

THE
INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

A COURSE OF LECTURES

DELIVERED IN THE
Divinity School of the University of Dublin

BY
GEORGE SALMON, D. D.

PROVOST OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN SOMETIME REGIUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

Author of
A Historical Introduction to the Study of the Books of the New Testament

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XXIII.

THE POPE'S TEMPORAL POWER.

ANYONE who has read enough of Roman Catholic periodical literature, within the last ten or twenty years, to become familiar with their internal controversies, will know something of the disputes between the 'maximizers' and the 'minimizers';¹ the latter party being anxious to reduce to a minimum the system of doctrine to which the Church's Infallibility was to be regarded as pledged; setting aside as not spoken *ex cathedra* a number of papal utterances which, in the judgment of their opponents, could not be disregarded without falling into the sin of heresy. In fact, a Roman Catholic who has to engage in controversy with Protestants naturally dislikes to weaken his position by extending it too much, and therefore is glad to represent himself as not bound to defend any doctrines to which the Church's Infallibility is not clearly pledged. But if he were suspected by a loyal member of his own communion of not believing those doctrines which he has declined to defend, he would certainly be set forth as a bad Catholic. If I chose to pursue further the subject of Papal Infallibility, I could easily swell the list of decisions made by papal authority which are now acknowledged to be erroneous. In each of these cases Roman Catholic apologists are forced to make excuses in different ways, trying to show that the attribute of Infallibility did not attach to the erroneous decision. But the general result is that, while Roman Catholics are now mainly agreed on the principle that the pope is infallible, the greatest differences of opinion will be found among them as to whether any particular papal utterance is infallible; and any Roman Catholic who does not like to accept any decision of the pope need have no difficulty in producing a parallel case of some previous decision, to all appearance possessing the same claims to reverence, but which is now acknowledged to have been wrong. So that, in short, I do not know how to sum up the Roman Catholic doctrine on this subject except by the formula, The pope is always infallible, except when he makes a mistake.

I will not trouble you with the case of such an extreme maximizer as one who, a little time ago, insisted, in defiance of his ecclesiastical superiors, that Roman Catholics are still bound by the pope's decrees against the motion of the earth; for it may be considered that the earth has had the pope's permission to move since the year 1821, when the prohibition against Copernican books was removed from the Index. But there have been later papal decrees, concerning the obligation of accepting which there has been much controversy among Roman Catholics.

¹ This was written several years ago, and as I have not kept up my reading of Roman Catholic periodicals, I really don't know how far the Vatican Council succeeded in putting an end to these disputes.

If all the official utterances of a pope are to be regarded as authoritative, no pope has given more employment to the believers in his Infallibility than Pius IX. found occasion to do in his long pontificate. The most remarkable was the encyclical ‘Quanta Cura,’ published on the 8th December, 1864, which was accompanied by a syllabus containing extracts from previous allocutions of the pope condemning eighty false doctrines. Dr. Newman, who had always been an extreme minimizer, laboured hard to relieve himself from the obligation of accepting this syllabus. It was not signed by the pope himself, but only by his officials; therefore if you accepted the accompanying encyclical, you might reject the syllabus. Thus the authority of the eighty articles rested only on the several allocutions in which they were first contained; and then Dr. Newman tried, by examining the special occasion on which each condemnation was delivered, to limit its application to some particular case. All this special pleading is as offensive to a thoroughgoing Papalist like Manning as it is unsuccessful in the judgment of outsiders like ourselves. It is plain enough that here the pope has selected a number of his judgments in individual cases, and has made them into general principles for the instruction of the universal Church. They are principles of which the party who predominated at the Vatican Council are not in the least ashamed; and it was generally understood that if the sittings of that Council had been prolonged, they would have been formulated in such a way as to receive the sanction of the council. In fact, my own copy of them forms part of the proceedings of the Vatican Council brought out by a Roman Catholic publisher ‘Cum permissu superiorum,’ where the encyclical and the syllabus hold the first place in the ‘Acta publica quibus concilium Vaticanum praeeparatum est.’

Now in this syllabus the proposition is condemned (77) that in our age it is no longer expedient that the Catholic should be the only religion of the State, and that all other forms of worship whatever should be excluded. Of course this condemnation leaves it free to the pope to tolerate toleration where the civil power is too weak to enforce uniformity; but the proper state of things is taught to be one in which the Roman Catholic religion shall be supreme or rather sole. What kind of toleration should be allowed to native subjects of a Roman Catholic State may be guessed from the next article, which condemns the proposition that it is laudable in such a State to allow even foreign settlers the free exercise of their religion. In the accompanying encyclical, which even Dr. Newman allows has the undoubted authority of the pope, it is condemned as a doctrine altogether opposed to Scripture, to the Church, and to the Fathers, that violators of the Catholic religion should not be restrained by punishments except when the public peace requires. Pius IX. echoes the language of his predecessor, Gregory XVI., in stigmatizing the claim of liberty of conscience and worship as a ‘deliramentum’; and as a necessary consequence similarly stigmatizing the claim of liberty of speech or liberty of the press. In art. 24 of the syllabus the doctrine is contemned

that the Church has not the power of applying coercion, or has not direct or indirect temporal power as well as spiritual. A Jesuit commentator on this explains: 'As the Church has an external jurisdiction, she can impose temporal punishments, and not only deprive the guilty of spiritual privileges. The love of earthly things which injures the Church's order obviously cannot be effectively put down by merely spiritual punishments; it is little affected by them. If that order is to be avenged on what has injured it, if that is to suffer which has enjoyed the sin, temporal and sensible punishments must be employed.' Among these he enumerates fines, imprisonment, scourging, and banishment. He laments that in these days the true principles are not acted on as they should. We see, he says, that the State does not always fulfil its duties towards the Church according to the Divine idea, and, he adds, cannot always fulfil them through the wickedness of men. And thus the Church's right in inflicting temporal punishment and the use of physical force are reduced to a minimum.

