LITERATURE.

THE JEWISH PILGRIM.

Beneath a blasted sycamore
An aged Jewish pilgrim stood,
And gazed on Jordan's sacred shore,
And Galilee's time-honoured flood.

Long had he roamed in Gentile lands,
And oft his burning heart was torn
By base reproach from Paynim hands,
Who treated Israel's race with scorn.

With patience firm and soul resign'd,
He bore the heathen's insults keen,
While still he hoped with ardent mind
To stray on Judah's mountains green.

He longed to view those beauteous bowers,
Where bloomed the pomegranate and vine,
And gaze upon the tombs, the towers,
And hallowed scenes of Palestine.

Oh! what emotions fired his breast,
When he beheld that famous land,
Which Abram's God with bounty blest,
And honoured high by wonders grand.

But when he thought with patriot pride,
On David's harp and David's spear,
And saw the desolation wide,
Unconscious fell the trickling tear.

For ah! that fair and fertile clime
Lay blighted with a curse malign;
While distant seemed the promised time
To raise up Zion's ruined shrine.

There loud he mourned in deep dismay,
His country's shame and sad disgrace;
For God had Salem left a prey
To those who scoffed at Jacob's race.

Thus while he looked on hill and vale,
On towns and towers of honoured name,
A robber marked the pilgrim pale,
And struck him with unerring aim.

Beneath the sycamore he fell,
His blood bedewed the sacred sod;
When wilt thou proud oppression quell,
And Israel's bondage break, O God!

Puseyism, or the Oxford Tractarian School.

(FROM THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.)

[*Continued.*]

Such mysteries as these, if received at all, must be received just in the same manner, and for similar reasons, with the doctrine of Transubstantiation; and we cannot wonder that those who have no scruple in receiving the one, should adopt views indefinitely near the other. In both cases we are called upon to believe that a stupendous change has, in millions of instances, been effected without any evidence that there has been any, or rather with all the evidence that our nature is susceptible of, that there has been none. In Transubstantiation, we are commanded to believe that a great *physical* change has been wrought, of which our senses give us no information; and, in baptismal regeneration, that a great *spiritual* change has been wrought, of which both consciousness and experience give us just as little.

But, as we said of Apostolical succession, so we may say of the "sacramental doctrine" connected with it, that no *mere arguments* can be more conclusive against it, than the feeling that it shocks the spirit of the whole Christian institute.

3. But perhaps this consciousness is more strongly felt in relation to the views held by this School respecting the Church than in relation to any other subject. According to these men, the Church of Christ is VISIBLE and ONE; and as the Church can exist only where "the gospel is truly preached, and its ordinances are duly administered," while these are exclusively and inseparably connected with an episcopally-ordained clergy; they deny the name and privileges of the Church to every community, in which such a ministry is not found, and as freely concede them wherever it is.* Apparently, scarcely any pravity of doctrine, any flagitiousness of practice, is sufficient to annul this title where these channels of preternatural grace are found—*no* purity of doctrine, *no* blamelessness of conduct, can justify its application to a community in which they are not found. But as this Church is also ONE, it might be supposed an insuperable objection to the Romish, Greek, and English Churches—which are acknowledged to be "branches" of the *true* Church, but which all exist in a state of professed separation from one another, nay, which have reciprocally anathematized one another—must be proved to be ONE. One would imagine that UNITY in any community must imply unity of government and jurisdiction; intercommunion with its members, or at the very least, perfectly friendly relations between its several "branches." And so Mr. Gladstone seems at first to admit; but he afterwards discovers, when it is convenient to discover it, that union in the Church by no means requires as one of its essential conditions, "the consciousness (?) and actual or *possible* communication of the persons united."

It would sadly perplex any ordinary understanding to comprehend how communities can be one which are not only hostile, but mutually excommunicate. If unity may still be preserved in such a case, it would really seem that there *might* be devised some reasonable way in which Episcopalians and Presbyterians might be regarded as *one*. An unsophisticated mind would imagine, that if unity is not impossible amongst those who respectively acknowledge the Thirty-nine Articles and the Tridentine Decrees, it should be not altogether impossible for those who acknowledge the Thirty-nine Articles and the Confession of Faith, to find one Church large enough to hold both. But such a man would only show his ignorance of theology. The terms of communion must be wide enough to embrace the whole Churches of Greece and Rome, for they have the Apostolical succession; but not a single Lutheran or Presbyterian community, for they have it not.

