

REPLY TO THE ANGLICAN BISHOPS IN AUSTRALIA

By Rev. Dr. Rumble, M.S.C.

THE readers of this book will perhaps find themselves wondering why I have chosen such a title for it. I have done so because, whilst one Anglican Bishop only, the Right Rev. W. H. Johnson, of Ballarat, Victoria, is the author of the pamphlet, "Roman Catholic Assertions," which I am called upon to answer, he has prefaced it with the most formidable array of authorities in his own Church that has ever yet appeared on the cover of any Anglican publication in this country.

Indeed, not only every Anglican Archbishop and Bishop in Australia has expressly endorsed Bishop Johnson's combined attack upon the Catholic Church and defence of the Church of England. Anglican Archdeacons, Deans, Canons and Heads of Theological Colleges vie with one another in supporting all that Bishop Johnson has written. And to crown it all, there is a special letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, dated from Lambeth Palace on June 28th, 1952.

"My dear Bishop," runs this commendation from the Anglican Primate of All England, "I have read your pamphlet on Roman Assertions with great interest, and I have handed it to a scholar* who has written on the same subject. Both of us entirely approve of what you say. It is indeed admirably said. You are at liberty to say that I endorse your arguments throughout. I am, yours sincerely, Geoffrey Cantuar."

Now before David puts his pebble into his sling, he must be allowed to say one thing. Such a weight of authority and such a display of unity would be impressive if only Bishop Johnson's booklet were not an attack on the Catholic Church. Of course all Anglican Bishops will stand together if it's a question of opposing Rome! Bishop Robin, of Adelaide, will then forget his direct and public opposition to the teaching of Archbishop Mowll, of Sydney, concerning remarriage after divorce. Bishop Wylde, of Bathurst, will put out of his mind for the time being the "Red Book Case" which he lost at the cost of thousands of pounds because of its "Romanizing" tendencies.

Archdeacon T. C. Hammond will be content to be associated with the "Rev. Father Snell," of the Society of the Sacred Mission, though if he himself were described as the "Rev. Father T. C. Hammond" he would be horrified. In "The Anglican," of December 5th, 1952, there appeared a news item that the Anglo-Catholic Fathers of the Society of the Sacred Mission from Adelaide would "raid" Sydney, seeking recruits to be trained by them for the Anglican ministry. It seemed incredible. For the recruits would be trained in a type of Anglicanism which is anathema to Sydney and which Moore Theological College, under Archdeacon Hammond, exists precisely to counteract in every possible way. It was no surprise, therefore, to find in a later issue of "The Anglican" a letter from Bishop Hilliard, assistant to Archbishop Mowll, stating that the advertised campaign by the Kelham Fathers, as the would-be "Raiders" are popularly known, had not taken place and would not take place. The Anglicanism of the Sydney Archdiocese and that of the Kelham Fathers constitute two essentially different religions! But all doctrinal, liturgical and disciplinary differences will be laid aside when it is a question of a "united front" in proclaiming that "Rome is Wrong."

But it is not impressive that they should present such a "united front" for such a purpose. Every sensible person would expect that. What would be remarkable would be to find the same array of Archbishops and Bishops, Archdeacons and Canons and Deans united in proclaiming just what Anglican teaching really is! But that will never be.

So much, then, for the impressive-looking endorsement of Bishop Johnson's pamphlet. But all who have endorsed it must take responsibility for it; and to all of them I am justified in addressing this reply.

** Footnote: This unusual anonymous citation cannot but suggest that the scholar in question felt that he could not do less than comply with the Archbishop's request to commend the booklet, but that he owed it to his own reputation as a scholar to withhold his name. That he would have had abundant reasons for wishing to remain anonymous the following pages will show.)*

“THE MOST FORMIDABLE ARRAY.”

Copy of the wording of the Cover of Bishop Johnson’s Booklet.

Begins “Roman Catholic Assertions

A REPLY

WRITTEN BY THE BISHOP OF BALLARAT

THE RIGHT REVEREND W. H. JOHNSON

And Published with the Endorsement of :

His Grace, The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, The Primate of Australia (The Archbishop of Sydney), The Archbishop of Melbourne, The Archbishop of Brisbane, The Archbishop of Perth, The Bishop of Tasmania, The Bishop of Adelaide, The Bishop of Newcastle, the Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn, The Bishop of Armidale, The Bishop of Carpentaria, The Bishop of Gippsland, The Bishop of Bendigo, The Bishop of St. Arnaud, The Bishop of Riverina, The Bishop of Wangaratta, The Bishop of Willochra, The Bishop of Bunbury, The Bishop of Bathurst, The Bishop of Kalgoorlie, The Bishop of Grafton, The Bishop of Geelong, Bishop Pilcher, Bishop D’Arcy Collins, Bishop Baker (Principal of Ridley College), Archdeacon T. C. Hammond (Principal of Moore College, Sydney), Bishop G. H. Cranswick, Bishop J. W. Ashton, The Dean of Melbourne, The Dean of Sydney (Dr. S. Barton Babbage, Principal-elect of Ridley College), The Archdeacon of Hobart (Ven. W. R. Barrett, formerly Warden of Christ College in the University of Tasmania), The Headmaster of Canberra Grammar School (Canon David Garnsey), Rev. Father Antony Snell of the Society of the Sacred Mission (acting Principal of St. Michael’s House, Crafers, South Australia), The Rev. I. F. Church (Principal of St. Francis’ College Brisbane), The Rev. Canon R. E. Sutton, (Warden of St. John’s College, Auckland, the Anglican Theological College for the New Zealand Dioceses).

COMMENDATION BY THE
ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY

Lambeth Palace,

June 28th, 1952.

My dear Bishop,

I have read your pamphlet on Roman Assertions with great interest and I have handed it to a scholar who has written on the same subject. Both of us entirely approve of what you say. It is indeed admirably said. You are at liberty to say that I endorse your arguments throughout.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

Geoffrey Cantuar.

Ends”

THE PROVOCATION

Bishop Johnson commences by saying that he has received newspapers containing persistent attacks on the Church of England, together with requests that he should answer them. But he soon makes it clear that it is my own religious “Question Box” session from Radio Station 2SM, Sydney, which is his main concern. For the replies to inquiries during that session are the ones published in almost every Catholic newspaper in Australia.

Now it is a distortion of the position to say that my replies concerning Anglicanism constitute attacks upon the Church of England. Inquiries dealt with have covered almost all aspects of religion. Naturally most questions sent to me concern

the Catholic Church; and I have not refused to let listeners ask me to justify that Church against all they may choose to say to its discredit - making public their charges, however serious and bitter they may be.

Where non-Catholic Churches are concerned, all come up for discussion at times, but more questions have to do with Anglicanism than with other forms of Protestantism for the simple reason that Anglicans happen to be numerically in the majority in this country. [A position, in 2005, now occupied by the Catholic Church, whereas Anglicanism is the largest Protestant Church in Australia.] And when asked why I think Anglicanism defective compared with Catholicism, or wherein Anglican objections to Catholicism are at fault, I declare my mind clearly and dispassionately on the subject. To suggest that such replies to enquiries are gratuitous attacks upon the Church of England is to distort the position entirely.

