

them, Cyprian, who lived in the year 250, and died a martyr for the truth, and is honoured as a saint in the Roman Calendar.

"From whence," says he, "is that tradition. Whether has it come down from the authority of the Lord and the gospels, or from the commands and letters of the apostles? For that those things which are written are to be done, God testifies and sets before Joshua, saying, 'The book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all things which are written therein.'"*

Here is the language of another of the fathers, who is also a saint in the Roman Calendar, Basil the great: "It is a manifest falling away from the faith, and a charge of arrogance either to reject any thing of what is written, or to introduce any thing of what is not written." †

Tradition is therefore one of those things that cannot stand the test of Vincent of Lerins, which I gave you in a former part of this discourse. It has not been received every where, at all times, and by all Christians, it consequently is not catholic, and the church that has introduced and now rests upon it cannot be the Catholic Church.

You are aware that the Roman Catholic Church has received as canonical several books which she calls scripture, which are altogether rejected by Protestants. There is no question about the books of the New Testament. The only doubt is with regard to those books which she considers a portion of the Old. Here that rule with which I commenced my discourse is of the greatest advantage: "That which is first is true, that which is more modern is corrupt." Which is the first, which is the more modern? I shall answer this question in the words of Melito, a writer who lived in the year 170, and who devoted a good deal of attention to the consideration of the matter: "When I was in the East," says he, "and come to the place itself in which these things were formerly preached and done, I learned diligently the books of the Old Testament, and I send you a list of them subjoined beneath. These are the names, 5 books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua the son of Nun, Judges, Ruth, 4 books of Kings, 2 of Paralipomenon, the Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon, which is also called Wisdom, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, Job, the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, the twelve prophets in one book, Daniel, Ezekiel, Ezra." †

The Roman Catholic members of the congregation will, I doubt not, be greatly surprised to hear that in this the first Christian catalogue of the books of the Old Testament, not one of those which we call Apocryphal is enumerated, but that it contains all the books of our canon, and no others. The only differences between it and ours are, that the books are not arranged in the same order, and the 4 Books of Kings are called by us, 2 Books of Samuel and 2 Books of Kings; and the 2 Books of Paralipomenon are called the 2 Books of Chronicles. The next catalogue which comes to our hands is that of the Council of Laodicea, which met about the middle of the 4th century, and is exactly the same as that of Melito,

* Ep. 74 ad Pompeium.

† De Fide Cap. 1, Tom. 2, p. 251, Bened. Ed.

‡ Apud Euseb. Ecc. Hist. Lib. 4, cap. 26.