

the little island in the beautiful bay of New York, massive and grand, beautiful in outline and in pose, holding her torch to proclaim that mankind receives true light, not from Christ and Christianity, but from heathenism and its gods.

HOW TO FIND THE TRUTH.

“**I** WOULD like to find the truth.” The truth referred to in this brief but pregnant sentence was divine or spiritual truth. We were anxious at the time of its utterance, by a few pointed questions, to sound its full meaning in the view of the speaker, and thus test it, in order to ascertain whether or not it was earnest or real, and if so, in what form and to what extent; but circumstances forbade. It may not be improper now, and in a general way, to try to do what we could not then; and this is the purpose and scope of the present article.

The remark is not limited to him who made it. Thousands are ready to say, if they are not actually uttering the words: “We would like to find the truth of God in such a way as to be certain that we have it—pure, simple, and inerrable—and thus put to rest our troubled minds;” but who, though they imagine they are in full earnest, are nevertheless, in the way of fact, really deceiving their own minds. Not all searching is a true searching, and therefore not all searching is rewarded. There are often—most generally indeed—many obstructing and diverting errors in the way. Some result from early training and false education; some lie in our immediate surroundings, and frequently in our own independent thinking. These, however they have come to exist, and whatever may be their nature, are hindrances to our success, and must be removed. To do this is exceedingly difficult, and often just as tedious. The work of eradicating error is always hard and slow. It is sometimes necessary to retrace the whole of one’s past life, and undo all that has been done in the way of an inwrought education.

To such a degree, besides, has the subtle spirit of falsehood penetrated and vitiated our moral nature, and so steadily and strongly are we held by it in the direction of error, that it requires, in addition to divine grace, the most continuous and painful self-probing to give to our own minds even a glimpse of our actual condition in this view. The instinctive tendency is to hide the ugly fact from

our conscience, and first to feign, and then actually believe, that however severe the demand which it might make upon us, we yet have an earnest desire to find the truth. This is all frequently a pure deception. We really desire no such thing. The facts may, however, easily be brought to light, if we are truly sincere. Those who really desire to find the truth in its full, whole, round character,—the truth as God revealed it for the guidance and salvation of men,—will be cheerfully ready to put themselves in such condition as will make this ordinarily possible. This will certainly be so, unless there should be, in fact, though perhaps unconsciously to them, a still stronger motive to do something else, by which this would be prevented.

To search for the truth so that the searching may carry in it the promise of reward, there must, of course, be a proper and sufficient motive; otherwise, there would be nothing to stimulate the search or sustain the effort it requires. This motive must be found primarily in the truth itself. Its own intrinsic excellence must in some way be brought forcibly before us; its divine majesty must be made to rise to our view, and its dread tones of authority must be distinctly heard. The truth being from God, is the bearer of His own moral image, and therefore nothing can be more majestic. It is eternal, and, in its nature, like God, it is unchangeable. Being from God, it leads to God, as the highest end of created existence, without whom it were better that man had never been born. It is the source of all beauty, and is beauty itself in the highest perfection. Harmony, wherever found throughout the whole moral world, results immediately from its presence. It is lovely in itself, and makes all else lovely that is seen actually to be so, and must, in turn, be loved with a corresponding love for its own sake. When in its full and rich nature the truth opens itself to the mind, even through a glass, or dimly, it is difficult, if not impossible, to remain entirely indifferent to it. As the moral horizon widens, and grander and clearer disclosures are made, our feeling of interest in it deepens. No grander idea can fill the soul. Man was made for the truth, and he begins to realize that he can be happy only as by some means he is put consciously into it. With this disclosure of its nature and charms our moral nature is aroused and quickened. We really stop on our busy way and admire. A sacred awe steals into and fills our being. Sometimes we stand in mute wonder, literally overwhelmed by the sense of the grand, beautiful, and sublime. What can we compare with it? All else seems to dwindle and disappear, even as the stars go out when the effulgent sun arises. Verily, we exclaim, "The truth is the grandest thing in the universe,—greater than all worlds,—like God himself!"

In this high appreciation the proper search after the truth begins.

But this abstract view, however complete, is not of itself sufficient. To give to our motive the proper nerve, or to infuse into it a proper genius, so to say, we must see that the truth is practically connected with our good. It is difficult to be really earnest with a mere abstraction or speculation. Few men are so in fact. We may stop for a few moments before a beautiful ideal painting, and very warmly admire it, but, passing on, it is very soon forgotten. It is easy to conceive, but hard to express in the way of detail, how the truth is related to our interest. The subject is too extended. That it is so related, and at every point, and vitally, we must all instinctively feel. Nothing can be truly promotive of our well-being that comes from error, or that may itself be a falsehood, and all the real good that we experience must be mediated by the truth. The whole objective kingdom of grace,—what is it? The grand projection of the truth. How may we know, either in whole or in part? Only through the truth. And how may we understand the subjective graces necessary to introduce us into it? Again, only by the truth. Who is Christ? What is the Church? What the nature of the holy sacraments? How shall we know these correctly, either in themselves or in their offices? All by means of the truth. Is this so? Then what can be practically more important for us than the truth? Here the motive to search after it receives its necessary quickening spirit and moral energy. All this must not only be seen theoretically, but also realized practically, which is a much more earnest thing. We must feel that our highest good in this and also in the coming world, is absolutely dependent upon the truth and our relation to it; and that we, through this relation, may be apprehended by it. Not to cultivate this deep sense—the truth of which, theoretically, is so clear, even self-evident—is to fail to furnish the motive to search after the truth with its proper vitality and wisdom, and to that extent it must become unworthy of success.

