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the Roman
Catholic
church**

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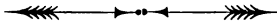
SHORT LINE

TO THE

Roman Catholic Church.

BY

Rev. J. W. BOOK, R. D.



TENTH EDITION 27th THOUSAND.

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PREFACE.

The question may be asked : "Why publish the 'Short Line to the Roman Catholic Church,' since we have so many works, deeper in thought and more comprehensive in scope ?"

My reasons are the following :

1. Some people take neither time nor trouble to read elaborate works. They say : "Time is money," our leisure hours are very limited; however, we can and will peruse the "Short Line."

2. Others, their education being limited, demand food easily digested. In the "Short Line" this class of readers will not be disappointed.

3. Pastors are frequently called upon to supply those under their charge with books; books, that proverbially never find their way home. Should the "Short Line" not return, the loss is easily sustained.

THE AUTHOR.

NIHIL OBSTAT.
HERMANUS ALDERDING.

IMPRIMATUR,
FRANCISCUS SILAS,
EPISCOPUS VINCENNOPOLITANUS.

SHORT LINE

—TO THE—

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

PART I.

OBJECTIONS TO RELIGION.

Thomas : “Rev. Father, how long have you been a Catholic ?”

Father : “My friend, this is a blessing I have enjoyed all the days of my life. Being born of Catholic parents, they brought me up in the church, founded more than 1800 years ago not by man, but by Jesus Christ Himself. In this holy church, with the help and grace of God, I shall live and die.”

Thomas : “Indeed, Father, you are very positive. You seem to entertain no doubts as to your faith and, of course, for you this must be a source of great pleasure. Catholics, I have noticed, are not tossed to and fro by every ‘Wind of doctrine.’ By the way, are there many Back-sliders among you ?”

Father : “*There is a black sheep in every flock*; however I may say without fear of contradiction, that no Catholic has ever denied the faith on his death-bed. This reminds me of Melanchthon’s famous words to his dying mother: ‘The Protestant doctrine

is the easiest, but the Catholic is the surest.' (Audin, Life of Luther, t. III. p. 268.) Not to change the subject, Thomas, what is your faith?"

Thomas: "I am sorry to say, Father, that your answer to my question was more definite than mine shall be to yours. Strictly speaking, I do not belong to any church. My mother belongs to the Lutheran, my father to the Baptist, and I lean to the M. E. church."

Father: "Quite a religious Babel in your house! I am not a little surprised to see your house hold together, for our Savior says: 'Every city or house divided against itself, shall not stand.' (Matt. 12:25) Furthermore, Thomas, you seem to be *on the fence*; but remember the words of the Lord: 'He that is not with me is against me.'" (Matt. 12:30.)

Thomas: "Of course, I know that a man ought to join the church. However, I am like many youths, who in the hey-day of life sow their wild oats. When I get older, I shall settle down and make a solemn profession of faith."

Father: "It seems, Thomas, you are holding a lease of life on your own terms. Since when did you make this contract with the Almighty? Furthermore, are you going to make God a present of old bones that you can no longer drag about? Think of a man saying to you: Friend, I make you a present of this, because it is fit for nothing else. Is it not presumptuous to ask people to treat us better than we are willing to treat God Himself?"

Finally, you seem to think that religion is a matter of choice, and that the Almighty has every reason to be thankful to us, should we condescend to accept His truths.

God is our Lord and Master; we are His creatures, children and subjects. If the rights of parents over children are great, the rights of God over us, His children, must be greater, because the power He sways is absolute. Either God has established a church or he has not. If He has, it is no longer a matter of choice, but of duty to join it. 'He that believeth not shall be damned;' Mark 16: 16. Suppose a man lost in the woods—he is groping in the dark—feeling for the way that will lead him home where a kind wife and loving children are waiting impatiently to receive him with open arms. Now, you kindly offer him your lantern, but he bluntly refuses to accept your kindness,—would not this be an insult to you?

But remember, by sin man strayed away from God—so far that he was lost—that he worshiped false gods. Jesus Christ comes with the lantern of revelation to lead him home; but he refuses to go, he prefers darkness to light. Is not this a gross insult to the Supreme Being? Hence it is the imperative duty of every man, who knows this, to embrace the religion of Christ at once, without the least hesitation. 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.' (Heb. II. 6.)

Thomas: "Some people and, not unfrequently, smart people say; *there is no God.*"

Father: "To him, who appeals to reason, the Atheist does not seem smart. The Psalmist says: 'The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God.' (13, 1.) Either something exists, or it does not; if it does, it follows, that something has always existed. To deny the conclusion would be to admit an effect without a cause, a hat without a hatter, a watch without a watchmaker. This is absurdity, pure and simple."

Thomas: "I see the force of your logic. But Ingersoll says: 'The universe, according to my idea, is, always was, and forever will be * * * It is the one eternal being—the only thing that ever did, does, or can exist.'"

Father: "It is true, he says so; his *idea* however, is not in accordance with reason. Listen to the reply of the Rev. A. Lambert: 'That which is eternal is infinite. It must be infinite; because, if eternal, it can have nothing to limit it. But that which is infinite must be infinite in every way. If limited in any way, it would not be infinite. Now, matter is limited. It is composed of parts, and composition is limitation. It is subject to change, and change involves limitation. Change supposes succession; and there can be no succession without a beginning, and therefore limitation * * * Matter is limited, and therefore finite; and if finite in anything, finite in everything; therefore finite in time, and, therefore, not eternal. Something exists, and since something exists, it follows, that something *necessarily* exists.'

But the universe does not exist *necessarily*. For instance, you can imagine the non-existence of the moon, Mars, Jupiter, etc. However, what is true of a part of the universe is true of the whole: therefore, matter is not eternal; therefore, there must be a supreme Being-God."

Thomas: "Pantheists say, there is but one substance, of which everything existing is nothing more than a modification. Could not the universe at large, as they say, be God?"

Father: "No; for the reason already given in speaking of Atheism: the universe is not eternal.

Let us understand each other. Pantheism means, that everything is God. This involves many contradictions, as can be readily seen in any work, philosophically sound. Let me call your attention to two inconsistencies only. Suppose a lady coming in contact with a huge, ugly-looking rattle-snake. Almost frightened to death, breathless, she turns to you for help. But the only consolation you give her is to answer: 'Never mind, good lady, go back! After all, your ladyship and his snakeship are one and the same substance; you as well as he are a part of God, though you are just now on fighting terms.'

Again: suppose, Thomas, you were to box the ears of a Pantheist and justify your ungentlemanly conduct thus. 'Don't get excited over a little cuff on the ear. You see we are one and the same substance; in boxing your ear, I, of course, box mine also; and'

if I can stand it, why should you object to these warm applications?"

Thomas: "Evidently, it would be very unwise to reduce the pantheistical doctrine to practice. What have you to say about the doctrine of Fatality? As you are aware, some people attribute everything to chance."

Father: "Yes; some weak-minded people do so. But to use your words, let us reduce this doctrine to practice also. On arising to-morrow morning, we behold to our utter surprise a new rail-road, 1000 miles long, well equipped with vestibule cars and silver-mounted locomotives, running through tunnels and over well-built bridges at the rate of 40 miles an hour, stopping along the line at all stations, where R. R. officials attend to their duties promptly.

You ask the question: *Who built the road last night?* I answer: *Friend, it is the work of chance.* What would you think of me?

Read, Thomas, on this subject the first chapter of 'Our Christian Heritage' by Cardinal Gibbons. It is a work, that should adorn every man's library; a work, to which I shall occasionally refer with pleasure. After giving a most glowing description of the harmony and beauty of this world, his Eminence says: 'Indeed, every man whose intellect is not perverted, is forced to acknowledge that a world in which such beauty and harmony and order are displayed, must be the work of a supremely intelligent Being. All men, even the most unculti-

vated, have a sense of the beautiful; they have certain fixed and uniform canons of taste more or less developed; they have in their mind an ideal by which they can at once determine whether, or not, a certain work is marked by order and regularity. The most ignorant peasant will recognise order in the disciplined march of an army, and disorder in the pell-mell rout of a mob. The sense of order is, therefore, common to us all, and we see it everywhere displayed in the universe.

Now this order presupposes an adaptation of means to an end. This adaptation implies a wonderful conception and foresight, and this conception and foresight manifest an intelligent Creator. There is no other reasonable way of accounting for the order existing in the universe. It cannot be the result of chance, as some ancient philosophers imagined. Chance, as we commonly understand the term, implies a cause which does not foresee the effect that follows from it. Chance involves the absence of uniformity and continuity. But in the world of nature, we observe laws that are constant and invariable in their operations. We see a regular succession of day and night, and a uniform revolution of the seasons.' ”

Thomas: “Some people deny the existence of the soul. They say: *After death all is over.*”

Father: “Materialists teach this doctrine. Volumes have been written against it. Permit me, however, to refer to the big *I* only. This *I* gives me the as-

surance beyond a shadow of doubt, that I am the very same person I was 20, 30, or 40 years ago.

Scientists on the other hand tell me, that my body undergoes a radical change, that its substance is totally renewed. It is true, they differ as to the time required for this transformation; but all agree, that after the lapse of about seven years not a particle of my former body remains. Destroy the *I*, i. e. the soul, and what follows? My former life would be to me, so far as I am personally concerned, a 'Tabula rasa;' parents would lavish favors upon children, not their own; children would embrace mothers, who would have no claim whatever to this token of filial love; yea, the punishment, inflicted by the state, would necessarily have to be of a short duration, lest an innocent man be made to suffer; contracts would be binding at best for seven years only.

As to *After death all is over*, it is beneath the dignity of man. People, truly good, never say *After death all is over*; those only whose prospects for the future state are not very flattering, lull themselves to sleep by saying *After death all is over*. However, when death stares them in the face, their conduct does not correspond with their former teaching.

Have we not a great longing after immortality? When we get sick we send for a physician at once. Why? To stay the hand of death, to prolong life.

Have not all nations, heathen as well as christian, believed in a future state of life? Why do we plant

flowers and evergreens on the graves of our departed friends? To immortalize them. What consoles the heart-broken mother, bending over the grave of her only child? The words of our Savior: 'The girl is not dead, but sleepeth.' (Matt. 9:24.) That we long after immortality, no man can deny. Would it not have been cruel on the part of our Creator to implant in our hearts desires never to be gratified?

Our Cardinal again: 'In a mortal body, he carries an immortal soul. In this perishable mass, resides an imperishable spirit. Within this frail, tottering temple, shines a light that will always burn, that will never be extinguished. As to the past, we are finite; as to the future, we are infinite in duration. As to the past, we are creatures of yesterday; as to the future, we are everlasting. When this house of clay will have crumbled to dust, when this earth shall have passed away, when the sun and stars shall grow dim with years, even then our soul will live and think, remember and love; for God breathed into us a living spirit, and that spirit, like Himself, is clothed with immortality.

The soul is the principle by which we live and move and have our being. It is that which forms and perpetuates our identity; for it makes us to be the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. The soul has intellectual conceptions and operations of reason and judgment independent of material organs. Our own experience clearly teaches us this important point. Our mind grasps what the senses cannot

reach. We think of God and of His attributes, we have thoughts of justice and of truth, we perceive mentally the connection existing between premises and conclusions, we know the difference between good and evil. Such a principle being independent of matter in its operations, must needs be independent of matter also in its being. It is, therefore, of its nature, subject to no corruption resulting from matter. Its life, which is its being, is not extinguished and cannot be extinguished with that of the body.'"

Thomas: "Since the existence of God and the immortality of the soul cannot be called in question, it follows, that we should render Him due homage and obey His fatherly commands. But with me the question often arises: How can we know His holy will? To me it seems beneath God's dignity, to speak or to make revelations to creatures so infinitely far below Him."

Father: "God is omnipotent. He can do all things whatsoever He pleases; hence He can make His will known to us, provided He chooses to do so. To deny this is to deny the very attributes of God. Some people, it is true, consider it beneath the dignity of God to speak to us; but if it was not beneath His dignity to create us, why should it be beneath His dignity to teach and direct us? Indeed, we might call His goodness in question, were He to leave us, His creatures, in a labyrinth of doubt

without a guide, without a director, without a teacher."

Thomas: "If we may give credence to the Sacred Scriptures, sin came into this world through the disobedience of our First parents. However, here at once, a difficulty presents itself to my mind: Either God knew, that man would transgress the law, or He did not know. If He did, as it is reasonable to suppose, it does seem, with all due deference to the honest opinion of others, that a kind and merciful Father would not have thrown stumbling blocks in the way of His children. Look at the long train of evils consequent on the Fall of man."

Father: "Just think of it, Thomas. In the first place, you call God to an account. Is this not presumption? It is an humiliation on the part of parents to see children question their authority; but, how humiliating must it be on the part of God, to hear us calling Him to an account? To question His authority is to insult him.

In the second place, you deprive God of a privilege, which you readily concede to man. Our state officials build jails and erect penitentiaries; they enact and pass laws, whose violation is a penitentiary offence; though they are morally certain of arresting the transgressor sooner or later. Yet, who has ever accused these officials of being unmerciful? Hence you concede to men, what you deny to God.

Lastly, you rob man of his most noble attribute; an attribute of which he is so justly proud, and

which exalts him so far above the level of the brute creation; I mean: moral freedom.

'By moral freedom,' says Cardinal Gibbons, 'I mean that, while man is conscientiously bound by law, he is not necessitated by it. Man enjoys moral freedom. He is at liberty to conceive thoughts good or evil; and if no external violence is offered to him, he can speak and act well or ill. He has the inherent power to choose between right and wrong. He can praise or blaspheme his Maker. He is free to honor or despise his parents, to hate or forgive an enemy; to help the poor if the means are at hand, or to reject their petition; to eat and drink, or to decline what is set before him; to entertain deliberately unchaste desires, or to spurn them; to tell the truth or to prevaricate.

If there is any truth which is plain and luminous, which is profoundly rooted in the human heart and universally admitted by the human race, it is the doctrine which proclaims that there is within us an active principle capable of deliberating, choosing, and determining,—which tells us that we are neither machines subject to purely mechanical impulses, nor mere animals led by blind instinct, which masters and controls us.

I have an innate sense or feeling that I am a free agent. Just as I have the evidence of my senses that the sun gives me light, that the fire warms me, that I am now writing in my room; so I have an innate conviction that I possess free-will, that I can

speak or be silent, and that, if no coercion is exercised, I can walk out or remain at home. I am not more certain that I feel a sensation of hunger than I am of my ability to accept or reject the food that is set before me. Nay, I am as intimately persuaded of my moral liberty as I am of my very existence; for it is the same interior monitor that makes me conscious of both. This vital principle within me is as worthy of belief when it tells me that I am free, as when it tells me that I exist.'

Deprive a man of this freedom and what better is he than a running engine, put in motion by the engineer? Deprive a man of this attribute and he deserves no credit for whatever good he may do. Rob a man of this boon, and it is a crime to punish the criminal; rob a man of this precious jewel, and God becomes the author of every crime, committed in this world.

You see then, Thomas, moral freedom elevates man. God indeed foresaw the abuse of this freedom; but His fore-knowledge does not deprive Him of the right of conferring favors upon His creatures, who thereby are made responsible for their own acts. You seem to consider God unmerciful for conferring blessings upon you. Indeed it proves His unbounded mercy; for God knew, that this freedom would be abused to insult Him.

