

The Vatican Council and Its Definitions: A Pastoral Letter to the Clergy (*The Vatican Council and Its Definitions: A Pastoral Letter to the Clergy*)

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Chapter II: The Two Constitutions

Having so far spoken on the less pleasing and less vital part of this subject, I gladly turn to the authoritative acts of the Council.

The subject matter of its deliberations was divided into four parts, and for each part a Deputation of twenty-four Fathers was elected by the Council. The four divisions were, on Faith, Discipline, Religious Orders, and on Rites, including the Missions of the Church.

Hitherto, the subjects of Faith and Discipline alone have come before the Council; and of these two chiefly the first has been treated, as being the basis of all, and in its nature the most important.

In what I have to add, I shall confine myself to the two Dogmatic Constitutions, *De Fide* and *De Ecclesia Christi*.¹

The history of the Faith cannot be adequately written without writing both the history of heresy and the history of definitions; for heresies are partial aberrations from the truth, and definitions are rectifications of those partial errors. But the Faith is coextensive with the whole Revelation of Truth; and though every revealed truth is definite and precise, nevertheless, all are not defined. The need of definition arises when any revealed truth has been obscured or denied. The general history of the Church will therefore give the general history of the Faith; but the history of Councils will give chiefly, if not only, the history of those parts of revelation which have been assailed by heresy and protected by definition.

¹ {org. 1} See Appendix, p. 182, etc.

The Divine Tradition of the Church contains truths of the supernatural order which without revelation could not have been known to man, such as the Incarnation of God and the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and truths of the natural order which are known also by reason, such as the existence of God. The circumference of this Divine Tradition is far wider than the range of definitions. The Church guards, teaches, and transmits the whole divine tradition of natural and supernatural truth, but defines only those parts of the deposit which have been obscured or denied.

The eighteen Œcumenical Councils of the Church have therefore defined such specific doctrines of the Faith as were contested. The Council of the Vatican has, for this reason, treated of two primary truths greatly contested but never hitherto defined: namely, the Supernatural order and the Church. It is this which will fix the character of the Vatican Council, and will mark in history the progress of error in the Christian world at this day.

The series of heresy has followed the order of the Baptismal Creed. It began by assailing the nature and unity of God the Creator; then of the Redeemer; then the doctrine of the Incarnation, of the Godhead and the Manhood of the Son of God; then of the Holy Trinity, and of the personality and Godhead of the Holy Ghost. To these succeeded controversies on sin, grace, and the Holy Sacraments; finally the heresies of the so-called Reformation, which spread over what remained unassailed in the Catholic Theology, especially the Divine authority and the institution of the Church itself. The Councils before Trent have completely guarded all doctrines of faith hitherto contested, by precise definition, excepting only the two primary and preliminary truths anterior to all doctrine, namely, the revelation of the supernatural order and the Divine authority and institution of the Church. To affirm and to define these seems to be, as I said, the mission and character of the Vatican Council, and indicates the state of the Christian world; because in the last three hundred years the rapid development of the rationalistic principle of Protestantism has swept away all intermediate systems and fragmentary Christianities. The question is reduced to a simple choice of faith and unbelief, or, of the natural or the supernatural order.

This then is the starting-point of the first dogmatic Constitution, *De Fide Catholica*.

In the Procœmium, the Council declares that none can fail to know how the heresies condemned at Trent have been subdivided into a multitude of contending sects, whereby Faith in Christ has been overthrown in many; and the Sacred Scriptures, which at first were avowedly held to be the source and rule of faith, are now reputed as fables. The cause of this it declares to be, the rejection of the Divine authority of the Church, and the license of private judgment.

‘Then sprang up,’ it goes on to say, ‘and was widely spread throughout the world, the doctrine of rationalism or naturalism, which opposing itself altogether to Christianity as a supernatural institution, studiously labours to exclude Christ, our only Lord and Saviour, from the minds of men and from the life and morality of nations, and to set up the dominion of what they call pure reason and nature. After forsaking and rejecting the Christian religion, and denying the true God and His Christ, the minds of many have lapsed at length into the depth of pantheism, materialism, and atheism, so that, denying the rational nature of man, and all law of justice and of right, they are striving together to destroy the very foundations of human society.

‘While this impiety spreads on every side, it miserably comes to pass, that many even of the sons of the Catholic Church have wandered from the way of piety, and while truth in them has wasted away, the Catholic instinct has become feeble. For, led astray by many and strange doctrines,

they have recklessly confused together nature and grace, human science, and divine faith, so as to deprave the genuine sense of dogmas which the Holy Church our Mother holds and teaches; and have brought into danger the integrity and purity of the Faith.'

Such is the estimate of the condition of the Christian world in the judgment of the Vatican Council; and from this point of sight we may appreciate its decrees.

Its first chapter is of God the Creator of all things.² In this is decreed the personality, spirituality, and liberty of God, the creation of corporeal and of spiritual beings, and the existence of body and soul in man. These truths may be thought so primary and undeniable as to need no definition. To some it may be hardly credible that, at this day, there should exist men who deny the existence of God, or His personality, or His nature distinct from the world, or the existence of spiritual beings, or the creation of the world, or the liberty of the Divine will in creation. But such errors have existed and do exist, not only in obscure and incoherent minds, but in intellects of power and cultivation, and in philosophies of elaborate subtilty, by which the faith of many has been undermined.

The second Chapter is on Revelation. It affirms the existence of two orders of truth: the order of nature, in which the existence of God as the beginning and end of creatures may be certainly known by the things which He has made; and the order which is above created nature, that is, God and His action by truth and grace upon mankind. The communication of supernatural truth to man is revelation; and that revelation is contained in the Word of God written and unwritten, or in the divine tradition committed to the Church. These truths, elementary and certain as they seem, have been and are denied by errors of a contradictory kind. By some it is denied that God can be known by the light of reason; by others it is affirmed not only that God may be known by the light of reason, but that no revelation is necessary for man ; once more, others deny that man can be elevated to a supernatural knowledge and perfection ; again, others affirm that he can attain to all truth and goodness of and from himself. These errors also are widespread; and in the multifarious literature which Catholics incautiously admit into their homes and minds, have made havoc of the faith of many.

The third Chapter is on Faith. It may be truly said, that in this chapter every word is directed against some intellectual aberration of this century.

It affirms the dependence of the created intelligence upon the uncreated, and that this dependence is by the free obedience of faith ; or, in other words, that inasmuch as God reveals to man truths of the supernatural order, man is bound to believe that revelation by reason of the authority or veracity of God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. The infallibility of God is the motive of faith. And this faith, though it be not formed in us by perceiving the intrinsic credibility of what we believe, but by the veracity of God, nevertheless is a rational or intellectual act, the highest and most normal in its nature. For no act of the reason can be more in harmony with its nature than to believe the Word of God. To assure mankind that it is God who speaks, God has given to man signs and evidences of His revelation, which exclude reasonable doubt. The act of faith therefore is not a blind act, but an exercise of the highest reason. It is also an act not of necessity but of perfect freedom, and therefore in itself an act of normal obedience

² {org. 1} The text of the Constitutions will be found in the Appendix, No. IV.

to God, and meritorious in its nature. And this act of faith, in which both the intellect and the will have their full and normal exercise, is nevertheless an act not of the natural order, but of the supernatural, and springs from the preventing grace of the Holy Spirit, Who illuminates the intelligence and moves the will. Faith is therefore a gift of God, and a moral duty which may be required of us by the commandment of God.

But inasmuch as the grace of faith is given to man that he may believe the revelation of God, it is co-extensive with that whole revelation. Whatsoever God has revealed, man, when he knows it, is bound to believe. But God has made provision that man should know His revelation, because He has committed it to His Church as the guardian and teacher of truth. Whatsoever, therefore, the Church proposes to our belief as the Word of God, written or unwritten, whether by its ordinary and universal teaching, or by its solemn judgment and definition, we are bound to believe by divine and Catholic faith.

To this end, God has instituted in the world His visible Church, one, universal, indefectible, immutable, ever multiplying; the living witness of the Incarnation, and the sufficient evidence of its own mission to the world. The maximum of extrinsic evidence for the revelation of Christianity is the witness of the Church, considered even as an historical proof; and that extrinsic evidence is not only sufficient to convince a rational nature that Christianity is a Divine revelation, but to convict of unreasonable unbelief any intelligence which shall reject its testimony. But the visible Church is not merely a human witness. It was instituted and is guided perpetually by God Himself, and is therefore a divine witness, ordained by God as the infallible motive of credibility, and the channel of His revelation to mankind.

I need hardly point out what errors are excluded by these definitions. The whole world outside the Catholic Church is full of doctrines diametrically contrary to these truths. It is affirmed that the reason of man is so independent of God, that He cannot justly lay upon it the obligation of faith; again, that faith and science are so identified that they have the same motives, and that there is neither need nor place in our convictions for the authority of God; again, that extrinsic evidence is of no weight, because men ought to believe only on their own internal experience or private inspiration; again, that all miracles are myths, and all supernatural evidences useless, because intrinsically incredible; once more, that we can only believe that of which we have scientific proof, and that it is lawful for us to call into doubt the articles of our faith when and as often as we will, and to submit them to a scientific analysis, in the meanwhile suspending our faith until we shall have completed the scientific demonstration.