Hence the fraternal yearnings of our Anglicans towards the Greek and Romish Churches. Hence the language recently quoted, "that it is evident at first sight that there is much grace and many high gifts" in each of these communions—hence the declaration, equally arrogant and insulting, cited in the preceding note from the Oxford Tracts—hence the lamentations over the Reformation as an untoward event, and all but "a fearful judgment"*—hence their eagerness to show, though at the peril of exposing their own Church to the charge of having been guilty of a detestable schism, that the differences between England and Rome are far from being so momentous as those between Anglicans and other Protestants—hence it is that we see them stretching themselves half over the gulf which separates them from Popery, to the infinite hazard of toppling into it, for the purpose of touching only the tips of the fingers of their new friends and allies. But it will not do; so long as the *separation* itself is continued, their argument will all be futile. Either that separation was justifiable or not; if it was, then are the Churches of Rome and England two communities, not one—and Rome heretical; if not, still they are two communities, and not one—and that of England schismatical. If the latter be the fact, let those who maintain these views act like men of sense and honor—return to the bosom of the Romish Church, and not only subscribe, but carry out, the following declaration of the editors of the *Ecclesiastical Almanac* for the present year: "It is by the constant action of this principle, as upon our theological opinions so upon our RITUAL and CEREMONIAL, and indeed upon every branch of our religious life, that we may hope to prepare ourselves for that *union* for which we sigh, and which we are so far privileged as to be permitted to hope for, and even to begin to look forward to. For THIS who would not pray and labour as for an *end*, before which all other objects of desire sink into infinite insignificance? For these poor pages, at least, the motto has long been chosen, and must be year by year repeated. God grant it may ever be its sole aim TO HASTEN THAT UNION, AND RENDER OURSELVES WORTHY OF ENTERING INTO IT."†

Meantime, is it not wonderful that those who are astute enough to discover that the Romish, Greek, and English Churches all form constituent parts of *One Visible Church*, merely in virtue of holding Apostolic succession and kindred Church principles, should not recoil at the bigotry of *unchurching* all the Reformed Churches of the Continent—the Church of Scotland, and the communities of dissenting Protestants! But here, again, the Oxford men are but carrying out their views consistently, however absurdly. The Bishop of London, indeed, naturally shocked at the uncharitableness of the above views, has, in his "Three Sermons on the Church." entered his protest against them. We only regret that he has protested on principles which, whatever respect we may feel for his charity, leave us little room to congratulate him either on his consistency or his logic. It is hopeless to contend against the Oxford men on the principles which his Lordship has laid down. He does not escape from one of the real difficulties in which the hypothesis of Church principles involves him, and is, in effect equally uncharitable. For how does this Prelate argue? He affirms that *ordinarily*, Episcopacy, and an Episcopally-ordained ministry, are as essential to the constitution of a true Church; but hesitating at the thought of consigning all the foreign Reformed Churches to "the covenanted mercies of God," as no part of the true Church of Christ, he frames them for a special exception, on the ground that their *individual members* have no choice, (there being no Episcopal Church to which they can join themselves;) while he consigns the Dissenting communities at home to the said "uncovenanted mercies," or to no mercies at all, (as the case may be,) because it is their duty to join the Church of England. How they can do so, if they conscientiously believe they *ought* not; and whether his Lordship, in saying they can and ought, be not constituting himself a judge of conscience, it may be wise in him to consider. But let that pass. It is plain, that on his Lordship's principles the foreign Reformed Churches are no true Churches; for though it is true that *individual members* of those Churches may not have had an opportunity of availing themselves of the inestimable advantages of "apostolical succession;" the churches themselves (of which, and of which alone, his Lordship is professedly speaking,) considered as entire communities, *have* had the opportunity any time within the last three centuries. They are, therefore, as communities, no true Churches, however charitably his Lordship may be disposed "to hope" respecting individual members. But we will further try his Lordship's test by an additional instance, which he has done wisely to keep out of sight, although it lay at his very door. We ask, "Is the Church of Scotland a true Church?" If his Lordship answer in the affirmative, it must be for *some* reason: it cannot be because she embraces Episcopacy, for she repudiates it; it cannot be because she could not have effected re-union with the Episcopal Church, had she been so pleased;—nay, she has not only had Episcopacy offered, but thrust upon her, and has, doubtless, deeply sinned in wilfully rejecting it. It can then only be on the ground of her being established. But then a totally different criterion of a true Church is at once admitted; will his Lordship affirm that every Church *established* is a true Church? If, on the other hand, he says that the Scottish Church is *not* a true Church, then, for aught we can see, he may just as well go the whole length of his censured, but more consistent brethren of Oxford. We will submit another case to his Lordship, still near home. Let us cross the Irish Channel. Is the Romish Church there a true Church, and entitled to the allegiance of the people?—if not, it appears that it is possible that the criterion of an Episcopal ministry may fail; if it be, then it is at least as much entitled to a rightful obedience as the Anglican Church. If his Lordship says, No, because it is not *established*, he again introduces a criterion of a true Church inconsistent with his theory. Such are the inconsistencies in which this Prelate is involved We thank him for his charity; but we cannot be content to hoodwink ourselves to palpable absurdities and inconsistencies, even in order to be charitable; and can only regret that he did not "find out a more excellent way" of rebuking that bigotry at which he is naturally shocked, and which we once more say, is a stronger argument against the errors of the Oxford school than any, or all besides. God forbid that we should deny the member of any community—Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Independent, who holds the essential doctrines of Christianity, and is manifestly animated by its spirit—to be a member of the true Church! We feel that whom we dare not deny to be a "Christian," we dare not deny to be a member of Christ's Church. We feel that the saying of Robert Hall commends itself at once to common sense, to the highest reason, and to the noblest instincts of our moral nature—"he who is good enough for Christ, is good enough for me."

