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THE  
HOLY SCRIPTURES  
—AND—  
EARLY FATHERS  
VERSUS  
FATHER DAMEN.

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*A Lecture delivered by Rev. Geo. Abbs, in the York  
Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Ottawa,  
on Sabbath evening, Feb. 4th, 1872.*

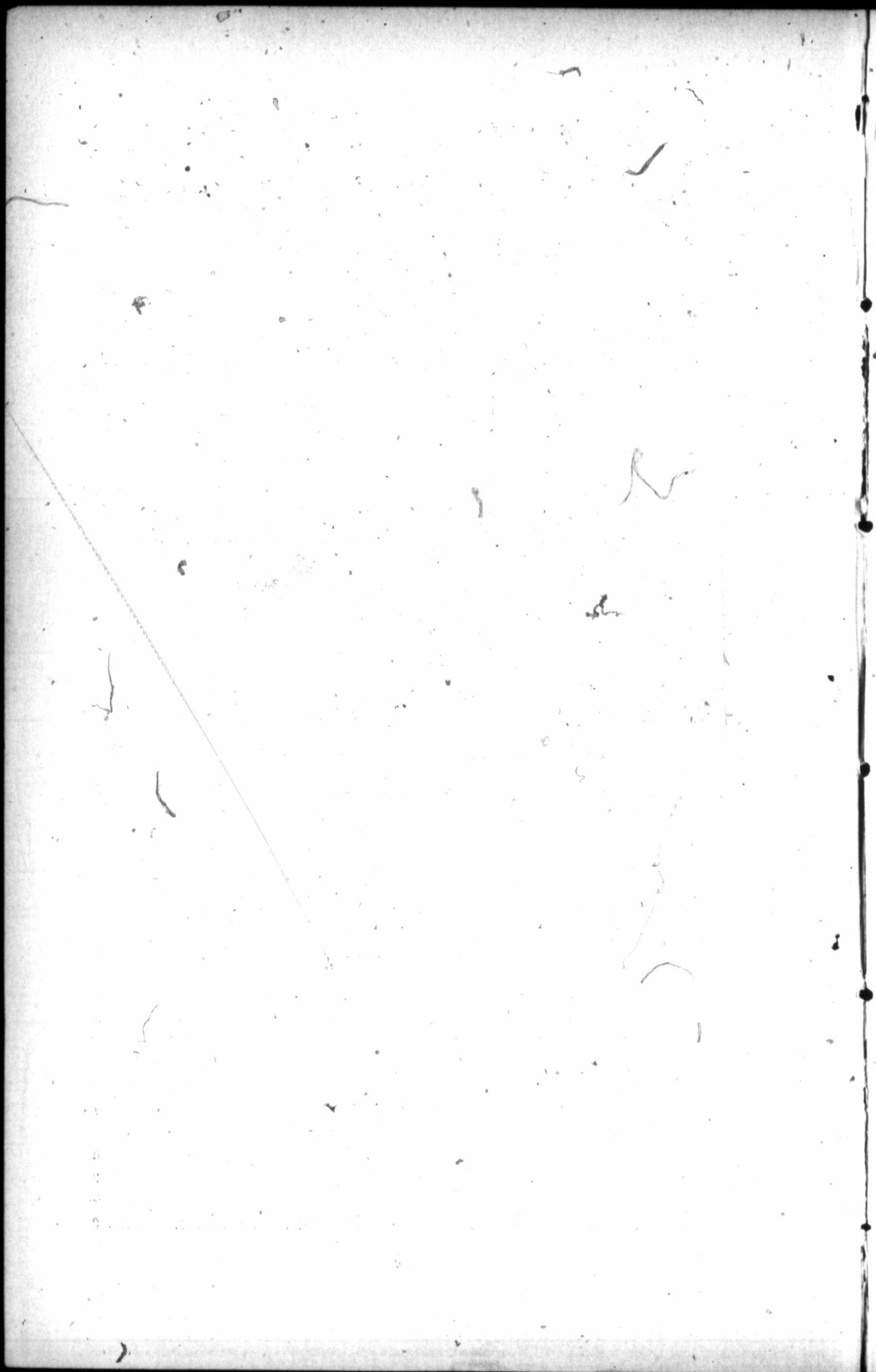
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*John, 5th chapter, 39th verse. Search the Scriptures, for you think in them to have life everlasting; and the same are they that give testimony of me.—(Douay Bible.)*

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,—

It is to be feared that controversial sermons or lectures do not always tend to promote the development of that charity which "thinketh not evil." This, however, depends, to a very great extent, on the spirit by which the speaker and his hearers are influenced. The sacred Scriptures furnish us with numerous examples in which our blessed Saviour and His Divinely inspired Apostles engaged in controversy with the Scribes, Pharisees and others, and in which the most severe and cutting rebukes were administered. Our Lord on one occasion said, when speaking to the classes named above, Matt. XXII c. and 33 v.: "You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell." And the Apostle Paul, when rebuking Elymas the sorcerer for attempting to turn the Roman Proconsul from the faith, said: Acts XIII c. and 10 v.: "O full of all guile, and of all deceit, child of the devil, enemy of all justice, thou ceasest not to pervert the right ways of the Lord." But will any one say that these utterances were not in harmony with the spirit of love?

