

INFALLIBLE FALLACIES

AN ANGLICAN REPLY TO
ROMAN CATHOLIC ARGUMENTS

By
Some Priests of the Anglican Communion



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ROMAN CATHOLIC PROPAGANDA
AMONG ANGLICANS

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It is not a pleasing thing for members of the Holy Catholic Church to feel obliged to enter into controversy with other members of Christ's Church. We ought to be working together for the hallowing of God's name in the world, preaching Christ's kingdom, and doing God's will. Moreover, there are several reasons why, in the present situation, Anglicans should be particularly reluctant to make charges against Roman Catholics. In the first place there is our admiration for the brave witness to our Lord which the Roman Catholic Church is making in certain countries where attacks are being made upon the Church, and martyrdoms are not unknown. Secondly, there is our sympathy with the Church of Rome in all the difficulties which, like the Anglican Church, it is experiencing in its evangelistic work in the face of materialism, indifference, and ignorance even in those countries where there is no very active opposition.¹ Thirdly, there are clear signs that many Roman Catholics, some of them in responsible positions, are adopting a more friendly attitude towards Anglicans, and have a greater understanding of—or at least a greater willingness to try to understand—the Church of England than has been the case at any time within living memory. It would perhaps be too much to say that there is solid justification for the constant Anglican hope that there may one day be a single Church enriched by the experience and traditions both of Rome and Canterbury. But that the attitude of Roman Catholics during recent years has helped to revive that hope is quite certain.²

Yet side by side with this improvement in relations between individuals there has been a significant deterioration. Roman Catholic propaganda has not only been intensified, but has become more exclusive in its claims than ever before, as well as

¹ For an admission that the Roman Catholic Church is in many ways hard pressed in South American countries see an article in *The Tablet*, 31 May 1952.

² Two recent examples of this greater friendliness towards non-Roman Catholic Christians are the very large number of Roman Catholic scholars who attended the Patristic Conference at Oxford in September 1951, and the presence of Roman Catholic observers at the Faith and Order Conference at Lund in 1952.

more reckless and, on occasion, impertinent.³ The use of the word "Catholic" by Roman Catholics, and their denial of the right of others to use it is but one example of this tendency.⁴ There was a time when Roman Catholics in this country were proud to be called, and to call themselves, Roman Catholics. It is not because of any dislike of their obedience to Rome that they are now almost unanimous in trying to discard the adjective "Roman", but quite clearly because the Anglican Church has insisted upon its right to be called Catholic.

In the Mission field all too often the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church seem to be directed towards those who are already converted from heathendom. Not a few instances might be given of Roman Catholics trying to exploit the pioneering work done by Anglicans. A successful Anglican Mission, in a locality of vast area, and as yet touched by no other Christian missions, will frequently find a Roman Catholic Mission planted *near by*. There is, apparently, a greater desire to turn Anglicans into Romans than to convert the heathen.

It used to be the Roman Catholic custom to put into practice the Catholic principle that Baptism by the effusion of water in the Name of the Holy Trinity is valid, by whomsoever it may be performed. Older priests of the Church of England remember being asked to supply certificates of Baptism for Anglicans who were becoming Roman Catholics, and who were, in many cases, not required even to be re-baptized conditionally. Cardinal Manning was accustomed to ascribe the high ethical standard of the English people as a whole to the grace which he did not doubt they had received in Baptism. But now no such enquiry is made, and although the re-baptism of those already baptized in the Church of England is said to be conditional, it is, in fact, calculated to cast doubt upon the validity of any but Roman Catholic baptism, and to promote the impression that the Roman Catholic Church alone is the sphere of habitual grace.

Rome's attitude to marriages performed by priests of the Church of England is similar. They are regarded as being very

³ For example, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Southwark's outrageous vilification of Queen Elizabeth I on 14 September 1952. As reported in the *Daily Express* he said: "she was one of the most infamous and miserable women in history, not excepting Jezebel".

⁴ See the correspondence in *The Times*, 14 May 1952 and subsequent days.

little more than civil marriages, and in no sense sacramental.⁵ The rigid attitude of Roman Catholics towards marriages performed by any but Roman Catholic priests is too well known to need illustration.

In one sense we are at a great advantage as compared with Roman Catholics. For it is far better to be able to believe that Christians, though separated from us and in schism because they have set up altar against altar, are yet—if Roman Catholic in good faith—within the Church and therefore in the same one way of salvation, than it is to have to believe (as they have to) that those from whom we are separated are not within the Church at all. For our view enables us to treat Roman Catholics as our brothers and sisters in Christ, already experiencing the grace of God; whereas they have to treat us as needing conversion and as experiencing God's grace only by some extraordinary dispensation of his mercy. Consequently (for instance) we can approach the problem of a "mixed marriage" with the single and simple motive of doing all we can to ensure that it will be a spiritually successful marriage; whereas their overruling object is to turn it to the numerical advantage of their own communion.

These are illustrations of the increasingly exclusive attitude of Roman Catholics at the official level. At the same time a vigorous proselytizing campaign goes on in many places, designed to detach the Anglican laity from their Church and to make them into Roman Catholics, and it is becoming more and more impossible to tolerate with good humour the misrepresentations which are employed, sponsored as they are by those who profess to follow Christ who is the Truth as well as the Way and the Life. The same campaign goes on in other countries where Roman Catholics are in the minority. Where they are in the majority, and have a large measure of control of the government, as in Malta and Spain, to name but two present-day examples, it is comparatively easy for them to remain in the ascendancy by the simple method of discrimination against non-Roman Catholics. Such disregard for the rights of minorities accords ill with the admirable (though not apparently infallible) utterances of the Pope in recent years on the subject of democracy and human rights. But where Roman Catholics are not the majority of the

⁵ See H. Davis, S.J., *Moral and Pastoral Theology*, (1935 2nd imp.) vol. iv, p. 106.

population they seek other methods of increasing the power of their Church. The obvious way would seem to be by campaigning for the conversion of modern pagans and those who at present attend no church. In so far as the Roman Catholic Church attempts this it deserves the good wishes of all followers of Christ. But in fact, as much energy seems to be spent in trying to detach Anglicans from loyalty to their Church as in proclaiming the gospel of Christ to unbelievers or in recovering their own lapsed.⁶ Surely there is no doubt which of these two methods would be more acceptable to God, and more useful to the cause of Christ in the world.

It is quite clear that in some of our parishes people are being disturbed by the repetition of untruths about their Church. These untruths are part of the Roman Catholic campaign of trying to gain Anglicans for their own Church. Some of the most frequent of them are that "Henry VIII founded the Church of England"; that "Anglican bishops and priests are not real bishops and priests" and that therefore "the sacraments administered in Anglican Churches are invalid"—which means that they are not real sacraments at all. We must not blame Roman Catholic laymen too much for these misrepresentations, for they are what they have been taught to say. In fact they sum up the official attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards the Anglican Church. We do not unchurch them, but they unchurch us. We regard the Pope as the lawful Bishop of Rome, and their bishops and priests as properly consecrated and ordained, and their sacraments as valid. But they regard our bishops and priests as either deluded or deliberate impostors, and our sacraments as but imitations or mockeries of the divinely appointed channels of grace.

