

# CHAPTER V.

## THE FALSEHOOD OF THE ALLEGATION, DEMONSTRATED FROM THE HISTORY OF BERENGER.

WHETHER the famous Berenger of Tours, who flourished in the middle of the eleventh century, ought to be viewed as an actually associated member of the Paulician or Albigensic Community, may perhaps, not unreasonably, be doubted. Still, however, there are particulars both in his doctrine and in his system, which may tend to establish the circumstance of his intimacy with the members of that Community, and thence inductively to shew that the Community in question could not have been tainted with Manichæism.

I. The Paulicians and the Albigenses always denied the occurrence of any material change in the consecrated eucharistic elements: and they were remarkable on account of the zeal with which they carried on their extensive missions, for the purpose of disseminating tenets, which they deemed to constitute the sincere Gospel, and from which they asserted the dominant Church both of the East and of the West to have foully apostatised.

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French and Italians and even English were infected with the poison of his heretical pravity.

But, if he and his disciples thus widely travelled, decrying the belief of any material change of the consecrated elements into the substantial body and blood of Christ, they must have attracted the notice and fallen into the company of the Albigensic Cathari, whether in France or in Italy, who, invariably and from the very first, held precisely the same sentiments. Whence it is obvious, that identity of opinion must have produced a deep feeling of interest, and must have led to much intimacy and converse and mutual confidence: so that, whether the Berengarians and the Cathari were or were not strictly one Community, they would still, from a consciousness of doctrinal harmony associated with an identity of missionary purpose, be readily inclined to give each other, as brethren, the right hand of fellowship\*.

\* Fuit eo tempore Berengarius Turonensis hæresiarcha, qui, panem et vinum in altari apposita, post consecrationem sacerdotis, verum et substantiale corpus Domini, sicut Sancta Ecclesia prædicat, esse denegabat. Jæmque scatebat omnis Gallia ejus doctrina, per egenos scholares, quos ipse cotidiano stipe sollicitabat, disseminata: unde, soliditati catholicæ timens, sanctæ memoriæ Leo Papa, Vercellis contra eum instituto concilio, tenebras nebulosi erroris, evangelicorum testimoniorum fulgure, depulit. Sed, cum, post obitum Leonis, virus hæreseos, diu in sinibus quorundam nebulonum confotum, iterum erumperet: Hildebrandus, cum esset Archidiaconus

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Now, like them, Berenger strenuously denied the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Under the influence of *fear*, indeed, he was led more than once to recant: but, so far as *conviction* is concerned, he appears never to have given up his opinion. *After every abjuration*, as Bertold of Constance happily expresses it, *he returned to the same heresy, even as a dog returns to his vomit\**. Yet, such was his fame for austerity and good works and humility and almsgiving, that *even without retraction*, as we learn from William of Malmesbury, some accounted him a saint†.

Holding, then, doctrinal views of this description, he employed, for the purpose of spreading his sentiments, poor scholars, whom he had himself converted, to act as missionaries in every direction: and so great was their success, that, as the popish writers lament, well nigh all the

\* Berengarius, novæ heresis de corpore Domini auctor, eo tempore deficiens, abiit in locum suum: qui, licet eandem hæresin sæpius in Synodo abjuravit, ad vomitum tamen suum, canino more, non expavit redire. Nam, et in Romana Synodo canonicè convictus, hæresin suam, in libro a se descriptam, combussit, et abjuratam anathematizavit: nec tamen postea dimisit. Bertold. in A. D. 1083. apud Usser. de Eccles. Success. c. vii. § 34.

† Ita respuit, ut, sine retractatione, a quibusdam sanctus habeatur. Gul. Malmes. de Gest. Anglor. Contin. lib. iii. c. 27. p. 342: sive, sub alio titulo, Gul. Malmes. de Gest. Reg. Anglor. lib. iii. fol. 63. Vide Nicol. Trivet. Chron. in A. D. 1136.

