does not know as well as Mr. Fitzgibbon that Jesus Christ loved and embraced little children, that He was full of tenderness, full of mercy and compassion, that He was the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for His sheep? But to dwell on these things only is to conceal at least one-half of the words and of the character of Jesus Christ, and completely to misunderstand the rest. Mr. Fitzgibbon would do well, instead of railing at the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin for giving his “*imprimatur*” to a book on hell, if he would meditate on the following sentences with which his own Protestant Archbishop concludes his “*Notes on the Parables.*” Having explained our Lord's parable of the king who took account of the conduct of his servants during his absence, Dr. Trench writes:—

“When the king had thus distributed praise and blame, rewards and penalties, to those who stand in the more immediate relations of servants to him, to those of his own household—the Church is the household of God—he proceeds to execute

vengeance on his enemies, on all who had openly cast off allegiance to him, and denied that they belonged to his household at all (Prov. xx. 8). At his command they are brought before him and slain before his face ; as their guilt was greater, so their punishment is more terrible, than that of the slotiful servant. . . . This slaying of the king's enemies *in his presence* is not to be in the interpretation mitigated or explained away as though it belonged merely to the outer shell of the parable, and was only added because such things were done in Eastern courts (1 Sam. x. 27. xi. 12. ; Jer. lii. 10), and to add an air of truthfulness to the narrative. Rather it belongs to the inmost kernel of the parable. The words set forth, fearfully indeed, but not in any way in which we need shrink from applying them to the Lord Jesus, His unmitigated wrath against His enemies—but only His enemies exactly as they are enemies of all righteousness, which shall be revealed in that day when grace shall have come to an end, and judgment without mercy will have begun (Rev. xiv. 10).”

I had thought of going into the theology and philosophy of the matter, and of endeavouring to suggest some reflections that might help to remove, or at least to diminish, a great difficulty felt by many—how the infliction of such terrible and everlasting torments can be reconciled with the infinite mercy of God. But on further consideration I relinquish this endeavour. There are, indeed, souls that deserve this help, souls not self-confident, scornful and presumptuous, but which are agitated with doubts regarding the Christian revelation. But few of those who rail at hell are capable of any such assistance. They are too shallow even to admit the possibility that there are things in God's dealings with men undreamt of in their philosophy, or they are prejudiced men, who scorn even to inquire. If such men are capable of any help, I believe it is only such as I have here attempted to impart. They must

be reminded that the doctrine they object to is not peculiar to the Church and priesthood which they hate and revile ; but that wondrous and awful as it is, it has been taught by men whom they themselves revere, men of many varieties of religious opinion and natural character, men renowned in literature, men famous for their tenderness and charity, quite as much as by men morose and bigoted, and most assuredly by the first preachers of Christianity, and its great founder, our Lord Jesus Christ.

So long as men talk in a scoffing manner, like Shelley,

“Of the strange things priests hold so dear,  
Because they bring them land and gold,  
Of devils and saints, and all such gear ;”

so long as they arrogantly affirm with Byron, that

“—— they  
Who doom to hell, themselves are on the way ;  
Unless these bullies of eternal pains  
Are pardoned their bad hearts for their worse brains ;”

so long as they most falsely and most unphilosophically imagine that only fools, knaves, and bigots have preached on hell, or described its torments, so long they are incapable of considering the subject in that calm and serious spirit which alone is capable of having a difficulty explained or a prejudice removed.

I do not, assuredly, maintain that hell is never invoked by bigotry or abused by spiteful feeling—the example I have quoted from Milton is a proof to the contrary. But if Milton’s admirers can extol his genius and his character in spite of his faith in hell, which never wavered to the end of his life, and in spite of his

vindictive mention of it in his youth, it would seem reasonable that they should suspend their judgment before they call Catholic priests infamous for a faith in hell, which is generally allied with charity just in proportion to its liveliness.

Coleridge speaks of Jeremy Taylor as “a man constitutionally overflowing with pleasurable kindness, who scarcely, even in a casual illustration, introduces the image of woman, child, or bird, but he embalms the thought with so rich a tenderness as makes the very words seem beauties and fragments of poetry from Euripides or Simonides.” It seems, then, reasonable that those who admire Taylor, whether as a man or as an author, when they learn that he both believed in hell and described its tortures with a force and minuteness never surpassed, may hesitate before they rail at Catholic priests for a similar faith and language.

And thus a wider acquaintance with facts may lead to more sober and less prejudiced judgments; and by degrees dispassionate study of present facts or past history may bring home to such men’s mind the undoubted, though, to them, perplexing truth, that the greatest heroes of charity whom the world has ever known, men whose hearts felt sympathy for every sorrow, and whose whole life was self-sacrifice for its relief—men such as St. Vincent of Paul, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Alphonsus de Liguori, St. Francis de Sales—have had the firmest faith, and have been the most powerful preachers of the fearful pains of hell.

When they have recognised this they may, perhaps, proceed a step further, and reflect that no one spoke so gravely, so terribly, and so frequently of hell as He whose whole life was love and mercy—our Lord Jesus

Christ. They may reflect that Jesus Christ is so far from seeing inconsistency in attributing the infliction of eternal torments to a God of infinite love, that He generally brings the two ideas into the closest contact, and denounces "judgment *without mercy* to those who do no mercy." They may reflect that the denunciations of hell made by Jesus Christ and by His faithful followers are intended to have, and in reality have, this effect; that they strike terror into the sensual, selfish, unforgiving, and hard-hearted, and bear fruit all over the earth in works of love and mercy.

When they have reflected on these things, which are not opinions, but facts that all may verify, they will then see that whether they can bring themselves to believe in hell or not, the epithet "infamous" ought not to be bestowed on the publications that produce these salutary fruits, but on those that seek to destroy them by destroying or vitiating the tree on which they grow, which is faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



*PART II.*  
FORGERIES.



## ESSAY VI.

### THE ROOD OF BOXLEY; OR, HOW A LIE GROWS.

“These accretions on divine worship went on accumulating like a snowball, till one day a crowd was gathered in St. Paul’s Churchyard; and a great image was drawn in from Boxley, in Kent, with all its secret wires and pulleys complete; and the Bishop of Rochester put it through all its religious antics, and made it bow its head and roll its eyes and weep out of a sponge cleverly concealed behind. And then what wonder that it, and all the like of it, were tossed with ribald insults into the flames! What wonder,” &c. &c.—*Speech of the Rev. G. H. Curtis, Canon of Lichfield, and Professor of New Testament Exegesis, King’s College, London, before the Anglican Church Congress. (The Guardian, Oct. 5, 1887.)*

IN the spring of 1538 Thomas Cromwell, Vicar-General in things spiritual of Henry VIII., now by Act of Parliament supreme head on earth of the Church of England, provided, for the edification of the King’s flock in London, a solemn spectacle. A crucifix, which had long borne the name of the Rood of Grace, was brought from the Cistercian Abbey of Boxley,<sup>1</sup> between Maidstone and Rochester, and exhibited at St. Paul’s Cross, as a sample of monastic imposture.

“On Sunday, the 24th February,” writes Stow in his Annals, “the Rood of Boxley, in Kent, called the Rood of Grace, *made with divers vices to move the eyes and lips*, was showed at Paul’s Cross by the preacher, which was

<sup>1</sup> Hasted, in his History of Kent (vol. iv.), erroneously says the rood was in the parish church of Boxley. It was in the abbey church, now destroyed.

the Bishop of Rochester, and there it was broken and plucked to pieces." <sup>1</sup> It was asserted by Cromwell, his partisans and agents, at the time of its exhibition and destruction, that the movements of the Rood were the only miracles ever performed in Boxley abbey church, and that the pilgrims and the whole world had been cheated by the monks into the belief that these mechanical movements, produced by the trickery of a concealed monk, were Divine manifestations of favour or displeasure. It is maintained by the writer of this paper that the miracles wrought, or supposed to have been wrought, or graces obtained, before this crucifix, had nothing whatever to do with these movements, which were perfectly well known by all who ever witnessed them to be merely mechanical.

It must be premised that the question is of more importance than the mere vindication of the good name of the monks of Boxley. From the days of the suppression of the monasteries to the present time the frauds of the monks have been the theme of our historians. The accusation is nearly always a general one, but the solitary example, always brought forward as a mere specimen, is the Rood of Grace. There is no need to turn to Burnet or to Strype—the story is told in every history, ecclesiastical or secular. It is not one of the slanders current while passions were still hot after the change of religion, and then rejected or silently dropped in less bigoted times. It is taken for a proved and universally accepted fact, and narrated at the present day either with fiery invectives, scoffs, or pious lamentations, according to the character of the writers. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stow : Annals, p. 575. Vices are screws, joints, mechanism.

<sup>2</sup> I know only one honourable exception. Collier writes as follows of

Before examining the evidence we must hear the accusations, and take note of the points requiring proof:

“A miraculous crucifix” (writes Hume) “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 votaries*. Hilsey, Bishop of Rochester, broke the crucifix at St. Paul’s Cross, and showed to the whole people the springs and wheels by which it had been secretly moved.”

In this passage Hume makes two, or rather three, assertions. That there was a mechanical or puppet crucifix at Boxley, that it was shown and destroyed in London, I admit; that the eyes, &c., “moved on the approach of its votaries,” is what I deny.

Russell, another historian of the last century, writes as follows:—

“At the visitation of the monasteries, prior to the suppression, several astonishing discoveries were made, which tended greatly to lessen the authority of the Romish Priests in the eyes of the people. One of the most singular instruments of deception was found at Boxley in Kent.”

Let the reader mark that there are said to have been “several discoveries,” while the single instance of Boxley is given, no other instance being ever adduced either by Russell or any other historian. He goes on—

“It was a remarkable crucifix, held in the highest veneration, and distinguished by the appellation of the Rood of Grace. It

the monastic churches: “The mistaken reliance and superstitious practice with respect to images and relics is not to be denied, but whether the impostures above mentioned are matter of fact will be a question: for William Thomas, cited by Lord Herbert, is somewhat an exceptional authority.” The impostures were the Holy Blood of Hales and the Rood of Grace of Boxley, and one or two others. We shall have to deal with William Thomas by-and-by.

had been often seen to move, to bend, to raise itself, shake its head, hands and feet, roll its eyes, and move its lips. On removing the image it was discovered that the whole was effected by certain springs concealed in the body, which was hollow, from the wall against which it was placed. This instrument of religious deception was brought to London," &c.

The assertion is here made that the crucifix "had often been seen to move." We shall have to inquire by whom? when? for what purpose were the movements produced, and what was thought of them? We shall find that the only facts proved and certain are that parts of the rood were movable, and that the rood was destroyed.

These two examples will suffice for the older class of historians who merely transcribed from printed books, with various arrangement and more or less skill, but without any independent examination of evidence. Of late years history is supposed to have become a science as well as an art. Historians profess to sift carefully their facts and to go to original sources. Who would not suppose that Mr. Froude was copying from an official report, instead of abridging Foxe, when he writes:—

"The most famous of the roods was that of Boxley in Kent, which used to smile and bow, and frown or shake its head, as its worshippers were generous or close-handed."<sup>1</sup>

I shall give presently Foxe's statement, as well as official papers, and it will be seen whence Mr. Froude has taken this part at least of his history. But supposing the account to be authentic, the curious reader will no doubt regret that Mr. Froude did not explain the material of which the face was made that could smile and frown. Wood, of course, it was not. Could

<sup>1</sup> History, vol. ii. p. 92.

it be papier mâché? but that also is stiff. Was it an early importation of india-rubber or caoutchouc?

A later writer than Mr. Froude is Dr. Hook, the historian of the Archbishops of Canterbury. I transcribe the following page:—

“Cromwell wielded the lawful weapons of controversy in the cause of sincerity and truth when he exposed to public gaze the impostures which had been the disgrace of too many monasteries. He exhibited to the astonished multitude the strings and wires and pulleys by which the image, too long worshipped by an idolatrous people, was made to open its eyes, to move its lips, to expand its mouth, and to perform other grimaces indicative of approbation when a wealthy ignoramus made an offering of jewels or of gold. The tricks were played upon pilgrims by the lowest class of persons in the monasteries, and were laughed at by some at the head of affairs. The indignation of all classes was directed against the abbots and priors who, having the power, had abstained from using it. So far they deserved their fate. They confounded credulity with faith, and forgot who is the father of lies.”<sup>1</sup>

So far Dean Hook. We shall see presently who was the father of lies in this matter. But first I would ask the reader to note the forms of expression in the passage just quoted. Boxley is not mentioned by name, yet it must be the instance referred to, since it is certain that Cromwell exposed to public gaze no other strings and wires than those of the Rood of Grace. Yet “the image” might mean that particular image, or it might stand grammatically for, or be meant as typical of, many similar images, and this meaning is certainly suggested by the “many monasteries” spoken of just before, and by the “abbots and priors” just after. So, even were the Boxley imposture proved to be such as

<sup>1</sup> Lives of the Archbishops, vol. vi. ch. i. p. 92.



Dr. Hook describes it, it is here multiplied indefinitely, and the abbots and priors throughout England are all made to bear the iniquities of the single abbot of Boxley, supposing that he was really guilty. Moreover, the whole matter is narrated as circumstantially as if given on the testimony of a score of eye-witnesses. Yet the grimaces approving the offering of the wealthy ignoramus, and the tricks of the lowest class of the monks, and laughter and connivance of the higher class, all these things are the merest fictions, partly copied from former historians, partly the dean's own invention.

It is generally admitted that we cannot compete with our ancestors of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in architecture; and if half the things told us about the Rood of Grace were true, it would be equally certain that we have degenerated in the plastic and mechanical arts; but historians of the nineteenth century assuredly do not fall behind those of the eighteenth or sixteenth in the art of fiction. One more specimen will suffice. The writer of the chapters on 'The History of Religion in "Knight's Pictorial History of England"' thus discourses about the Boxley Rood:—

"This image was no mere stock, but was endowed with the faculty of replying to the worship and oblations offered to it by various significant gestures, rolling its eyes, bending its brows, moving its lips, shaking its head, hands and feet, courteously inclining its whole body when it was pleased with what was set before it, and by some other equally expressive piece of pantomime denoting its dissatisfaction and rejection of the applicant's prayer. This must be admitted" (remarks this philosophical historian) "to have been an ingenious piece of mechanism for an age in which the general ignorance of mechanical science was gross enough to allow of its being put forward as something supernatural."

I must be excused for parodying this author by saying that "it must be admitted that his description is an ingenious piece of fiction, for an age in which the general ignorance of critical science is gross enough to allow of its being put forward as something historical." It is really amazing and prodigious that serious authors, one after another, for three centuries, could record these things without submitting them to the most elementary examination. They read how Henry VII. made offerings to the Rood of Grace,<sup>1</sup> and how his son Henry VIII. detected the imposture and indignantly destroyed it; and it seems to them in no way surprising that acute men like Henry VII. should have been befooled by the monks, and in no way to be suspected that astute men like Thomas Cromwell should have got up a false charge against the monks. The proper way to proceed in the examination of this matter is that ordinarily followed in a court of justice. Let each witness, after making his accusation, have his testimony sifted, to test its intrinsic coherency; then let the evidence of the various witnesses be compared, to see whether they agree or contradict one another. After that the case for the defence may be stated, and witnesses called in favour of the accused.

Before quoting or examining the evidence, I think it necessary to say something by way of explanation. It is quite evident that our historians, from Herbert and Hume downwards, have taken for granted that if there was really a crucifix at Boxley, an object of pilgrimage, and in construction such as it is described by Stow, "made with divers vices to move the eyes and lips,"

<sup>1</sup> On July 31, 1492, he sends an offering from Sittingbourne of 4s. *Excerpta Historica*, p. 91.

then the imposture is proved. For what other purpose could such a crucifix serve than to deceive pilgrims? And what other object could there be in the deception than to get their money? So, having assured themselves that there really was such a crucifix, they think the exact particulars are immaterial, and that they may freely enlarge on the fashion of the Rood and on the credulity of the worshippers. The story, they think, will be substantially true, though some few details may not be capable of proof. Nor should I contest the matter with them were the question merely as to the more or less of an admitted imposture. I admit the mechanism, but maintain that the existence of the mechanism gives no presumption whatever of trickery, that it had a perfectly legitimate purpose and use; and I deny that there is any particle of evidence of a single case of imposture, or even to justify a suspicion of imposture.

In a passage just quoted an author speaks of the Rood of Grace as having been "an ingenious piece of mechanism for an age in which the general ignorance of mechanical science was gross enough to allow of its being put forward as something supernatural." Now, if the mechanism did not go much beyond what is described by Stow, the movement of eyes and lips, and perhaps of some joints—and that it did not shall soon be proved beyond gainsay—it was in no way extraordinary for that age, and there was no more likelihood of its being considered supernatural *on that account* than there is of the waxwork figures in Madame Tussaud's exhibition being taken for living men and women by modern visitors. Puppets and pageantry were more familiar things then than now. Let any one open the

pages of Hall the chronicler and read his long and (to us) tiresome accounts of the pageants of Henry VII. and Henry VIII., and he will see at once how delighted both people and princes were with ingenious mechanism.

The accusers of the monks seem instinctively to have felt this difficulty, and have therefore not been satisfied with describing the Rood as it was. They have vied with one another in inventing details—such as smiling, frowning, weeping, expanding the mouth—the contrivance of which would baffle any artificer of the present day. Though such things were historically impossible, they were necessary for consistency, seeing that the pilgrims to Boxley were not mere country bumpkins, but lords and ladies, kings and queens, bishops and archbishops; and it had to be made plausible how all these should have been taken in by the wonderful imposture.

The mechanism was not in any way wonderful, nor adapted for deception. What, then, was its purpose? I will explain.

Pageantry and mechanism in that age were not confined to marriage and coronation processions of kings and queens. They had been used in churches, in miracle-plays (as they were called), and even in permanent contrivances of devotion.

Alderman Gosiman, of Hull, left in 1502, by his will, a sum of £40 in honour of the Blessed Sacrament, in order to construct at the high altar some machinery by which angels should ascend to the roof of the church and descend again, from the elevation of the Sacred Host to the end of the Pater Noster.<sup>1</sup> Even in our own day,

<sup>1</sup> Testamenta Eborac, p. 209.

in some churches in Bavaria and the Tyrol, as I have learned from eye-witnesses, a figure above the high altar representing our Lord in His agony in the garden is made to kneel, to prostrate itself, and to rise again, while the preacher describes the scene; and on the Ascension a figure rises into the air and disappears in the roof. A gentleman informs me that he has seen in Belgium a crucifix used formerly in the ceremonial of Holy Week. On Good Friday the arms could be depressed, so that it could be laid, together with the Blessed Sacrament, in the sepulchre until Easter Sunday morning. The Sacred Host was placed inside the breast of the figure, behind a crystal. At the Resurrection the figure was gorgeously dressed, and placed seated above the high altar, with one arm raised in benediction. It is needless to say that in all this there was pageantry, childish pageantry if you like, but no imposture.

In England the rood was generally laid, together with the Blessed Sacrament, in the sepulchre on Good Friday; and in some of the greater churches the Sacred Host, when taken from the sepulchre early on Easter morning, was enclosed, behind a berill or crystal, in the breast of a figure of our risen Lord. Now it would be antecedently probable enough that, in some cases, instead of using two distinct figures, one figure, with eyes made to open and close, and jointed limbs, might serve for both purposes. By a fortunate chance the record of one such figure has survived, and it was in existence at St Paul's Church, London, at the very time that the Boxley Rood was burnt at St. Paul's Cross. Wriothesley records in his Chronicle that on the 29th of November 1547, the first of Edward VI., being the

first Sunday of Advent, Dr. Barlow, Bishop of St. David's, preached at Paul's Cross—

“Where he showed a picture (*i.e.*, painted figure) of the resurrection of our Lord made with vices (*i.e.*, movable joints), which put out his legs of sepulchre and blessed with his hand, and turned his head, and there stood afore the pulpit the image of our Lady, which they of Paul's had lapped in cere-cloth, which was hid in a corner of Paul's Church, and found by the visitors in their visitation. And in his sermon he declared the great abomination of idolatry in images, with other feigned ceremonies contrary to Scripture, to the extolling of God's glory, and to the great comfort of the audience. After the sermon the boys broke the idols in pieces.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Sparrow Simpson, a recent historian of Old St. Paul's, after quoting this passage, makes the following reflection: “It is easy to understand that the exhibition of these mechanical figures, skilfully contrived to deceive the worshippers, must have greatly stimulated the zeal of the reformers.”<sup>2</sup> Dr. Simpson has clearly not understood the words he quoted, or he could never have made such a comment. “Skilfully contrived to deceive the worshippers”! Why! there is not the most distant hint at deception. Barlow denounced idolatry and feigned ceremonies, not imposture. As well say that an artist's lay-figure, with its movable joints and neck, is a delusion and a snare. The vices or screws of the joints would be visible to the most shortsighted; and really Englishmen before the Reformation were not the idiots that some would seem to suppose.

Besides this use of the crucifix, it must be remembered that in the Middle Ages the rood did not merely

<sup>1</sup> Wriothesley's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 1 (Camden Soc.).

<sup>2</sup> Chapters in the History of Old St. Paul's, p. 290.



call to mind our Divine Redeemer's sufferings, but especially His triumph; the cross had become a throne: *Regnat a ligno Deus*. Hence the figure was sometimes crowned, not with thorns, but with a diadem of gold or silver, and wore royal robes. This was the case throughout Europe, and may be illustrated by Kentish documents of the sixteenth century. In Archbishop Warham's visitation of 1511, a charge was brought against a layman for neglecting to furnish "a pair of silver shoes for the Rood of Chislet," in accordance with an obligation left on a house he had inherited.<sup>1</sup> When Richard Master, the rector of Aldington, in Kent, was, just four years previous to the suppression of Boxley, attainted and executed for high treason in the affair of the Maid of Kent, an inventory was made of the goods in his presbytery. Among them were found "two coats belonging to the Cross of Rudhill, whereupon hung thirty-three pieces of money, rings and other things, and three crystal stones closed in silver."<sup>2</sup> The purpose of these coats and shoes was evidently for dressing up the crucifixes on Easter Day or other festivals. If, then, a figure could be made at one time to represent death by closed eyelids, fallen jaw and drooping neck; at another life, by mouth closed, opened eyes, head erect and hand raised in benediction, it would carry out more vividly the purposes for which we know that roods were used, and would have no touch of trickery about it. Whether the Rood of Boxley was ever thus treated cannot be now shown; but that it was originally designed for some such purpose will be made clear by the documents that I shall now adduce.

<sup>1</sup> Diocesan History of Canterbury, by Canon Jenkins, p. 230.

<sup>2</sup> Letters and Papers of Henry VIII., vol. vii. n. 521.



First of all must come the witnesses for the accusation, and I shall not pass over any one that I have seen quoted or referred to. The following is a letter of one of the commissioners sent out by Cromwell for the suppression of the monasteries. As it is of great importance, I shall give it in the original spelling:<sup>1</sup>

“Jeffrey Chambers to T. Cromwell, Feb. 15th.<sup>2</sup>

“Upon the defacing of the late monasterye of Boxley and plucking down of the images of the same, I found in the Image of the Rood of Grace, the which heretofore hath ben hadde in great veneracion of people, certen ingynges and olde wyer with olde roton stykes in the backe of the same that dyd cause the eyes of the same to move and sterve in the hede therof lyke unto a lyvelye thyng. And also the nether lippe in lykewise to move as though it shulde speke. Which so founde was nott a litle strange to me and other that was present at the plucking downe of the same.

“Whereupon the abbott herynge this brut [*i.e.* rumour] dyd thether resorte whom to my litle wit and conyng with other the olde monkes I dyd examyng of ther knowleg of the premisses. Who do declare themselves to be ignorant of the same. So remyttyng the further<sup>3</sup> of the premisses unto your goode lordeshipe when they shal repayer unto London. Neverthelesse the sayde abbot is sore seke that as yett he is not able to come.

“Further, when I hadde scene this strange sight, and consideryng that th inhabitants of the cuntie of Kent hadd yn tyme past a greate devocion to the same and to use continuall pillgramage thether, by thadvise of other that wer her wt me dyd conveye the sayd image unto Mayston this present Thursday, then beyng the markett day, and in the cheff of the markett tyme dyd shew itt openly unto all the people ther being present, to see the false crafty and sottile handelyng therof, to the dishonor of God and illusion of the sayd people, whoo I dare say that if in case the

<sup>1</sup> The original document is in the Record Office, in the Cromwell Correspondence, vol. v. f. 210. I owe the transcript to the kindness of Dom Gasquet, O.S.B. It is, however, in Ellis, 3rd series, iii. 105.

<sup>2</sup> The date is 7th Feb. at end of letter.

<sup>3</sup> A word, such as “examining,” must be supplied.

sayd late monasterye were to be defaced agayne (the kyng's grace not offendyd) they wold aither plucke itt down to the grounde or ells burne it, for they have the sayd matter in wonderous detestacion and hatred as att my repayr unto your good lordeshipe and bryngyng the same image w<sup>t</sup> me, whereuppon I do somewhatt tarrye and for the further defacyng of the sayd late monasterye I shall declare unto youe. And thus almyghty Jesu p'serve youe to hys pleasure w<sup>t</sup> good liff and long.

“At Maydeston the vii. day of Feb.

“Yor mooste bounden,

“JEFFRAY CHAMBER.”