Bishop Johnson pauses to pay tribute to good Catholics, declaring that he has “Roman Catholic friends whose Christian life and character I admire.” Another Anglican Bishop, A. C. Headlam, of Gloucester, in his book “The Doctrine of the Church and Reunion,” attacked Bishop Gore, Anglican Bishop of Oxford, for refusing to recognize the validity of nonconformist ordinations. And he said, “It has become the fashion now for English divines, in the same breath almost in which they deny Sacraments and Orders to the Nonconformists, to indulge in eulogies of the many signs that they exhibit of the gifts of God’s spirit.” Bishop Johnson adopts that same fashion, though now in regard to the Catholic Church. Firstly he pays tribute to the admirable qualities of many Catholics in order to safeguard himself against any charge of personal prejudice, and then proceeds to say all that he has against their Church.

The official attitude of that Church and the methods of her “controversialists” he declares to be “a divisive influence in Christendom today, just as she was when she caused the divisions of the Church in centuries gone by.”

But the real truth is that the official attitude of the Catholic Church has ever been an uncompromising stand for the Christian religion in all its fulness. The divisive influence throughout the ages (not resulting in divisions “in” or “of” the Church, but “from” it) has been the spirit of schism and heresy. In the 11th century, mainly through national prejudices, the Orthodox Eastern Church separated itself by schism from the Catholic Church. In the 16th century the Protestant reformers separated themselves from the Catholic Church by both schism and heresy, denying at once the jurisdiction of the Apostolic See of Rome and teaching new and false doctrines.

Meantime, some 400 millions of Catholics [in 2005, it is 1.1 billions of Catholics] are united in faith, worship and discipline, in loyal communion with the Holy See. But the Eastern Orthodox peoples have broken up into 16 different national and independent Churches, whilst Protestantism has disintegrated into divisions and sub-divisions almost without number. The influence of the Catholic Church is unitive, whilst those divided from her carry their divisive influence with them which is ever at work within their own ranks.

ANGLICAN TEACHINGS

“The first statement I have been asked to deal with,” Bishop Johnson goes on to say, “came over the air in a Roman Catholic broadcast and was subsequently printed in Roman Catholic papers. It was in connection with the late King George VI, and contained the statement that the Anglican presentation of the Christian religion is ‘vague and confused’.”

Here I am indeed identified as the culprit. In one of my broadcasts I had said that Freemasonry cannot be reconciled with Christianity. Back came the challenge: The late King George VI was both a Freemason and a good Christian. I agreed. But I said that his many duties prevented him from making a deep study of Freemasonry, whilst his knowledge of Christianity was inadequate because the Anglicanism he had ever taken for granted was itself ‘vague and confused’ in its presentation of the Christian religion. That was a statement of fact in defence of the personal integrity of our late King, not an attack upon the Church of England.

However, Bishop Johnson says that if I were asked to explain why I made such a statement, he has no doubt that I “would quote something that some eccentric Anglican has said or written.” Then he asks: “Is that honest?” All I can ask in turn is whether he thinks it honest to try to make his readers think me dishonest on no other grounds than a mere guess on his part which he feels to be right! For I would never dream of doing what he does not doubt I would do.

Never have I based the statement that the Anglican Church is “vague and confused” in its teachings on anything any

eccentric individual Anglican has said or written. I have merely said what Anglican authorities themselves have said.

For example, in 1914, in his book "Ecclesia Anglicana," Bishop Weston of Zanzibar said that the Church of England "stands today at the judgement bar, innocent alike of narrow-mindedness and broad-mindedness, but proven guilty of double-mindedness. And until she recovers a single mind, and knows it, and learns to express it, she will be of use neither in the sphere of reunion, nor in the mission field." Bishop Weston was not merely "some eccentric individual Anglican." He was an Anglican Bishop in good standing with his Church.

It may be said, of course, that he was an Anglo-Catholic. Very well. Let us take another Anglican Bishop, anything but an Anglo-Catholic, Hensley Henson, Bishop of Durham. In his "Retrospect" he writes of the 1930 Lambeth Conference: "The truth is that, under the description of the 'Anglican Communion' there are gathered two mutually contradictory conceptions of Christianity. How long the divergence of first principles can be concealed remains to be seen."

Again it may be said that Bishop Hensley Henson was known to be a Modernist crank. Very well. Take Archbishop Randall Davidson, of Canterbury itself. Of him his successor, Cosmo Gordon Lang, said: "Seated as Archbishop on the box, he handled the three horses, Evangelical, Modernist and Catholic, fairly and adroitly; but he always seemed to me more concerned to get them together round the next corner than to envisage what the ultimate course of the journey was to be." "Cosmo Gordon Lang," by J. G. Lockhart, p. 231. That is practically to say that even the Archbishop of Canterbury did not know where he was going.

In 1947 the present Archbishop Fisher, of Canterbury, said of Bishop Barnes: "If his views were mine, I should not feel that I could still hold episcopal office in the Church." But nothing was done about it. Bishop Barnes merely stated that his views were quite compatible with Anglicanism, and stayed where he was.

In 1950, Bishop Rawlinson of Derby published a book entitled "Problems of Reunion." In it, after speaking of Anglo-Catholicism, of Broad Churchmanship, and of Evangelical Protestantism, he says: "As the Archbishop of Canterbury has expressed it, there are 'tensions' within Anglicanism which are not yet resolved." This is but a euphemistic way of saying that "vagueness and confusion" prevail.

Preaching a sermon in Somerville College, Oxford, on 13th August, 1951, the Rev. E. F. Carpenter, Canon of Westminster, said of the Church of England: "Neither its doctrinal position nor its pattern of worship is easy to state or define; nor, I think, would any of us know exactly where to go for them." "The Modern Churchman" - Sept. 1951, p. 278.

I could go on almost interminably with such assertions of "vagueness and confusion" by responsible Anglican spokesmen. And if one merely repeats what they themselves say, is Bishop Johnson of Ballarat justified in making the charge of dishonesty, basing it on the guess that such a verdict can be supported only by the utterances or behaviour of "some eccentric Anglican"?

To console his disturbed people, Bishop Johnson volunteers the information that "What the Anglican Church holds and teaches is found in her official documents and in the Book of Common Prayer." But one is compelled to ask what documents are official, and which Book of Common Prayer is meant, 1549, 1552, 1662 or 1928? And according to which interpretation of these sources, Anglo-Catholic, Evangelical Protestant, or Modernist?

In 1946 a book appeared, entitled "Laodicea in the Twentieth Century," by Frank Bennett - a book commended to all Anglicans by the Rev. Alec Vidler, editor of the Anglican periodical "Theology." In it, on p. 25, the author says: "There have been significant claims made of late that no degree of unbelief is inconsistent with membership of the National Church." And he declares this point of view to be "far from uncommon even among comparatively ardent adherents of the Church of England."

