

# Against romanism.--no. li. Archbishop Ussher on Prayers for the Dead

by J.H. Newman

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*The early Church's practice of praying for the dead was not for souls in Purgatory, but for those at rest in God's kingdom, and involved prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and intercession.*

**Scripture:** Luke 12:5, John 5:28, Romans 16:12, 2 Timothy 1:16

**Topics:** "Prayer For Dead", "Purgatory Doctrine"

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## Description

J.H. Newman preaches about the diverse beliefs and practices regarding prayers for the dead in the early Church, highlighting the misconceptions and fallacies surrounding the doctrine of Purgatory. He discusses how Roman controversialists have misinterpreted the teachings of the early Fathers to support their own theories, such as Transubstantiation and ecclesiastical penances. Newman emphasizes the importance of understanding the true intentions behind prayers for the dead, which were meant to offer praise, thanksgiving, and petitions for forgiveness and salvation, rather than to alleviate supposed purgatorial torments. He sheds light on the various interpretations and prayers used in different liturgies, showing the complexity and diversity of beliefs within the early Church.

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## Transcript

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ONE great unfairness practised by Roman controversialists, has been to adduce, in behalf of their own peculiarities, doctrines or customs of the Primitive Church, which, resembling them in appearance, are really of a different character. Thus because the early Fathers spoke of the Holy Communion in such reverent and glowing terms, as became those who understood its real nature and virtue, they have tried to make it appear that they believed in their own theory of Transubstantiation. Whereas they spoke of it as a commemorative sacrifice, they have thence taken occasion to make it a real and proper sacrifice. The doctrine of ecclesiastical penances, they have converted into the theory of satisfactions to Almighty God for sins committed. The existence of Apostolical Tradition, in the early Church, in behalf of the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, and the like, has been made a pretence for introducing so called Apostolical Traditions concerning various unfounded opinions in faith and practice.

But in no instance is this fallacious procedure more strikingly seen than as regards their doctrine of Purgatory, which they defend by notions and usages in the early Church, quite foreign to the distressing

tenet which we challenge them to prove. This is shown with great learning and ability by the celebrated Archbishop Ussher in his Controversy with a Jesuit. At a time like the present, when many persons are in doubt whether they are not driven to an alternative of either giving up the primitive Fathers or embracing Popery, it may be useful to reprint the chapter on this subject from Ussher's work in a separate form.

## OF PRAYER FOR THE DEAD.

### INTRODUCTION.

PRAYER for the dead, as it is used in the Church of Rome, doth necessarily suppose Purgatory; and therefore whatsoever hath been alleged out of the Scriptures and Fathers against the one, doth stand in full force against the other: so that here we need not actum agere, and make a new work of overthrowing that which hath been sufficiently beaten down already. But on the other side, the admittal of Purgatory doth not necessarily infer Prayer for the dead: nay, if we shall suppose, with our adversaries, that Purgatory is the prison from whence none shall come out until they have paid the utmost farthing, their own paying, and not other men's praying, must be the thing they are to trust unto, if ever they look to be delivered out of that jail. Our Romanists indeed do commonly take it for granted, that

"Purgatory and Prayer for the dead be so closely linked together, that the one doth necessarily follow the other;"

but in so doing they reckon without their host, and greatly mistake the matter. For howsoever they may deal with their own devices as they please, and link .their prayers with their Purgatory as closely as they list; yet shall they never be able to shew, that the Commemoration and Prayers for the dead, used by the ancient Church, had any relation with their Purgatory; and therefore, whatsoever they were, Popish prayers we; are sure they were not. I easily foresee, that the full opening of the judgment of the Fathers in this point will hardly stand with that brevity which intended to use in treating of these questions; the particulars be so many, that necessarily do incur into the handling of this argument. But I suppose the reader will be content rather to dispense with me in that behalf, than be sent away unsatisfied in a matter wherein the adversary beareth himself confident beyond measure, that the whole stream of antiquity runneth clearly upon his side.

Ä 1. OF THE PERSONS FOR WHOM AFTER DEATH PRAYERS WERE OFFERED IN THE EARLY CHURCH.

Ä 2. OF THE PRIMARY INTENTION OF PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

Ä 3. OF THE PEACE AND CONDITION OF SOULS DEPARTED.

Ä 4. OF THE OPINION OF THE HERETIC AERIUS TOUCHING PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

Ä 5. OF THE PROFIT OF PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD TO THE PERSONS PRAYED FOR.

Ä 1. Of the Persons for whom after death Prayers were offered in the early Church.

THAT the truth, then, of things may the better appear, we are here prudently to distinguish the original institution of the Church from the private opinions of particular doctors, which waded further herein than the general intendment of the Church did give them warrant; and diligently to consider, that the memorials, oblations, and prayers made for the dead at the beginning, had reference to such as rested from their

labours, and not unto any souls which were thought to be tormented in that Utopian purgatory, whereof there was no news stirring in those days. This may be gathered,

First, by the practice of the ancient Christians, laid down by the author of the Commentaries upon Job, which are wrongly ascribed unto Origen, in this manner:

"We observe the memorials of the saints, and devoutly keep the remembrance of our parents or friends which die in the faith; as well rejoicing for their refreshing, as requesting also for ourselves a godly consummation in the faith. Thus therefore do we celebrate the death, not the day of the birth: because they which die shall live for ever. And we celebrate it, calling together religious persons with the priests, the faithful with the clergy; inviting moreover the needy and the poor, feeding the orphans and widows, that our festivity may be for a memorial of rest to the souls departed, whose remembrance we celebrate, and to us may become a sweet savour in the sight of the eternal God."

Secondly, by that which St. Cyprian writeth of Laurentius and Ignatius, whom he acknowledgeth to have received of the Lord palms and crowns for their famous martyrdom, and yet presently addeth:

"We offer sacrifices always for them, when we celebrate the passions and days of the martyrs with an anniversary commemoration."

Thirdly, by that which we read in the author of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, set out under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite: for where the party deceased is described by him to have departed out of this life,

"replenished with divine joy, as now not fearing any change to worse,"

being come unto the end of all his labours, and to have been both privately acknowledged by his friends, and publicly pronounced by the ministers of the Church, to be a happy man, and to be verily admitted into the

"society of the saints that have been from the beginning of the world;"

yet doth he declare, that the Bishop made prayer for him, (upon what ground, we shall afterward hear,) that

"God would forgive him all the sins that he had committed through human infirmity, and bring him into the light and the land of the living, into the bosoms of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, into the place from whence pain and sorrow and sighing flieth."