As I do not profess to be infallible, I have no disposition to usurp the prerogatives of a judge by denouncing and unchristianizing all who may differ from me in opinion. But if, in presenting what I conceive to be the truth as it is in Jesus, the errors of Father Damen and our Roman Catholic friends should be exposed, I hope no one will accuse me of being destitute of the spirit of brotherly kindness and charity. Distasteful as controversy may be, there are times when to shrink from it would show a craven spirit, a spirit utterly at variance with that which should influence every man who has the least regard for the truth. In what we may say to night we do not wish to be charged with an intention to insult or traduce the character of any of our Roman Catholic fellow citizens, for we believe that notwithstanding the errors held and propagated by the Romish Church, she has within her pale many who love our Lord Jesus Christ. But possibly, in defending Protestantism and the Protestant Bible from the attacks made

upon them, we may be regarded as unwarrantably assailing Romanism. The Rev. Jesuit did not hesitate to unchurch and unchristianize all who repudiate the assumptions of the Papacy: We quote his words:—"I have said out of the Catholic Church there is no Divine faith—can be no Divine faith out of that Church." Jesuit like, he carefully avoided the word Roman when speaking of the Church, but notwithstanding this we cannot fail to discover his meaning, for being a priest in connection with the Roman Catholic Church, he unblushingly assumes—nay, states in substance—that outside her pale there is no salvation. But as this arrogant claim of the Papacy has already been so ably handled by Revds. Messrs. Stephenson and Cameron, and as my object this evening is more particularly to present the Holy Scriptures as against Romish traditions, &c., I must defer discussion on that point till some future time.

I wish to state here that I have taken the passage selected for a text, from the Douay version of the Bible, translated from the Latin vulgate, the acknowledged standard in the Romish Church, and unless otherwise stated, all the Scripture passages which may be quoted in support of the views presented, will be taken from the same source. It is presumed that neither Father Damen nor those who follow his teachings will repudiate the authority. I may also have to quote, and somewhat largely, too, from several of the ancient fathers, claimed exclusively by the Church of Rome,—which claim we repudiate; and from a number of her divines, many of them occupying high positions and of acknowledged repute, in support of my premises.

Both Protestants and Romanists agree on this point, that the Holy Scriptures were inspired by God—that holy men of old spoke and wrote as they were influenced by the Holy Spirit, consequently neither, we presume, will question the authority.

The very first principle of Protestantism is that the Bible is the sole fountain from which flows all revealed truth, and that it is a sufficient rule of faith and practice. But our lecturer tells us that the Protestants have not the Bible. Speaking of our version, he says:—"That is no Bible at all, sir; that is only a piece of the Bible, and a mighty bad piece at that. The Catholic says, if we must have a Bible, well, let us have a whole one, and not a piece; a real Bible, a faithful translation of God's Holy Book." Here we join issue and claim that we have the whole Bible, the Bible that was received by the early Church, and it was



only after errors began to creep in that the Apocryphal books were placed in the canon of Scripture, and it remained for the Council of Trent to thunder forth its anathemas against all who should reject them. You will perceive that Father Damen has merely asserted that the Protestant version contains but "a piece of the Bible, and a mighty bad piece at that," without a shadow of proof in favor of his position. We might meet his statement by a simple and unqualified denial, and let the matter drop, but we prefer giving a reason for what may be advanced. The Old Testament has been handed down to us by the Jews, and they never regarded the Apocrypha as canonical. Some of these books were written by learned Jews at Alexandria, after the prophetic spirit had ceased with Malachi. They were written in Greek and not in Hebrew, the ancient sacred language, and their writers did not claim to be inspired. This latter point can be ascertained by examining the books themselves and comparing them with the others. They may, perhaps, be valuable as historical records, but that they are inspired, and were regarded by the Jews or the early Church as worthy of equal reverence with the sacred records, we utterly deny. Speaking of the Jewish canon, Josephus, in his first book against Apion, section 8, says:—"For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another (as the Greeks have), but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times, which are justly believed to be divine." Speaking of the Apocryphal books, he says:—"It is true our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time." Here, then, we have the testimony of the Jewish historian respecting the light in which they viewed the Apocrypha. These books were not added to the Hebrew copies of the Scriptures, but only to the Septuagint or Greek version, made at Alexandria, B. C. 277, by a council of seventy learned men, for the use of the Jews in Egypt, who were accustomed to speak Greek.

