

**Zeitschrift:** Revue internationale de théologie = Internationale theologische Zeitschrift = International theological review  
**Band:** 5 (1897)  
**Heft:** 17  
  
**Artikel:** The development of papalism  
**Autor:** Green-Armytage, N.  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-403376>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 01.09.2025

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF PAPALISM.

---

When fifty-two years ago Newman published his celebrated Essay on development of Christian doctrine,<sup>1)</sup> and detailed therein the notes of a true development, to wit, preservation of type, continuity of principle, power of assimilation, logical sequence, anticipation of the future, conservative action on its past, and chronic vigour, he omitted, either designedly or thoughtlessly, to add thereto the following notes: scripturalness of original germ, continuous comparison of the developing idea with the scriptural germ, together with abhorrence of alien intrusive ideas to which the developing idea might, in the absence of watchfulness, carelessly assimilate itself. For these three notes entirely destroy the theory of development as it was enunciated by its celebrated author.

And here I would at once state that it is not my purpose to dwell now on a point, upon which Mr Archer Butler long ago enlarged in his answer to Newman,<sup>2)</sup> namely, the inconsistency of the Newmanite contention with the Romanist and Tridentine appeal to Scripture, and tradition, as handed down from the times of the Apostles, inasmuch as we, who are not of the Roman communion, are not particularly concerned with this contrariety between written Roman theory, and popular Roman practice.

Enough is it to observe that one cannot hold at one and the same time the doctrine of unchanging tradition, and the Newmanite theory of development.

---

<sup>1)</sup> "Development of Christian doctrine". Newman, 1845. Longmans new edition, 1885.

<sup>2)</sup> "Letters on Romanism", Archer Butler, Macmillan, 1854, and "Theory of development". J. B. Mozley, Rivington's, 1878.

But I will confine myself to the basis of Scripture alone, on the ground that a theory, like papalism, which claims to affect all the baptized, must be judged by a standard which all the baptized willingly acknowledge. For in controversy the appeal must ever lie to authorities held in common by both sides.

Now this appeal to Scriptural testimony, as proof of the value of religious ideas, is no appeal to a mere book, which, without any connection with previous oral testimony, appeared at some one given time in its entirety, much in the same way as the ten commandments were revealed to the Israelites.

For our New Testament, so far from being, like the roll given to Baruch, the introduction to oral testimony, is rather the sequel of the oral testimony of Apostles and Evangelists, and was demanded, as a necessary supplement thereto, by the very nature of that oral testimony. First came the spoken word, then afterwards the written word, but each of them was a necessity in the order stated, so that neither of them now stands alone as a witness to truth. This sequence of ideas will be evident to those who study philosophically the manner of preaching the Gospel which was observed by the Apostles.

The gift of inspiration accorded of them was such that the whole apostolic college would, in divers countries, by means of divers languages, nay by means of different expressions in the same language, yet ever teach the same unvarying Gospel, and administer the same unchanging Word and Sacraments throughout the then known Christian world.

Thus all who became Christians in the first age of the Church, wherever they might be, believed the same things about the same Christ. Oral testimony, unvarying because it was inspired, was to them in the stead of unvarying Scripture, a standard of reference in disputes that was always at hand. And for one generation after the Apostles' days would this unchangeableness of "the faith once for all delivered to the Saints" have been continued by their immediate disciples, whose minds had been moulded, so to say, by the power of irresistible apostolic orthodoxy inherited from the day of Pentecost.

Now, had God so determined it, the perpetual ministry founded once for all by our Lord in the persons of the twelve Apostles, might have been gifted with inspiration, at least in

the persons of their successors the bishops, so that always, to the very end of our dispensation, inspired oral testimony might have been the single and final court of appeal in questions of disputed doctrine, as it had been in the days of the Apostles. But God, as we know from the record of history, left no such infallible race of men as successors of the Apostles. Nay, rather may we say that, if the inspired Apostles considered themselves as "earthen vessels" filled with precious gifts given at Pentecost, our ministry, in spite of many precious gifts then once for all given to the Church, is earth of a baser mould than that of the Apostles, being no inheritor of the gift of inspiration.

