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# The sources of the idea that the church is infallible

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THE SOURCES OF THE IDEA THAT THE  
CHURCH IS INFALLIBLE

Graduating Thesis

of

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## PREFACE

Christianity is confronted with many religious problems. None, however, challenge the attention of modern theologians and Church historians more than does the Roman Catholic doctrine of ecclesiastical infallibility. Inasmuch as the Oecumenical Council of 1870 has decreed that the Pope is the absolute Vicar of Christ and Head of the Church and in his "ex Cathedra" definitions regarding faith and morals generally is infallible, this problem resolves itself into Papal Infallibility. The question naturally arises in our minds, has ecclesiastical infallibility a solid foundation? The author of this theme will prove that it has not; first by showing that it has no source in the Scriptures; second, by showing that it was not thought of nor practiced in the Early Church; and third, by showing that it is a modern innovation, the way to which has been paved by pious frauds.

In compiling this Thesis, I am indebted to Professor Shaff of Union Theological Seminary, Henry C. Sheldon, Prof. of Systematic Theology, Boston University School of Theology, Emil Seckel, Prof. of Law in University (of Berlin), Prof. W. F. Warren of Boston University School of Theology, and Patrick J. Toner, Prof. of Dogmatic Theology in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Ireland.

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THE SOURCES OF THE IDEA THAT THE CHURCH IS  
IN FALLIBLE.

INFALLIBILITY.

The claims of the Roman Catholic Church in regard to Infallibility are well set forth in the article in the Catholic Encyclopedia on Infallibility, written by Patrick J. Toner, S.T.D., Professor of Dogmatic Theology in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Ireland. A brief summary of this Article will furnish us a basis on which to work.

I. He begins by limiting infallibility to the Church in her objective definitive teaching regarding faith and morals, not that believers are infallible in their subjective interpretation of her teaching. He distinguishes Infallibility from Inspiration and Revelation, saying that God is not necessarily the author of the merely infallible and that it concerns itself with the interpretation and effective safeguarding of truths already revealed. The infallibility of the Pope and of the Oecumenical Council is divinely guaranteed by Christ's promise to his Church: (a) infallibility means more than exemption from actual error; (b) it does not require holiness of life, much less imply impeccability in its organs; sinful and wicked men may be God's agents in defining "infallible;" (c) finally, the validity of the Divine guarantee is independent of the

fallible arguments upon which a definitive decision may be based and of the possibly unworthy human motives that in case of strife may appear to have influenced the result. It is the definitive result itself, and it alone, that is guaranteed to be infallible.

## II. Proof of the Church's Infallibility.

Infallibility is a Catholic dogma, which although formulated oecumenically for the first time in the Vatican Council, had been explicitly taught long before and had been assumed from the very beginning without question down to the time of the Protestant Reformation.

### A. Proofs from Scriptures.

(1.) Premises: Infallibility is implied in the promises of Christ to his Apostles and their successors in their teaching office and includes promises to guide and assist them. Having thus endowed the Apostles as teachers, they have the privilege to say which writings are inspired.

(2) Passages which prove: Mt.28:18-20, 16-18, Jno.14, 15, and 16, I Tim. 3: 14-15, Acts 15-28.

### B. Proof from Tradition.

The Church has always acted as though she were infallible on doctrinal matters and the great orthodox teachers have always believed that she was so. Any other grounds than those taken by the Church were considered Antichrist; and the people holding them were excommunicated and anathemized.

## III. Organs of Infallibility.

Between the Council of Apostles at Jerusalem and the Council of Nicea, the ordinary rule of Episcopal authority was exercised. But there comes critical times in the

Church's history when Church doctrine must be formulated by an "oecumenical council" or spoken "excathedra" by the Pope.

A. Oecumenical Councils.

(1) An oecumenical council is a general Church Council of which the Pope is chairman.

(2) Infallible authority of such a council is not denied by anyone who admits the infallibility of the Church in general.

(3) Infallibility begins whenever the Pope gives his confirmation, and not when the Church gives universal consent, as the High Church Anglican says.

B. The Pope.

(1) The Vatican Council has defined as "a divinely revealed dogma" that "the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks excathedra--that is, when in the exercise of his office as pastor and teacher of all Christians, he defines by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by the whole Church,--is, by reason of Divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter possessed of that infallibility with which the Divine Redeemer wished His Church to be endowed in defining doctrines of faith and morals; and consequently that such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable of their own nature (ex esse) and not by reason of the Church's consent."

