

Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XIII

On the Unity of the Church.

June 29, 1896.

W. Kelly.

Table of Contents

THE FOLD.....	1
THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §1.	1
UNITY.....	4
THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §2.	4
PERPETUITY.....	6
THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §3.	6
THE FAITH.....	9
THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §4.	9
HEADSHIP.....	12
THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §5.	12
DOES THE CHURCH TEACH?.....	15
THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §6.....	15
THE CHURCH OR ASSEMBLY, CHRIST'S BODY.....	18
THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §7.....	18
WAS PETER CHRIST'S VICE-GERENT?.....	21
THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL. §8.	21

Souls may be profited if one subject this document to the test of God's word. It professes to come from an infallible man; and after full consultation with all who could render aid, rather than alone, we must presume. It is on a momentous article of faith, on which, if anywhere, infallibility should not falter. "If they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them."

THE FOLD.

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §1.

Let us begin with an all-important question raised in the first sentence. Pope Leo XIII. speaks of "the fold." It is no slip of the pen. It reappears with similar emphasis near the middle of his letter. It is reiterated in the final "appeal to sheep not of the fold," p. lvii. But the Lord Jesus, whom the Pope acknowledges to be "the Chief Pastor of souls," has ruled otherwise in John 10. He led His own sheep out of "the fold," the only such enclosure set up by God; and He forms "one flock" in contradistinction, Himself the "one Shepherd," as indeed is owned. So it is said in Matt. 16: 18, they are His church; as in the epistles, the church of God.

"The fold" applied to the Christian body is a vulgar mistake, or, if you wish it, as universally

current a tradition as could be produced. What can one think of its adoption by the religious chief over 200 millions of baptised? by one who aspires to gather under his authority a still greater number, who bear the name of the Lord but do not accept his title? Is it not strange to find an infallible claim, not only stumbling on the threshold, but persisting in so palpable an error throughout? For the Pope ignores "the flock," which the Lord of all instituted, and recalls the sheep to "the fold," out of which the Lord led them. It is no mere quibble of words, but distinctive truth. For "the fold" out of which the Saviour led His own sheep was governed by the law, and fenced by ordinances on pain of cutting off; it had a succession of priests; it provided continual repetition of sacrifices, and boasted of a gorgeous sanctuary, splendid vestments, and captivating music, to say nothing of saints such as were found nowhere else. Yet out of this fold the Lord leads His own sheep; and into such a fold, as far as man could imitate it, does the Pope seek to win the sheep now.

"The flock" which the Good Shepherd forms has quite another character. He had entered by the door into the fold of the sheep, as their Shepherd, the Messiah, with the utmost difference from those who claimed them as theirs. Prophecy and miracle, light and love, made Him plain save to those who, being enemies of God, received Him not. The porter opens the door; the sheep hear His voice, and He calls His own sheep by name, but leads them out. The confession of His person (John 8: 58) provoked from the Jews not worship but an effort to stone Him; whilst His work of gracious and divine power (John 9) drew out their agreement that every confessor of Him should be put out of the synagogue. The Jews thus condemned themselves. Jesus was come that those that see not (like the blind confessor) might see, and those that see (like the unbelieving Jewish leaders) might be made blind.

The Lord further sets forth Himself as the new separating and gathering object; no longer as Messiah entering "the fold," but as "the door of the sheep":- not of the sheep-fold, as some misinterpret. "I am the door: by me if anyone enter, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture" (ver. 9). In these divine words we learn who and what they are that compose "the flock." They follow Jesus because they know His voice; and He came that they might have life, and have it more abundantly. He is the object of faith; not "the flock." "He is the true God and eternal life." "He that hath the Son hath life." If any persons on earth could assuredly assert that they were God's people, theirs the fathers, theirs the covenants, theirs the Messiah, it was the Jews. Yet when proved to reject the Lord, as once for serving idols, God gave them up; and Jesus was the warrant for His own sheep to follow Him outside, where they enjoy salvation, liberty, food, and shelter from the enemy, in Him Who laid down His life for the sheep. "And I have other sheep which are not of this fold [namely, Gentile believers]; those also I must bring, and they shall bear My voice [this is the main criterion]; and there shall be one flock, one shepherd" (ver. 16).

Such is "the flock," not "the fold." The flock consists alike of the sheep separated from Judaism, which was "this fold," and of the sheep scattered among the Gentiles that had no fold: these are the "one flock." He Who is indeed infallible speaks of no "fold" now for His sheep; the Pope does. Can any child of God hesitate which to believe? The sheep hear His voice; an alien will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of aliens. The sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. "We walk by faith, not by sight." Blandishment is as vain as threats. Ever before, while "the fold" was owned, Jews and Gentiles were rigidly kept apart; now if they hear His voice, they are "one flock." It is anew thing, where grace reigns; and Christ is all, and in all. What a contrast with the fold of old or any new one! His person and work are the guarantee of every spiritual blessing to those that believe on Him.

Is it said in excuse that not only the loose speech prevalent in Christendom but the Vulgate of Jerome misled? Yet Pope Leo is a student of Scripture, they say, and probably familiar with the Greek

original of the N.T. He ought herefore to have known and avoided so flagrant a mistake. In the same verse 16 of John 10 is the word (αὐλή) rightly translated "fold", the Jewish enclosure. Here the Lord declares that the sheep He had which were not of this fold should, with those He was leading out of the fold, be "one flock" with one Shepherd. No such gathering into one had been hitherto. It was reserved for Christ when rejected by the Jews. As the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, Who died to gather together in one the scattered children of God (John 11: 52).

Oh! how the truth has been forgotten, and the fold" set up again into which the Pope devotes his "endeavour" to bring back "sheep that have strayed." It is part of that fatal judaizing against which the great apostle of the Gentiles strenuously laboured and fought throughout his blessed course. Therein the apostle Peter grievously failed: a feeble foundation for the church, and for the Roman claim of universal jurisdiction. Why should anyone hide that Peter was untrue at Antioch to the divine vision of Acts 10? He had rightly used the keys of the kingdom to admit the Jews, and afterward Gentiles. He at first had eaten with Gentiles, the sign of fellowship; and then when certain came from James, he was drawing back and separating himself. not vacillation and inconsistency only, but schism and despite of the "one flock, one Shepherd." And it was the more deplorable cowardice now, because he had confronted the narrow Pharisaic brethren in Jerusalem once (Acts 11) and again (Acts 15); and all the worse, because he was so honoured and influential. But the apostle of the uncircumcision was faithful and resisted him to the face, because he was (not merely "reprehensibilis," as the Vulgate improperly tones it down, but) "condemned". Indeed the apostle writes thus severely, "And the rest of the Jews also were guilty of like dissimulation [or hypocrisy], so that even Barnabas was carried away by their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before all," etc.

Has Pope Leo XIII. laid this solemn admonition to heart or those who helped Pope Pius IX. to proclaim papal infallibility? To the believer can there be a plainer instance of the care God has taken in scripture to anticipate and condemn human presumption? Holy Peter broke down where not only his faith as a saint should have kept him firm, but where his apostolic authority compromised the faith of the gospel and the unity of the church. It was a brief but sad slip into "the fold" again; but we read his censure for our warning in God's imperishable word. There is a painfully instructive tale of patristic dishonesty that hangs thereby; but to tell it here would cause too great a divergence from the present question, and so it must now be left.

But there is another fact of immediate bearing, which, if not familiar to all, one might expect so experienced a theologian as the present Pope to know. The correct and only tenable rendering we now discuss is given in copies of the old Latin Gospels, both *African* (or unrevised) and of the *Italic* revision. Thus in the Cod. Vercell. we read "fiet una grex, et unus pastor"; in the Cod. Veron. (with which here agrees Cod. Corbei.), "fiet unus grex, et unus pastor"; and in the Cod. Brix., "fient unus grex et unus pastor": each independent and differing perceptibly, but all agreeing in the sure and weighty truth of "one flock." This the Hieronymian Version perverted, the Popes and Councils and clergy ever since sanctioning it, ignorantly or deliberately, for their return more and more to the Jewish fold; as in fact there is none but that one. The blessed difference of the "one flock, one shepherd" they do not appreciate. It is all one to them no doubt.

Let me add that even the Gothic V. of Ulphilas is correct: why Gabelentz and Loebe have given a misinterpretation in Latin is the more strange, because in their note they rightly convict Schultz of error on this point. It is well-known that the Peschito Syriac gives the just sense, as does the Syr. Hcl. or Philox.: so also the Aeth., the Anglo-Sax., the Arabic, the Arm., the Georgian, the Memph., the Sah., and the Slavonic. Luther translated correctly, as did Tyndale; but Cranmer and the later English

wrongly followed the Vulgate, which was natural in Wiclif and the Rhemish. Erasmus in his note cites Valla, who knew that ποίμνη is "grex" rather than "ovile"; but he left the error uncorrected in all his five editions. Beza corrects it in his fourth and fifth editions, though wrong in the first three. But there can be no question, to those who adhere to the word, either of the truth, or of its importance. In Matt. 26: 31, Luke 2: 8, and twice in 1 Cor. 9: 7, the Vulgate without hesitation gives "flock," not "fold," and thus condemns itself in John 10: 16, where it is dogmatically of moment.