Then again, though in numerous instances our blessed Lord and His Apostles, in the New Testament, referred to passages in the canonical books of the Old; yet they never quoted from these uninspired writings which the Church of Rome has seen fit to incorporate with the sacred records, and anathematizes all who do not receive them. The Saviour

never upbraided the Jews for their rejection of these books, but he frequently reproached them for making the Word of God of no effect by their traditions. The canon of both Jews and Protestants, as it regards the Old Testament, is one. In support of this I give the testimony of the celebrated Roman Catholic historian, Dupin, who quotes Jerome on this subject. He says:—"All the books of the Old Testament among the Jews are twenty-two, of which five belong to Moses, eight to the prophets, and nine to the other holy penmen; and we are to take notice, that *whatever* is not contained in the number of those books which we have translated from the Hebrew, is Apocryphal." "Melito, Bishop of Sardis in the second century, gives as the result of careful inquiry, the same books in the Old Testament canon, as we have now, with the exception of Nehemiah, Esther and Lamentations, the first two of which, however, he probably included in Ezra, and the last in Jeremiah." Origen in the third century mentions but twenty-two. In the fourth century we have Saints Athanasius, Hilary, Cyril, of Jerusalem, Cyprian, Gregory of Nazianzen, Eusebius, bishop of Cesaræa and Amphilocheus. In the fifth, Jerome, Epiphanius, and Augustine. In the sixth, Junilius, an African bishop, and some say Isidore, bishop of Seville. In the seventh we have the authority of no less a personage than Pope Gregory the Great himself, and we are informed, on the best authority, that in the Vatican edition of his works, he rejected the Apocrypha from the sacred canon. We might go on to name others, but forbear, until we come to the sixteenth century, when we have the name of the celebrated Cardinal Cajetan, who wrote a commentary on the historical books of the Old Testament, which he dedicated to Pope Clement VIII. In the dedicatory epistle he adopts Jerome's rule respecting the distinction between the Canonical Books and the Apocryphal. We give his words:—"Most Blessed Father,—The universal Latin Church is deeply indebted to St. Jerome, not only on account of his annotations on the Scripture, but also because he distinguished the canonical books from the non-canonical, inasmuch as he thereby freed us from the reproach of the Hebrews, who otherwise might say that we were forging for ourselves books or parts of books belonging to the ancient canon which they never received." And it would be well to remember that this work of the Cardinal's appeared only twelve years before the meeting of the Council of Trent. The Laodicean Council, 363, was the

first to determine the number of canonical books, and it assigns only twenty two, and this decision was received by the whole Church. Dupin, the Roman Catholic historian, says again :—"The first catalogue wherein the books of the Apocrypha were admitted as canonical, and as having the same authority as the Bible, is that of the third Council of Carthage, held in the year 397," and he intimates still further, that they were "received on condition that the Church beyond the sea (Europe) should be consulted for its confirmation." So it appears that for the first four centuries the Apocrypha was rejected by all Christendom, the Council of Carthage deciding for themselves and wishing to consult other Churches on the subject." It must be remembered that the Council of Chalcedon, held A.D. 451, confirmed the canons of the Council of Laodicea. It remained for the packed Council of Trent, at its fourth session, in April, 1546, when only 49—some say 53—bishops were present, to tamper with God's Word by adding contradictory and uninspired records thereto, and hurl its curses for the first time against all who would dare to question its authority. The following is a portion of the decree of the Council :—

"The sacred and holy Ecumenical and General Synod of Trent \* \* \* \* perceiving that this truth and discipline are contained in the written books, and the *unwritten traditions*, which (books and traditions), received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down even unto us, transmitted, as it were, from hand to hand ; (the synod) following the example of the orthodox fathers, receives and venerates with equal piety and reverence all the books of the Old and New Testament—seeing that one God is the author of both—and preserved by a continuous succession in the Church. And it (the Synod) has thought it meet that a catalogue of the sacred books be inserted in this decree, lest doubt arise in any one's mind as to which are received by this Synod." Then follows a list, including those books which Protestants regard as canonical, and also the Apocrypha, such as Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the rest of the Book of Esther, that is from after the third verse of the 10th chapter, to the end of the 16th chapter ; and from and including the 13th and 14th of Daniel (so called), containing the story of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, and the song of the Three Children, and the two Books of Maccabees." After the enumeration of the books, the decree goes on to say :—"But if any one receive