A forcible reminder of this official Roman attitude to the Anglican Church is provided whenever "converts" (as the Roman Catholics call them) are admitted to the Roman Church. After

⁶It is not generally known how great is the number of Roman Catholic lapsed. Nor is it realized how many former Roman Catholics become Anglicans. The Bishop of Chichester announced, September 1952, that in the 4½ years, January 1948 to June 1952, he had received into the Church of England sixty former Roman Catholics, including two priests. The vicar of the parish in which the Roman Catholic Westminster Cathedral happens to be situated publicly received into the Church of England eight former Roman Catholics between 1 January and 30 September 1952. In five years he has instructed and received more than thirty.

a course of instruction in which they are taught to detest and abhor their former errors, they are, as we have seen, baptized or are conditionally baptized. The convert makes what is called his "first" confession, is in most cases confirmed by a Roman bishop, and makes what is called his "first" Communion.

If any reader of this is a "convert" from the Anglican to the Roman Church, does he now realize what he has done in submitting to all this? He has publicly declared that the Anglican bishop who confirmed him was an impostor, that the priest who baptized him, taught him the catechism, and gave him his Communion was cheating him, that he has never before received absolution, never before received the Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood, never before received the gift of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands. Is this not the sin against the Holy Ghost—to say that what is of the Holy Spirit is not of the Holy Spirit?

If any reader of this is attracted by Roman Catholic propaganda, let him be quite sure of what he will be persuaded to do—to deny the reality of former spiritual privileges in the Anglican Church, and to deny the priesthood of his former clergy.

Roman Catholic instructors may attempt to make this difficult step easier for "converts" by telling them that Anglican priests may possibly be regarded as acting in good faith, since they are in a regrettable state of ignorance. Let us at once deny a state of ignorance in this matter. Priests of the Church of England know quite well what the Roman claims are. They know the reasons why the Roman Church does not regard them as priests, and are convinced that these reasons are mistaken and cannot be upheld by any appeal to Holy Scripture, to the history of the Church, or to experience.

The issue is this. Priests of the Church of England claim to be priests of the Catholic Church of Christ. They claim that the sacraments they administer are the sacraments that Christ wills to be administered to his people in his Church. But the official voice of the Roman Church says that they are impostors.

The issue largely centres, of course, on the question whether Anglican ordinations are valid, i.e. whether or not the Anglican ordination services since the Reformation have lacked something essential, either in the words or the ceremonies or in general

intention. The Roman Catholics have laboured hard to prove that this is the case, and so we propose to discuss their efforts to discredit the Anglican "Form and Manner of Making Ordaining and Consecrating Bishops, Priests, and Deacons".

2

ARE ANGLICAN PRIESTS REALLY PRIESTS?

THE Roman Catholic argument that the Anglican Church is no part of the true Church of Christ rests principally on two assertions: that Henry VIII founded the Anglican Church, and that Anglican clergy are not validly ordained, and are therefore not priests.

The first assertion we shall deal with later in this pamphlet. Here we would only say that it is the sort of sweeping statement which is made by those who hope that their hearers have so little historical knowledge that they will be unable to challenge it.

The second assertion we will deal with at once, but it will require several pages. The question is a lengthy one because Roman Catholic arguments against the validity of Anglican ordinations have changed considerably from time to time. This fact in itself is significant. If the Roman Catholics really had a strong case, we cannot help thinking that it would not have been necessary for them to shift their arguments so frequently.

(a) *Valid Ordination*: First, by way of clearing the ground, let us be quite sure what is meant by valid ordination. Ordination is the rite (i.e. the words) and ceremony (i.e. the action) used by the Church to set apart a man to do the work which priests do in the Church, namely preach the Word of God and administer the sacraments.

For an ordination to be valid (which means to make a man really and truly a priest) four requirements must be satisfied. There must be (1) the proper minister, (2) the proper form, (3) the proper matter, and (4) the proper intention.

(1) This means that the ordination must be performed by a bishop who has himself been validly ordained priest and consecrated bishop.

(2) The correct words must be used.

(3) The correct action must be performed.

(4) The intention of the whole service must be to ordain a priest in the sense that the word "priest" has been understood from the beginning of the Church's history.

There is, probably, little difference of opinion between Roman Catholics and Anglicans about these points. But a difficulty enters in because in the ordination services which have been used by the Church since the earliest times, the words used (or the form), and the action performed (or the matter) have differed widely, and it really is not easy, either for Roman Catholics or for Anglicans, to decide what the "correct words" and the "correct action" really are.

(b) *Curious Behaviour of Cardinal Pole*: Before we begin to consider the arguments, we can clear another piece of ground by keeping the following dates in mind:

Henry VIII	1509 to 1547
Edward VI	1547 to 1553
Mary	1553 to 1558
Elizabeth	1558 to 1603

During the reign of Mary, the English Church was fully reconciled with the Pope after what Rome considered the period of schism under Henry VIII and Edward VI. Cardinal Pole, who was sent to bring this about, might have been expected (if it were true that the revised English ordination services were hopelessly invalid) to re-ordain all the priests who for the last twenty years or so had been ordained in England. It is a striking fact that he himself did so in only thirteen isolated cases.⁷ This means that many English priests who had been ordained with the English Ordinal (i.e. the revised English service of ordination) in the reign of Edward VI, were permitted to go on exercising their priesthood in communion with Rome, and with the full knowledge of the Pope. Nothing surely could be so clear an indication that at that time the English Ordinal was regarded as sufficient.

It is important to emphasize the fact that during the reign of Mary the English Church was reconciled with the Papacy. Therefore, regrettable (from the Roman Catholic point of view) as

⁷ See Gregory Dix, *The Question of Anglican Orders* (Dacre Press, 1944), pages 71 to 76. Pole received several instructions from Rome subsequent to his original faculty. But neither the Bulls of 8 March 1554, and 20 June 1555, nor the Brief "Regimini Universalis" of 30 October 1555, gave him any instructions to confer orders on priests who had been ordained by the English Ordinal as distinct from the Latin rite.

were the measures of reform in the English Church under Henry VIII and Edward VI, they have no bearing at all on the question whether Anglican priests to-day are priests of the Church or not. You can blacken the character of Henry VIII as much as you like, but that does not affect the question at all.

(c) *The Nag's Head Fable*: Reaction against the Papal claims followed under Queen Elizabeth, when once more the Pope's authority over the English Church was repudiated, and the revised English services once more came into use. It now became important for Roman Catholics to find some means of proving that in Elizabeth's reign the Apostolic Succession had been broken (i.e. that the English bishops and priests had received consecration and ordination at the hands of bishops who were themselves invalidly ordained).