Views so extraordinary as those on which we have commented—so unsupported by reason, and so destructive to charity—ought surely to be authenticated by the clearest utterances of Revelation. Even then, it may perhaps be said that their reception would present greater difficulties than ever yet troubled an infidel; but strange to say, it is admitted by their very advocates, that one of the greatest difficulties connected with these doctrines is the *primâ facie* evidence of Scripture against them; that they are not at all events on the *surface* nor explicitly stated, but are to be *developed* out of mysterious hints, and ambiguous whispers.* Further, the very *texts* on which they exhaust every art of exegetical torture to make them speak their mind sound, when thus interpreted, so cold, constrained, and frigid, that they acknowledge, again and again, that these doctrines cannot be established by Scripture alone; and they therefore discreetly call in the authoritative voice of tradition.

4. It is, then, a further dogma of this School, that the Scriptures are *not* the sole, or a perfect rule of faith; that they are to be *supplemented* by tradition; that they furnish at best but the germ of an imperfectly developed Christianity—which is to be found full blown and perfect somewhere, (no one can tell where,) in the third, or fourth, or fifth, or sixth century, or some century still later; and that the Fathers have much to tell us of undoubted apostolical authority, which the Apostles themselves have failed to tell.

Infinite are the disputes which such a theory instantly gives rise to. In essence and principle it in nowise differs from that of Rome, (for it affirms both a *written* and an *unwritten word*;) it differs only in the pleasant and gratuitously perplexing addition, that it is impossible to assign the period within which the circle of Catholic verities may be supposed complete—the period when the slowly developed church-system became ripe, but had not yet become rotten. The unity of faith which is thus sought, is farther off than ever; for the materials of discord are enlarged a thousand-fold.

1. There is the dispute as to whether there be any such authoritative rule of faith at all; and this alone promises to be an endless controversy.

2. Even if we were to admit the possible existence of such a rule, the uncertainty in its application would preclude the possibility of its being of any use.