Fourthly, by the funeral ordinances of the Church related by St. Chrysostom, which were appointed to admonish the living that the parties deceased were in a state of joy, and not of grief:

"For tell me," saith he, "what do the bright lamps mean? do we not accompany them therewith as champions? What mean the hymns?" "Consider what thou dost sing at that time. Return, my soul, unto thy rest; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. And again: I will fear no evil, because thou art with me. Again: Thou art my refuge from the affliction that compasseth me. Consider what these Psalms mean."

Fifthly, by the forms of prayers that are found in the ancient liturgies. As in that of the Churches of Assyria attributed unto St. Basil:

"Be mindful, O Lord, of them which are dead, and are departed out of this life," and of the orthodox Bishops, which from Peter and James the Apostles until this day, have clearly professed the right word of faith; and namely, of Ignatius, Dionysis, Julius, and the rest of the saints of worthy memory. "Be mindful, O Lord, of them also which have stood unto blood for religion, and by righteousness and holiness have fed thy holy flock."

And in the Liturgy fathered upon the Apostles:

"We offer unto thee, for all the saints which have pleased thee from the beginning of the world, patriarchs, prophets, just men, apostles martyrs, confessors, bishops, priests, deacons," &c.

And in the Liturgies of the Churches of Egypt, which carry the title of St. Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, and Cyril of Alexandria:

"Be mindful, O Lord, of thy saints; vouchsafe to remember all thy saints which have pleased thee from the beginning, our holy fathers, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, preachers, evangelists, and all the souls of the just which have died in the faith; and especially the holy, glorious, the evermore Virgin Mary, the Mother of God and St. John the forerunner, the Baptist and Martyr; St. Stephen, the first deacon and martyr; St. Mark the apostle, evangelist and martyr," &c.

And in the Liturgy of the Church of Constantinople, ascribed to St. Chrysostom:

"We offer unto thee this reasonable service for those who are at rest in the faith, our forefathers, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, religious persons, and every spirit perfected in the faith, but especially for our most holy, immaculate, most blessed Lady, the Mother of God and aye Virgin Mary."

Which kind of oblation for the saints, sounding somewhat harshly in the ears of the Latins, Leo Thuscus, in his translation, thought best to express it to their better liking, after this manner:

"We offer unto thee this reasonable service for the faithfully deceased, for our fathers, and forefathers, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and all the saints interceding" for them.

As if the phrase of "offering for the martyrs," were not to be found in St. Chrysostom's own works; and more universally

"for the just, both the fathers, and the patriarchs, the prophets, and apostles, and evangelists, and martyrs, and confessors, the bishops, and such as led a solitary life, and the whole order,"

in the suffrages of the Church rehearsed by Epiphanius. Yea, and in the Western Church itself:

"for the spirits of those that are at rest, Hilary, Athanasius, Martin, Ambrose, Augustine, Fulgentius, Leander, Isidorus," &c.

as may be seen in the Muzarabical Office, used in Spain.

Sixthly, this may be confirmed out of the funeral orations of St. Ambrose; in one whereof, touching the Emperor Valentinian, and his brother Gratian, thus he speaketh:--

"Let us believe that Valentinian is ascended from the desert, that is to say, from this dry and unmanured (inculto) place, unto those flowery delights, where being conjoined with his brother, he enjoyeth the pleasure of everlasting life. Blessed are you both, if my orisons shall prevail anything, no day shall overslip you in silence; no oration (oratio) of mine shall pass you ever unhonoured; no night shall run by, wherein I will not bestow upon you some portion of my prayers. With all oblations will I frequent you."

In another, he prayeth thus unto God

"Give rest to thy perfect servant Theodosius, that rest which thou hast prepared for thy saints."

And yet he had said before of him:

"Theodosius, of honourable memory, being freed from doubtful fight, doth now enjoy everlasting light, and continual tranquillity; and for the things which he did in this body, he rejoiceth in the fruits of God's reward; because he loved the Lord his God, he hath obtained the society of the saints."

And afterward also,

"Theodosius remaineth in light, and glorieth in the company of the saints."

In a third, he prayeth thus, for his brother Satyrus:

"Almighty God, I now commend unto thee his harmless soul; to thee do I make my oblation; accept mercifully, and graciously, the office of a brother, the sacrifice of a priest:"

although he had directly pronounced of him before, that

"he had entered into the kingdom of heaven, because he had believed the word of God,"

and excelled in many notable virtues.

Lastly, in one of his epistles, he comforteth Faustinus, for the death of his sister, after this manner:

"Do not the carcasses of so many half-ruined cities, and the funerals of so much land exposed under one view, admonish thee that the departure of one woman, although a holy and admirable one, should be borne with great consolation? especially, seeing they are cast down and overthrown for ever; but she being taken from us but for a time, doth pass a better life there. I, therefore, think that she is not so much to be lamented as to be followed with prayers, and am of the mind, that she is not to be made sad with thy tears, but rather that her soul should be commended with oblations unto the Lord."

Thus far St. Ambrose, unto whom we may adjoin Gregory Nazianzen also; who, in the funeral oration that he made upon his brother Caesarius, having acknowledged that he had

"received those honours that did befit a new created soul, which the Spirit had reformed by water,"

(for he had been but lately baptized, before his departure out of this life,) doth, notwithstanding, pray that the Lord will be pleased to receive him.

Divers instances of the like practice in the ages following, I have produced in another place; to which I will add some few more, to the end that the reader may, from thence, observe how long the primitive institution of the Church did hold up head among the tares that grew up with it, and in the end did quite

choke and extinguish it. Our English Saxons had learned of Gregory, to pray for relief of those souls that were supposed to suffer pain in Purgatory; and yet the introducing of that novelty was not able to justle out the ancient usage of making prayers and oblations for them, which were not doubted to have been at rest in God's kingdom. And, therefore, the brethren of the Church of Hexham, in the anniversary commemoration of the obit of Oswald, King of Northumberland, used

"to keep their vigils, for the health of his soul;"

and having spent the night in praising of GOD with Psalms,

"to offer for him, in the morning, the sacrifice of the sacred oblation,"

as Bede writeth; who telleth us yet withal, that he "reigned with GOD, in heaven," and by his prayers procured many miracles to be wrought on earth. So likewise both the same Bede report, that when it was discovered, by two several visions, that Hilda, the Abbess of Streamsheale, or Whitby, in Yorkshire, was carried up by the angels into heaven, they, which heard thereof, presently caused prayers to be said for her soul. And Osberne relateth the like of Dunstan; that being at Bath, and beholding in such another vision, the soul of one that had been his scholar, at Glastonbury, to be carried up into "the palace of heaven," he

"straightway commended the same into the hands of the divine piety,"

and entreated the lords of the place, here he was, to do so likewise.