Earlier, in 1933, the Rev. T. H. Whitton published a book entitled "The Necessity for Catholic Reunion." In it he says: "In the Anglican Communion . . . not only are there at least three different and contradictory religions calling themselves 'Catholic,' 'Evangelical' and 'Modernist,' but also these three religions are divergent. In this confusion and contradiction, what can be expected of the people? . . . There is no court in the Church of England competent to declare the truth or condemn error."

It is rather useless, therefore, for Bishop Johnson to refer us to Anglican "official documents" and the "Book of

Common Prayer.”

By-passing all this however, the Anglican Bishop of Ballarat tells us: “There you find the age-long ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons most carefully retained.” But again we run into trouble. The words mentioned have been retained, but not the realities for which those words stand.

There are Anglican Bishops and theologians who deny absolutely that a threefold ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons is essential to the Church at all. For them, the non-episcopal ministries of the Nonconformist Churches are every bit as valid. It’s only a question of which system one prefers. In his booklet, “The Genius of the Church of England,” the Anglican Bishop of Derby, Dr. Rawlinson, said, in 1949: “Continuity of Bishops was retained, not for any reasons connected with the idea of Apostolic Succession, but for reasons of statecraft. The Crown held that the clergy needed control, and that to that end Bishops were requisite; and, accordingly, Bishops there were.”

In the “National Review” of Sept. 1925, the Anglican Bishop Knox, of Manchester, wrote: “The Pope refused absolutely to recognize our Anglican Orders on the ground that our Church does not ordain priests to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass. In spite of the attempts made by our Archbishops to conceal this defect, the Pope from his point of view was unquestionably right.”

When, in 1946, the Anglican Bishop Kirk, of Oxford, published “The Apostolic Ministry,” in which he tried to maintain a genuine Catholic priesthood in the Church of England, his fellow-Anglican Bishop, Dr. Hensley Henson, described it as a “mischievous book,” and said: “In type, temper and tendency, Bishop Kirk’s essay appears to me essentially Roman, not Anglican.” “Retrospect” - Vol. III., p. 383.

Turning to the matter of faith, Bishop Johnson, of Ballarat, next tells us: “There you find the Creeds of the Catholic Church retained.”

Nominally, yes. But they are of no authority for Anglicans; or at best as each one likes to interpret them. Dr. H. L. Goudge, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, says in his book, “The Church of England and Reunion,” p. 316: “In regard to faith, nothing is *de fide* in the Church of England except the Creeds, and there are legitimate differences about their interpretation.” In an address at Girton College, Cambridge, in the year following the publication of Dr. Goudge’s book, a prominent Anglican, R. B. Henderson, M.A., Headmaster of Alleyn’s School, said: “Those who frame Creeds and impose their acceptance on others forget the simple Apostolic warning, ‘The devils believe and tremble.’ Nowadays they sign and chuckle.” And he adds: “There is no test of orthodoxy of which any practical use can be made.” “The Modern Churchman” - Sept. 1939, p. 382.

As for the Rule of Faith, Bishop Johnson tells us: “There you find it laid down that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and that nothing can be taught as necessary to eternal salvation which cannot be concluded and proved by the Scriptures.”

Now that teaching is found both in the Anglican ordination rite and in Article VI. of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion. Anglo-Catholic writers have described those Thirty-Nine Articles as the “forty stripes save one” with which the Church of England is scourged, borrowing the expression from St. Paul’s description of his own sufferings.

The teaching, of course, is not true, and it is self-contradictory. You cannot say that one must believe that nothing can be taught as necessary to salvation unless it be contained in Holy Scripture when nowhere in Holy Scripture will you find that one must believe any such thing. Bishop Johnson declares this teaching to be “true to the New Testament, to the Primitive Church and to the early Fathers.” But it is not. St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: “Hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word, or by our epistle.” II Thess., 2: 14. He did not say, “Nothing is necessary unless it be contained in Holy Scripture.”

As for the Primitive Church, the Acts of the Apostles tell us that the first Christians “were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles.” Acts 2: 42. They had no written New Testament at all.

And typical of the early Fathers we find St. Augustine writing in the fourth century: “There are many things from the Apostolic tradition which are not found in their writings nor in the councils of their successors, yet which are believed as taught by them and derived from them because they are preserved in the whole Church.” Epistle. 54, De Baptismo, (On

Baptism,) Book II, chapter 7, number 12. St. Augustine knew well the teaching of the earlier Fathers who had preceded him.

And now, having put before his readers, for their approval, the Anglican position, Bishop Johnson proceeds to ask their disapproval of the Catholic position. "The Roman Church," he says "has broken away by promulgating new dogmas, of which the Scriptures, the Primitive Church, and the early Fathers knew nothing."

To that general assertion, for which no proofs are here given, I will content myself with saying that certainly the Scriptures, the Primitive Church and the early Fathers knew nothing of the Church of England as by law established in the 16th century, nor of its derivative Churches, separated as they all are from the main body of Christians throughout the world who have remained true to the Catholic Church. But Bishop Johnson begins to come to something concrete when he declares: "Furthermore, perversions that helped to cause the Reformation still flourish in the Catholic Church. Things that provoked Luther to revolt are still there." Most Anglicans, of course, try to forget Martin Luther, holding that their Church is a "Via Media," or "Middle Way," which escaped from the errors of Rome without going to the other extreme and falling into the errors of Martin Luther. But, letting that go, we must consider the two "things" Bishop Johnson specifically mentions.

Firstly, he says: "The 'Double Standard' is still there." Goodness only knows what his readers will make of that! To most of them it will only mean some form of "Jesuitical Duplicity." But in its real meaning it is a most unfortunate charge to come from an Anglican Bishop in these days. Let us look a little more closely into the matter.

In order to justify the suppression of the Monasteries and Convents at the time of the Protestant Reformation, and to account for the absence of Religious Communities in the Church of England for some 300 years, Anglicans used to accuse the Catholic Church of teaching a "Double Standard," namely, that real holiness was expected of monks and nuns, but not of the laity. Monks and nuns should aim at perfection, but ordinary Catholics had not got to do that. They could content themselves with something less. A "pass degree" was good enough for them, and they could leave all attempts at an "honours degree" to the Religious Orders. That charge was quite false, for the Catholic Church has ever taught that Our Lord's words, "Be, you all, perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect," apply to all Catholics without exception according to the state of life which happens to be theirs.

But what Bishop Johnson has forgotten is that during the last 100 years or so there has been a steady revival of the Religious Life in his own Anglican Church. The "Guide to the Religious Communities of the Anglican Communion" lists 16 different Religious Orders for men, and 72 for women.

The Anglican Bishop Kirk, of Oxford, wrote recently: "After 300 years of largely undeserved obloquy and suspicion against the Religious Life, its restoration was no easy matter." He declared that Anglicans did not understand "the call to a special dedication to God and separation from the world." Speaking at Mirfield last year (1951) he said that "the Religious Communities of the Anglican Communion have changed the face of the Church." "I value more than I can say," he said, "the Religious Communities, because in them the Church has made her great effort to present this one truth, the thing that matters above all others, that men and women should continually be lifting their hearts and souls to God."