But the truth, in itself considered, is a certainty,—a fixed, unchanging, and unchangeable certainty. Otherwise it would not be truth. It is not what each may honestly conceive, or otherwise desire it to be, or that which accommodates itself to the varying modes of human thinking, or to the changes produced by time. Can it be found and known in this, its own fixed nature? At this point are exposed some of the false notions which lie in the way of this search after the truth, and prevent its being found. If the truth, as truth, cannot be found or known, then where is the motive to search for it? It cannot exist. To believe that the truth is not findable, and yet to search for it, would be simply to attempt the impossible. No contradiction could be more complete. Just here our Protestant friends find great trouble, and many of them are

sorely perplexed. They profess not only to be specially attached to the truth, to make the greatest account of it, to hold it in the highest estimation—as being, indeed, the thing upon which all else hangs—but also to be first, in the way of zeal, in searching after it; and yet, in the same breath, they say it cannot be certainly known. That they are actuated by a zeal, and a very ardent one, there is indeed, no room to doubt. Further on in this article we shall take pains to point out the motive of this zeal. Whatever the object animating it may be, it certainly cannot be the truth, as such, or the certain finding or possession of it; since the same zeal leads them with equal fervor to declare that the truth cannot be found or certainly known. Is it to be wondered at then that our dissenting friends, if they are searching at all, are ever searching but never finding; ever learning but never coming to a *knowledge* of the truth! Even if they were really to find and possess it, retaining their erroneous idea that it cannot be found, they would not believe it; for they could not persuade themselves that they had accomplished that which, according to their belief, is impossible. They would hold it, if they would hold it at all, as an uncertainty, and consequently not as truth. In such case there can be, of course, no sufficient motive to search for the truth; and our protesting brethren must, in the nature of the case, be simply deceiving themselves when they speak of their ardent attachment to, and search for, the truth itself.

But the truth, though it can and may be found—that is, known or apprehended in its certainty, according to its own nature—can only thus be known through the divine aid of infallibility. To search for it and deny this is, clearly enough, to search in vain. Indeed the word search itself, in such case, could have no meaning, since its object, as our Protestant friends say, and here they are clearly right, would lie wholly beyond its reach. This false opinion, grown into a conviction, that truth cannot be found, must, if seeking is to be successful, give place to the true idea that it can; and the dogma of infallibility, as the condition of this, however numerous and strong the prejudices against it, must be humbly and thankfully accepted; for if this be not true, then the truth can never be truth for the mind; we can never actually find it, or conscientiously rest in it, but must ever be driven about without any hope of a better moral condition by “every wind of doctrine,” and subject absolutely to the “cunning craftiness” of the prince of error or “father of lies.” To say, in such case, that we desire to find the truth, or that we are earnestly seeking after it, is simply a practical, though rather a serious, joke, we are attempting to play off upon our own consciences. It is a delusion, full and complete.

But the principle once adopted that the truth cannot be certainly

found, theories must be devised by which its fatal consequences may be avoided, else these consequences would themselves refute and blast the error. The fallacy of these theories must be detected, if the way is to be fully opened for the search after the truth, otherwise the truth cannot appear in its own true value. If the truth itself cannot be known, how can anything in the kingdom of grace come to be known?

The first and general effect of this error has been to turn the mind away almost entirely from the objective in Christianity, and to confine its view to the same exclusive extent to the narrow department of individual experience. But even this is found to be shrouded in the same darkness and pervaded by the same uncertainty. For instance, since the truth cannot be known, how can it become an object of faith? What, in this case, becomes of faith itself? What are or what ought to be its contents? Is there not room here for fatal error if these things cannot be known? Has not this, in the way of fact, been one of the prime sources of the various forms of wild fanaticism? Here clearly is great confusion. Now, to save the grace of faith in this view, our Protestant friends have been driven to the theory that Christ, not the truth, a living, divine person, not a dogma, is the object of faith. By this shift they hope, at least as far as faith is concerned, to avoid the fatal consequences of their false position in relation to the truth. But do they really escape the difficulty by this means? Nay, it follows them like their shadow. Let us see. Who and what is Christ as he is made the exclusive or abstract object of faith? Is it the Christ as seen by the Ebionites, simply human, or by the Gnostics, divine only, or by the followers of Eutyches, a confused blending of humanity and divinity, or by the disciples of Nestorius, a dualistic Christ? Or is it the Christ as conditioned and modified by any of the various and variously erroneous notions of modern times? Who is to answer this question? Each has the same right, and each may have the strongest reason. Who can know? But it is claimed that Christ, being a living person, authenticates himself for this purpose, and thus renders correct knowledge on our part unnecessary. If this were true, then there would at least be a definite Christ, in regard to whose nature all would agree, and how in such case could we account for the differences and contradictions in equally pious minds in regard to this point? Besides, how can they be sure that Christ does thus authenticate himself? Since, according to Protestant thinking, the claim of infallibility is not sustained, and the truth, which determines everything else, is itself undetermined and undeterminable, how and by what means is the mysterious nature of Christ to be determined for the mind, so that He may be, in His absolutely correct character, the object of faith?