The first attack took the form of spreading about a story that Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, was never duly consecrated, but that a mock ceremony was performed at the Nag's Head Inn in Cheapside, London. Therefore, it was argued, all ordinations and consecrations by Parker (and this would affect the majority of the English clergy) were invalid.

Unhappily for the Roman Catholic propagandists, this story was a fabrication, as they themselves now admit.⁸ (The Roman Catholic historian Lingard in the nineteenth century admitted it, and indeed proved the story to be false.) In fact Parker was validly consecrated. The register recording the consecration is in the Library of Lambeth Palace, London, and other relevant documents are to be seen in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

(d) *Another Misrepresentation*: A second attempt to discredit Archbishop Parker's consecration was the argument that Bishop Barlow, the principal consecrator of Parker, was himself never consecrated. There is, indeed, no direct evidence of his consecration, since no record of it exists. But this fact cannot be

⁸ The writers are well aware that this particular argument and some of those which follow are no longer used by the scholarly Roman Catholic controversialist. But they are still used by the more ignorant and impetuous propagandists at work amongst Anglican laity. This book, being designed to help the churchman in the face of such propaganda, must therefore deal with the arguments.

assumed to mean that no such consecration took place. Sixteenth century registers are by no means complete. Barlow was certainly accepted as a bishop both by his friends and enemies. He took his seat in the House of Lords without any opposition on the score that he was not a bishop. So far as is known, his consecration was not questioned until early in the seventeenth century.⁹ Three other bishops assisted Barlow at Parker's consecration, Hodgkins, Scory, and Coverdale, all of whom were validly consecrated.

(e) *The Anglican Form is Sufficient*: All attempts to prove Parker's consecration invalid having proved unsuccessful, another point of attack was therefore chosen. It was now suggested that the "form" in Anglican ordinations and consecrations was insufficient, for between A.D. 1550 and 1661 in the words accompanying the laying on of hands there was no specific mention of the particular order, whether Bishop, Priest, or Deacon, which was being conferred.

The Roman Catholics argued: (1) That mention of the order which is being conferred is necessary at this point in the ordination for validity;

(2) That the Church of England realized and admitted this deficiency, because in the newly revised services of 1661 the addition was made.

The Anglican reply is: (1) That in the Anglican ordination services of 1550 and 1552 the order which is being conferred is mentioned again and again throughout, though not at the particular moment of the laying on of hands. It was impossible to have any doubt about what order was being conferred;

(2) That the earliest known Eastern ordination rite, that of Bishop Sarapion, about A.D. 340, does not include a mention of the order at the laying on of hands, yet Roman Catholics have never attacked the validity of this ordination rite of the undivided Church;

⁹ The latest attempt to magnify the accidental fact that no record of Barlow's consecration exists into a proof that he never was consecrated is that of A. S. Barnes in *Bishop Barlow and Anglican Orders* (Longman, 1922). Mgr Barnes's argument was completely demolished by Claude Jenkins (now Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Oxford) in a review in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. xxiv, No. 93, October 1922, which called forth the comment from an eminent Roman Catholic "Verily, of Mgr Barnes' laborious work not one stone remains upon another". Professor Jenkins's review has been reprinted by S.P.C.K., entitled *Bishop Barlow's Consecration and Archbishop Parker's Register: with some New Documents*.

(3) That the addition of the words "for the office and work of a Bishop (or Priest)", in the English consecration and ordination rites of 1661 was not an admission that the previous Anglican rites had been deficient, and that the Roman Catholics were right on this point. The addition was made in order to make it perfectly clear to the English Presbyterians of the seventeenth century that there is a difference between a bishop and a priest. Pope Leo XIII, in condemning Anglican orders in the Bull "Apostolicae Curae" in 1896, utterly ignored this point, a point which can be substantiated by a good deal of contemporary seventeenth century evidence.

(f) *The Anglican Matter is Sufficient*: However, the favourite Roman Catholic argument for a considerable period was that English ordinations lacked the essential "matter" of the Sacrament. The Roman ordination included the ceremony of the handing over by the bishop of a paten and chalice to the candidates for priesthood. This was omitted in Anglican ordination, and the Roman Catholic argument was that thereby Anglican ordinations were invalid. But then it was discovered, and reluctantly admitted, that this particular ceremony had not existed in the Church at all until the tenth century. Therefore if Anglican orders are invalid on this score, so also are those of Roman Catholics, and even the orders of the Pope himself.

There is, in fact, no reason to doubt that laying on of the bishop's hands, with prayer for the Holy Spirit, as in the English ordination services, constitutes a sufficient "matter" for the Sacrament of ordination.¹⁰

(g) *The Anglican Intention is Sufficient*: The argument about the "matter", therefore, has naturally been abandoned (by the more honest Roman Catholic controversialists); but, nothing daunted, another opening for attack has been found. This time it

¹⁰ It is stated in the Papal Apostolic Constitution "Sacramentum Ordinis" (30 November 1947) that the matter in the ordination of a priest is the imposition of the Bishop's hands, and "the form consists in the words of the Preface of which the following are essential and therefore requisite for validity: 'Grant, we beseech thee, omnipotent Father, to this thy servant the dignity of Priesthood; renew in his inward parts the spirit of sanctity.'" These provisions are stated not to be retrospective. But the Bishop of London rightly says that the Constitution "destroys with one sweep of the pen the objections that Roman apologists have made against the Anglican method of ordaining sacred ministers, and although it does not conclude that Anglican Ordinations are valid, it does grant the truth of the main contentions of the great Anglican liturgiologists" (*The London Churchman*, October 1950).

is the argument that Anglican ordination rites lack a proper intention. In order that the ordination of a priest may be valid, there must be expressed the intention of ordaining a priest in the sense that the Church has always given to the word "priest". The Roman Catholic argument is that Anglican ordination rites omit any reference to the power of the priest to offer sacrifice. This, it is argued, is evidence that Anglicans, although retaining the ancient titles of bishop and priest, really intend to make ministers different from the bishops and priests of the Church. This is the main argument of Pope Leo XIII in the Bull "Apostolicae Curae" in which he condemned Anglican orders as invalid.

It is almost unbelievable, but Pope Leo makes no reference whatever to the Preface of the English Ordinal, where the Anglican intention is very clearly set out. It is to be feared that the Pope's failure to mention even the existence of this Preface lays him open to one of two charges. Either he was in ignorance of a matter on which he ought to have had knowledge, since he presumed to make an important decision about Anglican orders; or else, knowing of the existence of this Preface, he was guilty of intellectual dishonesty in not at least referring to it.