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II. Nor is this all. According, indeed, to the Bishop of Meaux, Berenger was heretical on the *alone* point of Transubstantiation: for, if we may credit that ingenious Prelate, leaving all the remaining fabric of Popery untouched and uninjured, he never advanced *any other* erroneous

Turonis, mox Papa, Romæ adunatis conciliis convictum, ad dogmatis sui anathema compulit.—Porro, licet Berengarius primum calorem juventutis, aliquantarum hæresium defensione, infamaverit, ævo austeriore ita respuit, ut, sine retractatione, a quibusdam sanctus habeatur, innumeris bonis maximèque humilitate et eleemosynis approbatus. Largarum possessionum, dispartiendo, dominus: non, abscondendo et adorando, famulus. Fœminæ venustatis adeo parvus, ut nullam conspectui suo pateretur admitti; ne formam videretur delibasse oculo, quam non præiebat animo. Non aspernari pauperem: non adulari divitem. Secundum naturam vivere: habens victum et vestitum, juxta Apostolum, his contentus esse. Gul. Malmes. de Gest. Anglor. Contin. lib. iii. c. 27. p. 342: sive lib. iii. fol. 63.

Clandestinis colloquiis, primum imperitorum animos in suam sententiam traxit: tum egenos quosque scholares, præsertim theologiæ studiosos, quotidiana stipe, cum opulentus esset, ita sollicitavit, ut, eorum opera, omnis penè Gallia ac vicinæ gentes eo malo quam citissimè laborarent. Alan. de Euchar. lib. i. c. 21. apud Usser. de Eccles. Success. c. vii. § 57.

Eodem tempore, Berengarius Turonensis, in hereticam prolapsus pravitatem, omnes Gallos, Italos, et Anglos, suis jam penè corruerat pravitatibus. Matt. Westmonast. Hist. Roffens. in A. D. 1087. apud Usser. Ibid.

Imprimis autem afficiebatur omnis Gallia ejus doctrina: siquidem, per egenos scholares, quos quotidianis stipendiis sustentabat, eandem passim divulgabat. Matt. Paris. Hist. Mag. ad A. D. 1087. apud Usser. Ibid.



opinions\*. But it may be doubted, whether this is quite so certain, as Bossuet would have us believe. Berenger, says Reginald, was condemned, because he embraced that Faith, which we of the Reformed Churches hold to be purely and perfectly evangelical: rejecting, on the one hand, the doctrine of Transubstantiation; and maintaining, on the other hand, the Roman Church to be a Church of Malignants, the Council of Vanity, and the See of Satan †.

To this statement of a modern writer, the Bishop might, with some shew of reason, have demurred: but he could scarcely, with any measure of decorum, have slighted the intelligible hint of William of Malmesbury that a denial of Transubstantiation was not the sole heresy of Berenger, when that historian, speaking in the plural form, tells us, that, by the defence of some

\* Berenger n'attaqua jamais que la présence réelle: et laissa tout le reste en son entier. Boss. Hist. des Variat. livr. xi. § 1.

† Damatus est Berengarius eam ob fidem, quam nos, ut purè et perfectè evangelicam, sectamur. Quia, nimirum, realem corporis et sanguinis Christi præsentiam ex Eucharistia auferebat: tum etiam quia Ecclesiam Romanam, Ecclesiam Malignantium, Concilium Vanitatis, et Sedem Satana, vocabat: et Leonem nonum, communi hominum opinione Pontificem bonum, immo sanctitatem et miraculis (ut ferunt) perinsignem, Pontificem et Pulpificem dictitabat, cum æc appellatione Pontificis aut Episcopi dignatus. Gul. Reginald. Calvino-Turcism. lib. xii. c. 5. apud Usser. de Eccles. Success. c. vii. § 24.

mony, respecting which the Bishop is equally silent: the undeniable testimony, to wit, of Berenger himself, as adduced and commented upon by his stout opponent Lanfranc. At least, if the words be not precisely the identical words of Berenger, the opinion, which they convey, is ascribed by Lanfranc to Berenger and his followers.

The Gospel, so runs the imputed heresy, was originally preached to all nations. Then the world believed: and the Church was founded. For a season, it increased and fructified: but, through the unskillfulness of men whose intelligence was evil, it afterward erred and perished. Such was the fate of the great body of the Church: and, henceforth, in us alone and in those who follow us, the Holy Church of Christ has remained upon earth\*.