Clearly the question cannot be answered. In these circumstances each may have a different Christ as the object of his faith, and all may have a false Christ. Again, who can know? But this is only one of the interests entering into the experience of men which, by this false opinion, is thus confused and destroyed. Thousands of others are left by this theory in the same condition of absolute uncertainty. How prevent a complete chaos in the whole kingdom of grace if the assertion must be accepted that the truth cannot be certainly known? These errors, and all others of kindred character, as the candid mind must readily see, are fatal not only to all real search after the truth, but also to every substantive interest which it is the office of the truth to define. All theories which affect to render any feature of Christianity for us independent of the truth necessarily detract from its dignity and value, and to that extent not only vitiate and weaken the motive-nerve which urges to the successful pursuit after it, but also, and to the same extent, confuse and confound the object of the search itself. For, as we have already said, it is not enough, in order to fill out and render this motive proper and sufficient, simply to have a theoretical view of the truth, even though in its full harmony, beauty, and grandeur, as something afar off, or as a grand picture æsthetically even playing directly on our moral nature; but it is necessary besides all this that we realize it to be, in some way, essentially and vitally interwoven with our proper destiny. It must be felt that not to find the truth in the way now described, that is, in its own certain nature, is to sustain a loss and a damage in our moral being, the broad extent and dreadful character of which, it is perhaps impossible, in our present circumstances, properly to estimate or measure. Whereas, on the other hand, to find it, to be consciously in the centre of it and freely governed by it, is to be in harmony with ourselves and with God, and to feel certainly that we are connected with the only legitimate and highest end of human being.

Such, then, being the nature and dignity of the truth, and such its practical importance for us, to really find and obtain it, what effort should we shrink from making, what deprivations in other respects should we be unwilling to suffer, and what sacrifices should we deem too costly or painful to make? And just this is, in the way of fact, the earnest spirit which the successful search of the truth involves. It can be nothing less high and heroic. The motive, to be worthy, must be grand, like its object. He who is really seeking this great good, the good practically comprehensive of all other forms of good, and without which nothing can have this character, is willing, and must be, to give up freely all that he possesses, sever the tenderest earthly ties, enter in imitation of his

Master, who is the truth itself, the most humble and abject condition, submit to the keenest shafts of derision, and meekly bear the most cruel persecution. This is not merely a necessary inference arising out of the nature of the truth itself, as something whose value and dignity are incomparable, but no one carefully reading the gospels can fail to perceive that this is the uniform demand of Christ. Throughout, and at almost every point, we hear the words, "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." Not to have this motive is plainly to be unworthy both of Him and of His truth.

Turning now from the motive essential to the successful seeking after the truth, we may fix our attention, in the next place, upon the proper attitude of the searcher and the method generally by which it must be conducted. And first of all, he who would find the truth, must, in addition to what has already been said, when speaking of the motive, be humble. Perhaps, at least so far as the intelligent searcher is concerned, this injunction may be deemed unnecessary. The contrast between the everywhere present and grand majesty of divine truth, and the littleness of man, with the feebleness of intellectual powers, these too, darkened by sin, might be sufficient to induce the proper sense of humility. It is said, when men stand and gaze at the mighty torrents of water rushing over the falls of Niagara, and hear the roar which is thus produced, causing the earth to tremble, they instinctively find themselves exclaiming, "What puny things are we!" But what is this compared with the full grandeur of the truth, the whole truth, beaming forth from God? All men, however, are disposed to vanity, and all therefore need the injunction, and need to have it frequently repeated, and especially when they are searching for the truth, "Be humble."

There is good ground for this. For it is not by any superior excellence of mental gifts, sharpness of wit, boldness of imagination, or clearness or strength of reason, that we are led into the truth, or enabled to take it into ourselves. The naturally great or highly endowed have, in this department, no advantage over the poor in spirit. There are no privileged classes in Christianity. Here, at least, even if nowhere else, all have the same chances. If the inclination of divine benevolence is in any direction, it is in favor of the weak and helpless. "Not many mighty are called." Whilst it is hidden often from the "wise and prudent," it is revealed unto "babes." Reason: "For even so, Father, it seemeth good in thy sight." The truth, in the sense in which we have been using the word all along, is, as to its origin and character, supernatural; therefore, it belongs not to the order of nature in any form, but it everywhere, though in and through nature, transcends

it. It is not for the natural mind, however great its powers or keen its perceptions, to reach and fathom the truth.