This is what the Preface says: (The following is the 1550 version. The slightly altered version you can read in your own Prayer Book.) "It is evident unto all men, diligently reading holy scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there hath been these orders of Ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons: which Offices were evermore had in such reverent estimation that no man by his own private authority might presume to execute any of them except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as were requisite for the same: and also by public prayer with imposition of hands approved and admitted thereunto. And therefore, *To the intent these orders should be continued* and reverently used and esteemed in this Church of England; it is requisite that no man (not being at this present Bishop, Priest, nor Deacon) shall execute any of them, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted according to the form hereafter following."

If this is not a perfectly clear statement that the English Church intended and intends to ordain bishops, priests, and deacons in

the sense that these titles have borne since the Apostles' time and to perform the same functions that they have performed since the Apostles' time, then words have lost their plain meaning.

And to clinch the argument: if mention of the priest's power of offering the Eucharistic sacrifice is necessary to make an ordination valid, then not only Anglican priests are invalidly ordained, but so also are an unknown, but certainly very large number of Roman priests.¹¹ For (unfortunately for the Roman Catholic argument) the very first Roman rite for the ordination of a priest of which we have knowledge (that in the "Apostolic Tradition" of St Hippolytus of Rome, about A.D. 215) has no mention whatever of the power of offering sacrifice.

Every changing, shifting argument brought forward by the Roman Catholics against Anglican orders can be met. Sound doctrine, historical fact, and the conviction born of experience of millions who know that they have received the grace of God through Sacraments administered by Anglican priests, unite to proclaim that the Anglican ordination rites are valid, that the Anglican priest is a real priest.

¹¹ That the Church of England believes and teaches the Eucharistic Sacrifice was strongly asserted in the reply of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York (Frederick Temple and Maclagan) to Leo XIII's "Apostolicae Curae". "We truly teach", the Archbishops say, "the doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice and do not believe it to be a 'nude commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Cross', an opinion which seems to be attributed to us by the quotation made (i.e. in the Papal Bull) from that Council (of Trent). But we think it sufficient in the Liturgy we use in celebrating the holy Eucharist,—while lifting up our hearts to the Lord, and when now consecrating the gifts already offered that they may become to us the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.—to signify the sacrifice which is offered at that point of the service in such terms as these. We continue a perpetual memory of the precious death of Christ, who is our Advocate with the Father and the propitiation for our sins, according to His precept until His coming again. For first we offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; then next we plead and represent before the Father the sacrifice of the Cross, and by it we confidently entreat remission of sins and all other benefits of the Lord's Passion for all the whole Church; and lastly we offer the sacrifice of ourselves to the Creator of all things which we have already signified by the oblations of His creatures.

"This whole action, in which the people has necessarily to take its part with the priest, we are accustomed to call the Eucharistic sacrifice."

No Convocation of the Church of England nor any synod of the Anglican Church has ever dissented from this.

It may be added that the Apostolic Constitution of November 1947, referred to in note 10, does not include mention of the power to offer the Eucharistic sacrifice among the essentials of the rite in the ordination of a priest.

HENRY VIII DID NOT FOUND THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

BUT there is another side to the argument. The Roman Catholic says, "Your Church is in schism. It broke away from the Catholic Church; and so, even if your priests were validly ordained, you would still be no part of the true Church. The Church of England was founded by Henry VIII." Let us try now to estimate the truth of the statements contained in this argument.

It is a somewhat muddled argument, at least in the form in which it is often stated by the enthusiastic Roman Catholic propagandist, for it really contains two lines which to some extent cancel each other out. On the one hand there is the statement that the Anglican Church was founded by Henry VIII, as though it were a new creation without any roots in the past. On the other hand is the statement that the Church of England broke away from the Catholic Church, which is to say that it was within the Catholic Church, but came out and assumed a separate existence when at the Reformation it repudiated the supremacy of the Pope.¹² For the sake of clearness we must deal with these two rather different forms of the argument separately.

It is said that Henry VIII founded a new Church. He himself at all events was unaware of any such thing. To the end of his life he considered himself a good Catholic, and he upheld the Catholic faith in all points of doctrine. What he did do, through acts of Parliament, was to limit the powers of the Pope in England, and to defy his authority.¹³

Now it is the Roman Catholic argument that only those persons who acknowledge the Pope of Rome as the Head of the

¹² That the excommunication by the Pope of the English Sovereign together with all English people who refused to acknowledge the papal supremacy did not take place until 1570, twenty-three years after the death of Henry VIII is a fact which Roman Catholics who make either of these two assertions must explain. We shall have more to say about this on pp. 20-1.

¹³ We do not pretend that the personal character of Henry VIII was anything but shameful. But this is not the question at issue. In any "mud-slinging" contest more mud would stick to many of the Popes of the earlier and later Middle Ages than to Henry. Moreover if to Roman Catholics the character of Elizabeth I seems unamiable, so also to others does that of Mary I, in the last three years of whose short reign over three hundred persons were burnt at the stake. The question, however, is not one of personal characters, nor of the relative numbers of Roman Catholic and Anglican burnings, but of historical fact.

whole Church belong to the true Church. We deny that this is so, and the following are our grounds.

(1) Holy Scripture tells us nothing about the Supremacy of the Pope. The authority which Christ gave to St Peter (Matt. 16. 19 and John 21. 15-17) was also given to all the Apostles (Matt. 18. 18 and John 20. 23). The words of Christ were spoken to Peter before he went to Rome; no mention is made of Peter ever being Bishop of Rome; no mention is made of any authority belonging to Peter passing to any successor of his in a particular office. In the Acts of the Apostles the chief see is Jerusalem, not Rome, and its bishop, St James, and not Peter was president of the first Christian Council.

(2) For at least the first 250 years of the Church's history (we put the figure at 250 lest we should exaggerate, but 450 would be nearer the truth) there was not the slightest recognition in the Church that the Bishop of Rome was the supreme bishop. To illustrate this it may be mentioned that Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, rebuked Victor, Bishop of Rome (about A.D. 190), quite soundly for excommunicating some Eastern Christians for not keeping Easter on the same day that it was kept by himself. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (A.D. 248-259), felt himself quite free to dispute with Stephen, Bishop of Rome, on a question concerning baptism by heretics, and to resist Stephen's attempt to impose his decision on Carthage. These two instances could be multiplied. Hardly a decade of the Church's history of the first 450 years does not contain at least one instance showing that the Church as a whole considered the authority of the Bishop of Rome to be no greater than that of the bishops of any of the other great sees like Alexandria, Antioch, or Constantinople.

Yet do modern Roman Catholics argue that the whole Christian Church, except for the diocese of Rome, for the first 250 (or 450) years of the Church's history was not part of the true Catholic Church? Apparently not.