3. Even if men in general are told that they need not enquire for themselves, but just receive what their "authorised guides" choose to tell them, private judgment is still pressed with insuperable difficulties; for alas, we find that the "authorised guides" themselves, in the exercise of *their* private judgment, have arrived at very different conclusions as to what is Catholic verity, and what is not. It is very easy for Mr. Newman to talk in magniloquent phrase of that much abused abstraction, the "Church;" and to represent his system of "Church principles" as one and complete in every age. But when we enquire *which* is that Church, *what* are the doctrines it has delivered as the complete circle of verity, and who are its infallible interpreters, we find those whom these authorised guides proclaim *equally* authorised, at endless variance;—Romanists, Greeks, and Anglicans, differing in judgment from each other and from themselves. In a word, we find the "Church" is just Mr. Newman or Dr. Pusey—not unbecomingly disguised in the habiliments of a somewhat antiquated lady, and uttering their "private judgments" as veritable oracles. What can one of these "guides" say to "a brother guide," who declares, "I adopt your principles, and it appears to me and many others, that on the same grounds on which you contend for the apostolical succession—that is, on the authority of the ancient Church—I must contend for the celibacy of the clergy? Or to another who declares, "on our common principles I think there is good reason to admit the invocation of saints, the worship of images, the doctrine of the efficacy of holy relics, the monastic institute, to be of apostolical origin? Or to another, "it appears to me that the doctrine of purgatory is but a *development* of the doctrine which justifies prayers for the dead? Or to another, "you will not go beyond such and such a century in determining your Catholic orthodoxy; I think the limit ought to be fixed a century later, or two centuries, or three?" What can he reply? He may perhaps say, "*We* can show when your doctrines came in." "Ah!" he replies, so it appears to *you*; but it appears to *me*, that on the same principles another person may show when *your* favorite doctrines came in; for I do nothing more than adopt your principles of "expansion" and "development" of improving "hints," of harmonising apparent contradictions, and so on; and my doctrines are thus brought out as clearly as those for which you contend. There is no greater apparent discrepancy between my favorite doctrine and those of the Fathers of the third century, than there is between those you extract from the Fathers of the third century and the Scriptures." "But *we* decide otherwise." "But who are WE?" is the instant and scornful reply.

Such is, in fact, the inevitable course which the controversy is taking; till at last thousands of Anglicans are contending for the system of the fourth or fifth century, and even there feel that their footing is insecure.

This variety of result is inevitable. 1. The very elements from which this Catholic system of theology is to be collected,

---

* "Do we not hover about our ancient home, the home of Cyprian and Athanasius, without the heart to take up our abode in it, yet afraid to quit the sight of it; boasting of our Episcopacy, yet unwilling to condemn separatism; claiming a descent from the Apostles, yet doubting of the gifts at tending it; and *trying to extend the limits of the Church for the admission of Wesleyans and Presbyterians*, while we profess to be exclusively primitive? Alas, is not this to witness against ourselves like coward sinners, who hope to *serve the world* without giving up God's service?"—"Whatever be our *private differences* with the Roman Catholics, we may join with them in condemning Socinians, *Baptists, Independents, Quakers, and the like.* But *God forbid* that we should ally ourselves with the offspring of heresy and schism, in our contest with any branches of the Holy Church which maintain *the foundation*, whatever may be their *incidental corruptions!*"—(*Oxford Tracts*, vol. II.; *Records of the Church*, No. XXV. pp. 3, 8, 9.)

* *British Critic*, No. 59, p. 1.—"We *trust*, of course, that active and visible union with the see of Rome is not of the essence of a Church; at the same time we are deeply conscious that in lacking it, far from asserting a right, we forego a great privilege. Rome has imperishable claims on our gratitude, and, were it not so ordered, for our deference ..., for her sins, and our own, we are estranged from her in presence, not in heart."—*Ibid*, p. 3.

† *Ecclesiastical Almanac*, 1843, p. 5.

* No. 85, *passim*.

are in a great degree doubtful;—intermixed with forgeries; disfigured by interpolations, erasures, mutilations; so that it has transcended all mortal skill to settle the patristic canon. 2 What one man receives as genuine, another rejects as spurious; and endless is the controversy as to which is right. 3. The works themselves, spurious and genuine, are most formidably voluminous, written in different languages, and each of them *dead*. 4. They contain much of universally acknowledged error, and a pleasing assemblage of obscurities and contradictions. 5. Some are dark with curious subtleties, and others as much disguised by rhetorical exaggerations. 6. Owing to these and other circumstances, it is possible for very different controvertists to prove from them very different conclusions, and to wage an interminable war of citations and counter-citations. The Romanist brings forward a citation:—"you are to consider the rhetorical mode of reasoning of these venerable men," exclaims the Protestant. The Protestant countercites—"you are not to forget," says the Romanist, "that it was said in the heat of controversy, when it is so natural to deal in unlimited propositions." The Romanist is ready with another; "the writing is not genuine—most probably a forgery," shouts the Protestant—all critics allow it to have been at least grievously interpolated." To a fourth it is said, "it is an interpolation of the Greeks." To a fifth, "it was foisted in by the Latins." To a sixth, "the passage is corrupt; there are five different readings, and twice as many renderings." To a seventh, "it is a contradiction only in appearance; we can easily harmonize the statement." To an eighth, "though it be only a *hint*, you are to consider the "*reserve*" of the early "Church." To a ninth, "true, that passage says so, but here is another from the same author, directly in the teeth of it;" and so on for ever.* Such is the unity to which the guidance of tradition has ever led, and will ever lead us; and of this the present controversies—the goodly array of books which stand at the head of this article—and the many others which might be added to them, afford a signal and irrefragable proof. Unity! Babel itself is but a faint image of this "confusion of tongues."