Nor can science be of any material aid in this regard. Grand as it has been in its own proper sphere, both in its nature and results, and greatly as it may properly be lauded for what it has accomplished, it has no power to move amid the far-reaching laws of the supernatural realm, and determine what is or ought to be the truth. The verities here, with which it sometimes essays to grapple, are entirely above its reach, and the effort thus to find the truth always results in terrible disaster. Those modern scientists, as well as those who may be called ancient, from whom the error has been borrowed, who have been determined to be guided strictly by science and by this alone, in their search through this department, have all been led, some against their will, into radical infidelity. This result could not be avoided. What has science to do with truth so infinitely transcending its scope and power? To become confused and confounded, and be led to the most puerile and even ludicrous consequences, as in the case of Tyndall, Huxley, and Darwin, the results of whose speculations are all, just now, fresh in the public mind, is precisely what any mind, having a true perception of the supernatural, would naturally expect. Not to the wise, in this sense, is it given to find the truth of God. The disastrous consequences of every effort heretofore made of this character, should be sufficient, one would think, to rebuke the arrogant fancy, that spiritual truth can be found in this way, and to aid in leading the mind up (for this is the proper term) to that state of real humility which the case requires.

Philosophy, as a means of finding the truth, has had very little better success, although the possibilities here are much greater. Separated however from faith, or de-christianized, it can only, like science, flounder in confusion. Reduced to rationalism, it is wholly inadequate. Even in its best form, simply as philosophy, it can never reach or comprehend the truth of God. Led by faith it may indeed very grandly enter the supernatural sphere, and find just what the untutored but believing child already possesses. Nothing more. Such a philosopher may indeed see more clearly the relation of the different truths, their reason, and the results which flow from them. But as to the truth itself in its substantial and saving power, the believing child and the believing philosopher occupy the same grand level. Indeed, the believing philosopher is but a believing child. Richness of intellectual gift and greatness of mental attainment, though always admirable, are never essential to the finding of the truth. These, relied on, are always in the way. But used and not abused, they may in many, though

not material, respects, facilitate the process and give a more refined and detailed appreciation of the truth when found.

Moral talent, here, is more important than mental. The heart is greater than the head. Sympathy (*συμπάθεια*) with the truth—real warm, glowing love of it, and thus an inward and sincere aspiration after it, is always surer to find and understand it, than a more cold effort of the reason, however mighty this may be. The little girl who, with very ordinary mental endowments, feels herself secretly drawn to the piano by her native love of music, will, ordinarily, in attaining a knowledge of it, greatly surpass her more gifted companion, who must be driven to her practice. And we are not sure that this is not true, to a very great extent, at least in relation to even some of the more exact sciences. Even in mathematics, which is the strictest of all, there have been many notable examples of persons otherwise but very ordinarily gifted, yet who, because of their deep sympathy with abstract formulas, have been able to move, with most wonderful ease and rapidity, through the most complicated problems. But in the department of supernatural verity, this is true in the highest degree; thus illustrating, even from ordinary and natural experiences of everyday life, the reason why love and faith, and not mere understanding and reason, are so frequently and positively demanded in the sacred Scriptures.

But this spiritual truth is also Catholic in its character, and this shows still further the peculiar nature of the method by which the search is to be conducted, if it is to be successful. In this character it is a unit, and from one common centre in its own being it spreads through the whole universe of moral and spiritual being, touching, like the sun, upon every object, great and small, and defining all it touches. It cannot be broken and scattered into independent parts. However extensive the region through which it permeates, and however infinite the variety of its parts, it is still, in the strictest sense, but one, grand, indivisible system. "Guilty of one, guilty of all," was the teaching of Christ himself, and nothing can more clearly show the unity of spiritual truth. It can be found only as a whole and not as separate fragments. It must, therefore, be sought in a broad and liberal spirit, a spirit approximating, at least, its own grand nature in this view; for he that is not willing to take the whole is not worthy to have a part.

We once heard a distinguished Protestant theologian in one of his most fervid sermons, describing the rich, full heritage of the Christian commonwealth in this view, exclaim, "I am a Christian, and all that is Christian is mine." We felt then that the sentiment was noble, but did not at that time see that it was far too noble for the narrow sect in which the preacher stood. A sect, if anything,

is but a small part of the whole and can never reach and embrace the whole in any form. Each one of the sects rejects, by an inward necessity, what is peculiar to the other; and all combined, if such a combination were possible (which it is not), could not be broad enough to comprehend the whole body of supernatural truth under this, its Catholic form. The sect, therefore, not having the truth, can of course never give it. Protestant churches are not like loving children, dwelling together harmoniously in the same family, each of whom receiving the benefit of the wealth which affectionate parents have gathered. Rather they are like discontented and quarrelsome children, who, not being able to live together in peace and harmony, have angrily torn themselves from the family commonwealth, each taking with him a separate moiety, which is afterwards found, in its isolated form, to be utterly insufficient to maintain a healthful existence. What was a great wealth and amply sufficient in its united form and under the wise management of the family head to furnish even a royal support for all, is now found, in its separation, not to be enough to procure even the common necessaries of life. Or to present the point, perhaps, in a still more striking figure; they are not like the happy crew on board the strong and majestic ship, gayly sailing over the heaving billows of the ocean, laughing at the storm, but like the unfortunate crew that have suffered shipwreck, where each has hastily seized a shattered plank, on which he is vainly struggling to save his wretched life. A part, thus sundered from the whole, is found to be much less, for any purpose, than when in its proper place and in union with all the other parts.