On 12th July, 1952, Archbishop Garbett, of York, speaking on the 60th anniversary of the Community of the Resurrection, said that he regarded the revival of Religious Orders in the Church of England as one of the supremely great gifts of the Oxford Movement, and he boasted that there were more Anglican nuns in England today than there were Catholic nuns at the time of the Protestant Reformation.

Now that is true. But Anglicans cannot have it both ways, sneering at Rome's "Double Standard" of high virtue for monks and nuns, and low virtue for ordinary people, whilst boasting about the restoration of Monastic and Convent Life in their own Church - the very thing on which they based their false charge of "Double Standards" against Rome!

Meantime, whilst all that is merely a matter of relative standards of virtue, when it comes to a question of straight-out sin and immorality, the Catholic Church as no other takes an unwavering stand against it.

Thus, writing in the "Hibbert Journal," July 1930, apropos of the Lambeth Conference of that year, the Rev. J. M. Lloyd Thomas, a Protestant clergyman of Birmingham, said: "The supreme attraction of Rome is to be found in its ethical

rigorism. Rome is the one uncompromising corporate witness to that moral code of Christendom which preserves Western Civilization from final collapse. It represents the last loyalty of the human race to its own highest moral standards. . . . There is no authoritative moral theology which can tell us what is the final judgement of Anglicans and Free Churchmen on questions such as marriage, divorce, birth control, euthanasia, companionate experiments [in ‘marriage’], abortion, suicide. Only Rome speaks with one voice on such themes, and these are the issues of life and death.”

And the Rev. J. M. Lloyd Thomas adds: “We can all be magnanimous enough to recognize that Rome in a uniquely tenacious temper, is a steward of the mysteries and of the moral witness of the Christian Church.” But Bishop Johnson, of Ballarat, has not such magnanimity. He can find room only for the trumped-up and antiquated charge that Rome has a “Double Standard,” demanding a high degree of virtue from members of her Religious Orders, and contenting herself with a lower degree of virtue from the laity. For the rest, about 10 per cent of Anglicans in this country attend their Church, whilst 90 per cent do not. That ought to be more than enough to occupy the attention of the Anglican Bishops of Australia.

The second specific thing Bishop Johnson here mentions in his effort to discredit Rome is this. “Roman Catholic clericalism,” he says, “virtually makes the laity an inferior caste subject to the clergy.” Our Catholic laity, of course, did not tell him that. They have never felt in such a way. I certainly had no such experience as a layman before ever I thought of becoming a priest, after I had transferred from the Anglican Church to the Catholic Church.

But there is a question here for Bishop Johnson to weigh well. Nonconformists who won’t have “Priests or Prelates” at any price, make exactly the same charge against Anglicanism as that made by the Bishop against the Catholic Church. Does Bishop Johnson believe that Anglican episcopal consecration or priestly ordination sets men apart in a special category within his own Church, to teach the people committed to their charge, as the Anglican Ordinal declares, and also to admonish them both in “public and private” as need shall require? If so, would he agree with the Nonconformists that this is to turn the laity into an “inferior caste?” If not, why does he adopt towards the Catholic Church their attitude towards his own Anglican Church?

He goes on to urge that such a distinction between clergy and laity “denies the Pauline doctrine of the Body of Christ in which all the members are subject to Christ Himself.” One is tempted to ask how Bishop Johnson gets over the hierarchical constitution of Bishops, Priests and Deacons in his own Anglican Church. Or does he deny any intrinsic difference between clergy and laity in the Church of England, regarding even himself as but a “mitred layman?” If so, let him never complain again that Rome refuses to recognize Anglican Orders as valid!

As for his remark about the Pauline doctrine of the Body of Christ in which all members are subject to Christ, that simply doesn’t touch the question as to whether, whilst all members are subject to Christ, there are differences of function, power and authority amongst the members themselves according to the very will of Christ. In the Catholic Church, whilst priest and laity are subject to their Bishop, their Bishop is as subject to Christ as they are. Will Bishop Johnson say, “In our Anglican Church all are subject to Christ, and therefore no one is subject to me?” Or if he does claim episcopal authority over his flock, does he admit that he does so in defiance of the Pauline doctrine of the Body of Christ? It is quite evident that he does not even understand the Pauline doctrine of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ.

HENRY VIII AND THE CHURCH.

Bishop Johnson devotes the next section of his booklet to the perennial question of Henry VIII as founder of the Church of England. And he begins by creating a smokescreen, declaring that “Roman Catholic writers . . . are not certain whether to say that Henry VIII founded the Church of England, or to say that Queen Elizabeth did so.”

Let me hasten to assure him that Catholic writers labour under no uncertainty whatever on that matter. When, in 1534, Henry VIII repudiated for the first time in English history the supreme ecclesiastical authority of the Pope and vested it in himself, he founded a new “Church of England” every bit as much as the English colonists in America founded a new nation in the United States when, in 1776, they repudiated the authority of the Throne of England and vested it in themselves. Catholic writers are equally clear that Henry’s new Church was Protestantised in teaching and worship under Edward VI, (Henry’s son) that it was temporarily abolished as a constitutionally independent Church by the reconciliation

of England with Rome during the reign of Queen Mary, (Henry's Catholic daughter) and that Elizabeth (Henry's other daughter) undid Mary's work, reviving Henry's constitutional break with Rome together with the Protestantism of Edward VI. The Church of England, as we know it, therefore, dates back to Elizabeth and ultimately, allowing for the brief Catholic restoration under Mary, to Henry VIII. via Edward VI. There is no uncertainty amongst Catholics about this, and one would have to be singularly obtuse not to be able to grasp the position.

That is the end of the smokescreen. Now for history itself. Bishop Johnson contents himself with quoting one historian's verdict. "Freeman, Regius Professor of History at Oxford," he writes, "states the truth when he says: 'Nothing was further from the mind of either Henry VIII or Elizabeth than that either of them was doing anything new. Neither of them ever thought of establishing a new Church'."

Bishop Johnson has no other reason for saying that Freeman states the truth in that matter than that he would like it to be the truth. But, alas, it was not the truth, as I will soon show.

Firstly, Edward Augustus Freeman was appointed Regius Professor of History at Oxford in 1884. He was undoubtedly an eminent historian - until King Charles' head came into the picture. For he was an ardent Anglican and a close friend of the Anglican Bishop Stubbs, of Oxford. As a result, however reliable he might be in other matters, he was definitely not reliable when Anglicanism was involved. Then he was no longer impartial, and his prejudices coloured his judgement. That is not merely my opinion, held because I would like it to be true. The "Cambridge History of English Literature," Vol. XIV., p. 73, says of him that his "failings were most palpable in controversy, in the conduct of which he lacked a due sense of proportion."