Before examining this letter I will give one, written about three weeks later, by another of these commissioners. The abbey of Boxley had been surrendered to the king on January 29, 1538, the monastery had then been “defaced,” *i.e.*, the house stript of all its plate and furniture and other valuables, and the church of its shrines, chalices, vestments, and then the sacred images “plucked down” to be burnt or otherwise maltreated, if they were of wood, to be cast into the melting-pot if they were of silver or gold. On the following Thursday, the 7th of February, it had been exposed to derision in the market-place at Maidstone, and thence conveyed to London. On the 23rd it was exposed and destroyed at St. Paul's Cross. Some time in February (before the 23rd) Robert Southwell had visited Cromwell for his instructions before proceeding to Northampton. From Northampton he writes to Cromwell on the 3rd March:—

“These poor men” (the monks of Northampton) “have not spared to confess the truth, and I daresay in their hearts think themselves rather to have merited pardon by their ignorance, than praise or laud by their former way of living.”

By confession *of the truth* Southwell means the signing

of the usual formula, which was the condition of their receiving a pension, in which they confess that regular observance was vain superstition. The Northampton monks, it seems, had been threatened and cajoled into this declaration. Southwell then adds:—

“Whether there was cause why that Boxley should recognise as much or more it may please you to judge, whom it also pleased to show me the idol that stood there, in mine opinion a very monstrous object.”<sup>1</sup>

These two letters comprise what may be called the official documents regarding the Rood of Grace; at least they were written by officials. Who were the men who thus wrote? What purpose had they in thus writing? What is it that they tell as fact, and what is it that they tell as their own opinion? They were men employed by Cromwell as the fittest tools he could find for a sacrilegious work. They were sent out, not merely to get the submission of the monks, but to do all they could to blacken their character. “The king, having the dissolution of the remaining monasteries in view,” writes Collier, “thought it necessary to lessen their reputation, to lay open the superstition of their worship, and to draw a charge of imposture upon some of them.” As Cromwell’s jackals, the commissioners wished to get from their master some part of the spoil. To obtain this they wrote what would please him and the king.

What does Southwell tell us as a fact, apart from his own opinion that the Rood of Grace was an “idol,” and “a very monstrous object?” Nothing whatever. But he insinuates that it would be ground sufficient to get some *confession* from the Boxley monks that they

<sup>1</sup> Printed in Wright’s Letters relating to the Suppression of Monasteries, p. 172 (Camden Society).

had practised imposture. Was such a confession ever obtained? Certainly not. A charge was made by Cromwell, but neither proof against the monks nor acknowledgment on their part was ever produced or even pretended.

What does Jeffrey Chambers tell us? That he found "old wire and old rotten sticks" at the back of the image. The mechanism was evidently not in repair. If it had been ever used, it had long been out of use. The abbot and old monks declared they knew nothing about it. Chambers does not say that he has proof to the contrary. He does not say that he has any witnesses to bring to London, who will tell of the moving eyes and mouth, or that such things had ever been reputed as miracles. He does not say that there was any secret approach to the back of the rood in the wall or pillar against which it stood, by which the wires and sticks might have been secretly manipulated. This is surely a difficulty, and it was evidently felt to be a difficulty; for Foxe, the lying martyrologist, in order to get over it, says that "a man stood enclosed within the rood with a hundred wires."<sup>1</sup> The sum of all the official documents is the discovery that the famous Rood was a mechanical figure of which the mechanism was apparently disused, and that it afforded a convenient pretext, not for proving any distinct act of trickery, but for connecting the fame of former miracles with a plausible but vague charge of imposture.

I now turn to the contemporary, or nearly contemporary writers to whom reference is made by modern historians. The first in order of importance, though not the earliest, is William Lambard, author of a "Per-

<sup>1</sup> The whole passage will be given presently.

ambulation of Kent," written in 1570. He is by far the most full and the only writer who professes to quote Catholic documents. After a brief description of Boxley, he continues as follows:—

"If I should thus leave Boxley, the favourers of false and feigned religion [Catholics] would laugh in their sleeves, and the followers of God's truth might justly cry out and blame me. For it is fresh in mind to both sides, and shall, I doubt not, to the profit of the one, be continued in perpetual memory to all posterity, by what notable imposture, fraud, juggling, and legerdemain, the silly lambs of God's flock were no long since seduced by the false Romish foxes at this abbey. The manner whereof I will set down in such sort only as the same was sometime by themselves published in print for their estimation and credit, and yet remaineth deeply imprinted in the minds and memories of many alive, and to their everlasting reproach, shame, and confusion.

"It chanced, as the tale is, that upon a time a cunning carpenter of our country was taken prisoner in the wars between us and France, who wanting [*i.e.*, having no means] otherwise to satisfy for his ransom, and having good leisure to devise for his deliverance, thought it best to attempt some curious enterprise within the compass of his own art and skill to make himself some money withal. And, therefore, getting together fit matter for his purpose, he compacted of wood, wire, paste, and paper a rood of such exquisite art and excellence that it not only matched in comeliness and due proportion of the parts the best of the common sort, but in strange motion, variety of gesture, and nimbleness of joints passed all other that before had been seen; the same being able to bow down and lift up itself, to shake and stir the hands and feet, to nod the head, to roll the eyes, to wag the chaps, to bend the brows, and finally to represent to the eye both the proper motion of each member of the body, and also a lively, express, and significant show of a well-contented or displeased mind, biting the lip, and gathering a frowning, froward, and disdainful face when it would pretend offence, and showing a most mild, amiable, and smiling cheer and countenance when it would seem to be well pleased. So that now it needed not Prometheus' fire to make it a lively man, but only the help of

the covetous priests of Bel, or the aid of some crafty college of monks, to deify and make it pass for a very god.

“This done, he made shift for his liberty, came over into the realm of purpose to utter his merchandise, and laid the image upon the back of a jade that he drave before him. Now when he was come as far as Rochester on his way, he waxed dry by reason of travel, and called at an alehouse for drink to refresh him, suffering his horse nevertheless to go forward alone along the city. This jade was no sooner out of sight but he missed the straight western way that his master intended to have gone, and turning south, made a great pace toward Boxley, and being driven, as it were, by some divine fury, never ceased jogging till he came at the abbey church-door, where he so beat and bounced with his heels that divers of the monks heard the noise, came to the place to know the cause, and marvelling at the strangeness of the thing, called the abbot and his convent to behold it.

“These good men seeing the horse so earnest and discerning what he had on his back, for doubt of deadly impiety opened the door, which they had no sooner done but the horse rushed in and ran in great haste to a pillar, which was the very place where this image was afterwards advanced, and there stopped himself and stood still.

“Now, while the monks were busy to take off the load, in cometh the carpenter, that by great inquisition had followed, and he challenged his horse. The monks, loth to lose so beneficial a stray, at the first made some denial, but afterward, being assured by all signs that he was the very proprietary, they grant him to take it with him. The carpenter then taketh the horse by the head and first essayeth to lead him out of the church, but he would not stir for him, then beateth he and striketh him, but the jade was so resty and fast-nailed that he would not once move his foot from the pillar. At last he taketh off the image, thinking to have carried it out by itself, and then to have led the horse after, but that also cleaved so fast to the place that notwithstanding all that even he and the monks also, which at the length were contented for pity's sake to help him, could do—it would not be moved one inch from it. So that in the end, partly of weariness in wrestling, and partly by persuasion of the monks, which were in love with the picture, and made him believe that it was by God him-



self destinate to their house, the carpenter was contented for a piece of money to go his way and leave the rood behind him.

“But what? I shall not need to report how lewdly these monks, to their own enriching and the spoil of God’s people, abused this wooden god after they had thus gotten him, because a good sort be yet alive that saw the fraud openly detected at Paul’s Cross, and others may read it disclosed in books extant and commonly abroad.

“Neither will I labour to compare it throughout with the Trojan Palladium, which was a picture of wood that could shake a spear and roll the eyes as lively as this rood did, and which, falling from heaven, chose itself a place in the temple as wisely as the carpenter’s horse did, and had otherwise so great convenience and agreement with our image that a man would easily believe the device had been taken from thence. But I will only note for my purpose, and the place’s sake, that even as they fancied that Troy was upholden by that image, and that the taking of it away by Diomedes and Ulysses brought destruction, by sentence of the oracle, upon their city, so the town of Boxley, which stood chiefly by the abbey, was, through the discovery and defacing of this idol and another (wrought by Cranmer and Cromwell), according to the just judgment of God, hastened to utter decay and beggary.”

Before quoting the rest of Lambard’s story, we may pause here to consider the relation just given. Lambard was a lawyer, and ought not to object to cross-examination. No one will maintain that this whole story is a pure invention of Lambard’s. He must have got the substance of it, as he says he did, from some Catholic documents, once spread about widely, and now apparently lost. What is the substance of the story? It is that, as regards the Rood itself, there was no attempt whatever at concealment or imposture. It was published abroad by the monks that the Rood was the work of a clever carpenter, that it was a piece of mechanism. There was no pretence that its movements were



miraculous. It was not even a monkish invention; it was the work of a layman. It had not been originally contrived with a view to trickery, nor offered to the monks for such a purpose. Lambard, indeed, finds a parallel in the Trojan Palladium, so that "a man would believe that the device had been taken from thence." But the monks did *not* say that their Rood dropped from heaven, nor that its action was celestial. Its arrival at Boxley they may have considered providential or even miraculous, though of course it is evident that the comic scene of "tug monks, tug crucifix," till the former gave up for sheer "weariness of wrestling," is not copied literally from the original documents. Neither of course is the description of the Rood itself. The arms may have been movable, and we know that the eyes and lower lip could move, but the smiles and frowns, the knitted brow, the moving cheeks, the biting of the lip, are a mere fancy portrait, of which we shall have some more specimens presently. If his work in any way corresponded to these descriptions, the carpenter made a bad bargain in selling it to the monks "for a piece of money." A thousand would not purchase it now.

Lambard thus continues his narrative:—

"And now, since I am fallen into mention of that other image which was honoured at this place, I will not stick to bestow a few words for the detection thereof also, as well for that it was as very an illusion as the former, as also for that the use of them was so linked together that the one cannot thoroughly be understood without the other; for this was the order:—If you minded to have benefit by the Rood of Grace, you ought first to be shriven of one of the monks. Then by lifting of this other image, which was untruly of the common sort called St. Grumbald, for St. Runwald, you should make proof whether you were in clean life

(as they called it) or no. And if you so found yourself, then was your way prepared, and your offering acceptable before the Rood. If not, then it behoved you to be confessed anew, for it was to be thought that you had concealed somewhat from your ghostly dad, and therefore not yet worthy to be admitted Ad Sacra Eleusina.

“Now, that you may know how this examination was to be made, you must understand that this St. Rumwald was the picture of a pretty boy-saint of stone, standing in the same church, of itself short, and not seeming to be heavy; but forasmuch as it was wrought out of a great and weighty stone, being the base thereof, it was hardly to be lifted by the hands of the strongest man. Nevertheless, such was the conveyance, by the help of an engine fixed to the back thereof, it was easily prised up with the foot of him that was the keeper, and therefore of no moment at all in the hands of such as had offered frankly. And contrariwise, by the means of a pin running into a post, which that religious impostor, standing out of sight, could put in and pull out at his pleasure, it was, to such as offered faintly, so fast and unmoveable that no force of hand might once stir it. Inasmuch, as many times it moved more laughter than devotion to behold a great lubber to lift at that in vain, which a young boy or wench had easily taken up before him. I wist that chaste virgins and honest married matrons went oftentimes away with blushing faces, leaving (without cause) in the minds of the lookers-on great suspicion of unclean life and wanton behaviour; for fear of which note and villany women (of all other) stretched their purse-strings, and sought by liberal offering to make St. Rumwald’s man their good friend and favourer.<sup>1</sup>

“But mark here, I beseech you, their policy in picking plain men’s purses. It was in vain (as they persuaded) to presume to the Rood without shrift; yea, and money lost there also, if you offered before you were in clean life; and therefore the matter was so handled that without treble oblation, that is to say, first to the confessor, then to St. Rumwald, and lastly to the Gracious Rood, the poor pilgrims could not assure themselves of any good gained by all their labour. No more than such as go to Paris

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<sup>1</sup> Did the young boys and wenches, who lifted it so easily, as he has just said, also pay heavily?

Garden, Belle Savage, or Theatre, to behold bear-baiting, interludes, or fence-play, can account of any pleasant spectacle unless they first pay one penny at the gate, another at the entry of the scaffold, and the third for a quiet standing.”

Such is the account of the pilgrimage to the Rood of Grace given by this veracious lawyer. It might seem very unlikely that, at this distance of time, we should have any means of testing the statement about the triple offering. Fortunately, Sir Harris Nicolas has printed the Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York, Queen of Henry VII., for the year 1502. Being unwell in the spring of that year, and unable herself to go on pilgrimage, she sent some of her chaplains as messengers to various shrines, there to pray and make offerings in her name. One of these, Richard Milner, was sent into Kent. He was absent thirteen days, and was paid at a fixed rate for his travelling expenses and reimbursed for his various oblations. In the bill, therefore, handed in to the steward for payment nothing, however small, was omitted. It will be a moderate estimation if we multiply each sum in his account by twelve, to represent its value in modern money. His expenses, then, were 10d. (or we may say 10s.) a day. His journey was as follows:—To Our Lady of Crowham (near Croydon), offering, 2s. 6d.; to the Rood of Grace at Boxley, offering, 1s. 8d.; to Canterbury, where four oblations are specified, viz., to St. Thomas, 5s.; Our Lady of Undercroft, 5s.; St. Adrian, 1s. 8d.; St. Augustine, 1s. 8d.; to Dover, where the offering at Our Lady’s shrine was 1s. 8d. Thence the messenger returns to London: At the Rood at the North Door of St. Paul’s Cathedral, 1s. 8d.; to Our Lady of Grace in St. Paul’s, 1s. 8d.; to St. Ignasi (*sic*), 1s. 8d.; in the Blackfriars

Church, to St. Dominick, 1s. 8d. ; to St. Peter of Milan, 1s. ; in the Franciscan Church, to St. Francis, 1s. 8d. ; to St. Saviour (in Southwark), 2s. 6d. ; to Our Lady of Piew at Westminster, 2s. 6d. ; to Our Lady of Barking (at Allhallows Church, near the Tower), 2s. 6d. ; to Our Lady of Willesden, 2s. 6d.<sup>1</sup> From this list, then, it appears that one offering only was made at Boxley, not a triple offering, and that it was one of the most moderate. No offering whatever was made to St. Runwald, no gift to the confessor.

Of course this single case is not proposed as a logical and conclusive refutation of a general statement ; but at least it is an authentic piece of evidence, and as such worth more than Lambard's unsupported assertions. There are many entries in documents that have come down to us of offerings to the Rood of Grace, but I do not remember any notice of a triple or double offering in this Church. Nor do the other accusers of the monks make any mention of St. Runwald. According to Lambard, it was a second imposture, enhancing the principal one. Yet his tale holds badly together. If the pilgrims knew that the Rood was worked by machinery, how was it they suspected no mechanical contrivance in St. Runwald's statue? A pin to keep a post firm, or a lever worked by the foot, are no recondite artifices that they should be unsus-

<sup>1</sup> It is curious how historians use their materials. Miss Strickland, in writing the life of Elizabeth *the Good*, had all this, and much more of the same sort, before her, and says nothing whatever about it. It would have been difficult for a Protestant writer to explain such "superstitious" veneration of saints and holy images in a queen so holy and prudent as the wife of Henry VII. Had Elizabeth detected, or sneered at, or destroyed the Rood of Grace, as did her brutal son, Henry VIII., would Miss Strickland have omitted to mention it?

pected in any place; but the presence of a work of art like the crucifix must have suggested a similar mechanism in St. Rumwald, even to boors or children. In the absence of documents, it seems to me quite possible that there was, in some part of the church of Boxley, some old stone-block or statue, and that a sacristan may have sometimes made a little innocent fun with the pilgrims, by fastening or withdrawing a bolt, and getting up a laugh at those who could not lift, as if they were prevented by some hidden sin. I would not assert that such was the case; but if it were so, it would be analogous to many bits of fun not unknown in our own days. The visitors to Ripon will remember the underground remains of the ancient abbey still shown in the crypt, and how ladies were invited to go through a small window, called, if I remember rightly, St. Wilfrid's needle, as a proof of their chastity, or to obtain good luck in marriage. The verger certainly affirmed to the present writer that an Anglican archbishop's wife had recently done the feat. In Merry England such things may have been done, but not more seriously than now.

We have heard one of the early accusers of the monks. His story, when stripped of its dressings-up, is not very formidable. Yet it is the only one that even professes to recount the real origin and nature of the Rood; while he—and he alone—appeals to Catholic testimony “in such sort only as the same was by themselves published in print.” His story is indeed not without some difficulty. If these printed accounts of the fabrication of the Rood were in circulation at the time of the suppression, how could the abbot and his monks declare their ignorance of the existence of the “engines?”

Or, if they knew of them, why should they not at once have appealed to the printed papers, to show that there had been no attempt to conceal anything from the people? However it may be, if Lambard is telling a lie in saying that he is using Catholic documents about the making of the Rood and its coming to Boxley, his testimony on every other point may be set aside also. For my part, I do not doubt this part of his tale. He is evidently a bigoted false witness, and dresses his facts with so many exaggerations that no details can be trusted. But his public statement, made less than half a century after the suppression, that he drew his tale from widely circulated papers, must have had some foundation. Besides this, the story is not one that he would have been likely to have invented. The part taken from the Catholic histories does not harmonise with his accusation of imposture. Had he been a mere inventor of a story, he would more probably have said that the monks boasted that their wondrous crucifix fell from heaven, whereas a document had been found, when the papers of the abbey were seized, showing how it was bought from a clever carpenter. One thing, however, all must admit: had he produced a document containing the confession of the monks, or a record of their trial and conviction, it would have been much more to his purpose. But no such document was in existence.

We may now pass on to other accusers and examine their evidence. Wriothesley, a Londoner and a contemporary, is a great approver of all Henry's proceedings. He was accustomed to set down things as he knew them, and is generally accurate as regards what fell under his own notice. His account is as follows:—



“ This year in February there was an image of the crucifix of Christ, which had been used of long continuance for a great pilgrimage at the abbey of Boxley, by Maidstone, in Kent, called the Rood of Grace, taken from thence and brought to the King at Westminster, for certain idolatry and craft that had been perceived in the said Rood. For it was made to move the eyes and lips by strings of hair, when they would show a miracle, and never perceived till now. The Archbishop of Canterbury had searched the said image in his visitation, and so, at the King’s commandment, was taken thence, that the people might leave their idolatry that had been there used.”

I interrupt the narrative to observe that, though Wriothesley’s description of the Rood, which he may have seen, is accurate, and corresponds with Jeffrey Chambers’s account, he is misinformed as to what happened at Boxley. It was not the Archbishop who made the discovery, nor the King who ordered the removal. That the eyes and lips were moved “ when they would show a miracle ” is not the testimony of a witness, but an echo of the London talk, and of the reports set afloat by Cromwell. He continues:—

“ Also the said Rood was set in the market-place, first at Maidstone, and there showed openly to the people the craft of moving the eyes and lips, that all the people there might see the illusion that had been used in the said image by the monks of the said place of many years, time out of mind, whereby they had gotten great riches in deceiving the people, thinking that the said image had so moved by the power of God, which now plainly appeared to the contrary.”

This, again, is the story as it reached London. But there is no proof of any kind that the miracles, for which the Rood was famous, had anything to do with the machinery. As to the great riches, an authentic document will be produced presently to show that the



abbey was too poor to pay the subsidy in 1524, being much in debt. Shortly afterwards Wriothesley returns to the subject thus:—

“This year, the 24th day of February, being the Sunday of Sexagesima and St. Matthias-day, the image of the Rood that was at the abbey of Boxley was brought to Paul’s Cross, and there at the sermon made by the Bishop of Rochester the abuses of the graces (? vices) and engines used in old times in the said image was declared, which image was made of paper and clouts from the legs upward; each leg and arms were of timber. And so the people had been deluded and caused to do great idolatry by the said image, of long continuance, to the derogation of God’s honour and great blasphemy of the Name of God, as he substantially declared in his said sermon, by Scripture; and also how other images in the Church, used for great pilgrimages, hath caused great idolatry to be used in this realm; and showed how he thinketh that the idolatry will never be left till the said images be taken away; and that the boxes that they have to gather the devotions of the people were taken away first, so that they should have nothing used to put the charity of the people in, but if there were any persons that would offer to such images that the said offering might be given incontinent to poor people; and that the people should be showed how they should offer no more to the said images. He doubted not but then in short time they would grant that the said images might be taken away.<sup>1</sup> . . . After that sermon was done, the bishop took the said image of the Rood into the pulpit, and broke the vice of the same, and after gave it to the people again, and then the rude people and boys brake the said image in pieces, so that they left not one piece whole.”<sup>2</sup>

This passage, besides the opinions of the preacher, and of his chronicler regarding idolatry, which are of no importance, tells us the nature of the Rood. It

<sup>1</sup> A short passage follows regarding a relic at Hales, in Gloucestershire.

<sup>2</sup> Chronicle, i. 74-76. (Camden Soc., 1875.)

was of "paper and clouts," probably a rude kind of papier maché. It gives us also the valuable information that the offerings of pilgrims were dropped into boxes (or trunks as they were sometimes called); and, if so, the exhibitors of the image, supposing there were such, of which there is no evidence, would not be able to know whether the offerings were great or small.

We may now pass on to another class of accusers and examine their evidence. Burnet writes:—

"The discovery of the cheats in images, and counterfeits in relics, contributed not a little to the monks' disgrace. Among them that of Boxley, in Kent, was one of the most enormous. Among the papers that were sent me from Zurich, there is a letter written by the minister of Maidstone to Bullinger that describes such an image (if it is not the same) so particularly that I have put it in the Collection."

The letter, written in ambitious Erasmian Latin, was also printed by Colomies in his "Select Epistles of Illustrious Men," and by the late Mr. Gorham in his "Reformation Gleanings." It is not found among the Zurich letters of the Parker Society. I give it in Mr. Gorham's literal translation:—

"The Azotic Dagon falls down everywhere in this country. That Babylonion Bel hath already been broken in pieces. There was lately discovered a wooden god of the Kentish folk, a hanging Christ, who might have vied with Proteus himself. For he was able most cunningly to nod with his head, to scowl with his eyes, to wag his beard, to curve his body, to reject and to receive the prayers of pilgrims. This (puppet) when the pied monks lost their craft, was found in their Church, begirded with many an offering, enriched with gifts, linen, waxen, rural, oppidan and foreign. That energetic man, the brother of our Nicolas Part-

ridge,<sup>1</sup> got scent of the cheat. He loosened him, fixed as he had been to the wall, from his pedestal. The artifices are disclosed, the wonderful and Polypean juggler is caught. Throughout his channeled body were hidden pipes, in which the master of the mysteries had introduced, through little apertures, a ductile wire; the passages being nevertheless concealed by thin plates. By such contrivances he had demented the people of Kent—aye, the whole of England—for several ages, with much gain. Being laid open he afforded a sportive sight, first of all to my Maidstonians,<sup>2</sup> exhibiting himself from a lofty platform to a crowded throng, some laughing heartily, some almost as mad as Ajax. The stroller was taken hence to London. He paid a visit to the Royal Court. This new guest salutes the king himself after a novel fashion. Courtiers, barons, dukes, marquises, earls swarm round him like bees. They come from a distance, stand around, stare and look him through and through. He acts, scowls with his eyes, turns his face away, distorts his nostrils, casts down his head, sets up a hump-back, assents and dissents. They stare, they deride, they wonder, the theatre rings with their voices, the shout flies into the sky. It is difficult to say whether the king was more pleased, on account of the detection of the imposture, or more grieved at heart that the miserable people had been imposed upon for so many ages. What need is there for so many words? The matter was referred to the Council. After a few days a sermon was preached by the Bishop of Rochester (John Hilsey). The Kentish Bel stands opposite to Daniel, erected on the upper part of the pulpit, so that he may be conveniently seen by all. Here again he opens himself, here again the player acts the part skilfully. They wonder, they are indignant, they stare, they are ashamed to find they have been so deluded by a puppet. Then when the preacher began to wax warm, and the Word of God to work secretly in the hearts of the hearers, the wooden trunk was hurled neck-over-heels among the most crowded of the audience.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gorham says "Of Lenham, near Maidstone." Chambers in his letter to Cromwell takes all the credit of the discovery to himself, and does not even mention Partridge, while Wriothlesley attributes it to Cranmer.

<sup>2</sup> Why does Burnet call Hoker "Minister" of Maidstone in 1538?

And now was heard a tremendous clamour of all sorts of people. He is snatched, torn, broken in pieces bit by bit, split up into a thousand fragments, and at last thrown into the fire, and thus was an end of him.—John Hoker.”

Other Calvinistic letters are preserved which show how the news reached the Continent, and though they add no real information, and cannot be quoted as testimony of witnesses, they are instructive as showing the growth of the lie.