But there is still another fact in this connection which our Protestant friends have not, as yet, sufficiently considered and laid to heart. This disrupting of the whole and depending upon any of the parts, in a separate and independent way, has not only this serious quantitative, but also an equally serious qualitative, effect; that is, the quantity is not only thereby diminished but the quality also is changed. A branch, sundered from the tree, does not thereby become a small tree. It is in fact no longer even a branch, but only a dead, dry piece of common wood. It has taken, in other words, a different character, become an entirely different thing. Just so, when a portion of the Church is cut by schism from the whole body, or the Church Catholic. It is no longer a Church, but a sect, namely, a part cut off; and in precisely the same manner, when a part of the truth is sundered from the whole or Catholic system of truth, it is no longer a truth but a heresy. Heresy, strictly, is born of schism. In a certain sense, indeed, heresy may be said both to precede and to succeed schism—to precede, as a restless, bubbling fanaticism, and to succeed as a fixed

and stubborn determination to maintain the false private opinion against all authority. Properly, however, heresy is the perverse holding of the error after this is authoritatively condemned.

That the fragment of the truth, thus cut from the whole system, is of this character is clearly seen in the fact, that the part taken is at once arrayed against that from which it was taken. The harmony is at once broken, and it and the residue are of different natures and at variance, not because the last, but the first, has changed. Instead of bearing the sense or meaning which it had when in union with the whole, and thus be in inward accord with the whole, it is now made to bear a sense or meaning just the opposite, and one which puts those who hold it in perpetual and violent antagonism with the truth under its whole form. Indeed, the part is made to exclude the whole from which it is taken. In the very act of sundering the part from the whole, the part thus sundered becomes changed in its nature, and, instead of remaining a truth, it becomes, in fact, a lie. This may not be so, absolutely, in all cases. But human prudence is a poor safeguard against it. It is certainly not intended to be this by those who adhere to it in this separate form. Individually, Protestants may be better than their sect, and most generally are so. But they cannot avoid this result. It is a matter which lies beyond their power to control. The great mass of Protestant men and women do not even know this dreadful fact. They have never themselves taken time to study it, and have none to teach it to them. On the contrary, they honestly believe, in their simplicity, not only that they have the truth in spite of the doctrine of their leaders, who maintain that truth of this supernatural character cannot be certainly known, but also that they have it under its purest possible form, and that when they are contending against the great Catholic body from which their faint ray has been taken, they are only fighting error with truth. While this false conviction may, under certain circumstances, greatly diminish the personal responsibility of those who hold it, or rather, who are held by it, it can never, however honestly entertained, alter or change the fact itself. The sundering of the truth, which is the result of schism, is, when once accomplished, an objective fact, and the change of the portion sundered into a falsehood, is wholly beyond the control of the individual will. It is converted into error by the very incision of the schismatic knife, and the only way to change it for ourselves is to escape from it.

Every portion of the sect system has by its movements demonstrated this heretical character from the very moment of its abnormal origin in the sixteenth century. From that day steadily on to this has its great effort been to prove that the whole body of truth,

from which a small portion was then rudely torn, is a gigantic falsehood, although it remains precisely what it was in the beginning. Indeed, the sect system all along has had but one real issue, and that is fierce opposition to the Church Catholic and her dogmas; thus proving, at every point in its history, in a most practical manner, the proposition, that a part sundered from the whole in a system in which unity is an essential and controlling fact changes its character. This opposition to Catholic truth is, moreover, an inward necessity on the part of the sects. They could not otherwise continue their being. They started in the spirit of antagonism, and this is found the whole content of internal unmake-up. It is the nature of heresy to be restless and to fight the truth, and when this fighting shall cease, heresy itself must die. Who can fail to see that sectarianism, in this view, as in all others, is an abnormality, a perverted and perverting existence—a veritable monstrosity? To find the truth, therefore, it is clearly not enough to find a part of it only, for this may but deepen the moral darkness; but it is necessary that we should, in a real way, compass the whole. Only in the whole, and conditioned by the whole, can the parts be seen and understood in their true nature. Lying outside of the modifying and controlling laws of the whole system, and being independent of them, there are no laws of hermeneutics in the hands, especially of the private judgment, that are able to hold it steadily to its original meaning and purpose. Therefore not to find the whole truth is, in fact, not to find any part of it, as it does not and cannot exist in fragments, and no part thus sundered and rendered independent of the rest can serve the purposes of the truth. It is but one immense whole, and as such, in all its fulness, it must, if ever, be found and embraced.