It is plain that the Inquisition was but the legitimate carrying out of the principles here enunciated. And accordingly, soon after the publication of this document, the pope canonized two inquisitors. If it is said that the pretensions of the pope expressed in these articles are medieval and inconsistent with the spirit of modern times, such an objection is met by anticipation in another article (80) which condemns the statement that the Roman pontiff can and ought to reconcile himself with progress, with liberalism, with modern civilization: in other words, pronounces that such reconciliation is neither practicable nor desirable. Elsewhere (13) he condemns the assertion that the methods and principles by which the schoolmen cultivated theology do not agree with the necessities of our times and the progress of the sciences. In connexion with this I may mention two other condemned propositions: one (11) that the Church ought not to animadvert on philosophy, but allow her to correct her own errors; the other (12), that the decrees of the pontiffs hinder the free progress of the sciences. With respect to the relations of the ecclesiastical and civil power, those are condemned (23) who assert that the popes and their councils have transgressed the limits of their power and usurped the rights of princes: in other words, the principles of Boniface VIII., and other aggressive pontiffs are frankly adopted. Again (38), those are condemned who say that the arbitrary conduct of the popes led to the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches. It is denied (25) that power not inherent in the office of the episcopate, but granted to it by the civil authority, may be withdrawn from it at the discretion of that authority; or (30) that the immunity of the Church and its ministers depends on the civil laws; or (42) that in the conflict of laws, civil and ecclesiastical, the civil law should prevail. It is denied (48) that any system of merely secular education can be approved; and (74) those are condemned who say that the law of marriages belongs to the secular, not the ecclesiastical tribunal. With regard to the pope's temporal power, there is

not only a condemnation (76) of those who say that the abolition of that power would tend to the liberty and happiness of the Church, but several allocutions are referred to in which the doctrine is set forth which all Catholics ought most firmly to hold concerning the civil power of the Roman pontiff. You will take notice that the pope's temporal power is thus made not a mere result of the events which have led to different portions of Europe becoming subject to different rulers, but that there is a doctrine concerning it which all Catholics ought most firmly to hold.

It would not have been possible for me, within the limits of these Lectures, to give you any complete history of the growth of Papal Supremacy. I have contented myself with sketching an account of its first beginnings; and I must allow you to study elsewhere the history of the later stages of the process by which the bishop of Rome became, in spiritual things, the master of the greater part of Europe. But having in view the internal controversies between Roman Catholics, to which I have referred, I do not think I ought to conclude this series of Lectures without saying something as to the theory of the pope's authority in things temporal. And I cannot discuss that subject without first speaking of the forgery of the Decretal Epistles, which did so much to lead men to believe that the pope's power, whether in things temporal or spiritual, was subject to no limitation.

It is not more than the truth to say that the Roman claims have principally taken their growth out of two forgeries. I have already described one of them, the pseudo-Clementine literature, which first started the idea that St. Peter had been bishop of Rome. This idea was developed by successive Roman bishops, who drew from it the consequence that, as St. Peter had been chief of the Apostles, so the bishop of Rome ought to be chief of all bishops; and who by gradually increasing claims endeavoured to elevate men's notions of the authority which in that capacity he ought to exercise. But the highest claims previously made fell far short of what men were taught was the pope's rightful possession, in the second forgery of which I have now to speak—the collection of letters purporting to have been written by early bishops of Rome, a collection first published in the ninth century.

It was a natural custom with Western bishops in early times, when cases of doubt or difficulty occurred to them in the administration of their dioceses, to ask the advice of the bishop of Rome. This is no more than what our own colonial bishops have been in the habit of doing, without thereby acknowledging in the English Church any right to command its daughter Churches. I remember one remarkable instance of the kind. Bishop Colenso of Natal, before he became noted for any doctrinal eccentricity, wrote to consult bishops at home on the delicate question how converts were to be dealt with who, at the time of their conversion, were married to more wives than one. I have already pointed out that there was exactly the same reason why Roman opinion should be respected in distant places, as there is why English opinion should be respected in the Colonies, namely, in both cases,

the liberality of contributions from the central source to Church work abroad. The bishop of Rome was very rich. I dare say you know the joke with which the heathen Praetor parried the attempts of his friend, Bishop Damasus, to convert him 'Make me bishop of Rome,' said he, 'and I will become a Christian at once.' The bishop of Rome, I have no doubt, spent his money liberally and well on Church work at home and abroad, and the opinion of a man who can confer substantial benefits will always be listened to with respect.

In the progress of Roman ambition what had at first been but the advice of a venerated superior in dignity became an order or decree. In fact the manner in which the Roman bishops pushed their claims was, whenever one or two contending parties endeavoured to enlist the bishop of Rome on his side, to treat the applicant as having made no more than proper acknowledgment of papal authority to decide the question. He in whose favour the decision was given might be trusted not to criticize too severely the arrogance of its terms. In like manner, they who asked for advice from the bishop of Rome were complimented as dutiful subjects who had come to him for commands. The earliest genuine epistle of the kind is one by Siricius, who was pope A.D. 384, in answer to a letter addressed to him by a Spanish bishop, asking for direction on some points of Church discipline for cases occurring in Spain. Siricius answers in a tone of authority, intermixing some reproofs; and his answers are to stand as decrees upon the several points submitted to his judgment. This letter of Siricius is the first of a collection published in the sixth century by Dionysius Exiguus, who took pains to collect all the papal epistles which were known in his time. These letters do contain proofs enough of Roman arrogance and incipient assumption; but the powers therein claimed for the Roman prelate were too small to satisfy the ambition of later times. In the ninth century another collection of papal letters, which were supposed by some means to have escaped the industry of Dionysius, was published under the name of Isidore, by whom, no doubt, a celebrated Spanish bishop of much learning was intended. In these are to be found precedents for all manner of instances of the exercise of sovereign dominion by the pope over other Churches. You must take notice of this, that it was by *furnishing precedents* that these letters helped the growth of papal power. Thenceforth the popes could hardly claim any privilege but they would find in these letters supposed proofs that the privilege in question was no more than had been always claimed by their predecessors, and always exercised without any objection.

No sooner was this forgery made than it was brought into active use by Nicolas I (Pope, 858-867), who in the audacity of his designs exceeded all his predecessors, pressing to the uttermost every claim which they had made, and pushing the limits of the Roman supremacy to the point of absolute monarchy. He employed these letters in his disputes with Hincmar and the Gallic Church, and again in his controversy with the Greek patriarch Photius,

and others. The decretals, however, did not produce their full fruit for a considerable time after their production. After the death of Nicolas there came more than a century of darkness and immorality, described in the extract I formerly read from Baronius, during which the papacy fell to the lowest point of degradation. From that it emerged, at the middle of the eleventh century, by the appointment of German pontiffs—men of pure lives and of high aims. They saw the Church under complete bondage to the mighty of this world; ecclesiastical offices bought and sold without shame; vice universally prevalent, and clergy unable to rebuke it, because they were themselves deeply tainted with it. The movement of papal aggrandizement, of which the celebrated Hildebrand (afterwards Gregory VII) was the life and soul, owed its success to the moral weight which it gained from the belief that it was an honest attempt to grapple with great abuses, and to the general satisfaction that was felt at seeing the empire of brute force confronted by a more mighty spiritual power. Pope Gregory, accepting with entire faith the decretal epistles as authentic records of the powers exercised by his predecessors, felt himself authorized to push the principles involved in them to what he regarded as their legitimate consequences. From these epistles it followed at once that the pope was the sole source of spiritual power; without his consent no council could be held; every bishop, priest, or layman might appeal to him from every other judgment; the Church must be withdrawn from the control of all secular power and be subjected to a single spiritual despot, whose errors and faults, if such there were, must be borne in silence, for from him there could be no appeal. One of the cardinals, whose assistance Gregory employed in drawing up his new system of Church law, attributes to St. Boniface the doctrine, that even if a pope is so bad that he drags down whole nations to hell with him in troops, nobody can rebuke him, for he who judges all can be judged of no man; the only exception is in case of his swerving from the faith.