W.K.

UNITY.

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §2.

To attract the stray sheep Pope Leo has thought it most conducive to describe the exemplar and, as it were, the lineaments of the Church. Amongst these the most worthy of our chief consideration is *Unity*" (p. v). Now in scripture the church has unity, not bare, but of a most distinctive character. It is the unity of God's presence in light and love, of which Christ is the head and centre, and the Spirit is the power, where therefore falsehood and evil are, as intolerable, judged by the written word. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. Where this is not realised, the unity becomes the enemy's snare attaching the name of God and binding souls helplessly together to that which sanctions any iniquity and error. Unity, which exalts man and his will under pretence of God's authority, letting in error and allowing evil, is the hateful antithesis of the Spirit's unity, the object of God's wrath and sore judgment, as St. John predicts for the harlot city of Rev. 17, 18. No wonder then that all votaries of corrupt and spurious unity should both slight openly and secretly dread the last book of holy prophecy.

The truth is thus unworthily ignored, or strangely taken for granted. But even if this were a sound and spiritual judgment, how sad! For nothing is more certain than the fact that "unity" no longer exists among Christians. There was a time when the apostolic exhortation in 1 Cor. 10: 32 could apply absolutely and without explanation: "Give none offence [no occasion of stumbling] either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God." There was no Latin church opposed to the Oriental, each claiming to be Catholic and Apostolic, to say nothing of the Russian patriarchate independent of Constantinople. There were no Jacobites, nor Nestorians; no distinct communities of Abyssinians, of Armenians, and of Copts. Again, how refuse the Christian name to the multifarious Protestant bodies who date from the Reformation, or to such as the Anglicans who boast of ecclesiastical continuity of a dubious sort for long ages before it? It must not be forgotten that more of the baptised are outside Rome than within it; and if one may at all speak not of mere profession but of real children of God, the preponderance is enormously against Rome. Yet godly and intelligent Protestants have immensely added to the disunion of Christendom. Who can deny it? or is it a light matter?

In apostolic days the church was one. How could it be otherwise if it were, as scripture declares it to be, the body and bride of Christ? It was not only that the individuals who composed it were sons of God with the Holy Spirit given to each, and crying, Abba Father. They were one with Christ corporately, His body; which relationship created the responsibility of walking as such together on the earth. They were heavenly in title already as belonging to the Heavenly One, before they bear His image at His coming again. "By one Spirit were we all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all given to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12: 13). It was not an invisible light here below; but out of the most discordant elements expressly one, that the world seeing it might believe that the Father sent the Son Who constituted it.

The church therefore was as distinctly separate from the world, as it was Christ's alone, bearing witness, wherever it existed on earth, to its Head in heaven. The Christians formed the "within," as all who were not, Jews or Gentiles, were the, "without." It was the only divine society here below. Israel of old had been Jehovah's chosen nation. But this place they for the time forfeited. Thereon God visited Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name, called by sovereign grace to incomparably higher privileges, and to heavenly glory as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. The same cross of Christ which ended Judaism founded God's reconciliation of both Jews and Gentiles that believe in one body, the enmity being slain thereby. Thus through Christ we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. So real and efficacious the presence of the Spirit, that in each locality (as at Corinth) the gathered saints were addressed as "Christ's body" (1 Cor. 12: 27); and so are they all together on earth "the church" (1 Cor. 12: 28). The unity was universal as well as local. A member of Christ was so equally in Antioch and in Ephesus, in Jerusalem and in Rome, so were apostles and prophets, evangelists, also pastors and teachers. There was one body, and one Spirit.

It is beyond controversy that this visibly and practically maintained unity no longer subsists. The later Epistles are full of warning for Christendom, as the O.T. prophets for Israel. The apostle Paul too in an early one had predicted that "the *apostasy*" should come before the day of the Lord. Nothing worse was ever said to the Jews. He declared that "the mystery of lawlessness" was already at work even in his active days. It may be held down for the time, but at last would issue in the revelation of the lawless one, the man of sin, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy when He appears. Was not this to write from God sentence of death on Christendom? 2 Thess. 2 intimates with divine certainty, that lawlessness was even then at work, breaking out in heterodoxy and unholiness, in schisms and heresies; that there is no uprooting of it, whatever the Spirit may do to suppress or check it; but that it will, when God's restraint is removed, rise up at last into the most impious defiance of God and the most openly lawless arrogation of His glory, judicially closed by the Lord shining forth in His day.

That the church which Christ builds on the rock, on the confession of His own person and divine glory, will prevail over all the power of Hades, is certain (Matt. 16: 18). But this in no way clashes with what scripture attests of ruin for the professing mass. What we now see around us, if we have the least spiritual eyesight, is thus clearly accounted for. God is no more pleased with the state of Christendom than of old with that of Israel (1 Cor. 10). Since the departure of the great apostle grievous wolves came in, not sparing the flock; and from among Christians themselves men rose up speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them. Hence the last apostle could only say, "even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour" (1 John 2: 18): not the triumph of the church, but alas! the spread of anti-christianism. So far too is Rome from being set out in scripture as the indefeasible guarantee of unity or of aught else, to the saints there above all others is addressed the solemn word for the professing Gentile, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but on thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: *otherwise thou also shalt be cut off*" (Rom. 11: 22). If there is a spot on earth perpetually infamous for iniquity, moral, doctrinal, and ecclesiastical, it is Rome, in Popes, Cardinals, priests, people, monks, and nuns: such have been the confessions of many of its own most distinguished adherents. Must I cite Gerson, Baronius, or a crowd of witnesses before and since? "Thou also shalt be cut off."

Is it meant, as too many think, Protestants as well as Papists, that all is hopeless, even for such as sigh and cry for all the abominations done in Christendom? Is there nothing but Christian work now? Is there no common walk and worship, no longer communion of saints reliable for the believer, or acceptable to God? God forbid that we should doubt Him, defraud our souls, or dishonour the Spirit given to abide with us for ever. There is a path and a centre for faith in a day of ruin. The name of Jesus

is not the ground and pledge of salvation only, but of unfailing security for those who are gathered to it. And the Holy Spirit is here to make good His unity for all that use diligence to keep it according to the written word in the uniting bond of peace (Eph. 4: 3). Those gathered to the Lord's name, even "two or three," wherever they be, have His promise and sanction as keeping the unity of the Spirit. Were 200 millions gathered otherwise (e.g. to the see of St. Peter), they have no such promise; if 400 millions were reunited otherwise, it would not mend matters, but only make them worse. To be gathered to His name is His own resource for a day of evil, and stumbling-blocks, and scattering; and it is an unfailing resource to such as have faith in Him.

Diligently to "keep the unity of the Spirit" is as far as possible from the letter or spirit of a sect. For a sect falsifies things by being sometimes broader, more commonly narrower, than the church of God. Thus nationalism departs from it by embracing a whole people in principle by sacraments; as dissent forms mere voluntary societies by adhesion to particular views. In both ways God's design is lost sight of and His children err.

But even in a day of confusion and ruin the path of His will is open to the single eye of faith. His word abides for ever. It is a solemn duty, not a sect, where Christians turn away from all that hold a form of godliness, but have denied its power (2 Tim. 3). It is a plain call of God not to forsake the assembling of themselves together as members of Christ — the only membership they recognise as of His grace. So it was originally according to His revealed will; and it remains ever true and obligatory. Yet to assume the title of the church of God, for the few who now act on it, would be pride and heartlessness, as virtually denying the many who are scattered here or there in the present state of ruin. But on no other ground should believers act; for only this is obedience, which remains always valid for action as for faith.

W.K.

PERPETUITY.

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §3.

There is another truth which the Popes have misconstrued, no less ruinously than unity, to build up their tower of Babel. "This [unity] the divine author impressed on it as a lasting sign of truth and of unconquerable strength" (p. v). They have one and all assumed that the church is to abide on earth conquering and to conquer till time melts into eternity. Not a word in the N. T. warrants such an expectation. Matt. 16: 18 speaks of the gates of Hades, which are not in this world. Unquestionably they will prevail against the wicked which Satan brought in, not against His church which Christ built: resurrection will vindicate it, as He was defined Son of God in power thereby. Yet earthly power or glory is assured neither here nor anywhere else; but as the Lord Jesus was once rejected and suffered, so each of His must now deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Him, as He explains at the same time to Peter, sternly rebuked for minding the things of men, not of God. Hence they essay to found it on the promises, psalms and prophecies which speak of Jerusalem, Zion, and the like in the O.T. But this is wholly unsound and misleading.