William Peterson, who is living somewhere on the Continent, writes :—

“As to the news which you desire of me, I have not any, except that the images, which formerly used to work miracles in England, are now, as I hear, broken in pieces, and the imposture of the priests is made known to everyone. And to mention to you one idol and imposture in particular, you must know that there was in England an image which at times used to move its mouth and eyes, to weep, and to nod in sign of dissent or assent before the bystanders. These things were managed by the ingenuity of the priests standing out of sight, but the imposture is now notorious to every person in England.”<sup>1</sup>

Another Calvinist, named John Finch, also residing on the Continent, probably at Frankfort, writes to Strasburg :

“A German merchant here, who is well acquainted with the English language, told me as a certain fact that all the images that used to work miracles by the artifice of the devil and his angels, that is to say the monks, friars, and fish-eaters, and others of that stamp, were conveyed on horseback to London, at the command of the bishop ; that a public sermon was preached from the pulpit of St. Paul’s to the congregation assembled in Christ ; after which a certain image, brought away from Kent, and called

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<sup>1</sup> Zurich Letters (Parker Society), p. 664.

in English the Rood of Grace in Kent, was first exhibited. The preacher, the Bishop of Rochester, explained all the trickery and imposture in the presence of the people. By means of some person pulling a cord, most artfully contrived and ingeniously inserted at the back, the image rolled about its eyes just like a living creature; and on the pulling of other cords it gave a nod of assent or dissent according to the occasion. It never restored health to any sick person, notwithstanding great numbers afflicted with divers diseases were carried to it, and laid prostrate before it, unless some one disguised himself of set purpose, and pretended to be sick; in which case it would give a nod, as though promising the restoration of health, that it might by this means confirm its imposture. Then, again, by some contrivance unknown to me, it opened and shut its mouth; and to make an end of my story at once, after all its tricks had been exposed to the people, it was broken into small pieces."<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, Nicholas Partridge, the brother of the famous discoverer of the "lying wonder," writes from Frankfort to his friend Bullinger:

"A certain German, who belongs to one of the merchant companies residing in London, has told us some marvellous stories respecting some saints, which were formerly fixed and immovable at some distance from London, namely, that they have now ridden to London, and performed most wonderful miracles in a numerous assembly. Concerning the bearded crucifix of Kent, called in our language the Rood of Grace near Maidstone, he told us that while the Bishop of Rochester was preaching at Paul's Cross to a most crowded congregation of nobility and others, in the presence too of many other famous saints of wood and stone, it turned its head about, rolled its eyes, foamed at the mouth, and poured forth tears down its cheeks. The bishop had before thundered forth against these images. The satellite saints of the Kentish image acted in pretty much the same way. It is expected that the Virgin of Walsingham and St. Thomas of Canterbury, and likewise some other images will soon perform their

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<sup>1</sup> Zurich Letters (Parker Society), p. 6c6.

miracles in the same place, which, of what character they are, you may, I think, judge for yourself. For the trickery of the wicked knaves was so publicly exposed in the image of the crucifix, that every one was indignant against the monks and impostors of that kind, and execrated both the idols and those who worshipped them."<sup>1</sup>

The foaming at the mouth and copious tears are picturesque additions to the other narratives, and do great credit to the ingenuity of the monks—or to Mr. Partridge's veracity.

There is one more contemporary document that must not be passed over. Cromwell kept in his pay certain scurrilous poets or rhymsters, whose business it was to write farces to be acted in the churches, and ballads to be sung in the ale-houses, in ridicule of whatever it pleased Henry and Cromwell to forbid, and of whomsoever it pleased them to defame. Foxe has preserved a long ballad, called the "Fantassie of Idolatry," in which, after scoffing at pilgrimages in general, the author thus alludes to the Rood of Boxley :

"But now some may run, and when they have done  
Their idols they shall not find ;  
For the Rood of Grace hath lost his place

. . . . .  
He was made to juggle ; his eyes would goggle,

He would bend his brows and frown,  
With his head he would nod, like a proper young god,  
The shafts would go up and down."<sup>2</sup>

It should be noticed that the writer of this sprightly

<sup>1</sup> Zurich Letters, p. 609.

<sup>2</sup> Foxe's Martyrs, v. 404 (ed. 1838). This ballad was composed at the time for Cromwell. Cromwell, as well as the Rood, "lost his place," and his head also, within two years of these sacrileges.

piece, though he insinuates trickery, makes no direct statement that these movements of the Rood had been either affirmed by the monks, or held by the people, to be miraculous. The ballad was intended for Londoners, and had to observe some moderation in statements of fact, though not in ridicule.

Foxe, however, who has preserved this piece for us, and who wrote in Elizabeth's reign, has no such reserve. He follows in the steps of the Zurich letter writers, and even improves on them :

“What posterity” (he asks) “will ever think the church of the pope, pretending such religion, to have been so wicked, so long to abuse the people's eyes with an old rotten stock called the Rood of Grace, *wherein a man should stand inclosed with a hundred wires within the Rood* to make the image goggle with the eyes, to nod with his head, to hang the lip, to move and shake his jaws according as the value was of the gift which was offered? If it were a small piece of silver, he would hang a frowning lip; if it were a piece of gold, then should his jaws go merrily. Thus miserably was the people of Christ seduced, their senses beguiled, and their purses spoiled, till this idolatrous forgery at last by Cromwell's means was disclosed, and the image with all his engines showed openly at Paul's Cross, and there torn in pieces by the people.”<sup>1</sup>

It will be remembered that, according to Lambard, the Rood was not gigantic, but carried, cross and figure, on a horse's back. According to Foxe it is large enough to hold a man concealed within, with spy holes to watch the nature of the offerings, so as to know which of his hundred wires he is to pull. Hoker, the Maidstone man, knew nothing of this hollow body; with him the mechanism was worked from outside. Finch heard from his German merchant, just come from

<sup>1</sup> Foxe, v. 397.



London, that "a cord was ingeniously inserted at the back," and the idol's accomplishments were confined to rolling the eyes, opening the mouth, and giving a nod or shake of the head. *Fama crescit eundo.*

The Rev. Canon Simpson, in his history of St. Paul's Cathedral, introduces the passage just given from Foxe, by the following words:—

"Foxe is seldom more in earnest than when he is denouncing some idolatrous superstition, and he has accordingly something to say about this Rood of Boxley. The details, if true, are sad enough, as the records of what are called 'religious' frauds always must be."<sup>1</sup>

Yes! religious frauds are sad, and the frauds of lying historians, making false accusations of imposture and idolatry, are especially sad. But it may be questioned whether the "earnestness" of the old, fanatical, out-and-out liars like Foxe, is more sad than the refurbishing of these wicked calumnies, with the qualifying clause, "if true;" words which allow all the mischief intended by the first inventors of these charges to be repeated, and yet provide a convenient retreat in case of refutation. If Dr. Simpson believed Foxe's story, why did he express this doubt? If he had reason to doubt the truth of Foxe's details, was it not his duty as a historian either to clear up the matter, or to tell his reader, as Collier did, the reasons of his hesitation, or else to pass the whole matter by in silence? Does either truth or charity permit the dissemination of scandal, with an affectation of wounded piety, and "'tis very sad if true?"

<sup>1</sup> Chapters in the History of Old St. Paul's, by W. S. Simpson, D.D., F.S.A. (1881), p. 170

The third principal witness against the monks is William Thomas. He was quoted by Lord Herbert, and the notorious falsehoods in his account of St. Thomas of Canterbury awoke in the mind of Collier a suspicion that his testimony might not be of great value regarding the Rood of Boxley. This man was a kind of political tutor of Edward VI., and was made by him clerk of the council. Though a layman, he had benefices conferred on him. At the accession of Queen Mary he was deprived of his office, and in revenge sought to murder the Queen, for which he was sent to the Tower, February 21, 1554. On the 26th he attempted suicide, but failed. He was tried and condemned on 9th May, and executed at Tyburn on the 18th.<sup>1</sup>

He wrote at the beginning of Edward's reign a book called "The Pilgrim," or "Il Pelerino Inglese," in which he relates an imaginary conversation between himself and some Italian gentlemen during his residence in Italy. This book has been reprinted by Mr. Froude, the panegyrist of Henry VIII., and he expresses a hope that Englishmen "will welcome an opportunity of seeing the conduct of Henry VIII. as it appeared to an Englishman of more than common ability, who himself witnessed the scenes which he describes."<sup>2</sup> We do welcome the book, and think the champion worthy of his hero.

Mr. Thomas does not mention the Rood of Boxley by name. What he says is this:—

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Anthony Harmer (*i.e.*, Henry Wharton) in his corrections of Burnet, n. 89.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to *The Pilgrim*, p. 8.

“Now, quoth I, hearken well unto me in this mine answer against miracles, and you shall hear things of another sort. In time past England hath been occupied with more pilgrimages than Italy hath now. For as you have here Our Lady in so many places, di Loretto, di Gracia, &c., even so had we Our Lady of Walsingham, of Penrice, of Islington. . . . And so many Holy Roods, that it was a wonder. And here and there ran all the world; yea, the king himself, till God opened his eyes, was as blind and obstinate as the rest. And those Roods and these Our Ladies were all of another sort than these your saints be; for there were few of them, but that with engines that were in them could beckon either with their heads or hands, or move their eyes, or manage some part of their bodies to the purpose that the friars and priests would use them, and especially one Christ Italianate, that with the head answered yea and nay to all demands.”<sup>1</sup>

There is a strange discrepancy between this and the preceding witnesses. With them the Rood of Boxley, the moving figure, was quite singular.<sup>2</sup> With Thomas he has become legion. *All* the Roods, *all* the Blessed Virgins, had machinery alike. It was the peculiar prerogative of England. As England surpassed Italy in saint worship and shrine-haunting, so also in the marvels which moved so many devotees: “Those Roods and these Our Ladies were all of another sort than those your saints be, for there were few of them but could beckon,” &c. The man dares not to accuse Italian monks of trickery, for the shrines and the roods were still standing in Italy, but he is at liberty to say what he likes of things destroyed and of men deprived and discredited. He betrays, how-

<sup>1</sup> The Pilgrim, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Partridge indeed, above quoted, does say that the “satellite saints of the Kentish image,” *i.e.*, the other images destroyed at St. Paul’s, “acted pretty much in the same way.” But his words are an evident flourish, and he was writing in Germany and for Germans.

ever, the source of his absurd lies by the words "*especially* one Christ Italianate, that with the head answered yea and nay to all demands," which words immediately following the assertion that nearly all the images could beckon, or move their eyes, remind one of the saying about two negroes: "Cesar and Pompey are very much alike, *especially* Pompey." But why especially this one Christ Italianate? No doubt he was referring to the Rood of Boxley; why called Italianate I do not know.<sup>1</sup> This Rood had become famous from having been brought to London and solemnly destroyed. If there had been many like it, it would not have gained such notoriety. If very many of the Roods and Our Ladies and other images were worked by crafty engines, "to the purpose that the friars and priests would use them," what was there in the Rood of Boxley to excite such special horror and astonishment? But it is idle to waste one's time in refuting such accusations. The fabrication is so clumsy that it falls to pieces at a touch. All the monks are adepts in making machinery! And all the people are unsuspecting of the fact, till an accident or the Bible-taught intelligence of Partridge reveals it!

"And here and there ran all the world," says Thomas; "yea, the king himself, till God opened his eyes, was as blind and obstinate as the rest." No doubt he was. And when and how did God open his eyes? When they saw "Gospel light" in the

<sup>1</sup> Has Mr. Froude printed the word aright? There is an error a few lines above, where it is said "St. John of Salston that conjured the devil into a book." It should be *boot*. In any case, Italianate cannot mean "contrived like Italian crucifixes," since he says the Italians had no such roods as the English.

eyes of Anne Boleyn, according to the poet Gray. Or, to speak more precisely, it was when they saw the last hope quenched of obtaining from the Pope a sentence of divorce. His book of expenses bears witness that in 1529 "the king's perpetual candle was still burning before Our Lady of Walsingham at the cost of £2, 3s. 4d., and in 1530 before King Henry of Windsor (Henry VI.) at the cost of £1.<sup>1</sup> Even in May 1532 he thinks it right to send his offering of 7s. 6d. to Walsingham, and in November 1532 he offers personally 11s. 3d. at the shrine of Our Lady of Boulogne, and 5s. to "Our Lady in the Wall" at Calais, and on his return from France 4s. 8d. to "Our Lady in the Rock" at Dover. Sir Harris Nicolas, who has edited the Privy Purse Expenses of Henry, on inspecting the gifts made by the king to his various favourites, exclaims that "the mind is impressed with horror at the reflection of how few of them escaped falling victims to his suspicion, jealousy, and revenge;"<sup>2</sup> and Our Lady and the Saints were no exception to this rule.

"And can you blame the king," continues Mr. Froude's "Englishman of more than common ability," "though he hanged and burned those hypocritical knaves that were authors and actors of so much abomination and superstition?" This was well said by Mr. Thomas, and we must not pass it by too lightly. It was notorious in Italy that monks had been hung and burnt by Henry. The story of the hanging and quartering of the monks and friars who were associated with the visions and revelations of the

<sup>1</sup> Letters and Papers, v. 303-336.

<sup>2</sup> Introduction, p. xxxi.

Holy Maid of Kent, of the Carthusians and others who denied the king's supremacy, of the hanging and burning of Friar Forest, the confessor of the queen, and of so many more, had quickly spread through Europe and excited among Catholics universal horror. William Thomas therefore tells the Italian gentleman that these supposed martyrs were in reality hypocritical knaves, convicted of sacrilegious fraud. This is a barefaced but most instructive lie.

Had any monks been proved guilty of such frauds, there is no doubt they would have been hung or burnt, or probably both hung and burnt, according to the ingenious device employed in the cruel murder of Forest, who was hung by a chain over a fire which was fed with the fragments of a statue brought from Wales. In his case the intention was to ridicule a popular saying that the image would one day "set a forest on fire." Now, had the Boxley monks really been guilty of cheating kings, nobles, and people out of their money, during long years, by gross and impious fraud, who can doubt that the Rood of Grace would have fed the flame which would have consumed them also? Would the tyrant who in 1534 sacrificed the lives of so many priests and monks on a charge of promulgating false visions, and who, in 1539, hung the mitred Abbot Richard Whiting of Glastonbury and two of his monks on a charge of having concealed some of the jewellery which the king claimed, would he or his minister Cromwell have spared the monks of Boxley in 1538?

But how stand the facts? Not one monk, either of Boxley or of any other abbey, was either executed, or convicted, or legally accused of fraud or trickery.

Surely this one fact is enough to settle the whole question. But the argument is not merely negative. The Abbot of Boxley, John Cobbe, received a pension of £50 a year (or £600 in modern value), and each of his nine monks a pension varying between four pounds and four marks.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the generous treatment of men who, according to the Rev. M. Soames, were guilty of "Scandalous imposture and infamous frauds."<sup>2</sup> Perhaps it is needless after this to say that none of the impostors mentioned by John Finch, who were bribed by the monks to feign illness, and then to be miraculously cured before the Rood, were ever brought to justice. We have no record that they received pensions: but perhaps the modern admirers of Henry and Cromwell will think it was due to their great clemency that such

<sup>1</sup> The pensions are recorded by Willis, in his "Mitred Abbeys," ii. p. 96, by the editors of Dugdale, v. 460, and by Hasted in his "History of Kent." None of these authors repeats the charge of the false miracles, though Hasted in a note refers to Lambard. The names are given incorrectly. I give them from the original.

In Record Office, Augmentation Office—Miscellaneous Books, No. 232. Enrolment of Pensions.

Pars. ii. Grants anno 29°.

	F. 5.	Boxley.	Feb. 12. a°—29°.	
John Cobbes, Abb	.	.	.	£50 0 0
John Graver	.	.	.	4 mares.
Will Larkin	.	.	.	4 0 0
George Squyer	.	.	.	4 0 0
John Rede	.	.	.	4 mares.
George Bonham	.	.	.	4 0 0
Amphiabel Mancorne	.	.	.	4 mares.
Alexander Wymonchshunt	.	.	.	4 0 0
John Godfrey	.	.	.	4 mares.
John Parker (Pakks)	.	.	.	4 mares.

Some of the pensions were still paid in 1553.

<sup>2</sup> History of the Reformation, ii. 264.



miscreants were left unmolested. Serious students of history will, however, conclude that if Cromwell thought it expedient to defame the monks, he did not find it convenient to have the charge too closely investigated. Let us return once more to the narration of William Thomas. We have seen how the murder of holy and innocent men was explained as just vengeance on hypocritical rogues. Of course, therefore, the suppression and plunder of the monasteries must also have its virtuous aspect.

“And did not the king [asks his champion] do as good service unto God in destroying the places of these imaginary saints, that drew the people unto the belief and trust in these false miracles, as the good Hezekiah, King of Judah, did in destroying the Mosaical brazen serpent, and overthrowing the excelsa, the images and hallowed woods consecrated to their idols?”<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately for the justice of this comparison, neither the Books of Kings nor those of Chronicles relate that Ezechias established any Court of Augmentation to receive the proceeds of the high places and sacred groves. Much is told of the generosity of the holy king in restoring the splendour of the service of God; but of king and courtiers enriched by confiscations, nothing. A fitter comparison would have been with Solomon falling under the influence of his idolatrous wives. “And the women turned away his heart, and when he was now old his heart was turned away by women to follow strange gods . . . and he worshipped Astarte, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Moloch, the idol of the Ammonites.”<sup>2</sup> It was when Henry had given up his heart to voluptuousness that

<sup>1</sup> The Pilgrims, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> 3 Kings xi. 4, 5.

he destroyed the images of the Immaculate Virgin, whom he had once honoured. When rage and ferocity had changed his once genial character, he destroyed the Roods of our Divine Redeemer.

A difficulty still remains. If there had been no imposture, how could Cromwell and Hilsey persuade the people that there had been such; how could the Londoners and Maidstonians be aroused to such violent indignation? I reply that in the first place there is no evidence that public opinion was thus aroused. Chambers's report to Cromwell is not trustworthy. He was justifying his own conduct, and that of his employer, by claiming the sympathy of the people. Hoker says that when the Rood was shown at Maidstone, some laughed, but "other were as mad as Ajax." Yes, buffoonery, especially with sacred things, will always secure laughter in a ribald mob. But the better classes, the devout, the former pilgrims to Boxley, all who knew the true history of the Rood, were "mad" with anger, not against the monks, but against the exhibitors, for it is evidently Hoker's meaning that the "Papists" were mad with vexation, which simply means that they were indignant against the calumniators of the monks, the sacrilegious impostors, who, after driving the monks away, now insulted them by barefaced lies. On the strength of Hoker's description, and without one particle of additional evidence, a writer in Knight's "London" says:

*"People came from the most distant parts of the country, to gaze and wonder at a discovery, which no doubt astonished many of them almost as much as if it had been found out that any one of themselves was merely a similar piece of mechanism. The evi-*

dence, however, was too conclusive to be resisted by any possible stupidity." <sup>1</sup>

So writes Mr. G. L. Craik, a name not unknown in literature: and yet all this is the merest nineteenth-century fiction.

But, after all, supposing that the charge against the monks was believed at once, as it certainly was by the Protestants in the course of a few years, the credulity which accepted the false charge can be more easily explained, in accordance with the laws of human nature, than the credulity or gullibility so freely imputed to the Catholics throughout England previous to the suppression of the abbeys. There is a choice of difficulties; either Catholics had been gulled or Protestants have been bamboozled (one must be pardoned the words, there are no others). Of course Protestants think it natural that Catholics were dupes; Catholics must be allowed to state and defend their own view. That the courtiers of Henry VIII. should have welcomed the exhibition of the crucifix, as Hoker relates, and should not have cared to examine too closely into the charge of imposture against the monks, is in perfect harmony with all history and experience. There is no sillier fiction about the Middle Ages than to represent the rich and noble grovelling at the feet of the clergy or the monks, either in admiration or in fear. Good monks were no doubt venerated by good laymen, but even saintly kings could make or relish a joke at the expense of imperfect monks, as they could be indignant against the bad. The ordinary run of nobles and men-at-arms had little enough reverence for men of peace and of religion. So it has ever been.

<sup>1</sup> Knight's London, vol. i. Art. "Paul's Cross."

One of the "sons of the prophets" (the monks of the Old Testament) is sent to anoint Jehu, and finds him among the captains of the army. He calls him aside, anoints him, and flees away. Jehu returns to the captains. They ask him, "Why came this madman to thee?" Jehu replies: "You know the man and what he said." They answer: "It is false; but rather do thou tell us."<sup>1</sup> It must be admitted that their calling the prophet a madman, and making up their minds that his words were false before they knew them, might almost make us think that the speakers were courtiers of Henry or Elizabeth rather than of Jehu. But this spirit is of all times and all countries. It was, however, intensified in 1538, when all needy men were gaping for the spoils of the monasteries.

It is even more easy to explain the conduct of the Protestantising mob then, than later, and at the present day. Why, a Protestant Scripture-reader, in 1851, as Cardinal Newman relates, believed that he saw a Catholic congregation in London worshipping a candlestick, with a bell concealed in the foot, which a priest was touching with his finger, undetected by all except by the more enlightened Scripture-reader. During the anarchy of the Commune in Paris, a few years since, some of the mob broke into a church, and finding a wax figure of a virgin martyr containing her relics, they showed it from a balcony to the people in the streets, and made them believe that they had found the body of a girl, recently murdered by the priests. Are not many in all ages easily persuaded that they are themselves wise and shrewd, and all others fools; they virtuous, and all others villains? And was it a

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings ix. 11.

difficult matter to convince some of the Londoners that the men of Kent were simpletons? Have we not in Lambard, the perambulator of Kent, a good specimen of one who thought the Catholic people "silly sheep," the monks "false Romish foxes," himself, no doubt, an intelligent and trusty sheep-dog, who yet shows himself an ass by his braying? Protestant literature, from the time of the Reformation to the present day, is filled with this assumption of the ignorance, folly, and superstition or knavery of Catholics, and the enlightenment and honesty of whatever is sectarian.

Cheating and eating—what else did the monks live for? Unless, perhaps, they varied the amusement of talking out of hollow statues, and working miracles through cunningly contrived roods, by walling up living nuns? Has not Sir Walter Scott told the history in *Marmion*? If an accomplished poet and antiquarian could be so deluded by Protestant traditions as to write such folly, what wonder if the atrocities of Maria Monk are circulated everywhere, and credited by millions?

The passage quoted from William Thomas proves that the spirit of lying and calumniating the injured monks had taken possession of a great part of the nation in a very short time after the suppression. Every possessor of their lands, and every pilferer of their churches' ornaments, would be eager to quiet his conscience, or defend his conduct, by giving credence to the slanders. And credulous historians have repeated them, and still repeat them to credulous readers. Thomas Cromwell has indeed had a triumph. He has set up a gigantic fraud, a "lying wonder," and set the wheels and wires working; and Protestant England, for three centuries and a half, has been grinning and

holding up its hands in pious horror before this puppet of his creation.

It may be retorted that the first Protestants, who had known Catholics, nay, who had themselves been Catholics, were thoroughly convinced both of priestly knavery and lay credulity. In reply, I would challenge the production of one single testimony of a Protestant of those early days, declaring that *he himself* had once believed in moving images, and had afterwards discovered the imposture. Plenty of them thanked God that, having once believed in the Real Presence, or the Sacrifice of the Mass, their eyes had been at length opened to see the truth, and their hearts to bewail their former blindness. But in such a case the testimony is to a change of inward conviction as to a matter of faith. But where is one who says, "I was myself juggled by priests?" It is ever their lament that their neighbours were abused; that the "poor simple souls," or "the ignorant people," were deluded. In the passage I have quoted from Wriothesley, Barlow's sermon against images and feigned ceremonies is said to have been "to the great comfort of the audience;" in other words, to the gratification of Pharisees who thanked God they were not ignorant, blinded Papists; not "to the shame and confusion of the audience" convicted of having been themselves fools and idiots. Mr. Froude writes: "The virtues (of the famous roods and images) had begun to grow uncertain to sceptical Protestants, and from doubt to denial, from denial to passionate hatred, there were but a few steps." With this I cordially agree; but I would add that from passionate hatred to the belief of calumnies, and even the inven-



tion of lies, is an easy advance. And it is this progression which explains the origin and the growth of the fable about Boxley.

A few months before Barlow's sermon, Gardiner, who, whatever were his faults, was a shrewd observer, wrote as follows:—

“To a multitude persuaded in the destruction of images I would never preach. For (as Scripture willeth us) we should cast no precious stones before hogs. . . . It is a terrible matter to think that this false opinion conceived against images should trouble any man's head ; and such as I have known vexed with that devil (as I have known some) be nevertheless wonderfully obstinate in . . . and slander whatever is said to them for their relief.”<sup>1</sup>

It is right now that, in conclusion, we should listen to some positive evidence in favour of the monks of Boxley. Surely Archbishop Warham cannot be objected to as biassed or ill-informed. He ruled the diocese of Canterbury for thirty years. In 1511 he made a personal visitation of all the monasteries. He was the intimate friend and patron of Erasmus, and knew all that Erasmus had written on the subject of pilgrimages and the monastic life. According to Erasmus, he had every episcopal virtue. He was not a man to countenance fraud. In that visitation he neither discovered nor suspected imposture or superstition. Again, in 1524 he was commissioned by the king to collect the subsidy granted by Convocation. He finds that the abbot of Boxley has mismanaged his revenues and got his house into debt, and cannot pay the tax though he offers security. Warham writes to Wolsey on the 3rd of May 1524

<sup>1</sup> Gardiner to Captain Vaughan, May 1517.



to advise patience and forbearance. As the place is much sought from all parts of the realm, visiting the Rood of Grace, he would be sorry to put it under an interdict. The abbot is inclined to live precisely (*i.e.*, economically), and bring the place out of debt, "or else it were a pity he should live much longer, to the hurt of so holy a place, where so many miracles be showed."<sup>1</sup>

Let men think as they please as to the reality of the miracles, certainly no well-informed man will suppose that by miracles Warham means the movement of the eyes or head of the crucifix. Let those who will class Warham also among the dupes of a bit of wooden mechanism, if they are ashamed to place him among the abbots and others "in high station," who, according to Dr. Hook, laughed and connived at the frauds practised by their inferiors.<sup>2</sup> And then let them have the satisfaction of reflecting how God hid these things from the pious and cultivated Warham; from the learned and saintly Fisher, who, from Rochester, must often have gone to pray before the famous Rood; and even from the penetration of Colet and Erasmus; while He revealed them to the arch-knave Thomas Cromwell, the perjured Archbishop Cranmer, the time-serving Hilsey, the debauched and blood-thirsty Henry, and the murderer William Thomas. And while they rejoice over the enlightenment and spiritual insight of the men who destroyed our abbeys,

<sup>1</sup> Letters and Papers, iv. 127.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hook speaks too highly both of Warham and Fisher to have been willing to connect them with the supposed knavery at Boxley. However, they must have been either knaves or dupes, for they were both neighbours of the monks, and Warham was their diocesan.

stripped our cathedrals naked, let them sigh or make merry over the thought that the builders of them were given up, generation after generation, to gross and besotted idolatry.

