

blessing also to the soul of him who looked up to God in the time of his necessity, we need not doubt, even though the forgiveness of sins mentioned does not refer to the Unction. The rite, however, though it might also impart such special grace and help as a man requires in sickness, was certainly intended to convey, if God should see fit, bodily healing. The fact that this was the view of the primitive Church, is witnessed to by the writings of the early Fathers. For example, Origen (A.D. 185-254), when speaking of the absolution which is pronounced over a man in the solemn hours of sickness, mentions incidentally that this absolution is given at the time when, according to St. James' injunction, the Unction is to be administered. Origen then evidently looked upon Unction as conveying some other blessing than the forgiveness of sins. The same may be said of St. Chrysostom (born A.D. 347), whose words prove that while the Church of his day practised Unction, the forgiveness of sins was to be attributed to the power of priestly intercession. The act of anointing, therefore, in his eyes, must have been designed to convey some other blessings.

More distinct, however, is the testimony on this point of St. Cyril, of Alexandria (A.D. 376-444), who exhorts the Christians of his day to refrain from resorting to enchanters and magicians in order to regain their health, and to have recourse instead to prayer and the anointing recommended by St. James. Innocent I., Bishop of Rome in 416 A.D., clearly did not suppose the Unction of the Sick conveyed the remission of sins, for he writes, "it is lawful not for the priests only, but for all Christians to use it for anointing in their own need and in the need of members of their household." The Venerable Bede, who died in A.D. 735, also bears witness to the fact that Unction in his time was practised in order that the sick might recover their health. The Unction in Bede's day, according to his statement, was administered not only by presbyters, but by lay people. To this conception of the Unction as a means of restoration to bodily health, all the ancient liturgies and forms of consecrating the holy oil bear witness. In fact it was not till about the beginning of the 9th century that a change came over the mind of the Church in reference to this subject. In A.D. 850, at the Council of Pavia,