Let us weigh the scriptures on which they rely. Here are Pope Leo's words (pp. 13, 14), "That the one Church should embrace all men everywhere and at all times was seen and foretold by Isaias, when looking into the future he saw the appearance of a mountain conspicuous by its all-surpassing altitude, which set forth the image of *The house of the Lord* - that is, of the Church. *And in the last days the*

mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of the mountains (Isa. 2: 2). But this mountain which towers over all other mountains is one; and the house of the Lord to which all nations shall come to seek the rule of living is also one. And all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go, and say: Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths (Ibid 2: 2, 3)."

Now it is vain to quote Fathers in support of an interpretation which is inconsistent with the text, foreign to the prophets universally, and contradicted by all that the N. T. tells us of the church. Beyond doubt the rejected Messiah, the Son of man, was lifted up on the cross, and must be, that (not Jews only but) "whosoever believeth might in Him have life eternal." "For there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved." But neither these scriptures nor any others teach that the church embraces the whole race. The very name essentially excludes and forbids such a perversion. "Church" means the "assembly," the calling out which leaves the rest where they were. The Lord therefore, who had before Him the end from the beginning, calls the "little flock" not to fear (Luke 12); and, when looking on to the day of displayed glory, He contrasts those that are then to be perfected in one with the world, which will thereby know that the Father sent the Son and loved the saints then glorified, even as He loved His Son. For are they not manifested in the same glory? The church is catholic, in contrast with God's previous dealing with one people, as comprehending not all mankind, but "out of" every land and nation. Hence in giving the sentence of the council in Jerusalem on the question of admitting the Gentiles, James refers to Symeon's explanation how God first visited to take "out of Gentiles" a people for His name. And this will be complete "in the consummation of the age" (Matt. 13: 40-43), in the time of the harvest, when those gathered out are brought to heaven, and shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

But Isaiah had before him the vision of the new age, when the veil is no longer on Israel's heart, and they see eye to eye, for Jehovah has returned to Zion. Therefore is her light come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon her. In this mountain shall Jehovah make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the veil that veileth all the peoples, and the covering that is spread over all the nations. Nor will this be without the solemn judgment of the living, which the living are so apt to forget, though He Himself revealed it, as the apostles repeated, and the O.T. prophets predicted of old: a judgment which will fall on the nations, but severely on the Jews, and yet more so on Christendom, more guilty still as knowing better and no less unbelieving and lawless.

Israel will then be under Messiah and the new covenant; and the inhabitants of the world, when His judgments are in the earth, learn righteousness. Such is the basis, such the circumstances, presupposed in the scene, to which the prophet prefixes a title which ought to preclude misapplication: "The word that Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem." The church at that time will have a still more glorious position. For she is the bride, the Lamb's wife, and is symbolised, not by Zion, or Moriah, or Jerusalem, but by the new Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. She had suffered with Christ during her earthly sojourn, instead of faithlessly, like Babylon, seeking present ease and power and glory; therefore will she be glorified together with Him in that day. Jerusalem even then is reigned over. The first dominion comes to Zion; and all the nations shall truly bow to Jehovah's choice and Messiah's seat of earthly rule. But the heavenly Eve of the second Man, the last Adam, has a far higher place and glory, as united to the Head over all, the Heir of the universe. The glorified saints alone shall reign with Christ over the earth.

With this agrees every word of the text. The Lord has not yet taken His great power and reigned, as He will, at the seventh trumpet in the end of the age when the world-kingdom is become His *de*

facto. Then will He reward His servants, and destroy the destroyers of the earth; and the present evil age will yield to the good age that follows when He is come and governs. Then as Zion is His earthly centre, so is the mountain of Jehovah's house exalted; and all the nations shall flow thither. The nations are no longer envious, nor is Israel jealous any more. Jehovah Messiah will have wrought in divine attractive mercy as well as in overawing power; and the peoples come up, assured that *He* (not the church) will teach them of His ways.

The prophet does not say that the gospel as now but that the law shall go forth out of Zion; it is not the Father's word which we know, but Jehovah's word from Jerusalem. No allegoriser is bold enough to deny the literality of Jerusalem here; but this they quit in a moment and interpolate the gospel and the church. But the prophet in ver. 6 goes on to say, "Thou hast cast off thy people, the house of Jacob," etc. How say this of the church? It is "the kingdom"; and the Great King will judge among the nations, and will reprove many peoples: a wholly different state from the church, wherein is neither Jew nor Gentile, now in training, and sufferings too, in the fellowship of Christ's, for heaven. The time for earth's deliverance and joy and blessing is come. For Jehovah will reign in a way He has never done yet.

Accordingly we are assured that men "shall forge their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-knives: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." So it will be in the age to come. But our Lord has expressly told us that till the end of this age come, "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Thus there is no excuse for the confusion of the theologians. This is not confined to Popery, though there it is extreme and systematised error. It is due to the evil heart of unbelief that loves the world and the things of the world. But the Lord has laid down for Christians that they "are not of the world" as He is not: a principle itself subversive of this evil scheme, which seeks earthly dominion more persistently and unscrupulously than any usurper that ever breathed. But strong is the Lord God that will judge Babylon, and this righteously.

It is not to the church in one single instance, but to Israel (when restored in sovereign mercy, yet also in accomplishment of the promises to the true fathers), that perpetuity is assigned throughout all the O.T. and sealed in the N.T. So Genesis 17 repeatedly assures to Abraham and his seed "an everlasting covenant," and the land (which decides its literal import) "an everlasting possession"; to Isaac and to Jacob the gift was successively confirmed. But Exodus shows that, while Jehovah remembered His covenant, Israel forgot His free promise and their own weakness, undertaking to obey the law as the condition of their possession. Thus man being what he is, all was certain to be lost. Only through a typical, and therefore temporary, mediator did they pass through the wilderness or enter the land. There (after the fullest patience and the exhaustion of all possible remedial means) ruin came at last under the first, and more under the last, of the four "beasts" or imperial world-powers. But even Lev. 26 which declares the stern chastenings awaiting their sins, lets us know that when their heart is humbled as our Lord taught us to expect (Matt. 23: 39), Jehovah will remember His covenant with their fathers, and remember their land. Jerusalem (said He, Luke 21: 24) shall be trodden down by Gentiles — for ever? Not so; but only until times of Gentiles be fulfilled. What has all this to do with the church? It has much every way to say to Israel and the future kingdom. Compare Num. 24, 25, and Deut. 32 especially vers. 36-43.

But it is in the Psalms and Prophets that evidence is most abundant, so much so that one need not cite any in particular, unless it be Dan. 2: 35, to which allusion is made in the extract from Augustine (p. xix). Now it is absurd to apply to the first advent that judicial act, which effaces not only the Roman empire, but all that remains of its predecessors on the earth. It is He at the second advent alone, who

will execute sudden and complete judgment on all hostile powers. Only when utter destruction falls on them, does the stone that smote the image become a great mountain and fill the whole world. It will be the kingdom of God in Christ set up on Zion, when Jehovah makes Judah as His majestic horse in the battle. What can be more decidedly in contrast with the suffering church, the witness of grace and heavenly glory? What more distinctly in keeping with the Lord coming in His kingdom and trampling all His enemies under foot?

Nevertheless theology has habitually confounded these two things; and none more grossly than the Popes, nor any with such evident and interested aim to profit by a deception, which probably deceived themselves. Yet what can be plainer than the wholly different facts when the church was brought in to view at Pentecost? Zion was for the present no better than Aeldama, and Jerusalem doomed to desolation. Instead of all the nations flowing to the mountain of Jehovah's house, the gospel was soon preached everywhere by the scattered Christians and later by the apostles. Instead of judging among the nations from His centre of Zion, He executed sentence on Jerusalem by heathen Rome (Matt. 22: 7); and instead of nations ever since learning war no more, all history attests, as He predicted, incessant ravages of war. And the day in which we live beholds Christendom, more than ever since the world began, bristling with arms on sea and land, and learning war with a zeal and mutual suspicion beyond all previous zeal. What more infatuated then than the traditional misuse of this vision and of others generally?

W.K.

THE FAITH.

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §4.

The flock and its unity we affirm. Human co-operation in all that is a duty on our part by God's will, none but a fanatic can dispute. That the church was originally visible is as certain as that it always ought to have been so; but it is not since early days, being broken up into parties ancient and modern. Self-will has made Christ's body the church invisible. This the faithful are bound to feel and confess as sin, while repudiating all corporate existence or action save on the principle of its divine unity. From its nature and character no section has departed so flagrantly as Romanism, none in such deliberate and active resistance against its Head as the Popes.