(2) Proof of Papal Infallibility.

a. From the Holy Scriptures--Passages which prove: Mt. 16:18, Luke 22:31-32, and John 21:15-17.

b. Proof from Tradition.

While we do not find anything said in the Early Church concerning the primacy of the Roman Bishop, yet in one way or another he had a widespread recognition as such. i.e. as infallible.

C. Mutual Relations of the Organs of Infallibility.

(1) The three organs are: the Bishops, the Oecumenical Council and the Pope.

The bishops in so far as definitive exercise

is concerned have been dormant for a long time this power being exercised by the Pope and Council.

(2) The bishops are only infallible in their corporate union with the Pope as head. The same is true of the Oecumenical Council.

#### IV. Scope and Object of Infallibility.

(1) Within the sphere of faith and morals it is the direct and primary object of infallible authority to deal with what is formally revealed. A second object is to deal with things subordinate to the primary object such as restricting Science and Philosophy to their proper spheres.

(2) From the major and minor premises questions of dogmatic fact which require definite certainty for the safe custody and interpretation of revealed truth may be determined infallible by the Church.

#### V. What Teachings are Infallible.

(a) Doctrines of Faith and Morals and facts so intimately connected with these as to require infallible determination.

(b) The three Instruments of Infallibility.

(c) Before being bound to give assent, the believer has a right to be certain that the teaching in question is definitive.

This outline of Toner's Article gives us an idea of the nature and scope of the Doctrine as such. It is to be noticed that he founds his arguments on Scripture and Tradition. In order to prove that Toner is wrong in referring to these sources as a foundation we need only to read Philip Shaff's "History of the Vatican Council." Ex-

tracts from this widely recognized author are as follows:

Papal Infallibility and the Bible.

"The Old Testament gives no tangible aid to the Infallibilists. The Jewish Church existed as a divine institution and served all its purposes, from Abraham to John the Baptist, without an infallible tribunal in Jerusalem, save the written law and testimony made effective from time to time by the living voice of inspired prophecy. Pious Israelites found in the Scriptures the way of life, notwithstanding the contradictory interpretations of rabbinical schools and carnal perversions of Messianic prophecies, fostered by a corrupt hierarchy. The Urim and Thummim of the High Priest has no doubt symbolical reference to some kind of spiritual illumination or oracular consultation, but it is of too uncertain interpretation to furnish an argument.

The passages of the New Testament which are used by Roman divines in support of the doctrine of Infallibility may be divided into two classes; Those which seem to favor Episcopal or Gallican, and those which are made to prove the Papal or Ultramontane theory. It is characteristic that the Papal Infallibilists carefully avoid the former.

1. To the first class belong John 14:16 sq.: 16:13-16 where Christ promises the Holy Ghost to his disciples that

he may abide with them forever, teach them 'all things,' bring to their remembrance all he had said to them, and guide them 'into the whole truth'; John 20:21, 'As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you.....Receive ye the Holy Ghost'; Matt. 18:18, 'Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,' etc.; Matt. 28:19-20, 'Go and disciple all nations and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.'

"These passages, which are addressed to all the Apostles alike, to doubting Thomas as well as to Peter, prove indeed the unbroken presence of Christ and the Holy Ghost in the Church to the end of time, which is one of the most precious and glorious truths admitted by every true Christian. But, in the first place, the Church, which is here represented by the Apostles, embraces all true believers, laymen as well as Bishops. Secondly, the promise of Christ's presence implies no infallibility, for the same promise is given even to the smallest number of true believers. (Matt.18:20.) Thirdly, if the passages prove infallibility at all, they would prove individual infallibility by continued inspiration rather than corporate infallibility by official succession; for every Apostle was inspired, and so far infallible; and this no Roman Catholic Bishop, though claiming to be a successor of the Apostles, pretends to be.