not, as sacred and canonical, these same books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate edition; and knowingly and deliberately despise the traditions aforesaid; let him be anathema," denoting, as Calmet says: "the absolute, irrevocable, and entire separation of a person from the communion of the faithful." That the Council followed the example of the orthodox fathers we utterly deny, for we have shown that the Apocryphal books were not included in the Hebrew sacred Records, that the early fathers did not receive them. But in order to refresh your memories we will name them again: Melito, Origen, Cyprian, Athanasius, Hilary, Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nazianzen, Eusebius, Amphilochius, Epiphanius, Jerome, Augustine, Gregory I., Damascene, Alcuinus, and Nicephorus. These lived between A. D. 177, and 800, and with the exception of Cyril, who is supposed to have admitted Baruch and the Epistles of Jeremiah, all rejected the Apocryphal books, which the Council of Trent embodied in the sacred canon, declaring that they are to be received "with equal piety and reverence" as the other portions of the Bible. This Council evidently framed, in part, a new code, and palmed it off upon the Church as the inspired Word of God, and assumed the prerogative of anathematizing all who would not receive it. We feel perfectly safe, however, as Protestants, in rejecting that which neither Christ, his Apostles, nor the early fathers regarded as authoritative in matters of faith and practice. I leave you, my friends, to judge of the truthfulness of Father Damen's statement, that we "have only a piece of the Bible, and a mighty bad piece at that." We prefer to avoid the calamity threatened by St Paul, Gal. I. and 8th: "But though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema," and the plagues spoken of in Revelation, XXII and 18: "For I testify to every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book: If any man shall add to these things, God shall add unto him the plagues written in this book."

Again, the Papal Church regards tradition, as she calls it, as equal in authority with, if not superior, to the Bible. In the quotation given above from the canons of the Council of Trent, there is reference to "the written books and the unwritten traditions," and all are enforced by the curse thereunto appended, which is still in force, so that all who do not receive the traditions as well as the Bible, are threat-

ened with "absolute, irrevocable, and entire separation from the communion of the faithful." As Protestants, we reject an unwritten word as a rule of faith, and though the demand for the proof of its existence and inspiration has again and again been uttered, it has not been, nor can it be given. If these traditions inculcate anything that differs from that which was taught by Christ and His Apostles, it is the duty of every man to reject them, saying, in the language of the Saviour:—Mark vii 9, "Well, do you make void the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition;" and Matt. xiii 3: "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for your tradition." In support of traditional authority they quote II Thess. ii-14, "Hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by our epistle." In reply to this we quote the words of Dr. Jenkins, in his book entitled *A Protestant's Appeal to the Douay Bible*, "I grant that the Thessalonians were thus taught, and I have no hesitation in declaring my willingness to accept these traditions or deliverances of the Apostle's mouth, if the Church of Rome can produce them, and furnish demonstrative evidence that they are truly what they profess to be." Rome asserts the authoritative nature of tradition, but utterly fails to produce proof, and it is not for us to prove a negative.

In connection with the declaration of the Council of Trent it may be well to quote Roman Catholic authors anent the question under consideration. Take the following from those who favor the dogma: Costerus, a popular writer of his day, says—"The excellency of the unwritten word doth far surpass the Scripture, which the Apostles left us in parchment; the one is written by the finger of God, the other by the pen of the Apostles. The Scripture is a dead letter, written on paper or parchment, which may be razed or wrested at pleasure, but tradition is written in men's hearts, which cannot be altered." With much more of the same sort. Melchoir Canus says—"Many things belong to the doctrine and faith of Christians which are not contained, either plainly or obscurely, in Holy Scripture," and Dominic Banhes says—"All things necessary to salvation have not been committed to the Scriptures." We might continue these quotations but forbear, as the above plainly show the teachings of the Papal hierarchy, and the claims of Rome to dictate to the consciences of men. On the other hand we have the plain and unequivocal declarations of Scripture which have been already