Other narrations, of the same kind, may be found among them that have written of the saints' lives; and particularly in the one published by Mosander, p. 69, touching the decease of Bathildis, Queen of France, and p. 25, concerning the departure of Godfrey, Earl of Cappenberg, who is said there to have appeared unto a certain abbess, called Gerberis, and to have acquainted her,

"that he was now, without all delay, and without all danger of any more severe trial, gone unto the palace of the highest King; and as the son of the immortal King, was clothed with blessed immortality."

And the monk, that writ the legend, addeth, that she presently, thereupon

"caused the sacrifice of the Mass to be offered for him."

Which, how fabulous soever it may be for the matter of the vision, yet doth it strongly prove, that within these five-hundred years' (for no longer since is it that this is accounted to have been done,) the use of offering for the souls of those that were believed to be in heaven, was still retained in the Church. The letters of Charles the Great, unto Offa, King of Mercia, are yet extant; wherein he wisheth, that "intercession" should be made "for the soul of" Pope Adrian, then lately deceased

"not having any doubt at all," saith he, "that his blessed soul is at rest: but, that we may show faithfulness and love unto our most dear friend. Even as St. Augustine also giveth directions, that intercessions ought to be made for all men of ecclesiastical piety; affirming, that to intercede for a good man, doth profit him that doeth it."

Where the two ends of this kind of intercession are to be observed; the one, to show their love to their friend; the other, to get profit to themselves thereby, rather than to the party deceased.

Lastly, Pope Innocent the Third, or the Second rather, being inquired of by the Bishop of Cremona, concerning the state of a certain priest, that died without baptism, resolveth: him out of St. Augustine, and St. Ambrose, that

"because he continued in the faith of the holy mother of the Church, and the confession of the name of Christ, he was assoiled from original sin, and had attained the joy of the heavenly country."

Upon which ground, at last, he maketh this conclusion;

"Ceasing, therefore, all questions, hold the sentences of the learned Fathers; and command continual prayers, and sacrifices, to be offered unto GOD, in thy Church for the foresaid priest."

Ä 2. On the primary intention of Prayers for the Dead.

Now, having thus declared, unto what kind of persons the Commemorations ordained by the ancient Church did extend, the next thing that cometh to consideration is, what we are to conceive of the primary intention of those prayers, that were appointed to be made therein. And here we are to understand, that first, prayers of praise and thanksgiving were presented unto GOD, for the blessed estate that the party deceased was now entered upon: whereunto were afterwards added, prayers of deprecation and petition, that GOD would be pleased to forgive him his sins, to keep him from hell, and to place him in the kingdom of heaven. Which kind of intercessions, however at first they were well meant, as we shall hear, yet, in process of time, they proved an occasion of confirming men in divers errors; especially when they began once to be applied, not only to the good, but to evil livers also, unto whom, by the first institution, they never were intended.

The term of [eucharisterios euche], a thanksgiving prayer, I borrow from the writer of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy; who, in the description of the funeral observances, used of old in the Church, informeth us, first, that the friends of the dead

"accounted him to be, as he was, blessed, because that, according to his wish, he had obtained a victorious end," and thereupon, "sent forth hymns of thanksgiving to the Author of that victory; desiring withal that they, themselves, might come unto the like end."

And then that the Bishop likewise offered up a prayer of thanksgiving unto GOD, when the dead was afterward brought unto him, to receive, as it were, at his hands a sacred coronation. Thus at the funeral of Fabiola, the praising of GOD by singing of Psalms and resounding of Hallelujah, is specially mentioned by St. Jerome; and the general practice and intention of the Church therein is expressed and earnestly urged by St. Chrysostom in this manner:

"Do not we praise GOD and give thanks unto him, for that he hath now crowned him that is departed, for that he hath freed him from his labours, for that quitting him from fear, he keepeth him with himself? Are not the hymns for this end Is not the singing of Psalms for this purpose? All these be tokens of rejoicing."

Whereupon he thus presseth them that used immoderate mourning for the dead:

"Thou sayest, Return, O my soul, unto thy rest, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee; and dost thou weep? is not this a stage play? is it not mere simulation? For if thou dost indeed believe the things that thou sayest, thou lamentest idly; but if thou playest, and dissemblest, and thinkest these things to be fables, why dost thou then sing? why dost thou suffer those things that are done? Wherefore dost thou not

drive away them that sing?"

And in the end he concludeth somewhat prophetically, that he

"very much feared lest by this means some grievous disease should creep in upon the Church."

Whether the doctrine now maintained in the Church of Rome, that the children of GOD, presently after their departure out of this life, are cast into a lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, be not a spice of this disease, and whether their practice in chanting of Psalms, appointed for the expression of joy and thankfulness, over them whom they esteem to be tormented in so lamentable a fashion, be not a part of that scene and pageant at which St. Chrysostom dost so take on, I leave it unto others to judge. That his fear was not altogether vain, the event itself doth show. For howsoever in his days the fire of the Romish purgatory was not yet kindled, yet were there certain sticks then a-gathering, which ministered fuel afterwards unto that flame. Good St. Augustine, who was then alive, and lived three and twenty years after St. Chrysostom's death, declared himself to be of this mind; that the oblations and alms usually offered in the Church

"for all the dead that received baptism, were thanksgivings for such as were very good, propitiations for such as were not very bad; but as for such as were very evil, although they were no helps of the dead, yet were they some kind of consolations of the living."

Which, although it were but a private exposition of the Church's meaning in her prayers and oblations for the dead, and the opinion of a doctor too that did not hold purgatory to be any article of his creed, yet did the Romanists in times following greedily take hold thereof, and make it the main foundation upon which they laid the hay and stubble of their devised Purgatory.

A private exposition I call this; not only because it is not to be found in the writings of the former Fathers, but also because it suiteth not well with the general practice of the Church, which it intendeth to interpret. It may indeed fit in some sort that part of the Church service, wherein there was made a several commemoration, first of the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, after one manner; and then of the other dead, after another; which together with the conceit, that "an injury was offered to a martyr, by praying for him," was it that first occasioned St.

Augustine to think of the former distinction. But in the "supplications for the spirits of the dead, which the Church, under a general commemoration, was accustomed to make for all that were deceased in the Christian and Catholic communion," to imagine that one and the same act of praying should be a petition for some, and for others a thanksgiving only, is somewhat too harsh an interpretation: especially where we find it propounded by way of petition, and the intention thereof directly expressed, as in the Greek Liturgy attributed to St.