But the advocates of tradition profess to have discovered an unfailing directrix in all difficulties, in the far-famed rule of Vincentius Lirinensis—that we are to believe what has been delivered EVERY WHERE, ALWAYS, and BY ALL: "QUOD SEMPER, QUOD UBIQUE, QUOD AB OMNIBUS TRADITUM EST." This rule sounds plausible, but on examination will be found to involve, for reasons already hinted, most complicated difficulties in its application; and is about as serviceable as a certain guide-post, which assured the traveller that when it was *under* water, that road was impassable. This, however true, would not prevent his being drowned before he made the discovery. When we come to examine the rule, we find that if we take it *without* limitations it is a manifest absurdity; and if we take it with all the limitations it requires, it becomes as manifest a nullity;—not to mention that, at the very least, it leaves open the question, who is to *determine* what has been thus delivered "always, every where, and by all?"—a question not very easy of solution, when we reflect that both Romanists and Anglicans profess to receive it, and yet reach widely different results.

But to consider the rule itself. We will not here refine, as some have done, and say that it is ambiguously expressed: that it *may* be so interpreted as to imply that we are to receive all that has ever been delivered for truth; in a word, that we are to believe error and truth, heresy and orthodoxy, contradictions and paradoxes—such a creed as may well be supposed too much for even a Montanist or a Marcionite. We will take it for granted that it means, that that *only* is to be received for Catholic verity which has been affirmed by all conjointly, at all times, and every where. But taken even in this sense, we have, at the very outset, a notable instance of what is called reasoning in a circle. For when it is asked—"Is the word 'all' to be taken absolutely?" The answer is—"By no means." "Who are the 'all,' then?" Answer—"The Orthodox alone." "And who are the Orthodox?" "Those who hold what has been delivered by 'all.'" This is limitation the first. But now, let us suppose this difficulty evaded by some subterfuge, and the authorities to which appeal is to be made otherwise determined. We proceed to ask then—does this rule mean, that whatever is delivered for truth must be expressly asserted by all whom the advocates of the rule itself invest with a vote? Are we, for example, to look for the whole circle of affirmed Catholic verities in the writings of each of the apostolical Fathers? "No;" must be the reply, "it is sufficient that they do not contradict them. Their silence must be supposed to give consent." To this it might be replied, that this is at once to abandon the rule, or rather to take for granted the very thing to be proved; while we have a sufficient explanation of the *silence* of these earliest Fathers in the fact, that it was impossible for them to anticipate, and therefore to condemn all the absurd innovations and corruptions which after ages would bring in. They were no prophets; Clement could not anticipate the vagaries of a Tertullian, nor Polycarp predict those of an Origen; any more than Cranmer could have supposed that such a peculiar logician as Mr. Newman would, at the distance of three centuries, arise to prove that the Articles might be explained away. This, then, is limitation the *second*. It is *not* necessary that all that we are to believe should be expressly affirmed by all who are included in the circle of authorities; that is, we are to believe much which *non ab omnibus traditum est*. But if the supposed argument drawn from their silence be of any avail, then let us consider with what weapons we are to combat the Romanist, who is continually playing off against us this very stratagem. Why may not *he* urge, on behalf of transubstantiation, (which undoubtedly for many ages could boast the *ubique et ab omnibus*,) the same apology for the silence or the ambiguous utterances of earlier Fathers, as our Anglicans urge for many of those novelties which are not to be found in the Apostolical Fathers? To both or neither is the course open—to say that Christianity was a gradually developed system; that it does not appear in its perfect proportions till some ages after the Apostles had