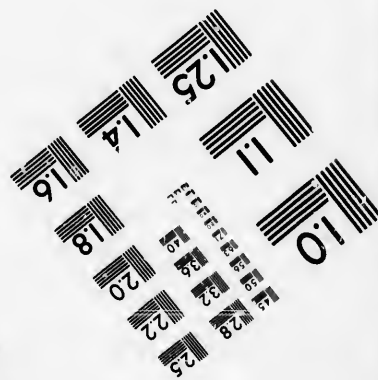
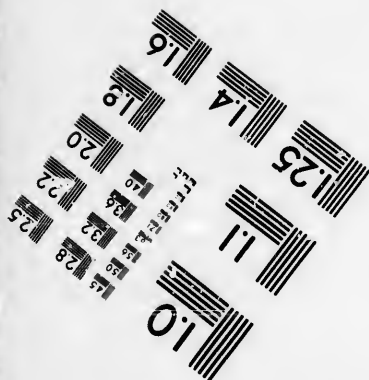
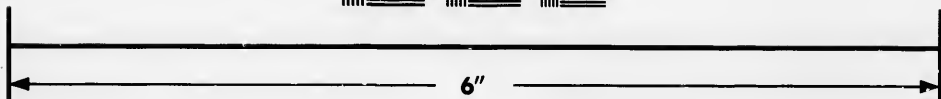
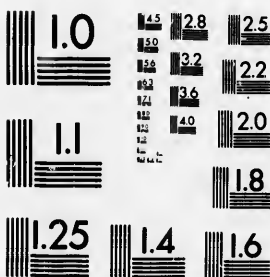


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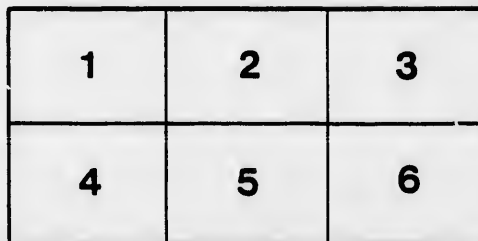
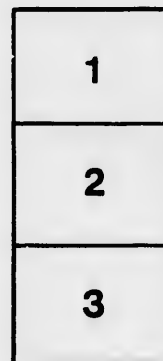
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NOTES OF A CONFERENCE

BETWEEN

TWO MISSIONARIES OF THE REFORMED

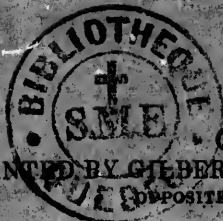
EVANGELICAL CHURCH,

AND

FOUR ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS.

Translated from the French.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to
this word, it is because there is no light in them."—ISAIAH, viii. 20.



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1843.

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Polémique N°2

NOTES OF A CONFERENCE

BETWEEN

TWO MISSIONARIES OF THE REFORMED

EVANGELICAL CHURCH,

AND

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS OF THE TRANSLATOR.

THE reader will easily notice that the representatives of Rome had scarcely anticipated meeting in the persons of the comparatively obscure individuals with whom they condescended to hold this "conference," antagonists so fully equal to the difficult task of answering the abrupt questions, no doubt previously prepared, and through which the wily character of the Papal Priesthood cannot but be observed.—It is admitted on all hands to be much easier to propose questions than to answer them, and in accordance with this maxim, we find the Priests here confining themselves to the performance of the less onerous part of the task, and perhaps it may be fairly assumed they found it much more convenient to preserve a dignified silence than to expose their argument to the risk of conclusive refutation. The written answer which was promised, is as yet prospective and will likely continue so, unless this little publication should attract a greater degree of attention than its adversaries seem to anticipate. Be this as it may, as a brief but excellent compendium on the subjects which it includes, this Pamphlet has seldom been surpassed, and as such merits the serious and prayerful attention of all persons whose object is not so much the conviction that genuine Protestant principles are founded in truth, as the promotion of their own spiritual welfare and that of their fellow men. The Translator adds his fervent prayer to that of the Author, that the reader may be profited and blessed by the perusal of this little tract.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I have been informed it is currently reported, that at the Conference which took place on the 26th April last, the Evangelical Missionaries were silenced in a few words, and had abandoned the discussion, being unable to answer the questions put to them. I do not know from what source these rumours proceed, but cannot more effectually refute them than by placing before the public a report of the whole matter; and I avail myself of the opportunity to state, that I am not anxious to secure public approbation, honor or fame, but the glory of God and the eternal salvation of souls, and to exhibit the truth as contained in the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments, taught by the Prophets, our Lord himself, and his holy Apostles.—I therefore affectionately invite the reader to seek for the divine influence, that his understanding being enlightened by the word of truth, it may be productive of that peace and holiness which are by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access to the throne of the Heavenly Grace, as he has obtained eternal redemption for those who trust in him and keep his word.

Your real Friend,

H. M.

Servant of Christ.