Nothing is more common than the use of the word "lie" by authors treating of revolt against the Catholic Church. "That a Lie cannot be believed, philosophism knows only this," writes Carlyle of the French Revolution;<sup>1</sup> and this Lie, with a capital letter, is of course the Catholic doctrine. And Mr. Froude, following his master's lead, writes of the first Protestants in England that they were "men and women to whom the masses, the pilgrimages, the indulgences, the pardons, the effete paraphernalia of the establishment, had become intolerable; who had risen up in blind resistance, and had declared with passionate anger that, whatever was the truth, all this was falsehood."<sup>2</sup> He calls them "a little band of enthusiasts, armed only with truth and fearlessness;"<sup>3</sup> who, having at last read for themselves the Gospel history, "believed in Christ, not in the bowing Rood," so that "thenceforward neither form nor ceremony should stand between them and their God."<sup>4</sup> All this sounds no doubt very brave and very noble. But what if "the bowing Rood," so skilfully thrown in here for the confusion of the ancient Church, is after all a Lie, a Lie deserving of very conspicuous capitals, but a lie first invented cunningly and knowingly by those first Protestants, and since then manipulated and multiplied and propagated by their successors, during three centuries and a half, not indeed with the same full consciousness, yet with

<sup>1</sup> Part I. Book I. ch. 2.

<sup>2</sup> History, ii. ch. vi. p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 36.

blindness and recklessness and eagerness, which are in ill harmony with such grand professions of devotion to the truth!

I trust that this lie will soon go the way of other calumnies. And that I may show that I have no animosity to Dean Hook, I will draw the moral of the whole story by employing his own words on an analogous charge—words that do him credit:

“Among the falsehoods freely circulated [he says] were those which related to the existence of underground passages leading from priories to nunneries, for the clandestine convenience of those who hated the light because their deeds were evil. But this application of the sewers, which are found upon examination to have gone no further than the exigencies of draining required, is now known to have originated in men who, whatever may have been their zeal against Popery, had forgotten that among deadly sins, falsehood is one, and that among Christian virtues, the charity that thinketh no evil is the first.”<sup>1</sup>

The sewers, it seems, have been dug up, and the discovery of the cesspools has checked the further wanderings of the Protestant imagination in that direction. It is to be hoped that some day it will escape from the monastic dungeons and hollow statues in which it has been so long imprisoned.

<sup>1</sup> History, ii. ch. vi. p. 116.

## ESSAY VII.

ROBERT WARE; OR, A ROGUE AND HIS DUPES.

### 1. *A Forger and his Method.*

JUST as the plague infected London during the seventeenth century, so was forgery during that time an epidemic throughout England and Ireland. The great plague of 1666 was but the climax of a series of outbursts of virulent disease; and the revelations of Titus Oates and his compeers, in 1678 and the following years, were only the most notable and atrocious of a series of frauds perpetrated on religious credulity. Some of these have been either long ago or more recently refuted and exploded. No one probably believes now in Tonge and Oates, Dangerfield and Bedloe. Mr. John Gough Nichols, in the Camden Miscellany for 1852, in his account of a true discovery at Clerkenwell in 1628 of a Jesuits' house and its very innocent contents, laid bare the forgery of a letter full of tricks and treasons, stratagems and wars, which was published as if it had been part of the spoil of the pursuivants. I am not going to re-write the history of the Clerkenwell discovery nor of the Titus Oates plot. The forgeries on which, in this essay, I shall be principally engaged have not, so far as I can learn, met with the attention they deserve, not indeed for their

importance or plausibility, but for the success they have obtained.

I refer to the forgeries of Robert Ware, begun in 1678 contemporaneously with the revelations of Titus Oates, and continued for some years. Ware did not appear as an accuser or a witness in a court of justice; his forgeries in books and pamphlets were not directed against living men; yet by his historical lies he helped to win credit for the monstrous stories of the "Popish Plot," as being in harmony with former events and past discoveries; and there are several of his baseless fabrics repeated in the publications, even of the last few years, by writers to whom the name of Robert Ware is almost or entirely unknown. For the success of Ware's forgeries during two centuries is mostly due to their adoption by the historian Strype. I do not accuse Strype of wilful deception as I do Ware; but he was blindly credulous, while, at the same time, like many propagators of malevolent gossip, he made no scruple to give a character of authenticity to his tales by quoting, as if they had been seen by himself, authorities which he took on trust from his own deceivers.

I must first explain the method adopted by Ware, and in which lay the secret of his success. In their subject matter nearly all his forgeries are, to the last degree, absurd and incredible, many of them are obscene and atrocious, and it is a sad revelation of the state of the Protestant mind in England that they were so greedily received, and are still accepted, by so many. In addition to the wish to believe evil of Catholics, which was the principal cause of their success, there were three tricks used by Ware

which helped to gain credit for his tales. First, he traded on the name of his illustrious father, Sir James Ware, the well-known Irish antiquarian and annalist. Robert Ware, *Gentleman*, as he calls himself on the title-pages of his books, was the second son of Sir James, who died in 1666. Sir James had been a great collector of old documents, and left numerous volumes of transcripts, containing, however, many blank pages. Robert Ware always professed to draw from his father's collections, and Sir James had acquired the reputation of being learned and judicious. In the second place, Robert Ware made a parade of the high sources from which his father, according to his story, had received the various items, as Sir Robert Cotton, Archbishop Ussher, and "memorials" preserved by them, but written by men illustrious in history, as Sir William Cecil, the Secretary of State of Queen Elizabeth, or Lord Sussex and Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputies in Ireland. Lastly, Robert Ware's narratives, or the memorials which he pretends to quote, are full of minute details of places, persons, and dates. A "lie with a circumstance" is easy to concoct, and with many carries great weight. Fortunately these very devices, so successful with those who are too lazy to push inquiries, give us the means of proving the forgery. Were the documents really collected or guaranteed by Sir James Ware? Did they really emanate from the sources indicated? Are the circumstances, the dates, the names in harmony with certain and uncontested history? Can the narratives be confirmed from any other source? These are fair and necessary tests for stories, all of which are full of bitterness and malice. The modern critic too often prefers to sift and

scatter to the winds pious legends and poetical fancies. Few imitate Mr. Nichols in eliminating lies which have served the purpose of party strife or religious bigotry.

My answer, then, to the first of these questions is as follows: Sir James Ware had, I am convinced, no knowledge whatever of the many documents published by his son Robert. Many of them are certainly to be found now in the books which contain the father's collections; but a careful examination of several of these volumes has convinced me that the papers quoted by the son are in a handwriting quite different from the genuine transcripts of the father, and of a later date. Handwriting underwent a notable change in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Sir James Ware, as I have said, died in 1666, and his papers are in an antique hand, that which he acquired in early life, or have been written for him by others in a contemporary handwriting. Now, the later writing occurs here and there in different volumes, just where there was room to insert new matter. These entries are generally followed by empty pages, but in no case have I found any of the older handwriting following one of the suspicious extracts on the same page. The collections of Sir James Ware, which fill many volumes, were formerly known as the Clarendon Manuscripts (not to be confounded with the Clarendon State Papers). They were purchased by the second Earl of Clarendon when Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1686.<sup>1</sup> Between 1666 and 1686 Robert Ware had plenty of oppor-

<sup>1</sup> Though this collection is called Clarendon on the binding, it will prevent ambiguity if I in future allude to it as *Collectanea Hibernica*, a name also given to it.



tunity of laying his cuckoo eggs in these nests. The papers afterwards became the property of the Duke of Chandos, and, when sold by auction in 1746, some were bought by Dr. Rawlinson, and are now in Oxford, the remainder were purchased by Dean Milles of Exeter, and were by him given to the British Museum. They are now among the Additional Manuscripts. It will be easy to understand from these facts that some later writers, who knew nothing of Robert Ware, have quoted from the manuscripts, while others, who knew nothing of the manuscripts, have quoted from Robert's printed books.

I have no reason whatever to think that the manuscripts were ever examined by Strype or Collier, who first gave currency to some of Ware's myths. The first and second parts of Burnet's "History of the Reformation" were printed before Ware's pamphlets had got about; consequently Burnet says nothing of the fables of Ware. But on the margin of one document, beginning, "Luther's writing spreading abroad"<sup>1</sup> are these words: "Anno 1679, April the 6th, lett Henry, Bishop of Meath, take copy hereof to send to Dr. Burnett." This of course cannot be Sir James Ware's writing, since he was long ago dead; yet it is quite similar to the entry at the head of the document, which affects to be Sir James's: "Ex Bib. Cottuens. I got this memoir on the 6th Oct., 1657." Now Burnet, in a sermon before the House of Commons, January 31, 1688-9, thus spoke: "I myself have seen the letters of the chief bishops of that time, from which it appears that the Queen's stiffness in maintaining some ceremonies flowed not from their counsels,

<sup>1</sup> Ad lit. MSS. 4797, fol. 131—olim 193.

but from the practices of some *disguised Papists*." As he has given nowhere in his history any proof of the existence of disguised Papists influencing State measures, I can only suppose that he had been afterwards deluded by communications like the above. It matters, however, not much whether my theory of the entries among Sir James Ware's collections be true or not, be accepted or rejected. In any case the documents are spurious, which is the all-important matter. But I would not willingly believe that Sir James is responsible for them, since he nowhere used them, though he had occasion to do so in more than one of his printed works, had he known of them.

## 2. *The Forger's Work yet Lives.*

I am not engaged in slaying the dead. Ware's inventions are manifold, and some of our latest, and in many respects best, books of history are tainted by his slime. Thus Mr. Gardiner, in his "History of England in the time of Charles I.," has occasion to mention the Clerkenwell discovery, alluded to above. He writes as follows:—"As there was nothing treasonable in the papers, some clever scoundrel thought fit to forge a letter from one of the community, in which it was told how the Jesuits had a plot on hand for keeping alive the quarrel between Buckingham and the House of Commons; and this forged letter was widely circulated."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gardiner in his note refers to Mr. Nichols, with whom he is so far in perfect agreement. But there is a further document, with regard to the authenticity of which they differ, though neither of

<sup>1</sup> Vol. vi. 238.

them seems to be aware of its origin. This is "A letter from some of the Lords of the Privy Council in England to the Lord Falkland, Lord Deputy of Ireland." It communicates the news of the Clerkenwell discovery, and encloses a copy of that Jesuit's letter which Mr. Nichols and Mr. Gardiner both denounce as a forgery. But in addition to this the letter says: "The Jesuits be not only a subtil Society, but also an audacious sort of people, fearing no punishment, no, not the halter itself;" and then mentions a proposal of the Duke of Buckingham that they should be shamefully mutilated. As this proposal early in the eighteenth century was seriously discussed in a printed treatise,<sup>1</sup> and was in 1723 actually embodied in a bill which passed both Houses of the Irish Parliament, and was only prevented becoming law by its rejection in the English Council owing, it is said, to the influence of Cardinal Fleury with Walpole, it is of some historical importance to know on whom the infamy rests of the first conception of this devilry. Mr. Gardiner says: "I incline to think the letter genuine;" and as regards this clause of it adds: "The letter is very characteristic of Buckingham's offhand way of treating serious matters." To Mr. Nichols' objection that the letter is dated March 2nd, whereas the Clerkenwell discovery only took place on the 15th, he replies: "This would be worth attending to if we had the original. But the hasty copy which is all we have may easily have substituted the 2nd for the 22nd March." Now, the hasty copy of which Mr. Gardiner writes, and which Mr. Nichols printed, is to be found in the 44th volume of the *Collectanea*

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted in *Harleian Miscellany*.

Hibernica.<sup>1</sup> It is also printed in the second part of Robert Ware's "Foxes and Firebrands."<sup>2</sup> From what has been already said, and from what I shall prove beyond question of the fabrication of other documents printed in this book, and written in the *Collectanea Hibernica*, no reasonable doubt can exist that what Robert Ware was the first to print Robert Ware had been the first to conceive. The forged Jesuit's letter is not his. It had been printed in 1643, and in circulation, as it would seem, long before;<sup>3</sup> but by pretending that it was sent to Lord Falkland by the English Council Ware gave it an appearance of genuineness and authenticity. That he made a blunder in dating this pretended letter of the Council is quite characteristic. Similar blunders in dates will be found in many of his forgeries, as I shall show. Were Mr. Gardiner's conjecture true, that the original was dated on the 22nd, it would follow that the Jesuit's letter had been forged immediately, and had been foisted on the Council; whereas Mr. Nichols proves that the Government knew nothing of such a letter. I conclude, then, that we may absolve the Duke of Buckingham from the infamy attributed to him, and throw it upon its inventor, Robert Ware. The force of this conclusion depends on cumulative evidence not yet given. My present point, however, is the necessity of sifting thoroughly this man and his work.

Another proof that Robert Ware's inventions are

<sup>1</sup> Now Addition 4791, fol. 38.

<sup>2</sup> At p. 125, the pretended Jesuit's letter being at p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Nichols makes it almost certain that it was the work of Sir John Maynard, and that it was intended to clear the Duke of Buckingham, by representing him as hated by the Jesuits.

still living and in vigorous life, after two hundred years of mischief-working, may be seen from another specimen. In the Harleian Miscellany<sup>1</sup> is a reprint of a pamphlet of twenty pages, which was first printed in London in 1681. It is called "Historical Collections of the Church of Ireland during the Reign of King Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Queen Mary, wherein are several material passages omitted by historians," &c. The pamphlet has no name of author, but from internal evidence, which I shall explain by-and-by, on reading it I at once perceived that it was from the pen of Robert Ware, *Gent.* I afterwards found that, under the title of "Life of Archbishop Browne," it was printed in Robert's edition of his father's Annals (Anno 1705). The new revelations profess to be drawn from Sir James Ware's papers, and mostly refer to the famous George Browne, first Protestant Archbishop of Dublin. These I reserve for the present.

There is also in this pamphlet a story of a Dr. Cole having been sent to Ireland with a commission from Queen Mary to bring about a massacre of Protestants; how, having reached Chester, he mentioned his mission, and showed his commission to a gentleman in the presence of a Protestant servant girl who had a brother in Ireland. The maid stole the commission out of Dr. Cole's bag, putting in its place a pack of cards with the knave of clubs uppermost, but wrapped it in the old cover. Dr. Cole, unsuspecting the theft, landed in Dublin on October 7, 1558, and presented his commission to Lord Fitzwalter, Earl of Sussex, the Lord Deputy, who, on opening the cover, burst into

<sup>1</sup> Vol. v. p. 594.

laughter, and said to the discomfited ecclesiastic, "Go and get another commission, and in the meantime we will shuffle the cards." Dr. Cole, of course, found Queen Mary dead or dying on his return to London, and so the massacre of Irish Protestants was providentially averted, and by the shuffling of the cards Protestantism got the upper hand. Queen Elizabeth gave the servant girl a life pension of £40 per annum.

The author of this precious story says that it is from the Earl of Cork's memorial and Ussher's manuscripts, copied by Sir James Ware, and wonders that it is not related by Foxe in his Acts and Monuments.

Does such a story deserve refutation? Well, if so, it might be enough to say, with the author himself, that it had been "omitted by historians" until 1681. Unfortunately, since then it has been reproduced by historians. It will be found in Sir Richard Cox's *Hibernia Anglicana*, published in 1689, and in Bishop Mant's *History of the Church of Ireland*, published in 1840. Mant gives it on the authority of Cox; and Cox, though professing to derive it from the anonymous pamphlet,<sup>1</sup> gives it with confidence, "because the author quotes the most reverend and learned Primate Ussher, and the memorials of the most noble and industrious Richard, Earl of Cork." Thus Sir Richard Cox's notion of evidence was to accept an anonymous author's reference to unknown MSS. as proof of an incredible story. Yet this credulous lawyer and historian became Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

This is not all. In 1885, Mr. Bagwell published his "Ireland under the Tudors," a work of considerable

<sup>1</sup> When Cox wrote, Ware had not yet fathered his offspring. He waited to see its fortunes.



research. He gives the story of Cole which he had found in Ware's life of Browne, but with the following introduction: "It rests on the testimony of Henry Ussher, one of the fathers of Trinity College, afterwards Archbishop of Armagh, and was repeated by his more famous nephew James Ussher, and by other public men of repute. In the absence of anything to rebut it, such evidence can hardly be rejected."<sup>1</sup>

Another writer, and one who as Lord Chancellor of Ireland was accustomed to sift evidence, and has acquired the reputation of impartiality, the Right Hon. Dr. Ball, in his "Reformed Church of Ireland," published in 1886, repeats the tale once more. He tells us that "Ware refers to Boyle, the celebrated Earl of Cork, and Primate Henry and James Ussher, as authorities for this story;"<sup>2</sup> and on the strength, not of these authorities, but of the *reference* to them, he writes: "There is no doubt that a story to this effect was in the next reign (Elizabeth's) current."<sup>3</sup> Lastly, that "the circumstantiality with which the story has been told" by Robert Ware, tends to confirm its credibility.

Are these the reflections of scientific historians and shrewd lawyers? Who would not think that Primate Henry Ussher's testimony to the story about Cole was to be found in one record, and Primate James Ussher's in another, and the Earl of Cork's in a third, and those of the "other public men of repute" in various books or MSS.? Who would imagine that the whole of this testimony resolves itself into the statement of Robert Ware? As soon should I have expected a saying of Sarah Gamp to be corroborated by the

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i 413.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix K.

<sup>3</sup> P. 45.



authority of the respectable Mrs. Harris, her oft-quoted yet mythic friend, or the *circumstantiality* of her gossip adduced in support of its truth.

Mr. Bagwell says that a tale with so many vouchers must be received, "in the absence of anything to rebut it." I do not find that he has sought for any rebutting or confirming evidence, except the fact that two years previously Cardinal Pole was thinking of a legatine visitation of Ireland. Against this I may set the following rebutting evidence. There is no mention in any English or Irish State document of Dr. Cole's mission; and the name of the recipient of Elizabeth's bounty—either her maiden or married name, for both are given by Ware to add plausibility to the story—will be sought in vain in the Calendars. Yet mere trifles are there recorded. There is an entry of a warrant<sup>1</sup> to deliver eighteen yards of crimson velvet to the Earl of Sussex, due to him as chief "sewer" at the coronation of Elizabeth, but of Elizabeth's bounty to the maid-servant not a word. Mr. Bagwell tells how Elizabeth was so parsimonious that she would only authorise her Lord Deputy to spend £1500 a month on the whole government of Ireland, and urged him if possible to reduce the expense to £1000;<sup>2</sup> yet she will give £40 a year for life to a maid-servant!<sup>3</sup>

These are merely negative arguments. But had Sir Richard Cox, or Bishop Mant, or Mr. Bagwell, or Dr. Ball, considered this matter with even a small part of that attention that they certainly would have

<sup>1</sup> On May 24, 1561, Dom. Eliz. xvii. 10.

<sup>2</sup> History, ii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> A sum equal to £400 of our present money.

given to the refutation of anything favourable to the Catholic Church, they would easily have discovered that the meeting of Lord Sussex and Dr. Cole was impossible. According to Ware, the meeting took place on October 7th, 1558, in Dublin. Now, it is easy to prove an *alibi* as regards the Earl of Sussex, and it shows the reckless impudence of Robert Ware (as well as the carelessness of those who quote him) that this proof should be in his own father's Annals. Sir James states explicitly that the Lord Deputy left Dublin in the middle of September, and only returned to Dublin on the 18th of November. This statement is borne out by the Irish Calendars of State Papers. On September 14th Lord Sussex started on an expedition to devastate the coast of Scotland. He returned to Ireland, but not to Dublin, on October 5th. He writes on that day that he is about to engage in some exploits against the Scotch "in these quarters," *i.e.*, in the north, for he refers to the Scotchmen settled in the north of Ireland, followers of O'Donnell and O'Neil.<sup>1</sup> We may therefore bid farewell to the story of Dr. Cole, but not without the saddening reflection that, had it not been anti-Catholic in its nature, it would long ago have been classed among fables by every popular manual of Irish history.

### 3. *Some Test Cases.*

Robert Ware was the author of several books which appeared with his name, and of some anonymous pamphlets. He tells us that, "about the year 1678 he

<sup>1</sup> Irish Cal. ii. 69, 71, 75; and *On the Scotch in Ireland*, Bagwell, ii. 7.

set forth in print the examinations of Faithful Commin and Thomas Heath." This pamphlet was reprinted, with reflections of his own, by a Dr. Henry Nalson, with the title "Foxes and Firebrands." According to Ware, both Commin and Heath, the one a Dominican and the other a Jesuit, were acting perfidiously as Protestant preachers, for the purpose of inventing heresies, causing divisions, weakening and overthrowing the Church of England, and so bringing back Popery. Nalson, therefore, in allusion to the story of Samson, calls Catholic priests *foxes*, who have the *firebrand* sects attached to their tails, in order to bring devastation into the fields of the Protestant religion as established by the State. Ware was so pleased with this title, that he republished Nalson's book in 1682, adding a second part. In 1683 he published "The Hunting of the Romish Fox and the Quenching of Sectarian Firebrands," and in 1689 the third part of "Foxes and Firebrands." Of these, and of his other productions, I shall give an account later on. I confine myself here to the first part of "Foxes and Firebrands."

Dr. Henry Nalson says: "I will begin with a remarkable narrative of a Dominican friar, being an extract out of the Memorials of the Lord Cecil, an eminent statesman in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, from whose papers it was transmitted to the Rev. Bishop Ussher, sometime Lord Primate of Ireland. The papers of the Lord Primate coming to the hands of Sir James Ware, late one of her Majesty's Privy Council in Ireland, his son, Robert Ware, Esq., has obliged the public by a communication of them." Here then are three weighty names introduced, Lord Cecil, by whom is doubtless meant Lord Burghley,

formerly Sir William Cecil, Ussher, and Sir James Ware. But the strength of a chain is that of its weakest link, and neither Nalson nor others after him took the precaution to test the trustworthiness of Robert Ware. After this introduction follows a dialogue extending through many pages, between a Protestant fanatical preacher named Faithful Commin and Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury. The examination takes place before the Council and in the presence of Queen Elizabeth, who now and then asks a question or makes a remark. It turns out that Commin is really a Dominican friar. He is put back for further examination, but manages to escape to the Continent. He goes to Rome and is imprisoned by St. Pius V., who hears that he has often preached against the Pope. But Commin writes to his Holiness that he has something important to communicate; and here I will give a page in the exact words of this book:—

“As soon as the Pope saw him, he said, ‘Sir, I have heard how you set forth me and my predecessors among your heretics of England, by reviling my person, and railing at my Church;’ to whom Commin replied: ‘I confess my lips have uttered that which my heart never thought, but your Holiness little thinks I have done you a most considerable service, notwithstanding I have spoken so much against you.’ To whom the Pope returned, ‘How, in the name of Jesus, Mary, and of all His Saints, hast thou done so?’ ‘Sir,’ said Commin, ‘I preached against set forms of prayer, and I called the English prayers English Mass, and have persuaded several to pray spiritually and extempore. And this hath so much taken with the people,

that the Church of England [service] is become as odious to that sort of people, whom I instructed, as Mass is to the Church of England, and this will be a stumbling-block to that Church while it is a Church.' Upon which the Pope commended him, and gave him a reward of 2,000 ducats for his good service."<sup>1</sup> Let the reader bear in mind that all this is not a bit of modern Irish burlesque, but a part of Lord Cecil's Memorial; and that Lord Cecil professes to derive it from a report made to the Council by a merchant named Baker. The great English statesman thus concludes his narrative: "The Queen sent over to her agent beyond the sea, if possible to have Commin taken and sent over to England; but the thing taking air, and it being the common discourse how the Pope had rewarded this impostor, some of his friends gave him advertisement of his danger, which made him quit the Low Countries and seek a safe retreat in the Romish territories."

I owe it to myself to say that, if I have investigated the truth of these and similar stories, it has not been for my own satisfaction; and I have only been convinced of its necessity by the strange credulity in these matters of which I have already given examples. As regards Faithful Commin, the story is accepted by Strype, though he had no other authority than Ware.<sup>2</sup> It was also given as an illustration of "Rome's Tactics," as lately as 1867, by William Goode, Dean of Ripon, though he writes not only D.D., but F.S.A. after his name, and he gravely informs us that Ware

<sup>1</sup> Foxes and Firebrands, part i. p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Strype's Annals, i. 342, and his Life of Parker, i. 485.

derived it from Lord Burghley's papers.<sup>1</sup> Dean Goode and Strype knew only the printed version in "Foxes and Firebrands," but to give Ware fair play, I will state that the same story occurs verbatim in the *Collectanea Hibernica*,<sup>2</sup> where it thus concludes: "This being a copy of L<sup>d</sup> Cissell's memorandums of faithful Commin. Many other memorandums in the same booke, worth the printing, which booke was amongst A. Bpp Usher's Manuscripts before his Death." This is intended to pass as a note by Sir James Ware, but it is in a later writing, and at the end of the volume, where several blank pages remained. I ask, then, what has become of these manuscripts of Ussher? Their existence rests entirely on this and similar notes. I ask again, how it is that a story like the above, of so public a nature, was never chronicled or alluded to before the publication of Robert Ware's pamphlet? The name, too, of Faithful Commin is utterly unknown in Dominican annals, and occurs in no State paper of the period.