(3) Innocent I (died A.D. 417) and Leo I (440-461) were the first Bishops of Rome to make serious claims to supremacy over other bishops. These were great and good men, and their orthodoxy, intellect, and moral character gave great weight to their claims. But later, less illustrious Bishops of Rome attempted to base the Roman claim for supremacy over the rest of the Church

on forged documents, the chief of which are two letters, supposed to have been written by Clement, a Bishop of Rome at the end of the first century, to James, the Lord's brother, in which the claims of the Bishop of Rome are magnified. There is no responsible historian to-day who would admit that these documents (which were first produced in A.D. 829-847) are genuine. They are usually called "The Forged Decretals".

In spite of this we Anglicans admit that it was for the good of the Church in Europe in many ways that the Pope was admitted to be its Head during the greater part of the Middle Ages. But when in the later Middle Ages the authority of the Pope was used for extorting money from non-Italian countries by various means, the most despicable of which was the sale of indulgences—money too which was used largely for political purposes—there is little wonder that the English Church considered that the usefulness of the Papal Supremacy to the Church as a whole was at an end, and that the time had come to return to an idea of the Church closer to that of the New Testament and the early Christian centuries. The incident of Henry VIII's wish to be released from his first marriage (which we will discuss later) was but the match which happened to be used to light the flame of the English Reformation. The Reformation would have happened in any case, for its real causes were far deeper and worthier ones than Henry's marriage difficulties.

(4) It would be easy to bring forward a good deal of evidence to show that the Church in the British Isles, even when in communion with Rome and under papal obedience, had taken up a critical, and in some ways independent attitude towards the Pope almost continuously, except when there was a weak king on the throne. The Christian Church was in Britain before St Augustine's mission came from Rome in A.D. 597, and it was a Church which, left by Rome to survive as best it could against the heathen Saxon invaders, developed institutions and customs quite different from those of the Church of Rome. These were only reluctantly given up after the powerful Roman mission of 597. William I (1066) refused to do homage to the Pope for the land of England. The choice of Lambeth for the residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury about A.D. 1200 was made in spite of the Pope's prohibition. Two Acts of Parliament in Edward III's reign

(1327-1377) forbade the surrender of the incomes of English benefices to the Pope, and prevented English law suits from being referred to the Pope and the entry of papal bulls (i.e. documents containing orders or advice from the Pope) into England without the king's permission. All these are but a few examples out of many.

Henry VIII's action, therefore, in completely repudiating the supremacy of the Pope in England was but the end of a process which had been going on almost from the beginning of the Church's history in Britain. G. M. Trevelyan writes in his *History of England*: "The average Englishman retained the feeling of his ancestors against the Pope's interference in England The ancestorism of England was fully grown; she would no longer submit to be governed by a religious authority that was seated a thousand miles beyond the seas and mountains, and that judged English questions by Italian, Spanish, Imperial and occasionally by French standards and interests, but never by English."

For these reasons the Anglican holds that acknowledgement of the supremacy of the Pope is no necessary condition of membership of the Catholic Church. That Henry VIII denied the papal supremacy did not make him the founder of a new Church.

4

WHOSE ACT OF SCHISM?

ROMAN Catholics, adopting an alternative line of argument to the assertion that the Church of England is a new Church founded by Henry VIII, say that the Church of England committed an act of schism in breaking away from the Catholic Church. Certainly the Church of England in the time of Henry VIII repudiated the supremacy of the Pope, and this was ratified at the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. But, as we have already shown, to deny the supremacy of the Pope is by no means the same thing as to break away from the Catholic Church.

What is meant by schism? To break the unity of the Catholic Church of Christ is what is called an act of schism. The word "schism" comes from a Greek word (the same Greek word from which "scissors" is derived), and means the cutting up of the one Church of Christ. In God's purpose and by Christ's institution

there is but one Church, as we confess in the Creed: "I believe in One Catholic and Apostolic Church." It is the one company of baptized believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. Any man or any body of men which breaks the unity of this fellowship is guilty of the sin of schism. To set up a new Church apart from the one historic Church of Christ is an act of schism. To separate oneself from the historic Church is an act of schism.

Now, Roman Catholics accuse the Anglican Church of this same sin of schism. This is a serious charge, and we must defend ourselves. This is our answer.

(1) The Church of England at the time of the Reformation committed no act of schism. For, as we have seen, to deny the Pope's authority in the realm of England is not an act of schism. To revise the service books of the Church in England is not an act of schism, for other parts of the Church had often done the same thing. For the Church in England to revise its own rules of worship and discipline, provided that nothing contrary to the faith and order of the Catholic Church is done, is not an act of schism; for, again, this had often been done in many parts of the Church. And nothing contrary to Catholic faith and order was done. The succession of bishops was carefully preserved, the ancient creeds were retained, and the sacraments of the Church continued to be administered. It is true that some ceremonies and practices which had become widespread in the Church were discontinued, but these were all comparatively recent innovations, and none of them were customs of the Church of the Apostles' time.

The Church of England thus maintained its continuity with the Catholic Church in all essentials, its ministry, its creeds, the sacraments, and the Holy Scriptures which were now translated into English. The English Church repudiated or excommunicated no other part of the Church. It merely denied the authority of the Pope as supreme in England; and asserted its ancient rights to revise its own rules of worship and discipline as other Churches had done in earlier centuries.

(2) But there was an act of schism! And it must be clearly stated that it came from the side of the Pope. In the year 1570 Pope Pius V excommunicated Queen Elizabeth, and called upon her subjects to help to dethrone her. There followed then the

sickening story, which can be read in any English history book, of the Roman Catholic plots to assassinate the Queen, and to set Mary, Queen of Scots, on the English throne. The papal secretary in 1580, in answer to an enquiry by some Jesuits working in England said that whoever sent Elizabeth out of the world, with the pious intention of doing God service, would not only do no sin but would gain merit! As this pretty scheme failed, the Pope gave strong support to Philip II of Spain in his plan to invade England. Few Englishmen, even Papists, wished to be ruled by the King of Spain, and Englishmen, whatever their religious opinions, rallied to the support of their Queen. The invasion was attempted, and, as is well known, was defeated when the Spanish Armada was ignominiously destroyed in 1588.

Yes, here is the act of schism. It is the Pope who excommunicates Elizabeth and all her loyal subjects, as much as to say, "You do not belong to the true Church. We want nothing to do with you. We will not be in communion with you." Let us repeat: it was Pope Pius V who performed the separating act of schism, not Elizabeth, not the English Archbishops, not the English Church. And to the grievous sin of schism the Pope added the unwarrantable crime of aiding and abetting attempts to assassinate the Queen, and supporting the invasion of England by a foreign power.

Do not be silent when you hear it said by Roman Catholics that the Anglican Church caused this schism. Tell them the truth. The boot is on the other foot. The English Church committed no act of schism in Elizabeth's reign. The Pope did.