Or, in the stead of the gift of perpetual inspiration, God might have chosen the way of infallible oracles, thus transferring to Christendom an idea long familiar to the heathen mind. But no writer has ever testified to the existence of such an institution, as that of spoken oracles, as a testimony to the truth of Christian doctrine.

How then, in the acknowledged lack of perpetual inspiration, and of oracular testimony, was the Apostolic deposit of unchangeable truth to be made known to the spiritual descendants of those who had heard it with their ears? How was alteration of this deposit either by addition or by diminution, to be obviated for all time?

Nothing was left but to follow on the lines of the old covenant, as was the custom of Christianity in so many ways, too numerous now to mention, by *stereotyping*, so to say, in fixed unalterable, because written phraseology, the inspired teachings of Apostles and Evangelists. Thus future generations might, if one may say so, sit side by side with the first converts to Christianity at the feet of the Apostles themselves, and listen to their oral teaching.

Thus inspired testimony was to continue ever in the Church, the form therein of the testimony alone varying, oral witness giving place to written witness.

And this change of form was not sudden, as if, on one and the same day, inspired testimony, throughout the whole Church, had given way to the witness of the whole New Testament as we now possess it.



Rather should we remember that, as the gift of inspired oral testimony diminished in its extent, little by little, so also, little by little, did the written word increase in volume, so that, for a time, there existed a dual testimony of inspired preaching, and of inspired scripture in the forms of the Apostolic Epistles.

But this coincidence of the two witnesses, neither of them in their fulness, was but a temporary arrangement, to bridge over the gap, between the time when oral testimony stood alone in its entirety, and the time when the New Testament alone, in its present entirety, took its place.

And this substitution of the written testimony of the New Testament for the oral testimony of inspired teachers has existed since the death of the last of such teachers, so that, always from the beginning, the faithful have ever received the same unchanging truth, the manner only of its transference from the divine to the human mind being changed, inspired writing having taken the place of inspired teaching.

Thus to appeal to the Scriptures, as a test of a true development, is nothing else than an appeal to the *oral* testimony of Apostles, by hearing of which, before Scriptures existed, faith entered into the world.

Moreover the existence in the Church of such an unchangeable standard of doctrine is but reasonable. For as God is always the same at all times, and as mankind is still sinful, as when the Gospel was first proclaimed, it must needs follow that the Christian religion, which is to unite together God and man, should ever remain unchanged in substance, and in doctrine, during the days of the later dispensation.

This is what was intended by our Church, when, at the Reformation, she called attention to this forgotten idea in her VI<sup>th</sup>, XX<sup>th</sup> and XXI<sup>st</sup> articles of religion. Forgotten, I say, was this idea of harmony between Scripture and Church doctrine. For we know that it was no mere innovation, as some Romanists vainly assert, for the Fathers, especially Tertullian, Athanasius, Jerome and others, enunciate the same truth. Nay, the famous canon of Vincentius, so obnoxious to all innovators, whether Protestant or Ultramontane; “*Id teneamus, quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*”, is but the same idea in another form, for the whole body of the faithful herein alluded to, as holding the same faith from the beginning,

must necessarily include the men, and the times of the age of inspiration, and of the New Testament writers.

But this patristic testimony to the need of likeness between spoken Church doctrine, and written Bible truth is but the echo of Apostolic teaching itself, by which we are bidden, at one time, "not to give heed even to an angel preaching any new Gospel", and at another, "to contend earnestly for an unchangeable deposit of truth" unalterable by later ideas.

But yet higher still is this sanction of the need of likeness between the written testimony of the Scriptures, and religious ideas in their development during the ages.

For, as Canon Gore well remarked in the debate on Evolution at the Shrewsbury Church Congress last October, what was the gist of our Lord's teaching, when He came into contact with religious ideas, as they appeared in His day developed by the Scribes and Pharisees? Was it not as though He had said to them, „Ye err in your evolution of religious ideas, because ye know not the Scriptures, so that, in your blind ignorance of the spirit of the Law and the prophets, you have developed many ideas in a wrong direction, and have farced into other ideas, during their development, many ideas alien from the spirit of revelation. In short, your developments are wide deviations from the way of righteousness". And, as instances of this erring and distorted development of original Mosaic ideas, may be mentioned the views of the Pharisees on Sabbath day observance, and on corban by which the ideas themselves had been obscured.

