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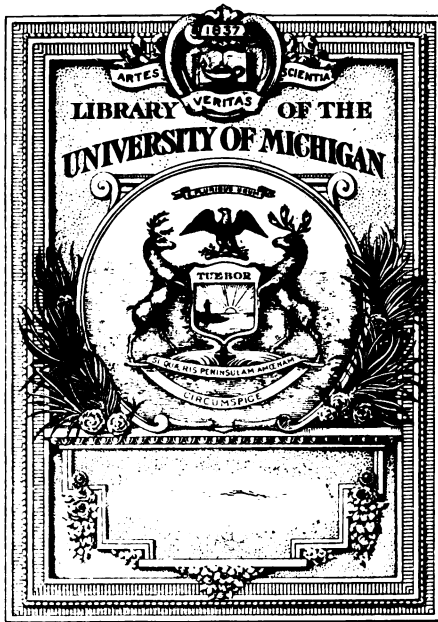
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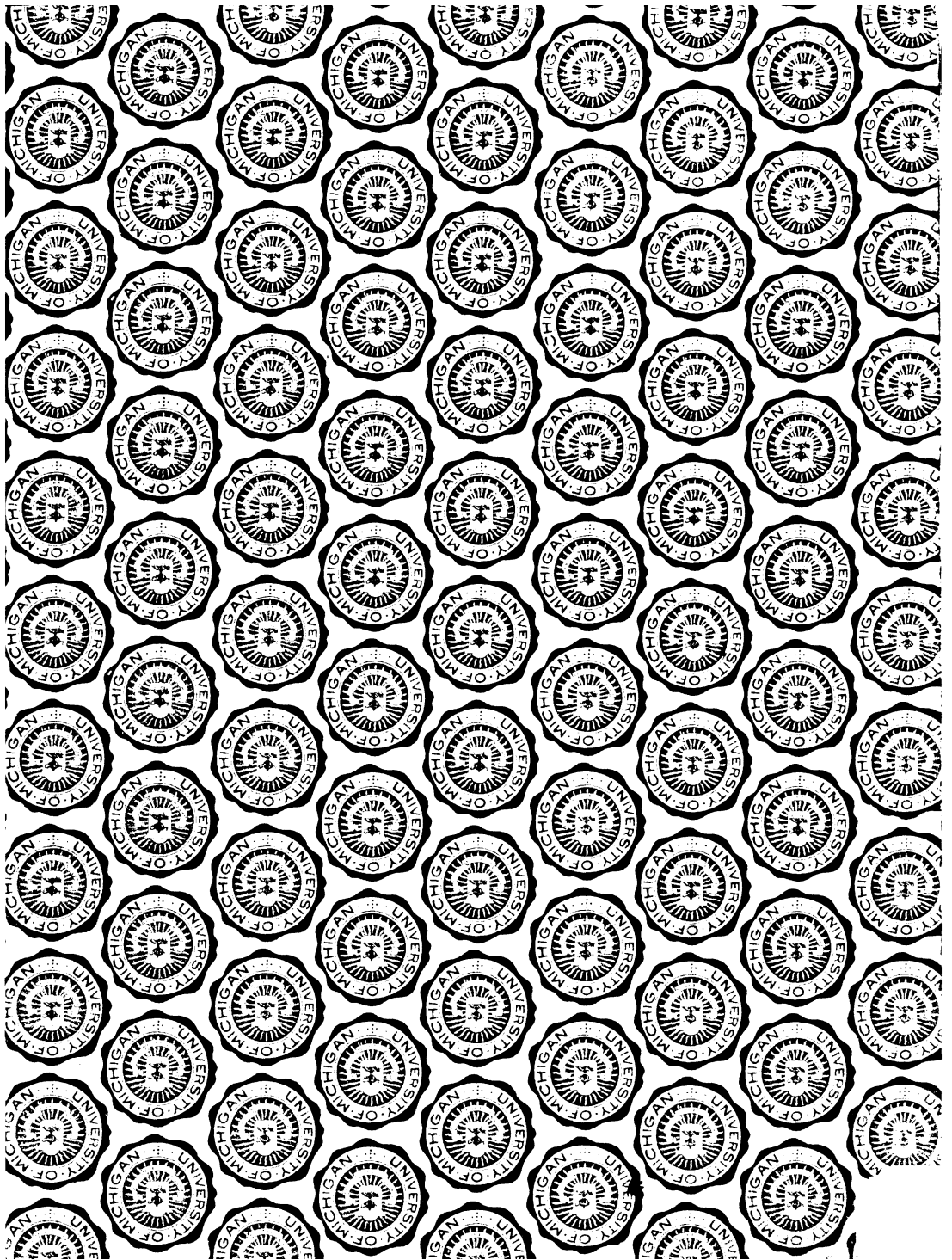
