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THE CATHOLIC.

Hamilton, G. D.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2.

As promised in our last, we give a few more authorities to prove the antiquity of auricular confession.

Origen, who flourished in the third century, is more explicit on the necessity of confessing our hidden sins, in his two Homilies, 1st and 2d, on Leviticus; but, for brevity's sake, we shall copy only what he says in his second Homily on Psalm 38, v. 18, No. 4. where explaining these words: *For I will declare my iniquity, and I will think for my sins.— Quoniam iniquitatem meam annuntiabo; et cogitabo pro peccato meo.*

"The declaration of our iniquity is, as we have often said, the confession of our sins. Lo, then, what the divine scripture teaches us, that we must not conceal within us our sins."—Then bringing the example of those, who, having indigestible matter on their stomach, are relieved by vomiting, he concludes thus: "So they who have sinned, if they conceal, and retain within themselves their guilt, are pressed inwardly, and almost suffocated with the phlegm and humor of sins: But if one becomes his own accuser, while he accuses himself and confesses, he at the same time vomits forth his guilt, and digests all the cause of his sickness. Only look round diligently, and see to whom you may confess your sin. Examine first the physician, to whom you ought to expose the cause of all your malady," &c.—*Annunciationem iniquitatis, id est confessionem peccati, frequentius diximus. Vide argo quid edocet Scriptura divina, quia oportet peccatum non celare intrinsecus.... Etiam hi, qui peccaverint, si quidem occultant; si retinent intra se peccatum; intrinsecus urgentur, et propemodum suffocantur a phlegmate vel humore peccati. Si autem ipse sui accusator fiat, dum accusat semetipsum, et confitetur, simul evomit et delictum; atque omnem morbi digerit causam. Tantummodo circumspice diligentius, cui debeas confiteri peccatum tuum. Proba prius medicum, cui debeas causam languoris exponere.*

In proof of private, or auricular, confession being at all times a dogma of the church, we could fill our paper with the clearest quotations from the most illustrious and early Greek and Latin Fathers of the church. But we shall content ourselves for the present with a few more.

St. Augustin says, "we must repair to those who preside in the church, by whom the power of the keys is administered."—*Veniendum esse ad antistites, per quos in ecclesia claves ministrantur.*—Hom. 50.

St. Ambrose, de Pœnit. lib. 1 cap. 2. "The right of absolving from sin is granted to the priests alone."—*Jus hoc absolventi peccata solis permissum esse sacerdotibus.*

Pope Innocent I. in his letter to Decentius, says:—"It belongs to the Priest to judge of the enormity of a sin, and by attending to the confession of the penitent." *Do pondere estimando delictorum sacerdotis est judicare, ut attendat ad confessionem penitentis.*

Lactantius, in the 4th century, Inst. lib. iv. cap. 17, affirms Penance to have been enjoined us: "For that if we bare our heart; that is, if, having confessed our sins, we have done sufficiently what God enjoins, we shall obtain pardon; which, to the refractory, and those concealing their sins, is denied by him who beholds not, like man, the countenance, but the inmost secrets of the heart."—*Ut si cor nudaverimus; id est, si peccata nostra confessi, satis Deo fecerimus, veniam consequamur; quæ contumacibus et admissa sua celantibus, denegatur ab eo, qui non faciem, sicut homo; sed intima et arcana pectoris intuetur.* Again, he says, in chapter 30, "That is the true church, in which is confession and penance, which thoroughly cures the sins and wounds to which is liable the weakness of the flesh."—*Illa vera est ecclesia, in qua est confessio et penitentia, quæ peccata et vulnera, quibus subjecta est imbecillitas carnis, salubriter curat.*

Of the Greek Fathers, St Basil, in *regulis brevioribus*, testifies that "our sins are to be disclosed to those entrusted with the dispensation of the mysteries of God."—*Peccata eis esse aperienda quibus credita est dispensatio mysteriorum Dei.*

St. Chrysostom, Hom. 30, in Gen. addressing himself in Holy Week to the people of Antioch, while inculcating the duty of fasting and constant prayer, exhorts them all to make a diligent and exact confession of their sins.—*Ut fieret diligens et pura peccatorum confessio.* Now, such a confession must have been a private one, for we never heard of a whole people making, or exhorted to make, a public one. In his book, *de Sacerdotio*, where he shows how much the priesthood of the new law excels that of the old, he says:—"The priests of the old law did not heal the lepers, but only pronounced them clean; but ours have received the power, not of inspecting the leprosy of the body, nor merely of examining if the soul be clean, but rather of cleansing it." *Nostri vero, non lepram corporis, vel immunditiam animæ non purgatum probandi, sed potius purgandi protestatem acceperunt.* "Whence," continues he, "is this power derived, unless from the words of Christ: whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."—*Undenam ista potestas, nisi ex verbis Christi: Quæcumque solveritis super terram, erunt soluta et in cœlis.*

This, we should think, may suffice to shew the ignorant assurance of some, who, from having read the tract peddled stuff of our strolling evangelists, or the more bulky lucubrations of those whose clerical existence depends on persuading the public that Christ never meant to have only one catholic or universal church; but an indefinite number of protesting and contradictory;—national, or individually invented ones; venture on such interestedly

partial, and never questioned authority, to challenge us to prove (what we are ready to do) the uninterrupted continuance of all and each of our Catholic doctrines from the very time of the Apostles.