quoted, to which we add: Deuteronomy IV-2. You shall not add to the word that I speak to you, neither shall you take away from it; keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" I may be permitted to say here, that in the earliest ages the Scriptures alone were appealed to for establishing doctrinal points, and when the early christians applied the term tradition to points of doctrine, they expressly referred to the traditions handed down by the Apostles in their writings. In support of this I quote Irenæus A.D. 140. He says: "For we have become acquainted with the dispensation of our salvation through no other men than those through whom the Gospel has come to us; which indeed they then preached, but afterwards, by the will of God, delivered to us in the Scriptures to be the foundation and pillar of our faith." Tertullian. A.D. 194, though he valued usage, custom and tradition, but not authorized by scripture, in arguing with heretics in his day, he demanded Scripture alone as authoritative proof, for he says:—"If it is not written, let them fear the curse allotted to such as add or diminish." And we are informed by Mr. Collette, in his valuable work entitled, "The Novelties of Romanism," that Suicer the noted professor of Greek, whose works are almost indispensable to the study of the Fathers, furnishes examples of the fact that tradition was used as identical with the written Word. At the first general council of Nice A. D. 325. Eusebius, bishop of Cesarea, in the name of the 318 bishops assembled, uttered the following noble testimony in favor of the truth:—"believe the things that are written: the things that are not written neither think upon nor inquire into." Gregory said: "Let a man be persuaded of the truth of that alone which has the seal of the written testimony." Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, A. D. 386, utters the following: "Not even the least of the divine and holy mysteries of the faith ought to be handed down without the divine Scriptures. Do not simply give faith to me while I am speaking these things to you, except you have the proof of what I say from the holy Word. For the security and preservation of our faith are not supported by ingenuity of speech, but by the proofs of the sacred Scriptures." Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, A. D. 412, was more emphatic still, for he said: "It is the part of a devilish spirit to follow the sophisms of human falsehoods, and to think any thing to be divine that is not authorized by the Holy Scriptures."

In view of the foregoing I ask, has Rome sufficient

ground on which to rest the dogma that tradition, as she teaches it, is of equal authority with the divinely inspired Scriptures, or that she is at liberty to hurl her anathemas against those who repudiate it? Evidently neither Christ nor His Apostles gave her this authority; that she does not follow the ancient fathers has been proven by extracts from their own writings, and if the decrees of a council are of any value, the deliverances of the 318 bishops assembled at the Council of Nice are of more value than the decision of the 49 or 53 assembled at Trent when the decree on the Scripture canon was passed. We assert, without fear of successful contradiction, that it was at the council of Trent in 1546, a little over 300 years ago, that oral tradition was declared for the first time to be of equal authority with the Scriptures, and that both were to be received with equal piety and reverence. But according to Cardinal Baronius the Sovereign Pontiff is superior, in the Church militant, to Christ himself, for he says: "It depends upon the mere will and pleasure of the bishop of Rome to have what he lists sacred, or of authority, in the whole Church." But I am glad to acknowledge that all Roman Catholic writers do not make such sweeping declarations as this.

There are other statements made by father Damen in his published lectures which I wish briefly to examine. He says: "Christ never said to His Apostles, go and write Bibles," Again: "Christ sent his Apostles with authority to teach all nations," but he says they, "never thought of writing." We answer they were already in possession of the Old Testament Scriptures, and the numerous references to them in the New, bear testimony to the fact that they employed them in presenting the truth to their hearers. The Apostle Peter in his addresses recorded in the second and third chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, quotes from Joel, one of the prophets, and Deuteronomy, one of the books of Moses, and refers to David, whose history he must have studied. And again in his epistles he quotes Isaiah. Would the Apostle Paul have declared before Festus that he had not offended against the Law of the Jews if he had not been thoroughly acquainted with that Law? Would he have asked Agrippa if he believed the prophets if he himself had not been thoroughly conversant with their writings? We might continue our references, but enough has been said, we think, to convince any candid mind, that the Apostles had access to and were thoroughly acquainted with the Hebrew canon, and with that the Protestant canon



agrees. In speaking on this point we have disproved another of the Rev. Jesuit's assertions, an assertion only, that "none of the Apostles (except St. John) ever read the Bible." But we assert that our Blessed Saviour commissioned the Apostles to *write* as well as preach. In support of this we may observe that in one of his discourses to his chosen ones, recorded John XVI., 7, he said: "It is expedient to you that I go; for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you." Place in connection with this, John XIV., 26: "But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said unto you." Now, Roman Catholics as well as Protestants believe that the Holy Scriptures were divinely inspired; and as Christ declared that He would send them (the Apostles) the Holy Ghost, they were under the direct guidance of the Spirit when they wrote the books attributed to them, and Father Damen has the hardihood to say that they never received this commission from Christ. Was not Paul divinely directed when he desired that his epistle to the Thessalonians should "be read to all the holy brethren?" Did not the Head of the Church direct him when he wrote to the Collossians, and begged they would send the letter to the Laodiceans? We can place no value on the statements of men when they conflict with the written Word, for Isaiah says, VIII, 20: "To the law, rather, and to the testimony. And if they speak not according to this word, they shall not have the morning light."