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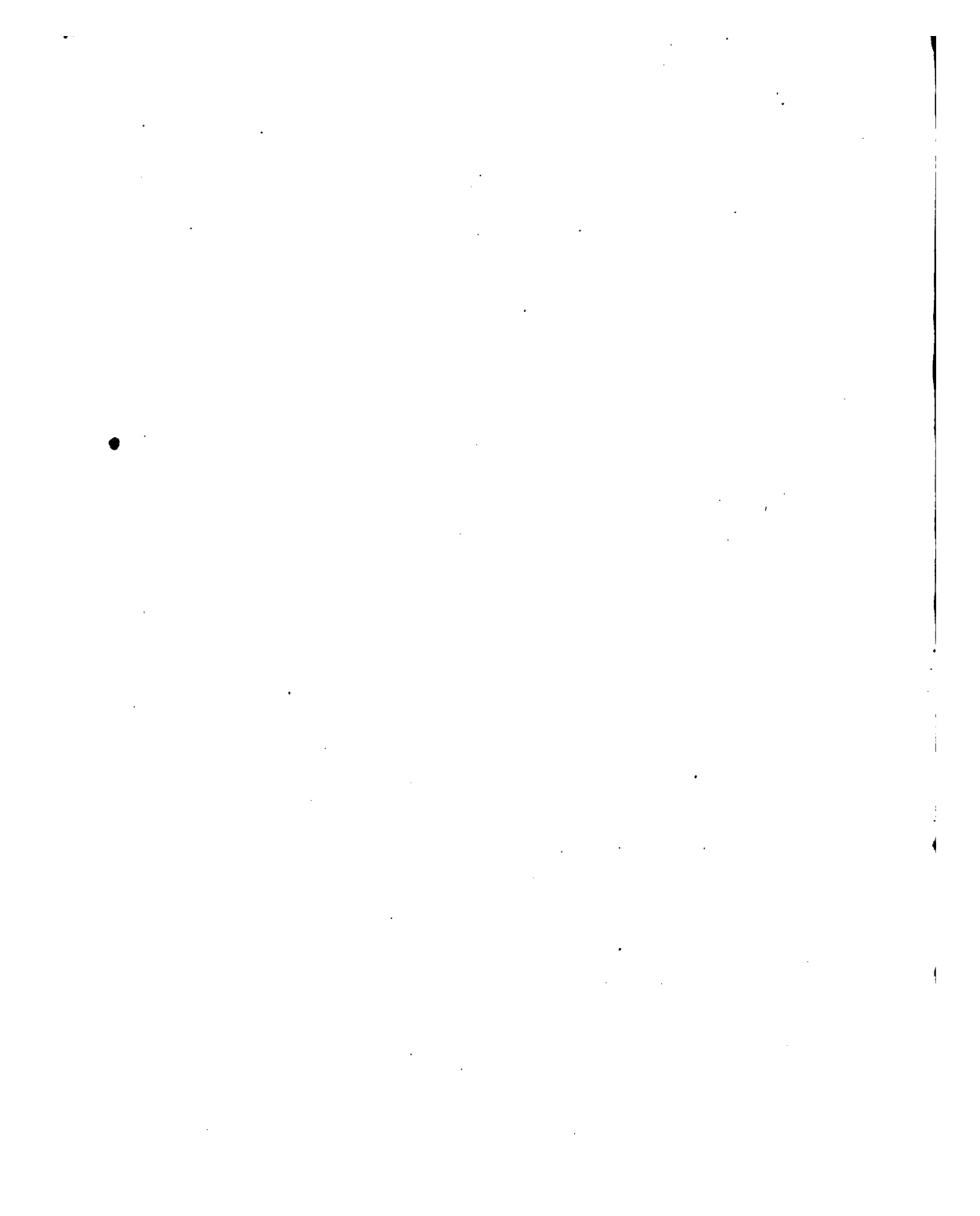
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By Tho Tenison