Now let us turn to two utterly detached historians on this particular subject. It must be remembered that, as a prelude to the "Act of Royal Supremacy," Henry had enacted a "Statute of Appeals," in which he sought to justify his actions. Commenting on this subject, in his "History of English Law" (5th Edition, 1931), Sir W. S. Holdsworth, Professor of English Law at Oxford University, says: "The preamble to this Statute of Appeals is remarkable, partly because it manufactures history on an unprecedented scale, but chiefly because it has operated from that day to this as a powerful incentive to its manufacture by others on similar lines. Nor is the reason for this phenomenon difficult to discover. The Tudor settlement was a characteristically skilful instance of the Tudor genius for creating a modern institution with a mediaeval form. But in order to create the illusion that the new Anglican Church was indeed the same institution as the mediaeval Church, it was necessary to prove the historical continuity of these two very different institutions. . . . It was not till an historian arose who, besides being the greatest historian of his century, was both a consummate lawyer and a dissenter from the Anglican as well as from the other Churches (i.e. F. W. Maitland, LL.D., D.C.L., late Downing Professor of Law at Cambridge University) that the historical worthlessness of Henry's theory was finally demonstrated."

What then are we to say to Bishop Johnson's next statement that Henry and Elizabeth were, in their own eyes, "reforming, not pulling down or setting up, but simply putting to rights"?

Firstly, if they were merely "putting to rights," they might have gone about it in the same way, instead of Elizabeth insisting on doctrines for which Henry would have sent people to the stake! But that is a minor point. Was Henry, in his own eyes, not pulling down or setting up? Far from it. He knew quite well that he was pulling down and setting up.

In his book against Martin Luther, "The Defence of the Seven Sacraments," published in 1521 (13 years before his break with Rome), Henry wrote in the second chapter: "Certainly if anyone goes through the history of former times, he will find that, since the conversion of the world, all Christian Churches have been obedient to the See of Rome. We find that even the Greeks, although the seat of Empire was transferred to their midst, in all that pertained to the Primacy in the Church, obeyed the See of Rome - except at those times when they had fallen into schism." Again, in the 12th chapter, he wrote that Martin Luther "makes a distinction between the Church of the Pope and the Church of Christ, although the Pope is the Supreme Pontiff in the same Church of which Christ is the Head." The man who wrote those words knew quite well that when he did the very thing for which he had blamed Martin Luther he, too, was setting up a new and independent Church.

They were only "getting rid of innovations and corruptions," insists Bishop Johnson. But "they" were doing nothing of

the kind. I have already pointed out that Henry was so bent on retaining things declared to be “innovations and corruptions” by Edward VI and later by Elizabeth that he had people hanged, drawn and quartered for not accepting them! He wanted to be free from Papal authority, but insisted on other Catholic teachings and practices, such as the Sacrifice of the Mass, the doctrine of transubstantiation, all seven Sacraments, auricular confession, the celibacy of the clergy, prayers to the Virgin Mary and to the Saints, and also for the souls in Purgatory.

Common to both Henry and Elizabeth would be Bishop Johnson’s further assertion that “they were casting off a usurped foreign jurisdiction,” were it indeed “usurped” and “foreign.” It was, however, neither usurped nor foreign.

It was not foreign, for ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the Church, abstracting as the Church does from all national considerations, could in no way be called foreign. The Catholic Church conforms to the teaching of St. Paul in Gal., 3: 28: “For as many as have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.” >From the religious point of view no member of the Catholic Church is a foreigner to another member; and there can be no question of the spiritual jurisdiction of a “foreigner.”

Nor was Papal jurisdiction usurped. When was it usurped? No one can say. In his Penguin Special, “The Gospel for Tomorrow,” (1941) the Anglican Bishop of Truro, Dr. J. W. Hunkin, wrote, “Anglicans may maintain that they were only repudiating an authority wrongly acquired by the Pope. But actually the Pope had had this degree of authority conceded to him by Western Christendom, and in this respect Anglicanism was a real break-away from what had become the established order of the Western Churches.” Archbishop Garbett, of York, also, speaking of the controversies between the Popes and English kings before the Reformation, wrote in his recent book, “Church and State in England,” p. 40, “The true nature of these controversies is often misunderstood . . . as the attempt of an indignant Church and patriotic nation to escape from thralldom to Rome. However much we might wish this had been so, the actual facts give no support to a theory so congenial to later-day Protestantism. . . . Papal authority and jurisdiction were accepted in England as in the rest of Western Christendom.”

PETER AND THE PAPACY

In order to try to undermine the right of the Pope to supremacy over the whole Church, Bishop Johnson now feels obliged to go back to the very beginning. “What are we to say,” he writes, “about the Roman Catholic claim that Peter was the Rock?” Of all the possible replies to that question, even from his own point of view, I could think of many better ones than those he has chosen!

He says truly that Archbishop Kenrick of St. Louis, U.S.A., had prepared an answer which he purposed to deliver at the Vatican Council in 1870 - a speech which was not delivered, but published at Naples in the same year. Now Archbishop Kenrick was one of those who, before it was defined, was opposed to the dogma of Papal Infallibility. His speech, of course, expressed his opposition to the defining of the dogma; but it was too long for delivery in the Council. It would have taken four hours! When, however, the dogma was defined he at once accepted it; and when, later, he was asked about the arguments in his speech, he said he had sufficiently indicated their lack of worth by his public proclamation of the dogma of Papal Infallibility in his Cathedral as soon as he arrived back in his Archdiocese in America. Of what benefit is it for Bishop Johnson to quote the argument of a man who himself treats it as of no force whatever?

“In it,” declares the Bishop, “the Archbishop said that a clause in the Creed of Pope Pius IV. required that Scripture should be interpreted only according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.” But that was one of the major fallacies in the Archbishop’s speech. He had quite misunderstood the clause in question.

Had he gone back to the actual Decree of the Council of Trent, on which the Creed of Pope Pius IV. was based, he would have found that the Council forbade anyone to interpret Scripture in a way which would conflict with any meaning for which the unanimous consent of the Fathers existed. There is no need to find the unanimous consent of the Fathers concerning the meaning of every passage in Scripture before one can accept an interpretation of it! There are many

passages in Scripture many of the Fathers did not discuss at all. What one must not do is to maintain an interpretation of Scripture against the unanimous consent of the Fathers where such unanimous consent exists. It is really a waste of time, therefore, for Bishop Johnson to quote the words of Archbishop Kenrick which he finds so impressive.

Archbishop Kenrick, he says, “pointed out that five different interpretations were given by the Fathers of the words, ‘On this Rock I will build my Church.’ Seventeen Fathers taught that Peter was the rock; eight taught that the whole band of the Apostles was the rock; 44 taught that the rock was the faith expressed by St. Peter; 16 taught that Christ was the rock; and there was the interpretation that the rock was the whole body of the faithful.”

But here again, Archbishop Kenrick had overlooked the fact that these different interpretations were not mutually exclusive. Fathers who taught that Peter was the rock taught the other interpretations also; and those who taught other interpretations taught also that Peter was the rock. And no Father can be quoted denying that Peter was the rock. In reality, different Fathers stressed different aspects of one and the same truth that Peter was the rock upon which Christ founded His Church. Seventeen Fathers taught that Peter was the rock. Eight, that the Church was founded upon the rock of the Apostles, of whom Peter was the chief. Forty-four said the rock was the faith confessed by St. Peter in the sense that the Church would ever be preserved in the true faith through Peter. Sixteen speak of Christ as the rock, intending that although St. Peter was head of the Church, it could only be as through Christ and subject to Christ. Those who taught that the rock was the whole body of the faithful meant no more than that St. Peter by reason of his supreme pastoral office was representative of the whole Church.