Finally, it was God's will, that it should depend upon our own choice, whether we would enter

heaven: but had we not received moral freedom, this would be impossible."

Thomas: "Speaking of heaven reminds me of its opposite, hell. Father, do you believe in everlasting punishment? Justice, of course, demands some punishment, but it does look unreasonable, that a merciful Father should punish an erring child forever and ever."

Father: "You uphold the Universalists, who teach that all men will finally be saved. Indeed a few days ago a fine fellow went a step further; 'I cannot see, he argued, why God does not pardon the poor devil. He demands of us what he refuses to do Himself; He asks us to pardon all men, even our enemies, but He Himself declines pardoning the devil.'

Thomas, let me appeal to your reason. Do you believe in the justice of God?"

Thomas: "Indeed I do. Justice is an essential attribute of God."

Father: "Do you believe, that a just God will punish sin as long as it lasts?"

Thomas: "Of course, I do."

Father: "Very well; but, when a man leaves this world in a state of mortal sin, does it not last forever?"

Thomas: "I believe I must answer this question in the affirmative. Unless I do so, you will require me to prove the possibility of conversion in the world to come, not to speak of the sinner's very probable

neglect to do there, what he refused to do here. This, of course would be a very unpleasant task."

Father: "Consequently, the belief in hell or everlasting punishment is reasonable.

Furthermore, Thomas, deny hell and the sinner will eventually triumph over God. Just think of it; the thief could say: I know, O God, you have forbidden me to appropriate the property of my neighbor: but as to your commandments I care not a straw. The time will come, when you must take me into your house and I shall be there in spite of You. I know You have legislated against impurity; but since it is so pleasing to frail nature and You cannot punish forever, I shall gratify my passions. Heaven will be the portion of the impure as well as the pure.

To this punishment the Sacred Scriptures refer almost on every page. Let us, however, take into consideration one verse only. In St. Matthew we read: 'These shall go into *everlasting* punishment, but the just into life *everlasting*.' (25:46.) Here the word *everlasting* occurs twice in the same sentence; once in connection with *punishment*, and again in connection with *life*. As to the latter, all Universalists agree, that *everlasting* means *never-ending*, no doubt because here a favor is extended. But by what authority can they claim, that the word has not the *same* meaning in the former case?

Once a Universalist asked me the following question: 'Do you Catholics believe in hell?' Yes, Sir! was the reply. After pausing a little, he said: 'You

must be a happy people for you expect the worst and therefore you will never be disappointed.'

In conclusion, says our Cardinal so beautifully: 'I admit you will now say, that the punishment may be just, but how can you reconcile it with our ideas of divine clemency?'

God is, indeed, infinitely merciful, but His mercy cannot absorb His other attributes; it cannot run counter to His justice, His sancity, and that moral order He has established in the world. The higher appreciation one has for benevolence, truth, chastity and moral rectitude, the greater is his antipathy to the opposite vices. Now, God whose love for virtue knows no bounds must by the very nature of His Being have an immeasurable aversion for all iniquity, and therefore He can never be reconciled to the sinner, so long as he voluntarily clings to his sin. God exults not in the sufferings of His creatures, but in the manifestation of His eternal attributes.

Again, God is indeed merciful, but He never forces His mercy on any man. He never does violence to our free-will, which is a precious, though a perilous boon. He wishes, indeed, the salvation of all men; but He wishes also that man's will should remain free. He desires, therefore, our eternal happiness by every means short of destroying our freedom of action. He gives grace to *incline* our heart, not to coerce it. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But how can we hope to be saved, if repentance be wanting? The

OBJECTIONS TO RELIGION

humble and contrite heart He will not despise; but if the heart is neither humble nor contrite, what can you expect? To the cry for pardon He ever listens, but what if that cry is never heard? And if a man will persistently rebel against the appeals of paternal love, he has no one but himself to blame for the consequences. If a drowning man refuses to seize the life-preserver within his grasp, he is solely responsible for his unhappy fate. And if a man prefers to be borne down by the tide of passion rather than listen to the inspirations of grace, he alone is to blame. The Prodigal Son never reproached his indulgent father, but himself for the miseries that followed his dissipated life.' ”

Thomas: “Father, do not imagine, that I am inimical to the churches. If you think so, you are mistaken. I like all churches. They keep the common people in restraint and over the weaker sex they have a calming influence. But we men of reason need not trouble ourselves about these minor affairs.”

Father: “I am surprised at you. You boast of reason but you dethrone it. It is very unreasonable to like all churches. On a given question, the doctrines of these churches are conflicting: one church says, no; the other, yes. Now, to say: I like the teaching of both, conflicting as they are, practically means this: I like lies as well as the truth. Consequently, to be consistent, even *we men must like one church only.*

Furthermore, either God has spoken or He has

not; if He has, we men as well as the ladies and common people are bound to listen. On the other hand, if He has not, why impose upon the weaker people a burden, which they are not bound to carry? They have as much right to the truth as we have, and it is very ungentlemanly to deprive them. In the long run, falsehood will not have a restraining and calming influence over the hearts of men."

Thomas: "In business, competition is the life of trade. To promote emulation among the members it is good to have many churches. Hence, I believe, God delights in them."

Father: "God, being truth itself, can not delight in falsehood. He is the God of truth and the devil is the *Father of lies*. Even men, respectable men, are highly insulted by accusing them of lies. What an insult must it then be to God, to accuse Him of taking delight in falsehood? This you necessarily do, Thomas, by saying, God delights in conflicting churches. It is to destroy one of the attributes of God—sanctity. To deny Him this attribute, is to deny His existence. Therefore the objection must fall to the ground.

Furthermore, can there be no emulation without having recourse to lies? Should this be the case, I would always try to be on the side of truth. Suppose a father having two sons. They quarrel all day about the product of 2×2 . Dick, the older, insists that $2 \times 2 = 4$, whereas Harry, the younger, says that $2 \times 2 = 5$. The emulation grows fever-high. The

dispute ends in a row, followed by severe blows and broken skulls. Would the father of these boys delight in such emulation, caused by the lie: $2 \times 2 = 5$? Hence, God can not delight in conflicting doctrines."

Thomas: "What a monotonous world this would be if all men were to think alike! It takes all kinds of people to make a world."

Father: "To make a world, Thomas, it is certainly not *necessary*, to have people believing in false doctrines. All intelligent men agree on this: $2 - 2 = 4$; $4 - 3 = 1$; $3 \times 2 = 6$; $10 \div 2 = 5$. But who considers this monotonous? If the business world were not to agree on this, were not to think alike, what disturbances, what rows, what law-suits would ensue? Society would be in a state of continual turmoil.

To teach false doctrines and to tell a lie is one and the same thing. Now, Thomas, imagine a church telling a lie for the sake of breaking the monotony. A lie is something bad in itself; you may whitewash it all the days of your life and yet it will always remain a black lie.

In this great world, there is enough to break the monotony without having recourse to falsehood. Suppose a family, consisting of father and mother, sons and daughters. 'They are one heart and one soul.' Every member is perfectly satisfied; each performs his duty without a murmur; there is no jar—no friction; the happiness of the household is supreme. Who would not envy that family? And

the words: *How happy they are!* would fall from every lip. They are happy because they *think alike*. In like manner the religious world should constitute one family, of which God, who can not contradict Himself, who can not represent to you and me the same thing as true and false at the same time, is the Father. To Him it must be a source of pleasure to see us of one mind, love one another, be resigned to His holy will, do what He commands and believe what He proposes to our belief, no more and no less. *Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum.* Ps. 132: 1. 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.' "

Thomas: "Churches are like roads. Many roads lead into the same town. Hence, one church is as good as another."

Father: "This may seem plausible to a superficial thinker; but people who give the objection a second thought must see its fallacy, its sophistry. It is Talmage's great hobby. He compares the various churches to so many railroads running from New York City to Chicago. Perhaps, Thomas, you read this, and because a man of notoriety says so, you take it for granted, it must be so. Exercise your reason and do not surrender your thinking-faculty. While it is true, that many roads lead into the same town, it is not true, that crossing the right road will lead into the town. There is no contradiction in saying that many roads lead into the same town,

though some may be better, shorter and more picturesque than others. However, there is a contradiction in saying this of cross-roads.

Imagine yourself five miles from Cannelton in a nice, level country; in a country where all roads are on the section line. You are a stranger—Cannelton is your destination. You meet a gentleman at the cross-roads, and you ask: which road leads to Cannelton? He replies, one is as good as the other. Instead of continuing your journey from East to West, you turn North or South, would you arrive at Cannelton? No. Why not? *Because one road is not as good as another*, especially, when it leads you from instead of to Cannelton. In like manner two churches, teaching doctrines contrary to each other, are *cross-roads* to one another; consequently both can not lead to God, who can not contradict Himself, whose church must be one, as He is one. Hence, one church is not as good as another."

Thomas: "There is not much difference between one church and another. Hence, it is immaterial to which one we belong."

Father: "Theoretically, people seem to believe that there is 'not much difference,' but practically they believe the reverse. To test a man's faith, you need but appeal to his purse, and you will be astonished how sensitive his reasoning faculties are. No man, really believing that there is no difference between one church and another, and having already a church within his square, will pass this church, go

into his pocket, sacrifice his dollars and cents and build a church five squares off, which church he attends regularly every Sunday. We American people are too practical; we have too much sense to pursue so wild a course. If people are willing to part with what is next to their heart, part with their money, hard-earned money, money soaked in the sweat of their brow, to erect a church when several churches are in sight, they must believe that there is considerable difference between one and another. And they are right, there is a great difference. The Universalist teaches, for instance, that all men will finally be saved, whereas the other Protestants assure us that the wicked will be consigned to everlasting flames. Is this not a great difference? Even if but one soul should be lost, it would still be a great difference. Let us suppose, however, that there is *not much* difference, it would make one or the other church false. What pleasure would God, the eternal truth, take in a false church? Think of associating God with falsehood until dooms-day: 'I am with you all days, even to the consumation of the world;' " Matt. 28: 20.

Thomas: "All churches agree on essentials. Hence, all are good.

Father: "I fear, Thomas, you are simply repeating what you have heard some men say, men who imagine they are smart, because they have fine beards, wear nice clothes, sport gold watches and chains, and on account of their wealth stand high in

society. Learn to think for yourself and do not ape ignorant people. After a moment's consideration, you can not utter such nonsense. Ask the Evangelical Church whether baptism is essential to salvation and her teachers will answer in the affirmative. Ask the M. E. Church and the answer to the same question is negative. Ask reason and it will say: Baptism is either necessary or it is not necessary—Christ either said so or he did not say so—there is no medium. The Christian adores Christ as the Son of the living God. The Jew on the other hand denies Him this adoration. Why? Because the synagogue teaches him that Christ is a mere man, a man like other men. Thomas, do you see any essential difference in this? Consequently it is ridiculous to say that the churches agree on essentials. Christ is either God or He is not God; if He is; the Jew must be wrong."

Thomas: "We all believe in the same God."

Father: "Indeed we do not. The heathens do not believe in the God of the Jews. The Jews in turn do not believe in the God of the Christians, since they do not believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ. Take the conflicting doctrines of the so-called orthodox churches, and the *same* God could not recognize them as His, because He cannot contradict Himself."

Thomas: "As far as the divinity of Jesus Christ is concerned other people besides the Jews call it in

question. One thing, however, all must admit: He was a *good man*."

Father: "No *good* man pretends to be what he is not. Jesus Christ not only made pretensions to, but positively proclaimed His divinity. Therefore, if He is not God, He was a *bad man*."

Thomas: "Provided we go to heaven, it matters not what we believe."

Father: "*Provided*, of course. But here comes the tug of war. For what must we *provide*? Suppose a stranger meets you at the cross-roads and asks you for the road leading to his destination, and you reply: it matters not what road you take, *provided* you get there. Would your answer satisfy him? By no means. He would consider you a fit subject for the lunatic asylum. To arrive at his destination, he must take (*provide for*, if you choose) the right road. In like manner to go to heaven we must follow the road pointed out by Jesus Christ. 'Not every one, that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth* the *will* of my Father, who is in heaven, he shall enter the kingdom of heaven.' (Matt. 7:21.) Hence it does matter *what we do and believe*."

Thomas: "When we get to heaven we shall not be asked, to what church did we belong?"

Father: "*When we get to heaven*, I admit; but *before we get to heaven* we will be asked that question at the particular judgment. 'It is appointed for men once to die and after this the judgment;'

Heb. 9:27. 'He that believeth not shall be condemned;' Mark 16: 16.

Thomas, buy your friend a Christmas gift that will cost \$10.00. He receives it rather coolly—he looks as sober as a judge—not a smile plays upon his lips—no thanks are expressed: will you buy him a present next Christmas? No. Why not? Because he had insulted you by not appreciating your gift. But see at what expense Christ has offered us the gift of faith. He left His father's house, came into this miserable world, became a helpless child, suffered hunger and thirst, heat and cold, subjected himself to all kinds of persecution, bloody sweat, scourging at the pillar, crowning of thorns, crucifixion. And yet in spite of all this, He should be so indifferent as not even to ask, whether we belonged to His church or not; whether we embraced or rejected His doctrines? Surely, if the heathens, the Mormons and the Jews stand as good a chance as the true Christian, then I ask, why did Christ go to the trouble of establishing His church? Thomas, this is so ridiculous, that it requires no other argument."

Thomas: "A man should live and die in the religion in which he was born. I have no use for *turn-coats*."

Father: "Thomas, what you say can not stand the test of reason. If a man is born in the true religion, he should of course cling to it to the very last; if not, he should retrace his steps at once. Convince me that the Catholic Church is wrong and I will

leave it before sun-down. I would do exactly what a reasonable traveler does. Tell him he is on the wrong road, and he will retrace his steps, and wheel right about. Should he not do so, you would pass him for a fool. If your doctrine were true, Thomas, then the heathen, having become enlightened, should continue to worship plants, trees, stones, heifers and crocodiles; the Jew should continue to deny our Lord, Jesus Christ; the Mormons should continue to preach polygamy.

You say you have no use for *turn-coats*, what use have you then for Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and Henry VIII? all *turn-coats*, because all were born Catholics. You have as much right to turn your coat as they did, with the additional reason that you turn your coat back to the right way."

Thomas: "My parents are Protestants; their religion shall be my religion."

Father: "On religion Protestants are divided. If I am not mistaken, you admitted this by saying that your mother belonged to the Lutheran, and your father to the Baptist Church. The one differs from the other; will you belong to both? It is the only way to make their religion your religion. Your Lutheran mother says: baptism is essential to salvation, but your Baptist father retorts: the *old lady* is mistaken, baptism is not essential to salvation; it is nothing but a form of initiation. Here is a contradiction; parent against parent. To believe in their religion is nonsense, pure and simple."

Thomas: "Should my parents be lost, I wish to share their fate. No true son could be happy in heaven, when his parents are suffering the torments of hell."

Father: "Common sense teaches us, Thomas, that one church only can be true, since God cannot contradict Himself: He positively said: 'Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church' (not churches). Matt. 16:18. And indeed we should be weak in the faith, were we to believe, that any other church but the Catholic could be meant. It is true, we teach: *Out of the church there is no salvation*; but we teach also, that no one is held responsible for what he could not possibly know; that no one is sent to hell unless it be through his own fault. For instance, suppose a person belonging to a false church; a person leading to the best of his knowledge a blameless life; a person who is heartily sorry for all past sins, who is firmly resolved to sin no more, who would willingly renounce error and embrace the truth, if it were made known to him: this person, we hold, may be saved, not however through the false church, which like bad medicine has no saving qualities, but through the grace of God, which operates where it will.