Now, if the Jewish Church could thus develop ideas wrongly, surely the Christian Church may do likewise, for the promised gift of God's superintending presence in the Church does not prevent the growth of the tares of false doctrines in the garden of the Lord, even until the end of our dispensation.

Truth indeed will never in the long run be vanquished by error, but error will continue to combat truth till the second advent of our Lord. In other words, there will ever be a tendency to wrong developments of original ideas to the end of time.

So, if the comparison of current and dominant religious ideas with scriptural truth was required as a preventive of wrong development in the Jewish dispensation, so is it required now in our own day: For the very idea itself, of harmony between written and spoken testimony, is one of those many principles that

are common to both the Law and the Gospel, which is the heir of the Law in all ordinances not expressly abrogated. An appeal to a fixed standard of truth is an innate idea in all revelation.

Needless also is it to state that the scripturalness of the germ of any developing idea, taught as necessary to salvation, involves also the acceptance of the other two notes mentioned above, namely, continuous comparison of developing ideas with their scriptural germ, and abhorrence of intrusive alien ideas. For a religious idea may, like that of the Sabbath among the Jews, start from a scriptural germ, and yet, in the course of its development, it may still become distorted, as was the idea of the Sabbath, by pharisaical tradition in an unscriptural way. To obviate this evil is needed therefore *continuous* careful comparison of germ and development, lest good ideas be perverted, and evil ideas be imported into the process of development.

And Christian teachers can exercise this watchfulness in two ways, first by careful comparison of their own teaching with the Scriptures, and also by inviting their hearers to test the doctrine which they hear, by the doctrine which they read in the Bible. This idea of comparison of ideas with Scripture is in itself eminently scriptural. For were not the Gospels themselves written, as S. Luke tells us, that the readers thereof might “know the certainty of what they had received by way of oral teaching,” which is only another way of saying that oral Catholic doctrine must be always written scriptural truth, and that, as such, it should both practice, and invite comparison of the two witnesses.

Such comparison as this was that which the Berœans made between the oral teaching of an inspired Apostle, and the Old Testament, for which they received the praise of the Holy Spirit speaking by the means of the Evangelist’s history. And even the inspired S. Paul feared not this comparison, because he was conscious that Jesus, Whom he preached, was no new teacher sent unannounced from God, but was “the Messiah, of whom the Law and the prophets had written”.

Thus early in the history of the Church do we find the Scriptures treated as the witness for necessary Christian ideas.

And, in our day the Anglo-Catholic Church may be said to be always making this invitation to compare together the word spoken, and the word written, developments, and original ideas,

by reason of the fact that, like the Church in primitive times, she reads the Scriptures in the language of the people in the public daily services.<sup>1)</sup> And the written is more frequent than the spoken witness, for she reads oftener than she teaches, seeing that oral instruction is not required more than twice or thrice a week, while, at least twice on each day, is an appeal made to the written word by the Church herself in her official acts. Now, as little acts of devotion frequently repeated tend to strengthen the spiritual life, though the virtue of each individual act may be but small, so do these frequent, though short appeals, made day by day to the written word in the Anglican Church, in the reading of the vernacular Scriptures at the altar, and in the choir, tend imperceptibly toward orthodoxy of faith, and the rejection of wrong developments of dogma and devotion.

Such continual repeated daily action of the Church in this matter may be well compared to the action of the steersman, whose hand is ever on the wheel, while his eye is ever on the compass. Intermittent attention to fixed rule is a law of life for both soul and body. For, as the steersman dare not for a minute neglect the compass, so, not for a day, should the Church neglect the public reading of the vernacular Scriptures.

For, if it be true that the Church is the ship, wherein "we must abide, if we would be saved," it is also true that the Scriptures are the compass, which is the guide to her path, and without which she will go astray.