Let us now briefly test this self-vaunting system by "the faith." If we cleave to the teaching of the apostles, Popery is a manifest revolt from it. If it allows that the passages cited for unity from the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Corinthians, as well as the Gospel of John, "need no interpreter," is it conceivable that what is more vital still, what concerns the basis of man's individual salvation or his perdition, does not "speak clearly? "

First, does Romanism proclaim, as the apostle Peter did, the remission of sins through Christ's name to every one that believes in Him (Acts 10: 43)? Does the Pope, or any of his venerable brethren, make known, as the great apostle of the Gentiles did, that through Christ is preached forgiveness of sins — that by Him all that believe are justified from all things (Acts 13: 38, 39)? To the cry "What must I do to be saved?" do they answer with Paul and Silas, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16: 30, 31)? The Council of Trent (Sess. vi. cap. 9) nullifies this, the simple and certain word of truth, the gospel of our salvation; and in Can. ix. it anathematizes any one who says that the ungodly man is justified by faith alone. They are, therefore, false witnesses and

adversaries of the faith. They confound justification with practical sanctification, which destroys it. "Non est sola peccatorum remissio sed et sanctificatio" are their words (cap. 7), which betray ignorance of the first message in God's gospel.

Secondly, they have invented an unscriptural, fabulous, purgatory, owing to the same blindness as to the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice. For though they allow that His blood meritoriously avails for the justification of the faithful, they hold, save for exceptional men like martyrs, that all others must go into that future prison till they have paid the last farthing. Not only is this flat contradiction of God's testimony to the Saviour's work declared not only to sanctify the believer (Heb. 10: 14), but to have perfected him in perpetuity (εἰς τὸ διηνεκές); it is distressing defamation of our God and Father, both in character and in conduct toward us. For He is said, even now, to *have* qualified the faithful for the participation of the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. 1: 12); and therefore are they called not only to pray but to give Him thanks. For His love is shed abroad in their hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given to us; and perfect love casts out fear. This the Tridentine fathers blacken as the vain confidence of heretics, being themselves as far from crying Abba, Father, as they are from enjoying redemption, in truth.

Thirdly, even at the start, their doctrine is (Sess. xiv. c. 2) that by baptism putting on Christ we are made wholly a new creature in Him, obtaining full and entire remission of all sins. Now this is to confound baptism with water and baptism with the Spirit. It is no wonder that, when they had lost the truth of the gospel, they exaggerated an institution like baptism. Even so it is evident that they have no confidence in anything really secured and abiding by Christ and His work. Of standing in grace they are in blank ignorance.

Hence, fourthly, they resort to a sacrament of penance to meet sins after baptism, and they urge "contrition" as its condition, that is, not only hatred of the sins but desire to make reparation or atonement for them, proportionate to the crimes it effaces. Now as few could hope to attain such an end, they pretend that God eases the difficulty by giving the keys of the kingdom to the church, and thus opening the gate of heaven to those who, not truly contrite, have only reached "attrition." Penance, therefore, is a deliberate device of Romanism to give absolution where there is confession without due repentance or contrition. Nor was auricular confession established till the fourth Lateran Council (1215), when Innocent III. had it imposed as an article of faith. For previously, though confession of sins was held to be a duty, it was left open to do so to God alone or to a priest also. The new development was by the usual fiction declared to be the church's faith from the beginning. So they say of all their peculiar dogmas, no matter how recent they be as articles of faith, nor how loudly their highest authorities are known to have once rejected them. More barefaced deceit than in Romanism it were hard to imagine.

Fifthly, may be noticed the strange doctrine of Rome as to the extreme unction. The Greeks are depraved and superstitious enough; but their practice approaches far nearer to that of early days among Jewish believers. For if they anoint the sick with oil, it is that the prayer of faith may heal him and the Lord may raise him up. Not so the unhallowed Romish system. In open departure from James 5 the aim is some faint hope of solace for the dying. Remission of sins in baptism suffices not; and no wonder, whatever the strong language employed. Penance again with its satisfaction and absolution has failed, no matter how often repeated. Of another resource we may speak presently, still more .their boast during life; but now that death approaches, it too has proved a broken reed. Then the priest is anew called in to administer the viaticum and extreme unction. The Council of Trent (Sess. xiv. c. 2) perverts the scriptural text, though not without prevarication, to the saving of the soul as the Jesuit commentator, Cornelius van der Steen, boldly, *Delicta, si quae sint adhuc expianda, ac peccati*

reliquias abstergit. Yet after all this round of appliances, however diligently used throughout life and in the hour of death, the soul at last goes to purgatory and must endure exquisite torments from God. What a contrast with the saving grace of God revealed in His word! How deplorable the ignorance, among Westerns or Orientals, of the unction from the Holy One, whereby even the babes of God's family know and enjoy the grace wherein they stand! For want of it in vain do they wrest the scriptures to inaugurate means of quieting consciences, which need to be and can only be purged by the blood of Christ.

This, sixthly, leads us to another of these unavailing expedients, which is, if possible, even more characteristic of incredulity — masses for the dead as well as the living. Here too is the same fatality of powerlessness to keep from the generally inevitable horrors of purgatory. But the serious feature common to them all is that these lying vanities undermine God's word and supplant the one sacrifice for sins, the offering of Christ's body once for all; which was God's will, that we might be not only sanctified but perfected uninterruptedly. Now no article of Popery is more sacred than that which is professed in the Creed of Pope Pius IV. that in the mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. Necessarily then the simple and complete efficacy of Christ's sacrifice is disbelieved. For if His blood really cleanses from all sin, it is dishonoured and in effect denied by supplementary sacrifices. Like the Jews of old, the Romanist now trusts in the repetition of sacrifices; but in this the latter is immeasurably more guilty. For the New Testament is explicit that sacrifice was repeated because of inefficacy, and that Christ's is but one because it makes the conscience perfect. The doctrine and the practice of Rome are in this not erroneous only but infidel and apostate.

There is further evidence of the same fundamental antagonism against the revealed truth. For God's word declares that since Christ's death there is no more offering for sin; whereas the Council of Trent curses all who deny its constant repetition in the Mass. There not only is Christ's one oblation on the cross brought to nought, but a rival is set up pretending to be its continuation. The excuse is made that the Mass is a pure unbloody offering. But this only renders the case worse and more glaring. For if Christ be offered often, the Holy Spirit has ruled that He must suffer often, which is impossible and false; and again, that an unbloody sacrifice cannot avail for remission of sins, because scripture decides that without shedding of blood there is no remission, Heb. 9, 10.

But the fact is, seventhly, that the Romish creed consecrates natural feeling without the least warrant and in the grossest way, against the faith of God's elect in the mediation of the Virgin, of angels, and of saints. Scripture is not plainer in the O.T. for the unity of God than in the N.T. for "one mediator between God and man" — Christ Jesus, not only man but Son of the Father Who is God over all blessed for ever.

The Epistle to the Hebrews elaborately draws out His perfection, both in sacrificial work and in priestly office, from the glory of His person as Son of God, and Son of man, exalted above all men and angels, and seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Highly favoured as Mary was in that the Son deigned to be born of her, so that all generations call her blessed, it is merely natural religion, as it is the deepest offence against Him and the word and the glory of God, to claim for her more accessible grace, or a more compassionate heart. He only is the merciful and faithful High Priest. What would it have been to have sought Miriam to interpose with weak and failing Aaron? How much more intolerable to have recourse to Mary with Him that has passed through the heavens, the Son of God! Herein we have known and do know love, because He laid down His life for us — for us, when we were enemies and ungodly. This, neither Mary, nor any saint, ever did for us; nor if they had, would it have availed in the least for us or even for themselves. His death alone was or could be efficacious for

our sins. His love is the same now that He is risen, and appears in heaven, interceding, for us, before the God of all grace, Whose love to us is as perfect as His own. The Romanist dream may not openly oppose this, which is the certain truth of God, but saps it all effectually. So that Mariolatry and guardian angels and patron saints really displace the worship of the Father and the Son to the infinite grief of the Holy Spirit.

But lastly, their hostility to scripture, in order to claim authority for the church both to authenticate and to interpret it, is the plainest defection from the faith. For the church is in no way the truth, but responsible to be its pillar and base. If the Queen sent a letter by the post, just think of the empty conceit of the postmaster or the postman pretending to accredit what solely depends on her majesty's sign-manual, or her command through this or that minister! How incomparably worse for the church, or its rulers, to arrogate the title to pronounce on God's word! Every scripture has in itself divine authority, because it is inspired of God; and the church, like every member of it, is bound to receive and obey it accordingly. To set up the church's title to accredit it is blasphemous pride, which is none the better because they profess themselves to believe. Satan deceives them to make that presumptuous claim, in order to exalt the church and enhance its authority over all mankind, alas! to their own sin and ruin, to God's unfailing and predicted vengeance.

W. K.

HEADSHIP.