Furthermore, Thomas, even if you do die in the faith of your parents, it does not necessarily secure the desired reunion in the world to come. Your parents, deprived of your opportunities, may through the grace of God be saved; whereas to you may be

applied the words of the Rt. Rev. Fr. S. Chatard, D. D., Bp. of Vincennes: 'The moment however, they begin to doubt, and fail to follow up the doubt, and find the truth, that moment they put themselves in the wrong, they remain in their bad faith; and saving faith with them, while in that state, is no longer possible.' (Christian Truths, p. 92.) Remember also, Thomas, you are within hearing of a catholic bell, surrounded by catholic neighbors, having at your command catholic books and papers. Finally, divested on the judgment day of all carnal love, we shall see things as they are and recognize in them the justice of God. We shall see the stern necessity of rewarding the good and punishing the wicked; we shall judge as God judges, think as God thinks; in short the will of God will be our will."

Thomas: "It matters not what a man believes, provided he does what is right."

Father. "What you say, Thomas, involves a contradiction. It implies that a man may believe a thing and do just the reverse. In plain language it would be to play the part of a hypocrite. If it matters not what a man believes, then he may believe that truth is falsehood and falsehood truth; that black is white and white is black; that there is no God, no devil, no heaven, no hell, no sacraments; that Christ is not God, that He established no church. The heathen may believe in the worship of sun, moon and stars, the Jew in Judaism, the Mormon in Mormonism and the Anarchist in Anarchy, provided

he throws no bombshells at the Haymarkets of the world. You may believe it right to steal—provided you do not steal. You may believe that $8 \times 2 = 15$, provided the storekeeper does not object when you pay the bill.

To do right, Thomas, covers more ground than you imagine. By this phrase you merely mean not to kill, not to overreach the neighbor in a business transaction. Herein lies your mistake. *To do right* is to do the will of God. What He wills must be right, because, being infinitely perfect, he can not will anything wrong. Surely you will not say: To God it matters not what we believe. Not even a father can be indifferent to the faith of his child, much less God, to whom we must give an account of every idle word. 'They shall render an account for it in the day of judgment.'" Matt. 12:36.

Thomas: "I am as good as those who belong to the church; in fact I am better than many. Hence, I need not join the church."

Father: "How do you know, Thomas, that you are better than others? Who appointed you judge? Perhaps you are a self-constituted one. To be a competent judge, we must be capable of looking into the hearts of men, must know all the *ins and outs*; otherwise it would be rash to draw a comparison.

To all appearances some people not belonging to the church are better citizens than some of its members. But this is no argument against the church.

Because there are counterfeit dollars in circulation, you will surely not draw the conclusion that there is no genuine dollar, or that this genuine dollar must not find its way into your pocket.

Let us suppose a practical case. You see a church member intoxicated. At once the thought comes to your mind; how wicked that man is, a church-member too—look at him—if this is religion, I will have nothing to do with it.

You are right, Thomas; brand drunkenness as much as you please—it is wicked, it is scandalous; but to brand religion itself, because a certain man refuses to submit to its dictates is ridiculous in the extreme.

Furthermore, drunkenness is a weakness rather than malice. Premeditated drunkenness is the exception. As a rule it is jolly companions that make people indulge too freely.

But remember, my friend, *you*, sober man as you are, refuse to embrace the truths handed down from heaven by God Himself, sealed with his sacred and precious blood. This is not weakness, but malice premeditated. Consequently *you*, too proud and haughty to bend the knee before your Maker, must be more of an eye-sore to Him than the man, who, pointed at by the finger of shame, is perchance through human frailty wallowing in the mire of the streets. Well may a drunkard say on the judgment-day: It is true, my God, I have been a sinner, I have yielded to the temptation of drink, I have

scandalized my fellow man; but one thing I did not do; I did not deny Thy coming into the world; I did not treat Thy teaching with utter contempt by positively refusing to accept it; I have never been so proud, so stubborn and malicious.

Finally, Thomas, take the following points into consideration:

1. If all people were what they should be, there would be no necessity for the establishment of a church. It is the sick that require the physician.

2. No man is so great a sinner that he could not be greater. Hence the church may have great influence over the evil-doers by preventing them from falling lower, and

3. If for you the wicked in the church are stumbling blocks, if you have a right to disown her on this account, then you also have the right to say: I am going to turn traitor to my government, the glorious government of the United States, because it harbors thieves and rascals. The one is as ridiculous as the other."

SHORT LINE TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

PART II.

HOW TO FIND THE TRUE CHURCH.

Thomas: "You divest me of all the respect I had for the so-called churches. I am now willing to admit, that one church only is and can be true. But now the question arises: Which is the true church? If divines, making religion the study of their life, differ on this all important question, how can a young man, with a limited education and compelled by necessity to work for a living, arrive at the truth, since so many conflicting churches present their claims and all pretend to base their doctrines on the Bible?"

Father: "At first sight I admit, Thomas, it looks bewildering. Yet the labor is not so hard as you imagine. With your permission I shall sketch for you the outlines; I shall point out the route, which will necessarily lead you to the truth. To save time and labor, not to speak of the expense entailed, it will of course be a *Short Line*. Hence, let us answer the following questions:

1. Could Jesus Christ establish a church?

The question is its own answer. He is the Son of God.

2. Had He a right to establish the Christian Church?

Who will dare question it? It is the Master's right to command and the subject's duty to obey, especially if the relationship between the two is that of creator and creature. The creator's rights over the creature are absolute.

3. Did He establish a church?

This is an undisputed historical fact, a fact recorded not only in Catholic, but also Protestant and Pagan histories.

4. When did He establish His Church?

More than 1800 years ago, proved to demonstration according to the combined testimony of all histories.

5. In the founding of His Church did He teach positive doctrines?

Of course. This is proven:

By reason. A church without positive doctrines is like a government without laws—no government at all.

Suppose a king about to leave his subjects. To them he says: *On my return I shall call you to a strict account.* But he leaves them no laws in accordance with which they are to be judged; each one is to guess what the king's will is; his law has not been promulgated. Would any sane man consider the king's procedure reasonable? Could not his subjects say to him on his return: Lord, you did not tell us what to do and what to avoid—you

did not lay the law down for us; hence you have no right to judge us according to it. As far as we are concerned your law had no existence whatever.

In like manner, to establish a church without laying down the law—without telling us what to do and believe to be saved, on what conditions salvation is granted—is unreasonable and tyrannous in the extreme. A church, constituted without positive doctrines, would condemn the mission of Christ.

By the Scriptures. 'He that believeth not shall be condemned' (Mark 16:16.) Believe what? Something indefinite, vague, on the imaginary order? Impossible. The salvation of a soul is too serious a matter. 'Teaching them to observe all things, whatever I have commanded you;' Matt. 28:20. Teach what? Something at random, a kind of *what-you-please* doctrine? No; but what He has taught, neither more nor less. 'He that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;' Matt. 7:21. If our entrance into heaven depends upon our doing the will of God, His will must be known to us. Hence reason as well as the Scriptures teach us, that the doctrines of the church of Christ must be distinctly defined.

6. For whom has Christ established His church?

For all—Jew and Gentile. The Jewish Church was established especially for the Jewish nation; the Christian for all nations: 'Go ye, therefore, teach all nations;' Matt. 28:19.

If the church was established for all nations, it follows that she must be the same throughout all ages; in other words she must be infallible in her teachings, she must teach the succeeding generation what she taught the preceding one; hand down to the end of time whole and uncorrupted the truths revealed by God.

7. Could God make His Church endure to the end of time?

No doubt, but He could! He is God. Imagine a contractor building you a house. You give him a large sum of money for it, but you have hardly moved into it, before it tumbles down: would you not say, the man does not know his business?

8. Would He do so?

Why not? He loved His Church most tenderly. 'He sealed the foundation of His Church with the life-blood of His heart.' (Faith of our Fathers.) If a man were to build a house at an enormous expense and neglect to preserve it, you would put him down as a foolish spendthrift. Think of launching a costly ship on high sea with no reliable compass, without competent manning. Can we fancy an infinitely wise God of being guilty of what we creatures would be ashamed?

9. Did He do so?

At least He says so, and whose word is more reliable? 'Upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;' Matt. 16:18. If the Church, as Protestants say,

has taught false doctrines, then the gates of hell have prevailed and Christ told a *lie*. Take your choice, there is no medium. For my part, I shall cling to the words of Christ. It is blasphemous to say—yes, to think that he told a deliberate falsehood.

‘I am with you all days, even to the consumation of the world;’ Matt. 28: 20.

Imagine, if you can, the Son of God abiding with a false church one single moment. Reason revolts at the bare suspicion, that a just God would bind us under the penalty of eternal damnation to obey a church teaching false doctrines. ‘He that believeth not shall be damned.’ Mark 16: 16.

Luther, himself, the father of the Reformation, believed in the infallibility of the church. ‘Most Holy Father,’ he writes to the Pope, ‘prostrate at the feet of your Holiness, I offer myself with all that I am and have. Vivify, kill, call, recall, approve, condemn, as you please; I will acknowledge your voice as the voice of Christ, who presides and speaks in you. If I have deserved death, I will not refuse to die. For the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, who is blessed forever. Amen. May He also preserve you forever. Amen. Anno MDXVIII. *Resolutiones Disputationum M. Luther de indulgentiarum virtute*. If we may believe De Wette, Professor of Basle and great admirer of Luther, this letter was written May 30, 1518. According to the same De Wette, Vol. I., Luther wrote March 3, 1519: ‘Now, Most Holy Father, before God and every

creature of His, I declare that I have not intended, and to-day also, I do not intend in any way to touch, or by any artifice (*versutia*) to destroy the power of the Roman Church and of your Holiness; on the contrary I most fully confess that the power of the Church is above all, and that nothing, either in heaven or on earth, is to be preferred to it, except only Jesus Christ, the Lord of all.'

This is strong language. It is true, however, a few days later, March the 13th, he wrote to Spalatin: 'I do not know whether the Pope is Anti-Christ himself or his apostle.' DeWette, Vol. I, 239, 240. In short as the light of Reformation progressed, the infallibility of the Church waned, and Luther's own infallible authority waxed stronger. Hear what he says: 'I am certain that I have my teaching from heaven.' *Contra Henericum*, A. 1522, p. 7.

'My doctrines will stand and the Pope will fall, notwithstanding all the gates of hell, and all the powers of the air, the land and the sea.' *ibidem*, p. 7.

The Pope has not yet fallen and to judge from present appearances is not likely to fall very soon.

'I will not allow it (his teachings) to be judged by anybody, not even by any of the angels. For since I am certain of it, I intend by means of it, to be your judge and also (as St. Paul says) that of the angels; so that whoever does not accept *my* teaching can not be saved. For it is God's and not mine. Therefore my judgment is at the same time

God's and not mine.' (Luther's Work Against Pope and Bishops, p 3.)

This is infallibility, pure and simple. He arrogates to himself what he denies the Pope. But be this as it may, Luther believes in infallibility.

10. If there be an infallible church, which is it?

It must be the first one, the one established by Jesus Christ more than 1800 years ago. And this is the Roman Catholic Church, frequently called the *Mother-Church* by Protestants as well as Catholics. Read history, Catholic and non-Catholic, and on every page you find the traces of this *Mother-Church*—she is the all-absorbing topic. Look at the long line of Popes, whose names are mentioned in history, whose deeds are recorded. No student familiar with history can deny that the Roman Catholic Church has existed more than 1800 years. The very Reformation proves it. What was to be reformed? The Church. What Church? The Roman Catholic Church. Why? Because, as was alleged, she erred—taught false doctrines. All the energies of the reformers, though divided among themselves, were directed against the Catholic Church. Hence, she is prior in existence; hence, if Christ made his Church infallible, which He could and should have done, aye, if we may take His word, has done; then the Roman Catholic Church must be the true one. It necessarily follows, Thomas, that you should think it worth your while, when you make your choice, to examine the claims

of the Roman Catholic first. For Protestants are divided among themselves; Protestantism is and has been from the beginning divided into a thousand and one religious fragments. It is much easier to examine united Catholicism than disunited Protestantism—easier to examine one church than a hundred churches.”

Thomas: “What you say is reasonable indeed. But, Father, look here! All agree, that in matters of religion the Bible is the ‘Rule of Faith;’ in other words, it is our teacher. Yet there are so many churches, contradicting each other. To me this looks bewildering.”

Father: “You are mistaken, Thomas, all do not agree. On this question Catholics and non-Catholics are divided. With non-Catholics the *Rule of faith* is the Scripture as interpreted by each person’s private judgment, or, as many express themselves, *The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible.* ‘The Bible alone,’ then, is the non-Catholic rule of faith.

On the other hand, Catholics maintain that the Church established by Christ is the divinely-constituted teacher in matters of faith and morals. Hence, they say: *I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.*

If the Bible, then, is the *Rule of Faith* for Protestants, and the Church for Catholics, either non-Catholics must be right, and Catholics wrong; or *vice versa.* When two contradict each other, both may be in error, but one must necessarily be

so. For instance, two boys write a composition on a certain colt. One says: It is as black as pitch; and the other: It is as white as snow. Evidently, one of the boys must be badly mistaken—the colt can not be white and black at the same time. In like manner, there being no third rule, either Catholics or non-Catholics must be mistaken.

But, I think I can prove beyond a reasonable doubt, that the weight of evidence is on our side of the house. In doing so, I shall quote from the Bible freely, not because we consider it above the Church, the latter being older than the Bible, but because I wish to prove by the Bible itself (the great and undisputed authority among non-Catholics.) that it does not set itself up as a teacher, that it favors not the Protestant, but the Catholic *Rule of Faith.*”

Thomas: “Was the Bible the *Rule of faith in the days of our Divine Savior?*”

Father: “No. Why not? Simply because it had then no existence. Was it possible, I ask, for the first Christians to get instructions from a book which did not exist? Did Christ write anything himself? No. Oh! I am mistaken—He did, on a certain occasion, write on sand,—but I presume there is no record of that writing,—the winds effaced it. Did He commission the Apostles to write? No, for the directions to St. John in the Revelations to write to the Churches of Asia are merely prophecies of warning, addressed to individuals. If the Bible was to

be the sole rule of faith, why did not the Savior write a copy? Why did He not multiply it, as he multiplied the loaves and the fishes? He might have invented a press, opened a printing-office, appointed St. John type-setter, St. Matthew proof-reader, St. Peter book-binder, and all the other Apostles, Bible agents. He might have invented a reading machine, because in those days, reading was a luxury; and on Main street, in the city of Jerusalem, he might have hung out His sign with the grand inscription: *Bible Printing Office! Join no other religion. Read and think for yourselves unto the consummation of the world!*

Would not this have been a Yankee trick,—and a smart one too,—and a paying one besides? But Christ said and did nothing of the kind—therefore the implied blasphemies we have repeated are not at all applicable to our Lord and Savior. On the contrary, take your own authority, the *Bible alone*,—take one Evangelist after the other,—and see what He *did* say:

‘Go ye, therefore, and *teach* all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; *teaching* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you (necessarily your successors) all days, even to the consummation of the world.’ (Matt. 28 : 19, 20.)