To give plausibility to his tale, Ware introduced names, dates, and many petty circumstances. These enable us to put him to the test. He says that the first examination of Faithful Commin took place on Monday, April 5, 1567. Commin's friends, after his first examination, gave bonds that he should appear on April 12, "but the Spanish Ambassador being that day to have his private audience of the Queen," Commin was put off to the 13th. Now April 5, 1567, was not Monday but Saturday. This, it may be said, merely proves a slip somewhere, and I allow that such

<sup>1</sup> Rome's Tactics, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Addit. MSS. 4783 (Codex Clarendon, xv.).



an error would not overthrow a document otherwise well proved. But in this case we have a far better means of ascertaining the truth than the mere examination of a date. The Privy Council Registers and Minute Books still exist, where each meeting is recorded, and the subject which was treated. A careful examination has been made of these books. From this it appears that the first meeting of the Council in April 1567 was on the 7th, the next on the 16th. Neither in these nor in any other meetings in April is there any question of Faithful Commin or of any similar matter. Hence the whole story of the examinations of Commin by the Council is a fiction, and the memorial of Lord Burghley a forgery, not derived from Ussher, not copied by Sir James Ware, but the creation of the crazy yet cunning brain of his unworthy son.

Dr. Nalson, when going on to relate the second story that he has borrowed from Robert Ware, says that he does so, "that in the mouths of two witnesses truth may be justified." He forgot that two *false* witnesses were brought to testify against Him who was Truth itself. The story of Thomas Heath, as given in "Foxes and Firebrands," is too long to transcribe here.<sup>1</sup> I can merely give its outline. Thomas Heath was, according to Ware, a brother of Nicholas Heath, the deposed Archbishop of York. He had gone to Rochester, where his brother had been formerly bishop, and obtained leave to preach in the cathedral on April 21, 1568. While preaching, he let drop a letter in the pulpit, which was found by the sexton and given to the bishop, Dr. Guest. It was a letter

<sup>1</sup> It is also in Addit. MSS. 4789 (Codex Clarendon, 42), fol. 36.



addressed to Thomas Finn, and written by Samuel Malt, Superior of the English Jesuits in Madrid. The letter encloses some Protestant collections, or tracts, as we should call them, for Finn, *alias* Heath, to distribute: "These mixtures with your own will not only a little puzzle the understandings of the auditors, but make yourself famous. We suppose your wants are not considerable at present, by what we have heard, how your flock do admire you every day more and more." This letter and the suspicious nature of Heath's sermon, which was on spiritual or extempore prayer as opposed to liturgies, caused him to be arrested and examined by the bishop. He acknowledged that he had once been a Jesuit, but he had forsaken them and their tenets, and was even labouring to purify the new Church of England, and "to take off all smack of ceremonies that in the least do tend to the Romish faith." But his lodgings in the Queen's Arms in Rochester were searched. "In one of his boots were found his beads and a licence from the fraternity of Jesuits, and a bull dated the first of Pius Quintus to preach what doctrine that Society pleased for the dividing of Protestants. In his trunk were several books for denying baptism to infants." "After this," says Mr. Robert Ware, "Heath was remanded to prison, and for three days brought to the market-place at Rochester, where he stood by the high cross with a paper before his breast, in which were written his crimes. Then he was pilloried, and on the last day his ears were cut off, his nose slit, and his forehead branded with the letter P, and he was condemned to endure perpetual imprisonment. But it lasted not

long, for a few months after he died suddenly, not without the suspicion of having poisoned himself."

Ware knew his contemporaries so well, and how easily they would accept any anti-popish story without inquiry, that he boldly stated: "The following narrative [of Heath] is a true copy taken out of the Registry of the Episcopal See of Rochester, in that book which begins Anno 2 and 3 Phil.-et-Mar. and continued to 15 Eliz." Luckily the registers of Rochester for the year 1568 are not lost, and I have the testimony of two Protestant gentlemen, who have made a special search to test this story, that they contain not one word about the matter, but merely the ordinary records of episcopal administration. I can also add that the names of these two Jesuits, Thomas Heath and his provincial, Samuel Malt, are unknown in the records of the Society,<sup>1</sup> and will be sought for in vain in the Indices of State Papers.

Dean Goode, after copying this story from "Foxes and Firebrands," calmly states: "The whole account is taken from the Episcopal Registry of Rochester."<sup>2</sup> Thus, while he is engaged in making a long and furious attack on the Catholic Church for forgery and dishonesty, he repeats these silly tales without taking the trouble to verify the reference given or to test any one of the names or circumstances or dates that are introduced.<sup>3</sup> Strype and others had adopted the same easy plan of calumniating before him.

<sup>1</sup> See Foley's Records, Series I. 209.

<sup>2</sup> Rome's Tactics, p. 17, note.

<sup>3</sup> The whole pamphlet of 100 pages is filled with spurious matter of the same kind, in great part taken from Ware or Ware's copiers.

4. *A Forged False Miracle.*

The "ill bird," Robert Ware, was not satisfied unless he could foul his own nest. We have seen some of his calumnies against English priests; I will now expose a too successful attempt to throw dirt on the priests and religious of the City of Dublin—too successful, I say, because some of it has been left sticking on them to this day. The following story I copy verbatim from the fifth chapter of his book, called "The Hunting of the Romish Fox," published in Dublin in 1683:—

"Queen Elizabeth sent over into Ireland Thomas Fitzwalters, Earl of Sussex, anno 1559, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, who landed at Dalkie upon the 16th August the same year. At his reception in the cathedral church of Christchurch, in Dublin, Mr. Nichol Darly sang the Litany in the English tongue, this being the first beginning of Reformation in our Queen's reign there since King Edward's reign, all reformity being expulsed upon that hopeful prince's death.

"This alteration stirred up the malignity of several of the Romish clergy then lurking and wandering in that city, so that a *Pia Fraus* was contrived, purposely to calumniate and vilify her Majesty's endeavours for the reformation of the Protestant Church of England. There was one Richard Leigh, who had been formerly of the priory of the cathedral, who at this time undertook to work this intended fraud or pretended miracle. The better to contrive this his purpose, he prepared a sponge, and the night before the Sunday following, her Majesty's Viceroy being to come to that cathedral with his attendance, this Romish impostor placed the same in a bowl of blood to soak up the same. Early in the morning Richard Leigh came, and, watching his opportunity, brought a stool with him to stand on, and in that cathedral there being an image of marble of Christ, standing with a reed in His hand, the crown of thorns carved on His head, he placed the sponge over the image's head, within an

hollow of the crown. The sponge being swollen and heavy with the blood that it soaked, began to yield forth the same, which ran through the crevices of the crown of thorns, and truckled (*sic*) down the face of this image. The people did not perceive the same at the first; but whilst her Majesty's Viceroy was at service, together with the Archbishop of that diocese, Doctor Hugh Curwin by name, and the rest of that Privy Council, this impostor, with his associates, cried one to another, 'Behold, our Saviour's image sweats blood.' Several of the common people wondering at it, fell down with their beads in their hands, and prayed to the image. This report caused a number of people to gather together to behold this miracle, this impostor all the time saying: 'How can He choose but sweat blood whilst heresy is now come into His Church?'

"The news hereof disturbed the Lord of Sussex, the Archbishop, and the rest of her Majesty's Privy Council of that realm, so that they hastened out of the choir fearing some harm. When they came out they beheld several people upon their knees, thumping of their breasts, crying out, 'Mea culpa, mea maxima, culpa.' Christopher Sedgrave, one of the aldermen, and mayor of that city, although he had been at the English service, drew forth his beads and prayed with others before this image. Hugh, Archbishop of Dublin, being displeased at this change, caused a form to be brought out of the choir, and then had the sexton of that cathedral to stand thereon, and search and wash the image to see if it would bleed afresh. The sexton, standing upon the form, and perceiving the sponge within the hollow of the image's head, cried out, 'Here's the cheat!' which, being brought down, was shown unto the idolators, who were much ashamed, and some of them cursed Father Leigh and three or four others who had been the contrivers of the cheat.

"The punishment that the Archbishop inflicted on these impostors was to stand upon a table with their legs and hands tied for three Sundays, with the crime written upon paper and pinned to their breasts. Afterwards they were imprisoned and so banished the realm.

"The Sunday following, Hugh, Archbishop of Dublin, preached before her Majesty's Lieutenant and that Council, and before these impostors, who were placed on a table before the pulpit,

choosing this text, 'And therefore God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie' (2 Thes. ii. 11). This text falling out so pat, and these impostors standing in the view of the spectators, converted and reformed above a hundred persons of that city, who vowed they would never hear Mass any more.

"The Archbishop of Dublin wrote this relation, and to this effect, to his brother Archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker, who was at this time very joyful at the reception hereof, by reason that the clergy were at this present debating whether the images should stand in the churches or no, the Queen herself being indifferent whether to have images or to destroy them. This letter being shown unto her Majesty, wrought on her to consent for throwing of images out of the churches, together with those texts of Scripture as the Archbishop of Canterbury and other divines gave her for the demolishing of them.

"Upon the 10th September, anno 1559, Hugh, Archbishop of Dublin, caused this image to be taken down, although he had caused the same to be set up at his coming into that see, being formerly pulled down by his predecessor, George Brown, which the said Hugh specifies in his letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury."

Strype, in his "Life of Parker,"<sup>1</sup> has given the same story, in the same words, though with several inversions in the order of the narrative. He makes a marginal reference to "Cecil's Memorials in Hunting of the Romish Fox," p. 85; and Robert Ware, in the heading of the chapter v., says, "Taken out of the Lord Cecil's Memorials." The Protestant Bishop Mant, after quoting the story in full, is content to say, "Such is the account of this monstrous imposition given by Strype," as if Strype's authority dispensed him from inquiring into the nature or existence of the mysterious Cecil's Memorials, from which the story was professedly derived. The editors of Parker's

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 90.

Correspondence, Mr. Bruce and the Rev. J. Perowne, copy the fable from the "Hunting of the Romish Fox," apparently without misgiving, but with regret that the original documents have not been discovered.<sup>1</sup> Lastly, even Mr. Bagwell has been content to give the "Story of the Bleeding Christ" on the sole authority of Strype. After relating the discovery of the sponge, he writes: "The Protestants were triumphant, the Roman party confounded, and Curwin's orders to have the statue broken up were obeyed without demur. Parker made good use of this occurrence to persuade the Queen to have images removed from all the churches. The exposure of so gross a fraud may have contributed to secure outward conformity in Dublin; but among the Irish-speaking people in the country it was perhaps scarcely heard of."<sup>2</sup>

Now, I would ask Mr. Bagwell this question: By whom was this bleeding Christ ever heard of, whether Irish or English-speaking, before Robert Ware? Who amongst all the writers of history, English or Irish, has one word about this gross and public fraud until it appeared in the "Hunting of the Romish Fox" in 1683? Or what confirmation of it has been found, after sorting and searching every manuscript preserved in the State archives of England and Ireland, or the muniment rooms of English or Irish nobles? Robert professes to derive it from his father's collections; yet Sir James Ware has not alluded to it in his account of the Archbishops of Dublin. Could he have omitted such a matter had he known of it, or could he have been ignorant of it had it really

<sup>1</sup> Parker Corresp., p. 95. *Ed. Parker Soc.*

<sup>2</sup> Ireland under the Tudors, ii. 354.



happened? The matter regards England as well as Ireland; for the letter of Curwin was addressed to Parker, and was by him shown to the Queen, according to the story. Why, then, is it not in Parker's Manuscripts in Cambridge? Parker carefully preserved his correspondence, and the originals still exist. Or, again, why is there no mention in Foxe or in Camden of the receipt of this important letter, and its influence on Elizabeth's mind?

Besides his history of the Irish bishops, which includes those of Elizabeth's reign, Sir James Ware wrote a volume of Annals, which he brought down only to the death of Queen Mary; but Robert made a continuation in English, which was printed in 1705, after his death, and in this he did not venture to insert the story of the bleeding Christ. Why? Perhaps when he prepared that continuation he had not yet invented the story, or more probably there is another reason. Ware's continuation is substantially a reproduction of the "Loftus Annals." Sir Dudley Loftus, grandson (or grand-nephew) of Adam Loftus, Elizabeth's Archbishop of Dublin, was a contemporary of Robert Ware. He made large collections relative to Irish history. These are still unpublished, but the original manuscript is in the Marsh Library in Dublin. It has been carefully examined with a view to the present paper, and I can declare not only that there is not a word relating to this false miracle, but that, so far as its statements can be relied on, they give proof that the story of Robert Ware is a pure fabrication. I say, so far as the statements are trustworthy, merely because the Loftus Manuscript is not a contemporary document. It seems, however, to have been drawn



up from good sources, and in this part of it at least is in harmony with facts otherwise known. Now the Loftus Manuscript merely says: "The service in English ceased to be read publicly from the death of Edward VI. until the second coming over of the Earl of Sussex; but then, when he received the sword at Christ Church, Sir Nicolas Dardy sang the Litany in English." This is all. But I ask again: The writer from whom Loftus drew his information about the English Litany, was he likely to chronicle the snap of the pistol, so to say, and omit the discharge of the cannon? The introduction of a translated Litany was an event to be handed down, but the bleeding Christ, the three weeks' public penance of the impostors, the Archbishop's sermon, the conversion of a hundred citizens of Dublin from Mass to—it is not said what—these were things to be passed over, and only to be learned at last by the discovery in Sir James Ware's papers of a copy of a hitherto unsuspected "Memorial of Cecil," telling of a letter to Parker which has perished, and which he never seems to have mentioned except to the Queen.

And, once again, if we examine the story as we have it from Ware's pen (the only known source, since Strype merely copies Ware), is there any intrinsic or extrinsic probability about it? In August 1559, he represents "the Romish clergy" as "lurking and wandering in that city." They were then in full possession of benefice and office; as yet not one had been deposed, nor had Parliament been summoned to bring about in Ireland the change of religion that was taking place in England. From what then were the priests lurking? As regards the *dramatis personæ*, Chris-

topher Sedgrave, the mayor's name, was easy to ascertain, and Nicolas Dardy was found in Loftus. But who was Leigh? We are told that Richard Leigh, or Father Leigh, as Ware afterwards calls him, had been "formerly of the priory of the cathedral." Now in the charter changing the prior and regular canons of Holy Trinity (since called Christ Church) into a dean and secular canons, a full list is given of the community; but Richard Leigh's name is not among them.<sup>1</sup> I may leave to the judgment of the reader whether it is probable that impostors would have adopted a trick so easy to discover as that of placing a sponge within the crown of thorns; and also whether the way to make blood flow is to allow it to coagulate all night in a sponge, and then put the sponge on a piece of cold marble. On the whole, "the strong delusion to believe a lie" seems to me not to have prevailed among the Dublin Catholics of 1559, but among the Protestants of England and Ireland ever since the year 1683.

A few years ago the cathedral of Christ Church was "restored," in an architectural sense. At a vast expense the whitewash and other accumulated vandalisms of three centuries of Irish Protestantism were removed. On this occasion a splendid volume was published, in which the architecture was explained and illustrated by Mr. Street, and very naturally an historical sketch of the cathedral was prefixed. This was from the pen of the Rev. Edward Seymour, precentor of Christ Church. What a golden opportunity for removing historical rubbish and restoring truth! But no, the old story is repeated, with even a few fresh daubs from

<sup>1</sup> See 20th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland, p. 116.

Mr. Seymour's brush. He tells us that, in accordance with Queen Elizabeth's injunctions, the English litany was used at the installation of the Lord Deputy "instead of the Latin Mass." These last words are Mr. Seymour's own gloss. In Elizabeth's instructions to Sussex, which may be seen in Shirley's Original Letters, there is no question of omitting Mass. Great men or officials are merely exhorted to adopt the reformed rites in their own homes. We do not know what Litany was used, probably the Litany of the Saints in the English and curtailed form approved by Henry VIII. But in any case there was no abolition of Mass. Mass may not have been said on the occasion of the Lord Deputy's receiving the sword; but it would certainly have been said on the following Sunday when the cheat is supposed to have been got up. Mr. Seymour then continues: "Upon this the opponents of the reformed worship resorted to the following means (narrated by Strype in his 'Life of Archbishop Parker') to cast discredit on the English service, and prevent its introduction into Ireland." He then gives the story. How much better both for himself and for truth would it have been had Mr. Seymour written: "The opponents of Catholic worship, Ware and Strype and their followers, resorted to a most unworthy forgery to cast discredit on the priests and people of Dublin." Is it useless to hope that some day candour and love of historic truth will prevail over party spirit and readiness to believe evil?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I regret to find the stories of Cole and his cards, and of Curwin and his statue, told without misgiving in the new National Biographical Dictionary.

5. *Forged Prophecies.*

The forged prophecies that I have met with are all malicious. Like the popular Protestant interpretations of Divine prophecies, they are intended to support the view of the preternatural iniquity of hated political or religious adversaries, by the fact that this iniquity was deemed worthy of being the subject of Divine intimations years or centuries before. I will give a few examples.

I. A BRITISH PROPHET.—Among the papers of Sir James Ware, which are the depositories of Robert Ware's inventions, is a page which I cannot indeed prove to be his, but if not his it is that of a kindred genius. I suspect it to be Robert's own because of the coincidence that it professes to be drawn from the Rochester Registers, the apocryphal source of the story of Thomas Heath. It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that it has been a favourite theory with Anglicans that they represent at least the spirit of the ancient British Church, and that the British Church knew nothing of Roman supremacy. The *Collectanea Hibernica*,<sup>1</sup> at fol. 124, states that the prophecy has been taken from "the register belonging to Rochester, and translated out of the Saxon character by John Gavende, sometime chaplain to the said Bishop, being named Edmund Gest, A.D. 1564." I need not give the full rigmarole of this prophecy. It is enough to say that Gnatus, a British prophet, meets St. Augustine, and upbraids him with calling the Bishop of Rome Vicar of Christ; he foretells the pride and

<sup>1</sup> Now Addit. MSS. 4762.

usurpation and idolatry that in future ages will come from Rome, and their final downfall under a "Judith who will one day arise;" by Judith being of course meant the valiant and beautiful Elizabeth, with a hint that the Pope is the proud and intoxicated Holofernes.

II. ARCHBISHOP USSHER.—The gift of prophecy was not confined to the ancient British Church. It fell also on the prelates of the Protestant Church of Ireland. Dr. Mant tells us that when the Queen and her Council in England held back the hands of Adam Loftus, Archbishop of Dublin, from enforcing the penal laws regarding religion in 1601, "the spirit of Ussher [then a young man] was stirred within him by this new condition of things. He feared that the allowance of the free exercise of the Papist religion by public authority would tend to the disturbance of the government both in Church and State. He was deeply sensible both of the offensiveness of its idolatrous practices in the sight of God, and of its intolerant and persecuting action, which made it so dangerous and pestilential to man." So he preached a sermon before the Lord-Lieutenant and his Council, in which he proved by a text from Ezekiel that, after forty years, retribution would fall on Ireland. "This application of the prophecy," writes Dr. Mant, "was made in 1601, and in 1641 broke out that rebellion, which was consummated in the massacre of many thousands of its Protestant inhabitants by those whose idolatrous religion was now connived at. The foreboding, in general, may have been no more than the result of judicious conjecture and foresight, actuated by an intimate knowledge of the true character of the Romish religion; the coincidence of time may have been a

fortuitous circumstance; but it can hardly excite surprise that many of those who were apprised of the prediction, and who witnessed its accomplishment, regarded it as an effusion of inspiration."<sup>1</sup>

There is one difficulty in this matter which Dr. Mant does not clear up. It is, that the massacre was not the result of toleration but of persecution. In 1626 twelve Protestant Irish bishops, led on by Ussher, made the following formal judgment: "The religion of the Papists is superstitious and idolatrous; their faith and doctrine erroneous and heretical; their Church, in respect of both, apostatical. To give them therefore a toleration, or to consent that they may freely exercise their religion and profess their faith and doctrine, *is a grievous sin.*"<sup>2</sup> And the lay authorities, who got into wealth and power by the most shameless fraud and spoliation, were but too ready to conform their practice to this religious theory. They had scruples about toleration, if unscrupulous in everything else. "The new men," says Mr. Walpole, "were all of strong Protestant tendencies. Accordingly we find a regular harassing of the Roman Catholics by the Castle authorities, the Oath of Supremacy being constantly required, and the Act of Uniformity steadily enforced, to the exclusion from public offices and professions and the systematic impoverishment of those who refused the one or disobeyed the other."<sup>3</sup> Mr. Walpole has headed the chapter in which he recounts these things, "Sowing the wind again." But if religious persecution was harassing, the wholesale confiscations of the "plantation" of Ulster drove the

<sup>1</sup> History, i. 339.

<sup>2</sup> Mant, p. 423.

<sup>4</sup> History of the Kingdom of Ireland, p. 111.



people to madness, and Mr. Goldwin Smith, a writer in no way favourable to Catholics, in describing the massacre of 1641, writes: "It presents an appalling but perfectly credible picture of the vengeance which a people brutalised by oppression wreaks, in the moment of its brief triumph, on the oppressor."<sup>1</sup> He then goes on to say that "as soon as the diabolical struggle had begun, the English and Scotch colonists perhaps exceeded the Irish in atrocity," of which he gives some specimens, and concludes: "Such is the effect of ascendancy on the character of the ascendant party." Thus, then, what Dr. Ussher and Dr. Mant represent as the Divine punishment of the grievous sin of toleration, history records as the natural result of persecution and oppression. Dr. Mant says that during the long period of toleration "for several years a deep plot was laid for a general rebellion and massacre of the English and Protestant inhabitants by Papist priests and Jesuits of the Continent, in conjunction with those of Ireland." Mr. Goldwin Smith, on the contrary, says: "This outbreak of savage vengeance seems to have been unpremeditated and opposed to the policy of the leaders;" and Mr. Walpole writes: "Some of the Irish priests and Jesuits were especially conspicuous for acts of Christian mercy, hiding the terrified supplicants under the altar-cloths, and striving to stop the bloodshed at the risk of their own lives."<sup>2</sup>

Robert Ware was one of those who had heard of Ussher's sermon. He improved the opportunity. In 1680 he printed a pamphlet of eight pages on the

<sup>1</sup> Irish History and Irish Character, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> History of the Kingdom of Ireland, p. 234.



prophetic spirit of Ussher,<sup>1</sup> which he issued again in 1687, with the boast that no one had ventured to deny the authority of his documents.<sup>2</sup> The substance of Ussher's utterances is that evil days were coming for Protestants by the hands of the Papists, "and that the then Pope should be the chief instrument in it." This bit of history is peculiar to Ware. To us all this may appear trivial and tedious. But let it be remembered that, in 1680, when Ware's pamphlet appeared, rewards were publicly offered by the Government to witnesses from Ireland who would come forward and give evidence in confirmation of the story of Oates, that a general massacre of Protestants was in preparation. Let it be also remembered that Archbishop Plunkett was being accused of a conspiracy to raise 70,000 men for that purpose. Though Ware did not come forward as a witness, and only dabbled in history, yet it was history of this kind that perverted the minds of both juries and judges, and made Chief Justice Scroggs say, in delivering his sentence against the venerable Archbishop, that "his religion was ten times worse than all the heathenish superstitions, the most dishonourable and derogatory to God and to His glory of all religions whatsoever, for it undertakes to dispense with God's laws, and to pardon the breach of them."

III. ARCHBISHOP BROWNE.—The prognostications of Gnatus and Ussher are vague and unsatisfactory compared with the predictions of Archbishop Browne. "Saul among the prophets" caused bewilderment to the Israelites, but what was that phenomenon to

<sup>1</sup> It is in the British Museum. *Press mark* 117, d. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Reprinted in *Harleian Miscel.* vii. 540.

Browne among the prophets? The tool of Henry VIII. in all dirty work, he was the very last man to whom a Divine communication could have been supposed to be made, unless it were like Balaam or Caiphas, to foretell a calamity impending over himself or his own people. Robert Ware seems, however, to have given his heart to this man as the founder of Protestantism in Ireland. In 1681 he printed a pamphlet with the following title: "Historical Collections of the Church of Ireland during the Reign of King Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Queen Mary, wherein are several material passages, omitted by other historians, concerning the manner how that kingdom was first converted to the Protestant religion, &c., set forth in the life of George Browne, some time Archbishop of Dublin."<sup>1</sup> As usual these revelations, unknown to former historians, are supposed to be derived from the papers of Sir James. The pamphlet was embodied in the English translation of Sir James Ware's Annals in 1705, and called the Life of Archbishop Browne. From this bundle of forgeries, for such it is, is derived the story of Cole and his pack of cards that I have already related.<sup>2</sup> Many of the speeches and letters of Browne given by Cox and Mant and Dr. Ball have no other origin or authority.

In this pamphlet occurs the marvellous prophecy of Henry's Archbishop. It is part of a sermon preached on the first Sunday after Easter in 1551. His text was, "Open mine eyes, that I may see the wonders of Thy law." First he sees wonderful things about images, then more wonders still about false prophets,

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted in Harleian Miscel., v. 595.

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, p. 217.

and at last, in the full burst of inspiration, he cries: "There are a new fraternity of late sprung up, who call themselves Jesuits, which will deceive many, who are much after the Scribe and Pharisee manner; . . . these will turn themselves into several forms, with the heathen an heathenist, with atheists an atheist, with the Jews a Jew, with the reformers a reformed, professedly to know your intentions, your minds, your hearts and your inclinations, and thereby bring you at last to be like a fool that said in his heart there is no God. These shall spread over the world, shall be admitted into the councils of princes, and they never the wiser; charming of them, yea making your princes reveal their hearts and the secrets therein unto them, and yet they not perceive it . . . yet in the end, God, to justify His law, shall suddenly cut off this society, even by the hands of those who have most succoured them and made use of them. So that at the end they shall become odious to all nations, they shall be worse than Jews, having no resting-place on earth; and then shall a Jew have more favour than a Jesuit."