One main pillar of Gregory's system was borrowed from the false decretals: The Church of Rome, by a singular privilege, has the right of opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven to whom she will. It is plain that if the pope has this power he can constrain to obey his will any man who values his eternal salvation; and so Gregory was able to use his power of binding and loosing in dethroning kings, and loosing subjects from their oaths of allegiance. Another doctrine Gregory got from the false decretals was, that no one dare hold speech with an excommunicated person; and as kings and emperors were not exempt from the operation of this rule, it followed that if the pope excommunicated a king, nobody could, even in matters of business, hold communication with him; so that he was no longer fit to reign, and must be deposed. This business, however, of deposing kings is a matter on which I shall have something more to say presently. But on these spurious decretals is built the whole fabric of the Canon Law. The great schoolman, Thomas Aquinas, was taken in by them, and he was induced by

them to set the example of making a chapter on the prerogatives of the pope an essential part of treatises on the Church. Bellarmine, and a number of other Roman controversialists, were similarly misled. Yet completely successful as was this forgery, I suppose there never was a more clumsy one. These decretal epistles had undisputed authority for some seven hundred years, that is to say, down to the time of the Reformation; yet the moment they were seriously assailed (as they were by the Magdeburg Centuriators),¹ defence was soon found to be hopeless; and there is not a single Roman Catholic divine at the present day who would venture to maintain their genuineness. In fact the letters are full of the most outrageous anachronisms. Persons who lived centuries apart are represented as corresponding with one another. The early bishops of Rome quote the Scriptures according to Jerome's version, including the text of the three heavenly witnesses.² Some of them who lived in pagan times are made to complain of the invasion of Church property by laymen. There is a uniformity of style between letters written by popes separated by long intervals: one egg, say the Centuriators, being not more like another than one of these epistles to another. The same phrases recur; the subjects are all of the same sort, such as the primacy of the Roman see, the allowance of appeals, &c. The style is barbarous, and full of expressions not used in early times, but common in Frankish writers of the ninth century. They say nothing of the events, the heresies, and other controversies of their supposed date, but are full of questions which had not then arisen; and they name Church officers and Church ceremonies which had not then been introduced.

We can fix with tolerable precision the date of this forgery. The letters borrow matter from the decrees of more than one council that was held in the first half of the ninth century among others one that was held in 845; and they are themselves quoted in 857; so between these two dates the forgery was made; and if we say 850, we cannot be very far wrong. The place of composition was Gaul. Mentz is the city named in your text-books; but I think modern scholars are more disposed to say Reims. Much as these letters helped Roman ambition, it was not the primary object of the forgery; but rather to secure the position of provincial ecclesiastics, and make it difficult to depose them. For this object it was very useful to take away from his neighbours all power of dealing with a criminous ecclesiastic, and to let the only authority that could deal with him be the distant one—Rome. A strong case of suspicion is made out against Ebbo, archbishop of Reims, as having

¹ The first great Church history on a large scale, so described because arranged according to centuries, and because the originator, Flacius Illyricus, commenced the preparation of the work at Magdeburg. The first volume appeared in 1539.

² There is an unlucky blunder at the outset. In a letter, purporting to be addressed by Clement to .Tames, James is favoured with an extract from his own epistle, which is ascribed to Peter.

something to say to this forgery—at least it was calculated to serve his interests. He had taken an active part in the politics and fightings of these troubled times, and when the opposite party got the upper hand he came to be deposed. ‘Fell, it has been noticed that the most important steps taken against Ebbo, which according to the old Church law would have been quite valid, would, according to the law of these new decretals, be altogether wrong. However this may be, the main point is, that the decretals are not a Roman forgery, but a Gallic one, however much they helped the growth of Roman power. That they did help it enormously is certain, yet, now that the spuriousness of these documents is universally acknowledged, Romish advocates think that they can remove the foundation, and yet that the edifice built on it can remain. They boldly assert that these letters really taught nothing new; that they ascribed no more power to the see of Rome than it had long possessed. I think this is as impudent an assertion as has been ever made by controversialists. It would be as reasonable, supposing they had been for centuries circulating Bellarmine’s chapters on the pope as part of Holy Scripture, to say, as soon as they were found out, that it really made no difference; that, after all, Bellarmine said no more than was already taught in the text, ‘Thou art Peter.’

If we want to know what share these letters had in the building of the Roman fabric we have only to look at the Canon Law. The ‘Decretum’¹ of Gratian quotes three hundred and twenty-four times epistles of the popes of the first four centuries; and of these three hundred and twenty-four quotations, three hundred and thirteen are from the letters which are now universally known to be spurious. I will not pledge myself to the genuineness of the remaining eleven. In writing a former Lecture I had occasion to refer to Bellarmine, to see whether he could cite any Father as applying to Rome the text in which Christ prays that Peter’s faith should not fail. I found he could allege no writer who was not a pope; and the papal letters he begins by citing are taken from the spurious decretals. The treatise of Bellarmine is founded on that of Melchior Callus; and of twenty quotations which he gives on this subject, eighteen are out of the false decretals. So idle is it to deny that this forgery is the foundation on which the Romish belief in papal power has been founded.

