

SUPPRESSED BY ROME.

The Discourse Delivered Before the Ecumenical Council of 1870 at Rome.

Upon the Infallibility of the Pope by Bishop Strassmayer More Powerful Than Martin Luther's Debate Before the Diet of Worms.

OAKLAND, Cal., April 7, 1894.  
The discourse pronounced in the Ecumenical Council of 1870 upon the "Infallibility of the Pope" by Bishop Strassmayer, should be in the hands of every citizen, and placed within the covers of every Bible. For argumentative reasoning, sound logic, with the truths of history recited, and that, too, within the bosom of the Roman Catholic church so near its head, it will stand unparalleled for ages to come, and should be most sacredly preserved as a part of the history connected with the promulgation of the most absurd dogma, and religious fraud, practiced by authority of the most infernal hierarchy that ever cursed the earth.

It was originally delivered in Latin before the Ecumenical Council at Rome in 1870, when that body met with closed doors, and nothing was allowed to be made public except by authority of Pope Pius IX., who, by the great Ultramontane and Jesuit majority, declared the "Infallibility of the Pope." This "discourse" shook the walls of the Vatican, and considering the time and place, more surprising and powerful than Martin Luther's debate before the diet at Worms.

EDWIN A. SHERMAN.  
Venerable Fathers and Brethren.—Not with fear, but with a conscience free and tranquil before God, who lives and sees me, I rise to speak in this august assembly.

From the time I am found seated here among you, I have followed with attention the discourses which have been pronounced, anxious that a ray of light may descend from above, illumining my intelligence, permitting me to vote the canons of this holy Ecumenical Council with perfect knowledge of their cause.

Penetrated with the sentiment of responsibility—for which God will demand of me an account—I am pleased to study with scrupulous attention the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and to interrogate those venerable monuments of the truth, that I may be permitted to know if the holy pontiff, who here presides, is certainly the successor of St. Peter, vicar of Jesus Christ, and the infallible doctor of the church.

To solve this great question I see that I am obliged to mentally separate from the actual state of things, and to transport my mind, with the torch of the gospel in my hands, to the times in which neither ultramontanism nor gallicanism existed, and in which the church had for doctors St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John; doctors to whom no one will deny divine authority, without placing in doubt the Holy Bible, which we have before us, to teach us, and the Council of Trent to proclaim the rule of faith and of morals.

I open, then, these sacred pages, and I boldly say, nothing can I find which sanctions—neither proximate nor remote—the opinions of the ultramontanes. Though it is greatly to my surprise, for I do not meet with, in the apostolic times, anything there that gives rise to the question upon a pope as a successor of St. Peter and vicar of Jesus Christ—neither upon Mahomet as though he did not exist.

You, Sir Manning, say that this is blasphemous. You, Sir Pius IX., say that I am demented. No, gentlemen; I do not blaspheme, nor am I mad. Having read all the New Testament, I declare before God, with my hand raised to the great crucifix, that not a vestige can there be met with of the papacy as it now exists.

Do not refuse me your attention, my venerable brethren; nor with your murmurings and interruptions justify those who say that this council is not free, because your votes have beforehand been imposed upon you. If that was certain, this august assembly, unto which are directed the observations of all the world, would fall into the most profound discredit. If it is desired that it shall be great, we must be free. Agreeable to his excellency, Monsignor Duponloup—who makes the sign of approval with his head—I am encouraged, and will proceed.

Reading, then, the holy books with all the attention that the Lord has made me capable of, I do not meet one single chapter or one single verse in which Jesus gave to St. Peter the chiefship of the apostles, his co-laborers.

If Simon, the son of Jonas, having been that which we believe today shall be his holiness, Pius IX., strange it is that it cannot be found to say: When I have ascended to my Father, you must all obey Simon Peter as you now obey me. He is established for my vicar on earth." Not only is Christ silent upon this particular, but how little did he think of giving a head to the church, when he had promised thrones to his apostles, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matthew, chapter 19, verse 28.) He promised twelve, one for each one, without saying, that among those thrones, one should be more elevated, and belong to Peter. Undoubtedly, if such was his

intention he would have indicated it. This logic leads us to the conclusion that Christ did not desire to elevate Peter to the head of the apostolic college.