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CONFERENCE

HELD ON THE 26TH APRIL, 1843,

Between TWO MISSIONARIES of the Reformed Evangelical Church, and the REV. MR. MCMAHON, assisted by three other Roman Catholic Priests; in the presence of two Ministers of the Church of England, and a few other persons belonging to both communions.

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The Priest.—What is your Confession of Faith?

Missionaries.—We receive the Apostles', the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds, and generally the whole Word of God, as contained in the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments.

P. That's very meagre.

M. What would you require more?

P. You say you receive the Word of God as your rule of faith, and yet you admit the three Creeds, therefore you receive something else besides the Word of God.

M. If we receive the Creeds, it is because they are conformable to the Word of God.

P. You then reject all creeds and comments?

M. We receive all that accords with the Word of God, and as the three creeds we have admitted are conformable thereto, we receive them upon that ground.

P. There is an article in the Nicene Creed which you admit, to the effect that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. Prove it by the Word of God.

M. This is easily done, for the Bible establishes the doctrine. In the Gospel according to St. John, ch. xv. 26, Jesus Christ says, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify

“ of me ;” and at the xvi. ch. 7th verse, “ For if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart I will send him unto you ;” and again, at the 14th verse, “ He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shew it unto you.” It therefore follows,—1st. That the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father,—2nd. That he proceeds from the Son, as he is sent by the Son, and takes of the things of the Son to make them known.

P. That does not answer the question. It is not said in these passages that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

M. What is said is at least equivalent thereto, for if he proceeds from the Father and is sent by the Son, and takes of the things of the Son to make him known, it is clear that he proceeds from the Father and the Son : nevertheless, to satisfy you, here are passages which speak positively—Romans viii. 9, “ But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. Now, if any man have not *the Spirit of Christ*, he is none of his.” Phil. i. 19 : “ For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer and the supply of *the Spirit of Christ*.” 1st Peter, i. 11 : “ Searching what, or what manner of time *the Spirit of Christ* which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.” In these three passages the Holy Spirit is called the *Spirit of Christ*, therefore he proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father ; that’s very clear, is it not ?

P. In these passages it is not said that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, and you cannot prove it from the Bible ; you are obliged to admit another authority.

M. We perceive what you wish to arrive at ; you wish us to receive tradition, but you will not succeed. Whence proceed traditions ? from men, do they not ? But God has said that men are in darkness, that they are altogether gone astray, that they have altogether become abominable.—Rom. iii. 12. But God is light, and his word is truth. Jesus Christ condemns traditions ; how could we receive them ?

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P. Keep to the question.

M. We have evidently proved from the word of God that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son; it is not in your power to nullify the authority of these passages; they are positive, and sufficient to authorize us to believe that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, without the aid of any false authority; yet we would desire you to state your own views clearly. Do you not believe from these passages that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son?

P. We deny it.

M. Then you are impious and unbelieving persons, and we cannot have any thing more to say to you. (The meeting here indulged in a smile.)

Here also the *Priest* turned the conversation, and proceeded thus: How do you know that the Bible is the Word of God, and consequently the rule of your faith?

M. We prove it from several passages of both the Old and New Testaments.—Deut. vi. 1: “Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you.” Ch. v. 32: “Ye shall observe to do therefore as the Lord your God hath commanded you; ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.” Ch. xi. 18—20: “Therefore ye shall lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes; and ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thine house, and upon thy gates.” Isaiah viii. 20: “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them. 2d Tim., iii. 16, 17.: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” Rom. i. 16.: “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the

“power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” Gal. vi. 16. : “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.”

These passages are definite ; the Word of God is given to us as a law, a rule which we are bound to observe and by which we shall be judged at last, Rom. ii. 16 ; therefore it is the rule of all we are to believe and practice in order to salvation.

P. How do you know that which you hold in your hand to be the true Bible ?

M. We know it to be such because it bears testimony to itself that it is the word of God ; besides we have here the originals and we can verify the texts by the contexts. There is but one law and one testimony to which we are to conform. “To the law and to the testimony : if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”---Isaiah viii. 20. “Search the Scriptures,” said the Saviour, “they are they which testify of me.”---Acts xvii. 11. The Bereans “were more noble than those of Thessalonica,” in that they “searched the Scriptures daily,” to ascertain if what Paul preached was according to them. Human compositions ever deceive, but not so the Bible, for it is the testimony of God.

P. How can you be certain that your Bible is the true Bible and the word of God, as, when Nebuchadnezzar burnt the city and temple of Jerusalem, the Bible was also burnt, and it was only after the return from the captivity that Esdras re-compiled the sacred volume as well as he could ? Later, again, the word of God was destroyed.