The fourth and last Chapter is on the relation of faith to reason. In this three things are declared: first, that there are two orders of knowledge; secondly, that they differ as to their object; thirdly, that they differ as to their methods of procedure.

The order of nature contains the subject-matter of natural religion and of natural science. The order of faith contains truths which without revelation we might have known, though not certainly nor easily; and also truths which, without revelation, we could not have known. Such then are the two objects of reason and of faith. The two methods of procedure likewise differ, inasmuch as in the order of nature the instrument of knowledge is discovery; in the supernatural order, it is faith, and the intellectual processes which spring from faith.

From these principles it is clear that science and faith can never be in real contradiction. All seeming opposition can only be either from error as to the doctrine of the Church, or error in the

assumptions of science. Every assertion, therefore, contrary to the truth of an illuminated faith, is false. 'For the Church, which, together with the Apostolic office of teaching, received also the command to guard the deposit of faith, is divinely invested with the right and duty of proscribing science falsely so-called, lest any man be deceived by philosophy and vain deceit.' 'For the doctrine of Faith which God has revealed, was not proposed to the minds of men to be brought to perfection like an invention of philosophy, but was delivered to the Spouse of Christ as a divine deposit to be faithfully guarded, and to be *infallibly* declared.'

The importance of this first Constitution on Catholic Faith cannot be over-estimated, and, from its great breadth, may not as yet be fully perceived.

It is the broadest and boldest affirmation of the supernatural and spiritual order ever yet made in the face of the world ; which is now, more than ever, sunk in sense and heavy with materialism. It declares that a whole order of being and power, of truth and agency, exists, and is in full play upon the world of sense. More than this, that this supernatural and spiritual order is present in the world, and is incorporated in a visible and palpable form, over which the world has no authority. That God and His operations are sensible ; visible to the eye, and audible to the ear. That they appeal to the reason of man ; and that men are irrational, and therefore act both imprudently and immorally, if they do not listen to, and believe in the Word of God. It affirms also, as a doctrine of revelation, that the visible Church is the great motive of credibility to faith, and that it is 'the irrefragable testimony of its own divine legation.' It moreover asserts that the Church has a divine commission to guard the deposit of revelation, and 'a divine right to proscribe errors of philosophy and vain deceit,' that is, all intellectual aberrations at variance with the deposit of revelation. Finally, it affirms that the Church has a divine office to declare *infallibly* the deposit of truth.

I am not aware that in any previous Œcumenical Council the doctrine of the Church, and of its divine and infallible authority, has been so explicitly defined. And yet the Council of the Vatican was not at that time engaged upon the *Schema De Ecclesia*, which still remains to be treated hereafter. It was not however without a providential guidance that the first Constitution on Catholic Faith was so shaped, especially in its closing chapter. Neither is it without a great significance that at its conclusion was appended a Monitum, in which the Roman Pontiff by his supreme authority, enjoins all the faithful, Pastors and people, to drive away all errors contrary to the purity of the faith; and moreover warns Christians that it is not enough to reject positive heresies, but that all errors which more or less approach to heresy must be avoided; and all erroneous opinions which are proscribed and prohibited by the Constitutions and decrees of the Holy See.

When these words were written, it was not foreseen that they were a preparation, unconsciously made, for the definition of the Infallibility of the Roman Pontiff. If the first Constitution had been designedly framed as an introduction, it could hardly have been more opportunely worded. It begins with God and His revelation; it closes with the witness and office of the Visible Church, and with the supreme authority of its Head. The next truth demanded by the intrinsic relations of doctrine was the divine endowment of infallibility. And when treated, this doctrine was, contrary to all expectation, and to all likelihood, presented first to the Council, and by the Council to the world, in the person and office of the Head of the Church.

In all theological treatises, excepting indeed one or two of great authority, it had been usual to treat of the Body of the Church before treating of its Head. The reason of this would appear to be, that in the exposition of doctrine the logical order was the more obvious; and to the faithful, in the first formation of the Church, the body of the Church was known before its Head. We might have expected that the Council would have followed the same method. It is, therefore, all the more remarkable that the Council inverted that order, and defined the prerogative of the Head before it treated of the Constitution and endowments of the Body. And this, which was brought about by the pressure of special events, is not without significance. The Schools of the Church have followed the logical order: but the Church in Council, when for the first time it began to treat of its own constitution and authority, changed the method, and, like the Divine Architect of the Church, began in the historical order, with the foundation and Head of the Church. Our Divine Lord first chose Cephas, and invested him with the primacy over the Apostles. Upon this Rock all were built, and from him the whole unity and authority of the Church took its rise. To Peter alone first was given the plenitude of jurisdiction and of infallible authority. Afterwards, the gift of the Holy Ghost was shared with him by all the Apostles. From him and through him, therefore, all began. For which cause a clear and precise conception of his primacy and privilege is necessary to a clear and precise conception of the Church. Unless it be first distinctly apprehended, the doctrine of the Church will be always proportionally obscure. The doctrine of the Church does not determine the doctrine of the Primacy, but the doctrine of the Primacy does precisely determine the doctrine of the Church. In beginning therefore with the Head, the Council has followed our Lord's example, both in teaching and in fact; and in this will be found one of the causes of the singular and luminous precision with which the Council of the Vatican has, in one brief Constitution, excluded the traditional errors on the Primacy and Infallibility of the Roman Pontiff.

The reasons which prevailed to bring about this change of method were not only those which demonstrated generally the opportuneness of defining the doctrine, but those also which showed specially the necessity of bringing on the question while as yet the Council was in the fulness of its numbers. It was obvious that the length of time consumed in the discussion, reformation, and voting of the *schemata* was such, that unless the Constitution *De Romano Pontifice* were brought on immediately after Easter, it could not be finished before the setting in of summer should compel the Bishops to disperse. Once dispersed, it was obvious they could never again reassemble in so large a number. Many who, with great earnestness, desired to share the blessing and the grace of extinguishing the most dangerous error which for two centuries has disturbed and divided the faithful, would have been compelled to go back to their distant sees and missions, never to return. It was obviously of the first moment that such a question should be discussed and decided, not, as we should have been told, in holes and corners, or by a handful of Bishops, or by a faction, or by a clique, but by the largest possible assembly of the Catholic Episcopate. All other questions, on which little divergence of opinion existed, might well be left to a smaller number of Bishops. But a doctrine which for centuries had divided both Pastors and people, the defining of which was contested by a numerous and organised opposition, needed to be treated and affirmed by the most extensive deliberation of the Bishops of the Catholic Church. Add to this, the many perils which hung over the continuance of the Council; of which I need but give one example. The outbreak of a war might have rendered the definition impossible. And in fact, the Infallibility of the Roman Pontiff was defined on the eighteenth of July, and war was officially declared on the following day.

With these and many other contingencies fully before them, those who believed that the definition was not only opportune but necessary for the unity of the Church and of the Faith, urged its immediate discussion. Events justified their foresight. The debate was prolonged into the heats of July, when, by mutual consent, the opposing sides withdrew from a further prolonging of the contest, and closed the discussion. If it had not been already protracted beyond all limits of reasonable debate, for not less than a hundred fathers in the general and special discussions had spoken, chiefly if not alone, of infallibility, it could not so have ended.³ Both sides were convinced that the matter was exhausted.

We will now examine, at least in outline, the first Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ; and I will then confine what I have to add to the definition of Infallibility; thereby completing a part of the subject which in the two previous Pastorals it would have been premature to treat.

The Proœmium of the Constitution declares that the institution of the visible Church was ordained to preserve the twofold unity of faith and of communion, and that for this end one principle and foundation was laid in Peter.

The first Chapter declares the Primacy of Peter over the Apostles; and that his primacy was conferred on him immediately and directly by our Lord, and consists not only in honour but also in jurisdiction.

The second Chapter affirms this primacy of honour and jurisdiction to be perpetual in the Church; and that the Roman Pontiffs, as successors of Peter, inherit this primacy; whereby Peter always presides in his see, teaching and governing the Universal Church.

The third Chapter defines the nature of his jurisdiction, namely, ‘totam plenitudinem hujus supremæ potestatis,’ the plenitude of power to feed, rule, and govern the Universal Church. It is therefore a jurisdiction episcopal, ordinary, and immediate over the whole Church, over both pastors and people, that is, over the whole Episcopate, collectively and singly, and over every particular church and diocese. The ordinary and immediate jurisdiction which every several Bishop in the Church exercises in the flock over which the Holy Ghost has placed him, is thereby sustained and strengthened.

From this Divine primacy three consequences follow: the one, that the Roman Pontiff is the supreme judge over all the Church, from whom lies no appeal; the second, that no power under God may come between the chief pastor of the Church and any, from the highest to the humblest, member of the flock of Christ on earth; the third, that this supreme power or primacy is not made up of parts, as the sovereignty of constitutional states, but exists in its plenitude in the successor of Peter.⁴

³ {org. 1} During the session of the council 420 speeches were delivered, of which nearly one-fourth were on the Infallibility alone.

⁴ {org. 1} In order to fix this doctrine more exactly, and to exclude all possible equivocation, after full and ample and repeated discussion, the words ‘*aut eum habere tantum potiores partes, non vero totam plenitudinem hujus supremæ potestatis,*’ were inserted in the

The fourth and last Chapter defines the infallible doctrinal authority of the Roman Pontiff as the supreme teacher of all Christians.

The Chapter opens by affirming that to this supreme jurisdiction is attached a proportionate grace, whereby its exercise is directed and sustained.