gone to their rest; and that we are not to wonder that many Catholic verities are very slightly noticed, or not at all, in the earliest age. Thus these parties may endlessly refute each other, but meantime, by that very dispute is shown to be a nullity. But if we are to believe nothing but what is affirmed BY ALL, AT ALL TIMES, EVERY WHERE, then any one of those whom they themselves challenge as orthodox, will do as a standard as well as the rest—Clement of Rome, for example. If they say, "True, but nevertheless there are many things which, though he did not assert, he *would* have asserted had he written about them, or thought of it,"—this is again to abandon the rule, and to substitute conjecture for it. If it be said, we imagine all believed these things, because later writers generally testify they did, we again reply, this is to imagine and not to prove, and will do as well for the Romanists as for you; for of course each succeeding age will take care to authenticate its own corruptions; and, right or wrong, vouch for its predecessor. Thus, if we may believe the Papists, Peter was first Bishop of Rome; and if the Oxford Tractists, prayer for the dead is an Apostolical tradition. But we come to a third limitation. When we ask—"But is it true that the dissent on *any* point, on the part of any one of those whom you deem in the main orthodox—as Clement of Alexandria, for example—is sufficient to invalidate that article?" The answer is—"No, certainly;" but then what becomes of your *quod ab omnibus?* for there is hardly an article, (if we except those great fundamental truths, which we can at once extract from the Scriptures without any thanks to these worthies)—there is hardly one of the opinions which you peculiarly patronize but is denied by some of them. Answer—It is not necessary that Catholic verity be asserted by all absolutely, but only by the "*greater part*." Limitation the *third*;—set down, then, that *omnes* means the "greater part." But we have not yet half done with the difficulties of the rule: we here come to a curious problem of limits. It is said that it is not necessary that each article of faith should be admitted by all those who are included in the circle of authorities, but only by the "greater part." Pray, how much "greater" is this "greater part" to be? Will a bare majority of one, or two, or three, or half a dozen, or half a score, be sufficient? or if not, of how many? What is to be the ratio of suffrages which shall determine *that* to be Catholic truth, which otherwise would be no truth at all? And if the judgments of different men differ as to what this ratio ought to be, (as they needs must, where there is nothing but caprice to determine them,)—who is to be the judge as to whose judgment is to be received? Even supposing that impossible point decided—who is to be the judge as to what opinions have or have not the requisite majority of authoritities to back them? But yet again, if a bare majority, or anything short of unanimity, will be sufficient, are you prepared to receive any of those doctrines or usages which are sustained by an *equal* majority, with any one of those you enjoin upon our belief? If so, this precarious rule will compel you to go much further than you have hitherto gone—if not, you have gone much too far. The doctrine of the Millenaries, now universally abandoned, and explicitly condemned by you; the administration of the Eucharist to infants; the celibacy of the clergy; the monastic institute; superstitious reverence for relics; the worship of the saints; the monkish miracles; and what would be quite as hard for *you* to digest, the popular election of Bishops and their voluntary support, can plead *as* large an amount of authority to sustain them, as many of those tenets which you enjoin upon us. He who wishes to see this subject fully handled may consult Mr. Isaac Taylor's able and elaborate work, entitled *Ancient Christianity*, on which we shall presently offer a few remarks. He plies the Oxford Tractists with this argument very fairly, and shows, in our judgment conclusively, that they are shut up to one of two courses; either to *develope* their system much further, (for which, if we may judge by recent demonstrations, they are fully prepared,) or retrace their steps to the principles of the Reformation.