When Christ sent out His apostles to conquer the world, in all equality He gave the power of binding and loosing, and to all made the promise of the holy spirit. Permit me to repeat: If He had desired to constitute Peter His vicar, He would be found to have given him supreme command over His spiritual army.

Christ—so say the Holy Scriptures—prohibited Peter and his colleagues from reigning or exercising authority, or having power over the faithful as the kings do over the gentiles (Luke 22:25-26.) If Peter was to have been elected pope, Jesus did not direct it; because following our tradition, the papacy has in its hands two swords, symbols of spiritual and temporal power.

There is one thing which has surprised me very much, agitating my mind and saying to me: "If Peter had been elected pope, would we have permitted his colleagues to have gone with St. John to Samaria to announce the gospel of the Son of God? (Acts 8:14.) It appears to us, venerable brethren, if we are now permitted the same, we should send his holiness, Pius IX., and his eminency, Monsignor Pianetti, to the Patriarch of Constantinople to persuade him to put an end to the schism of the orient.

But here I find another of greater importance. An ecumenical council met in Jerusalem to decide questions that divided the faithful. Who must have convoked this council if Peter was pope? Clearly, St. Peter. Who must have presided, Peter or his delegate? Who must have reigned or promulgated its canons? St. Peter. Well, then, nothing of that kind followed. Our apostle assisted at the council, the same as the others; it was not him who resumed the discussion, but James; and when the decrees were proclaimed, it was done in the name of the apostles, elders and brethren (Acts 15.)

Is this the practice of our church? How much more shall we examine, oh, venerable brethren? The more am I convinced of it in the Holy Scriptures, that the son of Jonas does not appear to be the first. Now, then, among our teachings that the church was built upon St. Peter, St. Paul, of whose authority we cannot doubt, says in his epistle to the Ephesians (Chap. 2, verse 20), "that it is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the principal corner-stone.

The same apostle believed so little in the supremacy of Peter that they are clearly guilty who say: "We are of Paul or we are of Apollus (1st Cor. 1:12) as guilty as those who say, "We are of Peter." If this last apostle had been the vicar of Christ, St. Paul would have well guarded himself from censuring with so much violence those matters which pertained to his proper colleague.

The same apostle, Paul, in enumerating the officers of the church, mentions apostles, prophets, evangelists, doctors and shepherds. It is credible, my venerable brethren, that St. Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, forgot the first of these offices—the papacy—if the papacy was of divine institution? This forgetfulness for me is as impossible, as if the historian of this council should not make mention of his holiness, Pius IX. (Various voices: Silence! here! silence!)

Calm yourselves, venerable brethren. I have not yet finished. If I am prevented from proceeding, I will show to the world how you are disposed to injustice, by closing the mouth of a minor member of this assembly. Thus I will continue:

The apostle Paul makes no mention in any of his epistles to the different churches of the primacy of Peter. If this primacy exists—if in a word, the church has had a supreme head within itself, infallible in its teaching—could the great apostle of the Gentiles forget to mention it? What say you? More probable it is, that he would have written a lengthy epistle upon this important matter. Then when we erect the edifice of the christian doctrine as we make the foundation, can we forge the keystone of the arch? Now, then, there is no argument that the church was never more beautiful, more pure, nor more holy than in the times when we had no pope. (Cries: It is not true; it is not true!) No, says Monsignor de Lava, no! If some one of us, venerable brethren, has the audacity to think that the church, that today has a pope for its head, is more firm in the faith, more pure in morals, than the apostolic church, tell me openly before the universe, placing this precinct as a center, from which our words shall resound from pole to pole! I will proceed and see if the writings of St. Paul, St. John or St. James discover any trace or germ of the papal power, "St. Luke!"

St. Luke, the historian of the missionary labors of the apostles, maintains silence upon this important point. And the silence of these holy men, whose writings form part of the canons of the divinely inspired Scriptures—for us so difficult and impossible, if Peter was pope—and is as inexorable, as if Thiers, in writing the history of

Romano, were to have omitted the title of emperor.