2. The passages quoted by the advocates of the Papal theory are three, viz., Luke 22:31; Matt. 16:18; John 21:15.

We admit, at the outset, that these passages in their obvious meaning, which is confirmed by the history of the Apostolic Church, assign to Peter a certain primacy among the Apostles: he was leader and spokesman of them and the chief agent of Christ in laying the foundations of his Church among the Jews and Gentiles. This is significantly prophesied in the new name of Peter given to him. The history of Pentecost (Acts II) and the conversion of Cornelius (Acts X) are the fulfillment of this prophecy, and furnish the key to the interpretation of the passages in the Gospels.

This is the truth which underlies the colossal lie of the Papacy. For there is no Roman error which does not derive its life and force from some truth. But beyond this we have no right to go. The position which Peter occupied no one can occupy after him. The foundation of the church, once laid, is laid for all time to come, and the gates of Hades cannot prevail against it. The New Testament is its own best interpreter. (It shows no single example of an exercise of jurisdiction of Peter over the other Apostles, but the very reverse. He himself, in his Epistles, disowns and prophetically warns his fellow-presbyters against the hierarchical spirit; exhort-

ing them, instead of being lords over God's heritage, to be examples to his flock (I Pet.5:1-4). Paul and John were perfectly independent of him, as the Acts of the Apostles prove. Paul even openly administered to him a rebuke at Antioch. At the Council of Jerusalem James seems to have presided, at all events he proposed the compromise which was adopted by the Apostles, Elders, and Brethren; Peter was indeed one of the leading speakers, but he significantly advocated the truly evangelical principle of salvation by faith alone, and protested against human bondage (Acts 15; comp. Gal.2)

The great error of the Papacy is that it perverts the primacy of honor into a supremacy of jurisdiction, a personal privilege into an official, prerogative, and a priority of time into a permanent superiority of rank. And to make the above passages at all available for such purpose, it must take for granted, as intervening links of the argument, that which cannot be proved from the New Testament nor from history, viz., that Peter was Bishop of Rome; that he was there as Paul's superior; that he appointed a successor, and transferred to him his prerogatives.

As to the passages separately considered, Matt.16,18; 'Thou art a Rock,' and John 21, 'Feed my flock,' could at best only prove Papal Absolutism, but not Papal Infallibility, of which they do not treat. The former teaches the in-

destructibility of the Church in its totality (not of any individual congregation), but this is a different idea. The Council of Trent lays down 'the unanimous consent of the Fathers' as the norm and rule of all orthodox interpretation, as if exegetical wisdom had begun and ended with the divines of the first six centuries. But of the passage Matt. 16., which was more frequently quoted by Popes and Papists than any other passage in the Bible, there are no less than five different patristic interpretations; the rock on which Christ built his Church being referred to Christ by sixteen Fathers (including Augustine); to the faith or confession of Peter by forty-four (Including Chrysostom, Ambrose, Hilary, Jerome, and Augustine again); to Peter confessing the faith by seventeen; to all the Apostles, whom Peter represented by his primacy, by eight; to all the faithful, who, believing in Christ as the Son of God, are constituted the living stones of the Church. But not one of the Fathers finds Papal Infallibility in this passage, nor in John 21. The 'unanimous consent of the Fathers' is a pure fiction, except in the most general and fundamental principles held by all Christians; and not to interpret the Bible except according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers, would strictly mean not to interpret it at all.

There remains, then, only the passage recorded by

Luke (22;31-32) as at all bearing on the disputed question; 'Simon, Simon, behold, Satan desired to have you (or, obtain you by asking), that he may sift you as wheat; but I prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and thou, when once thou art converted (or, has turned again), strengthen thy brethren.' But even this does not prove infallibility, and has not been so understood before Popes Leo I and Agatho. For (1) the passage refers as the context shows, to the peculiar personal history of Peter during the dark hour of passion, and is both a warning and a comfort to him. So it is explained by the Fathers who frequently quote it. (2) Faith here as nearly always in the New Testament, means personal trust in, and attachment to, Christ, and not, as the Roman Church misinterprets it, orthodoxy, or intellectual assent to dogma. (3) If the passage refers to Popes at all, it would prove too much for them, viz., that they, like Peter, denied the Saviour, were converted again, and strengthened their brethren, which may be true enough of some, but certainly not of all."

H. C. Sheldon, Professor of Christian Doctrine in Boston University School of Theology, says, "Only by the most extravagant and arbitrary interpretation can any warrant be found in the Scriptures for Papal Infallibility."