This truth has been traditionally held and taught by the Holy See, by the *praxis* of the Church, and by the Œcumenical Councils, especially those in which the East and the West met in union together, as for instance the fourth of Constantinople, the second of Lyons, and the Council of Florence.

It is then declared, that in virtue of the promise of our Lord, ‘I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not,’⁵ a perpetual grace of stability in faith was divinely attached to Peter and to his successors in his See.

The definition then affirms ‘that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when in discharge of the office of Pastor and Doctor of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the Universal Church, by the Divine assistance promised to him in Blessed Peter, is possessed of that infallibility with which the Divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed for defining doctrine, regarding faith and morals. And that therefore such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church.’

In this definition there are six points to be noted.

1. First, it defines the meaning of the well-known phrase, *loquens ex cathedra*; that is, speaking from the Seat, or place, or with the authority of the supreme teacher of all Christians, and binding the assent of the Universal Church.
2. Secondly, the subject-matter of his infallible teaching, namely, the doctrine of faith and morals.
3. Thirdly, the efficient cause of infallibility, that is, the divine assistance promised to Peter, and in Peter to his successors.
4. Fourthly, the act to which this divine assistance is attached, namely, the defining of doctrines of faith and morals.
5. Fifthly, the extension of this infallible authority to the limits of the doctrinal office of the Church.

Canon appended to this Chapter. I notice this, because it has been most untruly and most invidiously said, that these words were interpolated after the discussion. They were fully and amply discussed, and the proof of the fact exists in the short-hand report of the speeches, laid up in the Archives of the Council.

⁵ {org. 2} St. Luke xxii. 31, 32.

6. Lastly, the dogmatic value of the definitions *ex cathedra*, namely, that they are in themselves irreformable, because in themselves infallible, and not because the Church, or any part or member of the Church, should assent to them.

These six points contain the whole definition of Infallibility. I will therefore take them in order, and then answer certain objections.

I. First, the definition limits the infallibility of the Pontiff to the acts which emanate from him *ex cathedra*. This phrase, which has been long and commonly used by theologians, has now, for the first time, been adopted into the terminology of the Church; and in adopting it the Vatican Council fixes its meaning. The Pontiff speaks *ex cathedra* when, and only when, he speaks as the Pastor and Doctor of all Christians. By this, all acts of the Pontiff as a private person, or a private doctor, or as a local Bishop, or as sovereign of a state, are excluded. In all these acts the Pontiff may be subject to error. In one and one only capacity he is exempt from error; that is, when, as teacher of the whole Church, he teaches the whole Church in things of faith and morals.

Our Lord declared, ‘*Super cathedram Moysi sederunt scribæ et Pharisei*:’ the scribes and Pharisees sit in the chair of Moses. The seat or ‘*cathedra*’ of Moses signifies the authority and the doctrine of Moses; the *cathedra Petri* is in like manner the authority and doctrine of Peter. The former was binding by Divine command and under pain of sin, upon the people of God under the old law; the latter is binding by Divine command and under pain of sin, upon the people of God under the new.

I need not here draw out the traditional use of the term *cathedra Petri*, which in St. Cyprian, St. Optatus, and St. Augustine is employed as synonymous with the successor of Peter, and is used to express the centre and test of Catholic unity. *Ex cathedra* is therefore equivalent to *ex cathedra Petri*, and distinguishes those acts of the successor of Peter which are done as supreme teacher of the whole Church.

The value of this phrase is great, inasmuch as it excludes all cavil and equivocation as to the acts of the Pontiff in any other capacity than that of Supreme Doctor of all Christians, and in any other subject-matter than the matters of faith and morals.

II. Secondly, the definition limits the range, or, to speak exactly, the object of infallibility, to the doctrine of faith and morals. It excludes therefore all other matter whatsoever.

The great commission or charter of the Church is, in the words of our Lord, ‘Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.’⁶

In these words are contained five points.

1. First, the perpetuity and universality of the mission of the Church as the teacher of mankind.

2. Secondly, the deposit of the Truth and of the commandments, that is, of the Divine Faith and law entrusted to the Church.

⁶{org. 1} St. Matthew xxviii. 19, 20.

3. Thirdly, the office of the Church, as the sole interpreter of the Faith and of the Law.
4. Fourthly, that it has the sole Divine jurisdiction existing upon earth, in matters of salvation, over the reason and the will of man.
5. Fifthly, that in the discharge of this office our Lord is with His Church always, and to the consummation of the world.

The doctrine of faith, and the doctrine of morals are here explicitly described. The Church is infallible in this deposit of revelation.

And in this deposit are truths and morals both of the natural and of the supernatural order; for the religious truths and morals of the natural order are taken up into the revelation of the order of grace, and form a part of the object of infallibility.

1. The phrase, then, 'faith and morals' signifies the whole revelation of faith; the whole way of salvation through faith; or the whole supernatural order, with all that is essential to the sanctification and salvation of man through Jesus Christ.

Now, this formula is variously expressed by the Church and by theologians; but it always means one and the same thing.

The Second Council of Lyons says, 'if any questions arise concerning faith,' they are to be decided by the Roman Pontiff.⁷

The Council of Trent uses the formula 'in things of faith and morals, pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine.'⁸

Bellarmino says, 'in things which pertain to faith,' and again, 'The Roman Pontiff cannot err in faith;' and further he says, 'Not only in decrees of faith the

Supreme Pontiff cannot err, but neither (can he err) in moral precepts which are enjoined on the whole Church, and which are conversant with things necessary to salvation, or with those which are in themselves good or evil.'⁹

Gregory of Valentia says, 'Without any restriction it is to be said, that whatsoever the Pontiff determines in controverted matters which have respect to piety, he determines infallibly; when,

⁷ {org. 1} 'Si quæ subortæ fuerint quæstiones de fide, suo (i.e. Rom. Pont.) debent iudicio definiri.'—Labbe, *Concil.* tom. xiv. p. 512. Venice, 1731.

⁸ {org. 2} 'In rebus fidei et morum ad ædificationem doctrinæ Christianæ pertinentium.'—Labbe, *Concil.* tom. xx. p. 23.

⁹ {org. 1} 'In his quæ ad fidem pertinent.' 'Pontifex Romanus non potest errare in fide.' 'Non solum in decretis fidei errare non potest Summus Pontifex, sed neque in præceptis morum, quæ toti Ecclesiæ præscribuntur, et quæ in rebus necessariis ad salutem, vel in iis quæ per se bona vel mala sunt, versantur.'—Bellarmino, *De Romano Pontifice*, lib. iv. capp. iii. v. pp. 795, 804. Venice, 1599.

as it has been stated, he obliges the whole Church;’ and again, ‘Whatsoever the Pontiff asserts in any controverted matter of religion, it is to be believed that he asserts infallibly by his Pontifical authority, that is, by Divine assistance.’¹⁰

Bannez proposes the thesis in these words: ‘Can (the Roman Pontiff) err in defining matters of faith?’¹¹

‘Quæcumque Pontifex in aliqua re de religione controversa sic asserit, certa fide credendum est illum infallibiliter, utpote ex auctoritate Pontificia, i.e. ex Divina assistentia, asserere.’—*Ibid.* s. 39, p. 303.

S. Antoninus says, ‘It is necessary to admit one head in the Church, to whom it belongs to clear up doubts concerning whatsoever relates to faith, whether speculative or practical.’¹²

Suarez says, ‘It is a Catholic truth, that the Pontiff defining *ex cathedra* is a rule of faith which cannot err, whensoever he proposes authoritatively anything to be believed of faith to the whole Church.’¹³

And in his treatise ‘De Religione,’ tract. ix. l. 3, c. 4, n. 5, speaking of the Bull of Gregory XIII., ‘Ascendente Domino,’ by which it is declared that simple vows constitute a true religious state, he says that the truth of this definition is ‘altogether infallible, so that it cannot be denied without error. The reason is, because the sentence of the Pontiff in things which pertain to doctrine contains infallible certainty by the institution and promise of Christ, “I have prayed for thee.”’ Afterwards he adds, ‘The providence of Christ our Lord over His Church would be greatly diminished if He should permit His Vicar, in deciding such questions *ex cathedra*, to fall into error.’¹⁴

¹⁰ {org. 2} ‘Absque ulla restrictione dicendum est, quicquid Pontifex in rebus controversis ad pietatem spectantibus determinat, infallibiliter illum determinare, quando, ut expositum est, universam Ecclesiam obligat.’ Greg. de Valentia, *Opp.* tom. iii. disp. i. qu. i. ‘De Objecto Fidei,’ punct. vii. s. 40, p. 312. Ingolstadt, 1595.

¹¹ {org. 3} ‘An possit in rebus fidei definiendis errare?’—*In Sum. S. Th. Q. 2. q. 1. art. 10.*

¹² {org. 1} ‘Oportet enim in Ecclesia ponere unum caput, ad quod pertinet declarare illa quæ sunt dubia circa quæcumque ad fidem pertinentia, sive sint speculativa sive agibilia.’—*Summa Theol.* p. iii. tit. 22, c. 3.

¹³ {org. 2} ‘Veritas Catholica est Pontificem definientem ex cathedra esse regulam fidei, quæ errare non potest quando aliquid authentice proponit toti Ecclesiæ, tanquam de fide credendum.’—Suarez, *De Fide*, disp. v. sec. 8, tom. xiii. p. 94. Mentz, 1622.