But it is said that you must grant that this is not a Roman forgery. Well, if a man presents a forged cheque, and gets money for it, it is something to say in his defence that he did not forge it himself; but if he were an honest man, as soon as he discovered the forgery he would give back what he had wrongfully acquired. Have the popes any idea of abandoning the pretensions they were led by these documents to assert? Not the very slightest. Of course the moral guilt of the party who first utters a forged cheque depends on the

¹ This work, published in 1151 was intended as a collection of everything that Gratian could find having the force of law in the Church; and it had such success that it became the standard work on the law of the Roman Church.

question: Did he do so, knowing it to be forged? It is a true maxim, that we easily believe what is in accordance with our wishes; and it has so often happened that good Protestants have received, without the smallest sifting, untrustworthy authorities produced on the right side, that I am not in a hurry to accuse Pope Nicolas of conscious imposture. That the pope asserted what was not true is certain; and it is equally certain that he asserted what, if he had taken any trouble to inquire, he would have found not to be true. When the Gallican bishops refused to accept these decretals because they were not included in any previous code of canons, he stated positively that they had been preserved in the archives of his own see, and declared that they might as well reject the Old or New Testament, because it, too, had not been included in the code of canons.¹

Some of Dr. Littledale's critics lift up their hands in holy horror at the idea of a saint like Nicolas being accused of wilful forgery. What the character of this individual was is a matter with which we have no concern; we are concerned, not with the man, but with the pope. Now, when you catch a man presenting a forged cheque, it is all very well to say he could not possibly have known it to be forged, he is such a very respectable clergyman. But if you find that this very respectable clergyman makes a constant trade of presenting forged cheques, and living on the proceeds, our judgment can hardly be quite so charitable. Now there never was a case so gangrened with forgery as that for the papal claims; that which we have been discussing is the most stupendous; but it had been preceded by a constant succession of forgeries, of which there can be no doubt that Rome was the birthplace. I told you already of the attempt to pass off the Sardican canons as Nicene. At the Council of Chalcedon the Roman legates were detected in presenting the sixth canon of Nicaea with a forged preface, that 'the Roman Church always had had the primacy.' The string of subsequent Roman forgeries is so long that it would tire your patience to go through it. One of them is mentioned in Burnet: 'The Fable of P. Marcellin.' It was invented to establish the principle that the pope was inviolable, and could not be tried by any human tribunal: the story being that Pope Marcellinus had sacrificed to idols, and that a synod of 284 bishops being assembled at Sinuessa, they had not the hardihood to presume to try the pope, but asked him to pass sentence on himself, which he accordingly did, by confession and self-condemnation. Then comes a series of forgeries falsifying the history of the great Council of Nicaea. Constantine was made out to have been baptized at Rome; the Council of Nicaea was summoned by the pope's authority; a letter was forged from the council, asking the pope to confirm its decrees, which he accordingly does at a council held at Rome. Then there comes the 'Liber Pontificalis,' in which the scanty record of the bishops of Rome is enriched with fictitious stories of the doings of their pontificates, these fictitious

¹ See his letter in Baronius, *Ann. Ecc.* 869, xii.-xv.

stories being largely made use of in the forged decretals. It would be too long to tell how Cyprian, who in his lifetime had been an opponent of papal ambition, and whose works had, consequently, been rejected by Pope Gelasius, was thought too great a man to be allowed to remain permanently on the wrong side, and was therefore converted to Roman orthodoxy by means of a judicious interpolation into his works. I suppose you have heard of the famous donation of Constantine. The older fiction of his cure from leprosy and baptism by Sylvester was improved by a narrative, that the emperor, out of gratitude, bestowed Italy and the western provinces on the pope; this forgery having been made in order to induce King Pepin to secure these territories to the pope, who, under the cover of this forgery, could ask them, not as a gift, but as a restitution. The success of this forgery induced others to swell the temporal power of the pontiffs. Never have men incurred the woe—‘Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong’—more than the popes have done, both in respect of their temporal and their spiritual power. It is impossible to think that if Roman prerogatives had rested on any Divine gift, it would have been necessary to bolster up the fabric with so enormous a congeries of fraud and lies.

Roman pretensions reached their height when the pope claimed to be the supreme ruler of Christendom, administering directly such territories as he was pleased to keep under his immediate control, and with power to depose any sovereign over the remaining parts who might be disobedient to his will. It is well to let you know what a plausible defence is made at the present day for even this extreme power of the pope. The popes are represented, in teaching the maligned doctrines of their deposing power, to have been but the champions of what are now recognized as the just rights of subjects. There was, indeed, a time when this doctrine of the deposing power could not have been harmonized with what was taught in the pulpits of the Church of England. After the Restoration, the evils which had been keenly felt as attending the disturbance of an established government were still fresh in men’s memory, and were in their estimation incomparably worse than the half-forgotten evils which it had been hoped by rebellion to redress. So experience seemed to them to justify the doctrine of the absolute unlawfulness of resistance to the civil rulers. The question of defining the limits of the power, prerogatives, or jurisdiction of sovereign princes was then easily settled; for it was held that there were no limits, or rather that, if there were, the transgression of them was an offence which it must be left to God to detect and to punish. Subjects must not presume to make themselves judges of their superiors; for if it were lawful for them to be judges in their own cause against the prince, then no one who had a mind to rebel need be at a loss for a lawful cause. It was recalled to mind that when St. Paul wrote the words, ‘Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers,’ the sovereign whom he instructed his disciples to obey was Nero; whence it was inferred

that the best of saints were bound to be in subjection to the worst of men, if he were their lawful ruler. No impieties or faults in the man could invalidate his office. Though Nero deserve worthily to be abhorred, yet still the emperor is, and ought to be, sacred. A man cannot be so wicked, but that he is still a man by God's creation; a magistrate cannot be so vile and unjust, but that he is still an officer by God's institution. He holds his government by deputation from God, as God's officer; and to rebel against him were the violation of government, which is the very soul and support of the universe, and the imitation of God's providence.

This doctrine is what we should pronounce servile; but when it was delivered it had, at least, the recommendation that it certainly was not popish. South, in a sermon,"¹ some points of which I have here reproduced, casts odium with great dexterity on the doctrine of the lawfulness of resistance to princes, as taught by the Puritans of his time, by showing its identity with what had been taught by the popes and the Jesuits, from which he argued that the sons of Geneva and the sons of Rome were as truly brothers as were Romulus and Remus, both having sucked their principles from the same wolf.

If this identification was then used to the damage of the Puritans, it has been so used in our time to the benefit of the Romanists. Their doctrine concerning the pope's power to depose temporal princes, and to release their subjects from the obligation of oaths which had been taken to them, had been treated by Protestant divines as so clearly indefensible, that it was supposed only necessary to show that it had been taught with authority in the Roman Church, when it would follow at once that that Church was not infallible. *Now* it is contended that the popes, in teaching this maligned doctrine, were only the champions of what are recognized as the just rights of subjects, their defenders against the tyranny of royal oppressors.