Again, says the same Evangelist: ‘And if he will

not *hear the Church*, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican.' (18 : 17.)

'Go ye into the whole world, and *preach* the Gospel to every creature.' (Mark 16 : 15.)

'He that *heareth* you, *heareth* me; and he that *despiseth* you, *despiseth* me; and he that *despiseth* me, *despiseth* him that sent me.' (Luke 10 : 16.)

'These things have I *spoken* to you, remaining with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will *teach* you all things, and *bring all things to your mind*, whatsoever I shall have *said* to you.' (John 14 : 25, 26.)

Suppose you had an important law-suit, and four of your own most important witnesses were to swear against you, would you not feel *blue*? And don't you see that the Evangelists, your four principal witnesses, not to speak of other sacred writers, (whom, in the meanwhile, I am keeping in the rear, and whom I shall soon call on the witness stand) are swearing against you and your *Rule of faith*."

Thomas: "But, Father, remember the words of our Savior: 'Search the Scriptures.' If these words are not unmistakable in their meaning, I am at a loss to know what is plain."

Father: "Under what Dispensation do we live? Evidently, under the New. However, not a word of the New Testament was written, when our Redeemer said: 'Search the Scriptures.' It is very probable that our Lord did not speak as if commanding, but merely alluded to the fact that His auditors did

search to verify His references to the Old Testament. But granting that He did; the Savior evidently only utilized the pretension of his opponents, who *thought* they found in the Scriptures everlasting life, in order that they might really find the Old Testament *did give testimony of Him*.

You have no right to take a phrase of our Lord, wrench it out of its context and distort its meaning. There was no New Testament—not a letter of it written. Christ could not possibly allude to it. The Rule of Faith was the Savior—God's own unerring word, which the Apostles were to preach to their generation and teach their successors to hand down, by His special divine promise and aid, whole and unadulterated, to every age and nation. His character and miracles were the guarantee He offered to prove Himself truly God. He delivered over to the Apostles, and stood pledged that they should infallibly deliver to *their* successors, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Now, they might and did do this both by writing and by word of mouth—and this is what we call that unerring Tradition by which Christ's whole doctrine and whole law is taught from age to age.

Consequently, this is what our Savior meant:

If you do not believe my words, if you have no confidence in my works, wonderful as they are,—if you think more of the Old Testament than you do of me, go and *search* that sacred Book, and you shall find that I am the Messiah, promised by God

in the garden of Eden, longed after by the Patriarchs, foretold and described by the Prophets. But did they, the Jews, recognize the Savior after *Searching the Scriptures*? No, they crucified Him."

Thomas: "Your argument strikes me forcibly. But the Bible may have been the *Rule of faith* in the apostolic age."

Father: "The Apostles never saw the Bible as we know it. An Italian theologian has remarked that when the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles at Pentecost, he came not in the form of *pens* of fire wherewith to *write* the Gospel, but of *tongues* of fire wherewith to *preach* it. You will admit that St. John closed the sacred volume on the island of Patmos, at the end of his life, when the other eleven were dead and buried. In all probability, St. John himself never saw our Scriptures. The several books had been written at different times by different men, and sent to different nations: Romans, Hebrews, Galatians, Corinthians; nations, hundreds of miles apart,—at a time when there were no telegraph wires, no telephone lines, no railroads, no steamboats.

If the Bible was to be the Rule of Faith, St. John should have collected the various Epistles and Gospels, bound them together, and written in a postscript, thus: 'We do hold and declare that this book is, and shall be, the teacher of all nations until the consummation of the world. Witness my hand and seal.' But did he do this? No. On the con-

trary, he and the other Apostles follow the example of the Savior, and say effectively, that the Bible is *not* the Rule of Faith.

Non-Catholics say: 'It is all in the Bible.' But St. John denies it flatly: 'There are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written.' (21 : 25.)

Here are more examples of rightful Tradition:

'Having more things to write to you, I would not by paper and ink: for I hope, that I shall be with you, and *speaking face to face*; that your joy may be full.' (2 John 1 : 12.)

Non-Catholics say: 'Do not believe in traditions, take the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible.' But St. Paul says just the contrary: 'Brethren, stand *firm* and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by epistle.' (2 Thess. 2 : 14.)

Again: 'The things which thou hast *heard* from me before many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to *teach* others also.' (2 Tim. 2 : 2.)

Non-Catholics say: 'Do not pin your religion to the coat-tail of any minister,—read, and judge for yourself.' St. Paul says, on the contrary: 'Obey your prelates, and be subject to them, for they watch as being to render an account of your souls.' (Heb. 13 : 17.)

Again: 'How shall they believe him of whom they have not *heard*? And how shall they *hear* without a *preacher*? And how can they *preach* unless they be sent?' (Rom. 10 : 14, 15.)

In the Acts we read: 'The Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to *rule* the Church of God.' [20 : 28.] St. Paul was not told to go and read, but: 'Arise, and go into city; and there it shall be *told thee* what thou must do.' [Acts 9 : 7.]

When Philip found the Ethiopian sitting in his chariot, and reading the prophet Isaiah, he said to him: 'Thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou readest? [and] he said: How can I, unless some one *show me*.' [Acts 8 : 30, 31.] Philip instructed him, and he was baptized. Consequently, in the days of the Apostles, the Bible was not the 'Rule of Faith.'

Thomas: "Was the Bible the Rule of Faith within *four hundred years after Christ*?"

Father: "No. Why not? In the first place, the Bible, as we have it to-day, was only then fairly collected together. In the second place, in those days there were shams and humbugs, and men sailed under false colors. In the name of one or the other Apostle, false Gospels and false Epistles made their appearance. Breckenridge, in his great debate with Archbishop Hughes, admits that spurious scriptures were out as late as A. D. 364. If I am not mistaken, the matter was brought before the Council of Carthage, A. D. 397. The various books,

said to be inspired, were collected, fanned, and sifted; the chaff was separated from the wheat,—false Gospels and spurious Epistles were thrown overboard. In short, there and then it was decided, which books are inspired, and which are not. And this is part of true Tradition.

St. Irenæus, a disciple of St. Polycarp, [in *his* turn a disciple of St. John] says: ‘Supposing the Apostles had not left us the Scriptures, ought we not still to have followed the ordinance of tradition which they consigned to those to whom they committed the churches? It is this ordinance of tradition, which many nations of barbarians believing in Christ follow without the use of letters and ink.’ [*Iren. adv. Haeres, LIV. 6 : 64.*] In his book of Prescription, pp. 36, 37, Tertullian substantially uses the same language. Consequently, the Bible was not the Rule of Faith during the first 400 years after Christ.”

Thomas: “Was the Bible the Rule of Faith from A. D. 400 to *the time when the art of printing was invented?*”

Father: “Think of all the people living during those centuries; think of the many languages spoken; think of what a task it must have been to write the whole Bible with a pen. The labor entailed must have been enormous. The cost of a Bible was from one to three thousand dollars. Consequently, during the first 1400 or 1500 years, Bible-reading was not common. A first-class teacher may reside

in the city of New York, but what good does he do *me*, if he does not come to me, or if I cannot go to him? Is it reasonable to suppose that God would appoint a teacher who did not, and would not, visit his pupils for a space of 1500 years?"

Thomas: "To-day, however, the Bible alone is the surest and the best Rule of Faith. This no man can nor will deny."

Father: "You are mistaken, Thomas. Were this true, either Christ or the apostles should have told us so. But the contrary has been demonstrated. It is agreed among the learned that the Scriptures were intended not so much to *teach* as to *prove* doctrine. In the first place, the sacred volume was not intended for a Catechism, or a book of instructions. Its authors came to no mutual understanding. They wrote at divers times, from different places as the circumstances dictated. This is admitted by Grotius, a celebrated Protestant writer, in his 582d letter: 'The Apostles had no intention of giving in their Epistles a lengthy exposition of the doctrines necessary to salvation; they wrote as the occasion arose, to answer questions which had been asked.'

In the second place, how many are there, to-day, even in our own country,—a country which lavishly spends millions and millions in favor of education, a country which raises a school-house in sight of every citizen,—tell me, how many are there in our own country that can not read?

In the third place, how many are there who understand what they read?"

Thomas: "Oh Father! the Bible is so plain, that fools can understand it."

Father: "My friend, St. Peter does not agree with you. Speaking of the writings of St. Paul, he says: 'In which are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as also the other Scriptures, to their own perdition.' (2 Peter 3 : 16.) Luther, the father of Protestantism, confirms this: 'It is impossible to fathom the Scriptures; we can only skip over their surface; to understand their sense would be a wonder.' (Audin's *Life of Luther*, Book ii.)

What does *your own experience* teach? Look about you, and see the many churches teaching conflicting doctrines. Not only do Catholics and non-Catholics disagree, but Protestants disagree among themselves,—though all ground their religion upon the Bible. The Lutheran proves by the Bible that baptism is essential to salvation; whereas the Methodist holds just the reverse. The Presbyterian discipline favors infant baptism; but Baptists brand that as a heresy. The United Brethren believe in everlasting punishment; but the Universalist believes in the actual salvation of all mankind.

The Deist proves by the Bible that Jesus Christ was only a man, though above the general average; that to worship him is idolatry. The Mormon, (with the Bible under his arm, probably,) walks into the

halls of Congress, and proves that he has a divine right to marry as many wives as he can support. Yes, in the hands of Ingersoll, the Bible is a *pack of lies*; and stigmatizing it thus, he has the satisfaction of eliciting rounds of applause from thousands of shallow-pated citizens. Will any sane man say, that these conflicting doctrines are all true? Somebody *must* be mistaken. Black is not white, and white is not black. And will you tell me, in the face of all these stubborn facts, that the Bible is a plain book? Do not these facts prove, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the Bible is a dead letter, which must have an interpreter as well as the statute-book of the State of Indiana?

Consequently, even in our own day, in the day of telegraphs and telephones, in the day of railroads and steamboats, the *Bible alone*, dividing the human family into a thousand religious fragments, must be, indeed, if at all, a very poor rule of faith. Yet non-Catholics insist, that it is our only teacher in matters of faith and morals.

But, Thomas, this is a rather one-sided warfare. You are taking every advantage. Questions are more easily asked than answered: therefore let me ask a few.

I. In our day there are many Bibles. May I ask, what one you have?"

Thomas: "The Protestant version, of course. It is commonly known as that of King James."

Father: 2. "Not to speak of Luther's edition,

King James's has been revised quite frequently, as the perusal of Ward's Errata will readily show. In fact a revised edition appeared only a few years ago. Now, tell me, have you the former or the latter edition?"

Thomas: "I have the former."

Father: 3. "Very well! Now, let me ask you, how do you know whether you have the inspired word of God or not? Does the Bible *alone* tell you so? Suppose you had never heard of the inspiration of the Bible, would you, by reading, come to the conclusion that it *must* be inspired? The book itself does not prove it. On the contrary, there are a thousand things in the Bible which bring the blush of shame to the cheeks of the most hardened sinner."

Thomas: "But my mother and my grandmother said so,—in fact, the world says so."

Father: "Stop, my friend, you are standing on Catholic ground,—you are proving the inspiration of the Bible by outside authority,—by tradition,—just what we Catholics have always done, and still do, only we take tradition in the sense of unerring transmission. You have no right to appeal to Catholic judges,—take the Bible and the *Bible alone*, and tell me whether it is inspired, whether you have the true word of God or not.

4. Taking for granted, that you have a genuine Bible, are you infallibly certain as to the meaning of its passages? If not, your faith is wrapped up in doubt. Let us suppose you are mistaken,—which

is possible, since others, as smart as you, hold just the reverse,—what excuse will you offer on the day of retribution? A Catholic can say to the great Judge: Thou hast appointed a ministry,—commanded them to preach and teach to the end of the world,—promised to be with them all days. Thou didst command me to obey them under the penalty of being *a heathen and a publican*,—under the penalty of despising Him that sent them,—I obeyed, relying on thy promises. *If they taught false doctrines, I am not responsible*,—what right had I to believe that ‘The gates of hell prevailed against thy Church,’ when it is positively said they should not do so?

If the Bible alone is our Rule of Faith, many things should be done which are now set aside,—we should put on the apron and wash our neighbor’s feet, because Christ insists on it,—we should keep the Saturday instead of the Sunday, because Christ did it, (Luke 4 : 16), and because the disciples imitated their divine Master, (Luke 23 : 56), we should refrain from eating blood, because the Apostles positively forbade it. (Acts 15 : 20.) But where is the Protestant who scruples at eating pudding made of blood?

How do we know that all these things have been abolished? Certainly, not from the Bible, but from tradition.

Practically, non-Catholics themselves do not believe that the Bible alone is their only teacher in matters of faith.

Why would non-Catholics go to the expense of keeping a standing army of preachers, not to speak of their kith and kin, when a Bible worth fifty cents would answer all practical purposes?

In short, the Bible is positively opposed to private judgment in matters of faith and morals: 'Understanding this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is made by private interpretation.' (2 Peter 1 : 20.) Furthermore, it is ruinous to the human family, since it gives Tom, Dick, or Harry the right to start a new church every morning before breakfast.

Suppose every man had a right to explain the Constitution of the United States, what would become of our model government? It would soon be torn into a thousand shreds. To protect it, we have judges and Supreme Courts. In like manner, certain guards must be thrown around the Bible, which contains the sacred word of God, and which we should read on our knees. It is protected by the Catholic Church, the divine Spouse of Christ, who cries out to the Mormons, Ingersolls, and libertines of all ages: You must not use the Bible to shield your wickedness and rascality. Show, at least, as much respect for the Bible as for the law of the State of Indiana, by submitting yourself to the proper judges. If you find something that you do not understand, come for explanation to me, the authorized teacher of all nations, whose unalterable commission is the command of Christ to his Apostles: 'Go ye, therefore, and *teach all nations*; baptizing

them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. 28 : 20.)

Thomas: "Why is the catholic laity forbidden to make use of the Bible?"

Father: "Not the use, but the abuse is prohibited. I myself have often provided my parishioners with the sacred volume. Strange, that you non-catholics are generally misinformed about our teaching and practice.

Thomas: "Your argument is forcible. Being brought up a Protestant, I was always under the impression, that the Bible alone is our teacher in matters of 'Faith and morals.' In fact every Protestant seems to take this for granted—consider it a self-evident truth. As plain as your reasoning is, I am at a loss however to know, what better substitute could be had. Men are liable to error—they may mislead us intentionally or not intentionally. Therefore it strikes me that of two evils the lesser should be chosen."

Father: "If the Bible were delivered into the hands of each and every one either by God himself or by an angel of God, your argument would surely command some respect; but its authors, the translators, the type-setters, the proof-readers, the binders: all are men, at whose hands we receive it.

Now what assurance have you, that your Bible is

the word of God? Answer me this question from a Protestant standpoint."

Thomas. "I confess my inability to do so. You may give the answer from a Catholic standpoint."

Father. "Since we are bound to submit to the authority of some one, why not go to the proper source at once? Jesus Christ chose twelve Apostles—they were commissioned to 'Teach all nations' and with them (and their successors, of course) He promised to be 'Even to the consummation of the world.'