M. It is not true that all the copies of the sacred books were destroyed at the burning of the city and temple of Jerusalem ; although some copies may have been burned, it is utterly impossible that they should have been all consumed. I appeal to your own experience ; you know that although you burn all the copies of the Bible that fall into your hands, you cannot destroy them all ; there still remains a large number (thank God !) which escape your vigilance. I say, then, there is no reason to believe that at the carrying away into Assyria of the ten tribes, more than

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130 years anterior to this time, they all removed without carrying with them a single copy of the sacred books.

2. Neither is it credible that Jeremiah, whom the Babylonians respected, should have neglected the preservation of the books of the law and the prophets.

3. Daniel must have had the sacred books, for he learnt by them the number of years which the captivity would last.

4. In the 8th chapter of Nehemiah it is related, that the people requested Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to the people of Israel. It is not said that he was besought to compile it anew.

5. I say it is untrue that Ezra compiled the sacred volume *as well as he could*, because Ezra being inspired by the Holy Ghost, and assisted by certain prophets of that period, Daniel, Haggai, Zachariah and Malachi, compiled in one canon all the sacred books, not according to his own views, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Hence we are not to regard that work as emanating from the hand of Ezra so much as from the invisible agency of the Eternal, who merely employed Ezra as an instrument to communicate his word to his people, pure, and exempt from all human inventions. We therefore find our Lord, about 400 years later, bearing his testimony to these very Scriptures,—commanding that they should be searched, as “they were they which testified of him.” Had they been corrupted, he would not have directed them to be searched; and it is worthy of note, that while reprovng the Jews for their numerous sins, he never charged them with that of corrupting the Scriptures, which he certainly would have done, had they incurred that guilt. It is true, he charged them with making the word of God of none effect by their traditions, but he does not say that they had corrupted either the law or the prophets.

6. It is equally untrue that the sacred books were destroyed a second time, without any copies of them being left. Long before the advent of our Lord, they had been translated into many different languages, and were scattered over many countries. We have seen that after the destruction of Jerusalem the last time, the Jews of Berea examined the

Scriptures; of course they could not have done this had they been all consumed. (Acts xvii. 11.)

P. You receive the whole word of God as your rule of faith?

M. Yes, we have already told you that we receive the whole word of God as the rule, both of our faith and practice.

P. Therefore your rule of faith is incomplete, as many of the books have been lost. In Numb. xxi. 14, the book of the wars of the Lord is spoken of. At Joshua x. 13, the book of Jasher is mentioned. In 2nd Samuel i. 18, of the book of the Acts of Solomon: Several other books are also mentioned, such as those of Nathan the Prophet, of Gad, the Seer of Iddo and of Ahijah. In the New Testament, an epistle to the Laodiceans, and a 3rd to the Corinthians, are named. All these books being lost, your rule of faith is not complete, inasmuch as you have not the whole word of God.

M. Our last answer should have been sufficient, at least with respect to the Old Testament, as we have shewn that Ezra, under the inspiration of God, had collected and united in one canon all the inspired books. I will, however, enter more fully into the subject, in order to answer this objection: and beg to say, that several of the books supposed to have been lost, are not so in reality. It is highly probable that what the Jews say upon the subject is true, namely, that Nathan wrote from the 20th to the 24th Ch. of the 1st Book of Samuel, and that Ahijah, Iddo and the other Prophets wrote the Books of the Kings: and in addition, as it cannot be denied that there were records and chronicles among the Jews embodying at full length the history of that people, with them we are justified in classing these three, namely, the Book of Jasher, that of the wars of the Lord, and that of the Acts of Solomon, which were not inspired and never formed part of the Holy Scriptures.

Respecting the two epistles to the Laodiceans, and to the Corinthians mentioned in the New Testament, I answer, it cannot be proved that they ever existed; that of the Laodiceans, is nothing more than a letter from that church to St.

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Paul which he communicates to the Colossians: that to the Corinthians is altogether supposititious, and what is said at the 5th ch. 9th v. of 1st Cor. refers to the same letter, as will be seen by a careful examination of that passage. On the supposition, however, that one epistle should have been lost (which is not the case) would that be a sufficient reason for rejecting the Word of God or receiving it as subordinate to human reason? Would St. Paul destroy in one of his letters what he establishes in another? God preserve us from so foul an idea; but hear what he says: "though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

P. Why! can the Bible be a rule of faith to those who cannot read it?

M. As by the civil laws of any country the ignorant and the learned are equally bound, in the same manner the law of God applies to all men, rich and poor, bond or free, wise or unwise. To all men it proclaims, they must repent, turn to God with all their heart, forsake their evil ways and follow after holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. You may answer that those who cannot read cannot investigate these matters; this is only true in a very limited sense, for it must ever remain the duty of men to inquire what God has said and commanded, and if this is not done they are guilty of gross neglect, a neglect which proves their aversion to God and his ways. Again, although many persons are incapable of reading, it no more follows that the Word of God is not their rule of faith, than that the eye is not the organ of sight, because many persons are blind.