“Archbishop Kenrick,” declares Bishop Johnson, “summed the matter up in these words: ‘If we are bound to follow the greater number of the Fathers in this matter, then we must hold for certain that the word “Petra” means, not Peter professing the faith, but the faith professed by Peter’.” Archbishop Kenrick, however, was obviously illogical in first laying it down that we must interpret Scripture only according to the unanimous interpretation of the Fathers, and then insisting on an interpretation not, on his own showing, in accordance with such a unanimous interpretation. But he was wrong both in his ideas about the authority of the Fathers and also about the meaning of what they wrote. So we can dismiss his views on the subject, even as he himself when he accepted the decision of the Vatican Council repudiated the value of his own arguments.

Meantime, an Anglican scholar of today, Dr. T. G. Jalland, in his book on “The Church and the Papacy,” writes as follows: “It may be said, however, that the evidence as to the patristic views has exegetical interest only, since, to quote a modern Protestant writer, it is ‘quite certain, and is now generally admitted, that the words, “this rock” refer, not to Christ, nor to Peter’s confession of faith, but to Peter himself’.” Dr. H. L. Goudge, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, also maintains, in the “New Commentary on Holy Scripture,” that Peter personally is the rock.

“We need only add,” continues Bishop Johnson, as if he has sufficiently proved his previous point, “that the fact that different interpretations of the passage have been held by men of eminence in the Church is sufficient reason for stating that this particular text could never have been regarded as the charter of an important claim.” But, as I have already said, the different interpretations of the Fathers were not mutually exclusive, but explanations of the profound significance of St. Peter’s position as the rock-foundation of the Christian Church. In any case, this particular text is not regarded as the charter of our important claim. It is but one of many, even though it is an outstanding one. And it retains its force despite Bishop Johnson’s superficial remarks concerning it.

“The only thing certain,” he urges, “is that the Fathers did not hold, and never expressed the belief that St. Peter was constituted by Our Lord the Rock to the exclusion of the other Apostles.” We shall let St. Cyprian answer that. Writing in his “De Catholicae Ecclesiae Unitate,” (On the Unity of the Catholic Church) about 251 A.D., St. Cyprian says: “And after His resurrection He said (to Peter), ‘Feed my sheep.’ Upon one He builds the Church, and entrusts the feeding of the flock to him. And although He gives equal power to all the Apostles, He yet establishes one chair, thus arranging by His own authority the source and test of unity. The others were indeed what Peter was (i.e. Apostles), but the primacy is given to Peter, and we are shown one Church and one chair. . . . He who deserts the chair of Peter, upon whom the Church was founded, does he really imagine that he is still in the Church?”

The usual Anglican reply to these words is that of Archbishop Benson of Canterbury, namely, that they are not authentic, but an interpolation. But the Anglican Dr. Trevor G. Jalland, in "The Church and the Papacy," p. 162, candidly admits that Benson's position must be abandoned, and that Batiffol, Chapman and Bevenot have abundantly proved the words authentic, and not the unscrupulous interpolated forgery Archbishop Benson declared them to be.

"It is interesting to note," writes Bishop Johnson, as a kind of afterthought, "that in the Roman Missal the Collect for the Vigil of SS. Peter and Paul reads: 'Grant, we beseech You, Almighty God, that You would not suffer us, whom You have established on the rock of the Apostolic Confession, to be shaken by any disturbances.'" But is he really so blind as not to see that if such a prayer is found in the Roman Missal - as it is - it would not be there unless the Catholic Church were fully aware that it in no way conflicts with her teaching on the primacy of St. Peter?

ST. PETER SUPREME HEAD

Bishop Johnson shows even less discernment in the passages of Scripture he quotes against that primacy. When he says that, if we study the New Testament, we find that in St. Matthew 19: 28, our Lord promised His Apostles 12 thrones, one for each, without saying that St. Peter's throne was to be above the others, he adduces a symbolical and eschatological passage which is not concerned with the visible Church in this world, and which has no more to do with the case than the flowers that bloom in the spring! Meantime, if Bishop Johnson would like a little problem upon which to exercise his exegetical prowess, since there were twelve Apostles apart from St. Paul, who was yet undoubtedly an Apostle, which of the 12 thrones is to be his? To solve that problem the Bishop will have to find some interpretation of the twelve symbolical thrones in heaven other than the one he has so superficially adopted.

He next invokes St. Paul's words in Ephesians 2: 20, that "the Church is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-stone." But it is a waste of time to quote passages of Scripture which have no bearing on the topic under discussion. Obviously, from the text itself, that Our Lord was the chief Corner-stone does not exclude the fact that He built His Church on the foundation of the Apostles, and the whole question is whether amongst the Apostles constituting the foundation St. Peter had the primacy. With that matter the text does not deal, and had no intention of dealing. The appeal must be to texts that do deal with a given subject, not to those that do not.

The bland statement is then thrown in that "Neither in the writings of St. Paul, St. John, nor St. James do we find a trace or germ of Papal power." That is not true of St. Paul and St. John; whilst, once more, St. James in his epistle was concerned with other matters which gave no occasion for introducing the topic.

Continuing his series of unsupported denials, Bishop Johnson then says: "St. Luke, the historian of the missionary labours of the Apostles, gives no indication that Our Lord conferred on St. Peter the kind of primacy and supremacy which the Roman Catholic Church claims for him." So he may wish to think. But his fellow Anglican, Dr. Trevor Jalland, in his "Church and Papacy," p. 54, declares that to St. Luke "we owe the unique Dominical 'logion' (saying) in 22: 31, 32 . . . 'Simon, Simon, behold Satan has sought to have you all, that he may sift you [plural] as wheat; but I have prayed for you [singular], that your [singular] faith fail not. And do you [singular], once converted, establish your [singular] brethren.'" And Dr. Jalland adds, "If it is not easy to see here the institution of a permanent office, we can scarcely do less than recognize in it a personal commission of leadership and initiative."

On p. 64 of the same book Dr. Jalland writes after completing a close study of the New Testament evidence: "Our survey is now complete. With the evidence before us it is difficult to imagine that there can be any satisfactory final conclusion but one, namely, that the extensive authority assigned by anticipation to St. Peter in the 'Tu es Petrus' ['You are Peter' Mt 16:18] is amply supported. . . . It is Simon the Rock alone whose attitude appears to possess a certain finality, and from whose decision there would seem to lie no appeal."

Bishop Johnson claims to have read Dr. Jalland's book. There is the less excuse for his ignoring of the findings of the latest Anglican scholarship and trying to bluff the simple readers for whom his booklet was intended. And that reproach applies to all who endorsed his arguments throughout.

An appeal is then made to Acts, 8: 14, where, the Bishop tells us, "we are told that the Apostles sent Peter and John.