In ages when brute force was everywhere supreme, and when despots held sway, many of them were wicked enough to be capable of rivalling the enormities of the worst of the Roman emperors, was it not the safety of the world that the Church could not be silenced? When others crouched in fear and choked down their grief and indignation, one old man, feeble in this world's strength, but strong in the authority of Him in whose name he spoke, had courage to tell the evildoer how his actions were judged of in the sight of God, and could successfully threaten him, if he did not reform, with the loss of the power which he misused. 'It is amusing,' exclaim the Romish advocates, 'that Protestants should affect to be shocked at the claim of the popes to release subjects from their oaths of allegiance to unworthy sovereigns. One would be tempted to think that Protestants themselves believed these oaths to be chains which no human power could undo, and

¹ On Rom. xiii. 1. In verifying this quotation I find in the second sermon on Isaiah. v. 20, a curious opinion, which I forbear to quote, as to the value of the distinction whether or not the pope speaks *ex cathedra*.

which in no change of circumstances cease to be binding. Why, just the reverse is the case. The deed of those who rose in arms against their king, and sent him to public execution, finds now many an approver and defender; and those who condemn it repudiate absolutely the slavish principles of the divines of the Restoration. If concerning this there be difference of opinion, Protestants, at least, are nearly unanimous in counting it a glorious revolution when another king was driven from his throne in violation of the most solemn of oaths. The large majority of the clergy of those days, loud as they had been shortly before in condemning the rebellious doctrines of the Puritans, when they had tasted a little of oppression themselves, scrupled not to treat their old oaths of allegiance as no longer binding, and to take new ones to monarchs of their own choosing. These principles have spread over Europe. In the year 1848 there was scarcely a throne whose occupant was not dispossessed. We do not pretend to be in the least shocked at any of these changes of government; yet is it satisfactory that people should make themselves judge and jury in their own cause, and depose their sovereign when they please? What is an oath worth if he who takes it regards it as binding only so long as he himself may choose to observe it? Were it not infinitely better that there should be a recognized arbiter over all, who should hear all complaints of misgovernment, and decide whether it had reached such a point as would justify resistance and warrant subjects in withholding their sworn allegiance? Such an arbiter, it is said, was the pope in the middle ages, by the common consent of European nations. However little a prince might relish the pope's interference with himself he seldom objected to his interference with his neighbour; and often the king whose deposition by the pope is now said to have been an act of tyrannical usurpation, had been himself ready to profit by the pope's gift to him of another sovereign's dominions. This shows that the pope's authority was then recognized as legitimate. But, in particular, it was then part of the common law of Christendom that he who ruled over a Christian nation must himself be a Christian: neither a heathen nor a heretic. And the pope was evidently discharging an office which specially belonged to him if he declared whether or not a sovereign had fallen into heresy, and whether or not he had accordingly incurred the forfeiture of his crown. Thus, then, we who admit that cases may occur when subjects may lawfully depose their sovereigns, and treat the oaths they have taken to them as no longer binding, are called on to admit also that it would be an advantage that there should be an authority competent to decide whether in any case withdrawal of allegiance would be justified. And so we are told that we ought to be ashamed of the outcry we have raised against the exercise of the deposing power by the mediaeval popes, such an outcry not being justifiable unless we adopt the Caroline doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance; the exercise of the deposing power having been perfectly legitimate according to the political constitution of Europe at the time, and that constitution which gave

a common head to all Christian nations being really preferable to the international anarchy of the present time.

Such is the defence made for the extravagant pretensions in secular matters of the popes of the middle ages. I postpone for a time the consideration of the two questions whether, in point of fact, the European nations did really concede the supremacy over temporal princes which the popes claimed to exercise; and whether it would have been advantageous to them to have conceded it; because it is necessary first to point out that Roman apologists mislead us if they would have us believe that it was on any such voluntary concession that the pope rested his claims. He did not claim the right because nations had given it to him; but nations often yielded it to him because they believed his assertion that God had given it to him. The consent of peoples would, of course, affect the prudence of exercising the right, but not the right itself. The late pope might believe that he had the power to depose the emperor of Germany or of Russia, but he knew that if he did so he would only ruin his own adherents in these countries if they obeyed his deposition of their sovereign. In this way the consent of peoples is necessary to the prudent exercise of the deposing power; but the popes never admitted that it was the consent of peoples which gave them their power. It is in this sense that we are to understand language used by Pio Nono, in which he spoke of the 'right' of deposing sovereigns as exercised by his predecessors, and stated that their authority in accordance with public right which was then vigorous, and with the acquiescence of all Christian nations, extended so far as to pass judgment even in civil affairs on the acts of princes and nations. That we are here to understand the acquiescence of Christian nations not as giving the right, but as constituting that happy state of things which made its exercise possible and prudent, is evident from the language used by his predecessors.

Take the first great case of the deposition of a prince—that of the Emperor Henry, by Gregory VII. Gregory did not appeal to the consent of peoples, but to the blessed Peter, whom he addressed in these words:— 'Since it hath pleased thee that the people of Christ, specially entrusted to thee, should obey me in thy stead; since by thy grace power is given to me to bind and loose in heaven and in earth, therefore, relying on this trust for the honour and defence of thy Church, and in behalf of Almighty God, I deny to Henry the government of the whole nation of Germany and Italy, and I release all Christians from the bond of the oath, which they have made to him, and I forbid anyone to serve him as if he were a king.' These principles were acted on and improved by Gregory's successors. Innocent III. applied to himself the words of God spoken to Jeremiah, and declared that God had ordained the pope, as Christ's vicar, 'to have power over all nations and kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, to destroy, to build, and to plant.' It was this pope who found the papal power in the first chapter of Genesis; that power being the sun which God had appointed to rule the day, that is in

spiritual things; while the imperial power was but that lesser light which he hath appointed to rule in the night, that is in carnal things. It would be too long to tell how commentators worked out this analogy, as, for instance that the spiritual power shines by its own light; the temporal derives its authority from the spiritual, which commands subjects to be obedient for conscience' sake. Nay, it was supposed possible to determine thus the exact proportion between the two powers, though unhappily the theologians, who invoked the aid of the unfamiliar sciences of astronomy and arithmetic, went so far astray in their calculations as to do gross injustice to the papal claims. The gloss on this decretal of Innocent computes that as the earth is seven times greater than the moon and the sun eight times greater than the earth, so it follows (I do not exactly see how) that the papal dignity is forty-seven times greater than the imperial.¹ Later popes still further developed the theories of Gregory and Innocent. Boniface VIII., for instance, in the preamble of a Bull giving away the island of Sardinia, commences, 'Being set above kings and princes by a divine pre-eminence of power, we dispose of them as we think fit.' But the fullest statement of his doctrine concerning his supremacy is in his celebrated Bull 'Unam Sanctam.' In this he lays down that there is but one Catholic Church, and of that Church but one head, namely, Christ, and Christ's vicar, Peter, and his successor. In Peter's power are two swords, the spiritual and the temporal, each of which is therefore in the power of the Church. [I may say, in passing, that one of the most used texts in this controversy was that which relates to Peter's words on the night of our Lord's betrayal, 'here are two swords,' on which it was remarked that our Lord's reply was not 'that is too much,' but 'it is enough.'] One of these swords must be subject to the other: the temporal to the spiritual. If, therefore, the earthly power err, the spiritual will judge it; but if the spiritual err God only can set it right. This authority, not human, but divine, was given by the divine lips to Peter, and confirmed to him and his successors. 'Therefore whoso resists this power resists the ordinance of God, unless, like a Manichean, he pretends that there are two first principles, which we declare to be heretical and false. Moreover, we declare, affirm, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary to salvation that every human creature should be subject to the Roman pontiff.'