¹⁴ {org. 3} ‘Omnino infallibilem, ita ut sine errore in fide negari non possit. Ratio est, quia sententia Pontificis in his quæ ad doctrinam pertinent, infallibilem continet certitudinem ex Christi institutione et permissione: “Ego rogavi pro te.” . . . Valde autem diminuta fuisset Christi Domini providentia circa suam Ecclesiam si in decidendis talibus quæstionibus ex

Melchior Canus says, 'The Roman Pontiff succeeds by Divine right to Peter both in firmness of faith and in deciding controversies of religion;' and again, 'The Roman Pontiff in ending controversies of faith cannot err.'¹⁵

S. Alphonsus affirms, 'When the Pope speaks as universal Doctor, *ex cathedra*, that is, by the supreme authority to teach the Church, delivered to Peter, in deciding controversies of faith and morals, he is altogether infallible.'¹⁶

Hervæus says, 'The authority of declaring doubtful points in such matters belongs to the Pope, that is, in things pertaining to the natural or divine law;' and afterwards he adds, 'That his declaration ought to be held as true, so that it is not lawful to hold or to opine the contrary.'¹⁷

Gregory de Valentia adds, 'In him, whom the whole Church is bound to obey in those things which pertain to the *spiritual health of the soul*, whether they concern faith or morals, there is infallible authority for the judging questions of faith.' Again: 'Christ willed that after the death of Peter, some one should be acknowledged by the Church in perpetual succession in Peter's place : on whom Christ Himself should confer supreme authority *as He did on Peter*, of ordaining the matters which relate to faith, and to other things pertaining to the *salvation of the faithful*.' And further he says, ' that He (Christ) may confer on him the authority, which Peter had, that is, that by a certain law he may so ordain as to co-operate with him by a peculiar assistance, in rightly appointing such things in doctrine and morals as *pertain to the good estate of the Church*.'

And still more explicitly in another place he says, ' It is not to be denied, that what has been said of the infallible certainty of the Pontifical definitions, holds good, first, in those things which the Pontiff has proposed to the faithful, *in deciding doctrinal controversies and exterminating errors*, as revealed of God, and to be believed by faith. But, forasmuch as the Church is always bound to hear its Pastor, and the Divine Scripture declares absolutely the Church to be the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. iii.), and therefore it cannot ever err as a whole, it cannot be doubtful, that the authority of the Pontiff is infallible in all other things which regard *piety*, and

cathedra Vicarium suum labi permetteret.'—Id. *De Religione Soc. Jesu*, lib. iii. c. 4, n. 5, tom. xvii. p. 427.

¹⁵ {org. 1} 'Romanus Pontifex Petro et in fidei firmitate et in componendis religionis controversiis divino jure succedit. Romanus Pontifex in fidei controversiis finiendis errare non potest.'—Melchior Canus, *De loc. Theol.* lib. vi. c. 4 and 7.

¹⁶ {org. 2} 'Quum Papa loquitur tanquam Doctor universalis ex cathedra, nempe ex potestate suprema tradita Petro docendi Ecclesiam in controversiis fidei et morum decernendis, est omnino infallibilis.'—S. Alphons. Lig. *Opp.* tom. i. lib. i. tract. 2, p. 135. Mechlin, 1845.

¹⁷ {org. 3} 'Ad Papam pertinet auctoritas declarandi dubia in talibus, hoc est, in pertinentibus ad jus naturale vel divinum,' &c.—*De Pot. Papæ*, ii. col. 4. . . . 'Quod declaratio sua debeat haberi ut vera, ita quod non liceat oppositum tenere vel opinari.'—*De Potest. Papali*, apud S. Anton. Roccab. *Bibl. Pontif.* tom. v. p. 66.

the *whole Church*. Nor do I think that this can be denied without error.' Gregory then applies this to the canonisation of Saints, and concludes : ' This certainty surely rests upon the same promises of God, by which we have seen that it can never be that the whole Church should err in *matters of religion*.'¹⁸

Here we have the single word *faith* put to stand for the whole revealed order of salvation : for morals are contained under faith ; and this, which is the ultimate object of infallibility, is expressed in the following and various formulas : 1. Concerning faith. 2. In things of faith and morals. 3. Things which pertain to faith. 4. Things necessary to salvation. 5. Precepts of morals binding the whole Church. 6. Things pertaining to piety. 7. Things of religion. 8. Things of faith speculative and practical. 9. Things pertaining to doctrine. 10. Controversies of religion. 11. Things pertaining to the natural and Divine laws. 12. Things pertaining to the spiritual health of souls.

13. And to the salvation of the faithful. 14. To the good estate of the Church. 15. The deciding of controversies and the extermination of errors. 16. Things which regard piety and the whole Church. 17. Matters of religion.

These might be greatly multiplied. They will, however, suffice to show how wide and general is the simple formula 'in faith and morals,' which is the traditionary expression of the object of the infallibility of the Church.

¹⁸ {org. 1} ' Cui Ecclesia tota obtemperare tenetur, in iis rebus, quæ *ad spiritualem animæ salutem pertinent*, sive illæ fidem sive mores concernant, in eo auctoritas est infallibilis ad fidei quæstiones dijudicandas.'—Gregory de Valentia, disp. 1. q. 1, ' De Objecto Fidei,' p. vii. q. 5. s. 27, p. 238. Ingoldstadt, 1595. ' Voluit Christus ut Petro vita defuncto aliquis perpetua serie successionis in locum Petri ab Ecclesia reciperetur, cui Christus ipse auctoritatem supremam sicut Petro conferret, de fide et aliis rebus ea constituendi quæ *ad salutem fidelium pertineant*.' Ibid s. 35, p. 275. . . ' Ut is [Christus] illi conferat auctoritatem quam Petrus habuit, hoc est, ut certa lege statuatur, peculiari quadam assistentia cum eo concurrere ad ea in doctrina et moribus recte constituenda quæ *ad bonum Ecclesiæ statum pertineant*.'—Ibid. s. 36, p. 279. ' Non est negandum, quin quod dictum est de infallibili certitudine definitionum Pontificis, imprimis locum habeat, in iis quæ Pontifex ad doctrinæ controversias finiendas erroresque exterminandos fidelium proposuit, tanquam a Deo revelata et credenda ex fide. Cæterum, quoniam Pastorem suum semper audire tenetur Ecclesia, et Ecclesiam divina Scriptura absolute prædicat esse columnam et firmamentum veritatis (1 Tim. iii.), ideoque nunquam errare tota potest ; dubium esse non debet, quin in aliis quoque rebus omnibus asserendis, quæ *ad pietatem spectent*, et Ecclesiam totam concernent, infallibilis sit Pontificis auctoritas. Neque sane arbitror, hoc absque errore negari posse. . . . Quæ sane certitudo iisdem illis Dei promissionibus nititur ex quibus compertum habemus nunquam esse futurum ut universa Ecclesia in rebus religionis fallatur.'—Ibid. s. 40, p. 306.

It is clear that these phrases are all equivalent. They are more or less explicit, but they contain the same ultimate meaning, namely, that the Church has an infallible guidance in treating of all matters of faith, morals, piety, and the general good of the Church.

The object of infallibility, then, is the whole revealed Word of God, and all that is so in contact with revealed truth, that without treating of it, the Word of God could not be guarded, expounded, and defended. As, for instance, in declaring the Canon and authenticity and true interpretation of Holy Scripture, and the like.

Further, it is clear that the Church has an infallible guidance, not only in all matters that are revealed, but also in all matters which are opposed to revelation. For the Church could not discharge its office as the Teacher of all nations, unless it were able with infallible certainty to proscribe doctrines at variance with the word of God.

From this, again, it follows that the *direct* object of infallibility is the Revelation, or Word, of God; the *indirect* object is whatsoever is necessary for its exposition or defence, and whatsoever is contrariant to the Word of God, that is, to faith and morals. The Church having a divine office to condemn errors in faith and morals, has therefore an infallible assistance in discerning and in proscribing false philosophies and false science.¹⁹ Under this head comes the condemnation of heretical texts, such as the Three Chapters, proscribed in the Fifth Council, the ‘Augustinus’ of Jansenius, and the like; and also censures, both greater and less, those, for instance, of heresy and of error, because of their contrariety to faith; those also of temerity, scandal, and the like, because of their contrariety to morals at least.

2. It is therefore evident that the doctrinal authority of the Church is not confined to matters of revelation, but extends also to positive truths which are not revealed, whensoever the doctrinal authority of the Church cannot be duly exercised in the promulgation, explanation, and defence of revelation without judging and pronouncing on such matters and truths. This will be clear from the following propositions:

(1.) First, the doctrinal authority of the Church is infallible in all matters and truths which are necessary to the custody of the Depositum.

This extends to certain truths of natural science, as, for example, the existence of substance; and to truths of the natural reason, such as that the soul is immaterial ; that it is ‘ the form of the body ;’²⁰ and the like. It extends also to certain truths of the supernatural order, which are not revealed; as, the authenticity of certain texts or versions of the Holy Scriptures.

¹⁹ {org. 1} * Porro Ecclesia, quæ una cum apostolico munere docendi, mandatum accepit fidei depositum custodiendi, jus etiam et officium divinitus habet falsi nominis scientiam proscribendi, ne quis decipiatur per philosophiam, et inanem fallaciam (Coloss. ii. 8.)—*Constitutio Prima de Fide Catholica*, cap. iv. *De Fide et Ratione*. Appendix, No. IV.