P. How do you know that you have found out the true sense of the Scriptures?

M. The Word of God itself will again answer you, for it is written—"If our Gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

P. Has not God established a Church?



M. We admit he has.

P. Has not Christ promised to be with his Church even to the end of the world?

M. This has never been denied.

P. Then it follows from these words of Jesus Christ to Peter: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," that He created St. Peter and his successors heads of his Church, against which the gates of hell should never prevail; which Church he has also clothed with power and authority to bind or loose, that is to say, that the Holy Spirit would preside over all her councils and direct all her acts, in so much, that whatever she might do on earth would be ratified in heaven.

M. What do you mean? Do you wish us by this to understand the Church of Rome?

P. No, this is not our meaning; confine yourself to the question.

M. In order to answer, we must know your meaning; Do you mean to establish the supremacy of the Church of Rome, by means of the passage you have quoted?

P. We do: we understand the Church of Rome to be the Church of Christ.

M. And the Popes to be successors of St. Peter?

P. Yes.

M. Matters being distinctly understood I will proceed to refute your pretensions, and will prove by a thesis which I have prepared:—1st. That St. Peter had no superiority over the rest of the Apostles. 2d. That he could not therefore have any such successors as you represent, inasmuch as he himself possessed no pre-eminence. 3d. That the power of the keys, spoken of in this passage, was not given alone to St. Peter, but to all the Disciples of Christ. 4. That this power of the keys does not by any means include that of saving or damning, as such power would be subversive of the designs of the Gospel. I have written

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this thesis because the subject is of great importance, and if necessary, I have no objection to place it before the public, neither do I fear any refutation; hear it with patience, and if you can answer, do so with all freedom.

PRIMACY OF ST. PETER.

Was St. Peter superior to the other Apostles?

Was the power of the keys committed to the Apostles only, or to all the Disciples?

To be argued from Matt. xvi. 18, 19: "And I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

FIRST PART OF THE DECLARATION.

"*Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.*"

Does this part of the declaration attribute to Peter a power which belongs to him alone, and which he does not share with any other? This is a question of fact; it behoves us to examine whether or not the Holy Scriptures confer this privilege upon other individuals. Let us try. Here is a passage which will at once decide the matter—Eph. ii. 20: "And are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." Strange!—here we have several foundations to the Church—various stones on which it is erected; first, Christ, the corner stone, then the Prophets before the Apostles, who, nevertheless, were stones, also;—for an edifice of stone is not raised upon a wooden foundation; then the apostles, then all the faithful, (according to St. Peter, in his 1st Epistle, ii. 5,) are incorporated into the

sacred house, as *living stones*, to become an holy priesthood unto God. Hence, we have stones above, below, and side by side with Peter himself. Is it not so? and the Scripture cannot be shaken. What, then, do we find so particular, so striking or unique in the words addressed to Peter alone, upon this one occasion? Hitherto we have as yet discovered nought; hence it follows, that the pre-eminence of St. Peter, as founded upon these words, is swept away, inasmuch as, anterior to him, the Prophets were foundation stones of the Church, and the Apostles in a degree equal to and contemporary with himself. Perhaps you may say, that notwithstanding all this, the text before us seems to give Peter some speciality above the other Apostles. To this I answer, that even this humble resource falls before the investigation of the remaining part of the passage, as we shall immediately see that a declaration precisely similar to that made here to St. Peter is in two separate instances addressed to all the Disciples, and in a manner equally absolute: I now refer to the power of the keys so called. And if this power is conferred upon the whole Church, after having been in this instance delegated to St. Peter alone, I apprehend it will easily be seen that the exclusive claim set forth in his behalf falls as easily as that to be the only foundation of the Church, which we have proved he shared in common with the Prophets and the other Apostles.

Thus, at the outset, the special superiority of St. Peter is destroyed. It is true he is one of the stones in the foundation; one, and only one. Nevertheless, as it has been deemed important to fortify this feeble pretension of the Church of Rome, by other words or facts recorded in the New Testament, to the end that humble Peter should be exalted to the dignity of Prince, as if "Thou art Peter" signified "Thou art Prince," and to endue him with the supremacy; I willingly pause to examine the passages in question, this being a fitting time and place. It is pompously averred that Peter stands at the head of the list of Apostles; but in good sooth, in every list some one must appear at the top, and it scarcely follows as a necessary conclusion that the

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person who thus stands at the head, is therefore prince or even superior to those who come after. It then rests alone upon your assertion, that in the case of the Apostles he who happened to occupy the head of the list, was for that reason a prince over his colleagues. Yet so you say; but where are your proofs? You offer none: then I repeat, it is a mere assertion, to which I oppose a denial, and say that Peter was no more prince than either you or I.