Enough has been quoted to show what a misrepresentation it is when Roman apologists wish to produce an impression that the mediaeval popes exercised a dominion lawful because granted to them by the public consent at the time. It was not on this consent that the popes themselves based it. The consent, indeed, was by no means, at any time, universal. Naturally, when the pope made a present of one man's territory to another, he who received the gift and he at whose expense it was made were apt to hold different opinions as to the pope's power to confer it. But if the consent were ever so

¹ Decret. Greg. lib. i., ti. 33, c. 6.

general, it was given only because belief was given to the pope's assertion that a man would forfeit his eternal salvation by denying his claim. If that claim were really unfounded, no subsequent consent could legalize it. As well might a man who presents a forged cheque at a banker's maintain that he has a just claim to the money he receives because the banker's clerks have freely and voluntarily handed it over to him. They did so under a false apprehension, supposing the claimant to be vested with an authority which he did not possess. In like manner, when the popes came before the nations of Europe with forged documents in their hands, asking them on this evidence to own that Christ's vicar had the right to apportion their territories as he pleased, the fact that the claim was admitted does not legalize it, because it was fraudulent in its inception.

Far be it from me to disguise the fact that the pope's claim was admitted. It is this fact which makes the doctrine of the deposing power so great a stumbling-block in the way not only of the theory of the personal infallibility of the popes but of every theory of infallibility whatsoever. Take the theory most opposed to the Ultramontane, the Gallican, and I say that the theory that the pope possesses by divine right the power of deposing kings, satisfies all the Gallican tests whether a doctrine is infallibly true. It was solemnly propounded by the pope as 'de fide,' and acquiesced in generally by the Western Christian world. Particular exercises of the power were objected to by the parties whom they affected, as transgressing the just limits of the power; but the general existence of the power was not denied. If, therefore, we now do not admit that Christ gave the popes that power in temporal things which they claim, it follows inevitably that what Romanists count the Catholic Church may err; for, setting aside the Eastern nations which they do not include in it, all the West agreed in accepting the pope's account of his power as true. It will be found, then, that the consistent maintainers of papal infallibility at the present day are forced to hold the doctrine of his temporal power; and they really do hold it, however they may try to make it palatable to modern ears by speaking of the consent of peoples to admit it.

But, in truth, this doctrine of the pope's temporal power has not merely the accidental connexion with the doctrine of infallibility that it happened to be affirmed by the infallible authority. It is the necessary outcome of the theory that God has given to His people on earth a guide able infallibly to resolve all their doubts and guarantee them against error. Bellarmine's book on Controversies was for a time placed on the index, because in the then pope's judgment he had placed on too low grounds his defence of the pope's temporal power. But any reasonable pope might have been well satisfied with the proof Bellarmine gives that a power in temporal things results, when once it is acknowledged that the pope is an infallible guide both in faith and morals. Is it possible to think that it is only speculative error from which that guide can free men? Would he be able to give no help to men whose consciences were perplexed; and, when they were hesitating between two

courses, one of which could not be followed without sin, would he be unable to point out the right one? In particular in the case which has come before us—of subjects who had grave reason to complain of their rulers, but doubted whether the misgovernment had been such that in withdrawing their allegiance they would not be guilty of perjury or rebellion, and feared to trust their own judgment in so weighty a matter,—to whom should they turn for guidance but to him whom they believed to have been appointed by Christ as guide and ruler of His Church on earth; and, if he really possessed the attributes he claimed, was it possible that he could guide inquirers wrong?

O'Connell said that he would take his theology from Rome, but not his politics. This saying betrays ignorance of the Roman Catholic doctrine that the pope is an infallible guide not only in matters of faith (or, in other words, on questions of speculative theory), but also in morals. It cannot be denied that many political questions involve questions of morals. Bellarmine rightly pointed out that, even though Christ conferred no direct temporal power on the pope, yet, from the spiritual power which He did confer, and chiefly from the power infallibly to declare what are sins and what are duties, follows indirectly indeed, but inevitably, temporal power of the highest kind. For he who is able to speak in God's name, and to declare with authority what God has commanded or forbidden, is really in a position to utter commands which supersede the commands of any human authority.

Thus, in a merely temporal matter, which only concerns the affairs of this world, Bellarmine holds that the pope has no right to interfere with the duly constituted authorities; but in anything that concerns the safety of souls he has a right—and remember it is for the pope to decide whether a thing concerns the safety of souls or not. In such a case he may abrogate a civil law injurious to men's souls, which the civil power refuses to annul; or he may make a law which the civil power neglects to enact; or he may deprive a prince of his power altogether: provided always that he sees that the good of men's souls so requires. In particular, though the early Christians submitted to the rule of a Nero or a Diocletian, it was for want of power to resist successfully that they so submitted; but now that they have strength to shake off such a yoke, the pope would gravely neglect his duty if he left their souls exposed to the serious peril in which they would be involved if they were ruled over by an infidel or heretical sovereign. When Christ commanded Peter to feed His flock, He conferred on him the powers necessary to the fit discharge of that office, and amongst these powers are the power to keep off wolves—that is, to shield the flock from heretics—and the power to keep in order and restrain unruly rams, who butt and injure the peaceable sheep—that is to say, to restrain sovereigns who, though Catholics, may use their power to the injury of the souls of their subjects.

The connexion that has been established between the doctrine of the pope's Infallibility and that of his power in temporal things, has the advantage of bringing the doctrine of Infallibility to an experimental test.

The pope may, with little fear of contradiction, dispose of the kingdoms of the unseen world. He may inspire his adherents with the confidence in which one of them¹ boasts that an indulgence which he destines for a soul in purgatory reaches its destination as surely as a letter which he puts into the post-office; and the pretension can neither be tested nor experimentally refuted. But when his infallibility comes within the sphere of this world's concerns we are better able to see what it is worth.