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T29

DISCOURSE
Concerning a
GUIDE
IN
Matters of Faith;

With respect, especially, to the
ROMISH pretence of the
necessity of such a one as is in-
fallible.

L O N D O N,

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26.

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35.

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35, 36.

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36,

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A
DISCOURSE
Concerning a
GUIDE
IN
Matters of Faith.

THE design of this Discourse is the Resolution of the following *Query*.

“ Whether a Man who liveth where Christianity is *The Question*.
“ profess'd, and refuseth to submit his Judgment to the
“ Infallibility of any Guide on Earth, and particularly
“ to the Church or Bishop of *Rome*, hath, notwith-
“ standing that refusal, sufficient means still left him
“ whereby he may arrive at certainty in those Doctrines
B “ which

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“ which are generally necessary to the Salvation of
“ a Christian Man.

*The moment of
this Question.*

Satisfaction in this Inquiry is of great Moment. For it relateth to our great end, and to the way which leads to it. And it nearly concerneth both the *Romanists* and the *Reformed*. If there be not such a *Guide*, the Estate of the *Romanists* is extremely dangerous. For then the Blind take the Blind for their unerring Leaders; and being once misled, they wander on without correcting their Error, having taken up this first as their fixed Principle, that their *Guide* cannot mistake the way. On the other hand, If God hath set up in his Church a Light so very clear and steady as is pretended; the *Reformed* are guilty of great presumption, and expose themselves to great uncertainty, by shutting their Eyes against it.

*The Temptations to believe
the Affirmative part of this
Question.*

Now, there lyes before Men a double Temptation to a belief of the being of such a Guide in the Christian Church; *Sloth* and Vicious *Humility* of Mind. *Sloth* inclineth Men rather to take up in an Implicit Faith, than to give themselves the trouble of a strict Examination of things. For there is less Pain in Credulity, then in bending of the Head by long and strict Attention and severe Study.

Also there is a Shew of Humility, in the deference which our understandings pay unto Authority; especially to that which pretends to be, under Christ, Supreme on Earth. Although, in the paying of it without good reason first understood, Men are not *Humble* but *Slavish*.

*The true Resolution of the
Query.*

But these Temptations prevail not upon honest and considerate Minds, which inquire, without prejudice, after Truth, and submit to the Powerful Evidence

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dence of it. Such will resolve the Question in the Affirmative; and they may reasonably so do by considering these Propositions which I shall treat of in their order.

First, The Christian Church never yet wanted, nor shall it ever want, either the Doctrines of necessary Faith, or the Belief and Profession of them.

Secondly, Wheresoever God requireth the Belief of them, he giveth means sufficient for Information and unerring Assent.

Thirdly, Whatsoever those means are, every Man's Personal reason giveth to the Mind that last Weight which turneth Deliberation into Faith.

Fourthly, The means which God hath given us towards necessary Faith and the certainty of it, is not the Authority of any Infallible Guide on Earth.

Yet, *Fifthly,* All Ecclesiastical Guidance is not to be rejected, in our pursuance of the Doctrines of Christian Faith, in the finding out or stating of which it is a very considerable help.

Sixthly, By the help of it, and Principally as it offers to us the Holy Scriptures in the Quality of the Rule of Faith, we have means sufficient to lead us to certainty in that Belief which is necessary to Life Eternal.

First, The Acknowledgment and Profession of the necessary Doctrines of the Christian Faith, are annexed inseparably to the Christian Church. *Prop. I.*

There is but *one Faith*; and according to the saying of *Leo the great* *, *If it be not one, it is not at all*: For it cannot be contrary to it self. And though it be but *one*, yet Men of differing *CreeDs* pretend to it, as the

* *Nisi una est Fides, non est.*
L.M.Ser. 23.

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Merchants of *Relicks* in the Church of Rome shew; in several places, the *one seamless Coat* of Christ †.

† See Ferrand.
l. 1. c. 1. Sect. 4.
disquis. Relig.

This one Faith never did, nor ever shall in all places fail.

The Apostles were themselves without error both in their own assent to the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith, and in the delivery of them.

They heard the Oracles of Christ from his own mouth, and they were Witnesses of his Resurrection; And they spake * what they *had seen* and *heard*. And they gave to the World Assurance of the Truth, by the miraculous signs of their Apostolical Office. And if they had not had such Assurance themselves, and could not have given proof to others of their mission, there would have been a defect in the first promulgation of the Gospel; and such as could not afterwards have been amended. That which, at first, had been delivered with uncertainty, would, with greater uncertainty, have been conveyed down to after Ages; and Men, who, in process of time, graft error upon certain Truth, would much more have grafted error upon uncertain Opinion.