Most certainly if Jesus had expected the episcopacy and the Pope as its head to be vested with such infallible

powers as the Catholics claim, we should expect to find it clearly prescribed in the New Testament, but such is not the case.

Infallibility Tested by Tradition.

We shall now proceed to search for the sources of this idea in tradition. Again we find no authors better qualified to speak on this phase of the subject than Shaff and Sheldon. The former says:

"The dogma of Papal Infallibility is mainly supported by an inferential dogmatic argument derived from the Primacy of Peter, who, as Vicar of Christ, must also share in his Infallibility; or from the nature and aim of the Church, which is to teach men the way of salvation, and must, therefore, be endowed with an infallible and ever available organ for that purpose, since God always provides the means together with an end. A full-blooded Infallibilist, whose piety consists in absolute submission and devotion to his Lord the Pope, is perfectly satisfied with this reasoning and cares little or nothing for the Bible and for history, except so far as they suit his purpose. If facts disagree with his dogmas, all the worse for the facts. All you have to do it to ignore or deny them, or to force them by unnatural interpretations, into reluctant obedience to the dogmas. But after all, even according to the Roman

Catholic theory, Scriptures and history or tradition are the two indispensable tests of the truth of a dogma. It has always been held that the Popes and the Bishops are not the creators and judges but the trustees and witnesses of the apostolic deposit of faith, and that they can define and proclaim no dogma which is not well founded in primitive tradition, written or unwritten. According to the famous rule of Vicentius, a dogma must have three marks of Catholicity: the Catholicity of time (semper), of space (ubique), and of member (ab omnibus). The argument from tradition is absolutely essential to orthodoxy in the Roman sense, and, as hitherto held, more essential than Scripture proof.....

Now it can be conclusively proved that the dogma of Papal Infallibility, like the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, lacks every one of the three marks of Catholicity. It is a comparatively modern innovation. It was not dreamed of for more than a thousand years, and is unknown to this day in the Greek Church, the oldest in the world, and in matters of antiquity always an important witness. The whole history of Christianity would have taken a different course, if in all theological controversies an infallible tribunal in Rome could have been invoked. Ancient creeds, Councils, Fathers and Popes can be summoned as witnesses against the Vatican dogma.

1. The four oecumenical creeds, the most authoritative expressions of the old Catholic faith of the Eastern and Western Churches, contain an article on the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, but not one word about the Bishops of Rome, or any other local Church.....If it had been believed then as now, it would certainly appear at least in the Roman form of the Apostles' Creed;.....

And this uniform silence of all the Oecumenical Creeds is strengthened by the numerous local creeds of the Nicene age, and by the various anti-Nicene rules of faith up to Tertullian and Irenaeus, not one of which contains an allusion to such an article of faith.

2. The oecumenical councils of the first eight centuries, which are recognized by the Greek and Latin Churches alike, are equally silent about, and positively inconsistent with, Papal Infallibility. They were called by Greek Emperors, not by Popes; they were predominantly, and some of them exclusively, Oriental; they issued their decrees in their own name, and in the fullness of authority, without thinking of submitting them to the approval of Rome; they even claimed the right of judging and condemning the Roman Pontiff as well as any other Bishop or Patriarch.

In the first Nicene Council there was but one representative of the Latin Church (Hosius of Spain); and in the second and the fifth oecumenical councils there was none

at all. The second oecumenical council (381), in the third canon, put the Patriarch of Constantinople on a par with the Bishop of Rome, assigning to the latter only a primacy of honor; and the fourth oecumenical council (451) confirmed this canon in spite of the energetic protest of Pope Leo I."

3. Shaff then goes on with equal zeal and affirmation to show how the Early Church Fathers who unconsciously did most toward laying the foundations of the colossal pretensions of Rome were ignorant of any such idea as absolute supremacy and infallibility of the Pope. Clement, the first Roman Bishop, wrote a letter to the Church of Corinth, which proves this on his part. Ignatius of Antioch makes no distinction of rank among Bishops, but treats them all as equals. Irenaeus of Lyons, the champion of the Catholic faith against the Gnostic heresy at the close of the second century, sharply reproved the Vicar of Rome when he ventured to excommunicate the Asiatic Christians for their different mode of celebrating Easter, and told him that it was contrary to Apostolic doctrine and practice to judge brethren on account of eating and drinking, feasts and new moons. Although Cyprian, in the middle of the third century devised the idea that the unity of the Church lay in the chair of Peter, yet with all his Romanizing tendencies he always addressed the Roman Bishop as his 'brother' and

'colleague.' He even stoutly opposed Pope Stephen's view of the validity of heretical baptism, charging him with error, obstinacy, and presumption. Several other noted Fathers emphatically endorsed his opposition to the conduct of Pope Stephen.