But, how happens it that the Greek schismatics hold the same doctrine and sacraments as the Church of Rome, one of which sacraments is auricular confession? They surely borrowed nothing from the Church of Rome since their division from her.

The fact is, that division consists only in their holding, from motives of national jealousy, not the direct successor of Saint Peter the head of the church, but their patriarch of Constantinople, a subject of the grand Turk.

The Anglican Jew Bishop of Jerusalem, Mr. Alexander, will find it no easy task to make these schismatics of the east swallow down his adopted parliamentary creed of the 39 Articles. We fear, for all the fine picture of his lately published mystical *Stray among the Flowers*, he will be but like the lilly among the thorns, though he pass himself off among our gullible simpletons as a descendant of the tribe of Judah, [?] and his wife as of the tribe of Levi. [?—!] But it never occurred to our Protestant wisacres to ask him for a peep at his genealogical register; and how it had been preserved since the dispersion of his countrymen by the Romans. He doubtless thinks by thus pretending to belong to the kingly and priestly tribes, to reunite in his family, as of old, the sovereignty as well as the high priesthood of his people. It were nothing to be wondered at, (if the rich Jew-broker, Rothchild, who offered millions to the late Sultan for the recovery of Judea for his dispersed countrymen, and whose offer was rejected) we say, it were not at all to be wondered at, if this same Rothchild, with the secret understanding of the Jews, be not at the bottom of all this Anglo-Jew Bishop's installation in Jerusalem, backed, as he probably is, by the governments of England and Prussia, whose financial concerns he has been known to direct, and to rule with the golden rod of Mammon. At all events, in the meantime, the English Jew Bishop may expect his salary.—Our parliament hierarchy will feast their Jew convert at the expense of the nation, and beguile for him, even from our worthy queen dowager's pocket, that money which would have been more charitably spent in relieving the extreme distress of our own famished poor at home, than in feasting, according to the "Stray chapter among the Flowers," their Jew-Apostle in Jerusalem. But were it not for the salary, they would have no Jew there to feast. Mammon is the god of the Jew, and nearly as much so of most of our christians.

It is said, however, that the Grand Turk will not accept of this English Jew Bishop as a new church dignitary in his dominions.

The following able and learned communication on some of the doctrines of the Catholic church, is addressed to the editor of the *London and Dublin Orthodox Journal*. We copy from the *Catholic Herald*. We trust our Protestant polemics will profit by its perusal:—

Sir,—I have received the letter from the Rev. G. W. Jones, which was left at my publisher's lately for me, in which he asserts that many of the doctrines of the Romish Church (as he politely calls it) were not imposed upon the faithful till the Council of Trent; I resolved therefore, to peruse the Councils themselves, and, *de point en point*, to mark the time when these doctrines were in council established

1st. I commenced with the supremacy of the Pope. I found it confirmed in the Council of Chalcedon, Act. 16, one of the first four general councils, (and acknowledged by the Church of England), nearly 1400 years since: 630 fathers were present, and about the year of our Lord 451, and reference made to the First Council of Nice, Can. 6. This supremacy was also allowed, professed, and taught by the most ancient fathers after the apostles, and confessed to have been so by Melancthon, Luther, Bucer, Bilson, Dr. Cooper, Bunny, Fulk, Middleton, Osiander, the Centurists, and many others too numerous to mention.

2d. Those Books which the Rev. G. W. Jones calls Apocrypha were taken into the canon of the Old Testament in the Third Council of Carthage, signed by the illustrious St. Augustine (Baruch only was not named, because it was an appendix to Jeremiah, whose secretary he was.) Can. 47.

3d. The unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass, in the Sixth Council of Constantinople, 1200 years since, Can. 32. and also in the Ninth Council of the Apostles it was decreed "That a bishop, &c. should communicate when sacrifice is made."

4th. Veneration, &c. of saints' relics, (according to apostolical tradition), as also of martyrs and holy images, in the Council of Nice, 350 fathers present, Act 3, A. D. 780. See more in Act. 7, with the general concurrence of ancient fathers.—(See St. Basil in 40, Martyr, St. Ambr. de vid. Augustin, Psal. 63, 53.)

5th. Communion in one species held sufficient in the Council of Constance, sess. 13, and practised in the Church fourteen hundred years since.

6th. Purgatory, and many more too numerous to relate, in the Council of Florence, and believed in the primitive times.

7th. The doctrine of Transubstantiation confirmed in the Council of Lateran, in which near 1300 fathers assisted; therefore it is notoriously false for Protestants to assert that the doctrine of transubstantiation was never decreed or established by any general council till the council of Trent in the year 1551. It ever has and always will be the belief of the church, because she is and always will (as promised by our Saviour) be guided by the Spirit of Truth; and, consequently, when Berengarius began to impugn this doctrine in the 11th century he was instantly condemned by 15 councils, several of which were very numerous (see Verax's Reply to Hook's Novelties of Romanism), and many other controverted points, particularly and by name, are declared by some most eminent Protestants to have been brought into England by Augustin the monk, about 1200 years since. Indeed, when I had diligently examined this truth and found it