²⁰ {org. 1} * Concil. Later. V. Bulla *Apostolici Regiminis*.

The Council of Trent by a dogmatic decree declared, under anathema, that the Vulgate edition is authentic. Now this is a definition or dogmatic judgment, to be believed on the infallible authority of the Church. But this truth or fact is not revealed.

(2.) Secondly, there are truths of mere human history, which therefore are not revealed, without which the deposit of the Faith cannot be taught or guarded in its integrity. For instance, that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome; that the Council of Trent and the Council of the Vatican are Œcumenical, that is, legitimately celebrated and confirmed; that Pius IX. is the successor of Peter by legitimate election. These truths are not revealed. They have no place in Scripture; and except the first, they have no place in tradition; yet they are so necessary to the order of faith, that the whole would be undermined if they were not infallibly certain. But such infallible certainty is impossible by means of human history and human evidence alone. It is created only by the infallible authority of the Church.

(3.) Thirdly, there are truths of interpretation, not revealed, without which the deposit of the faith cannot be preserved.

The Council of Trent²¹ declares that to the Church it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of Holy Scripture.

Now the sense of the Holy Scripture is twofold; namely, the literal and grammatical, or, as it is called, the *sensus quis*; and the theological and doctrinal, or the *sensus qualis*. The Church judges infallibly of both. It judges of the question that such and such words or texts have such and such literal and grammatical meaning. It judges also of the conformity of such meaning with the rule of faith, or of its contradiction to the same. The former is a question of fact, the latter of dogma. That the latter falls within the infallible judgment of the Church has been denied by none but heretics. The former has been denied, for a time, by some who continued to be Catholics: for this is, in truth, the question of dogmatic facts. But the Jansenists never ventured to extend their denial to the text of Scripture, though the argument is one and the same. The Church has the same assistance in judging of the grammatical and of the theological sense of texts, whether sacred or simply human: and has exercised it in all ages.

For instance: Pope Hormisdas²² says, ‘The venerable wisdom of the Fathers providently defined by faithful ordinance what doctrines are Catholic: fixing also certain parts of the ancient books to be received as of authority, the Holy Ghost so instructing them; lest the reader, indulging his own opinion . . . should assert not that which tends to the edification of the Church, but what his own pleasure had conceived.’

Pope Nicholas I.²³ writes, ‘By their decree (i.e. that of the Roman Pontiffs) the writings of other authors are approved or condemned, so that what the Apostolic See approves, is to be held at this day, and what it has rejected, is to be esteemed of no effect,’ &c.

²¹ {org. 2} † Sess. iv.

²² {org. 1} * Hormisdæ Ep. LXX. Labbe, *Concil.* tom. v. p. 664.

²³ {org. 2} † Nic. Ep. ad Univ. Episc. Galliæ, Labbe, *Concil.* tom. x. p. 282.

Pope Gelasius, in a Council held at Rome, decreed as follows: ‘Also the writings of Cæcilius Cyprianus, Martyr, Bishop of Carthage, are in all things to be received; also the writings of Blessed Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzum. . . . also the writings and treatises of all orthodox Fathers, who in nothing have deviated from the fellowship of the Holy Roman Church, nor have been separated from its faith and preaching; but have been partakers by the grace of God of its communion unto the last day of their life, we decree to be read.’²⁴

Turrecremata says, ‘It is to be believed that the Roman Pontiff is directed by the Holy Ghost in things of faith, and consequently in these cannot err; otherwise any one might as easily say that there was error in the choice (or discernment) of the four Gospels, and of the canonical epistles, and of the books of other doctors, approving some, and disapproving others; which, however, we read, and as is evident, was determined by the Roman Pontiffs Gregory and Gelasius.’²⁵

Again, he says, ‘The sixth kind of Catholic truths are those which are asserted by doctors, approved by the Universal Church for the defence of the faith and the confutation of heretics. . . . This is evident: for since the Church, which is directed by the Holy Ghost, approves certain doctors, receiving their doctrine as true, it necessarily follows that the doctrine of such (writers), delivered by way of assertion, and never otherwise retracted, is true and ought to be held by all the faithful with firm belief, in so far as it is received by the Universal Church; otherwise, the Universal Church would appear to have erred in approving and accepting their doctrine as true, which however was not true.’²⁶

And Stapleton lays down, ‘Bishops . . . when they treat of the Scripture as doctors, have not this certain and infallible authority of which we are speaking: until their treatises, approved by sacred authority, are commended by the Church as Catholic and certainly orthodox interpretation, which Gelasius first did,’²⁷ &c.

I will give one more example, as it is eminently in point.

The Church has approved in a special manner the works of St. Augustine as containing the true doctrines of grace against the Pelagian and semi-Pelagian heresies.

In this particular, his works have been declared to be orthodox by St. Innocent I., St. Zosimus, St. Boniface I., St. Celestine, St. Hormisdas, St. Felix IV., and Boniface II. For that reason Clement XI. justly condemned the book of Launoy called ‘Véritable tradition de l’Église sur la Prédestination et la Grâce,’ &c., as ‘at least impious and blasphemous, and injurious to

²⁴ {org. 1} * Labbe, *Concil.* tom. v. p. 387.

²⁵ {org. 2} † Turrecremata, *De potestate Papali*, lib. ii. cap. 112, in Bibl. M. Rocaberti, tom. xiii. p. 453.

²⁶ {org. 1} * Ibid. lib. iv. p. ii. c. ii. 382.

²⁷ {org. 2} † *Controv. Fidei*, lib. x. c. ii. p. 355, ed. Paris, 1620.

St. Augustine, the shining light and chief doctor of the Catholic Church ; as also to the Church itself and to the Apostolic See.’²⁸

Now, in this approbation the Church approved the doctrine of St. Augustine, not only in the *sensus qualis* but also in the *sensus quis* ; that is, it approved not only a possible theological sense which was orthodox, but the very and grammatical sense of the text. It was therefore a true doctrinal judgment as to a dogmatic fact.

For, as Cardinal Gerdil argues, the doctrine of St. Augustine was proposed by the Church as a rule of faith against the Pelagian and semi-Pelagian errors. ‘ When it is said that the doctrine of St. Augustine in the matter of grace was adopted by the Church, it must not be understood in the sense as if St. Augustine had worked out a peculiar system for himself, which the Church then adopted as its own. . . . ’ The great merit of St. Augustine is, that with marvellous learning he expounded and defended the antient belief of the faithful.’²⁹ The Church infallibly discerned the orthodoxy of his writings, and approving them, commended them as a rule of faith.

If the Church have this infallible discernment of the meaning, grammatical and theological, of orthodox texts, it has *eodem intuitu* the same discernment of heterodox texts. For the universal practice of the Church in commending the writings of orthodox, and of condemning those of heterodox authors, is a part of the doctrinal authority of the Church in the custody and defence of the faith. It falls therefore within the limits of its infallibility.

The commendation of the works of St. Augustine, and the condemnation of the Thalia of Arius at Nicæa, of the Anathematisms of Nestorius at Ephesus, and of the Three Chapters of Ibas, Theodore, and Theodoret, in the Second Council of Constantinople, all alike involved a judgment of dogmatic facts.

The subterfuge of the Jansenists as to the literal meaning of ‘Augustinus’ came too late. The practice of the Church and the decrees of Councils had already pronounced its condemnation.

(4.) What has here been said of the condemnation of heretical texts, is equally applicable to the censures of the Church.

The condemnation of propositions is only the condemnation of a text by fragments.

The same discernment which ascertains the orthodoxy of certain propositions, detects the heterodoxy of those which are contradictory. And in both processes that discernment is infallible. To define doctrines of faith, and to condemn the contradictions of heresy, is almost one and the same act. The infallibility of the Church in condemning heretical propositions is denied by no Catholic.

In like manner, the detection and condemnation of propositions at variance with theological certainty is a function of the same discernment by which theological certainty is known. But the Church has an infallible discernment of truths which are theologically certain; that is, of

²⁸ {org. 1} *Brev. ‘Cum. sicut,’* 28 Jan. 1704. D’Argentré, *Collec. Jud.* tom. vi. p. 444.

²⁹ {org. 2} *Saggio d’ Istruz. teol. ‘De gratia,’* ed. Rom. p. 189.

conclusions resulting from two premisses of which one is revealed and the other evident by the light of nature.

In these two kinds of censures, at least, it is therefore of faith that the Church is infallible.

As to the other censures, such as temerity, scandal, offence to pious ears, and the like, it is evident that they all relate to the moral character of propositions. It is not credible that a proposition condemned by the Church as rash should not be rash, and as scandalous should not be scandalous, or as offensive to pious ears should not be such, and the like. If the Church be infallible in faith and morals, it is not to be believed that it can err in passing these moral judgments on the ethical character of propositions. In truth, all Catholic theologians, without exception, so far as I know, teach that the Church is infallible in all such censures.³⁰ They differ only in this: that some declare this truth to be of faith, and therefore the denial of it to be heresy; others declare it to be of faith as to the condemnation of heretical propositions, but in all others to be only of theological certainty; so that the denial of it to be not heresy, but error.