I see before me a member of the assembly, who says—making a sign with the finger: There is a schismatic bishop who has been introduced among us with false colors! No, no, my venerable brethren; I have not entered into this august assembly like a thief by the window, but only by the door, as yourselves; my title of bishop gives me a right to do it, as does my christian conscience compel me to speak and say that which I believe to be the truth.

That which has surprised me more, and if I can demonstrate it, is the silence of the same St. Peter. If the apostle was that which you proclaim he was, that is to say, the vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, he must at least have known it. If he knew it, how is it, that at not one single time did he labor as pope? Could he have been made pope on the day of Pentecost, when he preached his first sermon; and he was not made such in the council of Jerusalem, and he was not made such in Antioch, so neither was he made such in the two epistles that he directed to the church. How can we conceive such a pope, my venerable brethren, if Peter was pope? The result, then, is: If we desire to maintain that he was pope, the natural consequence is, that he was not known to be pope.

Now, I ask all who desire to think and reflect, are these two suppositions possible? I say, then, that among the living apostles, the church never believed they had a pope. To maintain the contrary, it will be necessary to deliver the Holy Scriptures to the flames or ignore them completely.

But I hear it said on all sides: Then what was not St. Peter in Rome? Was he not crucified with his head downwards? No one knows the places where he taught, and the altars where he said mass in this eternal city!

That St. Peter was domiciled in Rome, my venerable brethren, rests solely upon tradition; further, suppose that he had been bishop in Rome, how can we prove his episcopacy by his presence? Scalligero, one of the most erudite of men, does not hesitate to say that the bishopric of St. Peter and his residence in Rome must be classed among the ridiculous legends. [Repeated cries: "Shut his mouth, make him come down from that chair!"]

Venerable brethren, I am prompt to govern myself, but not to be better in an assembly like ours. Prove all things as commanded by the apostle, and believe only that which is good. Because, my venerable friends, we have a dictator before which all of us must prostrate ourselves and fall, even unto whom His Holiness Pius IX., must bow his head. The dictator is history, which is not a legend that can be molded to a shape as the potter models his clay, but as a diamond that cuts indelible words in crystal. Until now I have rested only upon it, and have not met with any vestige of the papacy in the apostolic times. You desire, perhaps, to place me in the position of one accused of lying. Make it so if you can. Listen to the just reason of these words: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). I will reply to this objection directly, my venerable brethren; but before doing so I desire to present the result of my historical investigations. Not having found any vestige of the pope in the apostolic times, I say to myself: Perhaps they may be found in the annals of the church and I will go and search. Well, then, I hunted for the pope in the first four centuries, and could not find that they gave any account of him.

I hope that none of you will doubt the great authority of the holy bishop of Hippo, the great and blessed St. Augustine. This pious doctor, the honor and glory of the Catholic church who was secretary of the council of Melvo. In the decrees of that venerable assembly are to be found these, his significant words: "All those who appeal to the west of the north side of the sea (Mediterranean) cannot be admitted by any to the communion in Africa." The bishops of Africa so little recognized those of Rome, punished by excommunication those who submit anything to arbitration.

These same bishops, in the Sixth Council of Carthage, celebrated under Aurelius, who was of that city, writing to Celestin, bishop of Rome, notifying him that he would not receive any appeals from the bishops, priests or clerics of Africa; that they would send no more delegates or commissioners, and that they would not introduce that baughty human into the church.

That the Patriarch of Rome, from the earliest times, had endeavored to bring all authority to himself is an evident act that he did not possess the supremacy that the Ultramontanes attribute to him. If he had possessed it, would the bishops of Africa have ventured (St. Augustine among them) to prohibit appeals to the decrees of his supreme tribunal?

I recognize, notwithstanding, that the Patriarch of Rome occupied the first place. One of the laws of Justinian says: "We command that you conform to the definition of the four councils, that the holy father of ancient Rome shall be the first of the

bishops, and that his highness the Archbishop of Constantinople shall be the second." Tell me, does this apply to the sovereignty of the pope? Do not run so hastily to this conclusion, my venerable brethren, for the law of Justinian bears written in front "Of the Order of the Patriarch Bases." Precedence is one thing, and the power of jurisdiction is another. For example, supposing that in Florence there should come together an assembly of all the bishops of the kingdom, the presidency would naturally be given to the primate of Florence, as it is among the orientals who concede to the Patriarch of Constantinople, and in England, to the Archbishop of Canterbury; but neither the first, nor the second, nor the third, can be deduced of the assigned position in a jurisdiction over his companions.