It is also asserted that St. Peter uniformly appears first in sacred writ. Uniformly? Then it is only necessary to appear first in order to be prince: if so, others of the Apostles were princes too, sometimes. At the famous assembly of the Apostles, designated by you "the first council," Peter neither spoke first nor last. It was only after much debate that he spoke at all; and it was James who finished the discussion. There it was not Peter who either directed or concluded; and this is not very conclusive in your favour—Acts xv. 13–22. And I here take the opportunity of observing, that in the Acts of the Apostles we nowhere read either of going to Rome, of a *Holy Father*, or of appealing to Peter preferably to the rest of the Apostles. So far from this, at the period of which we speak, when the twelve apostles were present in person, the elders were associated with them in their deliberations: and the decree which resulted from this conference, was ratified by the apostles, *elders and brethren*; that is, if we were speaking after a certain fashion, in the names of the Popes, (of Jerusalem however) the curates and the faithful.—Bad Catholics those early Christians.

But to return to St. Peter as at the head of the list of Apostles: He is not invariably so: In Gal. iii. 8, 9, he does not appear first, but James—"And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars," &c. And in the same chapter, Peter is so far from appearing superior to Paul, that when the right hand of fellowship was given to this latter, the duty of so doing was equally divided among all. Nay, so far from Peter having precedence, Paul rebuked him sharply because he had communicated an erroneous impulse to the Church. Where, then, is the Prince—where the Holy Father—where the *tiara*?

But further, it is alleged that Peter is the most forward, and indeed that he appears almost alone in the early days of the Church; thus *he* proposed to replace Judas, *he* pronounced the famous oration on the day of Pentecost; *he*, with John, performed the first miracle of healing; then *he* preaches, *is* imprisoned, *is* delivered by an angel, &c.

Well, what does all this prove, any more than that St. Peter was one of the most distinguished of the Apostles; an honor which has never been denied him. But may not a person be distinguished among his colleagues, without being at once their prince or master? Among you of Rome, Princes ever occupy the mind. Has not Christ said, in Matt. xxiii. 8 and 11—"Neither be ye called Rabbi, nor Father nor Master." But after all, though it may be true that Peter occupies some prominence in the first twelve chapters of the Acts, yet the sixteen following, to the end of that book, are almost exclusively devoted to St. Paul; and from that period, Peter is only mentioned six times more in the New Testament, while Paul appears (perhaps you have never counted,) one hundred and fifty-six times: this is something like prominence indeed.

Can any reason be assigned why St. Peter never assumed the titles which you labour to bestow upon him? He calls himself an Apostle with the rest; and in his 1st Epistle, v. 1,—speaking to the elders of the Church, he says: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder," &c. Substitute, as your church does, the word curate for elder, and in Peter will you have either a Prince or a Pope? And if you should adduce certain cases where Peter appears with peculiar honor, you may also be reminded, that he alone incurred the rebuke—"Get thee behind me, Satan"—Matt. xvi. 23.

If you say that the shadow of Peter healed the sick, we answer, that "handkerchiefs and aprons" which had touched the body of Paul, healed the sick and expelled evil spirits. Acts xix. 12.

If there was an Apostle whom Christ loved and who lay on his bosom, it was not Peter, but John. John xiii. 24. And is it a small thing to be tenderly loved by the Saviour?

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This however *you* do not covet so much as worldly pre-eminence.

Thus, gentlemen, you see that Peter was not so very eminent, so peculiarly distinguished, or so acknowledged a prince among the Apostles, as the Popes wish us to believe, and as it was maintained indeed in a very early age: but the antiquity of any tradition does not diminish its falsity when that falsity is well established. I dare say you will agree with me that the church is pre-eminently founded, not upon Peter, but first upon Christ himself; then upon the prophets; then upon the apostles generally, and if there is among them one more distinguished than the rest, it is St. Paul, who laboured more abundantly than they all. Bear in mind "who laboured more than they all". (1st Cor. xv. 10.)

We have thus examined the first part of the text, so far as the claims put forth on account of St. Peter to supremacy, or the power of the keys, &c., is concerned.

It remains for us now on the second part of the question, to inquire—whether the powers, rights or privileges possessed by St. Peter were hereditary; and if they were intended to descend to others? On the supposition that the words "Thou art Peter," &c., gave him an official position, a rank and particular prerogatives, were these privileges to be transmitted to those that would come after him? Here it appears to me you will have to yield the ground even sooner than in the former case, for in this declaration of Christ, there is not one word which can be made to indicate or even permit such successors. "Thou art Peter." Thou!—How, or in what manner can this be understood to favour your claim? Or what has this to do with any one else in the wide world? If we admit that Peter shared with the other Apostles the honor of being in the foundation of the Church, it is because a positive declaration of Scripture compels the acknowledgment; but what shadow of authority do we find for the establishment of successors? Answer, ye who have succeeded to the Apostleship.