James, the brother of our Lord: "Be mindful, O Lord GOD, of the spirits and of all flesh, of such as we have remembered, and of such as we have not remembered, being of right belief, from Abel the Just, until this present day. Do thou cause them to rest in the land of the living, in thy kingdom, in the delight of paradise, in the bosoms of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, our holy fathers; whence grief, and sorrow, and sighing, are fled; where the light of thy countenance doth visit them, and shine for ever."

And in the offices compiled by Alcuinus: "O Lord, holy Father, Almighty and everlasting GOD, we humbly make request unto thee for the spirits of thy servants and handmaids, which from the beginning of this

world thou hast called unto thee; that thou wouldest vouchsafe, O Lord, to give unto them a lightsome place, a place of refreshing and ease, and that they may pass by the gates of hell and the ways of darkness, and may abide in the mansions of the saints, and in the holy light which thou didst promise of old unto Abraham and his seed."

So the "commemoration of the faithful departed," retained as yet in the Roman missal, is begun with this orison: "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let everlasting light shine unto them." Whereunto we may add these two prayers, to omit a great number more of the like kind, used of old in the same Church: "Receive, O holy Trinity, this oblation, which we offer unto thee for all that are departed in the confession of thy name; that thou reaching unto them the right hand of thy help, they may have the rest of everlasting life; and being separated from the punishment of the wicked, they may always persevere in the joy of thy praise."

And "this oblation, which we humbly offer unto thee for the commemoration of the souls that sleep in peace, we beseech thee, O Lord, receive graciously; and of thy goodness, grant that both the affection of this piety may profit us, and obtain for them everlasting bliss." Where you may observe, that the souls unto which "everlasting bliss" was wished for, were yet acknowledged to rest "in peace," and, consequently, not to be disquieted with any purgatory torment. Even as in the canon of the mass itself, the priest, in the commemoration for the dead, prayeth thus: "Remember, O Lord, thy servants and handmaids, which have gone before us with the ensign of faith, and sleep in the sleep of peace."

To them, O Lord, and to an that are at rest in Christ, we beseech thee that thou wouldest grant a place of refreshing, light, and peace." Nay, the Armenians, in their Liturgy, entreat GOD to "give eternal peace," not only in general "unto all that have gone before us in the faith of Christ;" but also in particular to the "patriarchs, apostles, prophets, and martyrs." Which maketh directly for the opinion of those, against whom Nicolas Cabasilas both dispute, who held that these "commemorations" contained "a supplication for the saints unto GOD," and not a "thanksgiving" only.

As also do those forms of prayer, which were used in the Roman liturgy in the days of Pope Innocent the Third: "Let such an oblation profit such or such a saint unto glory." And especially that for St. Leo, which is found in the elder copies of the Gregorian Sacramentary: "Grant unto us, O Lord, that this oblation may profit the soul of thy servant Leo." For which the latter books have chopped in this prayer: "Grant unto us, O Lord, that by the intercession of thy servant Leo, this oblation may profit us."

Concerning which alteration, when the Archbishop of Lyons propounded such another question unto Pope Innocent, as our challenger at the beginning did unto us, "Who it was that did change it, or when it was changed, or why?" the Pope returneth him for answer. "That who did change it, or when it was changed, he was ignorant of: yet he knew upon what occasion it was changed: because that where the authority of the Holy Scripture doth say, that he doeth injury unto a martyr, who prayeth for a martyr," (which is a new text of Holy Scripture, of the Pope's own canonization,) "the same by the like reason is to be held of the other saints."

The gloss upon this decretal, layeth down the reason of this mutation a little more roundly: "Of old they prayed for him, and now at this day he prayeth for us; and so was the change made." And Alphonsus Mendoza telleth us, that the old prayer was "deservedly" disused, and this other substituted in the room thereof: "Grant unto us, we beseech thee, O Lord, that by the intercession of thy servant Leo, this oblation may profit us." Which prayer, indeed, was to be found heretofore in modernioribus sacramentariis, as

Pope Innocent speaketh, and in the Roman missals that were published before the Council of Trent, as, namely, in that which was printed at Paris, Anno 1529; but in the newly reformed missal, wherewith, it seemeth, Mendoza was not so well acquainted as with his scholasticall controversies, it is put out again, and another prayer for Leo put in; that by the celebration of those "offices of atonement a blessed retribution might accompany him."

Neither is there any more wrong done unto St. Leo, in praying for him after this manner, than unto all the rest of his fellows in that other prayer of the Roman Liturgy:

"We have received, O Lord, the divine mysteries; which as they do profit thy saints unto glory, so we do beseech thee that they may profit us for our healing:"

and nothing so much as is done unto all the faithful deceased, when, in their masses for the dead, they say daily,

"Lord Jesus CHRIST, King of Glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful that are departed from the pains of hell, and from the deep lake; deliver them from the mouth of the lion, that hell do not swallow them up, that they fall not into darkness."

So that, whatsoever commodious expositions our adversaries can bring for the justifying of the Roman service, the same may we make use of to show, that the ancient Church might pray for the dead, and yet in so doing have no relation at all unto Purgatory; yea, and pray for the martyrs and other saints that were in the state of bliss, without offering unto them any injury thereby.

For the clearing of the meaning of those prayers which are made for Leo and the other saints, to the two expositions brought in by Pope Innocent, Cardinal Bellarmine addeth this for the third:

"that peradventure therein the glory of the body is petitioned for, which they shall have in the day of the resurrection. For although," saith he, "they shall certainly obtain that glory, and it be due unto their merits; yet it is not absurd to desire and ask this for them."

Where, laying aside those unsavoury terms of debt and merits, whereof we shall have occasion to treat in their proper place, the answer is otherwise true in part, but not full enough to give satisfaction unto that which was objected. For the primary intention of the Church indeed, in her prayers for the dead, had reference unto the day of the resurrection; which also in divers places we find to have been expressly prayed for. As in the Egyptian Liturgy, attributed unto St. Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria:

"Raise up their bodies in the day which thou hast appointed, according to thy promises, which are true and cannot lie; grant unto them, according to thy promises, that which eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, and which hath not ascended into the heart of man, which thou hast prepared, O Lord, for them that love thy holy name, that thy servants may not remain in death, but may get out from thence, although slothfulness and negligence have followed them."

And in that which is used by the Christians of St. Thomas, as they are commonly called, in the East Indies:

"Let the Holy Ghost give resurrection to your dead at the last day, and make them worthy of the incorruptible kingdom."

Such is the prayer of St. Ambrose, for Gratian and Valentinian the emperors:

"I do beseech thee, most high GOD, that thou wouldst raise up again those dear young men with a speedy resurrection, that thou mayest recompense this untimely course of this present life, with a timely resurrection."