To deny the infallibility of the Church in the censures less than for heresy, is held to be heretical by De Panormo, Malderus, Coninck, Diana, Oviedo, Amici, Matteucci, Pozzobonelli, Viva, Nannetti. Murray calls it objective heresy. Griffini, Herincx, Ripalda, Ferraris, and Reinerding do not decide whether it be heretical, erroneous, or proximate to error. Cardenas and Turrianus hold it to be erroneous; Anfossi erroneous, or proximate to error. De Lugo in one place maintains that it is erroneous; in another, that to deny the infallibility of the Church in the condemnation of erroneous propositions, is heresy.³¹ All, therefore, affirm the Church in passing such censures to be infallible.

The infallibility of the Church in all censures less than heresy may be proved from the acts of the Council of Constance. In the eleventh article of the Interrogatory proposed to the followers of

³⁰ {org. 1} Of course, I am not speaking of writers whose works are under censure.

³¹ {org. 1} De Panormo, *Scrutinium Doctrinarum*, cap. iii. art. xiii. num. 7 sqq. p. 196, Rome, 1709; Diana, *Opp.* tom. ix. De infall. Rom. Pont. resol. x. num. 8 sqq. p. 262, Venice, 1698; Amici, *Cursus Theologicus*, tom. iv. De Fide, disp. vii. num. 55, p. 146, Douay, 1641; Matteucci, *Opus Dogmatic.* De Controv. Fidei, vii. cap. iii. num. 33, p. 359, Venice, 1755; Viva, *Theses Damnatæ*, quæst. prodrom. num. xviii. p. 10, Padua, 1737; Murray, *De Ecclesia*, tom. iii. fasc. i. p. 226, Dublin, 1865; Herincx, *Summ. Theol. Schol. et Moral.* dub. ix. num. 98, p. 186, Antwerp, 1663; Ripalda, tom. iii. disp. i. sect. 7, num. 59, p. 16, Cologne, 1648; Ferraris, *Bibliothec. Canonic.* tom. vi. sub. v. Prop. Damn. num. 37, p. 565, Rome, 1789; Reinerding, *Theol. Fundamental.* tract. i. num. 408, p. 237, Münster, 1864; Cardenas, *Crisis Theologica*, dis. proëm. num. 140, p. 35, Cologne, 1690; Turrianus, *Select. Disput. Theol.* pars i. disp. xxx. dub. 3, p. 149, Lyons, 1634; Anfossi, *Difesa dell' 'Auctorem Fidei,'* lett. x. tom. ii. p. 141, Rome, 1816; De Lugo, *De Virtute Fidei*, tom. iii. disp. xx. sect. 3, num. 109, p. 324, and num. 113—117, p. 325, Venice, 1751. For the summary and for the references to Pozzobonelli, Malderus, Coninck, Oviedo, Nannetti and Griffini, I am indebted to an unpublished work of Fr. Granniello of the congregation of Barnabites in Rome.

Huss are included condemnations of all kinds. They were asked whether they believed the articles of Wickliffe and Huss to be ‘not Catholic, but some of them notoriously heretical, some erroneous, others temerarious and seditious, others offensive to pious ears.’³²

Martin V., therefore, in the Bull ‘Inter cunctos’ requires belief, that is, interior assent, to all such condemnations made by the Council of Constance, which therein extended its infallible jurisdiction to all the minor censures, less than that of heresy.

In like manner, again, in the Bull ‘Auctorem Fidei,’ the propositions condemned as heretical are very few, but the propositions condemned as erroneous, scandalous, offensive, schismatical, injurious, are very numerous.

During the last three hundred years, the Pontiffs have condemned a multitude of propositions of which perhaps not twenty were censured with the note of heresy.

Now in every censure the Church proposes to us some truth relating to faith or morals ; and whether the matter of such truths be revealed or not revealed, it nevertheless so pertains to faith and morals that the deposit could not be guarded if the Church in such judgments were liable to error.

The Apostle declares that ‘the Church is the pillar and ground of the Truth.’³³ On what authority these words can be restricted to revealed truths alone, I do not know. I know of no commentator, ancient or modern, who so restricts them. On the other hand St. Peter Damian, Sixtus V., Ferré, Cardinal de Lugo, Gregory de Valentia, expressly extend these words to all truths necessary to the custody of the deposit.

This doctrine is abundantly confirmed by the following declarations of Pius IX. ‘For the Church by its Divine institution is bound with all diligence to guard whole and inviolate the deposit of Divine faith, and constantly to watch with supreme zeal over the salvation of souls, driving away therefore, and eliminating with all exactness, all things which are either contrary to faith or can in any way bring into peril the salvation of souls. Wherefore the Church, by the power committed to it by its Divine Author, has not only the right, but above all the duty, of not tolerating but of proscribing and of condemning all errors, if the integrity of the faith and the salvation of souls should so require. On all philosophers who desire to remain sons of the Church, and on all philosophy, this duty lies, to assert nothing contrary to the teaching of the Church, and to retract all such things when the Church shall so admonish. The opinion which teaches contrary to this we pronounce and declare altogether erroneous, and in the highest degree injurious to the faith of the Church, and to its authority.’³⁴

³² {org. 2} ‘Utrum credat sententiam sacri Constantiensis concilii, . . . scilicet quod supradicti 45 articuli Joannis Wicliff, et Joannis Huss triginta, non sunt Catholici ; sed quidam ex eis sunt notorie hæretici, quidam erronei, alii temerarii et seditiosi, alii piarum aurium offensivi.’—Labbe, *Concil.* tom. xvi. p. 194.

³³ {org. 1} 1 Tim. iii. 15.

³⁴ {org. 1} Litteræ Pii IX., ‘Gravissimas inter,’ ad Archiep. Monac. et Frising. Dec. 1862.

From all that has been said, it is evident that the Church claims no jurisdiction over the processes of philosophy or science, except as they bear upon revealed truths; nor does it claim to intervene in philosophy or science as a judge or censor of the principles proper to such philosophy or science. The only judgment it pronounces regards the conformity or variance of such processes of the human intelligence with the deposit of faith, and the principles of revealed morality : that is, in order to the end of its infallible office, namely, the guardianship of Divine revelation.

I will not here attempt to enumerate the subject-matters which fall within the limits of the infallibility of the Church. It belongs to the Church alone to determine the limits of its own infallibility. Hitherto it has not done so except by its acts, and from the practice of the Church we may infer to what matter its infallible discernment extends. It is enough for the present to show two things :

1. First, that the infallibility of the Church extends, as we have seen, directly to the whole matter of revealed truth, and indirectly to all truths which though not revealed are in such contact with revelation that the deposit of faith and morals cannot be guarded, expounded, and defended without an infallible discernment of such unrevealed truths.
2. Secondly, that this extension of the infallibility of the Church is, by the unanimous teaching of all theologians, at least theologically certain ; and, in the judgment of the majority of theologians, certain by the certainty of faith.

Such is the traditional doctrine respecting the infallibility of the Church in faith and morals. By the definition of the Vatican Council, what is traditionally believed by all the faithful in respect to the Church is expressly declared of the Roman Pontiff. But the definition of the extent of that infallibility, and of the certainty on which it rests, in matters not revealed, has not been treated as yet, but is left for the second part of the ‘Schema De Ecclesia.’

III. Thirdly, the definition declares the efficient cause of infallibility to be a Divine assistance promised to Peter, and in Peter to his successors.

The explicit promise is that of our Divine Lord to Peter, ‘I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren.’³⁵

The implicit promise is in the words ‘On this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.’³⁶

The traditional interpretation of these promises is precise.

The words, ‘Ego rogavi pro te, ut non deficiat fides tua, et tu aliquando conversus confirma fratres tuos,’ are interpreted, by both Fathers and Councils, of the perpetual stability of Peter’s faith in his see and his successors ; and of this assertion I give the following proofs.

St. Ambrose, A.D. 397, in his treatise on Faith, says, Christ ‘said to Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. Was He not therefore able to confirm the faith of him to whom by His own

³⁵ {org. 1} St. Luke, xxii. 32.

³⁶ {org. 2} St. Matth. xvi. 18.

authority He gave the kingdom? whom He pointed out as the foundation of the Church, when He called him the rock?’³⁷

St. John Chrysostom, A.D. 407, in his commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, writes, ‘He (i.e. Peter) takes the lead in the matter, as he was himself entrusted with the care of all. For Christ said to him, Thou, being converted, confirm thy brethren.’³⁸

St. Augustine, A.D. 430, in his commentary on the words of Psalm cxviii. 43, ‘And take not Thou the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,’ says, ‘Therefore the whole body of Christ speaks; that is, the universality of the Holy Church. And the Lord Himself said to Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, that is, that the word of truth be not utterly taken out of thy mouth.’³⁹

St. Cyril of Alexandria, A.D. 444, in his commentary on St. Luke, says, ‘The Lord, when He hinted at the denial of His disciple and said, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, immediately utters a word of consolation, thou being converted, confirm thy brethren; that is, be the confirmer and teacher of those who come to Me by faith.’⁴⁰

St. Leo the Great, A.D. 460, in a discourse on the anniversary of his election to the Pontificate, says, ‘If anything in our time and by us is well administered and rightly ordained, it is to be ascribed to his operation and to his government, to whom it was said, “Thou being converted, confirm thy brethren,” and to whom after His resurrection, in answer to his threefold declaration of everlasting love, the Lord with mystical meaning thrice said, “Feed my sheep.”’⁴¹

³⁷ {org. 3} Habes in evangelio quia Petro dixit, Rogavi pro te ut non deficiat fides tua.—Ergo cui propria auctoritate regnum dabat, hujus fidem firmare non poterat; quem cum petram dixit firmamentum Ecclesiæ indicavit?—St. Ambrose *De Fide*, lib. iv. cap. v. tom. iii. p. 672, ed. Ben. Venice, 1751.