But every institution, be it ever so small, must have a head. What would a literary society be without a president, a political meeting without a chairman, a town without a marshal, a city without a mayor, or State without a governor?

Yes, that the Apostolic College had a president, is not only reasonable and natural, but also scriptural. In the tenth chapter and second verse of St. Matthew, we read: 'Now, the names of the twelve Apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter.' Why is Peter called the *First*? Is it because he was the oldest among the twelve? No. Is it because he was the first one chosen? His elder brother was called before him. Now, if St. Peter was not *first* in age, nor *first* in our Savior's choice, he must have been *first* in authority. Practically, Peter's superiority is admitted by the other Apostles. Look at them assembled in the council of Jerusalem. Who controls the deliberations? Whose decision is

final? St. Peter's. And who are *holding their peace?* The other Apostles.

If a head was necessary then, it is now. It is natural, reasonable and scriptural, that the church, whose children are spread over the face of the earth, should have a *Papa, Pope*, head, chairman or president."

Thomas: "I see, Father, what object you have in view. You wish to introduce me to the Pope, and then force me to acknowledge his infallibility. I see the necessity of a head to every institution; but in my humble opinion, no man ever was or will be impeccable."

Father: "Impeccability and infallibility are not to be confounded. No catholic looks upon the Pope as sinless. He does not so consider himself: therefore he goes to confession regularly."

Thomas: "But you catholics believe, the Pope, whenever he opens his lips, utters words inspired."

Father: "No; we do not."

Thomas: "Then, tell me, what does infallibility mean?"

Father: "The Pope is infallible when he speaks *ex cathedra*—that is, when, in his official capacity, as head of the Church and representative of Jesus Christ, he defines, concerning faith and morals, something binding on the universal Church. Three things, then, constitute infallibility.

1. *The Pope must speak in his official capacity;*
2. *His decision must touch faith and morals;*
3. *His decision must be for the whole Church.*

Let me make this clear by an example. Suppose it were not yet defined whether Baptism is essential to salvation or not. Disputants may debate until a decision is given. But to settle the matter, and to quiet the minds of the people, the Pope, as successor to St. Peter, as head of the Church, in his official capacity, announces to the universal Church: 'I do hold and declare it to be a revealed truth that Baptism is essential to salvation.' In this case the Pope would be infallible; and every Catholic in the world would have to submit to his decision.

Now, what do the Scriptures say in support of the doctrine of infallibility? In St. Matthew we read: *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* (Matt. 18 : 18.) In the original language, the text reads thus: 'Simon, thou art a rock,' &c. Evidently, Simon was not, literally speaking, a rock. Consequently, Christ spoke figuratively. But rock is a figure of solidity, strength, and immovability. If a house be built upon a rock, we say it has a solid foundation, a foundation that will not give way. Hence, by way of explanation, Christ himself says: 'And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' With what consistency could the Savior have used this language if Peter, the Rock, would have been shaken, like a reed, by every *wind of doctrine*, and washed away, like sand, by every little billow?

You may say, my Protestant friend, 'That Peter's

profession of belief in the Lord Jesus is the Rock in question.' In the first place, what gives your explanation more weight than mine? In the second place, speaking from a Protestant stand-point, have I not as much right to my view of it as you to yours? Finally, remember that you put bad grammar into the mouth of our Savior. What reason have you to suppose him unacquainted with the ordinary rules of grammar? You will admit that when two things are spoken of, *this* refers to something close at hand, whereas *that* refers to something more or less distant. In the text before us, we find, that Christ, instead of using, as a good grammarian would, this language: 'Thou art Simon, and upon *that* rock (your profession) I will build my church,' on the contrary, says: *Thou art Peter* (changing the Apostle's name, on the instant, from Simon to Peter, which means rock)—*and upon this rock I will build my church.* You see, then, your explanation is a forced one, whereas mine is reasonable, natural, and grammatical.

In the same chapter, we find the following passage: *I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.* (Verse 19.)—Keys always have been, and are, emblematical of power and authority. Suppose I were about to travel abroad. If, at my departure, without saying a single word,

I should hand you the keys of my house, would you not at once understand my unexplained action? Would you not say to your neighbors: He has given me full control of his house?—And would they not acknowledge your authority? Yes, he who would force his way into my house without your consent, would be branded as a burglar. Now, Christ not only gives to St. Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but he adds unconditionally: ‘Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.’ If this text has any meaning at all, it proves beyond a reasonable doubt:

1. *That St. Peter clothed with all power is the head of the Church, and*
2. *That Christ has solemnly bound himself to ratify, at least, all his official injunctions.”*

Thomas: “Do you mean to say St. Peter was a sort of vice-roy of the Savior?”

Father: “I do. Think of Christ, who is essentially true, ratifying a false doctrine, promulgated by his representative, St. Peter. What a dilemma, what a humiliation on the part of God!”

Thomas: “But, hold on—give us the Scripture for that.”

Father: “In the 21st chapter of St. John, Christ says to St. Peter: *Feed my lambs, feed my sheep.* Again, this text proves two things:

1. That St. Peter was constituted the head of the

Church. This is obvious. Every well-regulated flock has but one shepherd. Indeed, the Saviour says emphatically: *There shall be one fold and one shepherd.* But if St. Peter was the shepherd, then all, the whole flock, the sheep and the lambs, the young and the old, the clergy and the laity, were bound to obey him. Otherwise, the sheep would rule the shepherd.

2. That St. Peter was infallible. Think of Christ commanding the flock to follow and obey a shepherd who would lead his flock into pastures full of poisonous weeds, full of dangerous and deadly doctrines! Yet, deny infallibility, and we have no assurance whatever whether the pasture is a good one or a bad one, whether we are feeding on the food of life, or on the husks of damnation."

Thomas: "Very good, but proceed."

Father: "In the 22d chapter of St. Luke, we find what has been said confirmed. 'Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have *you* (that is, all of the Apostles, mark the plural—the original text has the plural, more than one) that he might sift *you* (plural) as wheat; but I have prayed for *thee* (singular—St. Peter) that *thy* (singular) faith fail not, and *thou* being converted, confirm thy brethren.' (Verses 31, 32.)

Evidently, Christ prays for two things:

1. *That St. Peter's faith fail not;* and
2. *That St. Peter confirm his brethren.*

But, why pray for St. Peter in particular? Does

he stand more in need of prayer than the other Apostles? Yes; because he is the head of the Church, he is to rule and to govern, to feed and to nurture the whole flock; if he fails, all fails. Furthermore, is not the prayer of Christ efficacious? Suppose twelve were assembled and Christ were to appear among them, and to pray for one in particular, that his faith fail not; would not that one feel himself specially protected? In short, to deny infallibility is practically to declare the prayer of the Son of God null and void; and to pronounce the prayer of Christ a failure is blasphemy.

Two things, I think, have been conclusively proved:

1. *That St. Peter was the head of the Church in the Apostolic age; and*
2. *That he was infallible."*

Thomas: "Well, granted—St. Peter was head of the Church. I'd like to know how that makes the Pope infallible."

Father: "But, if a head was necessary in the Apostolic age, when the doctrines of our Saviour were yet fresh in the minds of the people, why not now? President Harrison is as necessary to-day, as George Washington was in *his* time. Does not this town need a mayor now, as well as twenty years ago? Where there is no head, there is no government, and where there is no government, there is anarchy. Hence that long line of popes, successors to St. Peter. And if they are successors, they must

have the same prerogatives as St. Peter had. As long as the constitution of the United States remains the same, every new President will be clothed with the same powers as his predecessor. Has Christ changed the constitution of his Church? 'I will be with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.' "

Thomas: "St. Peter denied our divine Lord. Was he infallible on this memorable occasion?"

Father: "As long as Christ was on earth, St. Peter was naturally not the acting head of the church. Consequently, he did not deny his divine master in his official capacity: therefore the objection falls to the ground."

Thomas: "But St. Peter was the visible head of the church, when he left the table of the uncircumcised on account of the advent of some Jews."

Father: "It is true, at that time he was the head of the church. However, we admit, St. Peter was not impeccable; in his private life he was subject to weaknesses as well as we are. But look at him in his official capacity, presiding over the Council of Jerusalem. There he condemns the action to which you refer—therefore, if you will, condemn his imprudence. In conclusion,

We all believe with St. Paul, that 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.' Furthermore, reason, as well as faith, teaches us that only the true faith can please God. Now, if you believe not in Infalli-

bility, how do you know whether your faith is true or false?"

Thomas: "It is true."

Father: "Are you certain, infallibly certain?"

Thomas: "Oh, I do not like that word infallible."

Father: "But if you are not infallibly certain, there is always a doubt hovering over you."

Thomas: "I may possibly be wrong."

Father: "That must certainly fill your well-meaning soul with anxiety. Such a thought does not disturb the sweet peace of a good Catholic. His mind is always at rest on points of faith. It is true, in the pride of life, bad Catholics, excommunicated Catholics, have become Protestants. But who has ever heard, who has ever read of an instructed Catholic becoming a Protestant on his death-bed? The Catholic dies satisfied. Without infallibility, there is no true consolation, no genuine satisfaction. Imagine a traveler standing perplexed at the junction of cross-roads in a strange country. He is unable to decide which road will lead him to his destination—which conduct him to a howling wilderness. But, before the shadows of a stormy night settle down on him, he discovers the guide-post. O joy! he has found with certainty the right road!

What the guide-post is to the traveler at the cross-roads, infallibility is to the Christian at the many cross-roads of doubt. How strange it is, that all denominations do not claim Infallibility—reason asks for it, nature longs for it, faith demands it."

Thomas: "I must admit, step by step you are leading me into the Catholic Church: However, she teaches some things, that border on blasphemy. Though it seems one ought to be satisfied beforehand if he be convinced of her infallibility."



SHORT LINE TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

PART III.

OBJECTIONS TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Father: "For instance, Thomas? You touch the quick in that last admission."

Thomas: "Well, it is *confession*. To me the very thought seems preposterous. I shall listen to you Father, but I must confess, I do not expect a satisfactory explanation."

Father: "The enemies of the Catholic Church, my dear friend, often speak of Confession, but as a rule, it is badly understood and, consequently, not unfrequently misrepresented. What is Penance (or Confession)?"

'Penance is a Sacrament in which the priest, as God's representative, forgives sins, when the sinner is heartily sorry for them, sincerely confesses them, and is willing to do penance for them.' "

Thomas: "You are guying me— that surely is not what I considered confession?"

Father: "It is however the stock answer in our Catechism. On the part of the penitent three things are necessary: first, confession; second, sorrow; and lastly, willingness to do penance.

Now, if this is the true definition of penance, (as it is, since it is taken from one of our standard works), what shall we say of the objection which

conveys the idea: Catholics may unburden themselves in the confessional, and then go back and get another load of sin? Can a man be heartily sorry, if he intends to commit the same offence again? It is a contradiction. Sorrow presupposes amendment. Shall we, then, attribute the objection to ignorance or malice?"

Thomas: "We Protestants used to believe the priests introduced confession."

Father: "Yes, but your believing it does not make it so.

1. Priests could not introduce confession after the days of Christ and the apostles without exposing themselves as forgers. It is natural to conceal our imperfections before men. The girl says to herself: 'What will mamma say, should she find it out?' The boy will do many things in secret which he would not do, were he within the reach of a father's watchful eye. The wife has great confidence in her husband, but some things are so deeply buried in her own bosom that his suspicions are not even aroused. The husband, too, has his secrets hoarded up in a chest, securely locked. Under the cover of darkness, many crimes are remorselessly committed which, in broad daylight, would bring the blush of shame to the cheeks of the perpetrators. It is true, we ought to fear God more than man, but we must stare the fact in the face and take men as they are, not as they ought to be. They exclaim: 'What will the people say?' What *God* says is not taken into

consideration; hence, (what no man will deny) that general repugnance to revelation of sins committed in secret.

Suppose now, one were to take it into his head to introduce Confession; suppose further your Methodist Minister were to ascend the pulpit next Sunday, and say: My friends! after this you must confess your sins to me to have them forgiven; the carpenters have already been ordered to put up a confessional; every man, woman, and child must come and tell me the secrets of the heart—the sins of thought, word, deed, and omission; if you have overreached your neighbor in a business transaction, you must tell me so; if you have been unfaithful, you must make it known to me. In short, you must unfold before me your hearts, that I may see their secrets.

Tell me, what would the Cannelton people say to this? Would they not say: 'Our preacher must be *cranky*—a fit subject for the lunatic asylum? His predecessors have never said anything about Confession; if he wishes to go himself, very well; we are not going—it is an innovation.' Would he not subject himself to ridicule on the part of his Cannelton flock? But suppose his influence over the congregation were so great that they would submit without a murmur—is it reasonable to suppose that other ministers and other congregations would submit unconditionally? On the other hand, would not the name of the first inventor of Confession be

handed down on the pages of history? Fifty years hence, would not the enemies of the Church, of whom there always has been a respectable number, hurl into the teeth of every Catholic that there and then such a priest introduced Confession—obligated all the Catholics in the land, priests, bishops and popes not excepted, to confess their sins?

But I defy any non-Catholic to lay his finger on that page of history, which tells us when, where, and by whom Confession was introduced after Christ and the Apostles. If it had been done, we would find the traces of it on the pages of history. Some people always have objected, and always will object to burthensome innovations. Indeed, Protestants feel the force of this argument; hence, they tried to saddle the innovation on some one. But, as in everything else, they fail to agree. Consequently, we find Confession laid at the door of parties who not only lived hundreds of miles apart, but between whom centuries elapsed. Many accuse Innocent III., A. D. 1215. It is true, he promulgated the law, *that every Catholic must go to Confession at least once a year*, but does it follow from this that he introduced Confession itself? Suppose a father were to say to his son, twelve years of age: 'You must eat your breakfast every morning at five o'clock;' would it not be ridiculous, to draw the conclusion that the son had never before eaten his breakfast? Consequently, priests could not have introduced Confession after Christ and the Apostles."

Thomas: "Hum! that may be true—But credit priests with sufficient craft!"

Father: "If priests could, they would not have done so. Man's highest ambition seems to be to take this world as easy as possible. The farmer will not carry the cradle when he can have a reaper. The tailor imagines he cannot do his work without a sewing-machine. The tourist will not travel to Louisville in a coach drawn by a yoke of unruly oxen, if he can pay for his passage on the beautiful steamer, James Guthrie. In short, all men study to do, with the least possible exertion, as much work as possible. But what reason have you to believe that priests form an exception to the general rule? They are capable of enjoying ease as well as other people. Would they not be great fools were they to put an unnecessary burden upon themselves? But to hear Confession is a *burden*. In larger congregations, we find penitents in the Church every morning. Now to rise early, to enter a cold church for the purpose of hearing confessions, when Protestant ministers, at the same time, are enjoying the comforts of a warm bed, is no pleasure. To inhale the breath of two or three hundred people on a hot summer day, to speak for hours in a whisper, may be considered a little entertainment by an inexperienced preacher, but the experienced priest says it is *hard work*. To travel for miles at midnight, regardless of roads and the inclemencies of the weather: to hear the confessions of small-pox

and yellow-fever patients, when other ministers are running for life under the excuse of saving their families, is certainly no amusement to the priest. He stares the danger in the face—he never runs. But suppose, for the sake of argument, a certain eccentric priest looked upon all this as a source of enjoyment, could he have induced all other priests to take the same view of the matter? Objections would have been raised on every side. But please, *do* mention the names of some of those who objected when Confession was introduced.”