All reading indeed of the Scriptures is good, as making "wise unto salvation" those, who have been already orally instructed in the elements of the faith. Yet such reading, good and useful though it is, is not equivalent to the public reading of the lessons, which is the corporate and official action of the Church continually comparing the progress of her spiritual life with the unchanging law laid down in the Scriptures.

This being so, it is not too much to assert that one reason among others, why certain religious ideas have been wrongly developed in the Roman Church, is the long neglect of the public reading of scripture lessons in the vernacular, at mass, and at vespers. For a mere verse or two at the later service, and a

---

<sup>1)</sup> Bingham's *Christian Antiquities*, XIII, 4.

short paragraph or two at the earlier service, and that in the Latin, cannot be called in any sense sufficient spiritual nourishment for a devout mind thirsting for divine wisdom.

To give the soul such a small amount of scriptural instruction is, as if one should set before a hungry man at his dinner-hour a plate full of nuts to eat, the work of cracking their shells, and the small sustenance then obtained, well representing the labour of first understanding the Latin, before receiving the infinitesimal spiritual benefit to be acquired from a few isolated texts read one day in the week.<sup>1)</sup>

And, by the way, it may be as well to remark that the opposite extremists to Ultramontanes, Protestants to wit, are also to blame in this matter, at least in England.

For, had they but observed that salutary law of the spiritual life, the daily public reading of the Scriptures, it is far from probable that such unscriptural ideas, as antisacramentalism, solifidianism, instantaneous conversion, and the like, would ever have gained firm hold on the minds of men. Strange indeed is it that even they who professed with their lips to honour the Scriptures, should have so grossly neglected them. But even vernacular Scriptures, if but seldom read, are of no more avail than Latin Scriptures when read. For Scripture abhors Protestant defect, as well as Papal development.

Now, as it would require a large volume to describe the divergencies from the Scriptural standard of all the wrong developments of religious ideas, let it suffice here to describe in outline the divergence of one only among them, and that the chiefest and most prominent of all, the papal idea of a divinely one-man appointed rule from Rome of the whole Church throughout the wide world.

It is not too much to say that papalism, thus tried in the Scriptural balance, is found grievously wanting, for not only is it non-scriptural, it is also anti-scriptural, as well as utterly improbable, and unreasonable, not to say absurd.

(1) That papalism is non-scriptural needs no proof, for in behalf of the three crucial points in the Petrine germ of the papal idea, which ought to be found in the New Testament, to

---

<sup>1)</sup> v. Chrysostom Hom: 32 and 41 in Johannem etc. etc., on the benefit of reading the Bible lessons.

wit: S. Peter's lordship as "Arch-Apostle", to quote Laud's phrase, over the other Apostles; his founding of the Roman Church; and his devolution of his peculiar powers as Arch-Apostle upon his successors, as bishops of Rome, no single text of Scripture can be honestly quoted.<sup>1)</sup>

True, S. Peter's mere visit to Rome is more than probable, but yet it is not a scriptural fact.

For the acts of the lives of our Lord, and of His Apostles, may be divided into three kinds.

(a) First, there are the foundation doctrinal facts, such as those mentioned in the Creed, as the basis of our faith.

(b) Next, come all the undoubted historical facts, which, though not mentioned in the Creeds, yet make up the history of our Lord, and His Apostles in the New Testament.

(c) Thirdly, follow events, which are not only not fiduciary foundation facts, but are not even biblical historical facts, being mere probabilities greater or less, which may or may not have happened, and which, as being unrecorded in the Scripture, we may or may not regard as true. Such are S. Paul's visit to Spain, the visit of his disciples to Britain, the mission of S. Thomas to India, of S. Andrew to Scythia, and S. Peter's visit to Rome, etc. etc.

For, as for his alleged lengthy episcopate there, it may be at once dismissed, as some thing very much less than a probability, being, as scholars have proved, not only an improbable, but an impossible event.

Now, any reasonable man must admit that a doctrine of such vast importance, as the Romanists allege the papal supremacy to be, being, in their opinion, equal in fiduciary importance to the doctrine of the Incarnation, needed some distinct record of its promulgation in the sacred Scriptures, not to mention its embodiment in the Creed, as a foundation fact of our faith.