³⁸ {org. 1} Πρῶτος τοῦ πράγματος αὐθεντεῖ, ἅτε αὐτὸς πάντας ἐγχειρισθεὶς, πρὸς γὰρ τοῦτον εἶπεν ὁ Χριστός· Καὶ σὺ ποτε ἐπιστρέψας στήριξον τοὺς ἀδελφούς σου.—St. Joann. Chrys. *Opp.* tom. ix. p. 26, ed. Ben. Paris, 1731.

³⁹ {org. 2} Totum itaque corpus Christi loquitur, id est Ecclesiæ sanctæ universitas.—Et ipse Dominus ad Petrum, Rogavi, inquit, pro te, ne deficiat fides tua; hoc est ne auferatur ex ore tuo verbum veritatis usque valde.—St. Augustin. *Enarratio in Psalmos*, tom. iv. p. 1310, ed. Ben. Paris, 1681.

⁴⁰ {org. 3} Ὁ μέντοι Κύριος τὴν τοῦ μαθητοῦ ἄρνησιν αἰνιξάμενος ἐν οἷς ἔφη, ἐδέηθην περὶ σοῦ ἵνα μὴ ἐκλίπῃ ἡ πίστις σου, εἰσφέρει παραχρῆμα τὸν τῆς παρακλήσεως λόγον, καὶ φησι, Καὶ σὺ ποτε ἐπιστρέψας στήριξον τοὺς ἀδελφούς σου· τούτεστι γενοῦ στήριγμα καὶ διδάσκαλος τῶν διὰ πίστεως προσιόντων ἐμοί.—St. Cyrill. Alex. *Comment. in Luc.* xxii. tom. v. p. 916, ed. Migne, Paris, 1848.

⁴¹ {org. 1} Tantam potentiam dedit ei quem totius Ecclesiæ principem fecit, ut si quid etiam nostris temporibus recte per nos agitur recteque disponitur illius operibus illius sit

St. Gelasius, A.D. 496, writes to Honorius, Bishop of Dalmatia, ‘Though we are hardly able to draw breath in the manifold difficulties of the times; yet in the government of the Apostolic See we unceasingly have in hand the care of the whole fold of the Lord, which was committed to blessed Peter by the voice of our Saviour Himself, “And thou being converted, confirm thy brethren,” and again, “Peter, lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep.”’⁴²

Pelagius II., A.D. 590, in like manner writes to the Bishops of Istria, ‘For you know how the Lord in the gospel declares: Simon, Simon, behold Satan has desired you that he might sift you as wheat, but I have prayed the Father for thee, that thy faith fail not, and thou being converted, confirm thy brethren. See, beloved, the truth cannot be falsified, nor can the faith of Peter ever be shaken or changed.’⁴³

St. Gregory the Great, A.D. 604, in his celebrated letter to Maurice, Emperor of the East, says, ‘For it is clear to all who know the Gospel, that the care of the whole Church was committed to the Apostle St. Peter, prince of all the Apostles. For to him it is said, “Peter, lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep.” To him it is said, “Behold, Satan has desired to sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not, and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren.” To him it is said, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church,”’⁴⁴ &c.

Stephen, Bishop of Dori, A.D. 649, at a Lateran Council under Martin I. says, in a *libellus supplex* or memorial read and recorded in the acts, ‘Peter the Prince of the Apostles was first commanded to feed the sheep of the Catholic Church, when the Lord said, “Peter, lovest thou

gubernaculis deputandum, cui dictum est, Et tu conversus confirma fratres tuos; et cui post resurrectionem suam Dominus ad trinam æterni amoris professionem mystica insinuatione ter dixit, Pasce oves meas.—St. Leo, serm. iv. cap. iv. tom. i. p. 19, ed. Ballerini, Venice, 1753.

⁴² {org. 2} Licet inter varias temporum difficultates vix respirare valeamus, pro sedis tamen apostolicæ moderamine totius ovilis dominici curam sine cessatione tractantes, quæ beato Petro salvatoris ipsius nostri voce delegata est, Et tu conversus confirma fratres tuos; et item, Petre, amas me? pasce oves meas.—St. Gelasius, epist. v.; in Labbe, *Concil.* tom. v. p. 298, Venice, 1728.

⁴³ {org. 1} Nostis enim in evangelio dominum proclamantem, Simon, Simon, ecce Satanas expetivit vos, ut cribraret sicut triticum, ego autem rogavi pro te Patrem, ut non deficiat fides tua, et tu conversus confirma fratres tuos. Considerate, carissimi, quia veritas mentiri non potuit, nec fides Petri in æternum quassari poterit vel mutari.—Pelagius. II. epist. v. in Labbe, *Concil.* tom. vi. p. 626.

⁴⁴ {org. 2} Cunctis enim Evangelium scientibus liquet, quod voce dominica sancto et omnium apostolorum Petro Principi Apostolo totius Ecclesiæ cura commissa est. Ipsi quippe dicitur, Petre, amas me? pasce oves meas. Ipsi dicitur, Ecce Satanas expetiit cribrare vos sicut triticum; et ego pro te rogavi, Petre, ut non deficiat fides tua; et tu aliquando conversus confirma fratres tuos. Ipsi dicitur, Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram, etc.—St. Gregor. *Epist.* lib. v. ep. xx. tom. ii. 748, ed. Ben. Paris, 1705.

Me? Feed My sheep.” And again, he chiefly and especially, having a faith firm above all, and unchangeable in our Lord God, was found worthy to convert and to confirm his fellows and his spiritual brethren who were shaken.’⁴⁵

Pope St. Vitalian, A.D. 669, says, in a letter to Paul, Archbishop of Crete, ‘What things we command thee and thy Synod according to God and for the Lord, study at once to fulfil, lest we be compelled to bear ourselves not in mercy but according to the power of the sacred canons, for it is written: The Lord said, “Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren.” And again: “Whatsoever thou, Peter, shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”’⁴⁶

The quotations given in the Pastoral Letter of last year, united with these, afford the following result. The application of the promise *Ego rogavi pro te*, &c. to the infallible faith of Peter and his successors, is made by St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Leo, St. Gelasius, Pelagius II., St. Gregory the Great, Stephen Bishop of Dori in a Lateran Council, St. Vitalian, the Bishops of the IV. Œcumenical Council A.D. 451, St. Agatho in the VI. A.D. 680, St. Bernard A.D. 1153, St. Thomas Aquinas A.D. 1274, St. Bonaventure A.D. 1274: that is, this interpretation is given by three out of the four doctors of the Church, by six Pontiffs down to the seventh century. It was recognised in two Œcumenical Councils. It is explicitly declared by the Angelic Doctor, who may be taken as the exponent of the Dominican school, and by the Seraphic Doctor, who is likewise the witness of the Franciscan; and by a multitude of Saints. This catena, if continued to later times, might, as all know, be indefinitely prolonged.

The interpretation by the Fathers of the words ‘On this rock,’ &c. is fourfold, but all four interpretations are no more than four aspects of one and the same truth, and all are necessary to complete its full meaning. They all implicitly or explicitly contain the perpetual stability of Peter’s faith. It would be out of place to enter upon this here. It is enough to refer to Ballerini *De vi et ratione Primatus*, where the subject is exhausted.

In these two promises a divine assistance is pledged to Peter and to his successors, and that divine assistance is promised to secure the stability and indefectibility of the Faith in the supreme Doctor and Head of the Church, for the general good of the Church itself.

⁴⁵ {org. 1} * Princeps apostolorum Petrus pascere primus jussus est oves Catholicæ Ecclesiæ, cum Dominus dicit, Petre, amas me? Pasce oves meas; et iterum ipse præcipue ac specialiter firmam præ omnibus habens in Dominum Deum nostrum et immutabilem fidem, convertere aliquando et confirmare exagitatos consortes suos et spirituales meruit fratres.—Labbe, *Concil.* tom. vii. p. 107.

⁴⁶ {org. 2} † Quæ præcipimus tibi secundum Deum et propter Dominum tuæque synodo, stude illico peragere, ne cogamur non misericorditer sed secundum virtutem sacratissimorum canonum conversari. Scriptum namque est, Dominus inquit, Petre, rogavi pro te ut non deficeret fides tua; et tu aliquando conversus confirma fratres tuos. Et rursum, Quodcunque ligaveris, etc.—St. Vitalian, epist. i. in Labbe, *Concil.* tom. vii. p. 460.

It is therefore a *charisma*, a grace of the supernatural order, attached to the Primacy of Peter which is perpetual in his successors.

I need hardly point out that between the charisma, or *gratia gratis data* of infallibility and the idea of impeccability there is no connection. I should not so much as notice it, if some had not strangely obscured the subject by introducing this confusion. I should have thought that the gift of prophecy in Balaam and Caiaphas, to say nothing of the powers of the priesthood, which are the same in good and bad alike, would have been enough to make such confusion impossible.

