

illness is meant, but not necessarily dying.

3. The "anointing with oil" was used as a means for the recovery of the sick person. The Jews practiced it as a medical remedy. The Good Samaritan pours oil and wine into the wounds of the man who fell among thieves. In St. Mark vi. 13, the Apostles "anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." The use of oil was a symbolical act. This was the age of miracles. A supernatural power of healing was entrusted to the assembled "elders" at that time on condition of a certain simple means being used as a symbol, accompanied with prayer offered in faith. "Shall save the sick" applies to the healing of the body, the forgiveness of sins being treated separately. The promise of recovery was unconditional, which shews its miraculous nature. We do not know how long this miraculous gift of healing continued. Gradually all these gifts necessary to attest the divine origin of Christianity faded away.

In the second century Irenæus says "others heal the sick by imposition of hands."

In the third century Origen shows the "fading glories of the age of miracles." "Still," he says, "traces of that Holy Spirit, which was seen in the form of a dove, are retained among Christians; they eject demons, *they perform cures*, and they enjoy visions of things future, according to the will of the Lord."

A hundred years later, Eusebius speaks of them as a thing of the past. The custom of anointing, however, was continued. But no reference to it as a sacramental rite

is found for 900 years. At the Councils of Florence and Trent, 1439 and 1551, the Roman Church enjoined extreme unction as a sacrament instituted by Christ, remitting sins and comforting the sick.

There is no doubt that now the prayer which proceeds from that faith, to which was granted the power of working miracles, will be heard and answered, and sins sincerely repented of will be forgiven. "Such faithful prayers of priests and people shall always be attended with blessing, often if it be God's will with restoration to health; but always, if they be earnest and true, with forgiveness and restoration to God's favour."

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#### NOTES ON THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS.

No. 3.

HERMAS.

HERMAS was a resident of Rome to whom St. Paul sends greeting, (Romans xvi., 14). Tertullian and Origen agree in attributing to him the work called "The Shepherd," *Poimen*. Some persons suppose this to have been written by another Hermas about A. D., 150. It existed for a long time only in a Latin version, but the first part in Greek is to be found at the end of the Codex Sinaiticus." It was never admitted into the Canon of Scripture, but was received with great respect. It treats of angels, prayers, fastings, marriages, &c., and the three orders of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon. What became of Hermas is unknown. He is said to have been made Bishop of Dalmatia.