

obey. After this striking and peremptory word: "He who despises you, despises me," how are we to account for the blindness or impiety of those Christians who afterwards had the face to despise this their doctrine? We learn moreover from St. Matthew, that our Saviour sometimes sent off the apostles to announce in the towns and cities of Judea, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand: "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words going forth out of that house or city shake off the dust from your feet." And what shall be the punishment of those who refuse the instructions of the apostles? Let us hear it from Jesus Christ. "Amen, I say to you, it shall not be more terrible for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city." This oracle proceeding from a God-man, is sufficient to terrify us. Let those consider it and apply it, who persist with their forefathers in shutting their ears against instructions and rejecting the authority that has a right to instruct them.

I know that, in their defence, they have said that these menaces against the refractory on the one hand, and this absolute and infallible authority on the other must be limited to the persons of the apostles and to the period of their ministry, and not be extended to their successors and to future ages. But that they may no longer attempt to persuade you of this, remark well, I entreat you, the words by which the transmission of these same prerogatives and those same powers, and the perpetuity of them in the church are forcibly declared. In fact, did not Jesus Christ say: "I am with you even to the consummation of the world?" did he not say: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it?" did he not say: "The spirit of truth shall remain with you for ever?" It is the apostles therefore in the first place, and in the succession of ages those who were to succeed them in the plenitude of the priesthood, that he appoints as his ministers, his ambassadors his representatives to continue and consummate his work.

Let us never be afraid to repeat to ourselves; it is glorious, it is profitable to contemplate in its origin the ministry it has pleased our Saviour to create and leave after him: for in this he truly appears as a Sovereign, as a God. He sends the ministers of his word as he had been sent, to whom all power had been given in heaven and on earth. Whither does he send them? To all nations, to every creature shall they bear his word, that is, as he himself explains it, all his commandments; all, without restriction. But will they be heard? There is a command for all the world to receive them, and a prohibition under pain of everlasting and most rigorous torments, for any one whatsoever to despise them. And now, with this strict obligation on our part of submitting to their authority, it was the part of justice that there should not be the possibility of error or of deception to be apprehended from them: and accordingly never will hell be permitted to prevail against their instructions, and the Church which they have to establish; the divine Spirit presides eternally over it, to teach it all truth; and their doctrine, always incorruptible, shall be per-

petuated from age to age with the world for its boundaries and time for its duration. Such is the command and the desire of our Legislator, to whom alone it belonged to command its execution.\*

\* Never was an order so faithfully executed, never were instructions followed by so indefatigable a zeal. At first the Apostles preach in Jerusalem and in Judea. They speak with an authority that imposes and astonishes. Although poor, simple and modest, nothing intimidates them. The spirit, with which they are animated, raises them above human considerations. To the little, to the great, before the people, before magistrates, in the synagogues, and the sanhedrim, they deliver themselves with the same firmness, the same tone of confidence, of superiority, and supreme dominion. Assembled in counsel they hesitate not to pronounce in their own name, and in the name of God. "It hath appeared good to the Holy Ghost and to us." Thus do they write at the head of their decree. From Judea they spread themselves over the world: some proceed straight to the centre of the empire and settle there: others to its principal towns; others penetrate to its utmost extremities some even beyond, and reach as far as India.

Every where do they announce the kingdom of God, every where do they establish the Government that Jesus Christ had traced out for them and which in their turn they again trace out for their disciples with an injunction to transmit it to their successors. The divine master had said to them — "Teach all nations to observe whatsoever I have commanded you," and St. Paul says to the inhabitants of Miletus and Ephesus: "I take you to witness this day, — I have not spared to declare to you all the counsel of God."

He had told them that he should be with them to the end of ages, which necessarily supposes an unbroken chain of successors; and in all places where the word fructifies they establish bishops, "Take heed to the whole flock where in the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God." They confer upon them the powers with which they themselves are invested, with an injunction to transmit them in their turn: "I left thee in Crete — that thou shouldst ordain bishops in every city, as I also appointed thee — a bishop must be without crime."

Jesus Christ had said to them. "As my Father hath sent me so do I send you," and they carry themselves as his ministers; "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ;" and again, "For Christ therefore we are ambassadors, God as it were, exhorting by us." Undoubtedly the ambassador of such a master forcibly felt the dignity of their character & knew how to assume the language belonging to it "These things speak, & exhort & rebuke with all authority Let no man despise thee."

And because authority falls away or obedience ceases, the apostles had been admonished, that they were, in case of refusal and opposition, to shake the dust from off their feet, and that the refractory would be treated more severely than Sodom & Gomorrah. The apostles also warned the faithful of the submission they owed to their bishops: remember your prelates who have spoken the word of God to you: whose faith follow." And you, sir, remember here your supreme governess expelling the bishops who were preaching the word of God, rejecting, instead of following their faith, "Obey your prelates and be subject to them." Call to your mind, moreover your ancestors of 1553, and all those who elsewhere called themselves reformers and reformed.

Jesus Christ had said to his apostles: "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me." And the apostles, sanctioning by the same motive the defence they required of the first faithful to the instructors of their bishops; "He that despiseth (said they) these things despiseth not man, but God, who also hath given his Holy Spirit in us." What a contrast between the submission and respect commanded by the scripture towards bishops, and the insubordination and contempt of the reformers towards one another. We will not here repeat the painful narrative of it — both you and I have but too often heard it. But let us at least learn from scripture, what conduct they ought to have adopted. They should have had recourse to

It seems to me impossible for any one, who is not obstinately blind, not to recognise in the Testament of our Saviour, on the one hand, the establishment of a spiritual authority, always guided by the spirit of truth in every thing pertaining to revelation; and consequently incapable of leading us astray in the doctrine attributed to it; and on the other hand the duty of submission and obedience to the instructions belonging to this authority. We are certain (for it would be blasphemy to doubt that a God-man would fulfil his promise) we are certain that this infallible doctrine, whatever changes take place in the affairs of the world, will never depart from his Church. As to obedience and submission they never will cease to be a duty. But the observation of this, as well as of all other duties, depends upon the free will and liberty of man. What is certain and as clear as the light of the sun, is that all those, who fulfil this duty of obedience to the instructions of the spiritual authority, can never be divided, when once this authority has spoken. What is certain and as clear as the sun, is that by their submission to its word it must necessarily follow that they remain united together in the same Church and the same faith. The authority given by Jesus Christ to his apostles and their successors is therefore the means that he has established, & that we were looking for, to conduct to him, to cement in one body and in one and the same belief, the people of all nations, of all countries and of all ages.

And in fact, that such actually was the intention of our divine Legislator, we learn positively and in distinct terms from the apostle St. Paul. The passage I am going to quote from his epistle to the Ephesians deserves your particular attention. "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ — that henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive." St. Paul, you see, here reveals to us the interior thoughts of Jesus Christ, his wish, his positive intention in giving us his apostles, and after them the bishops, often designated by St. Paul under the name of pastors, doctors, and priests. For what reason did he establish their ministry? To assemble his saints from all parts of the world, and by their union to raise the edifice of his Church and his mystical body. And how long was the ministry of the pastors to be continued? Until all people drawn by their teaching, become members of this great body, and meet successively in the union of faith to the end of the world. Thus the flocking to the same Church, adherence to the same

the successors of Peter, to the successors of the apostles, and to them they should have addressed the same language that Cornelius, his family and his friends, formerly addressed to Peter: "Now therefore, all we are present in thy sight, to hear all things whatsoever are commanded thee by the Lord." This is what the respect enjoined by the scripture commanded them to do: you know what they did do.