The preface to the Definition carefully lays down that infallibility is not inspiration. The Divine assistance by which the Pontiffs are guarded from error, when as Pontiffs they teach in matters of faith and morals, contains no new revelation. Inspiration contained not only assistance in writing but sometimes the suggestion of truths not otherwise known. The Pontiffs are witnesses, teachers, and judges of the revelation already given to the Church; and in guarding, expounding, and defending that revelation, their witness, teaching, and judgment, is by Divine assistance preserved from error. This assistance, like the revelation which it guards, is of the supernatural order. They, therefore, who argue against the infallibility of the Pontiff because he is an individual person, and still profess to believe the infallibility of Bishops in General Councils, and also of the Bishops dispersed throughout the world, because they are many witnesses, betray the fact that they have not as yet mastered the idea that infallibility is not of the order of nature, but is of the order of grace. In the order of nature, indeed, truth may be found rather with the many than with the individual, though in this the history of mankind would give a host of contrary examples. But in the supernatural order, no such argument can have place. It depends simply upon the ordination of God; and certainly neither in the Old Testament nor in the New have we examples of infallibility depending upon number. But in both we have the example of infallibility attaching to persons as individuals; as for instance the Prophets of the old and the Apostles of the new law. It is no answer to say that the Apostles were united in one body. They were each one possessed of that which all possessed together. To this may be also added the inspired writers, who were preserved from error individually and personally, and not as a collective body. The whole evidence of Scripture, therefore, is in favour of the communication of Divine gifts to individuals. The objection is not scriptural nor Catholic, nor of the supernatural order, but natural, and, in the last analysis, rationalistic.

IV. Fourthly, the Definition precisely determines the acts of the Pontiff to which this Divine assistance is attached; namely, '*in doctrina de fide vel moribus definienda*,' to the defining of doctrine of faith and morals.

The definition, therefore, carefully excludes all ordinary and common acts of the Pontiff as a private person, and also all acts of the Pontiff as a private theologian, and again all his acts which are not in matters of faith and morals; and further, all acts in which he does not define a doctrine, that is, in which he does not act as the supreme Doctor of the Church in defining doctrines to be held by the whole Church.

The definition therefore includes, and includes only, the solemn acts of the Pontiff as the supreme Doctor of all Christians, defining doctrines of faith and morals, to be held by the whole Church.

Now the word *doctrine* here signifies a revealed truth, traditionally handed down by the teaching authority, or *magisterium infallibile*, of the Church; including any truth which, though not

revealed, is yet so united with a revealed truth as to be inseparable from its full explanation, and defence.

And the word *definition* here signifies the precise judgment or sentence in which any such traditional truth of faith or morals may be authoritatively formulated; as, for instance, the consubstantiality of the Son, the procession of the Holy Ghost by one only Spiration from the Father and the Son, the Immaculate Conception, and the like.

The word 'definition' has two senses, the one forensic and narrow, the other wide and common; and this in the present instance is more correct. The forensic or narrow sense confines its meaning to the logical act of defining by *genus* and *differentia*. But this sense is proper to dialectics and disputations, not to the acts of Councils and Pontiffs. The wide and common sense is that of an authoritative termination of questions which have been in doubt and debate, and therefore of the judgment or sentence thence resulting. When the second Council of Lyons says, 'Si quæ subortæ fuerint fidei quæstiones suo iudicio debere definiri,' it means that the questions of faith ought to be *ended* by this judgment of the Pontiff. *Definire* is *finem imponere*, or *finaliter judicare*. It is therefore equivalent to *determinare*, or *finaliter determinare*, which words are those of St. Thomas when speaking of the supreme authority of the Roman Pontiff. It is in this sense that the Vatican Council uses the word *definienda*. It signifies the final decision by which any matter of faith and morals is put into a doctrinal form.

Now it is to be observed that the definition does not speak of either controversies, or questions of faith and morals. It speaks of the doctrinal authority of the Pontiff in general; and therefore both of what may be called pacific definitions like that of the Immaculate Conception, and of controversial definitions like those of St. Innocent against the Pelagians, or St. Leo against the Monophysites. Moreover, under the term definitions, as we have seen, are included all dogmatic judgments. In the Bull *Auctorem Fidei* these terms are used as synonymous. The tenth proposition of the Synod of Pistoia is condemned as 'Detrahens firmitati definitionum, judiciorumve dogmaticorum Ecclesiæ.' In the Italian version made by order of the Pope these words are translated, 'detraente alla fermezza delle definizioni o giudizj dommatici della Chiesa.' Now, dogmatic judgments included all judgments in matters of dogma; as for instance, the inspiration and authenticity of sacred books, the orthodoxy or heterodoxy of human and uninspired books.

But intimately connected with dogma in these judgments, as we have already seen, is the grammatical and literal sense of such texts. The theological sense of such texts cannot be judged of without a discernment of their grammatical and literal sense; and both are included in the same dogmatic judgment, that is, both the dogmatic truth and the dogmatic fact.

The example above given, in which the Pontiffs approved and commended to the Church, as a rule of faith against Pelagianism, the writings of St. Augustine, was a true definition of doctrine in faith and morals. The condemnation of the '*Augustinus*' of Jansenius, and of the five propositions extracted from it, was also a doctrinal definition, or a dogmatic judgment.

In like manner all censures, whether for heresy or with a note less than heresy, are doctrinal definitions in faith and morals, and are included in the words *in doctrina de fide vel moribus definienda*.

In a word, the whole *magisterium* or doctrinal authority of the Pontiff as the supreme Doctor of all Christians, is included in this definition of his infallibility. And also all legislative or judicial acts, so far as they are inseparably connected with his doctrinal authority; as, for instance, all judgments, sentences, and decisions, which contain the motives of such acts as derived from faith and morals. Under this will come laws of discipline, canonisation of Saints, approbation of religious Orders, of devotions, and the like; all of which intrinsically contain the truths and principles of faith, morals, and piety.

The Definition, then, limits the infallibility of the Pontiff to his supreme acts *ex cathedra* in faith and morals, but extends his infallibility to all acts in the fullest exercise of his supreme *magisterium* or doctrinal authority.

V. Fifthly, the definition declares that in these acts the Pontiff '*ea infallibilitate pollere, qua Divinus Redemptor Ecclesiam suam in definienda doctrina de fide et moribus instructam esse voluit*;' that is, that he is possessed of the infallibility with which our Divine Saviour willed that His Church should be endowed.

It is to be carefully noted that this definition declares that the Roman Pontiff possesses by himself the infallibility with which the Church in unison with him is endowed.

The definition does not decide the question whether the infallibility of the Church is derived from him or through him. But it does decide that his infallibility is not derived from the Church, nor through the Church. The former question is left untouched. Two truths are affirmed; the one, that the supreme and infallible doctrinal authority was given to Peter, the other, that the promise of the Holy Spirit was afterwards extended to the Apostles. The promises '*Ego rogavi pro te*,' and '*Non prævalebunt*,' were spoken to Peter alone. The promises '*He shall lead you into all truth*,' and '*Behold, I am with you all days*,' were spoken to Peter with all the Apostles. The infallibility of Peter was, therefore, not dependent on his union with them in exercising it; but, their infallibility was evidently dependent on their union with him. In like manner, the whole Episcopate gathered in Council is not infallible without its head. But the head is always infallible by himself. Thus far the definition is express, and the infallibility of the Vicar of Christ is declared to be the *privilegium Petri*, a charisma attached to the primacy, a Divine assistance given as a prerogative of the Head. There is, therefore, a special fitness in the word *pollere* in respect to the Head of the Church. This Divine assistance is his special prerogative depending on God alone; independent of the Church, which in dependence on him is endowed with the same infallibility. If the definition does not decide that the Church derives its infallibility from the Head, it does decide that the Head does not derive his infallibility from the Church; for it affirms this Divine assistance to be derived from the promise to Peter and in Peter to his successors.

VI. Lastly, the definition fixes the dogmatic value of these Pontifical acts *ex cathedra*, by declaring that they are '*ex sese, non autem ex consensu Ecclesiæ, irreformabilia*,' that is, irreformable in and of themselves, and not because the Church or any part or any members of the Church should assent to them. These words, with extreme precision, do two things. First, they ascribe to the Pontifical acts *ex cathedra*, in faith or morals an intrinsic infallibility; and secondly, they exclude from them all influx of any other cause of such intrinsic infallibility. It is ascribed alone to the Divine assistance given to the Head of the Church for that end and effect.

I need not add, that by these words many forms of error are excluded: as, first, the theory that the joint action of the Episcopate congregated in Council is necessary to the infallibility of the

Pontiff; secondly, that the consent of the Episcopate dispersed is required; thirdly, that if not the express at least the tacit assent of the Episcopate is needed. All these alike deny the infallibility of the Pontiff till his acts are confirmed by the Episcopate. I know, indeed, it has been said by some, that in so speaking they do not deny the infallibility of the Pontiff, but affirm him to be infallible when he is united with the Episcopate, from which they further affirm that he can never be divided. But this, after all, resolves the efficient cause of his infallibility into union with the Episcopate, and makes its exercise dependent upon that union; which is to deny his infallibility as a privilege of the primacy, independent of the Church which he is to teach and to confirm. The words '*Ex sese, non autem ex consensu Ecclesiæ,*' preclude all ambiguity by which for two hundred years the promise of our Lord to Peter and his successors has in some minds been obscured.