The Greek Church may indeed seem to look, and, in the minds of some, does actually look like a contradiction to the foregoing; but when examined closely it will be found to be this rather in appearance than in fact. No one at all familiar with the history of this separation in the eleventh century can fail to see a vast and substantive difference between it and the sect system as this arose in the sixteenth. But even with all this difference in favor of the Greek Church it still remains a fact that the Greek Church is comparatively dead, and that to keep the truth which it has all along enjoyed and to resuscitate the life by which it has thus far been sustained, it must come back in a still freer and fuller form into the broad bosom of the only true Catholic Church. Or if the schism was really complete and radical, the case can only be regarded, so far as its effect upon the truth is concerned, as an exception proving the general rule. The truth is, therefore, not to be found in, through, or by means of the sect system. Abandonment

of this is an unyielding necessity. This system, in the finding and practical embracing of the truth, is always transcended, no one being able to remain in it after actually embracing the whole truth. Indeed, he would not be allowed thus to remain, because of the antagonism which such a position would necessarily develop. No mind actually in possession of the whole truth could, by the narrow sense of any sect, be considered orthodox. The case demands a higher and broader method and one in greater harmony with the truth itself under its own Catholic form.

But how about the Bible in its relation to the sect-mind? Surely this is the revelation of God, and is, moreover, so far as its outward character is concerned, in the possession of Protestant sects, fully as much as it is in that of the Catholic Church; and do they not love and cherish it, and in the spirit of its own command (?) "search" its pages? Behold the vast numbers of copies which they have annually printed and circulated, and the millions of money they are thus expending, and hear, besides, how enthusiastically they are dwelling upon its charms, depicting its attributes, attributing to it, as a book, even magical powers! It is the only rule of faith and the almost exclusive means of converting the nations of the earth. Yes, verily, there is here an incontrovertible proof of zeal, and zeal under an exceedingly lively form. Yet in this holding to the Bible, or to the truth under this printed form they wholly deny, in the same enthusiastic manner, the truth under its spoken form, existing in the character of sacred tradition, whilst the same Bible, in so many words, and printed in the clearest type, declares that if all had been written which was spoken by *Christ Himself*, "the world itself could not contain the books which should be written." All this truth, spoken by Christ Himself, rejected and denied, if not spurned, simply because, as it would seem, the "printer" had no hand in it. Here again is a part only sundered from the whole truth, which, by this sundering, has become changed in its character and made, in the minds of those who hold it, to lead immediately into error. Thus the "the truth of God is turned into a lie." For it will be observed that the part itself which is thus held is used for the express purpose and as the means itself of excluding all the rest and residue of Revelation, the books of which, had they all been written, the world itself would not contain. In other words, the truth itself is put in conflict, God made to contradict Himself. Can it, therefore, be true, in view of a fact like this, that the sects, though with the printed Bible in their hands, are really in possession of its truth? Could they understand the great "commission" as they do, if this were so? In the very eulogy they bestow upon the Bible in this separate form they give it a false character, making the mere reading of this the

great means of converting the world? But for this false character, would they be so zealously attached to it? In this separated and abstracted form what book has been more prolific of strange vagaries and contradictory teachings? Is there anything contained in it in regard to which the sects, each led by its own separate ray, regard it in the same light or receive in the same sense? And why this strange want of unanimity, this continuous clashing and contradiction? The answer is obvious. It is the same reason which has made the part to contradict the whole from which it is taken, because, by a holding of a part, by which the residue is denied, the general laws pervading the whole system are lost, and there remains no rule by which the sundered part can be held to its original and true meaning, or, indeed, to any one meaning for any considerable length of time. Hence the truth of God itself, thus deflected and perverted, is made even the source of a bewilderment and confusion equivalent to darkness itself; and well may the divine question be asked, "If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness." We need not here enter this printed Bible itself, so much gloried in by our Protestant friends, with a view to point out how much therein contained is wholly excluded by their sect-creeds, though as to its claims of inspiration it rests upon the same basis as all other parts; how much is violently wrested from its manifest original meaning and held in unrighteousness; how much is spiritualized and transcendentalized to such a degree as to leave very little tangible body behind, and how much, because it is either mysterious in its nature, or, if naturally interpreted, would radically break up the very foundations of the sect system, is allowed to remain an absolutely dead letter. All this could be easily done in the way of detail, but it would lead us too far from our direct purpose. We submit here, in view of these and similar facts, that the mere possession by the sects of the printed book called the Bible does not sustain the inference, which they are so ready to draw from it, that, therefore, they possess the truth; nor yet that, depending upon this part only, as and for the whole, and glorying in it, they are even in condition to find the truth. The part thus deflected and perverted, or, in the strong language of the Bible itself, "wrested," constitutes, in many cases, and perhaps the vast majority, the very obstacle in the way, preventing the finding of the truth.