The importance of the bishops of Rome proceeds not from their divine power, but the importance of the city where its see is. Monsignor Darboy, of Paris, is not superior in dignity to the Archbishop of Avignon, and notwithstanding that Paris was given a consideration that could not be enjoyed, if in time he could have his palace in the bends of the Seine, it will be found upon the Rhone. This is true in the religious hierarchies as is also in civil and political matters. The prefect of Florence is no more than the prefect of Pisa, but civil and politically is of greater importance.

I have said that from the first ages, the Patriarch of Rome has aspired to the universal government of the church; and disgracefully, perhaps, it may be obtained; but his pretensions will not follow for certain: for the emperor Theodosius II. made a law that the Patriarch of Constantinople should have the same authority as he of Rome. The fathers of the Council of Chalcedonia, gathered all the bishops of ancient and now Rome in the same category, in all things including the ecclesiastics. The Sixth Council of Carthage prohibited all of the bishops from arrogating the title of pontiff over the bishops or sovereign bishops. With regard to the title of universal bishop which the popes arrogated to themselves much later, St. Gregory I., believing that his successors would never think of adorning themselves with it, wrote these words: "Not one of my predecessors have consented to bear this profane title, because, when a patriarch arrogates to himself the name of Universal, the character of the patriarch will suffer discredit. Put this away far off, then, from the Christian who desires to give a title that will cause discredit to his brethren."

St. Gregory sent these words to his colleague at Constantinople, who responded to make himself the primate of the church. "I do not know the import of the title of Universal, that John has taken illegally, and not one of the Patriarchs has arrogated to himself this profane name, because, how many disgraces must we not expect if among the priests there should arise such ambitions. "He is the king of the sons of pride." The Pope Pelagius II. called John, the bishop of Constantinople, who aspired to the supreme pontificate, impious and profane."

These authorities, and I could cite a hundred more of equal value, if they do not prove with a similar clearness to the splendor of the mid-day sun, that the first bishops of Rome were not recognized as universal bishops and heads of the church, until much later times. And for the other part, who does not know that from the year 325, in which was celebrated the first Ecumenical Council of Constantinople among more than eleven hundred bishops that assisted at the first six general councils, there were not to be found more than nineteen bishops from the west.

Who can be ignorant that the councils were convoked by the emperors, without desiring to be informed of them, and frequently in opposition to the desires of the bishop of Rome? And that Osius, bishop of Cordova, presided in the first Council of Nice, and compiled its canons? The same Osius presided afterward at the Council of Sardica, and excluded the delegate of Julius, bishop of Rome. I will not make any more citations, my venerable brethren, and will pass to speak of the great argument to refer anteriorly some of you, who aim to establish the primacy of the bishop of Rome. For the rock (stone) upon which the holy church is to be built is to be understood as Peter. If this were true, the dispute may be ended; but my predecessors (and certainly they knew something) do not express an opinion upon that as some of you do.

St. Cyril, in his fourth book upon the Trinity, says: "I believe that by the 'rock' must be understood the unvariable faith of the apostles." St. Hilarus, bishop of Poitiers, in his second book upon the Trinity, says: "The rock (stone) is the blessed and only rock of faith confessed by the mouth of St. Peter," and in the sixth book of the Trinity, he says: "It is this rock of the confession of faith upon which the church is builded." "God," says St. Jerome, in the sixth book upon St. Matthew, "Upon this rock will I build my Church." It is to say upon the faith of the confession. Now, then, what was the confession of the apostle? Behold

here it is, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Ambrose, the holy Archbishop of Milan, upon the second chapter of the Ephesians, St. Basilus of Seleucia, and the fathers of the Council of Chalcedonia, teach precisely the same doctrine. Among the doctors of Christian antiquity, St. Augustine occupies one of the first places; for his wisdom and sanctity. Hear, then, what he has written upon the First Epistle of John: "What signify these words, 'Build my Church upon this rock?' Upon this faith that to me says thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."