This does not sound as though Peter was the ruler, let alone the Supreme Head and Pope.” But it does not sound as if he was not to one who keeps in mind all other information given in the New Testament about St. Peter. For elsewhere the primacy of St. Peter is made clear; and that all the Apostles who happened to be at Jerusalem at the time should agree that Peter himself should go, together with John, to visit Samaria in no way conflicts with that primacy. Dr. Jalland, in the book I have quoted, p. 58, is honest enough to write: “So far as the testimony of the Acts is concerned, it is evident to the most casual reader that in almost half the narrative he (St. Peter) is the most prominent figure. His is the initiative which leads to the election and ordination of Matthias to fill the vacant apostleship; his voice first bears witness to the nature and reality of the new Pentecostal gift; to him is accorded by special revelation the divine purpose that the devout ‘God-fearers,’ no less than those actually ‘within the covenant’ should be admitted to share the privileges of the Gospel; by him the freedom is secured which one day his fellow-apostle (St. Paul) will make known throughout the Roman world. These are but a few, yet significant illustrations of the important and outstanding place taken by him in the reconstituted ‘ecclesia’ of God.”

But “in Acts 15: 6-19,” urges Bishop Johnson, “we are told that St. James presided at the first Council of the Church. If St. Peter was the Supreme Ruler why did he not preside?” The answer is not far to seek. St. James, as Bishop of Jerusalem, where the Council was held, presided as host to his fellow-apostles. But he did not preside as holding the primacy. Again let me offer Bishop Johnson of Ballarat the benefit of Anglican scholarship as recorded by Dr. Jalland who writes: “James gives his vote at the apostolic council, and as president of the local church records it last; but it is the summing up of a chairman, not the verdict of an arbiter. If anything, the narrative suggests that it was the evidence of Peter which turned the scales of decision in favour of St. Paul.” Dr. Jalland also says that earlier, according to the epistle to the Galatians, St. Paul had visited Jerusalem, and did not hesitate to affirm that his chief purpose in doing so was to see St. Peter. “He admits,” writes Dr. Jalland, “that he did encounter James ‘the Lord’s brother’ as well, but makes it clear that this meeting was purely accidental. Why was it so important to introduce himself to St. Peter? Can we exclude the possibility that St. Paul had some problem of a pastoral or administrative nature, regarding which he had reason to think that St. Peter’s opinion would be not only valuable but decisive?”

Another antiquated objection raised by Bishop Johnson occurs in the words: “St. Mark’s Gospel is known by scholars to represent St. Peter’s own account of the life and teaching of Christ; yet it contains no mention of the claim that St. Peter was made Supreme Head and first Pope.” But does Bishop Johnson deny that all four Gospels are of equal authority? Will he say that what is found in three of them is nullified by omission to speak of it on the part of one of them? St. Mark’s omission of the Petrine claims has been explained by some by the humility of St. Peter, who preferred to leave it to others to speak of his high office in the Church. If we do not like that explanation, we can try to think out another. If we cannot think of any other, we can say simply that we do not know. But we are certainly not justified in ignoring positive evidence elsewhere - and still less in regarding omission to speak of something as a denial of it!

Dr. Jalland, in the book quoted above (pp. 53-4), speaking of St. Mark’s Gospel says: “In addition to those passages in which St. Peter is mentioned in company with others, though always first in order, in at least half a dozen others he alone is specified by name. In this way the author seems to wish his readers to recognize, either that he acted as leader or spokesman of the rest, or else for some unexplained reason was to be distinguished from them. . . . If we had this Gospel alone . . . it is perhaps not less remarkable that we should also be ignorant of much that might be said in disparagement of his character.” That latter fact alone would indicate a very high degree of humility on the part of St. Peter. But Bishop Johnson is not impressed by that.

“Assuming that St. Peter wrote the first epistle that bears his name,” he says, “it is strange, even if he were the most modest of men, that St. Peter failed to safeguard his own authority and the organization of the Church by an explicit statement, if he believed in anything like the present Roman Petrine claims.” If it is only a matter of assumption for Bishop Johnson whether St. Peter wrote the epistle or not, then it is also a matter of assumption for him as to whether it is evidence of St. Peter’s silence or not. And he might just as well not have mentioned the matter. We Catholics, who accept the epistle as St. Peter’s, are not worried by the considerations introduced by the Bishop. Conditions when St. Peter wrote

it were very different from those now. In these days we may have to stress the primacy of St. Peter against Protestant denials of it by the Witnesses of Jehovah and up through all grades of Protestantism, including the various schools of Anglicanism. But there were no denials of it in apostolic times, and St. Peter had no need whatever to defend his own authority and the organization of the Church by assertions of his office and authority, an office and authority which all admitted.

But did all admit it? Bishop Johnson says that “St. Paul certainly did not regard St. Peter as Supreme Head of the Church when he rebuked him, as we read in verse 11 of Galatians Chapter 2” That threadbare objection, however, is more to be expected from smaller Protestant sects such as the Christadelphians or the Seventh Day Adventists, not from an Anglican Bishop. Let me once more put at Bishop Johnson’s disposal the scholarship of his fellow Anglican, Dr. Trevor Jalland. The Bishop, of course, might prefer the views of Dr. Littledale, whose book, “Plain Reasons Against Joining the Church of Rome,” in its 1924 edition, he recommends to his readers. But he omits to mention that Dr. Littledale’s book was written over 70 years ago [1880], and that the reprinting of it was for those Protestants whose thinking has never got past 1880; just as Maria Monk’s grotesque exposure of Convent Life is still being reprinted for those whose minds have not got past 1850. Dr. Jalland gives us the present position of Anglican scholarship, with the accumulated results of the 70 years of study and research since Dr. Littledale’s polemical outbursts.

What, then, does Dr. Jalland say of St. Paul’s rebuking of St. Peter, as recorded in Galatians Chapter 2?

I have already mentioned Dr. Jalland’s use of that very epistle to the Galatians in order to show that St. Paul’s account in it of his visit to Jerusalem to see Peter indicates the importance of St. Peter and suggests the need of getting a decision from him. And in the account of St. Paul’s rebuking Peter he finds another tribute to St. Peter’s primacy, not a denial of it as Bishop Johnson imagines!

Here are Dr. Jalland’s words: “It is sometimes argued that . . . St. Paul’s confessedly critical attitude towards his fellow-apostle is utterly inconsistent with any belief in a peculiar prerogative enjoyed by his colleague in virtue of a Dominical Commission. But can we explain why St. Paul makes so much of Petrine inconsistency and only notices in passing the same defect in Barnabas? . . . We may admit that St. Peter was inconsistent, and may even grant that the Pauline protest was justified. . . . Yet St. Paul must have had a reason for so emphasizing the seriousness of his co-apostle’s action. We can only infer that a decision made by St. Peter . . . was liable to be accepted as the norm. . . . Only so does the real implication of the Pauline protest become clear.” “The Church and the Papacy,” p. 60.

I might add that the matter concerned was one, not of doctrine, but of discipline. St. Peter had refused to eat with the Gentiles, on the ground that Jewish converts might not like his doing so. St. Paul thought it better to make Jewish converts realize that the Gospel was just as much for the Gentiles as for them.