5

A CURIOUS DATE

WHILST we are on the subject of the Pope's excommunication of Queen Elizabeth, and the people who remained loyal to her, it is worth noticing its date, A.D. 1570—twelve years after Elizabeth came to the throne. For twelve years since the death of the Roman Catholic Queen Mary the English Book of Common Prayer had been in use in English parish churches, and the sacraments had been administered by English bishops and priests ordained with the newly revised English ordination services. Yet all this time the Popes had taken no definite action to prevent churchmen

attending their parish churches. The explanation is, of course, that these Popes were postponing the drastic measure of excommunicating several millions of Christians in the hope that England, under Elizabeth, or, if she should chance to die, under Mary Queen of Scotland, might return to the papal obedience. When this was evidently no longer likely, the Bull of Excommunication was published. But meanwhile, it is to be carefully noticed, for twelve years the Pope had not forbidden English churchmen—even those who still believed in the papal supremacy—to worship and receive the sacraments in the reformed English Church. Now, if it was possible to do this without mortal sin between the years 1558 and 1570 it has been equally possible between the years 1570 and 1953. For since that day there has been no essential change in the doctrine or status of the English Church.

The postponement of the excommunication of Queen Elizabeth is as clear an indication as one could wish that the Popes of the years 1558 to 1570 did not believe that the English Church was heretical or that those who worshipped and received the sacraments therein were committing the sin of schism. How otherwise can it be explained that these Popes without strong protest and without excommunication allowed thousands of Christians for twelve years to continue in communion with the Church of England?

6

THE FACTS ABOUT HENRY VIII'S "DIVORCE"

WE place the word "divorce" in inverted commas here because, although Henry VIII's divorce from Katharine of Aragon is commonly spoken of, it was in fact a question of nullity and not of divorce.

Henry VIII's marriage problems really concern the position of the Anglican Church to a very small degree. Yet, because it is a favourite argument with many Roman Catholics that the Church of England had its origin in Henry's desire for a divorce, we ought to take trouble to understand the facts of the matter. These facts can be read in any standard History of Britain, for example in the justly renowned *History of England* by G. M. Trevelyan.

We have already said that Henry's "divorce" cannot fairly be regarded as the cause of the English Reformation, which would certainly have happened if Henry VIII had never been married, and even if he had never been born. For the real cause of the Reformation lay in the exaggerated claims of the Papacy, its corruption, its entanglement in European politics, and its deaf ear to the appeals of Christians for the reform of much that was wrong in the Church. Henry VIII's marriage difficulties were no more the cause of the English Reformation than the murder of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand was the cause of the Great War of 1914-18. Both were the incidents which happened to set history in motion; but the cause of the English Reformation, as of the Great War, lay much deeper.

Now let us try to get the real facts about Henry VIII's "divorce". The picture the Roman Catholics try to give us is that of the wicked King Henry demanding a divorce which was against the law of the Church, whilst the Pope righteously upholds the Church's law. The facts are quite otherwise.

In the first place what Henry asked the Pope for was not a divorce, but an annulment of his first marriage to Katharine of Aragon, on the grounds that it was not a true marriage at all. She had been the wife of Henry's deceased elder brother Arthur. By Church law a man might not marry his deceased brother's wife, but Henry had obtained a special dispensation from a previous Pope, in order to marry Katharine. He now argued, however, that a Pope had no authority to set aside the laws of God in this way, and he asked the new Pope, Clement VII, to declare that, since his predecessor had acted contrary to God's law in granting the dispensation, the marriage to Katharine of Aragon was no true marriage, and that he, Henry, was free to marry Anne Boleyn, to whom he was now greatly attracted.

There is certainly little to be said for Henry's morals, or for his disgraceful treatment of Katharine, of whom he had now tired; but his determining motive was bitter and superstitious disappointment that she had not given him a male heir to the throne. Church law, too, was on his side in his argument that his marriage to Katharine was not valid.

Valid or not, there is little doubt that the Pope would very willingly have granted Henry's request, had he been free in the

matter. Popes had frequently before this declared marriages null in similar circumstances. Clement VII himself had recently granted a release from marriage for Margaret of Scotland on far weaker grounds. Moreover the Pope had no wish to offend Henry. Henry was known to be a staunch Catholic, in spite of his wild life, and only a few years before he had written a book, upholding Catholicism against the teaching of the German reformer, Luther, for which the Pope had given him the title of *Fidei Defensor*, or Defender of the Faith. Two considerations may be presumed to have weighed heavily with the Pope, and to have caused his long (six years!) delay in the matter. First, it was no light thing for one Pope to annul the act of a predecessor, although it has been done. Secondly, Clement VII chanced just then to be in an exceedingly awkward position. It so happened that the Emperor Charles V had recently sacked Rome, but had not yet touched the papal lands and possessions. Now Charles V was the nephew of Katharine of Aragon. It is commonly thought, and not without justification, that here we have the Pope's real reason for delay in answering Henry's request. The Pope, being completely in the power of the Emperor, dared not give him offence by granting Henry's wishes.¹⁴ If so, it is by no means the first or the last time in history that the Pope's decisions have been made subject to political considerations.

To Henry it was unthinkable that English interests should depend, through the Pope, on the will of a foreign emperor. It must be remembered, to do Henry a measure of justice, that, as we have mentioned above, his chief reason for wishing the annulment of his marriage to Katharine was that he wanted a male heir to the English throne, which Katharine could not now give him. Was the English royal succession to be dependent on a foreign ruler? Henry decided that English churchmen were learned enough to give him a decision on the legality of his request. Cranmer argued learnedly in favour of the nullity of Henry's marriage with Katharine. His arguments were certainly in accordance with ecclesiastical law, little as we may respect either Henry's desire to be free of Katharine, or Cranmer's readiness to court the

¹⁴ The point is conceded even by Roman Catholics. See, for example, Joseph Clayton, *The Protestant Reformation in Great Britain*, Burns Oates, 1934, page 65.

favour of the King. The decision was made, Henry's marriage was annulled, and with little delay he married Anne Boleyn.

These are the facts about Henry VIII's "divorce", wrongly so-called. It is a miserable story; but the Pope, who would have granted the annulment if he had been able, comes out of it little better than Henry.

7

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND THE
ROYAL SUPREMACY

It is sometimes made an argument against the Anglican Church that Henry VIII by his Act of Supremacy had himself styled "the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England, called *Ecclesia Anglicana*". It is asked, "How can a Church which allows a layman to be called its head be part of the Church of Christ?" The implication is that if the Church of England acknowledges the King as its head, it thereby admits that it is a man-made Church, and no part of the Catholic Church of Christ. Nothing of the kind follows, as will be made plain if the following points are carefully studied.

(1) Convocation (the Assembly of the Bishops and Clergy of the Church of England) acknowledged Henry VIII as the Supreme Head of the Church of England "so far as the law of Christ allows". It was well known that Henry's desire to get his hands on Church property was one of his chief reasons for desiring this title. Henry was a tyrant whom it was difficult to withstand. But Convocation expressed sufficiently clearly the intention of the English Church. The Pope was *not* the Head of the Church of England, the King of England was—so far as the law of Christ allowed.