"Augustine," he says, "is often quoted by Infallibilists on account of his famous dictum, "Roma locata est, causa finita est." But he simply means that, since the Councils of Milene and Carthage had spoken, and Pope Innocent I. had acceded to their decision, the Pelagian Controversy was finally settled (although it was, after all, not settled till after his death, at the Council at Ephesus). Had he dreamed of the abuse made of this utterance, he would have spoken very differently. For the same Augustine apologized for Cyprian's opposition to Pope Stephen on the ground that the controversy had then not yet been decided by a Council, and maintained the view of the liability of Councils to correction and improvement by subsequent Councils.....

Gregory I., or the Great, the last of the Latin Fathers, and the first of the Mediaeval Popes (590-609), stoutly protested against the assumption of the title Oecumenical or Universal Bishop on the part of the Patriarch of Constantinople and Alexandria, and denounced this whole title and claim as blasphemous, anti-Christian, and devilish,

since Christ alone was the Head and Bishop of the Church Universal, while Peter, Paul, Andrew, and John, were members under the same Head and heads only of single portions of the whole. Gregory would rather call himself 'servant of the servants of God,' which, in the mouths of his successors, pretending to be Bishops of Bishops and Lords of lords, has become a shameless irony."

4. Heretical Popes: Although it was only Rome's rock-like stability as compared with the wavering tendencies of the Greek and Eastern Churches that fitted her to be the soil in which papal absolutism and papal infallibility sprang up, yet there have been exceptions to these firm and prepossessing tendencies. Popes have been heretics to the Roman faith, and this alone disproves the heinous doctrine.

To quote verbatim from Shaff, he says, "The Canon Law assumes throughout that the Pope may openly teach heresy, or contumaciously contradict the Catholic doctrine; for it declares that, while he stands above all secular tribunals, yet he can be judged and deposed for the crime of heresy. This assumption was so interwoven in the faith of the Middle Ages that even the most powerful of all Popes, Innocent III (d.1216), gave expression to it when he said that, though he was only responsible to God, he may sin against the Faith, and thus become subject to the judgment

of the Church." Innocent IV. (d.1254), Boniface VIII. (d.1303), and Hadrian VI. (in sixteenth century) made statements of like import to that just quoted of Innocent III.

Quite a number of Popes have been accused as heretics to the Roman faith. They either taught or held or subscribed to doctrines contrary to the orthodox ideas. Among these we find Zephyrinus (201-219), Callistus (219-223), Libius (in 358), Zosimus (contemporary with Augustine), Vigilius (538-555), and John XII. (d.1334). Besides these there were others who held and taught contradictory opinions concerning sacraments, immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, and matrimony.

But the case of Honorius I. (625-638) is the most notorious one of all.

(1.) Honorius taught "ex Cathedra" the Monothelite heresy, which was condemned by the sixth oecumenical council, i.e. that Christ had only one will, and not two (corresponding to his two natures.).

(2.) The sixth oecumenical council held at Constantinople (680) and universally recognized in the East and in the West condemned and excommunicated Honorius, as a heretic, and the seventh and eighth councils repeated the anathema of the sixth on him.

(3.) The succeeding Popes down to the eleventh century, in a solemn oath at their accession, indorsed the sixth

oecumenical council, and pronounced "an eternal anathema" on the author of the Monthelite heresy, together with Pope Honorius, because he had given aid and comfort to the perverse doctrines of the heresy.

These facts themselves are enough to disprove Papal Infallibility, according to the Roman system of doctrine.

Sheldon agrees with all these accounts which we have noted from Shaff, and he furthermore adds various other reasons, such as: (1) the record of the Early Church as a whole shows that it had no idea that doctrinal disputes could be settled by the short method of appealing to the Bishop of Rome; (2) the case of Honorius; (3) the moral record of the Popes; (4) the part which Popes have taken in the long tragedy of religious persecutions.