Father Damen says again:—"The Church of God was established, and went on spreading itself over the whole globe without the Bible for more than three hundred years" Now, we think we have established the fact that the books of the Old Testament existed before the Saviour's time, and the Rev. Father himself admits that St. John completed the New Testament canon "65 years after Christ had left this earth. Yet he says there was no Bible for three hundred years! Nay, "but for 1,400 years the Christian world," (he says) "was left without that sacred Book." There is evidently a contradiction here, but possibly the author of the words quoted meant to make a distinction between a Bible written, on parchment, and a Bible printed. But if so, we characterize such distinctions as trifling and deceptive. We freely admit that before the art of printing was discovered, it required a great length of

time to transcribe a copy of the Scriptures, and such copies were undoubtedly much more scarce and valuable than they have been since the printing press has, thank God, scattered them broadcast over the world. But has it come to this that a Bible inscribed on rolls of parchment is not a Bible because it is not printed? Are not the passages I have selected from the Douay Bible before me, just as much portions of the Word as though I read them from the printed page? Our Jesuit friend tells us that St. Matthew "wrote his Gospel about seven years after Christ left this earth." Was it a part of the Bible, when merely written, or has it been a portion of the Sacred Word only since the discovery of the art of printing? It requires no great grasp of intellect, or logical acumen to answer these questions.

Our venerable friend strongly denounces what he terms private interpretation of the Bible, and tells us to "hear the Church," and intimates in substance, that we are to receive Scripture as interpreted by the (Roman) Catholic Church. Before proceeding any further we will examine the passage from which, "hear the Church" is taken. You will find it in Matt. XVIII., 15 17:— "But if thy brother shall offend against thee, go and rebuke him between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother; and if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand. And if he will not hear them: tell the Church. And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." I have given the whole passage in order that the three words quoted above may be viewed in their proper connection. Now, I cannot see that Rome has here the shadow of a foundation on which to base the assumption to dictate what men shall or shall not believe. The Saviour evidently refers to a case of possible difficulty between two individuals, points out the course to be pursued to effect a reconciliation, and the mode of dealing with the party who will not submit.

On the 12th page of Father Damen's published lecture, on "The Catholic Church the only true Church of God," he says: "The Bible is not the teacher. Good as it is, the Bible, my dear friends, does not explain itself." \* \* \* \* "The Catholic Church says the Bible is the book of God, and that God has appointed an authority to give us the true meaning." Illustrating his subject by referring to supreme courts and supreme judges, he goes on to say:—"So our

Divine Saviour also has established his supreme court, his supreme judge, that is to give us the true meaning of the Scriptures, and that is to give us the true revelation and doctrines of the Word of Jesus. The son of the living God has pledged his word, that that supreme court is infallible."

\*\*\*\* We affirm that the Bible is the only rule and the sufficient rule of faith and practice. Take the following passages in support of the affirmation: "To the Law rather, and to the Testimony, and if they speak not according to this word, they shall not have the morning light. They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. \*\*\* If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead. \*\*\* But though we or an angel from Heaven preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema. \*\* From thy infancy thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which can instruct thee to salvation." If this is true respecting the Old Testament, what may we not say regarding the New? If the Scriptures are sufficient to instruct me to salvation; to teach me my duty to God, my fellow creatures and myself; then I want no other rule of faith. To that sure word of prophecy I desire most firmly to adhere. If the teachings of the Church are in harmony with the divinely inspired Word, it is well, but if otherwise, it is at our peril that we receive them. Many learned and good men have written commentaries on the Bible, which have, without doubt, been of great service and assistance in searching the Scriptures. But whenever we allow the opinions of Henry, Scott, Clark, Wesley or others to become part and parcel of our rule of faith, we leave the munition of rocks. While we adhere to the Word; make that the test and touch-stone of our faith, we occupy ground that is perfectly impregnable.

As Protestants we affirm that every man has the privilege and the right to approach the Bible, the *only* source of revealed truth, himself, and draw freely from its streams. We claim also that every man has the privilege, independently of the Church's interpretations, of ascertaining the meaning of the sacred Word, which he can do by comparing Scripture with Scripture, for the Bible is its own best interpreter, the declaration of Father Damien to the contrary notwithstanding. In support of this we refer to our text. The duty is plainly enjoined, without any caution respecting the danger that might result from private interpretation. Then again, Rom. xv-4: "For