But to endeavour to build on a mere probability a dogma of the first importance, is, as if, as has been said, one should attempt to support a pyramid on its apex.

(2) But yet even non-scriptural ideas in matters, at least of ritual, and of discipline, and of government, may be assimilated to

---

<sup>1)</sup> *Laud's controversy with Fisher.* Anglo-Catholic Library.



original Gospel ideas, so long as they are not made articles of faith necessary to salvation. Such a non-scriptural, but still not anti-scriptural idea, is the downward development of the sacred ministry, in the way of the minor orders in former times, and, in our own day, in the way of Catechists, and Sunday School teachers. Though some would even say that such a development has its scriptural analogue in the institution of the Nethinim, and of other officers of the Temple, unknown in the time of Moses.

So, if the papal idea had never developed beyond the idea of a primacy by ecclesiastical grant amongst coequal bishops, as a matter of the mere *bene esse* of the Church, but not of its *esse*, no constitutional Catholic would have objected to it, on the ground that the placing of such primacy at Rome was a non-scriptural idea.

For such a primacy amongst coequals is not only reasonable in itself, being acted upon every day in worldly matters, but would seem to have been provided for by our Lord Himself, as the peculiar privilege of the Holy City, from the fact of His separate appearance after His Resurrection to the first Bishop of Jerusalem S. James the Just (v. Euseb. H. E., VII, 19).

Hence, we are not surprised to learn that this primacy lasted during the Episcopates of his two next successors, Symeon, and Jude, till the fall of the Holy City (Apost. Const., VII, 46).<sup>1)</sup> For the existence of the primacy in Jerusalem was in itself a reasonable thing also, no cause being able to be alleged why this city should not continue, as it had been before, as "the centre of unity" of religious organization, thus becoming the constitutional president of all Churches, though the despotic mistress of none. In fact, such an idea of primacy in the Church may be classed along with the institution of the Lord's day, as both of them ordinances, Apostolic, and all but divine, and therefore secondary only to the unmistakably divine ordinances of the sacred ministry, and of the Eucharistic sacrifice. So this idea of primacy was acknowledged in the Church as a continuous need, when, after the fall of Jerusalem, Rome was appointed for its seat. The locality of this constitutional primacy was a matter of little account so long as there was a primacy. Some

---

<sup>1)</sup> v. Fragments of Hegesippus. Clementine Recognitions. Euseb. H. E., III, 20.

famous place must be chosen, firstly and best, a place of spiritual, secondly, a place of secular renown.

(3) But papalism claims more than a mere ecclesiastical primacy amongst coequal sees; and so it is an idea not only non-scriptural, but also plainly *anti-scriptural*.

And in this way. To the many ordinances held in common by both Judaism and Christianity; such as confession of sins, sacrifice, liturgical forms of public worship, etc., may be added the ordinance of the threefold ministry, which has a threefold confirmation of its importance in the Scriptures.

For there was first, the Aaronic ministry consisting of High Priest, Priest, and Levite; than the Gospel ministry of our Lord, His twelve Apostles, and the seventy disciples; followed by the threefold ministry of Apostles, latterly called Bishops: Bishops, or presbyters, known latterly as priests, and deacons.

Thus viewed, the threefold ministry is an innate idea in revealed religion, never to be set aside, and never to be either enlarged, or diminished by ecclesiastical ordinance, so long as the ministry itself shall last.

But papalism has invented a new, and fourth order utterly unacknowledged either by Moses, by our Lord, or by the Apostles, an order moreover consisting of one man only at a time, and an order claiming to rule all the other orders by virtue of divine right, so that the popedom is regarded as necessary a part of the sacred ministry, as is the Episcopate, or the priesthood.