And that in Alcuinus:

"Let their souls sustain no hurt; but when that great day of the resurrection and remuneration shall come, vouchsafe to raise them up, O Lord, together with thy saints and thine elect."

And that in Grimoldus's Sacramentary:

"Almighty and everlasting God, vouchsafe to place the body and the soul and the spirit of thy servant N., in the bosoms of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that when the day of thy acknowledgment shall come, thou mayest command them to be raised up among thy saints and thine elect."

And that which the Syrians do use:

"Cause, Lord GOD, their souls and their spirits and their bodies to rest; and sprinkle the dew of mercy upon their bones."

But yet the Cardinal's answer, that the glory of the body may be prayed for, which the saints shall have at the day of the resurrection, cometh somewhat short of that which the Church used to request in the behalf of St. Leo: for in that prayer express mention is made of his soul, and so it is wished that profit may redound by the present oblation. And, therefore, this defect must be supplied out of his answer unto that other prayer, which is made for the souls of the faithful departed, that they may be delivered out of the mouth of the lion, and that hell may not swallow them up. To this he saith, that,

"the Church doth pray for these souls, that they may not be condemned unto the everlasting pains of hell; not as if it were not certain, that they should not be condemned unto those pains, but because it is GOD'S pleasure that we should pray, even for those things which we are certain to receive."

The same answer did Alphonsus de Castro give before him, that

"very often those things are prayed for which are certainly known shall come to pass as they are prayed for; and that of this there be very many testimonies."

And Johannes Medina, that

"GOD delighteth to be prayed unto for those things which otherwise he purposed to do. For GOD had decreed" saith he, "after the sin of Adam to take our flesh, and he decreed the time wherein he meant to come; and yet the prayers of the saints, that prayed for his incarnation and for his coming, were acceptable unto him. God hath also decreed to grant pardon unto every repentant sinner; and yet the prayer is grateful unto him, wherein either the penitent doth pray for himself, or another for him, that GOD would be pleased to accept his repentance. GOD hath decreed also and promised not to forsake his Church, and to be present with councils lawfully assembled; yet the prayer notwithstanding is grateful unto GOD, and the hymns, whereby his presence and favour and grace are implored both for the council and the Church."

And whereas it might be objected, that howsoever the Church may sometimes pray for those things which she shall certainly receive, yet she doth not pray for those things which she hath already received; and this

she hath received, that those souls shall not be damned, seeing they have received their sentence, and are most secure from damnation; the Cardinal replieth, that this objection may easily be avoided:

"For although those souls," saith he, "have received already their first sentence in the particular judgment, and by that sentence are freed from hell, yet doth there yet remain the general judgment, in which they are to receive the second sentence. Wherefore the Church, praying that those souls in the last judgment may not fall into darkness, nor be swallowed up in hell, doth not pray for the thing which the soul hath, but which it shall receive."

Thus, these men, labouring to show how the prayers for the dead used in their Church may stand with their conceits of Purgatory, do thereby inform us how the Prayers for the dead used by the ancient Church may stand well enough without the supposal of any purgatory at all. For if we pray for those things which we are most sure will come to pass, and the Church, by the adversary's own confession, did pray accordingly that the souls of the faithful might escape the pains of hell at the general judgment, notwithstanding they had certainly been freed from them already by the sentence of the particular judgment; by the same reason, when the Church in times past besought GOD to "remember all those that slept in the hope of the resurrection of everlasting life," which is the form of prayer used in the Greek Liturgies, and to give unto them rest, and to bring them unto the place where the light of His countenance should shine upon them for evermore, why should not we think that it desired these things should be granted unto them by the last sentence at the day of the resurrection, notwithstanding they were formerly adjudged unto them by the particular sentence at the time of their dissolution?

For, as

"that which shall befall unto all at the day of judgment is accomplished in every one at the day of his death;"

so, on the other side, whatsoever befalleth the soul of every one at the day of his death, the same is fully accomplished upon the whole man at the day of the general Judgment. Whereupon we find that the Scriptures everywhere do point out that great day unto us, as the time wherein mercy and forgiveness, rest and refreshing, joy and gladness, redemption and salvation, reward and crowns, shall be bestowed upon all GOD'S children. As in 2 Tim. i. 16. 18. "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus: the Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." 1 Cor. i. 8. "Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord JESUS CHRIST." Acts iii. 19. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. "It is a righteous thing with GOD to recompense unto you which are troubled rest with us, when the Lord JESUS shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels." Philip. ii. 16. "That I may rejoice in the day of CHRIST, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." 1 Thess. ii. 19. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord JESUS CHRIST at his coming?" 1 Pet. i. 5. "Who are kept by the power of GOD through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Cor. v. .5. "That the spirit may be saved in the day of the LORD JESUS." Ephes. iv. 30. "Grieve not the holy Spirit of GOD, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Luke xxi. 28. "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." 2 Tim. iv. 8. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day;" and Luke xiv. 14. "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

And that the Church, in her offices for the dead, had special respect unto this time of the resurrection, appeareth plainly, both by the portions of Scripture appointed to be read therein, and by divers particulars in the prayers themselves, that manifestly discover this intention . For there "the ministers" as the writer of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy reporteth,

"read those undoubted promises which are recorded in the divine Scripture of our divine resurrection, and then devoutly sang such of the sacred Psalms were of the same subject and argument."

And so accordingly in the Roman Missal, the lessons ordained to be read for that time are taken from 1 Cor. xv. "Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall all rise again." &c. John v. "The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and they that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life," c. 1 Thess. iv. "Brethren, we would not have you ignorant concerning them that sleep, that ye sorrow not, as others which have no hope." John xi. "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, although he were dead, shall live." 2 Maccab. xii. "Judas caused a sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead? justly and religiously thinking of the resurrection." John vi. "This is the will of my Father that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son and believeth in him, may have life everlasting: and I will raise him up at the last day." And, "he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath life everlasting: and I will raise him up at the last day." And, lastly, Apocal. xiv. "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow them." Wherewith the sequence also doth agree, beginning,

"Dies irae, dies illa

Solvat seclum in favilla

Teste David cum Sibylla:"

and ending

"Lacrymosa dies illa,

Qua resurget ex favilla

Judicandus homo reus;

Huic ergo parce, Deus.

Pie Jesu Domine,

Dona eis requiem."

Tertullian, in his book de Monogamia, which he wrote after he had been infected with the heresy of the Montanists, speaking of a prayer of a widow for the soul of her deceased husband, saith, that

"she requesteth refreshing for him, and a portion in the first resurrection."

