

beatific vision. At Trent, the Church proclaims it of tradition and of divine revelation, that adultery does not break the conjugal tie; yet had not learned doctors and provincial councils professed a contrary doctrine? We might here, with the theologians, multiply examples frequent in history; but let us hasten to conclude: the Church has, in the lapse of ages, opened her creed to truths previously free, and even opposed by some of the learned and the virtuous; that is undeniable; the cause is, therefore, judged; the right does exist.

But it is remarkable that the opinion of Catholic doctors, and the practice of the Church, are strongly confirmed by reason and good sense. If, indeed, the Church can only define that which is revealed, there is no law that everything revealed must be immediately defined. What is there to hinder that luminary which God has placed in the bosom of his Church from gradually attaining its perfect radiance? . . . Why should not our dogma have, without changing its nature, its peculiar mode of growing, and developing itself? . . . What! shall it be said, *development in the immutable, and in the bosom of the unchangeable, the progress of time!* And why not? Doubtless, to impress on Catholic dogma its incommunicable character, it was requisite that that dogma should be formed at a single cast, and spring into existence complete in all its parts. But Providence has its time for all things,