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §5.

In scripture the truth is plain. The church of God knows but one Head, even Christ in heaven (Eph. 1: 22; Col. 1: 18). Earthly head there is none if we hear God's word. Not only is there no such anomaly as two heads of the one body of Christ; but the invariable teaching of divine revelation is incompatible with such an earthly incumbrance. The principle is as certain as the doctrine. The evident aim is to make the church of God even while on earth a heavenly institution by giving the glorified Christ to her as Head. This accordingly excludes any other. The church, if faithful, accepts on earth shame, rejection, and persecution, as the Lord Jesus did in the days of his flesh. "In the world (said He) ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world" (John 16: 33). When the church even seeks, still more when she receives, earthly glory, the world overcomes her, instead of her by faith overcoming the world. She is false to her Head. Latin, Greek, Protestant, makes no difference as to this. As we died with Christ to sin and law, so is it for the Christian to say in truth, Be it not for me to boast save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. Thus is this great severance laid down by the Holy Spirit. Souls may be and are delivered by grace from this present age; thenceforward they are not of the world as Christ is not.

Hence meddling with the world, or judging its questions, was refused by the Lord peremptorily (Luke 12; 13-15). So He departed from those who would make Him a king (John 6: 15). He is gone to receive for Himself a kingdom and to return (Luke 19: 12); He will receive it from God the Father and return to His earthly people, when they, no longer impenitent but believing, will say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of Jehovah (Matt. 23: 39). Yet is He a king, but His kingdom is not of this world. if it were, as He testified to Pilate (John 18: 36), His servants would fight, that He should not be delivered to the Jews. It was not from hence, but from heaven. His present work here below is quite another thing - bearing witness to the truth, not governing the world as He will in the day of His appearing (Rev. 11: 15). "And every one that is of the truth heareth His voice," not loving his life but hating it in this world,

that he may keep it unto life eternal. For the true christian path is plain to him whose eye is single. "If one serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My servant be; if one serve Me, him will my Father honour." "To him that overcometh will I give to sit with Me in My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father in His throne." Therefore are we called by God to suffer now while He is on the Father's throne; and we shall reign with Him when He receives His own throne.

The carnal and mercurial Corinthians seem to have been the first to err from the way. "Already are ye filled, already ye are become rich, ye reigned as kings without us, and I would at least ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." When reigning really comes, all enter on it together with Christ. How touchingly the apostle corrects this worldly-minded desire, when he adds, "For I think God set forth us the apostles last of all, as it were doomed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, both to men and angels" (1 Cor. 4). Those whom He put first in the church (1 Cor. 12: 28) He displayed last (like prophets before them), as patterns of suffering outwardly. What can be more evident than the place of unworldly affliction God indicates for the Christian here below? In nothing is Christendom more at issue with Christ and His word to us. Paul did not write to shame them (as he well might), but to admonish his beloved children. "I beseech you then," he says, "be imitators of me." Only faith does or can follow him in simplicity.

In all Christendom the Popes and their party have been the most grievous offenders, enemies above all of the Christ in minding earthly things, but not even there so audaciously as in claiming dominion over the Christian faith. All are bound to obey Christ the Lord.

On what then is supposed to be founded this fable, so obviously not only a stranger to, but utterly inconsistent with, scripture? They cite, as their proof-texts, Matt. 16: 15-19; Luke 22: 31, 32; and John 21: 15-17. Can anything more decisively prove themselves ignorant of the scriptures, and of God's grace as well as His power?

1. Peter, in the face of Jewish unbelief, confessed Jesus to be not alone the Christ or Messiah, but the Son of the living God. The Lord owned it to be not of human nature, but a revelation of His Father to him. And He also said to him (for He was co-equal), "Thou art Peter (stone) and upon this (not stone but) rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." On that believed and confessed truth He would build His church. Peter did not dare to exalt himself thus, but was inspired to preach Him Who is life and fulness. They were stones, Christ the chief corner-stone; and all believers were living stones, like himself deriving life from Him Who is life, though an offence to the unbeliever. The inspired word distinguishes in the strongest way between him who was but a stone, and the rock on which Christ builds His assembly. Romanism confounds it all in order to exalt, not Christ, but Peter. But the context resists this folly. For immediately after, when Peter betrayed his error in setting his will against the Lord's sufferings, he is denounced as a stumbling-block, as well as pronounced Satan, an adversary of God and man. What sort of rock is this for the church?

And you that appeal to Fathers, why do you not hear Athanasius, Augustine, and Jerome who understood the rock to be Christ Himself? Granted that Cyprian and Origen and Tertullian thought it was Peter; but what does this prove but Fathers against Fathers? Sometimes the same one, as Chrysostom or Augustine, gives both. What is the worth of all, save to show that the saying of Vincent of Lerins fails in practice? Universality, antiquity, and consent do not exist among the Fathers, whatever special pleaders pretend. The dictum was set up only when faith in the word and Spirit of God had long gone down.

2. Peter's restoration in wondrous grace from the awful sin of repeatedly denying his Master is a monstrous basis for the claim of supremacy. What a manifest witness it affords that they have no real

grounds! Peter's faithfulness wholly failed; but the gracious Saviour besought for him that his faith should not fail — yea that, when turned back again, he should confirm his brethren. So the Lord is pleased to do continually when a fallen disciple is made to stand. Who but the blind could strain such mercy into a papal throne?

3. So it is with the Lord's reinstatement of Peter after the resurrection, lest the disciples should have been too shocked to own God's grace toward him. Peter certainly felt keenly the threefold allusion to his sin, where these vain men dream only of ecclesiastical power and exalted position. Undoubtedly it was the richest grace on our Lord's part, which would be found sufficient for the self-confident saint who, in the face of solemn warning, fell so soon and so low. And this is made a lever for the grossest ambition!

Now we have the inspired writings of N.T. prophets and apostles. How comes it that, in providing bountifully and unerringly for the church and the Christian, nothing can be produced but such ghosts of so-called tradition, of really patristic confusion? Imagine if you can that Peter was invested with a power which solely belongs to the glorified Head; imagine Christ to vacate His functions, instead of ever living to make them good; imagine the Holy Ghost to have gone back into the heavens whence He came to abide with us and in us for ever. How comes it that there is not one sure testimony to it in a single Gospel or Epistle? Yet we have the apostle writing to the saints in Rome, unfolding fundamental truths, and regulating differences which menaced the peace of the church; but not a whisper about Peter, who is said, by one of the most respectable of early fathers, to have with Paul founded the church there! This we know to have been not only absolutely baseless but contrary to scripture. For how could this be, when Paul wrote as one who had never visited Rome, and altogether ignored Peter there, though he salutes more saints there at that time than in any other epistle? It is certain in fact that Paul was there a prisoner, and a martyr; it is probable that Peter may have been carried there to die; but that both founded the church in Rome, or that either was a bishop there, is a fabrication, in the teeth of powerful evidence in scripture against any such ideas of the Fathers.

So again it is fiction (and professing Christians very early began to invent spurious Gospels, Acts, and Revelations, some of which are extant with their detestable heterodoxy) that Peter ever held "the See" of Antioch, which East and West greedily received for their respective aggrandisement. He and Barnabas and Paul were there together. And the occasion was memorable. For the old question was renewed whether God under the gospel does or does not put a difference between Jews and Gentiles that believe. There Peter and Barnabas as sadly failed, as they stood firm in Jerusalem; and Paul declares for permanent and universal warning in his Epistle to the Galatians, that he resisted Peter, and "before all" to the face, because he was condemned. Can anything more completely refute the papal authority, to say nothing of the infallibility they absurdly assume to have been conferred on Peter? His fault was flagrantly inconsistent with God's revelation to him. they would minimise it as a small matter; but the Holy Spirit condemns it solemnly as "walking not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel" - a heinous sin, especially in an apostle so honoured.

But there is another fact of the utmost importance as to Peter and his sphere, which the Holy Spirit records in the same fruitful chapter, Gal. 2. The reputed pillars, James, Cephas, and John, gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that these should go to the Gentiles, themselves to the circumcision. They saw that Paul had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with that of the circumcision. So God had wrought; and they bowed. And the Epistles of Peter, written not long before his death as the second expressly intimates, fall in with this divinely ordered arrangement. For they are both addressed to the circumcision that believed. Peter left the work among the Gentiles to the far mightier hand of Paul. And God, knowing the pride of man and the corrupting,

design of Satan, took care that the church in Rome should not be, as in Corinth or Ephesus, founded by any apostle. Men might deceive or be deceived; but scripture has foreclosed any such pretension. Both apostles may have suffered there unto death; but neither one nor other presided there, as neither had to do with founding the assembly there. The traditions about it are as false, as a more ancient one that "the beloved disciple" was not to die (John 21).