Ever since the Apostles times there has been True Faith, and the Profession of it in the Catholick Church: And it will be so till Faith shall expire, and Men shall see him on whom they before believ'd. For a Church cannot subsist without the Fundamentals of Christianity. And Christ hath Sealed this Truth with his promise, that there shall be a Church as long as this World continues. * I mean by a Church a visible Society of Christians both Ministers and People; for publick Worship on Earth cannot be invisible.

* S. Mat. 28.
20.

But the True Faith and the Profession of it is not fixed to any place, or to any succession of Men in it.
God's

God's Providence has written the contrary in the very Ashes of the *Seven Churches* of the lesser, *Asia*.

Neither is any particular Church, though so far infallible in Fundamentals as to be preserved from actual error, an infallible Rule to all other Christians. If they follow the Doctrine of it, they err not, because it is true; but if they follow that Church as an unerring Guide or Canon, they mistake in the Rule and Motive of their Faith. For that particular Church which Teacheth Truth, might possibly have err'd; and the Church which errs, might have shined with the True Light. But the whole Church cannot so err in any Age; for then the very being of a Church would cease.

Neither doth it, hence, follow, that the Faith of the *Roman Church*, when *Luther* arose, was the only true and certain Doctrine. For that Church was not then the only visible Church on Earth. The *Greek Church* (for instance sake) was than more visible than now it is, and more Orthodox: The Rich Papacy having much prevailed upon the necessities of it by Arguments guided with Interest. That Church did not err in Fundamental Points; the Article of the *Procession of the Holy Ghost* from the Father by the Son, which the *Romans* accuse of Heresy, being easily acquitted of it, if Men, agreeing in the sense, forbear contention about the Phrases. Besides; if our Fore-Fathers under the Papacy embraced the True Faith, we have it still; the Faith not being removed, but the *Corruption*. Their Question therefore, [*Where was your Religion before Luther?*] is not more pertinent amongst Disputers than this is amongst Husbandmen, [*Where was the Corn before it was weeded?*]

We have seen that necessary Faith is perpetual, and *Prop. I. I.*
it

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it is as manifest that *wheresoever God requireth the belief of it, he vouchsafeth sufficient means for information; and unerring Assent.*

Of all he does not require this belief, for to all the Gospel is not preached, and where it is preached there are Infants, and Persons of Age so distempered in Mind, as to remain unavoidably Children in understanding.

And though the same Sum of Doctrines is generally necessary to Salvation, yet the Creed of all Men is not of equal length, seeing they have unequal capacities.

But wheresoever there is a particular Society of Men, who call themselves a Church, yet err actually in the necessary Articles of the Faith, it is certain they were not forced into that error for want of external means. For the Just Judge of the World would never have required Unity in the Faith upon pain of his Eternal displeasure, if he had not given to Men Power sufficient for such Unity. No Tyrant on Earth has been guilty of such undisguised injustice as that is, which maketh a Law for the punishment of the Blind because they miss their way. The Articles of Christian Religion come not to the Mind by natural reason but by Faith; and Faith comes by hearing or reading; and where these means are not offered, a Man is rather an Ignorant Person than an Unbeliever. Wherefore our Saviour told the perverse Jews, * that if the *Messiah* had never been reveal'd to them, they had not been answerable for the Sin of Infidelity: But that, since he was come to them, and by them despised, their Infidelity was blackned with great aggravation.

* Job. 15. 22.
24.

Prop. III. The means, then, are sufficient wheresoever the end is absolutely required; but whatsoever those means are, *the Act of Assent is to be ultimately resolved into each Mans Personal reason.* For no Man can believe

or

or assent but upon some ground or motive which appears credible to him. He could not believe unless he had some reason or other why he believed. *When all is done* (said Mr. Thorndike*) *Men must and will be Judges for themselves.* I do not quote the saying because it is extraordinary, but because that Learned Man said it who was careful to pay to Authority its minutest dues. If a Man believes upon Authority, he hath a further reason for the believing of it. He is not willing to take Pains in examining that which is proposed to him; or he thinks himself of less Ability in understanding than those from whom he borrows his Light. If he desireth another to judge for him, his choice is determined by the Opinion he hath conceived of him. Every Man has his reason, though it be a weak one, and such as cannot justify it self or him. Something at last turns the Ballance, though it be but a Feather.

*To the Reader of the Dis. of Govern. of Church's.