Once more; as it is a part of the rule that what we are to believe must have been universally received, but *always*, that body of truth must have been as perfect in the earliest times as the latest: there is, therefore, no occasion to go lower than the first age—that is, to the Scriptures themselves, and honestly to apply the rule to them. That the truth was subsequently received by greater numbers, or was more widely diffused, is nothing to the purpose, and does not affect its integrity. The base of a pyramid may be enlarged; but as every section of the pyramid parallel to it, cuts off a precisely similar pyramid, so if the body of doctrine we are to receive has been *always* the same—it was just the same in the Apostolic age as in the fifth century, or in our own, and we may as well stop there. Thus a perfectly fair application of this much-vaunted rule, issues most unexpectedly, but most legitimately, in allowing us to defer to the exclusive authority of Scripture; and with this fresh limitation we are willing to abide by it. The Apostles shall be our *omnes*, their writings our *ubique*, and their age our *semper*. "But," says the Anglican, "though it is true that the body of truth has always been the same, and is therefore entire in the Scriptures, it is not on the *surface* there—it is five hundred fathoms deep—it must be *developed*; they contain but hints which require *expansion*, "expand" the system of the Scriptures into the system of Trent.

But further still; will these imitators of Rome, in borrowing Rome's own rule, apply it fairly to *all ages* of the Church? Will they take the *semper* absolutely? "No, by no means," is the reply; "for how could we confute the Romanists, who truly allege that during many ages doctrines have been professed, universally and by all, which *we* deny?" What then, we ask, is your *semper?* Within what limits is *always* to be confined? "That question does not admit of an answer," says Mr. Newman; "we had better not perplex ourselves with it: 'the era of purity' cannot be determined within less than 400 years; It was not 'much earlier than the Council of Sardica, A.D. 347!' nor so late as the second Nicene Council, A.D. 787." What a curious solution of a historical problem, which brings us somewhere within 400 years of the truth, and leaves the rule of Vincentius of uncertain application, within that very period in which the doctrines and practices were *developed*, on which the very gist of the controversy depends! However, as limitation the *last*, let it be noted that *semper* means not *always*, as some foolish people imagine; but some time between 347 and 787 years.

Thus the rule which Vincentius Lirinensis has delivered with so much gravity and solemnity, amounts to this—that we are religiously to receive all doctrines, which some unknown persons have, in some undetermined places, delivered for truth at some uncertain periods! But the rule becomes yet more flagrantly absurd, as less epigrammatically delivered by himself. It then sinks into the most contemptible of truisms; for he takes care, as Daillé has remarked, to fence his proposition with so many limitations, that if they could but be all complied with, he must be an infidel indeed who would refuse assent to it. He tells us in his own inimitable style, that "he speaks not of any authors, but only of such as having piously, wisely, and constantly lived, preached, and persevered in the Catholic faith and communion, obtained the favor at length, either to die faithfully in Christ, or else had the happiness of being crowned with martyrdom for Christ's sake;" he further adds, "that we are to receive as undoubtedly true, certain, and definitive, whatsoever all the aforesaid authors, or at least the greater part of them, have clearly, frequently, and constantly affirmed, with an unanimous consent, receiving, retaining, and delivering it over to others, as it were jointly, and making up all of them but one common and unanimous council of doctors." Whence it appears, as Daillé has fully shown, and not without a touch of humour unwonted in him, that "all that Vincentius here promises us is no more than this, that we may be sure not to be deceived, provided that we believe no other doctrines save what are holy and true. This promise of his is like that which little children are wont to make, when they tell you that you shall never die if you but always eat." So that to the enquiry—"What is the Catholic faith?" it appears that we are at liberty to reply that it is the doctrine of those who have "*piously, wisely,* and *constantly* lived, preached, and maintained to the death—the Catholic faith;" or, at all events, of the *greater part* of such. A truly cautious conclusion!

Nothing can be more ridiculous than the extravagant claims which our modern lovers of antiquity prefer on behalf of the Fathers. It is true that Mr. Newman, by way of obviating the argument arising from their unspeakable weaknesses and extravagances, assure us that it is not their individual authority, but their concurrent testimony, to any point of doctrine and ritual, which sanctions it as of Apostolical origin. But then, as it is difficult to say how far it may be necessary to draw upon these holy men, or how far their poor credit will serve to give currency to the preposterous doctrines for which they are made responsible, it is as well to accredit as much of their worthless paper as possible. If there be a concurrence of a majority, their authority is then infallible; if only of a considerable number, the most egregious puerility ceases to be such; while the opinion only of one, though it may appear downwright craziness to common sense, is to be treated with silent veneration. Throughout the Oxford Tracts, and more especially in Number Eighty-Nine, (On the Mysticism of the Fathers)—a besotting and besotted veneration is constantly inculcated towards them.* Many of their most extravagant absurdities are not merely palliated, but lauded:—even their inimitable vagaries in the way of allegorical interpretation, are seriously recommended to our devout attention; and we are told to enquire whether we have not lost much by renouncing the system which led to them. The tone of reverence, which is every where maintained and enjoyed, is evidently designed to perplex the understanding of the ignorant and timid, (an artifice in common use with this School,) and to foster the belief that the Fathers are too *sacred* to be dealt with as merely human authors. No matter how childish, how ludicrous the fancies which provoke our laughter, these writers shake their heads and say, "Beware how you despise things that *may* be sacred."†