Which seemeth to have some twang of the error of the Millenaries (whereunto not Tertullian only with his prophet Montanus, but Nepos also, and Lactantius, and divers other doctors of the Church did fall), who, misunderstanding the prophecy in the 20th of the Revelation, imagined that there should be a first

resurrection of the just, that should reign here a thousand years upon earth; and after that a second resurrection of the wicked at the day of the general judgment.

"They that come not to the first resurrection, but are reserved to the second, shall be burned until they fulfil the times betwixt the first and the second resurrection: or if they have not fulfilled them, they shall remain longer in punishment. And therefore let us pray that we may obtain to have our part in the first resurrection,"

saith St. Ambrose. Hence, in a certain Gothic Missal, I meet with two several exhortations made unto the people to pray after this form: the one that GOD would

"vouchsafe to place in the bosom of Abraham the souls of those that be at rest, and admit them unto the part of the first resurrection."

the other, which I find elsewhere also repeated in particular, that he would

"place in rest the spirits of their friends which were gone before them in the Lord's peace, and raise them up in the part of the first resurrection."

And, to come nearer home, Asserius Menevensis, writing of the death and burial of Ethelred, King of the West Saxons, and Burghred, King of the Mercians, saith that they

"expect the coming of the LORD and the first resurrection with the just."

The like doth Abbo Floriacensis also write of our Cuthbert. Which, how it may be excused otherwise, than by saying that at the general resurrection the dead in Christ shall rise first, and then the wicked shall be raised after them, and by referring the first resurrection unto the resurrection of the first, which shall be at that day, I cannot well resolve.

For certain it is, that the first resurrection, spoken of in the 20th chapter of the Revelation of St. John, is the resurrection of the soul from the death of sin and error in this world, as the second is the resurrection of the body out of the dust of the earth in the world to come; both which he distinctly laid down by our Saviour, in the 5th chapter of the Gospel of St. John; the first in the 25th verse, "The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of GOD, and they that hear shall live:" the second, in the 28th and 29th, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

And to this general resurrection, and to the judgment of the last day, had the Church relation in her prayers; some patterns whereof it will not be amiss to exhibit here, in these examples following:

"Although the condition of death brought in upon mankind doth make our hearts and minds heavy; yet, by the gift of thy clemency, we are raised up with the hope of future immortality; and being mindful of eternal salvation, are not afraid to sustain the loss of this light. For by the benefit of thy grace, life is not taken away to the faithful, but changed; and the souls being freed from the prison of the body, abhor things mortal when they attain unto things eternal. Wherefore we beseech thee that thy servant N., being placed in the tabernacles of the blessed, may rejoice that he hath escaped the straits of the flesh and in the desire of glorification expect with confidence the day of judgment."

"Through JESUS CHRIST our Lord, whose holy passion we celebrate without doubt for immortal and well resting souls; for them especially upon whom thou hast bestowed the grace of that second birth; who, by the example of the same JESUS CHRIST our Lord, have begun to be secure of the resurrection; For thou, who hast made the things that were not, art able to repair the things that were; and hast given unto us evidences of the resurrection to come, not only by the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles, but also by the resurrection of the same thy only begotten Son our Redeemer."

"O God, who art the Creator and Maker of all things, and who art the bliss of the saints, grant unto us who make request unto thee, that the spirit of our brother, who is loosed from the knot of his body, may be presented in the blessed resurrection of thy saints."

"O almighty and merciful GOD, we do entreat thy clemency, forasmuch by thy judgment we are born and made and end, that thou wilt receive into everlasting rest the soul of our brother, whom thou of thy piety hast commanded to

"Being to render an account of every idle word, shall we desire the day of judgment, wherein that unwearied fire must be passed by us, in which those grievous punishments for expiating the soul from sins must be endured?" For, "to such as have been baptized with the Holy Ghost, it remaineth, that they should be consummated with the fire of judgment."

In St. Ambrose also there are some passages to be found which seem to make directly for either of these points; as these for the former:

"The soul is loosed from the body, and yet after the end of this life it is held as yet in suspense, with the uncertainty of the future judgment: so that there is no end where there is thought to be an end."

"We read in the books of Esdras, that when the day of judgment shall come, the earth shall restore the bodies of the deceased, and the dust shall restore the relics of the dead which do rest in the graves; and the habitacles shall restore the souls which were committed to them; and the Most High shall be revealed upon the seat of judgment."

Also that Scripture

"nameth those habitacles of the souls promtuaries," or secret receptacles; "and meeting with the complaint of man, that the just which have gone before may seem to be defrauded, until the day of judgment, which is a very long time, of the reward due unto them, saith wonderfully, that the day of judgment is like unto a crown, wherein as there is no slackness of the last, so there is no swiftness of the first. For the day of crowning is expected by all; that within that day both they who are overcome may be ashamed, and they who do overcome may obtain the palm of victory."

"Therefore while the fulness of time is expected, the souls expect their due reward. Pain is provided for some of them, for some glory; and yet, in the mean time, neither are those without trouble, nor these without fruit."

And these for the latter:

"With fire shall the sons of Levi be purged, with fire Ezekiel, with fire Daniel. But these, although they shall be tried with fire, yet shall say, we have passed through fire and water. Others shall remain in the fire."

"And if the Lord shall save his servants, we shall be saved by faith, yet saved as it were by fire. Although we shall not be burned up, yet shall we be burned."

"After the end of the world, when the angels shall be sent to separate the good and the bad, this baptism shall be; when iniquity shall be burnt up by the furnace of fire, that in the kingdom of God the righteous may shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. And if any one be as Peter or as John, he is baptized with this fire." Seeing therefore, "he that is purged here, hath need to be purged again there, let him purge us there also, when the Lord may say, Enter into my rest: that every one of us being burned with that flaming sword, not burned up, when he is entered into that pleasure of paradise, may give thanks unto his Lord, saying, Thou hast brought us into a place of refreshment."

Hereunto we may adjoin that observation of Suarez the Jesuit:

"They who think that the souls of men are not judged at their death, nor do receive reward or punishment, but are reserved in hidden receptacles unto the general judgment, do consequently say, that as men do not receive their last reward or punishment, so neither are they also purged, until the general resurrection and judgment do come, from whence they might say with reasonable good consequence, that men are to be purged with the fire of conflagration."

And with as good consequence also may we add, that prayers were not to be made for the delivery of the souls of the dead from any purgatory pains, supposed to be suffered by them betwixt the time of their death, and their resurrection, which be the only prayers that are now in question.