But still, how account for this special zeal which, by Protestant sects, is everywhere manifested ostensibly for the truth—the fierce conflicts among themselves and against each other—if they are not earnestly searching for the truth? But, on the other hand, why all this fierce contention and contradiction, if it is a fact that they have found it and are now really in possession of it? In account-

ing for this special zeal, we may ask generally why are errorists usually actuated by a special zeal? This, too, is a fact, not strange, however, when thoroughly sifted. All persons are specially interested in and for their own children, and, in like manner, each new offspring of the fertile imagination will create, as is everywhere seen, a new and special enthusiasm in the parent. And it matters not how unsightly, ill-shaped, or even monstrous, or how puerile, silly, and jejune, these children of the fancy may be, as seen, for example, in the recent developments of Huxley and others. It is enough that they spring actually from our brain, or that we are their author; and the more exactly they are the expression of our own perverted mind, the greater will be our fondness for them. Indeed, the more monstrous and often the more helpless and puny this brood of the misled brain may be, the more fondly will they be cherished by their parent; and if connected with some degree of bewitching genius, and, by means of sophistical reasoning, are made to appear to stand upon apparently solid ground, the greater will be the interest in them also by others. It is the new which is always hoped to be true; something free, which it is expected will liberate from the irksome and unpleasant authority of the fixed and staid. How could man be more zealous than those who are now striving to prove that man has come, through some mysterious gradations and transformations, from the ape or monkey, or that the Bible itself is but a magazine of falsehood, or that God Himself is a mere fancy of the mind, and that the Church is the deadly foe of human progress and mental emancipation and enlargement? Why should error amongst Protestant sects inspire less zeal?

But Protestant sects are active and zealous in contending for truth as they hold it, because it can be kept up and alive only by this means. Being heretical, it is out of its order and harmony, and, therefore, is constantly attacked from all sides. This requires constant contention. Each sect is fighting the other just as vigorously as all are fighting the Church Catholic; and each, to maintain its own ground, must prove that the other has no right to exist. This restlessness is the very proof that the sects do not consciously possess and calmly rest in the truth. Each, besides, is in competition with the other as to the outlying population. The principle of competition is adopted by them as a necessity. For how else, they ask, can we maintain our separate rights, or how else can poor human nature be made earnest? Here comes to light the real inspiration of the motive creating this practical activity. The great question with each is, not how to bring men to "the truth," but how to bring them to our truth? who can draw the largest crowds, and which of the sects can in this way swell

into the largest bulk, and become, in other respects and for other ends, not of them the most spiritual, the most influential or controlling? Nothing, however, in all this acknowledged zeal, necessarily looks to the truth in its own broad wholeness as the inspiring object of it. True, it does involve the truth, but only as they hold it, a small fragment abstracted from the general sum, and thereby changed as to its original nature, meaning and end, and arrayed against all other truth equally divine. Would they otherwise have this zeal for it? Is not this miserably narrow eclecticism in a region so immense, and where all carries on its face the same stamp of divinity and speaks with the same authoritative tones, not manifestly fatal to the vaunted boast of special zeal for "the truth" on the part of the sects? Clearly, this is neither the attitude nor the method by which to find "the truth."

There is a reason for this lying in the moral constitution of those who seek in this partial way after the truth. Why take one part and reject the other? Whatever this reason may be, it must have regard to that portion of the truth itself which such persons reject. But the part they desire to embrace is, if seen properly, of the same nature and tenor as that which they do not wish to embrace. How, if the part, in the act of culling it from the whole, were not changed to some other nature, or made to wear some other aspect for them, could they make this difference? Clearly, this is neither honestly to desire either the whole or a part of the truth. In some form or other the end, in fact, is always error, with which it is sought in this fragmentary way to connect the truth, in order to give the error a more open field and greater force. How can it be otherwise? All such effort after the truth, instead of leading to the full, broad light of day, can only conduct to the denser darkness of moral night; for all the parts of the truth are, in themselves, and must of necessity be of the same nature, arising as they do from a common centre, and to be worthily sought for must, therefore, be loved, as already said, for their own sake. And this they will be, if, in fact, they are all equally regarded as truth. Where this is so actually, no one part can be thus preferred to another, and certainly never to the rejection of the other; for the rejection of the one part conclusively shows that the other part is held not in the spirit of truth, but in that of "unrighteousness." This spirit is itself an absolute disqualification for finding the truth.

Moreover, truth of every description and in every form, has, in some shape, a keeper, or, in other words, it becomes embodied, by which means it is preserved and perpetuated in its own proper character. Natural truth has the various forms of nature; historical truth has history; civil truth has the state; domestic truth has the family, and legal truth, the forms of jurisprudence. Truth

lying in the region of the fine arts assumes the forms of poetry, painting, sculpture, and music. So we may travel all through the various forms of mundane truth, and in the case of each we will find that it has crystallized itself in some outward visible form or institution, which becomes in turn its keeper or preserver, by means of which it is continued in its own proper character. Now, can it be supposed that spiritual truth, which is infinitely more important than all these combined, forms an exception to this otherwise universal fact? Surely it cannot. But what, precisely, is the keeper of this truth? Prior to Christianity, as will be generally conceded, this keeper was the Jewish Church. To it were the divine oracles given. The Jewish people were raised up for this special purpose; and in order that they might be able to carry it out more effectually, they were not only specially blessed with extraordinary gifts, but were also carefully separated from all other surrounding peoples and nations. Upon them all other tribes were dependent for the truth. Jewish history, in connection with the Bible itself, makes it too clear to leave any doubt with regard to this general fact.