How such a sweeping denunciation as this can

Missam, eo modo quo celebratur hodie, non esse vel a Jesu Christo vel ab Apostolis ejus institutam. Vignier. Hist. Eccles. in A. D. 1207. apud Usser. de Eccles. Success. c. x. § 22.

Item sunt (doctores Romanæ Ecclesiæ) divites et avari, quibus dicitur: *Vae vobis divitibus, qui habetis hic consolationem vestram.* Nos vero, habentes victum et vestes quibus possumus tegi, his contenti sumus. Reiner. de hæret. c. viii. p. 307.

\* Prædicatum est evangelium in omnibus gentibus. Credidit mundus: facta est Ecclesia. Crevit, fructificavit: sed, imperitia male intelligentium, postea erravit et periit. In nobis solis, et in iis qui nos sequuntur, sancta in terris Ecclesia remansit. Lanfranc. Epist. iii. ad Alex. II. apud Baron. Annal. in A. D. 1072.

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HERESIES, he had rendered the first heat of his youth infamous\*. At any rate, whether Bossuet had or had not consulted the continuator of Bede, he says nothing of an intimation, which, without indeed descending to particulars, ascribes, nevertheless, to the perverse Archdeacon of Angers, the contumacious defence of more heresies than one. These heresies, I feel persuaded, were no other than the general Scheme of Doctrine professed by the Cathari: for they, too, always declared the Church of Rome to be a Church of Malignants; and they, too, always inculcated that same apostolical poverty, which, according to William of Malmesbury, was assumed by Berenger †.

III. I may add, that there is yet another testi-

\* Primum calorem juventutis, aliquantulum hæresium defensione, infamaverit. Gul. Malmes. de Gest. Anglor. Cont. lib. iii. c. 27. p. 342: sive lib. iii. fol. 63.

† Die Lunæ, Octob. secundo, A. D. 1207, in oppido Montis Regalis prope Carcassonem in Comitatu Tolosano, habitum est memorabile colloquium, inter Episcopum Exovensem Hispanum qui a Papa missus fuerat cum S. Dominico et aliis pluribus, et Arnaldum Hot Pastorem Albigenium appellatum, qui ad hæc tria expressè asserebat. Primo: Romanam Ecclesiam non esse Christi Sponsam, nec sanctam Ecclesiam; sed turbulentam, Satanæ doctrina institutam; adeoque Babylonem esse illam de qua in Apocalypsi loquitur B. Joannes, matrem fornicationum et abominationum, sanguine sanctorum, et martyrum Jesu Christi inebriatam. Secundo: Politiam illius non esse bonam neque sanctam, neque a Jesu Christo stabilitam. Tertio:

be construed to mean only, that Berenger left the whole fabric entire (as the Bishop speaks), save and except the dogma of Transubstantiation, I have not skill sufficient to explain. At all events, what may well shew the close connection, of the Berengarians and the Cathari, the latter, on this point, held precisely the same opinion as the former. The Church of Rome, says Reinerius, they style a Harlot. Hence they oppose the Pope and all the Catholic Bishops and Priests and Clerks: declaring, that they themselves are the Church of God, and that the others are but the seducers of the world\*.

IV. In point, then, of fact, the circumstance, that both Berenger and his numerous missionaries and still more numerous proselytes must have familiarly mingled and doctrinally conversed with the Cathari both of France and of Italy, is, from the very necessity of the case, plainly, I think, indisputable. Now the sentiments of Berenger were too well known, for his enemies to hazard against him any charge of Manichæism. Hence it is a reasonable presumption, that, mixing with the Cathari as he and his missionaries must inevitably have done, they found among them just as little of Manichæism as could be detected among themselves.

\* Ecclesiam Romanam dicunt Meretricem. Unde, Domino Papæ, et omnibus Episcopis, Sacerdotibus, et Clericis, catholicis, contradicunt: dicentes; *Se Ecclesiam Dei, et illos mundi seductores.* Reiner. de hæret. c. vi. p. 306.