The apostles, whatever their spiritual energy, were all of them, and not least Peter and Paul, as far from affecting earthly pomp and power like the Popes, as light and love are from the selfish darkness of the earth. Before the baptism of the Spirit they did indeed often strive which should be accounted greatest: a contention inconceivable, (yet up to the last, Luke 22: 24), if the Lord had been understood so to invest Peter. But He reprov'd vanity so opposed to all grace and truth, and contrasted their intended position with kings or even those that exercise authority called benefactors. *They* were not to be so; but the greater among them was to be as the younger, and the leader as he that serves. The Lord Himself set the same example here below. He could as easily have made them earthly princes, as He left them able to say truthfully, as Peter did, "Silver and gold have I none." They had incomparably better. They had persevered with Him in His temptations, as He did with them in theirs when He sat at God's right hand, yet working with them (Mark 16: 19, 20). And He appointed to them a kingdom (as His Father to Him), that they might sit at His table in His kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel: certainly not now, when called to the fellowship of His sufferings, but in the regeneration when all things shall be restored by His grace to divine order and glory. It is the wickedness of man by the prince of the power of the air to do his utmost to antedate that future kingdom. The papacy thus sets at nought the truth and will of God now, and turns the church into a scheme of vainglorious pride and present exaltation, by deceit and intrigue and cruelty that would disgrace the pagan or infidel world.

W.K.

DOES THE CHURCH TEACH?

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §6.

There is no assumption more widely accepted, not only by Rome but throughout Christendom, than the teaching-authority or *magisterium* of the church. Nor is it easy to conceive a claim more opposed to every fact and principle of revelation, or more derogatory to the rights of God. Yet it prevails wherever the Catholic idea governs the imagination. That the church teaches this, and denies that, sounds grand and imposing; but all is vague, where we need certainty; and if sifted, it ends in the authority of clergy or the infallibility of the Pope.

God has revealed His mind conclusively on this in 1 Cor. 3. "What then is Paul, and what Apollos? Ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to each; I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one thing; and each shall receive reward according to his own labour. For we are God's fellow-labourers: God's husbandry, God's building ye are" (vers. 5-9). What can be clearer? God employs gifted men as joint-servants, His journeymen; but the church is the object of their labours. They teach from Him; the church is taught. The apostle not only contrasts the church with the fellow-workmen, but he claims the *magisterium* for God, Who employed the apostles and all others of His servants for the church's good.

It is nothing at all to the purpose, to cite John 10: 37, 38, John 15: 24, or Matt. 28: 18-20, Mark 16: 16 any more than John 14: 16-17, John 15: 26, 27, John 16: 7-13, or Luke 10: 16 and John 20: 21. No Christian doubts that Christ's words carry divine authority, or that what the apostles taught and wrote is no less authoritative (Mark 16: 20, Rom. 1: 5). But how is it that darkness so veiled the Encyclical that not one scripture referred to means that the church teaches? that every one means that the church is taught by Him or His servants? The Pope deceived himself. He undertook to prove that the church teaches, which is not even touched by one of his quotations of scripture; all of which at most show that *Christ* teaches the church, either by His Spirit or through servants sent and qualified of Him to that end. Timothy's committing what he had heard from Paul to faithful men (2 Tim. 2: 1, 2) was ministry to teach the church, the reverse of the church teaching.

Thus then the true *magisterium* is of the Lord Jesus, Who is not dead but risen and ascended. Only thus and then indeed was He given as Head over all things to the church; and from the right hand of God He continues such gifts as are for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a full-grown man, to stature-measure of the fulness of the Christ. The Head continues His functions without fail, and cares not only for duly giving "joints and bands" (Col. 2), but that "all the body," ministered to and united by their means, shall increase with the increase of God. His love can no more cease than His power: one moment's breach would be as fatal to the church, as the severance of the head from the natural body.

Unbelief as to the Lord's present and continual guardianship of the flock of God as the Great and Chief Shepherd is the root of this presumptuous usurpation. If it be replied that such a heavenly Head can only be apprehended by faith, and that the church, while on earth, needs an earthly supreme ruler, we answer that the reply betrays the enemy's deceit. For we are expressly called to walk by faith, not by sight; and as the heavenly Head makes the church a divine institution, so an earthly head makes the body as earthly as itself. To say that we have two heads, one heavenly and another earthly, is not only a baseless fable added to the truth of scripture, but an elevation of a mortal to share His glory Who is Lord of lords and King of kings, and an impiety on which God will not fail to take vengeance when His day comes.

Is it not strange to hear the champion of church tradition saying, that "every revealed truth without exception must be accepted?" (p. 24) Had he forgotten the Judge of quick and dead ruling that the Jews who set up *their* authoritative *magisterium* in His day (and it still abides, much older than Rome's) "made void the word of God on account of their tradition" (Matt. 15: 6)? They charged His disciples with transgressing the tradition of the elders; whereas He acquitted His followers of all sin in the matter, and convicted the Jewish leaders of transgressing the commandment of God because of their tradition. Such is the inevitable hypocrisy of those Jews or Christians, who teach as doctrines men's precepts. Assuming God's place, they really fall into the devil's snare.

It is in vain then, as we agree, to speak of zeal to keep the unity of the Spirit, unless we hold "one faith." How far Romanism is true to "the faith" has been shown in §4. Nor is their flagrant departure surprising; for they have overlaid the holy deposit by their superstitions and profanely fabulous supplements. The true rule of faith is thus hidden from them. God has not left the faithful without the certainty of His mind. As the Lord laid down so solemnly (in the Rich man and Lazarus), "They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them;" so we can say, We have Christ and the apostles. There is the Christian *magisterium*. It is not gifts or ministry, however real and precious in their place, but the teaching of the Lord Jesus and of those He inspired to give by the Holy Spirit what they could not bear before redemption.

Hence says an inspired man behind none, If any one think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write to you are the Lord's commandment (1 Cor. 14: 37); and another later says for all, *We* are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error (1 John 4: 6). None but the inspired are entitled so to speak. They therefore to us speak permanently in what the Holy Spirit empowered them to write. If we hear *them*, we are blessed. Woe to all that hear not them! Such are of the world and not of God.

What says Popery here? That Christ and the apostles could not safely give God's mind and will, without a living judge of controversy now to make their sense clear! Did God and His servants need the Pope and his vassals to do what they failed to do? Such is the arrogance of Romanist unbelief that confronts us habitually. Therefore do they enlarge like Donatists and other heretics of old, on the obscurity of scripture. Do they not show their hostility to it by forbidding a Romanist to read even their own version without a permission in writing from his parish priest or his confessor on pain of being refused absolution? So any one can see in the last Session of the Council of Trent (rule 4).

But their irreverent enmity to scripture goes farther still. For to embarrass the Protestant and to exalt what they call the church (in reality their own Romish sect), they take infidel ground and deny the authority of the scriptures without the sanction of the church. You cannot, say they, know them to be God's word unless the church declares them so. But this, far from being true, is blasphemous. The O.T. derived no authority from Israel, but gave divine authority to all their institutions, rites, and statutes; while it convicted them of continual transgression in violating the law. Just so it is the N.T. which reveals the Lord's building His church, His order, gifts of ministry, worship, and will generally. In both Testaments it is God's word which will judge man, instead of sanctioning Christendom's sin in pretending to judge what is of God. Israel transmitted the O.T., as Christendom the New as well as Old. And the Jew, of the two, was more faithful than Romanism and other sects; for these dared to add books, which their own favourite father, St. Jerome, confessed to be uncanonical, the Apocrypha, which books are not in Hebrew.

On their own showing Romanists are thereby seduced from God's authority to man's. They believe not God but the church; their principle makes the church's word surer than God's. Now our Lord and Saviour took all pains to teach that faith is in God's word because He communicates it; those only believing in His name when they saw signs, He did not trust (John 2). To receive His testimony is to set to one's seal that God is true. This alone is divine faith, and has His authority commanding the soul. To believe His word because of the church is to believe the church, not God. So the Lord said, Verily, verily, he that heareth My word and *believeth Him* that sent Me hath life eternal (John 5). Thus it is the saints agree in the faith. They each and all believe God's word. Nowhere does scripture sanction such a human faith as believing what the church believes.

On the face of the N.T. neither Jews nor Gentiles believed in the authority of the church. The Jews of Berea were even commended for searching the O.T. scriptures when the apostle Paul preached the gospel. The heathen heard what was no less inspired in the gospel; so that Dr. Milner in his *End of Controversy* had to own exceptional grace on their part who could know nothing of the church. But this lets out the real ignorance of the Romanists generally: they rest on saving ordinances administered by their priests, and not on that grace which alone saves any soul through the faith of Christ.