This has been praised as a very remarkable sermon, and so indeed it would be had it been preached in 1551 as pretended. For at that time St. Ignatius was still alive, and not one Jesuit had ever been seen by Browne or his auditors. Two Jesuits had indeed been for a few weeks in Ireland, in 1541, but as they had lived in concealment, their visit had probably never been heard of by Browne. Robert Ware says that his father got this sermon from Anthony Marsh, late Bishop of Meath, but as Sir James gives no hint of it in his notice of Browne, we may easily know what was its real origin. Its object was to give support to

the murders being perpetrated, about the time of its publication, on so many innocent and excellent Catholics, Jesuits, and others.

IV. ST. LASERIANUS.—Robert Ware thought it a most cunning device to make his enemy, the Catholic Church, predict her own downfall, and to do this he hit on the egregious plan of invoking papal authority for his concoction. In the same Life of Browne he says that in 1538 a Franciscan friar, named Thady Birne, was apprehended in Ireland and cast into prison, where he committed suicide, and that amongst his papers was found the following letter, addressed to the great chieftain of the north, Shane O'Neil:—

“My son O'Neil,—Thou and thy fathers are all along faithful to the *Mother Church* of Rome. His Holiness Paul, now Pope, and the council of the holy fathers there, have lately found out a prophecy there remaining of one St. Laserianus, an Irish Bishop of Cashel, wherein he saith that *the mother Church* of Rome falleth, when in Ireland the Catholic faith is overcome. Therefore, for the glory of *the mother Church*, the honour of St. Peter and your own secureness, suppress heresy and his Holiness's enemies, &c.—EPISCOPUS METENSIS. Rome, April 28, 1538.”

It seems almost incredible that this idiotic effusion should really have been supposed to have emanated from the Holy See; yet such is the fact, and it is accepted without any misgiving by Cox, Mant, and others. Even Mr. Goldwin Smith writes: “In the time of Henry VIII. a prophecy went abroad that the Catholic Church would fall when Ireland ceased to be Catholic.”<sup>1</sup> He is wrong. We may hope that Ireland will remain faithful to the end; but the promise about the gates of hell is made to the see of St. Peter,

<sup>1</sup> Essay on Irish History, p. 94.

not to the Church of St. Patrick, and the Thady-Birne prophecy is of Protestant, not Catholic origin, and came from the forge of Robert Ware in the time of Charles II., not from Pope Paul III. in the time of Henry, much less from St. Lasarian of Cashel, a saint not known to history or to Irish hagiology.<sup>1</sup> I will not delay further on this than to ask the reader to note the phrase, "the mother Church;" for this phrase may be called the private mark of Robert Ware. He puts it in every document, whether supposed to emanate from Popes or Jesuits, to have been composed in Latin or in English.

#### 6. *Forged Dispensations and Indulgences.*

Sir Richard Cox, and after him Bishop Mant, give a tremendous form of oath, prescribed, they say, by Pope Paul III. in 1538, to be taken by all Irishmen. It is too long to quote fully. I give some specimens:—"I, A. B., do vow and swear to maintain, help, and assist the just laws, liberties, and rights of the *Mother Church of Rome*. I count all acts made, or to be made, by heretical powers of no force, or to be practised or obeyed by myself, or any other son of the *Mother Church* of Rome. I do further declare him or her, father or mother, brother or sister, son or daughter, husband or wife, uncle or aunt, nephew or niece, and all others, nearest or dearest relations, friend or acquaintance whatsoever, accursed, that either do or shall hold, for time to come, any ecclesiastical or civil, above the authority of the *Mother Church*; or that do or shall obey, for the time to come, any of the *Mother*

<sup>1</sup> St. Lasarian of Leighlin is well known.

*Church's* opposers or enemies; so God, the Blessed Virgin, St. Peter, St. Paul, and the Holy Evangelists help," &c. I need scarcely say that this is not to be found in the Roman Bullarium, nor did Cox or Mant condescend to look for it there. It is taken from Robert Ware's "Life of Archbishop Browne," and comes from a pretended letter from Browne to Cromwell, not found in any other collections, one of those documents so curiously known to Ware in 1681, and never seen before or since. I have already remarked the phrase, "*Mother Church*" of Rome, by which Ware's documents may be recognised. It occurred three times in the short letter to O'Neil. It occurs four times in this oath. We shall see it again and again.

In his "Foxes and Firebrands"<sup>1</sup> Ware says that "an indulgence was granted by Paul III. for to kill any that followed Luther's opinion, a thousand years' pardon for his sins, besides the honour to be enrolled by the name of Rome's faithful soldier." To the same Pope he attributes other grants too obscene to be transcribed. Again: "This Pope Paul, by his Bull entered at Paris (!) runs Englished thus:— 'Whereas we find the heretics now concord in the administration of the Sacrament of the Body of Jesus, we grant full remission of sins to those our sons of *our Mother Church* that shall stop or hinder their union among heretics.'"<sup>2</sup> This is quoted by Dean Goode as an authentic document. Robert Ware gives the following information regarding the Council of Trent, which is certainly supplemental to all that has been recorded by Pallavicini or Le Plat, or even by

<sup>1</sup> Part ii. p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 24.

Sarpi. Those authors tell us that the Council, after a long interruption, reassembled for the eleventh session on May 1, 1551, and that even then, as only thirteen bishops had come, it was prorogued to September. But Ware says that "In the year 1550 the Jesuits of Paris their opinion was to the Council of Trent that the Pope and the Council were above all that is called God, and of greater force than the Scripture was; for which opinion one Veratus returned this Society thanks from the Council that their acts and the Pope's were beyond the law, the prophets, and the Scriptures."

Perhaps the reader may ask impatiently why I transcribe stuff like this. I do so because it is necessary to show what sort of a man was Robert Ware. All his documents are not so palpably absurd, and we have seen that some of them have been accepted by Mr. Bagwell, Dr. Ball, and one of them by Mr. Gardiner. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the veracity or authority of the man on whose voucher their authenticity rests.

Ware then continues: "The messenger between the Council of Trent and the Jesuits of Paris was Ludovich de Freake, formerly a priest in England, who brought with him up to Paris, from the Council, several kinds of indulgences and instructions for the Society to undertake and grant and teach." They are to make use of the confessions of the people to ascertain their sentiments, "to make memorandums of things doubtful or suspicious, and to give the See of Rome intelligence that the *Mother Church* might be informed and all evil prevented." They are to associate with heretics, and to disguise their profession; and "ye may,



with leave of any three of the society, be permitted to wear what dress you think convenient; and any of you thus dispensed may go with the heretics to any of their heretical meetings. If you own yourselves clergymen, then to preach, but with caution, till ye be well acquainted with those heretics ye converse with, and then by degrees add to your doctrine by ceremonies or otherwise, as you find them inclinable." They are authorised to dispense with clever laymen also to feign heresy; and "in case they scruple in taking of oaths, you are to assure them that they are to be kept no longer than the *Mother Church* sees it convenient. Or if they scruple to swear on the Evangelists, you are to say unto them that the translation on which they swear his Holiness hath annulled, and therefore it is become heretical and all one as upon an ordinary story-book. You are also dispensed with to marry after their manner, and then ye safely may make answer that heretical marriage is no marriage, for your dispensation mollifies it so, that at the worst it is but a venial sin and may be forgiven. You are not to preach all after one method, but to observe the place wherein you come. If Lutheranism be prevalent, then preach Calvinism; if Calvinism, then Lutheranism; if in England, then either of these, or John Huss's opinions, Anabaptism, or any that are contrary to the Holy See of Rome, by which your function will not be suspected, and yet you may still act in the interest of the *Mother Church*, there being, as the Council are agreed on, no better way to demolish that Church of heresy than by mixtures of doctrines, and by adding of ceremonies more than be at present permitted. Some of you who undertook to be of this

sort of heretical episcopal society, bring it as near to the *Mother Church* as you can; for then the Lutheran party, the Calvinist, the Anabaptist, and other heretics, will be averse thereunto, and thereby make that Episcopal heresy odious to all these, and be a means to reduce all in time to the *Mother Church*. . . . Dated the fourth Ide of November, 1551. *Beneventum*."

All this was, of course, intended by Ware to cast odium on the Protestant dissenters, as well as on what were then called the Arminian clergy of the Church of England, as if they were Jesuits in disguise. Dean Goode, who swallows it all, prints it with copious italics and small and large capitals, as if it were a most important revelation as to the character of the Ritualistic clergy of to-day. He did not reflect that it would equally prove that he himself was a designing knave with a Roman dispensation. It would probably be useless to tell men who do not see the intrinsic folly of such documents that they are refuted by external evidence also. However, I will mention a few facts.

1. The mysterious word "*Beneventum*" is explained by Ware, in a marginal note, to mean that Casa, Bishop of Beneventum, was the spokesman or secretary of the Council of Trent. He drags in his name because of an infamous forgery which in the seventeenth century had been attached to him. But Casa never sat in the Council of Trent; and between May 1551, and April 1552, was Apostolic Nuncio in Venice.<sup>1</sup>
2. No such Jesuit as Ludovic Freaque is known in any history but that of Ware. In a marginal note of one of his manuscripts<sup>2</sup> he says that Ludovic was cousin

<sup>1</sup> See Migne's *Pallavicini*, iii. 100.

<sup>2</sup> *Addit.*, 4785, fol. 27 b.

german of Edward Freake, Protestant Bishop of Rochester.<sup>1</sup> He is fond of instituting these relationships. The Jesuit Heath is brother of Archbishop Heath, and John Warham, who translates an imaginary bull of St. Pius V., is nephew to Archbishop Warham.<sup>2</sup> 3. There were no Jesuits in Paris at this period. 4. All the above, and much more, is supposed to be related by Samuel Mason, a converted Jesuit, who made his public retraction in Christ Church, Dublin, on June 6, 1566, and then wrote out a statement for the Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, which Ware pretends to have been preserved by John Garvey, then Dean of Christ Church, and afterwards Primate. It is needless to say that the name of Samuel Mason is not to be found in Jesuit records; but the whole story of him and his doings is written in *Addit. MSS.* 4791, fol. 31-34, and printed in "Foxes and Firebrands," part ii., 15-35, though of course the original record of Garvey is lost. The same may be said of the history of another illustrious convert to Protestantism, Philip Corwin, a Franciscan friar, nephew of Archbishop Corwin (!), whose story, related by Garvey, was once in Ussher's papers, and then in Sir James Ware's, and was printed by Robert in 1681. On the strength of these imaginary compositions, Wood has ranked Garvey, who was educated at Oxford, among the writers of that University!

Ware has also a long and circumstantial story of a converted Carmelite friar named Malachy Malone, who, in the presence of the Lord Deputy, Sir John Perrot,

<sup>1</sup> There was an Edmund Freke, Bishop of Rochester, in 1572, afterwards of Norwich and Worcester. Ware has a curious partiality for Rochester.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* fol. 29.

in 1584, entering into St. Stephen's Church, Galway, cried out, "I have sinned against God and the Queen;" then, taking off his friar's weeds, he said: "Away with these cloaks of sins. I will clothe myself with the Gospel of Jesus Christ." This man, like Mason, has wonderful tales of dispensations for false oaths and false preaching, for the sake of the *Mother Church*. Malone quotes a Bull of St. Pius V., "willing and authorising the wise and learned to devise all manner of devices to be devised, to abate, assuage, and confound those heresies . . . . by which means heretics may either speedily perish by God's wrath or continue in eternal difference to the reproach of Jew, Turk, heathen, nay to the devils themselves. Given at Rome the 6th Ide of May. Primo Pontif, PIUS QUINTUS." Malone's story, including this Bull, was sent by the Irish Council to the Queen and the English Council. So says Robert Ware.<sup>1</sup>

It is curious how these lies of Ware keep turning up. In the volume for 1887 of the *Associated Architectural Societies*, is a paper called a *List of Popish Recusants for Bedfordshire*, by Mr. G. A. Blaydes. To this has been added a short preface by Mr. F. A. Blaydes, F.S.A. Though the list belongs to the middle of the 17th century, it gave the writer an opportunity to display his erudition regarding a former period. He writes as follows: "That some steps were necessary to preserve order in the realm is evident on referring to the history of the period. There is also in the British Museum—Addit. MSS. 4784—a paper which throws considerable light on the attitude of the Romanist party towards the Queen

<sup>1</sup> Addit. MSS. 4791, fol. 27-30. Foxes and Firebrands, p. 35.

and Church of this country. It may not be amiss if I here quote one of these articles, the fifth of this document, as showing the animus of the Roman court towards this country, and the absolute necessity of taking stringent steps to counteract it." The article is as follows: By a committee sitting in Rome in 1564, consisting of three cardinals, two archbishops, six bishops, and six Jesuits, "it was granted not only indulgence and pardon to the party that should assault her Grace [Queen Elizabeth] either private or in publick; or to any cook, brewer, baker, physician, vintner, grocer, chirurgion, or any other calling whatsoever, that should or did make her away out of this world, a pardon, but an absolute remission of sins to the heirs of that party's family sprung from him, and a perpetual annuity to them for ever; and the said heir to be never beholding to any of the fathers for pardon, be they of what order soever, unless it pleased himself, and to be one of those privy-council whosoever reigned successively."

Now, it is certainly no inconsiderable triumph of Robert Ware that he, and such as he, should have so bewitched the educated mind of this country, that a man with capacity to read a MS. should have no capacity to detect or even to suspect its authenticity from the plainest intrinsic evidence; or that a man, reading such a document as the above, should consider it so natural and plausible as to go no further in his researches to discover whether the document could be proved authentic from any other source, and whether it would be admitted or contested by Catholics. The account which the document gives of itself is this—that it forms one of a series of iniquities which a spy

of Queen Elizabeth, named E. Denum, discovered by means of "the silver key," in Italy, in 1564, and which he communicated to the Privy Council; that the original "was kept private in her Majesty's secret closet amongst other papers of secrecy, at that time not to be published," but that Lord Cecil (Burghley) had made a memorial of it, which came in the next century into the hands of John King, dean of Tuam, from whom it was copied by Sir James Ware among his papers. The reader by this time knows what to think of this pedigree, and will not be surprised to learn that all this is printed in "Foxes and Firebrands."<sup>1</sup> He will not be surprised to hear that "*the Mother Church*" occurs five times in this document, or that it contains a license to priests of all religious orders to act as Protestant ministers.

I will give number four: "It was afterwards debated how it should be ordered, in case any of the heretical ministry of England should become as they who had these licenses. It was then answered by the Bishop of Metz that they desired no more than separation amongst the heretics of England, and by so doing, in case any animosity be amongst them, the Church established by the heretic Queen, there would be the less to oppose *the Mother Church* of Rome whenever opportunity served." Number six gives a dispensation to Catholics in England to take any office, "ecclesiastical, military, or civil, and to take such oaths as shall be imposed upon them, provided that the said oaths be taken with a reserve for to serve *the Mother Church* of Rome whenever opportunity serveth, and thereby in so doing the Act in Council was passed

<sup>1</sup> Part ii. 49 58.



it was no sin but meritorious until occasion served to the contrary."

Mr. Blaydes read all this in the British Museum document; and believing that it "threw considerable light on the attitude of the Romanists" and on history generally, he felt himself bound to take a note of it for future use. In the same spirit I cull two more specimens of Robert Ware's code of Catholic indulgences. They are taken from his "Hunting of the Romish Fox." In chapter i. he says that Paul III. granted a dispensation to Gardiner, Ponet,<sup>1</sup> and Bonner, in the time of Henry VIII., to take the oath of royal supremacy, and to grant dispensations to others to do the same, in order the better to suppress heresy. To get this dispensation these crafty bishops sent to Rome a rough draft of the famous Six Articles, saying: "As Catholics be burnt for denying supremacy, so shall heretics be burned for denying these." "Paul liked of this project, and his cardinals approved thereof, as appeared by some papers which Matthew Parker, the Archbishop of Canterbury, seized on for her Majesty's use, then belonging to the bishoprics of London and Winchester, anno 1559." These documents have of course by some means got separated from the rest of Parker's papers, and so are lost. Fortunately Sir Henry Sidney took a copy (also lost), from which Ussher took another (lost, alas!), from which Sir James Ware took another, which it was reserved to his son to see, and thus make known to the world.

In chapter ix. of the same book Ware gives the oath taken by the missionary priests educated in the

<sup>1</sup> It would not matter in Ware's theory that Ponet or Poynet is well known to have been an ultra-Protestant in Edward VI.'s reign.



seminaries in the time of Elizabeth. "I (A.B.) do acknowledge the ecclesiastical and political power of his Holiness, and the *Mother Church of Rome* as the chief head and matron (*sic*) above all pretended Churches throughout the whole earth; and that my zeal shall be for St. Peter and his successors as the founder of the true and ancient Catholic faith, against all heretical kings, princes, states, or powers repugnant unto the same. And although I (A.B.) may pretend, in case of persecution or otherwise, to be heretically disposed, yet in soul and conscience I shall help, aid, and succour *the Mother Church of Rome*, as the true, ancient, and apostolic Church. I further do declare not to act or contrive any matter or thing prejudicial unto her, or her sacred orders, doctrines, tenets, or commands, without the leave of her supreme power, or its authority, under her appointed, or to be appointed. And when so permitted, then to act or further her interest more than my own earthly gain or pleasure," &c.

Mr. Froude would seemingly have no difficulty in accepting the genuineness of this oath; for he has thus written of the year 1559: "The vast majority of the clergy, unambitious of self-sacrifice, or, it may be, acting under secret instructions and with a dispensation for perjury when hard pressed, abjured the Pope."<sup>1</sup> Literary courtesy can have no place with regard to words like these. They contain an infamous calumny, which is all the more inexcusable in that the bishops, who are supposed to have granted the dispensation, all, with one exception, suffered deposition and most of them imprisonment, rather than accept the oath of supremacy.

<sup>1</sup> History of Elizabeth, i. 88.

7. *Priests in Masquerade.*

To trace out the ramifications of Robert Ware's forgeries is a tedious and difficult work, for a lie, once well started, gets copied over and over again, with references to authorities that at first seem independent, though on careful investigation they are reduced to one original. Of this I will give three specimens. They are three stories of priests in masquerade.

I. BOSWELL'S LETTERS.—Sir William Boswell was Charles I.'s Ambassador at the Hague in 1640. Some impostor, who called himself Andrew Habernfeld, put into Sir William's hands a long and very absurd discovery of Jesuitical intrigues going on in England, involving many leading men at Court and menacing the King and Archbishop Laud. Boswell sent the paper secretly to Laud, who made some notes on it and forwarded it to the King. They both treated it as it deserved, as a silly piece of imposture. It was afterwards found by Prynne among Laud's papers, and printed by him, by Parliamentary authority, in his "Rome's Masterpiece." It is also printed in Rushworth's Collections. With this forgery I am not concerned, and have mentioned it only to account for the use of Sir William Boswell's name in a subsequent forgery, which I attribute confidently to Ware. This is a letter, supposed to have been written by Boswell to Laud, on June 12, 1640, from the Hague: "Be assured the Romish clergy have gulled the misled party of the English nation, and that under a Puritanical dress, for which the several fraternities of that Church have lately received indulgences from the See

of Rome and Council of Cardinals for to educate several of the young fry of the Church of Rome who are natives of his Majesty's realm and dominions, and instruct them in all manner of principles and tenets contrary to the episcopacy of the Church of England." The letter adds that there are two at the Hague, James Murray and John Nappe, "who have large indulgences granted them, and known to be of the Church of Rome, although they seem Puritans; and that sixty Romish clergymen are gone within these two years out of the monasteries of the French King's dominions to preach up the Scotch covenant and Mr. Knox's description and rules within that kirk."

Now, though Sir William Boswell might consider himself bound to transmit a document making revelations of a plot for the judgment of his superiors, whatever he himself might think of its character, it is hard to conceive of an ambassador making himself responsible for a letter like the above, which is altogether according to the capacity and style of Robert Ware. Nor can I trace this letter farther back than the year 1685, when it was printed in the "Life and Letters of Archbishop Ussher" by Dr. Parr. It must have come into Dr. Parr's hands while his book was passing through the press, for it forms part of a short appendix not paged with the rest of the book, and with a note that it is from "Sir Robert Cotton's Choice Papers." I will state presently why I think that Ware supplied Dr. Parr both with the letter and the reference.

II. BRAMHALL'S LETTER.—Mr. Haddan, the editor of Archbishop Bramhall's works,<sup>1</sup> printed a letter which

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. xciv.

is supposed to have been written by Bramhall to Ussher, when the former was residing in Brussels in 1654. He clearly thought it genuine. I give some extracts:—"It plainly appears that, in the year 1646, by order from Rome, above one hundred of the Romish clergy were sent into England, consisting of English, Scotch, and Irish, who had been educated in France, Italy, Germany, and Spain; part of these within the several schools there appointed for their instruction. In each of these Romish nurseries these scholars were taught several handicraft trades and callings, as their ingenuities were most bending; besides their orders or functions of that Church. They have many yet at Paris a fitting to be sent over, who twice in the week oppose one another; one pretending Presbytery, the other Independency; some Anabaptism, and the others contrary tenets, dangerous and prejudicial to the Church of England, and to all the reformed here abroad." Then the writer tells how the hundred men, who went over in 1646, became soldiers in the Parliamentary army, and how this amazed and puzzled the Catholics in the King's army, until there came a conference between the two, of which he gives full particulars. From their mutual explanations it was found that the great design of Rome was to create confusion, to cause the death of the King and set up a Republic, and so to "confound the Church of England" and bring back Popery. And that when the Sorbonists were consulted on the lawfulness of getting rid of the King and his son, they had replied "that it was lawful for Roman Catholics to work changes in governments for the *Mother Church's* advancement, and chiefly in an

heretical kingdom, and so lawfully make away with the King."

In this clause about the Mother Church we have once more the old catch at Catholic phraseology which we have seen so often in Robert Ware's inventions. It has about as natural a sound in Catholic ears, in such a collocation, as when the famous Tichborne claimant, wishing to write like a Catholic, concluded his letter with the words, "The blessed Maria have mercy on your soul." Of course the declaration occurs in the creed of Pius IV., that the Roman Church is "the mother of all Churches," *i.e.*, of all local churches in communion with her. But Ware uses the phrase as if the Roman Church claimed to be the mother of all the sects, her rebellious daughters. This is an Anglican theory. James I., at the opening of his first parliament, had said: "I acknowledge the Roman Church to be our mother Church, although defiled with some infirmities and corruptions." The phrase was very odious to the Puritans. But not to insist on this tell-tale phrase, how could those who published this letter as a genuine production of Bramhall explain either his own credulity in having accepted such trash from others, or his silence as to his sources of information? The letter concludes with these words: "Thus much to my knowledge have I seen and heard since my leaving your lordship, which I have thought very requisite to inform your Grace; for myself would hardly have credited these things had not mine eyes seen sure evidence of the same." Bramhall is supposed to write from the Continent. How, then, could he know the secret questionings between the Parliamentary and Royalist Catholics in England which he so minutely details?

Bramhall's letter as well as Boswell's first appeared in Dr. Parr's *Life of Ussher*. It is letter 293, just at the end of the book, and, according to my conjecture, it was received by Parr from Robert Ware. Two years later, in 1687, Ware reprinted a pamphlet containing the prophecies of Ussher, to which he added the two letters of Boswell and Bramhall, which, he says, "are taken out of that treasury of choice letters published by Dr. Parr in 1686."<sup>1</sup> This savours very much of Ware's ordinary device, first to create and then to quote. But in further confirmation that he is their real author, in the third part of his "*Foxes and Firebrands*,"<sup>2</sup> he gives a long list of regulations proposed by the Jesuits and Sorbonists at Paris, and agreed to by the Pope and Cardinals at Rome, after the marriage of Charles I. Now these regulations are beyond all question a forgery of Robert Ware's. He fiddles on the same one string about the Mother Church, with whatever little twists and turns his cunning can contrive; and then concludes that these licenses and directions have been "copied out of a bundle of papers, some time with the Most Rev. James Ussher, and supposed to be sent from beyond seas to him from the Rev. Bishop of Derry [*i.e.*, Bramhall], being written with the same hand as the aforesaid letter was, signed Jo. Derensis." I have no doubt whatever that in this Ware states the truth—the licenses of the Jesuits and Sorbonists, and the letter of Bramhall to Ussher were indeed written by the same hand, but the hand was that of Robert Ware.

III. STRYPE'S WORKS.—I have already said that much of the success of Ware is to be attributed to the

<sup>1</sup> Harleian Miscel., vii. 540.