And the test is not an unfair one, for it might seem as if it could not fail to turn out to the advantage of the claim. Can anything seem more desirable than that there should be a supreme court, which should make all war, whether civil or foreign, impossible, by its power of arbitrating in all disputes whether between one sovereign and another or between any sovereign and his subjects? No wonder that the nations of Europe gladly embraced the idea, when they saw the hope of obtaining such a guardian of the public peace. But, alas! the old difficulty arose—Who was to guard the guardian? He proved altogether unworthy of his trust. His decisions were made, not in the interests of peace and justice, but of his own selfish ends. It is proof enough of this that he has lost his power; for the tribunal which he occupied, if rightly filled, would have conferred such temporal advantages on the world that, when it was also backed by the highest religious sanction, it needed not that it should have been guided by infallible wisdom. Had it been governed by common fairness and honesty, Europe would never have parted with it. But then took place exactly the practical refutation that was experienced by the Caroline doctrine of non-resistance. Anglican divines held that under no circumstances was it lawful to resist the civil ruler. If he misgoverned, God alone could judge him. They made practical trial of their theory, and soon were glad to abandon it. So, in like manner, the Romish divines owned the danger of making the civil ruler irresponsible. They instituted a power above him, to which he must give account; but they held that if that power went astray none but God could set it right. And here, too, those who had accepted the theory were forced to abandon it by discovering that there is no exception to the rule, that irresponsible power is apt to lead before long to absolutely intolerable abuse.

In deciding, for instance, between prince and subjects, a ruler most hateful to his subjects was upheld, if subservient to the pope, and one most acceptable to them deposed, if not submissive to papal will. It is enough to mention our own experience. The degrading submission of King John to the pope gained him the pope's hearty support in his contests with his subjects, and the great Charter was obtained not merely from a reluctant king, but in defiance of papal excommunications. On the contrary, a sovereign so acceptable to her subjects as Queen Elizabeth was excommunicated and deposed by two successive pontiffs—a futile act, by which they injured their

¹ Father Faber.

own religion more than anything else. Even Roman Catholic states disregarded the excommunication; and treaties, alliances, business, commerce, went on as before. Meanwhile the fanatical believers in the pope's power, who were driven by his instigation into rebellion, suffered death, and yet did not gain for their religion the moral victory which was won for ours by the constancy of our martyrs in the Marian persecutions, because those men were understood by all to have suffered death, not as heretics, but as rebels and traitors.

The case of King John, to which I have referred, was made the subject of a special apology by Cardinal Manning. His defence is in substance this:—The excommunication is not to be understood as implying the pope's disapproval of the provisions of the great Charter. Many of these related to the correction of local abuses, which the pope, by reason of distance, was quite incapable of understanding. But it was the means which the barons took to obtain the Charter which put them clearly in the wrong. In the early stages of the conflict, when the tyrant king was trampling impartially on civil liberties and ecclesiastical rights, the pope and the barons were united in resistance, and the latter were consequently in the right. But when their ally, having obtained his own objects, had made a separate peace, they had no business to carry on the fight any longer. If the king did not redress their wrongs they might appeal to the pope, and be content with whatever satisfaction he might be pleased to give them; notwithstanding that, as Manning himself has reminded us, the pope's want of local information made him an incompetent judge of the matters in dispute. I have no doubt that Manning's theory of the duty of subjects coincides with that of Innocent III. But, as even in John's time it was rejected as an innovation, and the English declared that the ordering of secular matters belongeth not to a pope, so it is not likely that the doctrines will find favour now which we rejoice were not accepted by our fathers.

I have said that the popes abused their power by exercising it, not in the interests of the peoples whom they claimed to govern, but in their own; and I must add, not in the interests of anything that can plausibly claim the high name of religion, but of the most vulgar ambition. For the popes were not content with the lofty position of being supreme judges over temporal princes: they wanted to be temporal princes themselves; and when they sought to aggrandize their dominions they freely used the spiritual weapon of excommunication.

You know that they were successful in this endeavour; so much so, that if it were mentioned that I was lecturing 'on the temporal power of the popes,' it would be popularly imagined that I was discussing the right of the popes to rule over a certain portion of Italy. I think, therefore, that I must not wholly omit to say something about this claim; but you will observe that it is a different thing from what I have been really discussing, viz. the pope's right to interfere in temporal matters in any part of the world. The latter right, if it

exist at all, is an alienable possession of the see, and must have belonged to it from the first, being inseparably connected with the pope's office as head of the Church and infallible guide to Christians on questions of faith and morals. The former right only belongs to the see accidentally. It was some centuries before it possessed it; and the pope might cease to be a temporal sovereign without any loss of his spiritual powers.

In my private opinion his spiritual power would then be all the greater, and therefore I never thought it matter for controversial triumph that the pope, in 1870, ceased to be an Italian prince. I do not believe the assertion that temporal sovereignty is necessary for the free exercise of his spiritual power; for I believe that in the present state of public opinion the pope would be quite as free to excommunicate any person whom he thought unfit to be a member of his Church, if he lived in London or New York, as if he lived in Rome. Nay, I count that his direction of spiritual matters was far more liable to be influenced by extraneous considerations when he was dependent on foreign powers, for his possession of a precarious throne, than since he has had nothing to hope for from the good-will of secular princes. However, I will not dispute that the pope may be a better judge than I as to what the interests of his religion require; and I must acknowledge that Pius IX. held it to be essential to those interests that he should be king as well as pope. It was judged that at the bottom of his claim to infallibility was anxiety on his part that his words should be taken on this subject; and it was believed that if the Vatican Council had been prolonged it would have been asked to ratify his opinion. A list of doctrines—with respect to which Cardinal Manning says that the Church cannot be silent, cannot hold her peace—begins with the Trinity and Incarnation, and ends with the necessity of the temporal sovereignty of the Holy See. Still I cannot but think it likely that future Roman Catholic divines will count it as a providential escape that their Church has not irrevocably committed herself to a claim likely to bring her less honour than disgrace.

I know no part of Church history less calculated to impress a truly religious man with respect for the papacy than the history of those popes who did most to gain its Italian States for the Church. There have been worse popes: indeed, their immediate predecessors were worse who, instead of working for the benefit of the see, aimed only at gaining principalities for their sons and their nephews. But all alike seem to have their whole thoughts bent on things of earth, and to be men to whom no one would dream of coming to obtain spiritual counsel.