The point of all this, however, is that Dr. Jalland would tell Bishop Johnson, his fellow Anglican, that the significance of this incident is the very opposite of that imagined by him; and that it tells in favour of, and not against the primacy of St. Peter!

Bishop Johnson concludes his appeal to Scripture by saying: “So it can be stated emphatically that in the New Testament there is no idea of the Roman Catholic claim of Supreme Headship or Infallibility.” To which I can but reply that it can be, for anything can be stated emphatically. But it cannot be stated truly. A proposition is of value, not by the fact that it is stated emphatically or even repeatedly, but by its having had good reasons advanced on its behalf. Those Bishop Johnson does not produce. But he is not disheartened.

“Furthermore,” he says, “the claims which the Roman Catholic Church makes for the Papacy are contrary to the teaching of the Fathers . . . and the decisions of the Councils of the first four centuries.” But that also does not happen to be true. He can produce no quotations from the Fathers and no decisions of any of the Councils of the first centuries denying Papal Supremacy.

At most, Protestant opponents of the Catholic Church can point to a fact which everyone should expect; namely, that the evolution of the formularies of the Church had not reached within the first four centuries that degree of clarity and precision which they were to attain in later centuries. After all, it was only in the 4th century that the Church really “got

going,” when freedom to develop according to its own innate principles was granted by Constantine’s putting an end at last to the three centuries of pagan persecutions. And it is absurd to imagine that the development of the Church was legitimate for the first four centuries, but not after that.

Meantime, the innate principles which found a later and more developed expression in the Church are evident enough from the writings of the earliest Fathers, St. Clement of Rome (96 A.D.); St. Ignatius of Antioch (107 A.D.); St. Irenaeus (202 A.D.); and St. Cyprian, quoted earlier in this book, (250 A.D.). In 314 A.D. the Council of Arles in France sent the account of its deliberations to Pope Sylvester with the words: “To the most beloved Pope Sylvester. Being united by the common bond of charity, and by that unity which is the bond of our Mother, the Catholic Church . . . we salute you with the reverence which is your due, most glorious Pope.” In 325 A.D. two Legates were sent by the same Pope Sylvester to the Council of Nicea, who, with Hosius, Bishop of Cordova, had precedence amongst all the Bishops there.

“These Councils,” declares Bishop Johnson, “(recognized) the high position which the Bishop of Rome occupied in the Church on account of the importance of the city of Rome.” It is a pity, but that just will not do. Ecclesiastically Rome derived its importance from the primacy of St. Peter who died there. And the high position of the successor of St. Peter in the bishopric of Rome was acknowledged throughout the whole Church both Eastern and Western. This cannot be explained by the political importance of Rome, or when in the fourth century the seat of Empire was transferred to Constantinople the primacy would have been regarded as belonging to the Bishop of that city and no longer to the Bishop of Rome.

But such was not the case. The primacy remained with the Bishop of Rome. Dr. Jalland, in his “The Origin and Evolution of the Christian Church” (1948) p. 178, writes: “However much the See of Rome may have owed to the secular prestige of the city in which it was located, there is all but universal testimony in the Church of the pre-Nicene age that ultimately its ‘potior principalitas’ (‘Greater Authority.’ Dr. Jalland translates it as ‘Superior Origin.’ Dr. B. J. Kidd, also Anglican, as ‘Leading Position’) depended on the tradition, if not the fact, that its ‘ecclesia’ (Church) had been ‘founded and erected’ by none other than the two apostolic princes, Peter and Paul, and that it perpetuated their ‘paradosis’ (Apostolic Teaching). Amid all the changes which the fourth and succeeding centuries were to bring, the conviction that the See of Rome was ‘par excellence’ the Apostolic See remained the fundamental basis of its pre-eminent status.”

“They accorded to the Bishop of Rome a pre-eminence of honour,” explains Bishop Johnson, “but not of power or of jurisdiction.” Here, once more, I must refer him to Dr. Jalland’s book, “The Church and the Papacy.” On p. 22 of that book this Anglican scholar says that the evidence shows “that the Roman See was recognized by other Churches as possessing from very early times, if not in fact from the beginning, an undoubted primacy in the sphere of doctrine, at least in the sense of a right to be heard in preference to others. . . . Equally, as we venture to believe, it will emerge that the primacy of jurisdiction . . . if not traceable so far back as the doctrinal primacy, is at least contemporary in respect of its development with the evolution of episcopal jurisdiction.” As all the Bishops who attended the Councils were well aware of their episcopal jurisdiction, the evidence gathered by Dr. Jalland is more than enough to prove that the Councils accorded primacy of jurisdiction to the Bishop of Rome.

Dismissing for the moment all intervening centuries, Bishop Johnson next says: “The modern claims for the Papacy were forced through in spite of the strenuous opposition of learned theologians of the Roman Catholic Church.” We should be grateful for the admission that at least those learned theologians had the opportunity of stating their opinions and doing so strenuously. But there were, of course, other theologians, not less learned, who disagreed with them.

Nothing is to be gained, however, by dwelling on the merely human element where the Councils are concerned, save perhaps from the purely historical as detached from the religious point of view. Anglicans may say with Archbishop William Temple of Canterbury, “I believe in the Holy Catholic Church and regret that it doesn’t exist.” But we Catholics believe in the Holy Catholic Church and know that it does exist; and that it depends for its inerrancy in vital matters upon the guidance and protection of the Holy Spirit. All who have the Catholic Faith know that the teaching authority of the Catholic Church is ultimately safeguarded by the divine element from any difficulties arising from the human element. If one lacks the Faith, and takes natural views of the Church only, ignoring spiritual and supernatural considerations, then he

will concentrate on human factors only and condemn himself to an inevitable misunderstanding of the true nature of the Catholic Church as Christ intended it to be.

“So it was,” writes Bishop Johnson, “that the eminent Roman Catholic historian, Lord Acton, was compelled to complain that the Roman Catholic Church was placed at a hopeless disadvantage in every reasoned discussion.” Lord Acton, of course, was not “compelled” to make such a complaint, though it was quite in keeping with his character that he should choose to do so. Not that he ever wavered for a moment in his belief in the Catholic Church. But he had been far too greatly swayed by his studies in the German Universities.

Herbert Butterfield, a Methodist and Professor of modern history at Cambridge, in his book, “Christianity and History” (1950) says, on p. 9, “It was often noted in the earlier decades of the present century how greatly it had become the habit of Protestants to hold some German scholar up their sleeves - a different one every few years but always preferably the latest one - and at appropriate moments strike the unwary Philistine on the head with this secret weapon, the German scholar having decided in a final manner whatever point might have been at issue in a controversy. . . . The tendency was not confined to Protestants, however, for almost a century ago the young Acton was warned not to play this game of waving German professors at his fellow Catholics; though he not only failed to take the advice, but added the weight of his influence to a tendency that was making historical scholarship perhaps over-arrogant and certainly too pontifical.” Bishop Johnson is welcome to his “too pontifical Lord Acton.” Whether this book shows that a Catholic is placed “at a hopeless disadvantage in every reasoned discussion” must be left to the reader to decide.

Continued in Pamphlet 2