This utterly novel, unconstitutional, and revolutionary order of mere human invention, is sometimes defended as the necessary analogue to the one-man ministry of the Jewish High Priesthood. But such a contention cannot stand a moment's critical examination. For the one-man high priestly ministry was an idea essentially Jewish, and fitting in admirably, and harmoniously, with the idea of one Temple only for one single holy race. But, now that the area of the Church is enlarged, so as to include all nations, each with its multitude of Temples in her borders, the Aaronic idea is not magnified, as Romanists contend, so as to have for its analogue a *single* Arch-Apostle at Rome, but rather is it *multiplied* by the number of Bishops throughout the Christian world, so that each of these Bishops is a "summus sacerdos", or High Priest, as the fathers say, and a spiritual Aaron, because, not the whole Christian world,



but each diocese therein, is the spiritual counterpart of ancient Israel.

In other words, there is still in the Church after Christ, as before, a divine vicariate, but with this difference, that instead of one member only, it has many coequal members, the Bishops of the Christian world.

As for the divine appointment of a fourth supreme order, the papal idea would demand that Christ should have appointed one Apostle only, to be succeeded by a line of Bishops, as sole rulers of the Church, each the only member of the Episcopate during his life.

But this limiting of the Episcopate to one member only at a time would be not only impossible to work in a world-wide Church, but would be also contrary to the spirituality of the Christian idea of the ministry, for, in order to obviate any surceasal of the Episcopate at the death of the sole Bishop, it would be necessary that his successor should be his son, who should succeed by right of inheritance at his father's death, and not by virtue of a spiritual gift at consecration.

Thus the papal idea of Church polity is not only non-scriptural, it is also anti-scriptural, and, as such, it is not only unnecessary for the existence of the Church, but is absolutely injurious to her best interests. For, that which offends against the mind of God in the Bible, must offend against that mind, as shown forth in His Church also, for, otherwise, God in one ordinance would contradict Himself in another ordinance, which is blasphemous.

Papalism, in short, is not so much a development of a Gospel idea in a wrong direction, analogous to the wrong pharisaic development of the original sabbatic idea revealed to Moses, as an instance of *an unnatural intrusion of an alien idea*, having nothing more in common with the idea of the divine Episcopate, to which it joins itself, than the ivy has in common with the building, which it covers, or the misletoe with the oak on which it grows.

Whence then comes this alien idea of a spiritual Vice-royalty of a single ruler in the Church? Surely from the city of the Cæsars, to which, in the nature of things, the primacy naturally gravitated after the fall of Jerusalem.

The spiritual malaria of Rome, so to say, affected even the divinely ordained ministry, infecting it with the deadly poison

of despotic Cæsarism. Cæsarism, so that the Pope became, as Ferrari calls him, a "bishop of the whole world", a "divine Monarch", "Supreme Emperor"; etc. etc.<sup>1)</sup>

Truly did Hobbes speak, when he said that "Papal Rome is but the ghost of old Rome sitting on the walls and the ruins thereof".

So, on the whole, it is not too much to say that, had the idea of the papacy, as now taught in the Roman Church, as an article of faith necessary to salvation, been placed before the fathers of one of the first seven General Councils for their acceptance, it would have been summarily rejected with a thousand anathemas, as an idea utterly unworthy even of serious consideration.

For it would have seemed to them as thoroughly uncatholic, unscriptural and unreasonable, as any other new doctrine, that could have been invented by mans unspiritual ingenuity, such, for instance, as the doctrine of a divine Quaternity, to supersede the Trinity, or of the natural birth of our Lord to supersede the divine incarnation, or of our Lord's non appearance on earth to His disciples during the great forty days.

For, as a reception of any one of these three heresies would have been, not merely an instance of wrong development of original divine ideas, but rather an abnormal, unnatural change of one species of revelation for another, so, in like manner, the substitution for the old tripartite ministry, of a quadripartite ministry, and that too, with the fourth, and new order supreme over the other three, would have been an unnatural change of one species of Church polity for another.

Being therefore such a change of one species of Church polity for another, the papal idea is out of harmony with even the laws of nature. "For neither geology nor history supplies any record of the change of one species into another." (Maccoll's Life here and hereafter.)

That is to say, a Christian bishop, preserving ever the permanance of the Gospel type of his office, can no more become a Pope, than, by the law of natural evolution, a dog can become a fish, or a bird can become a whale.

