ART. III.—THE CATHOLICITY OF THE ROMAN CHURCH AS AFFECTED BY THE PROGRESS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY; SEEN IN THE HISTORY OF THE DOGMA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

As the Greek Church has claimed pre-eminence from its occupying the home, and wearing the costume of the Ancient Oriental Church, and as Mahommedanism has claimed authority on the ground of its power with the sword to win adherents and maintain civil authority, so from the first the Roman Church has staked its claim to the title of Catholic on the ground of its strictly maintained unity, like that of the old Roman Empire, and of its infallibility as the fruit of that unity. Dissolve the spell of his supposed supernatural prowess in arms, and the faith of the Moslem has no

ground to rest on; and show by the conversion, through modern missions, of a whole branch of her communion to "a better hope," that her ancient descent is like that of the children of Abraham, only the circumcision, which is outward, not in the inward man of the heart, and the Oriental Church has lost her fascinating charm. So, too, prove that the Roman Church is losing the bond of her Catholicity, and her constrained unity will be found like a rope of sand, held together only because it is in an iron tube; the outward pressure alone preventing the body from falling back into its original disintegration. The disorganizing indications, which in rapid succession have been lately seen in the French branch of the Roman Church, beginning with the day when the Abbe Laborde, about five years ago, published his letter in opposition to the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, to the open and boasted assassination of the late Archbishop of Paris by one of his own dissenting clergy—these indications are significant links in a long chain of history as to a dissent in doctrine existing in the very bosom of the Roman Church. A difference in views of polity, rather than faith; discussion as to expedients rather than matters of principle, is an outside issue, which external application of power has always repressed or caused to disappear. when matters of faith are discussed in the Roman Church, and the dogma of the Imperial See is shown to be contrary both to Scripture and to the Fathers, then the seeds of a Reformation are sown, whose germ may be long trampled, as it was in the days of John Huss; but whose "handful of corn" at length ripened, will bye and bye, when the hand of a Luther flings it broadcast, "shake like Lebanon." brief review of the progress of dissent upon a single point of doctrine long existing in the Roman Church, namely, the sanctity of Mary, the mother of Jesus, is now proposed; and the indications that this dissent has come to its ripeness in , the nineteenth century may suggest an instructive lesson.

In times comparatively late, during the thirteenth century, a pious monk of the Latin, or Roman Church, poured forth a plaintive Latin hymn, which has been admired universally for its beauty, and has been sung by thousands as