You say that Christ annexes to this declaration a promise for the future, "And upon this rock I will build my Church." Aye, and these very words prove that you are not in the

foundation as St. Peter was, for foundation stones are below, under, at the origin or beginning of an edifice, and are not carried up high as the cupola. If, therefore, you could prove that in other respects you are successors to St. Peter, these words would nullify your claim in this. Neither can you maintain that the Pope is successor to St. Peter in his capacity of Prince of the Apostles, as we have proved that Peter neither possessed, nor exercised the authority, or power belonging to such an exalted position. But, again, (as your arguments are generally susceptible of double refutation,) let us suppose that Peter was Prince, how can you make it apparent that this dignity would be transmitted to others? I'll take the liberty to illustrate the point. When the Emperor of Austria exalted M. de Metternich to the rank of Prince, did it follow that in future every Prime Minister of Austria would take the title? Your notion of hereditary transmission is absurd in all its aspects. You make use of the word, as of a machine which can reproduce its like and be handed from friend to friend; all this excites both wonder and pity. I ask, then, when Christ spoke to Peter, did he address Peter's heirs? did he address you? Answer, Yea, or Nay.

SECOND PART OF THE DECLARATION.

"And the gates of hell (or the invisible place) shall not prevail against it."

I apprehend you will not require any particular arguments upon this portion of the text. It is true it only requires the name of Rome to make it speak all you desire; but that name is left out: and under these circumstances, none ever maintained that hell would prevail against the Church of Jesus Christ. It is sometimes said that Rome alone has maintained an Apostolical succession from the beginning,—this is untrue; we have ever defended the true succession. But it is not true either, that Rome has always claimed pre-eminence; the Apostles did not know such a thing as the supremacy of a See over the rest of the Church; had there existed such a distinction, Jerusalem first and afterward

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Antioch, would have been entitled to the privilege: in addition, it may be remarked, that the first seven Councils were held in the Empire of the East, and presided over by eastern Bishops. Rome was left out of the question, and of course—the Pope. Read and be satisfied.

THIRD PART OF THE DECLARATION.

“ And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Singular thing this favourite passage of the Romish Church! myriads of sincere Roman Catholics have ended their career with the firm conviction that this text conclusively established the pretensions of the Latin Church; and very possibly even you (the Priests) are well pleased to observe my approach to this famous chart of the “rights and privileges of the Holy See” as it is termed, and may inwardly query how this Protestant will conquer the difficulty! *Nous verrons.*

I say then, that the right, power, privilege or commission (or whatever else it may be called) granted here seemingly to St. Peter alone, was upon two separate occasions given to all the disciples of Christ, and to them alone; in proof of which I will adduce stubborn incontrovertible facts.

FIRST INSTANCE.

In the Gospel according to St. John, xx. ch. 19-23, we read that on the evening of the resurrection when “the disciples were assembled” with closed doors “for fear of the Jews, “Jesus came and stood in the midst and saith unto them, “Peace be unto you” “as my Father hath sent me, so send I you; and when he had said this he breathed on them and “saith unto them—Receive ye the Holy Ghost; Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and “whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.”

As it is uniformly admitted that these words are equivalent to those addressed to St. Peter, I will not occupy any

time to prove it: and thus at the outset, my pledge is redeemed, at least as far as the supremacy of the Pope is concerned; but for the sake of argument, let us admit that only the eleven Apostles were present on this occasion; (although it is evident that other disciples were present also) yet it follows that to the eleven were committed the power of the keys; wherefore, then, do you not provide a successor for each of them? why do you not? Answer, if you can, why you have only one Pope?

To meet this terrible difficulty, it is said that the Apostles transmitted the power of the keys to the Clergy alone; or as it is understood, to the Bishops and Elders; and that they all were made subordinate to one directing power, in conformity with the theory, that St. Peter was president of the sacred College. We have already seen that the latter assertion is destitute of even the semblance of proof; and with respect to the authority of the Clergy to forgive sins or to withhold absolution, it is a mere assumption, for which no proof was ever attempted to be furnished; in so much that the only difficulty which presents itself to those who controvert the pretensions of Rome is, that upon this article they have not even the show of false reasoning to combat;—no, Rome does not reason upon the subject, but deems it sufficient to affirm or insist:—it would probably be thought quite enough to oppose a negation to the affirmation. We can, however, do better, and by exhibiting truth in its own light, I will proceed to prove that this power appertains to all believers.

To this end, let us examine who the persons were to whom Christ addressed these words. The proof that they were not spoken to the Apostles alone, is furnished by St. Luke in his 24th chapter, where reference is made to the facts mentioned by St. John. Luke, after having given an account of the resurrection (in which it is related that upon the return of the women from the sepulchre they informed not the apostles alone, but also the disciples who were assembled with them, of all they had seen,) relates the interview with Christ of the two disciples journeying to Emmaus on the same day, and their return to Jerusalem the same

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evening, and consequently the very evening spoken of by St. John. Upon the arrival of the two disciples, what company did they meet? Luke answers, at the 33d verse, they found the eleven and "them that were with them." And as they conferred together, "Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

You see, then, gentlemen, that this was the same apparition, the same session, the same salutation, the same company of which St. John speaks. And from St. John xx. 19-21, we learn that upon *all* present Christ breathed the Holy Ghost, and upon *all* he bestowed the power or rather committed the function of retaining or remitting sins. If this is true, Peter alone was not endued with this power, nor the Apostles exclusively; hence, not to Priests or Bishops, but to the Disciples, to the faithful, to all Christians, and to Christians alone, is granted the power of the keys. Will you attempt to deny this? Read and be convinced.