(2) Queen Elizabeth, in her Act of Supremacy of 1559 which once more repudiated the Papal Supremacy in England, refused the title of Supreme Head of the Church, but was styled its "Supreme Governor". The title of Supreme Head of the Church has not been used of English Kings or Queens since the days of Queen Elizabeth.

(3) When the King of England is called the Supreme Governor of the Church of England it must be remembered that he is the

chief layman of the Church, and a layman who is in a unique position. He has been consecrated and crowned by sacramental rites of the Church, and he is, under God, responsible for the welfare of his subjects. In these circumstances it is difficult to see that it is at all unfitting that the King should be regarded, so far as the law of Christ allows, as the Supreme Governor of the Church.

(4) The King of England as Supreme Governor does not possess the right to dictate who shall be ordained, or to alter the Creeds or the laws and universal customs of the Church. He does possess the right to make certain appointments, e.g. of bishops in the provinces of Canterbury and York. It must not be thought that the King *makes* bishops. A bishop can only be made by election and consecration by authorized ministers, i.e. by other bishops. But the King has the right to nominate who shall be elected and consecrated. It is perhaps a roundabout way of doing things; but it can certainly be argued that it works well on the whole. Mistakes, no doubt, have been made, but the bishops of the Church of England—and especially is this so to-day—are no whit behind the bishops of other parts of the Church in holiness and learning, and as fathers of their flocks.

Secondly, the King of England has the right (always exercised through Parliament) of regulating the services of the Church of England. No revision of the Prayer Book can take place without the consent of the King. Parliament in 1927 and 1928 rejected revisions of the Prayer Book proposed by the assemblies of the Church. At the time it was generally thought a calamity that Parliament which included Nonconformists, Roman Catholics, agnostics, and atheists, should disregard the desires of the official bodies of the Church. But it has since become clear that the proposed new Prayer Book would in fact have satisfied very few people. Parliament proved on this occasion to express the desires of the whole English Church more accurately than the Councils of the Church itself. Again, therefore, it can be argued that, although it is a roundabout way of doing things, it works well on the whole.

However, it must be admitted that many churchmen in England think it wrong that important Church appointments, and such matters as the regulation of Divine Worship should be

in the control of any but ecclesiastical persons possessing spiritual authority. In our days we shall probably see an increasing demand for a revision of the status of the Church of England in relation to the Crown and Parliament, in view of the changed nature of Parliament.

(5) The above points do not concern Anglicans outside England, for most parts of the Anglican Church are not established as the official religion of the country. The majority of dioceses elect their own bishops through the diocesan synod, and such matters as forms of service and discipline are also decided by the synod. Of course, no diocesan synod has the authority (any more than the King in Parliament has in England) to revise the Creeds, abolish sacraments, or alter universal customs of the Church.

Now that we understand, perhaps, a little better what the Supremacy of the King means in actual fact, we shall better be able to see that there is nothing in the establishment of the Church of England under the King's Supremacy which makes it impossible for the Church of England to be reckoned as part of the true Church of Christ.

The King of England is no more supreme over the Church of England than was the Emperor Constantine over the Church of his day. The Emperor presided at Councils of the Church, including the General Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325, where he claimed to speak as "Bishop of Bishops". But nobody has ever suggested that this fact means that the Churches of Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, etc., ceased to become part of the true Church. Why then, should it be argued that the King of England's Supreme Governorship of the Church of England excludes that Church from the Catholic Church of Christ?

If it is argued that it is unfitting that unworthy kings should be styled Supreme Governors on earth of the Church of England, we must reply that it is equally unfitting that unworthy Popes (and there have been far more of these) should be styled Vicars of Christ on earth.

WHY BECOME A ROMAN CATHOLIC—OR WHY NOT?

Although the Anglican Church does not deny that the Roman Church is a true part of the Catholic Church, the Roman Church denies it of the Anglican. Some might think that this indicates that there really is some doubt in this matter, and that to be on the safe side it would be best to be a Roman Catholic. But we have shown that the Roman arguments against the Anglican Church are based (to say the best of them) on a great deal of misrepresentation of history. In fact there is no doubt that the Anglican Church is a part of the Catholic Church of Christ. But Roman Catholic propagandists are past masters in the art of making it appear otherwise.

Let us, therefore, set down some of the reasons why the vast majority of thoughtful members of the Church of England are unlikely ever to become Roman Catholics, and count themselves happy to remain Anglicans.

(a) *Gratitude to the Anglican Church* is the first reason which we will mention. She has been our spiritual mother, teaching us all we know of the Christian faith, nourishing us with the sacraments. To leave her and to join the Roman Catholic Church would put us in the position of having to deny that she is part of the Catholic Church. To call one's mother a bastard is an awful thing. Yet this is what those Anglicans who fall a prey to the attractions of the Roman Church are really doing, for they are officially required to "detest and abhor" what the Roman Church calls their "former errors".

(b) *The Doctrinal Errors of the Roman Church* are a formidable obstacle in the path of any great movement of Anglicans towards the Roman Church. In recent years the Roman Catholic Church has imposed a number of doctrines in addition to those contained in the creeds of the Universal Church. These new doctrines have been declared "of faith", so that anybody who denies them is subject to excommunication. Some of these doctrines have been the pious beliefs of Christians for centuries, and the probability of their truth is great; some of them are errors. But whether true or false, the Church has no authority to impose

on its members doctrines which are not plainly to be deduced from the Scriptures and which have not been declared by general councils.

(i) *The Infallibility of the Pope*, a doctrine promulgated in 1870, is perhaps the most obviously unscriptural and erroneous of these new doctrines. It is said to mean that the Pope, when he speaks officially in teaching the Church on a point of faith or morals, is not allowed by God to teach error. Many Roman Catholics disagreed with this doctrine at the time; a section of the Church, now united with the Old Catholics, left the Papal obedience; and ever since 1870 Roman Catholics have been hard put to it to explain exactly what the doctrine means. If it means what it says (that God does not allow the Pope officially to teach error in faith or morals), then it makes nonsense of the Christian belief that God the Holy Spirit works on men's minds not by compulsion but by love. It implies that any Pope who might be about to make an official utterance on some point of faith or morals which was false would somehow be prevented from doing so by God. But this is to deny the freedom of the Pope's will, which is nonsense. And the fact that there have been so few "infallible" utterances of the Pope (and so much argument by Roman Catholics as to how many there have been—the estimates vary between three and nine) leads to the conclusion that the doctrine really is nonsense, in spite of the fact that it is believed by some highly intelligent men. But there is enough nonsense in the world without inventing more. Moreover, if the Pope really has infallibility, it is surely remiss of him not to use it more frequently and more promptly for the guidance of Roman Catholics if not of all mankind. It is odd, too, that although the world to-day sorely needs moral guidance, not one infallible utterance has there been on any question of human conduct.