I have already said something as to the frauds used in order to gain that power, beginning with the famous forgery of the donation of Constantine, by which the Frankish monarchs were induced to believe that the Italian provinces rightly belonged, not to the Greek emperors, but to the Roman pontiffs; and this forgery was succeeded by others with similar objects. But many a power has proved a benefit to the world, the first origin of which will

not bear investigation. I should not care, therefore, to mention the frauds by which the papal power was built up, if a more sacred origin had not been claimed for it; but the best justification of the power would have been in the use that was made of it. Surely we should say that the happiest of men must be that chosen people who were so fortunate as to be under the direct rule of him—whose office it was to punish all instances of misgovernment in others, of him who was appointed to feed Christ's sheep, who was the divinely constituted guardian of truth and justice in the world. His dominions, we should expect, would rapidly increase by the voluntary cession of peoples, anxious to place themselves under his beneficent rule.

Godliness has promise of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come. Surely he whose infallible wisdom prescribes such laws as best secure men's eternal happiness might be expected to rule, in such a way, as most to promote the happiness of his subjects in this life. If there be any force in the *a priori* arguments which have made men believe that God will be sure to fulfil all their expectations as to His government of this world, and in particular that He will supply an unerring guide, able to resolve correctly every theological problem about which the members of His Church may dispute, surely we might argue that God would not bring discredit on His gift by refusing to His appointed minister in things spiritual, some share at least of the human wisdom with which things temporal are managed; and that He would not put such a strain on men's faith as to require them to believe that the same man who was seen to be thoroughly unwise and incompetent in every matter on which we can form a judgment of our own, might be trusted to make decisions, guided by infallible wisdom, in those matters on which we are told we are not competent to form any judgment at all.

It is not possible to state what papal government might reasonably have been expected to be, without seeming to be cruelly ironical. For it is notorious that what, if the Romanist theory of its origin were true, ought to be the best government in the world, in fact turned out to be the very worst. At the time of the accession of Pius IX. it was fondly hoped that he would distinguish himself as a reformer of previous maladministration; and in this hope Mr. Mahony, better known as Father Prout, who was then at Rome, wrote the following description of the condition of the Papal States at the time of that accession: 'Confessedly things had gone on during Gregory's sixteen years of reign from bad to worse, from feebleness to dotage. The finances were in an awful state; the trade and commerce of the country depressed, paralysed, and in despair; the cultivation of science in every department clogged and discountenanced; no hope, no buoyancy, in any of the liberal professions; deep-rooted discontent among the people; open rebellion in the legations; corruption in every branch of the civil and in some departments of ecclesiastical administration; dogged reluctance to adopt any system of amelioration; stupid adherence to worn-out expedients and bygone traditions of redtapery; the approach of ruin looked at with the calm stolidity

of an idiot who hugs himself to the last in the cherished monotony of routine and fatalism. All was desolate, waste, barren, and dilapidated, beyond the graphic picture of the inspired writer who has left on solemn record his landscape of the field of the sluggard, with its fences broken down and other evidences of sad improvidence: "I went by the field of the slothful and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding, and lo! it was all grown over with thorns; and nettles had covered the face of it, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well; I looked and received instruction; yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." I cannot quote at greater length Mahony's picture of oppressive taxes; great waste in the collection; discouragement of arts and industry; discontent of the educated classes, there being no place for any layman in the employment of the government; sullen dissatisfaction with the overpowering predominance of Austrian power, whose bayonets secured the continuance of the existing state of things, and scared away all hope of reform. This picture, you will observe, was not drawn by an enemy anxious to discredit the pope's government generally, but by one who hoped that the prosperity to be introduced by Pius IX. would contrast brightly with past mismanagement. I need not say how these hopes were disappointed: how Pius, after figuring for a year or two in the character of a liberal pope, became frightened at the prospect that opened out to him: how it became more and more difficult to induce his subjects to submit to his rule: how he maintained a precarious seat on his throne as long as he was propped up by foreign bayonets, and fell from it the moment they were withdrawn.

Manning is not likely to make many converts in England to his doctrine, that the miserable right of a few priests to misgovern some thousands of Italians is necessary to the perfection of Christ's kingdom upon earth. But if he is right in holding that this doctrine is a legitimate deduction from his theory of Infallibility, the falsity of the conclusion serves to prove that there is falsity in the premisses. If it is incredible that Christ should leave His people exposed to the risk of error in matters of speculation, it is incredible also that He would leave them exposed to the risk of going wrong in practical matters. If there is an infallible guide to tell us how to believe, that guide ought to be able to tell us also how we are to act. It is impossible to make a separation between faith and morals. Ultramontanes are only consistent in saying that he who governs the one must also have dominion over the other. But he whom we recognize as able to give us unerring guidance in practical matters is, in truth, the ruler of life. His advice avails more with us than the commands of any person whatever. If there be, then, any such infallible guide upon earth, every secular power which does not itself submit to it and frame its laws according to its dictates, must rightly regard it as an enemy. For if the infallible authority does its duty it must scrutinize every ordinance of the secular power in order to ascertain whether the law directly

or indirectly affects the welfare of the souls of the people. But there are few questions with which legislators deal which do not come under this description. For instance, this authority has claimed—and, on its own principles, rightly claimed—to pronounce upon toleration, civil liberty, education, marriage: nay, it clearly would not travel out of its province if it pronounced on the lawfulness of any foreign war, nor if it directed subjects to vindicate their rights by rebellion. It is argued, then, that if Christ did not see fit to complete His scheme by giving His vicar upon earth temporal power as well as spiritual, that vicar would be left exposed to suffer from temporal governments such measures of expulsion or repression as the rulers of any country deal to those who will not submit to the law of the land.

But the popes have had the opportunity of working out their theory of a necessity of temporal power, and have brought it to a miserable failure. Not only did they destroy the temporal prosperity of the states they governed, but they impaired their own spiritual influence through the hatred inspired by the character of their rule. The pope might drive through any part of heretic London, and be sure of a courteous reception; but the last two popes have thought it necessary to shut themselves up in their own palace, through alleged fear, if they stirred out of it, of meeting insults from their countrymen who ought to know them best. Now, men who have themselves made such a poor hand at governing are clearly not fit to teach others how to govern; and therefore we may safely reject the pope's claim to interfere with secular princes in their government of their states. And this claim is, as we have seen, inseparably connected with the pope's general claim to infallibility, so that we arrive once more at the result that we have no right to think that Christ has provided us with any infallible security for right thinking or right doing, or taught us any other way for attaining these ends than the prayerful use of the means He has given us for the education of our own reason and conscience.