This matter deserves to be treated more at length, but I'll pass to the second instance, by which I shall prove that this function is still committed to all believers.

SECOND INSTANCE.

If at the outset I assert that the position is more easily sustained than even the preceding, I do so because neither Peter, nor the Apostles, nor the clergy, are so much as indicated by the name of their office.

It is recorded in Matt. xviii. 15-18, that upon a certain day our Lord said to his disciples: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. But if he will not hear thee, *then* take with thee one or two more,—and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican;" then our Saviour adds, "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

You will please observe, that we have the very language

addressed to Peter, word for word; and I might content myself with repeating what I have asserted a little before. However, let us again suppose that Christ here addressed the eleven only, and of necessity they are invested with the power of the keys. I therefore ask anew, why do you not allow a specific successor to each as you do to St. Peter? Why? You are silent! Then Peter alone is not endowed with the power. But you will soon be either convinced or confounded by the accumulation of evidence. In effect, the proof that the Saviour had in view believers generally, and of all ages, abounds to redundancy; the general application of the rule laid down, the nature of the case contemplated, prove to a demonstration that our Lord did not merely provide for possible misunderstandings among his twelve Apostles: and to cut the matter short, the Church of Rome itself has ever proclaimed the declaration as indicating *the Church*, hence the frequent repetition, "*he that will not hear the Church let him be as a heathen man and a publican.*" Here for once Rome is orthodox; *only* the authority is wrested from the Church to be vested in the dignitaries thereof;—this is the great point of difference.

By what authority has this change been effected? Why is the Church thus confounded with its conductors? If a member is injured he is directed to go to the offending party alone,—if unsuccessful, the next step is to go accompanied by two brethren,—if this fails, then he brings the case before the church, (the assembly of believers) but what church? The Roman Catholic Church, spread over the whole world? Priests, Bishops and Doctors, Archbishops and Popes; before God I demand an answer of your consciences! To what church can he submit his misunderstanding with a brother member, if an appeal to such a tribunal be impracticable, and if he cannot succeed in a private and amicable way? I must confine your attention to the case; the question is of immense importance, and I beg you will not evade it. You dare not answer that he is bound to carry his complaint before an Œcumenical Council or any other Council. Again, what is meant by the church in the passage? Since a church is mentioned, of necessity it must

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be a particular flock ; it is so evident that our Saviour intends by each successive instance to increase the number of arbiters or judges, as to require no argumentation, for in no one place in the Bible where the word *church* occurs can it be understood to mean the conductors only, much less an individual priest.—Then we arrive at this conclusion, that to each flock or re-union of true believers, the declaration is addressed ; and that their conciliatory counsel and advice, their sentence or acts, offered and performed in the presence of God and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, would be sanctioned in heaven, conformably to the words, “ Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Such is the truth. I then ask, where is Peter ? where the Pope ? and what becomes of the pretensions of your clergy ?

Such is the truth—now for the *untruth*.—So far from resting in the sense of the passage before us, (for the view we have of it is not even an interpretation, but the simple and obvious meaning ;) what did the priests do ? It is of no moment when they began ; for we find that even in the days of the Apostles, the enemy had begun to sow his tares :—Arbitrarily, and without shadow of proof, nay, contrary to all evidence, as we see, they laid violent hands upon the keys originally confided to all the disciples ; very conveniently for their purpose, they invested some few hundred ecclesiastics with the title of “ the Church of Christ,” many of whom were not so much as his disciples ; then, to crown this mass of absurdities, they attributed to themselves the promise of a divine sanction ; which promise is only made to believers engaged in the arrangement of differences between brethren ! Of course they argued *à fortiori*, if a particular church can settle a difference of this kind, the conductors of the universal church will be able infallibly to decide doctrinal points ! If a man can build a cabin, *ergo* he is able to erect a mountain. Or to state the case without metaphor : if a certain number of Christ’s disciples are authorized to judge of a misunderstanding between two brethren, three or four priests, converted or not, as it may

be, must possess the power to propound to the world what it should believe ; and in conclusion, eternally to save or damn by a simple volition of their will.