<sup>2</sup> P. 175-188.



propagation of some of his falsehoods by the ecclesiastical historian Strype. He had read all Ware's volumes. He refers sometimes to "Foxes and Firebrands," sometimes to the "Hunting of the Roman Fox," almost always adding *e MSS. D. Usher Armach*, or something equivalent, to give weight to his narrative. He has also carefully expurgated his author. He omits the most abominable and incredible parts of Ware's narrations, although they are all given on the same authority of Archbishop Ussher, or Archbishop Garvey, Lord Burghley, or Lord Deputy Sir John Perrot, or Lord Sussex, and the rest; and if one part does not deserve credit, neither does the other. Strype knew, however, that the English of his day would still swallow much. He tells his readers how the apocryphal Samuel Mason,<sup>1</sup> who had been a Jesuit, was converted to Protestantism by the discovery when in Paris of frightful documents by various Popes, authorising false swearing and the invention and dissemination of heresies, with a view to divide Protestants, and in particular the indulgences sent by the Council of Trent through Ludovic P'reake. Strype continues as follows: "Upon these indulgences several of the English Popish clergy, lately fled from England upon the change of religion, joined with other foreign clergy and came into England to distract the common people's heads with new-found opinions and fancies in religion, and all against the liturgy established. Some of these were Dr. Thomas Lacey, Thomas Tunstall, a Franciscan friar, cousin german to Bishop Tunstall; James Scott, cousin to Scott, late Bishop of Chester; Faithful Cummin, a Dominican

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, p. 250.



friar, who some years after, for his religious hypocrisy, narrowly escaped hanging, and William Bulgrave, of the same order, who was caught and hanged at York, May 10, A.D. 1566. He being suspected to be an impostor, was seized, and divers treasonable papers were found in his closet. But he was so hardened that when he went up the ladder he laughed in the Archbishop's face, telling him that those converts that he had drawn unto him would hate the Church liturgy as much as his Grace did Rome. And when the Archbishop desired him to tell who they were he refused, but said he hoped they would be ashamed of their folly, and that they would turn back again to their mother principles, and not to heresy."<sup>1</sup> All this is taken almost verbatim from the "Hunting of the Romish Fox." In other words, both Ware and Strype teach that English dissent or nonconformity is in great part the work of Jesuits, Dominicans, and Franciscans, whose plan is to bring souls back to Rome by the *reductio ad absurdum* of the various sects. English Nonconformists and Irish Orangemen ought to look to this.

But what shall we think of the authority of Strype, who could introduce these names of Tunstall, Scott, Cummin, Bulgrave, without taking the slightest pains to ascertain whether any other record of their deaths or their existence could be found except in the pages of Ware? Strype's readers, seeing the death of William Bulgrave set down with date (May 10, 1566) and place (York), could scarcely doubt the truth of the story. Yet not only William Bulgrave, or Blgrave, as Ware calls him, did not act or speak as here

<sup>1</sup> Annals i. 392.

reported, but no such man is known either in the traditions of Nonconformist or in Dominican annals, or in the civic archives of York. This is not an assertion made at a venture. When Nonconformists were reproached with some of these stories found in Robert Ware, they indignantly repudiated them. One says: "The whole story is such a notorious forgery that no man can lay stress upon it without exposing the reputation of his judgment or his honesty;"<sup>1</sup> and, again, "The stories of Faithful Cummin and Thomas Heath are some of the Church (of England's) pious frauds, contrived only to blacken us (the Dissenters), of which we are as sure as we can well be of anything of this nature."<sup>2</sup> These and other passages are quoted by Mr. Archibald Bower, against whom a similar accusation was made.<sup>3</sup> As regards Catholic traditions, I have the assurance of the Rev. Father Palmer, O.P., and the Rev. Father Morris, S.J., that the names mentioned by Strype are quite unknown in the annals of their respective Orders, nor did the latter, in his long researches among the civic archives of York, discover any trace of the trial and death or of the existence of Blagrove. I shall return to Strype presently.

### *8. Attitude of Nonconformists.*

In this matter the attitude of Nonconformists has not been very consistent, or at least not uniform. Mr. Neal, the historian of the Puritans, who wrote with great

<sup>1</sup> Remarks on Dr. Well's Letter, by James Pierce, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Pierce's Answer to Dr. Nicholl, part ii., p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Bower's reply to a scurrilous libel, intitled "A Full Confutation," &c. [by Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury].

minuteness, makes no reference to Heath or Cummin or Blaggrave, or any other imaginary Catholic disguised as a Puritan minister. But Dr. Toulmin, his editor, appears bewildered by the evidence contained in the various forged documents to which I have referred. Thus the forged Clerkenwell letter, supposed to be written by a Jesuit in England to a Jesuit in Brussels, contains the following passage: "I cannot choose but laugh to see how some of our own coat have accoutred themselves—you would scarce know them if you saw them—and it is admirable how in speech and gesture they act the Puritans. The Cambridge scholars, to their woeful experience, shall see we can act the Puritans a little better than they have done the Jesuits. They have abused our sacred patron, St. Ignatius, in jest, but we will make them smart for it in earnest." This is the letter which Mr. Nichols and Mr. Gardiner admit to be a forgery. But it formerly passed as genuine; and a Dr. Grey, in his examination of Neal's history, drew the very natural conclusion that the Jesuits considered the Puritans as very fit tools to upset the constitution. To this Dr. Toulmin replies that the Jesuits must have wished to weaken, not to strengthen, the Puritans. "If the Jesuits acted the Puritan, could it be with a sincere desire to advance the influence of the Puritans and promote their wishes? Could it be with any other design than to turn against them the confidence into which by this means they insinuate themselves, and to undermine the Reformation by increasing divisions and fomenting prejudices against it? Of this the collection of papers called 'Foxes and Firebrands' furnishes evident proofs. Dr. Grey probably would not have thought this so weak a

policy as he represents it had he recollected what is said of the false teachers in the primitive Church who transformed themselves into the apostles of Christ, had he recollected that it is said of Satan that he 'transformed himself into an angel of light,' and thus to overturn those interests of truth and virtue of which the former knew that the latter were the bulwark."<sup>1</sup>

As, however, there is no proof that either Jesuits or Dominicans, or any other Catholic priests, ever transformed themselves into Puritan divines, we may be dispensed from entering into the discussion whether or not these are "apostles of Christ," or "angels of light," or bulwarks of truth and virtue; and whether Catholic priests are the contrary. Mr. Neal quotes, without a suspicion as to its genuineness, the letter of Bishop Bramhall about the hundred Seminarists who became soldiers in the Parliamentary army; but he adds: "Mr. Baxter, after a most diligent inquiry, declares 'that he could not find them out,' which renders the bishop's account suspected. . . . The body of the army had a vast aversion to the papists, and the parliament took all occasions of treating them with rigour."<sup>2</sup> These reflections do credit to the good sense of Mr. Neal. Later on he discusses at length who were the authors of the King's death. He gives the opinions of various historians. Dr. Lewis du Moulin, a French Protestant, yet Canon of Canterbury and professor of history in Oxford, says "the papists had the greatest hand in it of all." Echard declares that "great numbers of papists, under hopes of liberty of conscience, or of destroying episcopacy,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Toulmin's note in Neal's *History of the Puritans*, i. 516 (Ed. 1837).

<sup>2</sup> *History*, ii. 424.

joined with foreign priests and Jesuits against the King." Neal also cites what he calls "a remarkable passage by the celebrated author of 'Foxes and Firebrands.'" It is this: "Let all true Protestants who desire sincerely to have a happy union recollect what a blemish the emissaries of Rome have cast upon those Protestants named Presbyterian and Independent, Rome saying the Presbyterians brought Charles the First's head to the block, and the Independents cut it off; whereas it is certain that the members and clergy of Rome, under dissenting shapes, contrived this murder. Nay, the good King himself was informed that the Jesuits in France, at a general meeting, resolved to bring him to justice, and to take off his head by the power of their friends in the army."<sup>1</sup> Lastly, Neal quotes Mr. Prynne, who says "that Mr. Henry Spotswood saw the queen's confessor on horseback among the crowd in the habit of a trooper, with his drawn sword, flourishing it over his head in triumph, as others did, when the king's head was just cut off; and being asked how he could be present at so sad a spectacle, answered that there were about forty more priests and Jesuits there besides himself, and when the fatal blow was given he flourished his sword and said, 'Now the greatest enemy we have in the world is dead.'" Mr. Neal, however, is by no means convinced by all these testimonies, and he adds: "This story does not seem to me very probable, nor is it easy to believe that the Papists should triumph in the death of a king who was their friend and protector in prosperity, and whose sufferings are in a great measure

<sup>1</sup> Foxes and Firebrands, part iii. fol. 188.

chargeable upon his too great attachment to their interest."<sup>1</sup> What cause Catholics had to be grateful to Charles I. it is not necessary to inquire, but it is notorious that they espoused his cause and suffered terribly for their loyalty at the hands of the Parliamentarians.

As Du Moulin and Baxter have been quoted by Mr. Neal, I will illustrate the forging mania from their writings. Peter Du Moulin wrote a "Vindication of the sincerity of the Protestant religion in point of obedience to sovereigns, in answer to Philanax Anglicus." He tells (from Prynne), the story of the Queen's confessor flourishing his sword at the King's death, and how afterwards there was a contention between friars and Jesuits who had "the glory of that great achievement." He declared himself able to prove, *whensoever authority will require it*, that "the year before the king's death a select number of English Jesuits were sent from their whole party in England, first to Paris, to consult with the Faculty of Sorbonne, then altogether Jesuited; to whom they put this question in writing: That seeing the State of England was in a likely posture to change government, whether it was lawful for the Catholics to work that change for the advancing and securing of the Catholic cause in England by making away the king, whom there was no hope to turn from his heresy. Which was answered affirmatively. After which the same persons went to Rome, where the same question being propounded and debated, it was concluded by the Pope and his Council that it was lawful and expedient for the Catholics to promote that alteration of state. What followed that

<sup>1</sup> History of Puritans, ii. 546-8.



consultation and sentence all the world knoweth, and how the Jesuits went to work God knoweth, and time, the bringer forth of truth, will let us know. But when the horrible parricide was so universally cried down as the greatest villany that had been committed in many ages, the pope commanded all the papers about that question to be gathered and burnt; in obedience to which order a Roman Catholic in Paris was demanded a copy which he had of those papers. But the gentleman, who had time to consider and detest the wickedness of that project, refused to give it, and showed it to a Protestant friend of his, and related to him the whole carriage of this negotiation, with great abhorreny of the practices of the Jesuits."

In his fourth edition, published in 1679, Du Moulin says that, when he first wrote the above, Catholics were very angry, and complained to the King (Charles II.) that he received a letter from the Secretary of State, telling him that it was his wiser course to forbear writing books in English, because it was not his natural language. He adds that Protestants also had challenged him to give his proofs, and that he in his turn challenges Catholics to bring him in question before our judges. "As to the solicitations of Protestants, I acknowledge that divers persons of great concernment, some of them of great place, have expressed to me a great desire that I should discover the whole plot. To quell their expectation, I do ingenuously profess that I have set down the whole matter, as far as I know, wanting to it but the witnesses." He will call these, he says, only when obliged by authority. It is curious how history repeats itself. In our own day we have seen a gigantic forgery, an indignant



repudiation and demand of proofs, and the same defiant challenge: "Bring me to justice—sue me for libel." Any one may judge for himself how much it would have availed the Catholics of those days to have brought an action against Dr. Du Moulin, the professor of history and Canon of Canterbury, especially as he had named no one. One delicious bit of this forger's story I cannot omit: "Many intelligent travellers," says Du Moulin, "can tell of the great joy among the English convents and seminaries about the King's death, as having overcome their enemy, and done their main work for their settlement in England, of which they made themselves so sure that the Benedictines were in great care that the Jesuits should not get their land; and the English nuns were contending who should be abbesses in England."<sup>1</sup> Did the old French rogue chuckle over this, or had he no sense of humour?

Although the well-known Presbyterian, Richard Baxter, could find no trace of the disguised Papists in the Parliamentary army with which he served, yet he was willing enough to throw the blame of Protestant extravagances and divisions on the machinations of Papists.<sup>2</sup> He left in MS. an autobiography, which was printed in 1696. The credulity of the man may be judged from the following extract: "And here I shall insert a passage not contemptible concerning the Papists. In Cromwell's days, when I was writing the book, 'Key for Catholics,' and was charging their treasons and rebellions on the army, one Mr. James Stansfield, a reverend minister of

<sup>1</sup> Vindication, p. 60-66.

<sup>2</sup> In his Key for Catholics (1659).

Gloucestershire, called on me and told me a story which afterwards he sent me under his hand, and warranted me to publish it, which was this:—One Mr. Atkins of Gloucestershire, brother to Judge Atkins, being beyond sea with others that had served the late King, fell into intimate acquaintance with a priest who had been, or then was, governor of one of their colleges in Flanders. They agreed not to meddle with each other about religion, and so continued their friendship long. A little after the King was beheaded, Mr. Atkins met this priest in London, and going into a tavern with him, said to him in his familiar way, ‘What business have you here? I warrant you come about some roguery or other.’” Whereupon the priest told unto him as a great secret that there were thirty of them here in London, who, by instructions from Cardinal Mazarine, did take care of such affairs, and had sat in council and debated the question whether the King should be put to death or not, and that it was carried in the affirmative, and there were but two voices for the negative, which was his own and another’s; and that for his part he could not concur with them, as foreseeing what misery this would bring upon his country. That Mr. Atkins stood to the truth of this, but thought it a violation of the laws of friendship to name the man. “I would not print it,” adds Baxter, “without fuller attestation, lest it should be a wrong to the Papists. But when the King was restored and settled in peace, I told it occasionally to a privy councillor, who, not advising me to meddle any further in it, because the King knew enough of Mazarine’s designs already, I let it alone. But about this time I met with Dr. Thomas Good, and occasionally mentioning such a thing, he

told me that he was familiarly acquainted with Mr. Atkins, and would know the certainty of him, whether it were true; and not long after, meeting him again, he told me that he spoke with Mr. Atkins, and that he assured him that it was true, but he was loth to meddle in the publication of it.”<sup>1</sup> Mr. Richard Baxter’s scrupulous unwillingness to wrong the Papists by publishing his tale when it could be refuted, and then leaving it to be published after his death nearly forty years later, is a curious phenomenon of conscience. But this whole matter is full of interest and instruction. Protestants were ashamed of their sects and divisions, their religious extravagances and political excesses, and were confounded when the more sober part of the nation turned round on them and reproached them with regicide. They could not deny notorious facts, but they remembered that Papists and Jesuits were hated and suspected by High Churchmen as much as by Dissenters. So they made them the authors of their divisions and crimes; and clever scoundrels forged and printed documents; and “intelligent” travellers invented marvellous stories, and related them to their gaping and delighted hearers; and at last came Shaftesbury to set on Titus Oates and the rest, with the cynical remark: “Don’t fear, make it strong, nothing tame will take hold of the imagination; the more marvellous and incredible is the story, the more certain it is to be believed.”

<sup>1</sup> Baxter’s Narrative of his Life, p. 244.

*9. The Catholic Bishops and Queen Elizabeth.*

I come at length to a distinct class of forgeries, for the unravelling of which these researches were first undertaken. I confess that if one of Robert Ware's books had fallen into my hands a year ago, after turning over a few pages I should probably have exclaimed, Bogus! and thrown the book aside. It chanced, however, that being engaged on the history of the Catholic bishops deposed by Queen Elizabeth, I came upon certain passages in later writers that raised a doubt in my mind, and set me on the investigation of the sources from which they were derived. I thus was brought to read "The Hunting of the Romish Fox," and (to borrow Ware's metaphor) I followed up the scent till I unearthed this literary skunk. Even then I should have been content to have eliminated him and his inventions from my own special subject, had I not noted how widespread had been the success of his cheating, and with what singular bias, where the Catholic Church is concerned, and with what incredible carelessness, history has been written. This "study," as the French would say, of forgery and credulity has been made rather for the sake of the general lesson than the immediate results. The matters, however, which remain to be treated are of a somewhat higher order than Ware's ordinary tales of roguery, and concern an important part of history. The forgeries also are less self-evident. They regard, as I have said, the Catholic bishops deposed by Queen Elizabeth in the first year of her reign.

Mr. Froude writes: "On the 15th May [1559]

the whole body of the prelates, fourteen in number, were called before the Queen, and informed that they must swear allegiance or lose their sees." Dr. Lingard writes: "The Queen sent for the bishops then in London, and required them to conform, but they pleaded the prohibition of conscience, and were dismissed with expressions of scorn and resentment." Here then seems to be a fact of history accepted alike by Protestants and Catholics, and so beyond the range of controversy. Yet it is a mere fiction; and it will be an instructive study to trace it to its origin, and to see how it has been modified, or cooked, to use an expressive term, by successive writers. It will be sought in vain in any writer, Catholic or Protestant, before 1680. It is found in Strype and Collier, and their followers, but the first and sole authority is Robert Ware. He writes as follows:—

"Anno 1559. This year, upon the 15th May, her Majesty called an assembly of the bishops and clergy of the realm, to take into serious consideration the affairs of the Church of England, and to expulse all the schisms and superstitious idolatry of the Church of Rome. There were fourteen Romish Fathers who, in this assembly, endeavoured to oppose our gracious Queen in the re-establishment of the Church of England. Their names be as follows: Heath, Bonner, Thirlby, Watson, White, Bourne, Turberville, Bayne, Scott, Goldwell, Tunstall, and Ogelthorpe. In this assembly Nicholas Heath, in the name of these bishops, spoke as follows—'May it please your most royal Majesty, in the behalf of the Catholic Church here planted within these your Grace's dominions, I am entreated by several of the Rev. Fathers of the *Mother Church*,

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the Bishops of several dioceses within your realm, that your Majesty would seriously recollect to memory your gracious sister's zeal unto the Holy See of St. Peter, at Rome, as also the covenant between her and that Holy See, made soon after her coronation, when she promised to depress heresies and all heretical tenets, binding both her Gracious Majesty, her successors and this realm, under perpetual ignominy and curse, if not perfected by them; upon which conditions that Holy See was pleased once more to take your sister and this realm into her bosom after so long a heresy increasing within this isle.'

"Her Majesty, upon these sayings of the Archbishop, rose up and made this answer:—'My Lord, as Joshua declared, saying, "I and my house will serve the Lord," so be we resolved and our realm to serve Him, for which we have here assembled our clergy, and be resolved to imitate Josia, who assembled the ancients of Judea and Jerusalem purposely to make a covenant with the Lord. Thus have we here assembled our Parliament, together with you of the clergy, for the same intent, to contract with God and not with the Bishop of Rome.' She goes on to say she will have nothing to do with this usurped supremacy, and concludes: 'We therefore shall esteem all those our subjects, ecclesiastical or civil, as enemies of God [to us], and to our heirs and successors, who shall henceforth own his usurped or any other foreign power whatsoever.'"

"This her Majesty's speech," adds Ware, "quelled the Romish zeal of these Popish fathers, and much encouraged the hearts of those who were affected unto reformation."<sup>1</sup> Ware adds: "Taken out of the

<sup>1</sup> Hunting of the Romish Fox, iv. 76.



Lord Cecil's Memorial, p. 132, n. 10." Strype has given the speech of the bishops and the Queen's answer word for word as in this book. He has also given the date as May 15, 1559. But he saw a difficulty not noticed by Ware. The latter distinctly calls the meeting a Parliament. Now Parliament had been dissolved on May 8. Strype therefore ventures a conjecture that Convocation may not have been yet dissolved, and that the interview may have taken place there. But this is to no purpose. Convocation was already dissolved, and had Elizabeth personally presided over the bishops and clergy, either in Convocation or in a later special assembly, the fact would have been recorded elsewhere than in the "Romish Fox." Mr. Froude, as we have seen, says nothing of a special assembly of bishops and *clergy for consultation*, but supposes a mere citation of the bishops to take the oath. Carte, who took all his information from Strype, evades the difficulty by saying "they were summoned to appear before *the Council*." That Strype took his account from Ware, and from him only, is clear from several things:—1. The speeches are verbatim the same. 2. The names of the bishops are placed in the same order, which is merely arbitrary on the part of Ware. 3. Strype has adopted word for word the reflection with which Ware concludes as to "quelling the Romish zeal of these Popish fathers," and the rest.

Now, had Strype or his copiers taken even ordinary pains to verify this history, they would have found that no such assembly of those fourteen bishops could possibly have taken place on May 15, 1559. On that day two of the bishops mentioned, Dr. Watson



and Dr. White, were prisoners in the Tower. Dr. Tunstall was in Durham, and did not reach London until July 20. This Strype himself elsewhere records, and it is proved beyond question.<sup>1</sup> Bishops Poole of Peterborough, Bourne of Bath and Wells, and Goldwell of St. Asaph's, had not been in London on May 8, at the close of Parliament. It is utterly unlikely that they came up directly afterwards. Indeed, as regards Bourne, he was in Worcestershire on Whitsunday, May 14, the day before this supposed gathering; for there exists in the Record Office a letter from Sir Hugh Paulet to Sir William Cecil, dated May 6, 1559, saying: "I hope, as prescribed, to be with the Bishop of Bath at Bewdley before Whitsunday."<sup>2</sup> Thus, then, six of the fourteen bishops mentioned by Ware, Strype, and Fronde, could not have been present at any meeting on May 15.

If there is blunder or falsehood in the names given there is also a blunder of omission. The name of Bishop Morgan of St. David's is neither in the list of Ware nor in that of Strype. Ware, no doubt, omitted it through ignorance, since it is not found in the list given by Camden of deprived bishops, though his deprivation is mentioned in Rymer. This may explain why Strype has given the date of Morgan's death as December, 1558,<sup>3</sup> whereas he did not die until December, 1559. It is an old trick of some historians to correct dates to suit their theories, instead of testing their theories by dates.

But why did Ware and Strype omit Bishop Kitchen,

<sup>1</sup> Machyn's Diary, p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> P.R.O. Dom. Eliz. Addenda, ix. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Annals, i. 227.

of Llandaff, from the list? Hitherto he had gone along with his brother bishops in their resistance to innovation, he had opposed in Parliament the grant of Royal supremacy. The oath had not yet been offered to him. Even when it was offered he hesitated about accepting it. Hence, had there really been such a meeting as that of May 15, whether an assembly for consultation, according to Ware's tale, or on a summons to take the oath according to the gloss adopted by later writers, Kitchen (who was certainly in London) ought to have been among the number.

There remains, with regard to this affair, a still more curious example of the way in which the "History of the Reformation" has been written. When Burnet published, in the year 1681, the second part of his "History," containing the reigns of Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth, Ware's "Hunting of the Romish Fox" had not appeared. Hence Burnet may be searched in vain for a number of fables that have since become current from having been adopted into the "Annals" and "Memorials" of Strype. But when Burnet, in 1714, published his third part, which is a supplement, going again over the same ground, Strype had printed his "Annals," the first edition having appeared in 1709. As Strype had generally passed over documents printed by Burnet, so Burnet would not borrow at any length the documents printed by Strype. But he had, of course, read his book. In the meantime Burnet had got copies of what are known as the "Zurich Letters," written by the advanced Protestant party in England to their friends on the Continent. In the sixth book of the third part (or supplementary volume) of his "History," he gives a letter of Jewel, describing the

measures taken by Elizabeth up to the date, which is August 1, 1559. It is as follows: "*The Popish Bishops made a very poor address to the Queen, persuading her not to change the state of religions, to which she answered resolutely. And they, rather than abjure the Pope once more, which they had often done before, were resolved now to relinquish their bishoprics. It was plain they had no religion among them, yet they now pretended conscience. They were full of rage, and one of the artifices they used at that time to keep the people from receiving the Reformation was the giving out of prophecies that this change should be short-lived.*"<sup>1</sup>

This is all given between inverted commas, as if it was, substantially at least, a quotation. By printing the original in Latin among his "Records," Burnet supplied a corrective for careful readers, but not an explanation how he came to insert in a translated letter matters of which there is no trace in the original. The second passage that I have printed in italics is merely a distortion of Jewel's words. Jewel says that the priests (*sacrifici*)—for of them he is writing, and not specially of the bishops—were addicted to prophesying and *self*-delusion. Burnet says the bishops gave

<sup>1</sup> Burnet, History of Reformation, part iii., book 6, p. 227. In Pocock's edition, vol. iii. p. 475. The letter of Jewel is in the Records, n. 51, p. 276, or in Pocock, vol. vi. p. 413. The words of Jewel are these: *Episcopi, potius quam ut relinquunt papam quem toties jam antea adjurarunt, malunt cedere rebus omnibus. Nec tamen id religionis causâ faciunt, quam nullam habent, sed constantiæ, quam miseri nebulones vocari volunt conscientiam. Sacrifici, jam tandem mutata religione, passim abstinere a cætu sacro, quasi piaculum summum sit cum populo Dei quicquam habere commune. Est autem tanta illorum nebulonum rabies, ut nihil supra. Omnino sperant et prædicant (est enim, ut scis, genus hominum prædictiosissimum et valde deditum futuritionibus), ista non fore diuturna.*

out prophecies as an artifice. But the first passage in italics is more serious, that which refers to the bishops' poor address and the Queen's resolute answer. Jewel has not even a hint at such a thing. Burnet took this out of Strype, but, not wishing to acknowledge his obligation, he slipped it into a letter of Jewel. Is it to be wondered at that Lingard, Tierney, and others were misled by all these arts? Lingard, with his usual caution, has avoided committing himself to the number of bishops or the dates he found in Strype; but he did not suspect that what Strype, Burnet, and Collier all told with such multiform authority as that of Jewel, Ware, and Cecil was a pure myth.

Dr. Hook's reflection on this episode is amusing. After giving from Strype the Queen's answer to the bishops, he says: "If there had been a great man among the prelates he would have risked an answer, though it might have placed his life in peril; but without consultation with one another the prelates were afraid to speak. . . . *They were silent, and were bowed out of the Royal presence.*"<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Hubert Burke has a chapter on the Marian Bishops in the third volume of his "Historical Portraits." I regret to say that it is full of the most flagrant mistakes, due either to carelessness or a wish to embellish. But he tells us that his narrative of the interview between the Queen and the bishops is derived from a manuscript lent to him by a clergyman of the diocese of Lincoln. This manuscript is by Farlow, "a very intelligent preacher, whose father was present." It is substantially the same as Ware's account, but introduces a few other details, as that the interview took place at

<sup>1</sup> Life of Parker, p. 192.