what things soever were written, were written for our learning." St. Paul was not writing merely to the pastor or pastors of the Church, but as he tells us himself, "to all that are at Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints." But he did not say that they could learn only through the interpretation of the Church. Acts xvii-11-12 :—"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, who received the word with all eagerness, daily searching the Scriptures whether these things were so; and many indeed of them believed." Here the inspired writer highly commended the Bereans for their diligence in searching the Scriptures. They wished to be perfectly satisfied that the utterances of the Apostles were true, and they appealed not to tradition; not to the high priest or doctors of the law, but examined for themselves, and as a result many of them believed. We urge this point on the ground of man's individual accountability. We shall not be judged as families, communities, churches, but as individuals. Every man must be responsible for the faithful performance of his own duties, and will be held strictly accountable for his own sins. Two or three passages of Scripture bearing on the point are all that we shall quote, as follows: "Who will render to every man according to his works." "Every one of us shall render account to God for himself." It is evident that if men are led into error by their teachers, these teachers cannot answer for them at the bar of God, but those who have permitted themselves to be led astray by the errors taught will have to bear their own burdens. Father Damen says: "Hear the Church." Joshua, under divine inspiration, cries, "Hear the Word of the Lord your God." Father Damen says, "The Bible is not the teacher." The Head of the Church by St. Paul declares, that "The Scriptures are able to instruct thee to salvation."

The author of the lectures under review-claims that the Church is the infallible guide, that it alone has authority to interpret the Scriptures. I wish to assist him a little, and will give what I presume he will regard as proof in favor of his views. Cardinal Hosius said:—"If any one has the interpretation of the Church of Rome concerning any text of Scripture, although he does not understand how the interpretation suits the text, yet he possesses the identical Word of God." Take the following from the "Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, translated from the authorized Latin, by Charles Seager, M.A., to which is prefixed a preface by the Right Rev. Nicholas Wiseman, D.D.,

London, 1847." He says:—"That we may in all things attain the truth, that we may not err in anything, we ought ever to hold it a fixed principle, that what I see while I believe to be black, if the Hierarchical Church so define it to be." Remember these are the sentiments of Jesuitism, from the pen of its founder, and to this order Father Damen belongs. Can we wonder that he insists on the infallibility of the Church, and that she alone has the right to interpret Scripture? But I have more charity than to believe that our Roman Catholic friends, generally, hold such God dishonouring, soul enthralling sentiments as are embodied in the above extract. In this connection we will just give a specimen or two of the interpretation of Scripture passages (the sense of the Church), and Cardinal Hosius says they are to be received even though we cannot see how the interpretation suits the text. There was an edition of Liguori's "Glories of Mary," published in London in 1852, bearing Dr. Wiseman's sanction and "cordial recommendation to the faithful." In the preface we are told:—"Remember, dear reader, that it (this book) has been strictly examined by the authority which is charged by God himself to instruct you, and that that authority has declared that it contains nothing worthy of censure." The authority referred to is the "Sacred Congregation of Rites," delegated by the "Consistorial Church," which Cardinal Bellarmine tells us is composed of the "Pope and Cardinals." On the 215th page we have the Church's sense of that beautiful and encouraging passage of St. Paul, Heb. IV, (16. "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, &c." It is there said: "Mary (i. e., the Blessed Virgin) is that throne of grace to which the Apostle St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews (IV, 16,) exhorts us to fly with confidence, that we may obtain divine mercy, and all the help we need for our salvation." This interpretation of an infallible Church does not agree with the divinely directed Paul when writing his second Epistle to Timothy, II, 10, for there he says: "salvation is in Christ Jesus." Again, on page 88, "In the first chapter of the book of Genesis, we read that, "God made two great lights; a greater light to rule the day, and a lesser light to rule the night; Gen. 1-10." Then we are informed "that Christ is the greater light to rule the just, and Mary the lesser light to rule sinners." But Pope Gregory IX, in his decretals, has sanctioned another interpretation of this passage. He says:—"God made two great lights in the firmament of heaven, the greater light to rule the day, and



the lesser light to rule the night. For the firmament of the heaven, that is of the universal Church, God made two great lights, that is, he appointed two dignities, which are the pontifical authority and the Kingly power." This exposition was addressed by Pope Innocent III to the emperor of Constantinople, consequently had the sanction of two Popes. Here we have Father Dâmen's infallible Church giving one interpretation and two infallible heads of the same Church giving another. We must enter our protest against such interpretations of Scripture, even though given by those for whom a Jesuit priest claims infallibility, (on what ground, I leave you to judge), for, evidently, the object was to invest the Virgin Mary on the one hand, and the Sovereign Pontiff on the other, with the graces and prerogatives which belong to Christ alone. This is what might be termed, in one sense, private interpretation, against which Father Dâmen speaks so much, for it can be clearly seen that the Scriptures were wrested to support dogmas which find no sanction in the Sacred Records. If men can thus heedlessly or by design pervert and falsify the plain meaning of the Word, do they not expose themselves to the suspicion that the sacred text may have been tampered with in making their translations and so rendered as to favor their arrogant assumptions?

