

restraints of which, on their pride, their passions, and their self-will, they were determined to shake off, on the plea of "Christian liberty". And naturally, since these heresiarchs were, almost without exception, priests and religious who had renounced their former faith from motives of which God alone has the right to judge; of which He has already judged, and rendered to each of them, "according to his works." The misunderstanding, however, as it commonly exists, arises from a mistaken and wholly arbitrary distinction between the authority of the Church, and that of the God-enlightened conscience of every faithful Christian. It was Cardinal Manning,¹ I think, who pointed out that a Catholic is not priest-ridden, but conscience-ridden, and that every consistent Protestant, who obeys the dictates of his conscience, is in precisely the same condition. The Protestant conscience invokes the infallible authority of the Written Word; the Catholic, that of the living, infallible Church, "the pillar and ground of the truth"; but, behind and above Bible and Church is the same Supreme Authority, God Himself. It is only because the Bible is His Word, only because the voice of the Church is His Voice—"he that heareth you, heareth Me"—that either has any claim to Christian obedience. Once more, if this were clearly understood, a further cause of division would be removed from between those who alike submit to one and the same authority—that of God. It is not man we obey, when we accept the teaching or instruction of a priest, but God, even as they listen to Him; it is not to man that we confess our sins, but to God, in the person of His minister.

Yet, when all explanations have been made, and all misunderstandings, so far as may be, cleared away between "men of goodwill," there remain the questions, both of the possibility, and of the lawfulness of such a Christian "internationalism" as I have here ventured to suggest for consideration. Our differences with our separated brethren arise, as has been

¹ In his *Religio Viatoria*.