#### Greed for Power Fed by Fraud.

We are now sufficiently convinced that the roots of this notorious doctrine of Papal Infallibility are not to be found imbedded in the Scriptures nor in Tradition. Whence then does it draw its strength? It has been the record of the Roman Church throughout her history to be greedy and grasping for power from any source. Power seems to be her one object and aim. Leo XIII, by quoting as authority the Encyclical of Gregory XVI, issued in 1832, and the Syllabus of Errors, published by Pius IX, as well as by utterances of

his own, has indicated that the Roman Catholic power commits a grievous sin when it tolerates any form of dissenting worship, except under the pressure of practical necessity. This greed for power has been fed by pious frauds and the outcome has been Papal Absolutism and Papal Infallibility. This fact we shall proceed to show.

There are two distinct frauds which serve in this connection. The first is that of the pseudo-Clementine Homilies, which contain a singular system of speculative Ebionism, and represent James of Jerusalem, the brother of the Lord, as Bishop of Bishops, the center of Christendom and the general Vicar of Christ; he is the last arbiter, from whom there is no appeal; to him even Peter must give an account of his labors, and to him the sermons of Peter were sent for safe-keeping. These writings appear as early as the second or third centuries, and although they do not confer any great honor on Peter, yet they suggest Papal Absolutism, which serves to poison the minds of Romanists.

That this idea was transferred to the Bishop of Rome, is first clearly expressed in the pseudo-Isidorian Decretals which constitute the second of the fraudulent sources. This huge forgery of Papal letters, which appeared in the middle of the ninth century, had for its object the completion of the independence of the Episcopal hierarchy from the State, and the absolute power of the Popes, as the legislators and

judges of all Christendom. Here the most extravagant claims are put in the mouths of the early Popes, from Clement (91) to Damasus (384), ~~and~~ in the barbarous French Latin of the Middle Ages, and with such numerous and glaring anachronisms as to force the conviction of fraud even upon Roman Catholic schoars. One of these sayings is: "The Roman Catholic remains to the end free from stain of heresy." Soon afterward other minor frauds arose with the appearance of filling in the crevices of this larger one. And by this series of pious frauds, the mediaeval Papacy, which was the growth of ages, was represented to the faith of the Church as a primitive institution of Christ, clothed with absolute and perpetual authority.

When these false decretals first made their appearance, Nicholas I. (858-867) was then in office. "It is probable that Rothad of Soissons," says Emil Seckel, Dr. Jur., Professor of Law in the University of Berlin, "who carried the decretals to Rome in 864 and laid them before Pope Nicholas I. The first sure indications that Nicholas knew of them appears in his Christmas address of that year and in a letter of January 865, to the Frankish Bishops, both utterances being in regard to Rothad's contest with Hincmar. Adrian II., in 871 quoted a decretal of the pseudo-Anterus, and a synodal address of 869, probably composed by Adrian himself, has more than thirty citations from the pseudo-Isidore's

collection: it is noteworthy as the first extensive use of the false decretals in favor of the claims of the Roman See. In the reform movements of the eleventh century their full possibility of effects were disclosed. In Germany the first citations are in the acts of Synods at Worms (868), Cologne (887), Metz (893), Tribur (895), and - at greater length - Hohenaltheim (916). At Gerstingen (1085) both the Gregorian and the imperial parties appealed to the false decretals; and an utterance of the Papal legate (who afterward became Pope Urban II.) and the Saxon Bishops concerning them is noteworthy for its doubting and contemptuous tone. They were introduced into England by Lanfranc. Spain they reached only as embodied in the later collections of canons. It was these collections which did most for their acceptance and dissemination. The oldest which embodied pseudo-Isidorian material (A2) is the "Collection Anselmo Dedicata," made probably in Milan, between 883 and 897. Others followed (see Can Law, II., 5, P 1), and a collection made in Italy, under Leo IX, about 1050, is little more than a compendium of the pseudo-Isidoriana (250 of its 315 chapters are from the forgery). When it was admitted to Gratian's "Decretum" its acceptance became absolute.

With the possible exception of Hincmar and the guarded expressions of the Synod of Gerstingen, no one raised his voice against the forgeries till the fifteenth century.