Thomas: “They say, priests get \$5.00 for every confession they hear. Of course, this would be a great inducement.”

Father: “They say so; but I am surprised, that a man of your intelligence ever gave the objection a second thought. I am priest more than 17 years and I have never received a single cent for said purpose.”

Thomas: “This being the case, I admit, there could have been no inducement for the introduction of confession. We admit, that confession can be traced back to Pope Innocent III. A. D. 1215: could you, by way of history, trace it back still further?”

Father: “Of course I can. To save time and labor, I shall pass over seven centuries prior to 1215, though I might quote such authorities as St. Bernard, St. Anselm and St. Climachus, not to speak of many others. The nearer we can trace Confession to Christ and the Apostles, the better it is. Hence,

I prefer to call the Fathers of the very first centuries on the witness-stand.

St. Augustine of the fifth century says: 'Let no one say to himself: I do penance to God in private, I do it before God. Is it in vain, that Christ has said, *whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven?* Is it in vain, that the keys have been given to the church? Do we make void the Gospel? void the words of Christ?' (Serm. 392 c. 3.)

St. Jerome in A. D. 420, declares: 'The bishop and the priest, having heard as his duty requires, the various qualities of sins, he understands who should be bound, who should be loosed.' (Commentary on the Gospel of St. Matt., c. 16, v. 19.)

St. John Chrysostom, earlier still, in 407, exhorts his hearers: 'Do not confess to me only of fornication, nor of those things that are manifest among men; but bring together also thy own calumnies and evil speaking . . . and all such things.' (41st Homil. [al. 42d] on St. Matt. v. 4.)

Again: 'To the priests is given a power which God would not grant either to angels or archangels; inasmuch as what priests do below, God ratifies above, and the Master confirms the sentence of his servants . . . For he says, *Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained!* What power, I ask, can be greater than this?' (3d Book on the Priesthood.)

St. Ambrose, of the fourth century also says: 'But they say, we show reverence to the Lord, by reserving to Him alone, the power of forgiving sins.

Now, no one can more grievously offend Him than they who would annul His commands and throw upon Him the duty given to themselves. For since the Lord Jesus, Himself, has said in His Gospel: *Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained:* who is it who honors Him the more, he that obeys His commands, or he that resists them? (De Poen. L. 1. c. 2, v. 6.)

Attend again to the dictum of St. Basil: 'We must absolutely reveal our sins to those who have received the dispensation of the mysteries of God.' (Apud Liberman, c. 4, p. 177.)

It is true, most Protestants admit that the Church at this period was yet pure and incorrupt. But let us continue our research, until we land on the very threshold of the apostolic age;—there is nothing like believing as the Apostles believed.

Origen, of the third century, declares: 'If we are sorry for our sins, and if we confess them not only to God, but also to those, who have a remedy for them, then shall they be forgiven us.' [Homil. 11, in p. 47.]

Tertullian, of the second century, makes short work of a bad confession, as follows: 'Several fail to tell their sins because they are more concerned about their honor, than about their salvation . . . Which is better, to conceal your sins and be damned, or to make them known and be saved?' [De Poenit. c. 10.]

In the first century, St. Clement, the disciple of and successor to St. Peter, says: *St. Peter taught that we must reveal even the bad thoughts to the priests.* [Epist. 11 ad Corinth.]

Here, then, we stand on the very threshold of the Apostles, and we are told, that we must confess even bad thoughts to a priest. By whom are we told this? By a disciple of St. Peter. If this doctrine is not true, we are bound to come to the conclusion, either that St. Peter was a poor instructor, or that St. Clement paid no attention to the instructions given. Is it reasonable to suppose that the Church, at so early a period, is teaching false doctrines; at a period when the words of the Apostles are still resounding in the ears, and are yet fresh in the people? There would certainly be derived little consolation in this case from the words of the Savior: *I will be with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*

Consequently, history attests the existence of the confessional."

Thomas: "You priests are adepts in showing the bright side on all questions pertaining to the church. You must remember, however, it is hard for us to give up altogether the old *Rule of Faith*—the Bible. Does *it* favor the necessity of confessing our sins to man?"

Father: "Your *Rule* is not very old, since it was made 1500 years after Christ. Yet, most emphatically, I can answer the question in the affirmative.

In the Gospel of St. John, we read: 'Peace be to you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you.' When He had said this, he breathed on them; and he said to them: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.' [20: 21-23.]

The Savior had great power, but he confers this power upon his Apostles: *As the Father has sent me, I also send you.* He breathed on them. He tells them to receive the Holy Ghost. Why? Because they have a great work before them—they are to forgive sins: *whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them.*"

Thomas: "Stop, Father. You quoted the wrong passage this time. It simply means; you must pardon personal insults."

Father: "In the first place, what gives your explanation more weight than mine? Answer me the question from a Protestant standpoint.

In the second place, you can no longer ignore the authority of the Church and she teaches, that you are mistaken—that your explanation must be false, because God commands us to love and pardon our enemies *seventy times seven*, in other words, times without number. He, Himself, has given us a glorious example. But in the above text, Christ speaks of two things: *Forgiving* and *retaining*, or not forgiving. Would not our condition be sad in the extreme, if the forgiveness of our sins in all

cases depended on our enemies? How many, alas! would have to appear unpardoned before the bar of divine justice? It is blasphemous to say, that God conferred upon the Apostles a power to be used at random—according to caprice. Hence, the forgiving and retaining power presupposes judgment. But since the Apostles were not omniscient, how could they form a correct judgment without confession? An honorable judge never condemns a criminal without a hearing.

However, this passage from St. John is not the only Biblical text on the subject. In St. Matthew we read: ‘Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.’ [18 : 18.] This passage, too, presupposes judgment, and judgment presupposes knowledge: otherwise, the wrong man might be bound. Think of a court binding an innocent man, hand and foot!

Familiarize yourself with the light—bearers of the first ages of the Church: Clement, Tertullian, Origen, Basil, John Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine, and a host of others. All raise their voice in support of the catholic doctrine.

In the Acts of the Apostles we find what follows:

And many of those who believed, came confessing and declaring their deeds. [19 : 18.]

St. James says: ‘Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests [elders in Protestant

Bible] of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil, in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man; and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess, therefore, your sins one to another.' [5 : 14-16.] *Confess*—but to whom? To those brought in, of course. And who are brought in? The priests of the Church.

It is true, in the Protestant Bibles, printed since A. D. 1562, we find the word *priest* changed into *elders*. Then, as now, the Bible was changed to suit the times. However, and only for the sake of argument, let us suppose that *elder* is the proper translation of the Greek. You get seriously sick; you send for an *elder*, five miles off; he comes; do you *confess* to him? No, we confess to one another. Well, if one elder confesses to another elder, is it not confessing *one to another*? Furthermore, why did you send for the elder? Does it not place him in an awkward position when he sees you reposing more confidence in a lay-member than in himself? Oh, consistency! what a precious jewel thou art!"

Thomas: "Evidently, the Apostles had the power of forgiving sins; but it was an apostolic prerogative; at their death it ceased."

Father: "Why so? Were no more sins committed after the last Apostle gave up the ghost? If the forgiveness of sins was necessary in the apostolic age, it is so yet. Are we God's step-children? Furthermore, Christ's Church was not established

in favor of a particular people, but for all nations throughout all ages. *Preach the Gospel to every creature. Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.* Consequently, if the Apostles had the power to forgive sins, their legitimate successors must have it, also, as long as the constitution of the Church is not changed. President Harrison has the same prerogative his predecessors had."

Thomas: "The Apostles wrought miracles: priests cannot work them: therefore the latter cannot forgive sins."

Father: "This is poor logic. Simply because a man cannot digest one kind of food, it does not follow, that another is obnoxious. The Church of the Jews was a true Church. God himself had taught them so. They knew it and they felt it. Hence, they adhered to the Church stubbornly. Nothing short of a miracle could change their minds. Consequently, Christ, his Apostles, and their immediate successors had to work miracles. The Church having been firmly established, there was ordinarily no necessity for miracles. In short, in the face of all history, walking as we do in the broad light of noon, it is blasphemous to ask for sledge-hammer proofs. Not so with the forgiveness of sins—it is as necessary now as in the days of the Apostles."

Thomas: "Why not confess our sins to God?"

Father: "Because God said we should confess them to his agent: *Whose sins you shall forgive*

they are forgiven them. Suppose I want to send a money-order; I meet the postmaster on the street; I ask for an order; but he says: Go to the office; my deputy has charge of it—he will wait on you. Have I a right to complain? In like manner, God appointed his deputies—to them we must go. *Brother*, said a negro to another lately, within my hearing. *God left that business in the hands of his priests.* Furthermore, is it not preposterous to call God to an account? When God speaks, we should not ask *Why* but simply obey. However, a good reason can be given. Confession to man is a powerful restraint—a curbing of the passions. On the other hand, confessing to God would be very acceptable to the priests—would relieve them of a great unremunerated labor.”

Thomas: “Occasionally Catholics themselves object to confession. They say: Some are always *running* to confession; yet we see no perceptible advancement in the way of perfection.”

Father: “You are right; sometimes and, for the sake of argument, I am willing to admit, frequently, there is no perceptible advancement. This, however, is no proof in favor of an imperceptible one; for men may be addicted to secret as well as to public sins. Should he avoid only one of the former; for instance should he succeed more frequently in the suppression of the inward emotions of anger, it would indeed be a step forward; though the world would not be the wiser.

I have reasons to believe, Thomas, the better class of Catholics do not raise this objection. Most probably some one wished to have a plausible excuse for his own negligence.

But let us suppose there were no advancement whatever. Confession would be good if it prevented relapse. To hold one's own is as honorable in spiritual life as in business.

To be a competent judge, it is necessary to know the hearts of men as God knows them. So long as we are liable to error it is expedient not to sit in judgment."

Thomas: "We confess also, confess publicly, in the presence of the assembled—You know, Father: *An open confession is good for the soul.*"

Father: "Undoubtedly, you have heard public confessions made. But I dare say, you never heard one acknowledge the perpetration of theft, not to speak of crimes more shameful. To pass a just and equitable sentence, the nature of the offense must be known—in other words, must be specified. Remember what Saints Jerome and Chrysostom said. Were the old and hardened sinner to reveal his *bad thoughts* publicly, what a source of scandal would he be to the young of the assembled congregation? Were he to make his confession at the night-meeting, he would surely be the town-talk at the breakfast table. The stereotyped confession: *O God, I am a sinner*, is too silly to deserve our notice.

Consequently, to recapitulate, Priests could not

and would not have introduced Confession. The Fathers of the Church throughout all ages handed it down as an apostolical institution; and the Bible, Protestant as well as Catholic, commands it. *And many that believed [Protestant version] came, and confessed and showed their deeds.*" [Acts 19 : 18.]

Thomas: "Unpleasant as it is, I am constrained to admit, that you have produced strong arguments in favor of catholic confession. The most remarkable feature is, our own Rule of Faith favors it. Who would have thought so? However, Purgatory is surely untenable and no argument can be brought forward in its favor. What do you say to this, Father?"

Father: "On the question of Purgatory, our separated brethren entertain some very unreal and highly warped notions. They brand it as unscriptural, unreasonable, and ridiculous in the extreme.

Before I give a definition of Purgatory, permit me to show:

1. That there is a difference in sin,—in other words, that *some sins are greater than others*; and
2. That to sin there is always attached a *temporal punishment*.

(1) Some sins are greater than others. This is scriptural and reasonable. Some sins are compared to a mote, and others to a beam in the eye. (Matt. 7 : 3.) Again no one will say that a gnat is as large as a camel; yet in the Scriptures, some sins are compared to a camel, and others to a gnat. (Matt.

23 : 24.) Read I Cor., 3 chap., 12-16 verses, and you will find mention made of substances hard as wood, and others as light and combustible as straw and stubble. Drunkards and fornicators are abominable in the sight of God,—they shall be excluded from the kingdom of heaven. Consequently, the sins of drunkenness and fornication are greater than others. In St. John we read: *There is a sin which is unto death, and there is sin which is not unto death.* (5 : 16.) *A just man shall fall seven times.* (Prov. 24 : 16.) 'He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor the world to come.' (Matt. 12 : 32.) Hence, this sin must be more grievous than others. According to the Jewish law, the criminal met with a punishment in proportion to his crime. This presupposes a difference in the magnitude of sin. Our own laws are based upon the very same principle. Some law-breakers are sent to jail, whereas others are sent to the penitentiary. Again some are sent to the penitentiary for two years, others for life. A child telling a little *white lie* is certainly not so wicked as the man who whets his razor to cut the throat of the mother that bore him.

(2) A temporal punishment is due to sin. This is also undeniable. An immoderate use of pound-cake produces dullness, yes, sickness at the stomach. Delirium tremens is a consequence of the excessive use of intoxicating spirits. If medical science is not at fault, we must believe that self-abuse is frequently

followed by insanity and that, among the descendants of a drunkard, the first generation are frequently epileptics, and the second, maniacs or idiots. Ask the inmates of the hospital, of the penitentiary, and if they tell the truth, they will attribute all their present sufferings to sin and crime. Deny sin, and there is no reasonable solution to the ills of this life.

Nay, more,—even after the sin itself has been forgiven, its temporal punishment still remains to be suffered. After the cure is effected, you must satisfy the doctor by paying the bill. There is no satisfaction until this is done. In like manner, God demands satisfaction of his creatures after sin and its eternal punishment have been remitted. Take, for instance, our first parents, Adam and Eve. They ate of the forbidden fruit. The sin was mortal. *For in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death.* (Gen. 2 : 17.) But the mercy of God forgave that sin, and remitted the eternal punishment thereof; temporal punishment, however, still remained due. A satisfaction had to be made. To the woman God said: ‘I will multiply thy sorrows and thy conceptions; in sorrow, shalt thou bring forth children, and thou shalt be under thy husband’s power, and he shall have dominion over thee.’ (Gen. 3 : 16.) Quite a punishment, even after the sin itself had been forgiven. Adam fared no better. ‘In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the earth out of which thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt

return.' (Gen. 3 : 19.) Look at the long train of evils, trials, and hardships, cold and heat, hunger and thirst, sickness and death,—consequences of a sin already forgiven. What a severe temporal punishment !

The Lord said to Moses, concerning the murmuring people : 'I have forgiven according to thy word But yet all the men that have seen my majesty, and the signs that I have done in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now ten times, and have not obeyed my voice, shall not see the land for which I swore to their fathers.' (Numbers 14 : 20-23.) Here we have another temporal punishment attached to the pardoned sin, viz., exclusion from the Promised Land.

David furnishes us a proof also. The prophet Nathan says to him : 'The Lord also hath taken away thy sin: thou shalt not die. Nevertheless, because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, for this thing, the child that is born to thee shall surely die.' In punishment, the child *did* die."

Thomas : "This may have been so under the Old Dispensation; but Christ's atonement was so complete, that *faith alone* will save us."