---

<sup>1)</sup> Prompta Bibliotheca. Venetiis, 1782, s. v. "Papa".

So that it may be said that there can't possibly be such a thing as the papacy, as a means of grace, and of salvation. Rather has its existence made for the contrary effect of distraction, disorder, and division in the Church, first, in the separation between East and West, and secondly, in the revolt of Protestantism against even the Scriptural idea of the Episcopate, despotism having prepared the way for anarchy.

But great facts, though they represent great frauds, must yet be recognized as existent, even though they cannot be acknowledged as lawfully dominant. And so, like the two facts of Buddhism and Mahometanism, the fact of the Papacy must be regarded as an idea to be rigorously contended against, in season and out of season, by teachers of truth, for wideness of reception of any idea does not of itself argue its truth, or as Tertullian says, "Dominus noster Christus veritatem se, non consuetudinem, nominavit." (Virg. Vel. 1.)

But, how shall we account for the widespread acceptance of the heretical idea of the papal polity of Church Government? What has already been stated in this article will make it plain that the neglect of the Scriptures has chiefly tended to this universal acceptance in the Latin Church of the papal idea. The idea of Church development of ideas has been fully accepted, without the acknowledgment of the need of the corrective and coordinate working of another idea, the continual testing of such development by a Scriptural standard. The ship of the Church, with her compass neglected, was allowed to sail uncontrolled amidst the seas of human opinion.

And this necessity of harmony between Scripture, and developments of religious ideas, throughout the whole course of their existence, receives indirect support from the events of the last few years in France. For if Henri Lasserre's<sup>1)</sup> presentation of the vernacular Gospels to his countrymen did not tend, in the long run, to lead its readers to contradict modern Roman developments in religion, why was it suddenly withdrawn from circulation by the authorities, even after previous sanction on their part? For they who preach truth, and develop religious ideas in a Scriptural way, are only too glad to have their oral

---

<sup>1)</sup> *Les saints Evangiles*, trad. nouv. par H. Lasserre, publiée avec l'imprimatur de l'archevêché de Paris; 23<sup>e</sup> édit.; Paris, Palmé, 1887.

testimony confirmed by the written word, just as the school teacher, who teaches history, invites his pupils afterwards to read history for themselves.

So, the natural inference to be drawn from this incident, is that the Roman Church, as swayed by the Jesuits, cannot afford to have her developments tried by a Scriptural standard, least of all the development of the papal idea. Kindred ideas work well together, so it is but according to the fitness of things that the Jesuits, who are, in their constitution, an instance of the wrong development of the idea of subjection to Church authority taught in the Scriptures, should be the firm upholders of a similarly wrong development of the Scriptural idea of Church polity.

And, in conclusion, another thought. This continuous and unceasing appeal of the Church herself in her corporate capacity for the trial of all ideas, both in their origination, and in their development, by the unchanging standard of the written word, is not only supported on the testimony of fathers, and of councils, but has stronger foundation still. For did not our Lord Himself, in Whom there was no admixture of error, make continuous appeal to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, not only, as I have already observed, in order to test the wrong pharisaical developments of Mosaic ideas, but also, what is more important to observe, for the testing of His own teaching, because He wished to shew that the Gospel ideas, which He originated, had been already typified, or provided for in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, as the shadow of good things to come.

If even He then tested, and invited others to test Gospel ideas, at their origination, by means of Old Testament revelation, much more should the Church test the development of these Gospel ideas by their New Testament germs.

Thus continually "comparing spiritual things with spiritual", principles with their products, statements with their logical deductions, and ideas, in their state of germ, with the same ideas in a state of development, we shall be the less liable to fall into the error of those "who err, from not knowing the Scriptures", either because, like some, whom we know, they never read them, or because, like others, whom we know

also, they read them with the veil of inherited traditional prejudice before the eyes of their mind, a veil as thick as that, which of old prevented the Jews from seeing in Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah predicted by the Prophets.

N. GREEN-ARMYTAGE. M. A.  
Incumbent of S. Aidan's Boston, England.

---