Then Heinrich Kalleisen of Coblenz, Nicholas of Cusa, and Juan Torquemanda challenged the decretals of Clement and Anachetus. In the next century suspicion extended as far as Siricius (Erasmus; two editors of the Corpus Juris Canonici, Charles Du Moulin, 1554, and Antoine Le Conte, 1556; Georgius Cassander, 1564). The "Magdelburg centuries" (1559) and David Blondel (1628) brought the full and incontestable proof."

Shaff adds further that, "Papal absolutism was in full vigor from Gregory VII. to Bonifact VIII. Scholastic divines, even Thomas Aquinas, deceived by these literary forgeries, began to defend Papal absolutism over the whole Church and the Council of Lyons (1274) and of Florence (1439) sanctioned it."

The Council of Constance (1414-1418) which deposed John XXIII, and Behedict XIII. on account of serious crimes against the faith and unity of the Church and elected Martin V., ended in a complete triumph for the Episcopal System. But in a short time the Reformation shook the whole Papacy to the foundation, but could not overthrow it. A powerful reaction followed, headed by the Jesuits. Their General, Lainez, strongly advocated Papal Infallibility in the Council of Trent, and declared that the Church could not err only because the Pope could not err. But the Council left the question unsettled, and ascribed infallibility simply to the

"Catholic Church" without defining its seat. Bellarmin also advocated the dogma of Papal Infallibility and shielded misprints in the Latin Vulgate because they conveyed that impression. He gave the advice that all copies should be called in, and a new edition printed with a lying statement in the preface making the printers the scape-goats for the errors of the Pope. This in itself is enough to explode the whole idea of the infallibility of the Pope, because it touches the very source of divine revelation.

The seventh<sup>cent</sup> and eighteenth centuries furnish no great triumphs for either the Episcopal or Papal systems, however, the contest continued until the Vatican Council of 1870. There were present at this Council, which met Dec. 8, 1869, and ended Nov. 11, 1870, 803 in all, 6 Archbishops - princes, 49 Cardinals, 11 Patriarchs, 680 Archbishops and Bishops, 28 Abbots, 29 Generals of Orders. The attendance was larger than any other of the eighteen preceding councils, and presented an imposing array of hierarchical dignity and power such as the world never saw before, and as the Eternal City itself is not likely to see again. The great question to be decided was Papal Infallibility, and this came to a head on July 18, 1870. The disproportion between the representatives of the different nations and the number of their constituents was overwhelmingly in favor of the Papal influence. During the five days July 13 - 18 in which the contest was waged many of the "non Placet" voters became dis-

gusted and went home. So when the fourth and final vote was taken on the 18th, only 535 Fathers were present, and of these all voted "Placet" except two, viz., Bishop Riccio of Cajazzo, in Sicily, and Bishop Fitzgerald, of Little Rock, Arkansas, who had the courage to vote "Non Placet," but immediately before the close of the session submitted to the voice of the council. The problem was to get the Council which was recognized as infallible to vote the Infallibility of the Pope. If this could be secured, there would be no doubt thenceforth and forever that the Pope was infallible, because the infallible oecumenical council voted it. The Bishops of the minority were forced to submit, some hesitated long, but yielded at last to the heavy pressure of the will of the Council, and for the sake, as they said, of Church unity.

The Roman Church has realized that her power lies in the unity of the Church. To secure this unity she has resorted to base and ignominious tricks. All the while she has been narrowing the scope of reason among her communicants. Before the Council of Trent, salvation was given by faith only, but after this Council, works played a great part of the roll, and so the margin kept getting narrower and narrower until the Vatican Council of 1870, when salvation was to be granted by the consent of the Pope or by the Bishop or Priest as his representative. All

this has been done for Unity and Power, and every free-minded thinker knows that such ideas as these interfere with the normal development of humanity.

Thus in searching for the sources of the idea that the Church is infallible, we find them not in the Scriptures, and not in Tradition, but in the Roman greed for power, which has been fed by pious fraud. And as a closing word, let us note what Shaff says, "Absolute power, especially of the Spiritual kind, is invariably intoxicating and demoralizing to any mortal man, who possesses it. God Almighty alone can bear it, and even he allows freedom to His rational creatures."