Father : "This would be going to heaven in a *hand-basket*. Why, then, are we told to take the cross upon ourselves ? Why do the Scriptures insist so much on penance and good works ? *Faith without good works is dead*. Why did the apostles fast, and

why should we fast? *Thy Father, who seeth in secret, will reward thee.* (Matt. 6:18.) It would be a loss of time to show that in the first ages of the Church, severe and long (not to speak of public) temporal punishments were undergone for sins committed. The student who has only a smattering of history is well aware of this fact. Experience also proves, in its turn, that the very thought and fear of punishment is a powerful restraint upon the human passions. Let me, then, recapitulate: (1) There is a difference in sin; some are *mortal*, and others are *venial*. (2) There is a temporal punishment due to sin—a punishment which must be undergone to satisfy the justice of God.”

Thomas: “Enough of this, Father. Tell me: what is Purgatory?”

Father: “It is a place of purgation for the souls of the faithful departed, who have died either in the state of venial sin, or without having fully satisfied God’s justice for sins committed during life.

The definition may be thus simplified: Purgatory is the temporary abode of all those souls who are not good enough for heaven, and yet not bad enough for hell.

Protestants deny the existence of a middle state. Consequently, they acknowledge future dwelling-places for the perfect and for the wicked, but none for that other vast body of imperfect Christians, whose sanctity during life was by no means of the heroic type.”

Thomas: "I am growing impatient. If the Bible teaches this doctrine, produce the texts at once."

Father: "Of course it does: 'And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead; thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection . . . and because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore *a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins.*' (2 Machabees, 12 chap., 43 and following verses.)

Tell me, would it not be ridiculous to pray for the dead, if there were no intermediate state? The inhabitants of the kingdom of heaven need no prayers,—they are perfectly happy; and the inmates of hell are beyond redemption. Hence praying for the dead presupposes a purgation, Purgatory."

Thomas: "Now, Father, you are caught. The Books of the Maccabees belong to the *Apocrypha*. Ergo, they prove nothing."

Father: "According to Webster, *Apocrypha* means *books of doubtful authority*. Consequently, my Protestant friend, I have as much right to the benefit of the doubt as you have,—nay, I have more right to it than you, because the Councils and the Fathers of the Church declare that the Books of Maccabees are inspired. Among others, the councils of Carthage, Florence, and Trent, speak unequivocally on this point; and the Fathers of the Church are no

less clear. See St. Clement Alexandrinus, lib. i. Stromat; St. Cyprian, lib. i.; Epistolarum, Ep. iii. ad Cornelium, lib. iv.; St. Isidorus, lib. xvi., c. 1. The great doctor, St. Augustine, lib. ii., c. 8. *De Doctrina Christiana*, et lib. 18 c. 36. *De Civ. Dei* most clearly avows that, *notwithstanding the Jews deny these books, the Church holds them canonical.* Furthermore, if the Bible was false for 1,500 years, what assurance have we now as to its veracity? None whatever. In fact, Protestants admit this in practice, if not in words, since they change or revise their Bibles from time to time. But for the sake of argument (and *only* for the sake of argument), let us suppose that the book in question is not inspired. Is it not as good as any other historical work? Does it not prove that the Jews prayed, and offered sacrifices for the dead? Must not the practice have been general, when such a large collection was made and sent to Jerusalem? Yes, at this present day the Jews pray for the dead. In Rockport, two intelligent men of that persuasion told me so. Just after Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, a Jewish synagogue in one of our Eastern States called a meeting of its members to offer prayers for the repose of the dead President's soul. For stronger proof, send for the Jewish prayer-book, published by Stole & Money, Philadelphia. But if there is no intermediate state, should not Christ, who is *the Way and the Truth*, have said to the Jews: Stop your praying for the dead; stop offering up your

sacrifices; save that trouble, and save that expense—after this life, there is no Purgatory; there is but one alternative,—either heaven or hell? The Savior of the world said nothing of the kind. On the contrary, in the New Testament, He implicitly confirms our doctrine. In Matthew, we read: *Amen, I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from hence [prison] till thou pay the last farthing.* [5 : 26.] Evidently, Christ locates that prison beyond this life. It is not heaven, because in heaven there are no farthings to be paid. It is not hell, because in hell the last farthing will *never* be paid. Consequently, there must be a middle state, called a prison. Again: *He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.* [Matt. 12 : 32,]

If that particular sin cannot be forgiven in the *world to come*, it logically follows that others *can*,—not in heaven, however, because *there shall not enter into it anything defiled*, [Apoc. 21 : 27,]—nor in hell, because *out of hell there is no redemption*. Hence, there must be a middle state. St. Augustine [De Civ. 1. xxi. c. 13] and St. Gregory [Dialog. iv. c. 39] draw the same conclusion.

St. Paul says: 'The fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. [I Cor. 3 : 13-15.]

This, cannot be the fire of tribulation in this world, since the Apostle declares that it shall burn in *the*

day of the Lord,—that is,—on the day of judgment [v. 13.] Neither is it the fire of trial before the Judge, because loss is suffered [v. 15] by the burning;—nor the fire of hell, because, [as the same Apostle expressly states,] in spite of this temporary loss of the Beatific Vision which is entailed upon the suffering debtor to God's justice, *he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.* [v. 15.] Can any one doubt after all this, that there is a Purgatory,—a cleansing place for the faithful departed ?”

Thomas: “You Catholics put so much confidence in Tradition. Does it also favor the doctrine of purgation after death ?”

Father: “Indeed it does: St. Augustine, of the fifth century, says: ‘Through the prayers and sacrifices of the Church, and alms-deeds, God deals more mercifully with the departed than their sins deserve.’ [Serm. 172. Enchirid, cap. 109, 110.]

Listen to the dying request of St. Monica, the mother of that great and holy doctor: ‘Lay this body anywhere: let not its care in any way disturb you. This only, I request of you,—that you would remember me at the altar of the Lord, wherever you be.’ And St. Augustine tells us in his *Confessions* that, [respecting the request of a dying mother,] he did so, *to obtain the pardon of her sins.* (Confess. L. ix., c 13.)

Eusebius, in the fourth century, says: ‘That the body of the blessed prince (Constantine the Great) was placed on a lofty bier, and the ministers of God

and the multitude of people, with tears and much lamentation, offered up prayers and sacrifice for the repose of his soul.'—L. iv., c. 71.

St. Chrysostom, within 300 years of the Apostles, says: 'It is not without good reason, *ordained by the apostles*, that mention should be made of the dead in the tremendous Mysteries, because they knew well that these would receive great benefit from it.' (In cap. I Philip, Hom. 3.)

But let us go back still further. The closer we conform to the Apostles, the better it is. Tertullian, who lived in an age next to the chosen Twelve, says: 'Among the apostolical traditions received from our fathers, we have oblations for the dead on their anniversary day.' (De Corona Militum, p. 209.)

Again: *She prays for the soul of her husband, and begs refreshment for him.* (L. De Monogam. c. 10.)

Hence, history proves that the doctrine of Purgatory dates back to the Apostles.

If there were no Purgatory, Reason tells us that there should be one. I believe it is generally admitted, that *nothing defiled* shall enter the kingdom of heaven. Christ says: 'I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment.' (Matt. 12 : 36.) Consequently, even an *idle word* would defile a man. Suppose, now, I were a thief, a robber, and a cut-throat,—suppose I had washed my hands in the blood of my brother,—whilst you, on the other

hand, were guilty only of little imperfections, human frailties, such as *idle words*. A sudden death, for instance, apoplexy, takes us both out of life the same day, without the least warning,—without sorrow, without having satisfied the justice of God for our respective sins:—would it not be unreasonable, not to say cruel, on the part of God, to cast *you*, in punishment for your *idle words*, into the same pit of everlasting woe and misery, to which I, the thief, the robber, and the cut-throat, am condemned to burn forever? Hence, Reason also demands Purgatory.”

Thomas: “Father, you are bound to admit, that human nature revolts against this article of faith.”

Father: “In so far as human nature revolts against all punishment, you are right, Thomas. On the other hand it is a great consolation for one who knows that he is *defiled*, that he is full of imperfections. Therefore it is natural to pray for the dead. Even Protestants unconsciously pray for them. Tell me, have you never heard them say at the grave of a friend: *Lord, have mercy on his poor soul?* Is not that a sweet little prayer? But why pray, if there is no Purgatory? If the dead are in heaven, they are safe; if in hell, there is no redemption. A Lutheran preacher, (whose name I can give,) once said to me: ‘I have said at the grave: *May the soul be recommended to the mercy of God.*’ Here we have another sweet prayer, entirely, out of place, if there be no Purgatory. Another preacher once told me that, every night, before he retired, he

prayed for his departed wife. Just think of it! A preacher praying (not for a living), but for a dead wife. What caused him to do it? Was it his faith? It was his heart that prompted the prayer,—and a large and a warm heart it must have been.

Suppose two married couples, living side by side, in the same street;—one is a Catholic and the other a non-Catholic. The ladies visit each other daily. They are good, yet, like most people, have their faults,—their imperfections,—they talk about Tom, Dick and Harry, Susan, Kate, and Betsy. It is true, no particular harm is intended, but, to say the least, it is uncharitable. One evening, especially, these ladies are hard at work,—they are in the height of their glory,—snipping, snarling, canvassing, criticising,—when (say in the midst of a thunder-storm), without a moment's warning, both are struck dead. The Protestant buries his wife in the city graveyard; the other takes his to the Catholic cemetery, just opposite,—on the other side of the street. On the Sunday following, the two neighbors came to the conclusion to visit the graves of their respective wives. Their language, their looks, their walk, their actions, all indicate a deep and heartfelt grief. See them at the grave. Who can describe their feelings? What thoughts are passing through their minds? The non-Catholic says to himself: 'It is true my wife was a good wife, a noble woman; but, though she was not so bad as many others, she, like most women, had her faults and imperfections. There is

no disguising the fact that she died without preparation; and since there is no middle state, no purgatory, and since *nothing defiled* can enter heaven, it is likely (God forbid!) that I shall be separated from my beloved wife, my noble companion, forever and ever!

On the other hand, the Catholic says to himself: 'My wife, too, was a noble woman; it is true, she had faults, but since I believe in Purgatory, where souls that die in the state of grace are cleansed and purified from all the dross of imperfection and defilement,—I shall do all in my power to free my faithful companion from that fiery prison, where doubtless, she is now detained, and help her to reach that brighter Land, the kingdom of God's eternal glory.' And off goes his hat, he falls on his knees, and sobs to the Father of mercies a fervent prayer for the repose of the soul of his devoted wife.

Both men leave the grave,—they meet on the street,—they go home: one with feelings of hope; the other with feelings of despondency. Yes, the non-Catholic doctrine is not only unreasonable, but unnatural, heart rending, a doctrine almost of despair.

It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins. (II Maccabees 12:46.)

Thomas: "Excited by curiosity, I must ask several other questions, though I dread the very idea of being convinced. Tell me, Father, is it true, that

Purgatory is quite a source of revenue for the priests? People say: It takes a great amount of *Ready cash* to induce a priest to pray a poor soul out of its dismal dungeon."

Father: "You remind me of a certain young man, who took special delight in attacking our holy religion in the presence of those, who unhappily could not give an account of the *Faith in them*. Being told to go to the priest for the desired explanation, he tersely replied: *I am afraid he will convince me.*

But to the question. Let me call your attention to the following points :

1. Priests like Preachers must live. The latter may follow some other avocation for a living and yet discharge their ministerial duties satisfactorily. This cannot be said of priests. They are not only expected but commanded to answer every call by day or by night. Many travel ten or fifteen miles to hear the confessions of the dying. Hence their support must come in one way or the other from the faithful.

2. Support is support, whether given by way of praying or preaching. The one is as spiritual as the other.

3. Preachers are highly salaried, especially in the cities. The salary of a priest, stipulated by his Bishop, is small—usually from \$500 to \$700,—scarcely sufficient to keep soul and body together, and yet it becomes their station of life to live respectably.

4. Catholics are as grateful to their pastors as Protestants are to their ministers. When a preacher marries a couple, they tender him a fee, usually not rejected; and the greater it is, the more thankfully it is accepted. In like manner Catholics tender the priest a present, when they demand special services, when they ask him to read, according to their intention, a Mass, which he would say for himself or some devoted friend. Catholic people however are protected. For a marriage a Preacher may take as much as he can get, but the Bishop says to the priest: You dare not take more than one Dollar for a stipend for Mass."

Thomas: "Your explanation on this question ought to satisfy the most sceptical. However, another difficulty presents itself. Look at the gross injustice. Two neighbors die; one is rich and the other poor. The mourners of the rich man have Masses said for the repose of his soul, whereas the poor man's soul is deprived of this soothing balm, not for want of love on the part of the bereft, but on account of their inability to make *presents* to their beloved pastor."

Father: "Analyze the objection and the charge of gross injustice will be removed. Consider the following points:

1. The more talents received, the greater the account to be rendered. The widow's mite was pleasing in the eyes of God.

2. No priest in condition to do so, will refuse to

read a Mass for a person in destitution: at least I have never met one. Furthermore, privately and publicly, prayers are always said *For the souls of the faithful departed* in general. Yes, charitably inclined people often ask us to read Mass for this class of *Poor souls*.

3. God is not bound to bestow any favors upon us. Indeed, the preservation from eternal destruction was a great favor conferred upon the poor man. Hence there is no room for complaint.

Thomas, let me bring the matter home. You are wealthy and enjoy all the comforts of life, of which poverty deprives me. Does it follow, that an injustice is done me? If so, you ought to place me on an equality with yourself. On the other hand, if it is not wrong to enjoy special privileges in life, why should it be so very wrong in death?"

Thomas: "We Protestants, strange to say, always considered the doctrines of the Catholic Church very immoral. But, when we hear a Catholic expound them, they seem reasonable, natural and, to our great surprise, scriptural. We do know however, that not even a plausible reason can be given in favor of *Granting a license to commit sin*. It is so outrageously immoral, that the very attempt at a defense would be blasphemous."

Father: "You are right, Thomas. It is a permission beyond the power of God himself to grant. I hope, you are not casting insinuations at the Catholic Church."

Thomas: "To be frank, I am. What is an Indulgence but a license to commit sin?"

Father: You are mistaken in the meaning of an Indulgence. It is not even a forgiveness of sin, much less a license to commit it.

Hear what our catechism, a standard work says: 'An Indulgence is a remission of the *temporal punishment* of our sins, which the church grants outside the sacrament of penance.' I have told you before: a temporal punishment remains due to sin, after the sin itself has been forgiven. If, as we have seen, sins can be forgiven by man, why should it be so hard, to remit the punishment due to sin? Should there be any difference, the latter must be easier than the former. St. Paul exercised this power in case of the incestuous Corinthian; parents exercise it, when they mitigate or remit the inflicted punishment; governors exercise it, when they release a convict, imprisoned for five years, though condemned by the courts to an imprisonment of ten years. If parents and state officials are empowered to remit inflicted punishment, why not the Pope, successor of St. Peter, to whom Christ said: *Whosoever thou shalt loose on earth it shall be loosed also in heaven.*" (Matt. 16, 19.)

Thomas: "Taking for granted, that the head of a well organized body enjoys privileges of this nature, it must be conceded, that the *Sale of Indulgences* is an unpardonable crime."

Father: "It is a crime; therefore the Catholic

church always has and always will put on it the seal of her condemnation. Your ideas, Thomas, about Catholic teachings and practices are exceedingly warped. It seems, you never read a Catholic work. If you cannot lay your hands on one, ask any child coming from or going to a Catholic school. He can tell you, that Indulgences are not for sale.