In his treatise 124, upon St. John, we meet with this significant phrase, "Upon this rock that thou has confessed, I will build my Church, pieces that Christ himself wasthat rock. The great bishop, believing, so little that the Church was built upon St. Peter, said to his flock in the sermon 13: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock (stone)—that thou hast confessed—upon that rock that thou hast recognized, saying 'thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God'—I build my Church upon myself, that I am the Son of God to build upon and I do not build upon thee Peter."

That which St. Augustine teaches upon this celebrated passage, was the opinion of all the Christian world in his days; by following with it, I resume and establish, first, that Jesus gave to his apostles the same power that he did to St. Peter; second, that the apostles never recognized in St. Peter, the vicar of Jesus Christ, to be the infallible doctor of the church; third, that the same Peter never thought of being pope, nor did he labor as if he was pope; fourth, that the councils of the first four centuries, when recognizing the high position that the bishop of Rome occupied in the church by reason of being in Rome, he was only granted an honorary pre-eminence, and never with power and jurisdiction; fifth, that the holy fathers, in the famous passage "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," never understood that the church was to be built upon Peter (*super petram*), but upon the rock (*super petram*), that is to say, upon the confession of faith of the apostle. I conclude, victoriously, conforming to this history, to reason, to logic, in the good sense and the Christian conscience, that Jesus Christ never gave any supremacy to St. Peter, and that the bishops of Rome were not constituted sovereigns of the church, without confiscating one by one all the rights of the episcopacy. (Voices: "Silence!" "Insolent Protestant!" "Silence!")

No, I am not an insolent Protestant. No, a thousand times, no! The history is not Catholic, nor Anglican, nor Calvinistic, nor Lutheran, nor Aryan, nor Greek, nor Schismatic, nor Ultramontane. It is what it is; that is to say, something more powerful than all the confessions of faith; than all the canons of the Ecumenical councils. Write against it, if you venture to do so. But you cannot destroy it, as neither can you take out one brick from the Colosseum that you think you are able to destroy. If I have said anything which history may prove to be false, show me that history, and I will not hesitate one moment to make the most venable apology. But have patience and see that I have not yet said all that I desire and can. If the funeral pyre awaits me in the square of St. Peter, I will not fall, because I am determined to proceed. Monsignor Duponloup, in his celebrated observations upon this council of the Vatican, has said and with reason, "that if we declare Pius IX. infallible, we must necessarily, by natural logic, see ourselves necessarily maintaining that all his predecessors were also infallible." Then, venerable brethren, here is the history raising its voice with authority assuring us, that some popes have erred. We can assert upon this or deny, if you please, but I will prove it.

The Pope Victor I., in 120, approved Montanism, and afterwards he condemned it.

Marcellinus (296 to 303) was an idolater. Entering the temple of Vesta and offered incense to the goddess. You may say, perhaps, that it was an act of debility, to which I contest, "A vicar of Jesus Christ dies, but he must not be made an apostate."

Liborius (358) consenting to the condemnation of Athanasius, and afterwards made profession of Arianism to succeed, that his banishment might be revoked and be restored to his see.

Honorius (625) adhered to Monotheism. The Father Gratry has proved it with the evidence.

Gregory I. (575 to 590) called anti-Christ, whoever may give him the name of universal bishop and to the contrary. Boniface III. (907) persuaded the parried emperor Phocas to confer upon him said title.

Paschal II. (1035 to 1099) and Eugenius III. (1145 to 1153) authorized dueling in the meantime that Julius II. (1503) and Pius IV. (1560) prohibited it.

Eugenius IV. (1431) approved the council of Basil and the restitution of the chalice to the church of Bohemia, and Pius II. (1458) revoked the concession.

Adrian II. (967) declared civil matrimony valid; but Pius VII. (1800 to 1823) condemned it.

Sixtus V. (1585 to 1590) published an

addition of the Bible, and in a bull recommended its reading; that directly Pius VII. condemned.