Greenwich Palace, that Cecil and Bacon were both present, that the Queen delivered her address "in tone and gesture most emphatic," and that the bishops were allowed twenty-one days to reconsider their position, that when that time had elapsed they declined the oath and "were immediately arrested after the fashion of common malefactors, and committed to the worst dungeons in the Tower and the Fleet, that they were compelled to pay for their food, whilst they were left without a shilling to do so, but that some kind-hearted people, nearly all Protestants, made up a purse for them." I have no space here to refute all these statements. I have elsewhere shown that they are all utterly contrary to historic facts.<sup>1</sup> I am certain that the manuscript used by Mr. Burke is of a later date than Robert Ware. Whether or not the "intelligent preacher" Farlow ever existed I leave to others to inquire.

#### 10. *Two Episcopal Plots.*

Among his numerous and always malicious fictions Ware has given, in two different books, the history of two distinct plots, both contrived by English bishops, both successful at the time, both brought to light later on by Irish viceroys. It was, therefore, easy to confound one with the other, and this has been done, not merely by Ware's transcriber, Strype, but even by the inventor himself.

In the book called "The Hunting of the Romish Fox,"<sup>2</sup> after describing the interview between the Catholic bishops and Queen Elizabeth, on May 15, 1559, the

<sup>1</sup> The True Story of the Catholic Hierarchy deposed by Queen Elizabeth. (Burns & Oates, 1889.)

<sup>2</sup> iv. p. 80.

existence of which I disproved in the last section, Ware thus continues: "The Council taking these things into serious debates, the Earl of Sussex, that loyal subject, put her Majesty in mind that when he sealed up the late Queen's closet, upon her decease, by order from the Council, for her gracious Majesty's use, there were several bundles of letters from the Cardinal, as also from the Archbishop of York, and from most of the above specified Popish Fathers, written unto the Queen's sister both before and during her reign. These words of the Earl caused her Majesty to send him to search for them; which being brought before the Council, much was discovered, how to order affairs, to strengthen the interest of the Bishop of Rome, and that Romish religion, in case King Edward should miscarry; also all the intrigues that were then carried on between the Bishops of Winchester and London, from thence to Rome, and from Rome hither, how to lay plots to cut off the Protector and most of the wisest of King Edward's Council, hoping thereby to procure the Romish religion and to weaken the Crown's interest. Had these projects been discovered during King Edward's days, it was thought that it would have hindered Queen Mary's reign. For when they were read at Council, those Privy Councillors who were instrumental for her coming to the Crown, before the Lady Jane Grey, were much amazed, having never heard of these things till then. When the Council had met the second time, it being upon May 18th, and had further taken these things into their considerations, it was generally declared that these acts of theirs, being committed partly in King Edward's reign and partly in Queen Mary's, and nothing since laid to their charge, saving their zeal



to the See of Rome, that her Majesty's sister's pardon, proclaimed at her entrance into the Crown, would clear them. Yet most wisely the Council advised her Majesty to offer the oath of allegiance and supremacy, and to declare their religion in Parliament, which they refusing were all expelled."

At the beginning of the chapter where all this is told, Ware says it is "taken out of the Lord Cecil's Memorial, p. 132, n. 10." Nothing can be more definite, and, as I have remarked before, it is this definiteness of reference to sources and circumstantial detail of story that put Ware's readers off their guard, and were the causes of his success. Cecil's Memorial was supposed to exist somewhere in Dublin, and Cecil could not be mistaken as to matters of which he was eye-witness. The mere silence of all other historians about these public facts could not be set against Cecil's testimony. But as we only know the existence of Cecil's Memorials from Robert Ware, while we know Robert Ware to have been a habitual forger, we must carefully examine the account here given us. 1. The most simple course seems to be to consult the Privy Council Registers and Minute Books. This has been done, but unfortunately there is a gap in the records, beginning on May 13, 1559, just two days before the supposed citation of the bishops, and continuing to December, 1562. This important volume has at some period been lost, and though from Bishop Kennet's references there appears to have been once a transcript among the Harleian Manuscripts, it is no longer in the British Museum. We must look, then, to the dates and names. 2. Parliament had been dissolved on May 8, yet the story says that on the 18th it was proposed that the



bishops should make a declaration to Parliament. Such a mistake could not originate with Cecil. 3. The supposed plot of 1553 was carried on between the Bishops of Winchester (Stephen Gardiner) and London (Edmund Bonner) and the Holy See. Ware was doubtless led to select these names because they were odious to Protestants; but his choice was unfortunate, seeing that in the latter part of Edward's reign Gardiner was a prisoner in the Tower and Bonner in the Marshalsea, and they could neither communicate with Rome nor with each other. 4. Ware has made choice of Lord Sussex as the discoverer of the plot. He is one of the forger's favourite heroes. He says that at Mary's death Sussex was appointed by the Council to seal up her papers. But this again is an impossibility, for the Earl of Sussex was not in England at the time of Mary's death. She died on November 17, 1558. Sussex had asked leave of absence from his post of Lord Deputy in Ireland to visit England on private affairs, and on November 13 writes to the Queen to thank her for leave granted; but he adds that he must first go to Waterford to settle the country. On November 28 he was in Waterford, and probably left Ireland in December to be present at Elizabeth's coronation. All this is shown by State Papers.<sup>1</sup> The London citizen Machyn has noted in his "Diary"<sup>2</sup> that on May 15, 1559, the Earl of Sussex was present at a sermon at St. Paul's Cross, but he has not a word of the great citation of the bishops before the Queen on that day. 5. After all this, it seems superfluous to speak of the improbability that the Council should have proposed lenient

<sup>1</sup> Irish Cal., Mary, ii. 75 sq.; Eliz. i. 2.

<sup>2</sup> P. 197.

measures towards the bishops, when, as we know from the famous paper drawn up for Elizabeth at her accession by Sir Thomas Smith, the one desire of the Protestant part of the Council with regard to the bishops was to entangle them in *Præmunire*.

I now come to the second plot, earlier in supposed date, though later in being discovered. This is related by Ware in the second part of his "Foxes and Firebrands."<sup>1</sup> He tells how, at the accession of King Edward, Calvin wished to bring about a union with the English Church, and would have accepted episcopacy and the rest, but his efforts were frustrated by Gardiner and Ponet, Bishops of Winchester and Rochester, who were themselves urged by the Papal Nuncio in the Low Countries to feed dissension and disunion. This story is thus introduced:—"The parties instrumental for dissuading of this Prince from those overtures of Calvin's were not known until about the ninth year of Elizabeth, about which time Sir Henry Sidney, sometime Lord Deputy of Ireland, one of her Majesty's Honourable Privy Council, having thus the liberty to view the Papers of State within her Majesty's secret closet, he happened to find a letter directed to the Bishops of Winchester and of Rochester, dated from Delph, which he copied in a manuscript of his own, afterwards in the custody of the most learned Dr. James Ussher, late Primate of Armagh, which was after transcribed by Sir James Ware, and is now entered into a manuscript of that Knight's, number 44, running in manner following: '*Memorandum* taken out of Sir Henry Sidney his book, called the *Romish Policies*, n. 6, p. 37, in fol., a MS. with Archbishop Ussher.'" I

<sup>1</sup> P. 10, and is in Addit. MSS. 4791 fol. 38.

shall not delay on the examination of this story. Ponet, or Poynt, Bishop of Rochester, mentioned by name in the margin of Ware's book, is known to have been an ultra-Protestant, and would have been the last man to combine with Gardiner against Calvin. Yet it is to these two that Ware supposes the letter to be written by the Nuncio, which concludes: "Reverend Fathers, it is left to you to assist, and to those you know are sure to the *Mother Church*. D. G." Once more the Mother Church!

I must now draw attention to one of the "curiosities of literature," or of historic writing. When Strype<sup>1</sup> is about to transcribe from Ware the story of the meeting between the Queen and the bishops, on May 15, 1559, he has the following preamble: "To represent this business more certainly and exactly out of a valuable memorial of Sir Henry Sidney, transcribed among the manuscripts of Archbishop Ussher." Now, if the reader will look back, he will find that it is not Sidney but Cecil who is said by Ware to have made a memorial regarding that affair. How then comes Sidney's name in Strype? It seems to have happened in this way. In the "Hunting of the Romish Fox," though Ware says in the text that the discovery of the Gardiner and Bonner plot was made by Lord Sussex, yet in the margin he put "Sir Henry Sidney's discovery to the Queen and her Council." This is evidently a slip of the author. He had invented two plots, one of Gardiner and Ponet; the other of Gardiner and Bonner; one at the beginning of Edward's reign, the other at the end; one brought to light by Sidney, the other by Sussex; and he could not keep the matter distinct in his brain. Sidney

<sup>1</sup> Annals, i. 206.

and Sussex were related (as Sidney-Sussex College in Cambridge still commemorates), but there had been some collision between them in Ireland. What wonder if they came into collision in the forger's tales? But Strype's words cannot be excused as a mere slip borrowed from Ware. He introduces the mention of Sidney and of Ussher to convince his readers that they may expect "certainty" and "exactitude" in what he is going to relate. He wants them to think that he has seen the Manuscripts of Ussher, and that he can describe an important historical event from the genuine and authentic report of an illustrious statesman, while all the time he is merely copying a page, slips and all, from a foolish and infamous pamphlet of an impostor, who was his own contemporary.

I do not willingly class together Collier and Strype. Yet I am sorry to say that Collier, telling over again the tale that he had found in Strype, puts in his own margin not only a reference to Strype's "Annals," but also to "Sidney Memoir;"<sup>1</sup> and so the fiction gets a firm footing in history, and will probably be repeated as long as history shall be written.

#### 11. *A Royal Correspondence.*

In the sixth chapter of the "Hunting of the Romish Fox" we are informed that in December 1560 five bishops drew up an address to the Queen, which was brought before her and her Council. It is as follows:—

"Most Royal Queen, We entreat your glorious Majesty to listen unto us of the Catholic clergy within your realm, as well as unto others, lest that your gracious Majesty and subjects be led astray

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<sup>1</sup> History, vi. 432.

through the inventions of those evil councillors who are persuading your ladyship to embrace schisms and heresies in lieu of the ancient Catholic faith, which hath been long since planted within this realm by the *motherly* care of the *Church of Rome*."

Then, after a little weak historical argumentation, the topics of which can be seen in the Queen's answer, they conclude:—

"God preserve your Majesty, which be the prayers of Nicholas Heath, Edmund Bonner, Gilbert Bourne, James Turberville, David Poole."

Before giving the Queen's supposed answer, I must remark a contradiction of dates. Ware says the letter was sent in December 1560, but at the end of the Queen's answer the date is December 4, anno 2<sup>d</sup>o, reg., which would be December 1559. Strype has silently corrected this slip of his original. The corrected date does not much diminish the glaring improbability of such a letter having been written. In December 1560 Heath, Bourne, and Turberville were prisoners in the Tower, and Bonner in the Marshalsea, and they were in no position to combine or to protest. But even in December 1559 the five subscribers to the letter had all been recently deprived of their sees. The protest itself was quite unnecessary, since it was protest sufficient to have refused the oath. Moreover, by writing such a letter the bishops would have rendered themselves liable to forfeiture of all their goods, real and personal, to the Crown, according to the Act of Supremacy made in the late Parliament. The action of the bishops is quite contrary to the known characters of three at least of the signatories—Heath, Turberville, and Poole. But is it needful to discuss the likelihood or unlikelihood of a

document that comes to us only from the tainted hands of Robert Ware? The silence of Camden, of Lord Burghley, in his "Execution of Justice;" of Foxe, the martyrologist; of every Catholic writer of those days, Saunders, Rishton, Allen, and so many more; and of all State Papers now existing, is perfectly conclusive on such a subject.

Why, then, did Robert Ware impute to the bishops so bold a proceeding as this protest? I suppose he foisted on them the weak and undignified controversy, which is contained in the supposed letter, in order that he might introduce what he thought would be a strong and crushing retort from the Queen. The answer alleged by Ware to have been sent by Elizabeth runs as follows:—

"Sirs,—At your entreaty for us to listen unto you, we waive it, yet we return you this our answer. Our realms and subjects have been long wanderers, walking astray while they were under the tuition of Romish pastors, who advised them to own a wolf for their head in lieu of a careful shepherd, whose inventions, heresies, and schisms be so numerous, that the flock of Christ have fed on poisonous shrubs for want of wholesome pastures. And whereas you hit us and our subjects in the teeth, that the Romish Church first planted the Catholic faith within our realms, the records and chronicles of our realm testify the contrary, and your own Romish idolatry makes you liars; witness that ancient monument of Gildas, unto which both foreign and domestic have gone in pilgrimage there to offer. This author testifies Joseph of Arimathea to be the first preacher of the Word of God within our realm. Long after that, when Austin came from Rome, this our realm had bishops and priests therein, as is well-known to the wise and learned of our realm, by woeful experience how your Church entered therein by blood, they being martyrs for Christ, and put to death because they denied Rome's usurped authority. As for our father being withdrawn from the supremacy of Rome by schismatical and heretical counsels and advisers, who, we pray, advised him more or flattered him than you, Mr. Heath, when you were Bishop of Rochester? Than you, Mr. Bonner, when you were Archdeacon, and you, Mr. Turberville? Nay, further, who was more an adviser of our father than your great saint,



Stephen Gardiner, while he lived? Are not ye, then, those schismatics and heretics? If so, suspend your evil censures. Recollect, was it our sister's conscience made her so averse to her father's and brother's acts, as to undo what they had perfected, or were it you and such like advisers that dissuaded her and stirred her up against us and other of her subjects? And whereas you would frighten us by telling how Emperors, Kings, and Princes have owned the Bishop of Rome's authority, it was contrary in the beginning. For our Saviour Christ paid His tribute unto Cæsar, as the chief superior, which shows your Romish supremacy is usurped."

After some more of this kind of railing controversy her Majesty concludes:—

"We for the future give you warning that we hear no more of this kind, lest you provoke us to execute those penalties enacted for the punishment of our resisters, which out of our clemency we have forborne.

"From Greenwich, Dec. 4, anno 2, reg."

Dr. Hook says that in this letter "the hand of Parker is legible." It must be allowed that it is not the composition of a statesman like Cecil, nor even of a Queen like Elizabeth; for though, in her later years especially, she may have scolded, she would have preserved some show of dignity in a formal State paper, such as this is supposed to be. To me the hand of Robert Ware is alone legible, though he repeats what he had learned from men like Parker. Dr. Hook probably recognised the Parkerian views of history, the new Anglican Church claiming identity with the ancient British Church, the repudiation of the mission of St. Augustine, and the accusation against St. Augustine and his Anglo-Saxon converts of bringing about the slaughter of the British monks at Bangor. For those not versed in Anglican polemics, I may mention, in passing, that this was formerly maintained, though it is now rejected by every decent Pro

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testant. Venerable Bede declares that St. Augustine prophesied a great calamity in punishment for the British want of charity in refusing to preach to the heathen. Ethelfrith the Wild, who accomplished the prophecy, was a pagan king, subject to no Christian influence, and St. Augustine was dead some years before the slaughter. But though all these anti-Catholic arguments might have been written or suggested by Parker, it seems rather premature to suppose them formulated by the young Queen in the second year of her reign. It is amusing to find Collier showing that the Catholic bishops were mistaken in one of their historical references, and the Queen in one of hers. "But in this last instance they (the bishops) plainly misreport the case." "But here her Majesty, or her Council, missed the matter of fact."<sup>1</sup> Alas! poor Robert Ware!

Nothing is more curious and instructive than the way in which all the above matters are related by Dean Hook. Taking his documents entirely from Strype—that is, in reality from Ware—he writes as if he had access to a world of minute information which puts him, so to say, behind the scenes. Thus, after narrating the first or verbal protests of the bishops on May 15, and how the dumb-stricken prelates "were bowed out of the royal presence," he continues: "On their return to their houses they were met by some violent partisans, by whom they were urged to renew the attack, and to make one final appeal to the youthful sovereign. A letter, the result of a consultation, was presented to the Queen, which was signed by Heath, Bonner, Bourne, Turberville, and Poole." The rhetorical effect of this imaginary meeting with the violent partisans, after the imaginary meeting with the Queen,

<sup>1</sup> History, vi. 300.

is rather spoilt when we look at the dates. According to Ware, the letter which the violent partisans force the bishops to write is dated a year and seven months after their first discomfiture; even according to Strype, seven months elapsed before the violent counsels prevailed. This would-be-picturesque style of writing history is one of the literary nuisances of our day. It is a weak imitation of Lord Macaulay. His immense and heterogeneous reading and prodigious memory enabled him to fill in details with historic truth, or at least semblance of truth; whereas his followers give us romance instead of history. But when the romance of one is embroidered on the forgery of another, we have—well, we have Dean Hook's "Life of Parker."

#### 12. *A Last Example and Summary.*

There remains one more incident to be discussed. In the seventh chapter of the "Hunting of the Romish Fox," we are told that, in 1560, "Matthew Parker, having received from the expelled Archbishop of York, and the rest of the Popish bishops, a letter terrifying of the reformed bishops and clergy of the Church of England, with curses and other threatenings, for not acknowledging the Papal tribunal, this worthy father, consulting with her Majesty and the Council, showed the same with this following answer, prepared upon the receipt thereof, which extremely pleased her Majesty and the reformed party of the Council. After which her Majesty purged her Council from all suspected persons, bending towards the Bishop of Rome or his usurpations." The letter of the Catholic bishops is not given. That of Parker begins thus: "It is the pride, covetousness, and usurpation of the Bishop of Rome and of his predeces-

sors, which hath made the princes of the earth to defend their territories and their privileges from that wicked Babylon and her Bishop. And whereas you and the rest of the late expelled bishops have scandalised our reformed clergy within these her Majesty's realms, that we yield no subjection unto Christ and His apostles, we yield more than ye fathers of the Romish tribe do. For we honour and adore Christ as the true Son of God, equal with His Father as well in authority as in majesty, and do make Him no foreigner to the realm, as you members and clergy of the Church of Rome do." The letter is very long and controversial, and concludes as follows: "By these your demands of us to own Rome and her tribunal you forget your duties to God, with your father the Bishop of Rome; for his usurping of a tribunal to make all nations subject to his beck, hath caused him and his successors ever since to forget the living God. Ye his followers and acknowledgers partake of this sin also, and have occasioned the Bishop of Rome to fall into these errors; for ye have made it sacrilege to dispute of his fact, heresy to doubt of his power, paganism to disobey him, and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost to act or speak against his decrees; nay, that which is most horrible, ye have made it presumption in any man not to go to the devil after him, without any grudging, which is so shameful and so sinful a subjection that Lucifer himself never demanded the like from his slaves of hell. . . . Your faithful brother in Christ, MATTHEW CANTUARIENSIS, March 26th, 1560."

I cannot say that this letter bears intrinsic evidence of *not* being Parker's. His biographers and admirers, Strype, Hook, and the recent editors of his correspondence, have claimed it for him; yet I do not think I am

robbing him of any glory in assigning its composition to Robert Ware. How is it that Strype and his many followers have never sought after the original? Strype, in giving it, refers to the "Romish Fox" (Life of Parker, i. 134), so do the editors of Parker's Correspondence (p. 109). But Strype most inexcusably also puts "Archbishop Ussher's Manuscripts," for which he has not, in this instance, even Ware's authority. Yet it is certain Strype merely copied from Ware, as any one may see who will collate the two. He adopts all Ware's reflections. Why did Strype and the rest never search for the letter of the Catholic bishops, with its threats and curses, to which Parker's is a reply? Parker was not accustomed to destroy his correspondence, nor was Cecil. Yet neither the Parker collections at Cambridge, nor the Burghley papers at Hatfield House, nor the immense deposits in the Record Office, contain the originals or transcripts of either the Catholic bishops' letter or of Parker's answer. Neither Foxe, nor any of the busy collectors and writers of those days, gives a hint of this important correspondence. It was reserved for Robert Ware to discover it in his peculiar treasure-trove, his deceased father's papers!

It probably seemed to enhance Parker's forbearance and the Queen's clemency in the eyes of Strype, to have left unpunished these three acts of the Catholic bishops, their verbal and epistolary remonstrance with the Queen, and their terrifying letter to the Anglican Primate; but it is surely out of all harmony with what we know of Archbishop Heath and his colleagues that they should thus have exposed themselves to the penalties of *Præmunire* (that is, confiscation of all goods, and imprisonment at the Sovereign's pleasure), for no practical purpose whatever. Sanders, writing to Cardinal Morone

in 1561 for the express purpose of giving accurate information regarding the action of the deprived bishops, says not one word of all these protests. But this he does say: "When the illustrious Count de Feria asked the Archbishop, before his imprisonment, what he would do in the present state of affairs. 'Nothing,' he said, 'but to bear whatever God may appoint me to suffer.'" <sup>1</sup>

I have already said that these books of Robert Ware may be considered as a part of the Titus Oates' movement, the attempt to calumniate the Catholic Church and make it odious in the eyes of the inhabitants of these islands, with a special view to the exclusion of the Duke of York from succession to the throne. For this end the living were maligned, the dead made to look ridiculous, and those who never existed credited with fictitious and abominable crimes. In the incidents I have related the Catholic bishops, though somewhat bold or reckless, are made to appear at a disadvantage, as being snubbed and rebuked and refuted. That seemed sufficient reason for Strype to accept all he found in Ware, and for subsequent writers to accept all they found in Strype.

To sum up the arguments of the last four sections. I reject as apocryphal certain histories of the deposed bishops. 1. Because they are in themselves improbable and out of harmony with the known character of the actors. 2. Because they are filled with impossibilities when compared with ascertained facts and dates. 3. Because, being of a public nature, they should have been chronicled by contemporaries, whereas they were unheard of until a century and a quarter after their supposed occurrence. 4. Because there is no record of

<sup>1</sup> Vatican Manuscript, folio 264. Translation of a manuscript lent me by the Rev. J. Stevenson, S.J.

them in any existing State papers. 5. Because the "Memorials" from which it is pretended that they have been derived do not exist and are not known to have existed. 6. Because the book which first records them is full of palpable forgeries, whereby these things also are rendered suspected; and 7, lastly, Because the purpose of their invention is clear, which is to throw odium on the Church and her bishops, as unscrupulous agents of Rome, ready to bully or to lie according to circumstances, but crushed by Protestant simplicity and truth, of which these books are a curious specimen.

As regards the whole of this series of papers I have no wish to retort on Protestants any general accusation of forgery and lying, such as the forger and liar, Robert Ware, did his best to fix on Catholics. At the present day there is much candour, and innumerable Protestants would rejoice to see the exposure of such vile attempts. But I will say that the *charge* of lying against Catholics is generally proportioned in vehemence to the *guilt* of lying in the accuser. Ware and Oates, Tonge and Bedloe, lived by lying, and their great discovery was that Catholics could not be believed, because they were dispensed and indulged to forswear themselves. Who is the very type of an unjust judge? All would now name Chief Justice Scroggs, who tried so many Catholics accused by the men just mentioned. From his charges to the juries, whole pages might be gathered like the following at the trial of Ireland, Pickering, and Grove: "When they have licences to lie and indulgences for falsehoods—nay, when they can make him a saint that dies in one, and then pray to him, as the carpenter first makes an image and after worships it, and can then think to bring in that wooden religion of theirs amongst us in this nation, what shall I think



of them? What shall I say to them? What shall I do with them? If there can be a dispensation for the taking of any oath (and divers instances may be given of it, that their Church does licence them to do so), it is a cheat upon men's souls, it perverts and breaks off all conversation amongst mankind. . . . This is a religion that quite unhinges all piety, all morality, and all conversation, and to be abominated by all mankind. They eat their God; they kill their king, and saint the murderer. They indulge all sorts of sin, and no human bonds can hold them." It has been well observed by Mr. Andrews that this charge of Scroggs was delivered only seventeen days after the passing of that Act of Parliament, which, by means of a simple *test* and *oath*, effectually prevented (and was judged adequate to prevent) all "Papists" from sitting in Parliament, or holding offices under Government, because they would not violate the sanctity of an oath, or take a sacrament of heretical consecration with the mouths that had fed upon their God.

There are still men who, like the late Dean of Ripon (Dr. William Goode), write books on Rome's Tactics, which are made up of all the baseless fabrications which industry, united with boundless credulity, can rake together from such controversialists as Foxe and Ware. Of such books Coleridge once said, in a letter to Carey: "These are not errors of faith, but blunders from the utter want of faith, a vertigo from spiritual inanition, from the lack of all internal strength, even as a man, giddy-drunk, throws his arms about and clasps hold of a barber's block, and mistakes seeing double for 'additional evidences.'"



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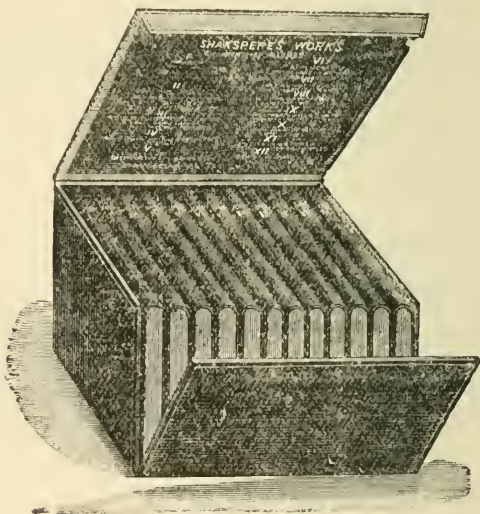
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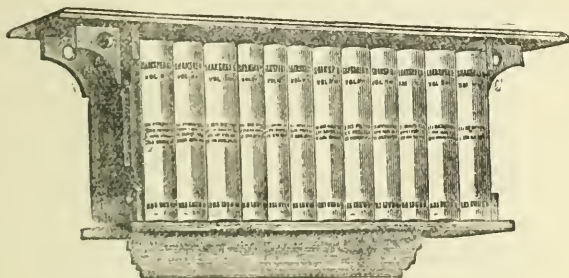
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