The author of the Tract in question is even so infatuated as to express his regret that the selections from the Fathers to which the people have been occasionally treated, are such as to give the reader a too favorable opinion of them; that is, that the Editors of such selections have exercised some discretion, and extracted only the better parts of these authors. "But the very circumstance," says he, "of such selections being made with a view to modern prejudices, shows that they can do no more than palliate the evil. When a reader passes from specimens of that kind to the whole body of any Father's writings, he is apt to feel as if he had been unfairly dealt with, and is inclined rather to be the more intolerant of the many things which he is sure to meet with, alien to his former tastes and habits of thought."‡ He proceeds, therefore, to expose more freely the (in popular opinion) more questionable "sayings and doings" of the Fathers; in the hope, no doubt, that the public, on becoming familiarized with, may be enamoured of them; and this Tract, in which so much that is whimsical and delirious in the Fathers is not only apologized for, but cited with applause, may be considered as a sort of tentative experiment—a test of the patience and stupidity of the English people.§

* The Archbishop of Dublin has well illustrated this subject:—"The mass of Christians are called on to believe and do what is essential to Christianity, in implicit reliance on the *reports* of their respective pastors, as to what certain deep theological antiquarians have *reported* to *them*, respecting the *reports* given by certain ancient Fathers, of the *reports* current in their times, concerning Apostolical usages and institutions."

* "A devout mind will probably at once acknowledge on which side, in the present question, the peril of erring will be greatest. The question is like that of the general evidences of religion; a person who would go into it with advantage, should be imbued beforehand with a kind of natural piety, which will cause him to remember all along, that perhaps when he comes to the end of his enquiry, he will find that God was all the while really there."—(Oxford Tracts, No. 89, p. 5.)

† After vindicating the patristic system of allegorical and mystical interpretation as a system, and fearlessly justifying it in some of the most extravagant instances—as, for example, in those absurd fancies in which the Fathers persisted in discovering types of the cross and baptism in every mention of wood and water in the Old Testament—as in the rods which Jacob stuck in the troughs before Laban's sheep, or the staff with which he passed over the river Jordan, or in the ladder which he saw in a dream—(on which the Tractist actually makes the following inconceivably silly remark, "This example is not irrelevant, since a ladder is part, so to speak, of the furniture of the cross;")—after all this, pursued at great length and with most edifying solemnity—the writer makes this frank statement,—"Some examples have been given above: examples purposely selected, many of them, as the likeliest to startle and scandalize a mere modern reader; and something, it is hoped, has been done towards showing, that in those cases, at least, the holy Fathers well knew what they were about (?); that they proceeded in interpreting Scripture on the surest ground—the warrant of Scripture itself in analagous cases."—No. 89, p. 40.)

"But in order to appreciate rightly the Fathers' reasoning in such places, we ought, of course, to recollect, that its force lies in the accumulation of instances. It is not necessary that each anecdote, taken by itself should be a complete type of the evangelical truth, at which the sum of the whole points: *e.g.* though a person questioned the distinct allusion to any Christian mystery, in the account, taken singly, of Jacob using rods to influence the breed of Laban's cattle, still it must come in as one among many examples, to show how constantly the Almighty employed that material, which was to be the instrument of redemption, as a conveyance of temporal blessings to his chosen people (!!)"

‡ No. 89, p. 8.

§ "It is a subject," he says, "which scholars in general have, perhaps, been apt to treat over lightly, not to say profanely; so that, in speaking of it, a person insensibly falls into the apologetic tone; but the more we really come to know and think of it, the more deeply, perhaps, shall we feel, that even that tone is inexcusable presumption, compared with what would become us in making mention of those who come nearest the Apostles, and had, in greatest perfection, the mind of Christ."—(No. 89, p. 38.)