Clement XIV. (1769 to 1775) abolished the Company of the Jesuits, permitted by Paul III., and Pius VII. re-established them.

But why seek proofs so remote? Has there not been made as much by our holy father, who is here present, in giving rules in his bull for this same council, in case he should die in the meantime, when it is found convened, revoking all as many of the times passed that were contrary to it, although when proceeding in accordance with the decisions of his predecessors? And certainly Pius IX. has spoken ex cathedra imposing from the depths of his sepulchre his will to the sovereignty of the church. Never conclude, my venerable brethren, if treating of presenting to your sight the contradictions of the popes in their teachings. For as much, if we proclaim the infallibility of the actual pope, or will have to prove, that the popes never are contradictory, which is impossible, or will have to declare that the Holy Spirit has revealed to us, that the infallibility of the pope is only to date from 1870. Are we sufficiently adventurous to make it so?

Perhaps the peoples are indifferent and leave passing upon theological questions that they do not understand and whose importance to them does not come; but although while being indifferent for the principles, they are not so when taking in account the acts. Well, then do not deceive them. If the decrees of the dogma of papal infallibility pass, the protestants, our adversaries, will mount the breach with so much more bravery, when they have the history of its part. Meanwhile we will only have a negation that will oppose them. What they may say to us when we exhibit to them all the bishops of Rome from the days of Luke unto that of His Holiness Pius IX.? Alas! If all had been like Pius IX., triumphant all along the line, it would not have been as disgraceful as it is. (Cries: "Silence! silence!" "Enough! enough!") Do not clamor, monsignors, to fear the history is to confess defeat; although we cannot blot out one of its pages. Leave me to speak and I will be as brief as possible on this important subject.

The Pope Vigilius (538) bought the papacy of Belasarius, lieutenant of the Emperor Justinian. True it is, he bought with his promise and never paid. Is this a canonical manner to enclose the tiara? The second council of Chalcedonia formally condemned it. In one of its canons it reads: "The bishop who obtains his episcopacy by money, shall lose it and shall be degraded."

Pope Eugenius III. (1148) imitated Vigilius. St. Bernard, the brilliant star of his time, responding to the pope saying: "Can you inform me, in this great city of Rome, if any of them have received the popedom without first having received gold or silver for it?" My venerable brethren, who will be the pope that will establish a traffic at the door of the Holy Spirit? Have any the right to teach this infallibility to the Church? You know the history of Formosa too well that I should add anything to it. Stephen VI. had his body exhumed, clothed with pontifical raiment, and commanded that his fingers, that had been accustomed to give benediction, should be cut off, and afterwards thrown into the Tiber, declaring that he was a perjurer and bastard. Then the people imprisoned Stephen, who was poisoned and garroted; and directly Romanus, the successor of Stephen, and after him John X., rehabilitated Formosa.

Perhaps you may tell me that those are fables, not history. Fables? Go, monsignors, to the library of the Vatican, and read Plotinus, the historian of the papacy and the annals of Baronius (A. D. 897). Those are acts that for the honor of the Holy See, we desire to ignore; but when we treat of defining a dogma that will provoke a great schism between us, the love shelters us unto our venerable mother, the Apostolic Roman Catholic church, must you impose silence upon us? I will proceed: The erudite Cardinal Baronius, speaking of the papal court says (lend me your attention, my venerable brethren, to these words): "What was the Roman church in those times? What infamy! Only the most powerful courtiers governed in Rome. They were those who gave, exchanged and took bishoprics, and, horrible it is to relate, made their lovers the false popes to mount the throne of St. Peter." Baronius (A. D. 912.)

I contend, that if those were false and not true popes, so it is; but in this case, if for one hundred and fifty years, we find the see of Rome occupied by anti-popes, how can we reunite the thread of papal succession? Then, what? How could the church exist a century and a half without a chief head? Note well that the greater part of those anti-popes came from the genealogical tree of the papacy; and surely they are those described by Baronius; because until Genebrardo, the great adulator of the popes, has the boldness to say in his chronicles (A. D. 905): "This centenary was unfortunately placed, that for nearly one hundred and fifty years the popes had fallen from