But what became the keeper of the truth when Judaism faded away, or dissolved into Christianity? Did this truth, at this point and all at once, become independent of a keeper, and has it been allowed, from this time on, to float loosely and vaguely in the mind of all succeeding nations? Surely no one would be willing to take such a position. If not, what was its keeper? Were any of the Protestant sects on hand at this time to take this office? What institution other than the Catholic Church, which, by divine authority itself, is said to be the "ground and pillar of the truth," could be this keeper? Upon her the burden passed from the Jewish Church, which itself became merged into her broad bosom, with the command from the Almighty, made only tenfold more solemn, because the revelation itself is more precious, "Keep my truth." The keeper here was, as to its nature, as we can readily see, in full harmony with the truth itself. If the truth was divine, so was the Church; if the first was supernatural, so was the second. The truth, being infinitely broad and high, the Church, to be its competent keeper, was Catholic, which involves both attributes, and approximately commensurate. If the truth was inspired, and, therefore, fixed and unchangeable, the Church was infallible, and constantly the same through all the ages. The last, therefore, was meet to be the keeper of the first. In her is the written word just as it was penned in the beginning, and here also is the spoken word, which, if it had been written, would have filled the world with books; and these, in perfect accord and harmony with each other, are but the two different forms of the same grand, whole system. Acting as this keeper, the Catholic Church, feeling the sacredness

of its obligation, carefully selected the genuine from the spurious productions claiming to be inspired, and formed the Canon of Sacred Scripture ; and but for this, where would be the Bible now in the hands of our Protestant friends, and of which separately they so zealously boast? Could any of the sects have the attributes above enumerated, corresponding with the truth itself, fitting it or them to be this keeper of the truth?

Besides all this, the Catholic Church has the truth embodied in still another way. It has one altar, which, when properly understood, is rich in this view, beyond all power of imagination ; a priesthood, who, in their persons and various robes, impressively symbolize much of the most sacred truth connected with Christ himself and his atoning work ; images and paintings, bearing vividly to the eye almost the whole circle of practical truth essential to salvation. In a word, the whole Church, including its architectural structure, outside as well as within, with its music and its ritual growing out of the real presence, is, in every particular and throughout, the striking symbol for the eye and ear of the grand truth of God, which, besides, it proclaims daily throughout all the world, with the unerring voice of infallibility.

But our purpose is accomplished. We can go no further. We have reached not the mount that "burneth with fire, and a whirlwind, and darkness, and storm;" but we are come to "Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and the company of the many thousands of angels, and to the Church of the first born, who are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, and to the sprinkling of blood which speaketh better things than that of Abel." Bowing at her altar we deeply realize that though the physical eye sees it not, yet to the eye of faith the transfigured glory of the scene enacted eighteen centuries ago on Mount Tabor still glows with undiminished brightness. Amidst the condensed rays of the whole truth thus streaming directly upon us, we come to know what is meant by "not apprehending," but "being apprehended," by the truth. Hitherto, and on the outside, the movement in searching the truth was from the human side aided by the divine ; now and here, it is from the divine side aided by the co-operation of the human. This is not only to find the truth, but to be found by it ; not only to have the truth in us, but for the truth to have us in it, which is much richer, deeper, and grander. It is for the single individual to be centrally in the whole, and not for a mere ray of this truth to be separately in the individual. Here also is the truth in its own certainty, for here still sounds the great commission : "Go ye into all the world and preach my gospel to every creature," and preach

it, not as something doubtful or uncertain, or that cannot certainly be known, but as the absolute verity of God. "So I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." "He that heareth you, heareth Me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me."

There are many still on the outside who have more than a dim inkling of all this. Still they allow themselves to be tossed about by endless and angry controversies, hoping that something hereafter may be developed which will bring to them the truth in its wholeness without the necessity and humiliation on their part of going to the Catholic altar for it. Longingly they are looking forward to a coming Church, which they call the "Church of the future," which, as they hope, may be the union of all. Vain hope! Can it be supposed by the rational mind that God would set aside his own wonderful creation, the Catholic Church, which is so perfectly adapted to, and commensurate with, the nature and requirements of the truth itself, for the purpose of making room for another? And what other could be greater and broader, and endowed with grander gifts? And can the imagination conceive anything more capable of comprehending all kindreds and nations, than the Church Catholic? What such persons need, in addition to their present conviction, is the divine grace of faith, and with this the equally divine gift of moral courage, by which they may be able to sacrifice pride of intellect, worldly position and consideration, and realize that in the truth, and through the truth, only, can anything be of real good. Having this, we have all things; without this, *what* have we?