(ii) *Indulgences*. Another doctrine which we believe to be erroneous, and in its results positively harmful and immoral, is the doctrine from which the practice of granting indulgences springs. This is the doctrine that the Church has power to remit temporal punishments, by which is meant

punishment in Purgatory, for those who are in a state of grace, upon the performance of certain pious acts, such as the saying of certain prayers, or visits to holy places. It is taught that, provided a person is in a state of grace (that is, has made a good confession and received absolution) the remission of a certain number of days from Purgatory may be granted by the Church, if the prescribed pious acts are duly performed.

The intellectual absurdity of this is clear when one considers that the existence of the soul after death cannot be measured by days and years. Time belongs to the material world of the body. No doubt Roman Catholics of intelligence explain the "days" and "years" of Purgatory in some refined sense. But the fact remains that thousands of simple Roman Catholics do believe that they really will gain time off Purgatory by performing pieties and that the souls of those already dead may likewise gain time off in respect of indulgences gained by the living.

It is well known that in earlier centuries the Roman Church gained a great income from the direct sale of indulgences. Although this iniquitous practice has been discontinued, the Roman Church still makes huge profits out of the credulous belief of simple people in indulgences, by the alms which are encouraged when indulgences are sought, and by the sale of Rosaries and other articles to which indulgences may be attached. Few Anglican priests would care to become involved in such wholesale exploitation of simple people's credulity.

(iii) *The Immaculate Conception* was proclaimed as a dogma in 1854. It is the doctrine that the Blessed Virgin Mary was not only without actual sin, but also without original sin, that she was immaculate (stainless) from the moment that she was conceived. This speculation can nowhere be found in Holy Scripture, was unknown to the early Fathers of the Church and was denied by St Thomas Aquinas. But the main Anglican objection is that to require belief, under pain of excommunication, in a doctrine so unscriptural and problematic is wrong.

(iv) *The Bodily Assumption*. This is the doctrine that the Blessed Virgin Mary was assumed (taken up) to Heaven with her body. Of this, the latest Roman Catholic dogma to be proclaimed (1950), a great deal has been written lately. Here we need say no more than that, except by a violent distortion of one or two texts, no hint of the doctrine can be found in Holy Scripture or the Fathers, and that it, too, is an unjustifiable attempt to impose upon the Church an unscriptural speculation.

(c) *Roman Catholicism is Totalitarian*. In addition to doctrinal reasons there are other considerations of a more general kind which render the Roman Catholic Church unattractive to the majority of Anglicans. Its authoritarian system of government seems to us too closely akin to the totalitarianism we have learned to detest in secular states. Roman Catholic laity are closely supervised by the clergy, who in turn are ruled in all matters of faith, discipline, and morals (and "morals" is made to include almost every activity of life) by committees in Rome called Congregations. The Congregations are composed of Cardinals and other prelates appointed by the Pope. This is something very different from the system of the Catholic Church of the first few centuries. The laity was always reckoned as an Order of the Church, with its special functions and privileges, alongside the three Orders of bishops, priests, and deacons. The laity often played an important part in the General Councils of the Church. The Anglican system of Councils and Vestries on which the laity are fully represented is much nearer to the Church of the Apostles' days.

This great bureaucratic system of the Roman Catholic Church, centralized in Rome and tightly controlled by the Pope, is totalitarian. The transition from one kind of totalitarianism to another is an easy one, and it is well known that the countries of Western Europe in which Communism is strongest to-day are the predominantly Roman Catholic countries.

(d) *A Spiritual Dictatorship*. The close discipline exercised by Roman Catholic priests upon the laity is unchristian, and often amounts to spiritual bullying. Decisions which normal persons ought to be trusted to make for themselves in obedience to their consciences are made by the Pope and enforced through the priests—such questions as what schools their children may

attend, or what books they may read. Obedience to papal decisions is enforced by the threat of excommunication and its eternal consequences. While, no doubt, to the majority of Roman Catholics, churchgoing is a joyful privilege, the churchgoing of the more slack is kept up to a certain minimum standard by the same spiritual threats.

Roman Catholics argue that this is justified by the result—full churches. But we cannot see the *final* result, which is *not* full churches, but the eternal destiny of souls. It is an elementary Christian principle, taught clearly by our Lord, that the motives of our actions are the important factor. Fear of excommunication, and fear of having bothering visits from priests, are not worthy motives for church attendance.

(e) *Intolerance*. To the Anglican of to-day the discrimination which is still exercised against non-Roman Catholics in those countries which are predominantly Roman Catholic seems an anachronism, and a particularly detestable one. There is much evidence about the difficulty of any other but a Roman Catholic securing a public appointment in a country like Malta. In Spain, to take but one example, severe legal disabilities are placed upon the activity of all non-Roman Catholic Churches. Roman Catholics would be quick to raise the cry of religious freedom if any such disabilities were placed upon them in England or the United States. It must be remembered that in England and in the United States, where the Roman Catholic Church does not predominate, we see that Church at its best, on its mettle, active in good works socially, professing respect for the consciences of others, and maintaining a high moral standard. But a very different picture of the Church of Rome is to be seen in, say, Spain or Colombia in South America.

(f) *Proselytizing*. Some of the Roman Catholic methods of proselytizing are most objectionable. In many places much more energy is expended in winning over Anglicans and members of other Christian churches than in converting the heathen. Particularly do we condemn the practice (fairly common in some places) of touting for converts among the seriously ill and dying in hospitals. There have been instances of lifelong loyal Anglicans being pestered by Roman Catholic priests when in no physical or mental condition to resist.

(g) *Duplicity*. There is, moreover, a certain duplicity which is to be detected in the Roman Catholic official mind. One example must suffice here. The Roman Church officially upholds the plain teaching of Christ against remarriage after divorce. But in practice it allows it by means of various legal devices—chiefly by multiplying the possible reasons for annulment. Thus the Roman Church manages to gain on the one hand the reputation for strictness, but on the other is able to allow the remarriage of those it particularly desires to please.

CONCLUSION

ROMAN Catholics will almost certainly fix the label “anti-Catholic” to this booklet. But let us here place on record our great admiration of the sanctity, the heroism (especially under the present Communistic attacks on the Church in Europe) and the Christian work and witness of many thousands of Roman Catholics. The argument we have set ourselves in this pamphlet has caused us to dwell on what we consider to be falsehoods and defects in the Roman system. But we have not forgotten the greatness and glory of the Roman Church in many places and many times. Nor do we assert that the Anglican Church is perfect. All we argue is that, with all its faults and failures, it is as near to the mind of Christ as is any Church to-day, and that it is truly Catholic. We want to put on record our love for our Church, and we pray for God’s blessing on it, and especially for the re-union of Christendom.