This the *Romanists* own as well as the Reformed, till it toucheth them in the case of a new Convert. To induce a Man of another particular Church to embrace their Communion, they submit these weighty points to his private Judgment: What is a True Church, and which are the marks of it? What is the *Roman Church*? And whether the marks of the True Church do only belong unto the *Roman*? What Men or what Books speak the sense of that Church? They tell us * *“That the Light of a Mans own reason first serves*
“him so far as to the discovery of a Guide; Also that,
“in this discovery, the Divine Providence hath left it so
“clear and evident, that a sincere and unbyassed quest
“cannot miscarry. But when once this Guide is found
out, the Man is afterwards, “for all other things that
“are prescribed by this Guide, to subject and resign his

* R. H. Guide in Controv. in Pref. p. 3.

“ reason.

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“reason. As if it were not as difficult to judge of such a Guide, as of his direction.

It seems, the *Roman Church* is like a *Cave*, into which a *Man* has *Light enough to enter*; but when once he is entred, he is in *thick Darkness*.

Prop. IV. But, how subservient soever our reason may be to our Faith; *The means which God hath given us towards the certain attaining of it, is not the Authority of any infallible Guide on Earth.*

This will not be disbelieved by those who weigh well the following considerations.

Confid. I. First, God did not set up such a constant, infallible Guide among the *Jews*; though, at first, he gave Assurance to them by *Miracle*, that *Moses* had received his Commission from him, and had brought to them the *Tables* which he had *Written*, for their direction, with his own finger.

Some of the *Sanedrim* were of the Sect of the *Saducees*, who erred in the *Fundamental point of a future State*. Most of them erred in the *Quality of the Messiah*, not considering their *Scriptures* so much as their *Traditions*. And of the errors of the *Levitical Priesthood* there is, in the *Old Testament*, * frequent mention, and great complaint. And the Prophet *Malachy*, † as soon as he had said, *The Priests lips shall preserve Knowledge*, he adds this reproof, *but ye are departed out of the way.*

It is true, the *Israelites* were, by God, directed in difficult cases to an *Assembly of Judges* *. But they were not *Judges of controversies in Doctrine*, but in *Property*. To their sentence the *People* were to submit, as to an expedient for *Peace*; though *Judgment* might be perverted, or mistaken.

* *Isai.* 56. 10.
Jer. 2. 8.
Ex. 7. 26.
C. 22. 26.
† *Mal.* 2. 7. 8.

* *Deut.* 17. 8.
to 12.

See *Levit.* 4. 13.

It must be, also, confessed that God spake to them by the *Oracle of Urim*, and that the voice of it was infallible. But its answers concerned not the necessary Rudiments of the *Mosaick Law*, but emergencies in their civil affairs; those especially of Peace and War.

But if we admit that there was under *Judaism* a living infallible Guide; it does not, thence, follow, that it must be so under Christianity. For their small precinct (the People of which were thrice in a year to come up to the Temple) was much more capable of such a judge than the Christian Church, which is as wide as the World. Also the new Revelation is more clear and distinct than the old one was, and stands not in such need of an Interpreter.

Secondly, God hath, no where, *promised Christians* *Confid. II.* such a judge: He hath no where said that he hath given such a one to the Christian Church. And seeing such a one cannot be had without Gods supernatural assistance, the most knowing amongst Men being subject both to Error and to Fallhood; it is great arrogance, whilst the Scripture is silent, to say he is in being. And to affirm that if there were not such a Guide, God would be wanting in means sufficient for the maintenance of Peace and Truth, is presumptuously to obtrude the schemes of Mans fancy upon Gods Wisdom. He can Govern his Church without our methods.

Now, God hath no where promised such a judge to *Christian Men*; though he hath promised help on Earth, and assistance from Heaven to Men diligent and sincere in their inquiries after Truths which are necessary for them.

There are two places of *Scripture*, which are by some taken for *Promises* of such a nature, though they were not, by the Divine Wisdom, so intended.

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Of these, the *First* is that which was spoken by
* S. Mat. 16. 18. Christ unto St. Peter. * *The Gates of Hell shall not pre-
vail against (the Church.)* Which Promise concern-
eth the Church in general, and the necessary Faith of
it, and not any particular persons, or places, or suc-
cessions of persons in them.

And Christ doth here assure us, that *the Gates of
the Grave* shall not swallow up the Church ; that it
shall not enter in at them ; *that it shall not die or per-
ish.* But he doth not say he will preserve it by the
means of any Earthly Infallible Guide. He can, by
other ways, continue it till time it self shall fail.