Thus do we wade in absurdities ; and where, in the Scriptures a particular flock is contemplated, or a difference between friends or brethren, the priests discover the church universal, then without observable transition pass on to its dignitaries, ranging them at the next step under one supreme head ; invent new dogmas, and finally enrobe the church with infallibility in spiritual matters ; while at the same time it is notorious, that many of the integral parts of this whole are men "sold under sin," who, as in the case of the Council of Ephesus in the year 449, concluded their session with a bludgeon fight, and earned for themselves the distinction of the Council of Brigands!! Or, to survey the matter under another aspect, we have an Italian Priest, M. Capellari, letting loose upon Switzerland and France, five hundred thousand fanatics, to destroy the inhabitants by fire and sword, because they refused to invoke the Virgin Mary, or to embrace other like superstitions ; and all this, in virtue of the passage which promises to the flock of Christ, that they would be guided in all their ways as long as they continued his faithful and devoted followers.

What monstrous fictions ! what a mass of folly ! how brazen the face and how stupid must be the heart which can believe and advocate them !

We have thus disposed of the power of the keys, by proving that in the three declarations of our Lord, one to St. Peter, and two to the other disciples, he never conferred upon men the power either to save or ruin their fellow men eternally, much less the special power in behalf of the few, claimed by the Church of Rome.

Whenever the Saviour spoke concerning his disciples, he did so in the same noble and impressive manner as of any part of his atoning work ; of the real christian, he entertained the idea which is carried out through the whole New Testament, (1st John, iii. 6-9,) "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." 1st John, i. 6, 7 : "We walk in the light as He is in the light : " he "seeks the

“ things that are above and not the things that are on the earth ;” he is crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to him. To such an one “ all things are become new ;” and “ his conversation is in heaven.”

The Apostle St. Peter, whom you have endeavoured to make the support of sacerdotal power in the church, exhibits to our view the assembly of believers as “ a royal priesthood” whose province is, fully to show forth “ the praise of Him who hath called them out of darkness unto his marvellous light.” 1st Peter, ii. 9. Jesus Christ the *Lord* of the Church, so far from establishing over it a dominant priesthood, said to his disciples, Matt. xx. 26, “ But it shall not be so among you ; but whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister.” Yea, and such is the tenor of the whole New Testament.

Is there, then, any thing singular in the passages we have examined, since our Lord has promised the Holy Spirit not only to the apostles, but to all the disciples likewise ? Are not the disciples to be the salt of the earth ? Matt. v. 13. Are they not to be the light of the world, shining to all around, and “ carrying the word of life ?” Phil. ii. 15. When the Holy Spirit was copiously effused, the Apostles did not *alone* partake of the benefit ; when Peter addressed Cornelius and his family, the same Spirit was given to *all* that heard him : Acts, 10th chap. And even while the Saviour sojourned personally among men, he promised the Spirit to *all* who should believe in him : John, viii. 32.

So far, then, from being like a stupid flock under abject subjection to their spiritual instructors, all true believers, in common with their shepherds, constitute an army of preachers, and with them are the guides and pastors of the world !

Such is the promise of Christ to his own, or rather such are the declarations addressed to them in a multiplicity of cases, and particularly, as we have already noticed, in the 20th chap. of John. Read that portion over again, and you will find nothing more nor less than this great and holy commission : for in effect it is more a commission than a privilege or a power, which by this famous declaration is en-

trusted to them: Go! said He, go and declare what you have heard, seen and felt "of the word of life!" Proclaim in my name salvation and forgiveness to every creature: say to every soul of man, that "he that believeth on the Son hath life," but "that the wrath of God abideth" on the disobedient: John, iii. 36. "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words—shake off the dust of your feet as a testimony against them:" Matt. 10th chap. In my name preach repentance and the remission of sins: Luke xxiv. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned:" Mark, xvi. 16.

Now hear the Apostles, and learn how *they* pardoned or retained sins:—"Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost:" Acts, ii. 38. "Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out:" Acts, iii. 19. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved:" Acts, xvi. 31. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,"—and God "hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation:" 2d Cor. v. 19-21. "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save, and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" James iv. 12.

After the reading of this discourse, the Priests said they had sick people to visit, and could not stay any longer; that they would answer in writing, if I furnished them a copy. I await their answer, and pray God to shed his blessing upon this little tract, and to grant to those who may answer it, the light of his Holy Spirit, to enable them impartially to examine the Scriptures, and to act as in the immediate presence of Him who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men.

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The written answer promised by the opponents of Mr. Morell, has, as far as the dialogue is concerned, made its appearance in the *Canadien*: the Rev. Mr. M'Mahon also promises, when health and leisure permit, to review the Thesis on the Supremacy of St. Peter and the Church of Rome.

We are credibly informed, that the version given by the Reverend gentleman differs, both in its matter and extent, from the verbal arguments advanced by him at the Conference. Mr. Morell is engaged in preparing a refutation of it, and we very much undervalue the reasoning of his adversary, if he does not succeed in setting it aside. Those who have read or heard the report given in the *Canadien*, will be surprised, after the perusal of this pamphlet, at the singular mis-statements published about it in that paper. But so it has ever been with the infallible Church.