We are accused of falsifying God's word. Were the charge true, it would stamp the translators of our authorized version with eternal infamy. Such an accusation could only be based on one of two things: either that the gentlemen employed in the work were unqualified, or that they designedly and deliberately, gave us a false rendering of the original tongues. With regard to the qualifications of the translators, we may observe that the fifty-four men who were appointed to the important undertaking were distinguished for their profound and extensive learning, and also for their deep piety, and good men would not falsify God's Message to man. The work occupied several years, and when completed was revised by a committee of six of the translators, and finally was carefully and critically reviewed by Bishop Bilson and Doctor Smith. In view of the number of men employed, the profound and extensive character of their learning, the depth of their piety, and the careful and critical scrutiny to which their work was subjected after completion, Dr. Horne, in his "Introduction to the Study of the Bible," justly and truthfully observes:—"Of all modern versions, the present authorized

English translation is, upon the whole, undoubtedly the most accurate and faithful, the translators having seized the very spirit of the sacred writers." We might go on multiplying testimony in favor of the correctness of our version, but lest I should trespass too long upon your time refrain from so doing.

The Rev. Father carefully avoided all reference to the nature of the errors, if they are such, which he says abound in our English Bible. This he knows would have rendered untenable the ground he assumed, and have overthrown his own statements. If he has ever read our version, which is questionable, and compared it with theirs, he could not have failed to discover the very general correspondence between the two ; and if you have read in your Bibles the numerous quotations I have given from the Douay version, you will have arrived at the same conclusion. But while admitting that slight differences between the two translations exist, it does not follow that where ours varies from theirs it is falsely translated. We have good reason for believing the contrary to be the fact. Father Damen claims that the Latin Vulgate is the best translation in existence. Other men whose profound learning cannot be questioned give it a lower place among ancient versions. That during the lapse of ages numerous and grave errors had crept into it, is a fact which is well authenticated, and this led many learned men, at different times, to undertake the work of revising it. One of the most celebrated of these revisions was that of Pope Sixtus V, published at Rome in 1590. This edition contained such a multitude of errors, many of them being of so grave a character, clearly perverting the sense of the inspired word, that it was suppressed by Pope Clement VIII, who published another edition in 1592. The publication of the edition of Sixtus, with its thousands of glaring errors, placed the Papal dignitaries in a most embarrassing predicament. Either this edition must be declared to be the standard, with all its false renderings, or infallibility must be shown to be fallible. Either horn of the dilemma, if the facts became known, would prove fatal to their arrogant assumptions. As stated above, the version of the infallible Sixtus, with its glaring perversions, was, by another infallible, Clement, suppressed. But fortunately for the cause of truth, a number of copies escaped destruction, one of which may be found in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and another in the Royal Library at Cambridge. Dr. James, in a work in which he compares



the two above named editions, says that he noticed 2,000 variations, some of whole verses, and many others contradictory to each other. Yet both editions were declared by Papal Bulls to be authentic, and the least alterations guarded against by threatened excommunication.

The Council of Trent, in 1546, adopted the Latin Vulgate, making it the standard, even exalting it above the inspired Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. We copy a portion of the decree. The Council "doth ordain and declare, that the same old and Vulgate edition which has been approved by its use in the Church for so many ages, shall be held as authentic in all public lectures, disputations, sermons, and expositions; and that no one shall dare or presume to reject it, under any pretence whatever." Here the translation of Jerome was exalted as the standard instead of the original Sacred Records. Many of the most learned Romanists acknowledge that Jerome's translation abounded with errors. Speaking of this the celebrated biblical scholar, Dr. Jahn, says:—"Jerome did not invariably give what he himself believed to be the best translation of the original, but occasionally, as he confesses, followed the Greek translation, although he was aware that they had often erred through negligence \* \* \* and therefore we find that in his commentaries he sometimes corrects his own translation. Sometimes, too, he has substituted a worse instead of the old translation." The same writer, who was a Roman Catholic, still speaking of this old Latin Vulgate, says:—"The universal admission of this version throughout the vast extent of the Latin Church multiplied the copies of it, in the transcription of which it became corrupted with many errors." One more brief extract from Dr. Jahn, who candidly relates the facts respecting the edition of Sixtus and its suppression by Clement. Speaking of the Roman Catholic standard, he makes the following remarkable admission: "The more learned Catholics have never denied the existence of errors in the Vulgate; on the contrary, Isidore Clarius collected *eighty thousand*." Bear in mind the fact, my friends, that the Douay version is a translation from the Latin Vulgate, being translated from a translation which Roman Catholic writers of repute declare abounds with errors; while our English Bible is a translation from the original Hebrew and Greek. I leave you now, my friends, to judge, calmly, candidly and prayerfully, of the points which, in these strictures, have been brought under review, and may the only Head of the Church, our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, lead us into the way of all truth. Amen.