"In the resurrection, when our works, like unto clusters of grapes, shall be cast into the probatory fire, as it were into the wine-press, every man's husbandry shall be made manifest,"

saith Gregorius Cerameus, sometime Archbishop of Tauromeniun in Sicilia. And

"No man as yet is entered either into the torments of hell, or into the kingdom of heaven, until the time of the resurrection of the body."

saith Anastasius Sinaita. Upon whom Gretser bestoweth this marginal annotation; that this is the

"error of certain of the ancient and latter Grecians."

And we find it to be held indeed both by some of the ancient, (as namely in Caius, who lived at Rome when Zephyrinus was Bishop there, and is accounted to be the author of the treatise falsely fathered upon Josephus, [peri tes tou pantos aitias], a large fragment whereof hath been lately published by Hoeschelius, in his notes upon Photius's Bibliotheca,) and by the latter Grecians, in whose name Marcus Eugenius, Archbishop of Ephesus, doth make this protestation against such of his countrymen, as yielded to the definition of the Florentine Council:

"We say, that neither the saints do receive the kingdom prepared for them, and those secret good things, neither the sinners do as yet fall into hell; but that either of them do remain in expectation of their proper lot; and that this appertaineth unto the time that is to come after the resurrection and the judgment. But these men, with the Latins, would have these to receive presently after death the things they have deserved; but unto those of the middle sort, that is, to such as die in penance, they assign a purgatory fire, which they feign to be distinct from that of hell, that thereby, say they, being purged in their souls after death, they likewise maybe received into the kingdom of heaven together with the righteous."

2. And, therefore, as the Latins in their prayers for the dead have respect for the delivery of souls out of purgatory, so the Grecians in theirs have relation to that other state, which is to determine with the resurrection. As in that prayer of their Euchologe for example:

"The body is buried in the earth, but the soul goeth in unknown places, waiting for the future resurrection of the dead; in which, O gracious Saviour, make bright thy servant, place him together with the saints, and refresh him in the bosom of Abraham:"

the condition of which "unknown places," they do thus further explicate in another prayer:Â--Forasmuch as by thy divine will thou hast appointed

"the soul to remove thither, where it received the first being, until the common resurrection, and the body to be resolved into that of which it was composed; therefore we beseech thee, the Father without beginning, and thine only begotten Son, and thy most holy and consubstantial and quickening Spirit, that thou wilt not permit thine own workmanship to be swallowed up in destruction, but that the body may be dissolved into that of which it was composed, and the soul placed in the quire of the righteous."

That "barbarous impostor," as Molanus rightly styleth him, who counterfeited a letter as written by St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, unto St. Augustine, touching the miracles of St. Jerome, taketh upon him to lay down the precise time of the first arising of this opinion amongst the Grecians in this manner:

"After the death of most glorious Jerome, a certain heresy or sect arose amongst the Grecians, and came to the Latins also, which went about with their wicked reasons to prove, that the souls of the blessed, until the day of the general judgment, wherein they were to be joined again unto their bodies, are deprived of the sight and knowledge of God, in which the whole blessedness of the saints doth consist; and that the souls of the damned, in like manner, until that day are tormented with no pains. Whose reason was this: that as the soul did merit or sin with the body, so with the body was it to receive rewards or pains. Those wicked sectaries also did maintain, that there was no place of purgatory, wherein the souls which had not done full penance for their sins in this world might be purged. Which pestilent sect getting head, so great sorrow fell upon us, that we were even weary of our life."

Then he telleth a wise tale, how St. Jerome, being at that time with God, for the confutation of this new-sprung heresy, raised up three men from the dead, after that he had first

"led their souls into paradise, purgatory, and hell, to the end they might make known unto all men the things that were done there;"

but had not the wit to consider, that St. Cyril himself had need to be raised up to make the fourth man among them. For how otherwise should he, who died thirty years before St. Jerome, as is known to every one that knoweth the history of those times, have heard and written the news which those three good fellows, that were raised by St. Jerome after his death, did relate concerning heaven, hell, and purgatory? Yet is it nothing so strange to me, I confess, that such idle dreams as these should be devised in the times of darkness, to delude the world withal, as that now in the broad daylight Binsfeldius and Suarez, and other Romish merchants, should adventure to bring forth such rotten stuff as this, with hope to gain any credit of antiquity thereby, unto the new-erected staple of Popish Purgatory.

The Dominican Friars, in a certain treatise written by them at Constantinople in the year 125, assign somewhat a lower beginning unto this error of the Grecians; affirming that they

"followed therein a certain inventor of this heresy, named Andrew, Archbishop sometime of Casarea in Cappadocia who said, that the souls did wait for their bodies, that together with them, with which they had committed good or evil, they might likewise receive the recompense of their deeds."

But that which Andrew saith herein he saith not out of his own heal, and therefore is wrongfully charged to be the first inventor of it; but out of the judgment of many godly Fathers that went before him.

"It hath been said," saith he, "by many of the saints, that all virtuous men," after this life, "do receive places fit for them; whence they may certainly make conjecture, on the glory that shall befall unto them."

Where Peltanus bestoweth such another marginal note upon him, as Gretser his fellow Jesuit did upon Anastasius:

"This opinion is now expressly condemned and rejected by the Church."

And yet doth Alphonso de Castro acknowledge that

"the patrons thereof were famous men, renowned as well for holiness as for knowledge;"

but telleth us withal, that;

"no man ought to marvel that such great men should fall into so pestilent an error, because as the Apostle St. James saith, he that offendeth not in word is a perfect man."

3. Another particular opinion, which we must sever from the general intention of the Church in her oblations and prayers for the dead, is that which is noted by Theophylact, upon the speech of our Saviour, Luke xii. 5., in which he wished us to observe, that he did not say,

"Fear him, who after he hath killed, casteth into hell," but, "hath power to cast" into hell. "For the sinners which die," saith he, "are not always cast into hell; but it remaineth in the power of God, to pardon them also. And this I say, for the oblations, and doles which are made for the dead, which do not a little avail even them that die in grievous sins. He doth not, therefore, generally, after he hath killed, cast into hell, but hath power to cast. Wherefore, let us not cease by alms, and intercessions, to appease him who hath power to cast, but doth not always use this power, but is able to pardon also."

Thus far Theophylact, whom our adversaries do blindly bring in for the countenancing of their use of praying, and offering for the dead; not considering, that the prayers, and oblations, which he would uphold, do reach even unto such as "die in grievous sins," (which the Romanists acknowledge to receive no relief at all, by any thing that they can do,) and are intended for the keeping of souls from being cast into hell, and not for fetching them out when they have been cast into Purgatory; a place that never came within the compass of Theophylact's belief. His testimony will fit a great deal better the prayer of St. Dunstan; who, as the tale goeth, having understood that the soul of King Edwin was to be carried into hell, never gave over praying, until he had gotten him rid of that danger, and transferred him unto the coast of penitent souls; where he well deserved, doubtless, to undergo that penance which Hugh, Bishop of Coventry and Chester, on his death-bed imposed upon himself; even to lie in the dungeon of Purgatory, without bail or mainprise, until the general jail delivery of the last day.