Further, it is plain to all that the great bulk of the N.T. Epistles is expressly addressed to all the faithful (in one case, with the bishops and deacons). The Holy Spirit therefore confided in the spiritual capacity of every believer, in open contrast with Romanism. In his first Epistle Paul adjured them that

this letter of his be read to all the holy brethren. In his last he, in view of the perilous times of the last days, directed to scripture as the main safeguard, and to every scripture as God-inspired and profitable. Doubtless we need the Holy Spirit's grace against our own thoughts; but this gift every true Christian has. Error too has come far more from the clever and learned than from the simple believer. Rome's antagonism to God at all points is too evident.

"Hear the church" in Matt. 18: 17 is a favourite appeal for such as seek scriptural support for ecclesiastical pride, or, as they would say, its *magisterium*. But the context is perfectly plain that there it is simply and solely a question, not of teaching-authority, but of local discipline in a case of personal trespass.

Before the church began, the Lord in John 5 laid down in order the various testimonies which made the Jews inexcusable: (1) John the Baptist's witness, (2) the Son's works, (3) the Father's voice, and (4) the scriptures. Beyond dispute the Lord attaches the utmost weight to what *was written*. "For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" Scripture has the character of a standard beyond all that was unwritten. It is only in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians that we hear of doctrines that were taught, not written. No such thought appears in the later Epistles. God took care to give His mind in a sure and permanent form. To impress into service such a text as this shows the lack even of appearances. The church does not teach, but is taught. The Lord's servants teach. Theirs is the *ministerium*, His the *Magisterium*.

W.K.

THE CHURCH OR ASSEMBLY, CHRIST'S BODY

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL §7.

Talk as men may of "possessing the supreme authority," "the primacy," it is a fleshly ambition, uniformly reproved by our Lord Himself even in the apostles. What is it in their pretended succession, of men that call themselves apostles and are not so, but lie? He, Who on the holy mount was displayed for a moment in the glory of His coming kingdom as Son of man, and owned by the Father as His beloved Son, laid before the disciples the then strange words, The Son of man is about to be delivered into men's hands. Even then arose the unworthy dispute who should be greatest, which the Lord met by setting a child by Him, and saying, Whosoever shall receive this little child in My name receiveth Me, and whosoever receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me. For he that is least among you all, *he* is great.

How evident that the Lord expressly puts down by anticipation all such self-seeking as the Pope claims in virtue of Peter! The Lord looks for self-renunciation. So, when James and John, like Elijah, asked for fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans who did not receive the Master, He turned and rebuked them. Even the Seventy He corrects in their joy over the demons subjected through His name: their becoming joy should be that their names were written in heaven, in divine grace, not in miraculous power. Their place was to watch for His coming, and meanwhile to work as His bondmen in His love. Let them beware of the servant that said in his heart, My lord delays to come, and began to beat the men-servants and the maid-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken. He utterly reversed for His followers the world's order, and taught the guest to put himself in the last place; that, when the host comes, he may say, Friend, go up higher. Hence Peter, when Cornelius fell at his feet in homage, raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. What a contrast with those who falsely

arrogate the fisherman's chair, and require their venerable brethren, cardinals and all, to kiss their toe as they sit on the high altar of St. Peter's! who instead of being subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake as Peter commands, instead of honouring the king in his place, abuse the alleged see of Peter to kick the royal crown in the plenitude of presumption, or to humble an erring and haughty emperor to the dust with a haughtiness more aspiring than his own! Such is not the mind of heaven but from beneath, not of Christ but of Satan, and all the worse because veiled under the hollow hypocrisy of calling oneself "servant of the servants of God." Has the Pope, or the papal system, ever accepted these revealed truths? If so, their practice wholly contradicts them. What is this morally?

But let us briefly turn from the unworldly lowliness which the Lord enjoined for "the fitting and devout worship of God," which it is said "must be also" (p. xxxi.), "as well as salutary laws and discipline." Let us try Romanist worship by the written standard of God's assembly in public edification, the Lord's supper, and discipline. The inspired directions are laid down in 1 Cor. 5, 11, 12, 14. Not one of these is found according to revealed truth, though the Encyclical says, "All these must be found in the Church." Undoubtedly they ought to be, yet who can deny the total departure of Popery from every one of them?

1. We have the constitution of the church clearly shown us in 1 Cor. 12. The irregularities at Corinth drew out the apostle's instructions so much the more fully. Its unity depends on the presence of the Holy Spirit sent forth at Pentecost. He acts in it through its members to the glory of the Lord Jesus. God set the members each one in the body, as it pleased Him; if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. This is so true that the apostle tells the assembly in Corinth, Ye are Christ's body and members in particular. And God set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, etc. It is true that "faith alone cannot compass so great, excellent, and important an end" as is proposed in that divine society the church.

But the Encyclical Letter of the Pope overlooks the power and presence of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. He it is Who baptised all into one body, however dissimilar the constituents. Jews or Greeks that believed, they are now one body, of which Christ in heaven is the Head, the sole head known to scripture. As there is one Head living and glorified, so are they now in the Spirit's power but one body. Faith and life had been before; but not unity till the Holy Spirit personally came so to constitute. This is Christ's body. It was true in principle locally, for it is Christ's body as far as it was then manifested in Corinth, but the very next verse looks at it in fact as a whole on earth. For apostles, prophets, teachers, etc., were not of course in the Corinthian assembly, but in the assembly of God in its entirety here below. This Protestantism ignores or denies; while Popery perverts it into a corporation of men, not even born of God but nominally formed by ordinances, in order to constitute a quasi-spiritual kingdom as worldly as ever was set up by human will, and more wicked than any because of covering their ambitious corruption with the Lord's name.

2. This then makes evident the divine character of the one body, God's assembly or church. In 1 Cor. 14 (after the beautiful episode on charity or love, the great desideratum to the right working of every member of the body) we have the divinely intended action in the assembly, and the guard against its dangers. It may be said that miraculous powers, tongues, healings, etc. are now no longer manifested. Granted, and for wise reason. But is the Holy Spirit gone? If so, there is no more one body. If however He be still here, and abide for ever in and with Christians (John 14), does He not work by the manifestations of His gracious power? Are there not divinely given and qualified teachers? Are there not pastors and teachers as well as evangelists (Eph. 4) till the last member is formed and the body absolutely complete? Surely it would be base unbelief to doubt the love and care of the ascended Head. It is His grace, and He cannot fail in all that is needed for the perfecting of the saints, unto

ministerial work, unto building up His own body. Shame on the Christians who do not believe this!

Instead of these gifts of His grace, the Pope looks to the aspiring chiefs of man's invention, Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops in a sense altogether foreign to the revealed word, and other "ordinaries" as extraordinary to the apostles Paul and Peter and all the rest, as the one who glories in his shame of pretending to be the Vicar of Christ, *jure divino*. Not one of them acts, or even professes to act, on the principle of 1 Cor. 12 or according to the regulated practice of 1 Cor. 14. They have every one and everywhere departed from these revealed truths; as if the Holy Spirit had gone back, and Christ's one body, the assembly, had ceased its functions on earth. Is any Christian bold enough to deny the fact or its guilt? Granted that Protestantism never knew these truths, and is also guilty in this. Not only Romanism, but what called itself the Catholic system had slipped away from the revealed truth of the church, long before papal pretensions began. Yet 1 Cor. 14 shows us the true and sanctioned action of the assembly by its members in speaking to edification and exhortation and consolation. It forbids men speaking in a tongue not understood or interpreted, and commands women to keep silence in the assemblies. It comprehends also prayers and singing and praise and thanksgiving.

3. The discipline of scripture in its most solemn form is on the self-same principle. Our Lord anticipated it in Matt. 18. A trespass was to call out grace bent on delivering one's brother from wrong. The one wronged was to go after the man who had wronged him! if he heard, he was gained! This was not law or power or authority, but love. If he did not bear, one or two more were to be taken: surely he would not resist such earnest love! But if he would not listen, could he hold out against the assembly in the place? Alas! this was possible. But if so, "let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the tax-gatherer." The Lord solemnly declared that whatsoever they should bind on earth should be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven. Heaven would validate what His disciples decided, even if ever so few gathered to His name. If Peter personally had this solemn privilege, but is no longer here to exercise it, the Lord charges it on those gathered to His name, were they but two or three in the darkest day. This is the true succession.

4. In 1 Cor. 5 the apostle reproves the Corinthians for their lack of spiritual feeling about deplorable evil in their midst. If they were not yet instructed how to act, where was their sensibility as saints? where their grief that such wickedness should be where the Lord was confessed? Why did they not humble themselves and pray for the offender's removal? In the name of the Lord Jesus the apostle not only calls on the entire assembly to put out from them the wicked person, but joins himself in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver him such as he was to Satan for destruction of the flesh that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. For, as Christ our passover was sacrificed, we have to celebrate the feast with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. It is a manifest instruction drawn from the Jewish feast of unleavened bread for seven days after the Paschal lamb was eaten. So is the christian assembly, under the efficacy of Christ's blood, bound to purge away corruption; as they were an unleavened lump, they must not tolerate leaven. And as this applies to practice, Gal. 5: 9 applies the same principle to fundamental doctrine.