It is true, the Holy Father often grants these spiritual blessings on condition, that alms be given. But alms-deeds are highly commended in the Scriptures. You Protestants want everything for nothing—you must be more liberal and come to the assistance of the destitute, the orphan and the widow.”

Thomas: “The more I know, the more inquisitive it makes me; furthermore I am bent upon finding a flaw in the Catholic church. If it is not taxing your patience too much, I shall continue the investigation. Tell me why do Catholics worship the Virgin Mary, mother of God? It is true her position was an exalted one, yet she was a creature. We Protestants believe in worshipping the one, true and living God only.”

Father: “So do we, Thomas, and every Catholic child can tell you so. But the worshipping of one God only, does not preclude the honor and veneration due the friends of God.

It is natural to honor the good and look up to those in high position. You respect your good mother: which is a child’s duty. The people of the

United States highly honored Mrs. Cleveland. After her marriage to the executive of this great country, the press teemed with her praises. When she passed through the country, the people were wild with excitement: they besieged R. R. depots, they peeped through car windows and they rushed through the train, to see the wife of the president of the United States.

When General Grant died, the home of his boyhood was almost demolished: many carried off relics; some satisfied their cravings with a morsel, taken out of the old flue: all in honor of the hero of our *late unpleasantness*.

No one dared call this idolatry. Had any one had the misfortune to do so, he would have been branded as an enemy to our country. Yet, Thomas, you think it unpardonable, to honor a lady, not the wife of a President, but the mother of God Himself. The angel of the Lord honored her by his salutation; God the Father honored her, when, in His selection of a mother for His only Son, the choice fell on her. God the Son honored her, when he abided by the choice of his heavenly Father; and God the Holy Ghost honored her by his overshadowing.

Finally, in the language of the Scriptures, Mary prophesied: *Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.* Lk. I. 48. Were it not for the Catholic Church this prophecy would remain unfulfilled."

Thomas: "Undoubtedly, your reasoning is un-

impeachable. But God deserves more honor, than we can possibly confer upon Him, even if we held nothing in reserve. In honoring creatures, we take from Him, what is due Him alone."

Father: "Again you are on the wrong track. Take a mother, extremely fond of her beautiful child. You meet and greet her; after this you turn your attention to the sweet child. You admire the regularity of her features, the brightness of her eyes, the gracefulness of her movements: will the mother feel slighted or dishonored? In like manner God is honored, when we show respect to the objects of His love."

Thomas: "To some Protestants the ceremonies of the Church appear ridiculous. They say: to go to the Catholic church is like going to a show. To me, however, the ceremonies seem very impressive. I like them and I would attend the services often; but, Father, you know, it is not very pleasant to listen to a sermon, preached in Latin, unless you understand the language."

Father: "Well! well! Is it possible, Thomas? Some one must have tried to dupe you. I have preached for seventeen years, but I have never delivered a discourse in Latin. Moreover, I have never heard one delivered before the people. As to ceremonies, they are natural and reasonable. When we meet a good friend on the street, we bow to him and bid him the time of the day; when he rings the door-bell, we rise to our feet, ask him to come in,

we offer him a chair, we inquire about his well-being; in short, by our looks, by our speech and by our gesticulations we try to make him feel that he is a welcome visitor. Without these marks of attention he would feel miserable, and we could not convince him of our good will towards him.

The example of others has a powerful influence over us for good or evil. The devout appearance of others has a great tendency to make us pious. The fewer the ceremonies, the colder the service. Dispense with all ceremonies and you deprive a worshipping congregation of all vitality. Passers-by will say: it is the coldest set I ever saw. Protestants are well aware of this; therefore, though they object to ceremonies, they have them nevertheless. For instance, at one part of their service they sit; at another they stand, or lean their heads in prayer.

In the Old Law the ceremonies were prescribed most minutely by God Himself.

Man is composed of body and soul. Both are to be rewarded; therefore both must serve their Maker.

The one is the reflex of the other. If the soul is troubled, the body manifests it; if the spirit rejoices, its companion cannot contain itself."

Thomas: "But we must serve God in *spirit and in truth.*"

Father: "Two persons meet, going through the hand-shaking ceremony. Of course this mark of mutual love could be, and no doubt, often is deceiving; but to say, they did not love each other

because they *shook hands*, would be drawing on the imagination largely."

Thomas: "In the construction of churches too much money is spent. It would be better to build them less costly and give the surplus to the poor, orphan and widow."

Father: "As a rule, Thomas, those very ones, who raise this objection, have never contributed much to the erection of a church, and what is still worse, they wish to be excused in the future. A bad excuse is so much better than none at all; and it sounds so well to speak of the poor widow and the helpless orphan. But whose orphans have they assisted and whose widows have they protected? They are *few and far between*."

To give the surplus, we must have a surplus. But where are those, who would give more to the poor, if the calls for the church were less frequent? Experience teaches that, as a rule, the Catholic edifices are the most costly: yet no other church can point to so many and such grand asylums.

Furthermore, if men build fine houses for themselves, why should they not build a house becoming the dignity and majesty of God?

Indeed it is hard to please some people. If the church be poor and shabby, they say: Respectable people cannot go to it, it is fit only for the wharf-rats."

Thomas: "One thing, however, you must admit: it is perfectly ridiculous, to send so much money to

the heathens in foreign countries, when we ourselves are surrounded by them. *Charity begins at home.*"

Father: "In the first place, many of those *surrounding* heathens are, as experience shows, not open to conviction. In the second place, the following rule holds good: Do the one and do not neglect the other."

Thomas: "I am at the end of the row. What was to me inexplicable, is reasonable now. I shall raise no other objections, for no sooner are they made, than they are refuted. Father, I shall be glad to take any advice you may be pleased to give me in regard to my future conduct."

Father: "Remember, Thomas, that you have but one soul to save. Should it be lost, all is lost. Therefore, continue the investigation and read the following books: 'The Faith of our Fathers;' 'Our Christian Heritage;' 'Christian Truths;' and for a last learned book, 'Faith of Catholics.' Above all, Thomas, pray, that you may know the truth and ask for the grace to embrace it. Remember the words of our Divine Savior: 'The eyes of the Lord are upon the just; and His ears unto their prayers.' (Ps. 33 : 16) 'Ask and it shall be given to you: seek and you shall find: knock and it shall be opened unto you.' Matt. 7 : 7. 'Amen, amen, I say to you: If you ask the Father anything in my name, He will give it to you.'

In conclusion, says our Cardinal: 'To have a private audience with a distinguished crowned head

is always deemed a great honor and a privilege, although certain formalities must be observed before the audience can be obtained. You are required to appear in court-dress; you must send in your card, or present a letter of introduction, stating who you are and the object of your visit; you must await the monarch's good pleasure in the ante-room, till he appoints the time and place for the interview. He can spare you but a few moments, he may be secretly wearied by your presence, and he will dismiss you with a formal bow and a faint smile, whilst you esteem yourself exceptionally favored if he bestows some gift upon you. And so elated are you by the interview that you devour every word uttered by royalty as eagerly as Lazarus desired to be filled with the crumbs which fell from the table of Dives, and you treasure up the gift he bestowed with as much care as you would preserve a saintly relic.

But how much greater is the honor to be admitted into the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords, to converse familiarly with Him, and to present to Him your petitions!

And to be favored with an interview with the Divine Majesty you have not to appear in court-dress. The garment He desires you to wear is the robe of innocence, or the sackcloth of humiliation; and the ornaments most precious in His sight are the jewels of faith, humility, and devotion. These sparkle in the light of the Sun of justice; these delight the heavenly King, for 'all the glory of the king's daughter is within.' "

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COMMENTS.

REV. G. H. TRAGESSEER, S. S.—Montreal.

I am convinced Very Rev. Sir, that any clergyman who has read your book, while heartily felicitating you on your success, will eagerly await the time when your skillful pen will furnish new productions, to aid him in the delicate ministry of conversions.

RT. REV. ABBOT FINTAN O. S. B.—St. Meinrad, Ind.

The little work pleases me.

VERY REV. I. HOBI, O. S. B.

Regens of St. Meinrad's Seminary.

Continue and you will become an Alban Stolz for our Americans.

REV. T. KUSSMANN.—Boonville, Mo.

Father Book is a good reasoner. His off-handed way of expressing himself is thoroughly American. The pamphlet deserves a wide circulation.

REV. JOS. DICKMANN—St. Joseph's Hill, Ind.

I find the most popular objections answered with good American common sense.

OHIO WAISENFREUND, Columbus, O.

We recommend the little work to Catholic societies; it ought to be in every society's library by dozens.

ST. MEINRAD'S RABEN.

We recommend the "Short Line" most heartily, urgently and sincerely.

NEW RECORD, Indianapolis, Ind.

The plain and sententious style of the author is admirably adapted to that large class of people called practical.

CATHOLIC ADVOCATE, Louisville, Ky.

(After criticising some things in the first edition, of which the author takes advantage in the second, the editor says:)

The texts are judiciously selected and marshalled to establish and fortify the author's position, and the heretical objections to our holy faith are most forcibly combated.

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It is a long time since so popular a pamphlet has appeared in English in behalf of the Catholic Church. The whole breathes a heartfelt love for our separated Brethren. The language is plain and at the same time dignified * * * * May this sterling work have the wide circulation which it deserves.

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Permit me to say, that it is refreshing to know that a few, at least, of the laborers in the vineyard are as "Wise in their generation as the children of this world."

VERY REV. H. ALERDING. *Censor Deputatus.*

KANSAS CATHOLIC, FEB. 1892.

A "Short Line to the Roman Catholic Church," by Rev. J. W. Book, is an excellent work, so excellent that it is now in its fourth edition. In the same space, we know of no work better to present to an inquirer into the Catholic religion.

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St. Thomas' Day, 1891.

DEAR REV. FATHER :

Your booklet is pithy and of distinct American character. Having carefully gone through the sterling and compact little pages, and conned it over, line by line, I can freely say, of the Rewritten and Revised Edition, that it surely ought to succeed. You meet the requirements of the Clergy needing just such help in instructing Converts. It is so handy too and cheap that, probably, there are few pamphlets better fitted to distribute to the many inquirers in these States after the True Church—especially those but slightly prejudiced. Its method seems to point to preparatory conviction rather than conversion. Your deft handling of the all-important queries, in such fluent, short and popular paragraphs argues as well for your tact, as for the further extension of the SHORT LINE up and down the green villages, and into the centre of the busy marts. Blessing let it go forth, that it may be blessed by the many needy souls it will benefit—is the sincere wish of

Yours very truly, REV. THOS. JEFFERSON JENKINS.

CHURCH PROGRESS. June 27, 1891.

No doubt it will do good to all who read it, to Catholics by giving them fit and terse expressions in which to say much they must needs speak with emphasis and clearness or else hesitatingly and to their dismay ; to Protestants by lifting them easily and unconsciously over what are formidable-appearing obstacles between themselves and the Church. There is a phrasing and familiarity about its style that fits it for the people and to their wants it is also fitted because of its brevity, its directness and its cheapness.

CATHOLIC RECORD, May 28, 1891.

It is a pleasure to see that this excellent little work has reached a second edition. It has many things to commend it. It is short and practical ; cheap, and written in a manner which everyone can understand. Its price commends it to Catholics who wish to present a clear idea of belief to Protestant friends. The author treats in a plain and convincing manner those teachings of the Church which usually seem preposterous to Protestants. We recommend his little book and hope to see it widely circulated.

Eliza Allen Starr,

On the Short Line to the Roman Catholic Church.

In the Chicago Catholic Home.

The cover of this small book, a thick pamphlet in fact, tells a great deal about the one who wrote and publishes it, and has it printed too in his own town. The tint of the paper cover, the sepia colored fluid in which the title is printed and the whole arrangement shows taste; and no matter how small the book may be, it should be printed and made up in good taste. It is a great pleasure to say that the author and publisher of our little book has done this. It bears the *imprimatur* also, of that true scholar and accomplished prelate, Bishop Chatard, of Vincennes. Even after such an introduction as these facts give us, bidding us to expect the work of a scholarly theologian, the book does not disappoint us. In truth, we are taken by surprise, as one fallacy after another is exterminated, as one would suppose, by the pure logic and homely, perfectly adapted illustrations. One of first is that of the "roads" all leading to Heaven; and as our author remarks, "even if they cross each other at right angles!" The agreement too, of all churches, on "essentials" taking the example of Baptism, is it necessary, or is it not? Thus the divinity of our Lord, the ground of hope to many, absolutely denied by others. Both can not be in the truth. The old dodge of "When we get to Heaven, we shall not be asked, to what Church did we belong?" does not take the whole of one of Father Book's lines to answer, and another fallacy, "It matters not what a man believes, provided he does what is right." How many have stumbled against these fallacies never to rise! They seem so weak under the strong light Rev. Father Book throws on them; but the work they have done in the world has undermined many a strong man's citadel. The "Way to the True Church" deals with the false reasoning upon that word of our Lord "Search the Scriptures." The interpretation, the non-existence of the New Testament at the time our Lord spoke, is so simple, that a child's Catechism could adopt it; and the "rule of faith," the supremacy of Peter, the infallibility of the Pope, *not* his impeccability, are set forth with equal simplicity. The objections to the Church—confession, indulgences, the ceremonies of the Church as they appear to those who do not understand them, are treated in a way so fair, that no one can take umbrage, and so logically, that the wonder will be that so many will not read our little book so as to receive it. This "Short Line to the Roman Catholic Church" can anger no person, and will, no doubt, convert many.

CATHOLIC TELEGRAPH, FEB. 1892.

"Short Line to the Roman Catholic Church," by Rev. J. W. Book. This valuable little treatise has now reached its fourth edition. It ought to be placed into the hands of every non-Catholic.

WESTERN CROSS, KANSAS CITY, MO. March 1892.

This pamphlet of 109 pages is an admirable little book. Although it is intended principally for non-Catholics, it will prove very useful to Catholics also on account of the abundance of valuable information it contains. It is written in a clear, simple and interesting style that rivets the attention whilst it charms the imagination. We most heartily recommend the work to the readers of the Western Cross.

FROM THE PILOT, BOSTON, Feb. 1892.

Catholic authors and Catholic publishers often complain of the lack of popular appreciation for their efforts as shown in the slow sale of pious books. Would it not be well, sometimes, to question if part of the blame for this state of affairs does not rest with the books? Are they not sometimes too dull for the patience of intelligent people? or too abstruse for any but those who have some theological training.

We have noted some recent signal successes in Catholic books of instruction, which proves that there is a large demand for such books if they are but written with appreciation of the popular need and in an attractive style. Leila Hardin Bugg's "The Correct Thing for Catholics" went into its second edition in a week. Father Bernard Feeney's "How to Get On" has reached its third edition. To go a step higher—the Rev. J. W. Book's "Short Line to the Roman Catholic Church" is in its fourth edition.

THE YOUNG CATHOLIC MESSENGER, Feb. 1892.

The very interesting little pamphlet by Rev. J. W. Book, treats the objections coolly, forcibly and masterly. The numerous comparisons are at once so commonplace and to the point, that the whole force of the logic imprints itself indelibly on the mind. The reporter adopts the name of *father*, and that shows the spirit in which the refutation are presented. The book is sold by all dealers; Price 20 cents.

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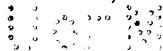
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