4. Another private conceit, entertained by divers, as well of the elder as of middle times, in their devotion for the dead, was, that an augmentation of glory might thereby be procured for the saints, and either a

total deliverance, or a diminution of torments at leastwise, obtained for the wicked.

"If the barbarians," saith St. Chrysostom, "do bury with their dead the things that belong unto them, it is much more reason that thou shouldst send with the deceased the things that are his; not that they may be made ashes as they were, but, that they may add greater glory unto him; and if he be departed hence, a sinner, that they may loose his sins; but if righteous, that an addition may be made to his reward and retribution."

Yea, in the very latter days, Ivo Carnotensis, writing unto Maud, Queen of England, concerning the prayers that were to be made for the King, her brother's soul, saith, that

"it doth not seem idle if we make intercessions for those who already enjoy rest, that their rest may be increased."

Whereupon, Pope Innocent the Third doth bring this for one of the answers wherewith he laboureth to salve the prayers which were used in the Church of Rome, that

"such or such an oblation might profit such or such a saint unto glory;" that "many repute it no indignity, that the glory of the saints should be augmented until the day of judgment; and, therefore, in the mean time, the Church may wish the increase of their glorification."

So likewise for the mitigation of the pains of them whose souls were doubted to be in torment, this form of prayer was of old used in the same Church, as in Grimoldus' Sacramentary may be seen, and retained in the Roman Missal itself, until in the late Reformation thereof it was removed.

"O Almighty and merciful God, incline, we beseech thee, thy holy ears unto our poor prayers, which we do humbly pour forth before the sight of thy Majesty, for the soul of thy servant X., that forasmuch as we are distrustful of the quality of his life, by the abundance of thy pity we may be comforted; and if his soul cannot obtain full pardon, yet at least in the midst of the torments themselves, which peradventure it suffereth, out of the abundance of thy compassion it may feel refreshment."

Which prayer whither it tendeth may appear partly by that which Prudentius writeth of the play-days, which he supposeth the souls in hell sometimes do obtain:

Sunt et spiritibus sæpe nocentibus

Pænarum celebres sub Styge feri, &c.

Marcent suppliciiis Tartara mitibus,

Exultatque sui carceris otio

Umbrarum populus, liber ab ignibus;

Nec fervent solito flumina sulphure--

partly by the doubtful conceits of God's merciful dealing with the wicked, in the world to come, which are found in others, but especially by these passages that we meet withal in the sermons of St. Chrysostom:

"This man hath spent his whole life in vain, neither hath lived one day to himself, but to voluptuousness, to luxury, to covetousness, to sin, to the devil. Tell me, therefore, shall we not mourn for him? shall we not

endeavour to pull him out of these dangers? For there be means, if we will, whereby his punishment may be made light unto him. If, then, we do make continual prayers for him, if we bestow alms, although he be unworthy, God will respect us." For "many have received benefit by the alms that have been given by others for them; and found thereby, although not a perfect, yet some consolation."

"This, therefore, is done, that although we ourselves be not virtuous, we may be careful to get virtuous companions, and friends, and wife, and son, as looking to reap some fruit even by them also; reaping, indeed, but little, yet reaping some fruit notwithstanding."

"Let us not, therefore, simply weep for the dead, but for such as are dead in their sins; these be worthy of lamentations and bewailings and tears. For what hope is there, tell me, for men to depart with their sins, where they cannot put off their sins? For as long as they were here, there was, peradventure, great expectation that they would be altered, that they would be bettered: but being gone unto hell, where there is no gaining any thing by repentance, (for in hell, saith he, who shall confess unto thee?) how are they not worthy of lamentations?"

"Let us, therefore, weep for such, let us succour them to our power, let us find out some help for them, little indeed, but yet such as may relieve them. How, and after what manner? both praying ourselves, and entreating others to make prayers for them, and giving continually unto the poor, for them; for this thing bringeth some consolation."

5. The like doctrine is delivered by Andrew, Archbishop of Crete, in his sermon of the Life of Man, and of the Dead; and by John Damascen, or whosoever else was author of the book ascribed unto him, concerning them that are departed in the faith; where three notable tales are told of the benefit that even infidels, and idolaters themselves, should receive by such prayers as these. One touching the soul of the Emperor Trajan, delivered from hell by the prayers of Pope Gregory; of the truth whereof lest any man should make question, he affirmeth very roundly that no less than

"the whole east and west will witness that this is true and uncontrollable."

And, indeed, in the east this fable seemeth first to have arisen, where it obtained such credit that the Grecians to this day do still use this form of prayer:

"As thou didst loose Trajan from punishment, by the earnest intercession of thy servant Gregory, the dialogue writer, hear us likewise who pray unto thee."

And, therefore, to them doth Hugo Etherianus thus appeal for justifying the truth of this narration:

"Do not, I pray you, say in your hearts, that this is false, or feigned. Enquire, if you please, of the Grecians; the whole Greek Church surely doth testify these things."

He might, if he had pleased, being an Italian himself, have enquired nearer home of the Romans, among whom this feat was reported to have been acted, rather than among the Grecians, who were strangers to the business. But the Romans, as we understand by Johannes Diaconus, in the Life of St. Gregory, found no such matter among their records; and when they had notice given them thereof out of the legends of the Church of England, (for from thence received they the news of this and some other such strange acts, reported to have been done by St. Gregory among themselves,) they were not very hasty to believe it; because they could hardly be persuaded that St. Gregory, who had taught them that

"infidels and wicked men, departed out of this life, were no more to be prayed for than the devil and his angels, which were appointed unto everlasting punishment,"

should in his practice be found to be so much different from his judgment.

The second tale toucheth upon the very times of the Apostles, wherein the Apostless Thecla is said to have prayed for Falconilla, (the daughter of TryphŃna, whom St. Paul saluteth, Rom. xvi. 12.)

"a Gentile and an idolatress, altogether profane, and a servitor of another God," to this effect: "O God, Son of the true God, grant unto TryphŃna, according to thy will, that her daughter may live with thee, time without end."

Or, as Basil, Bishop of Seleucia, doth express it:

"Grant unto thy servant TryphŃna, that her desire may be fulfilled concerning her daughter; her desire therein being this, that her soul may be numbered among the souls of those that have already believed in thee, and may enjoy the life and pleasure that is in paradise."

The

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