Will anyone be hardy enough to say that there is the least resemblance between Roman discipline and what the Lord enjoined or the apostle Paul? Think of the anathemas of the Papal Bulls! Never have human ears heard such bitter or varied curses. Can anything be more in contrast with scripture? Even in delivering the grievously wicked person to Satan, the declared aim of the apostle was that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. In no case is it the assembly acting responsibly in the Lord's name, without which the discipline is invalid. It is the same with restoration. When the offender was overwhelmed with sorrow, the apostle would only forgive when the assembly had forgiven. But as the evil-doer had fully judged himself, and the assembly had proved itself clear in the matter, he urges

them to confirm love to the repentant, as he had before pressed them to clear the Lord's name of such sin unjudged. The revealed will of the Lord for the church is as plain as that Popery of all sects in Christendom is the farthest from Him. Confessing the doctrine of the Trinity and Christ's person, it corrupts almost all else, and not least the church, its worship, action, and discipline. This is the society which denounces others to damnation and cries up itself to heaven so loudly!

5. "The Lord's Supper" as laid down in 1 Cor. "has hardly a trait in common with the Mass; but it is not needful to enter into details now, as it may be examined later.

W. K.

WAS PETER CHRIST'S VICE-GERENT?

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL. §8.

It remains to notice the main pretexts, foundation it is too much to say, for the airy palace of the Roman Pontiff, his claim of universal monarchy in spiritual things continually encroaching on the sovereignties of the earth, and striving directly or indirectly to dictate to all. It is as unsubstantial as his own *sedia gestatoria*, with its flabelli of peacock's feathers, sustained on nothing but an arm of flesh, with an ambition as vaulting as that of the prince of darkness.

The alleged evidence of scripture is mere perversion, even as to Peter to say nothing of the Popes, who assume but cannot prove the smallest connection with that apostle. "The supreme authority," so far from being vested in Peter, the risen Lord declares was given to *Himself*, all authority in heaven and on earth. Confiding in Him therefore, Who is no longer dead but alive again for evermore, His servants were to go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them unto the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever He enjoined them, "And lo! I am with you all the days until the consummation of the age." He *never* "appointed Peter to be the head of the Church" (p. xxxvi.). Where? one text would suffice; not one even approaches it.

As unfounded is the statement which follows that He also determined the authority should be inherited by his successors. What has Matt. 16: 18 to do with this? "Thou art Peter (a stone); and upon this rock I will build My church." It was a new and wondrous privilege to be claimed for Himself with a name derived from Him; but the apostle Peter takes care to predict the same yet more strongly ("living stone") of all the believers in Christ addressed in his First Epistle (1 Peter 2: 5). It was a high personal honour that Simon was so named by the Lord on the first day Andrew brought his brother to Him; and it was again more emphatically confirmed on his confession of the Messiah's personal and eternal glory. But the blessed apostle, far from seeking self-aggrandisement and exclusive title, rejoiced to own those who are Christ's as "living stones" no less than himself. And the fiery ecclesiastic, Cyril of Alexandria, whom the Pope cites in the same page, is no more reliable in his exegesis than is the piety that inflamed the fierce populace to tear in pieces Theon's daughter, Hypatia, τὴν φιλόσοφον, *pace* Cave. It is false that upon him our Lord was about to found His Church. A stone is far from being the rock, which rock was Christ, and Christ confessed in the divine glory of His person,

It is true that the Lord on the same occasion gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom of the heavens; the kingdom now in mystery of the earth-rejected King on high before He returns in power and glory as the Son of man. And Peter used them to throw its gates open to Jewish believers in Acts 2, and to Gentile in Acts 10. The work was then and thus done. It was a personal privilege, which admits of neither repetition nor still less of continuous descent. It remains accomplished, and the Popes could

not undo it if they would. Peter was given to fill this charge.

There was another solemn charge conferred. Whatsoever thou shalt bind on the earth shall be bound in the heavens; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on the earth shall be loosed in the heavens." Undoubtedly Peter had used this authority, as we read in Acts 5 and Acts 8, but it was administrative in the Spirit, and as far as possible from Kingly or Imperial, the earthly-minded vain dream of sacerdotal ambition, and expressly tied to the apostle by the Father's sovereign choice and also by the Son's authority. Chrysostom was guilty of inexcusable exaggeration and error in saying that the Lord gave to a mortal man all power in heaven, because what is done here in His name and service is ratified there. This is made so much the more manifest in Matt. 18: 18-20, where the self-same ratification on high is assured to the local assembly on earth, were there but two or three to pray or decide as gathered to the Lord's name.

Luke 22: 31, 32, and John 21: 15-17 are misapplied in puerile levity to eke out of them a monarchy over the church. The one was to assure the self-confident disciple of His Master's grace in restoring him, even to his service in strengthening others so much the more afterwards; the other was His loving goodness in going to the root of Peter's fall, and as He knew his love in the face of his deep and public failure, which all others might have doubted, committing to his shepherd care His sheep and lambs, the dearest objects of His own love for whom He died. The sheep were the Jewish believers, not those outside the old fold, which we know did not fall within the official care of Peter but of Paul (Gal. 2); and so Peter wrote both his Epistles to the saints of the circumcision. But in no case was there exclusive prerogative, still less did it approach the royal type on earth. There was no Prince of apostles, let the Fathers speak as they may. The risen Christ alone has the keys of death and hades; He only has the key of David (Rev. 1, Rev. 3). Neither Peter nor Paul ever claimed such a place, which belongs solely to the Conqueror of death and Satan, to Him Who is the Holy, the True. But whatever of spiritual power and authority either of those most honoured apostles received from the Lord, not a word of God teaches or implies its devolution on a successor. Both wrote in view of their death and of growing evil in the christian profession, and both direct to God and the word of His grace as the provision and security for perilous times (Acts 20: 29-32, 2 Tim. 3, 2 Peter 1: 12-15, 2 Peter 2 and 2 Peter 3). Not a whisper about the Roman Pontiffs, about which men began to boast as Christendom fell from the wisdom that is from above into earthly and natural policy where is envying and strife, and consequently confusion and every vile deed.

The Pope quotes (41) from Basil's Hom. de Poenitentia, "He (Christ) is a priest, and makes priests. He is a rock, and constitutes a rock."

The latter statement is baseless and at issue with all revealed truth. As Christ alone is the Head of the church, so He only is the rock. Controversialists may prattle about the Syriac or Aramaic they imagine our Lord to have used. Of this neither we nor they have a right to speak; but none can deny that the sole revelation given expressly distinguishes a stone from the rock. And it is inconceivable that any language beneath the sky should be unable to mark the difference of ideas so distinct, as it is corrupting the faith to level down the Lord in order to raise Peter to the same height.

The former statement is true. The true great High-priest is Christ, and He makes priests. But the apostles Paul, Peter, and John, uniformly teach the truth which Romanism (and not Romanism only) denies and seeks to destroy, that He constitutes every believer now a priest with greater privilege, not merely than Aaron's sons but than Aaron himself. For as Heb. 10 insists on the one completed offering of Christ, whereby He has perfected us uninterruptedly, the same chapter from ver. 19 is as definite that we have title and boldness to enter into the holies in virtue of the blood of Jesus through the rent veil,

and are exhorted to approach. with a true heart in full assurance of faith, instead of the anxiety which could not but fill Aaron when he approached once a year. And if it be said that now there is a royal as well as holy priesthood, we agree cordially that so St. Peter calls not presbyters or bishops, but the Christian brotherhood in 1 Peter 2: 5, 9; the sole priesthood, besides Christ's, which the N.T. sanctions. Ministry in the word and rule are given to a few for the good of the many; but all saints are by the gospel declared to be brought to God, nigh by the blood of Jesus; and therein lies the chief privilege of a priest. So St. John represents the believers breaking forth at the name of Jesus in Rev. 1: 5, 6, owning not His love only, nor His having washed us from our sins in His blood, but also His having made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father. If it be replied that this is solely by faith, the answer is that so is every Christian blessing but this too as really as any other.

And here is just Rome's unbelief to its ruin. As the Jewish branches were broken off through unbelief, so the apostle solemnly cautioned the saints in Rome, that Christendom stands in the olive-tree by faith. This is its responsibility, as it was Israel's of old; and therefore the call not to be high-minded but to fear. Who but themselves can deny the high-mindedness of the Papacy and of Romanism in general? No doubt there is infatuated pride in the Greek church and in other remains of the old ecclesiastical bodies; but Babylon's sins have exceeded all others, heaped or glued together up to heaven, as Rev. 18: 5 so graphically puts it for God to remember her unrighteousnesses.

W. K.