The *other* place of *Scripture* is, the promise of Christ
a little while before his Ascension into the Heavens.

† S. Mat. 28. 20. † *Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the
World : As long as this Age of the Messiah shall last,
and that is the last time or Age.* This promise is, in-
deed, made to the Apostles, and to their successors
also. But it is a promise of general assistance ; and it
is made upon condition that they go forth and make
Disciples of all Men of all Nations, and Baptize them,
and give them further instruction in the things
which Christ gave in charge to them. And some of
the successors of the Apostles have not performed these
conditions ; and the Governour of the Church of *Sardis*
Revel. 3: 1, 2, 3. had not held fast what he had received and heard.

As God hath not *promised* an unerring Guide, so
neither hath he *said* he hath set up such an one in any
Church on Earth.

He hath not said it, either *directly*, or by *conse-
quence.*

The *places* which are supposed *directly* to affirm this,
are two, and both mistaken.

One of them is that of Christ to his Disciples, after
he had given Commission to them to preach the Gos-
pel,

Of a Guide in Matters of Faith. I I

pel. * *He that heareth you, heareth me ; me the in-* * S. Luke 10.
fallible way and the Truth. † 16.

This Speech, if it be extended to all Ministers, it makes them all infallible Guides. And it is certain they are so, as long as they deliver to the People what they received from Christ. But the words are especially directed to the seventy Disciples who were taught to preach a plain Fundamental Truth, that the *Kingdom of God was come nigh to the Jews.* † And these Dis- † S. Luke 10.
ciples were able to give to the *Jews* a demonstration of † 9.
the Truth of that Doctrine which they taught, by miraculous signs : *By healing the Sick, * and doing, among * Ver. 12
them, mighty works.*

Another place, used as an expresse Testimony is that † Tim. 3. 15.
in the first to *Timothy* to whom *St. Paul* saith, that the Church is the *Pillar and Ground of Truth.* But this place also is misapplied. It seemeth to be spoken of that Church of *Ephesus* in which *St. Paul* advised *Timothy* to behave himself with singular care : Which place hath so far failed that the lofty Building called *St. John's Church*, † is now become a *Turkish Mosch.* But if it † Ryc. of the
were spoken in a general sense, it would amount only *Greek Ch.*
to this meaning : A Christian Church is like a Pillar † P. 44.
sustained by a *Pedestal* on which a writing is so fixed, that all who pass by may see it. It is (as *Jerusalem* once was to the *Heathen-World*) a *City on a Hill* : It is a visible Society which giveth notice to *Jews* and *Gentiles* of Christianity, and is instrumental to awaken their observation, and by their sense to prepare the way to their belief. For, this advertisement being so publickly given to them, they have fair occasion of examining the grounds of Christian Truth, which when they find, they will be induced to build upon them. In this sense likewise, though not in this alone, Aposto-

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lical Men were called *Lights* and *Pillars*. In the Book
 * *Revel.* 3. 12. of the *Revelation* * this promise is made to him who
 persevereth in his Christianity, notwithstanding the
 cross which it brings upon him. " Him will I make
 " a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and I will write
 " my name upon him, and the name of his God, and
 " the name of the City of his God which is new Je-
 " rusalem [or the Christian Church.]

X † *In* 1 *Cor.* 9. 2.
 — τὸ φῶς τῆς
 ἐκκλησίας, ὁ
 θεμέλιος λίθος
 τῆς
 πίστεως, ὁ κύ-
 λινδρος, &c.

And *S. Chrysoftom* † gives *S. Paul* the Titles of the
Light of the Churches, the *Foundation of the Faith*,
 the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*. The Governours of
 the Church do ministerially exhibit Christian Truth;
 they do not by mere Authority impose it.

Among the *Places* which are said to prove, by
 good consequence, that there is a Living Guide of Faith,
 that in the eighteenth of *St. Matthews* Gospel * is the
 * *S. Mat.* 18.
 15, 16. 17. *Principal*.

There our Saviour, requireth his Followers, if their
 Brethren persisted in their offences, to *tell it to the*
Church, and to esteem them no longer Members of their
 Society, if they despised the Sentence of it. From whence
 they conclude with strange Inadvertence, that such a
 Decree is therefore infallible.

See *Deut.* 17. 6. But our Lord speaks of their Brothers *Trespases* a-
 gainst them, and not of his *Heresie*: And of the Dis-
 cipline, and not of the Doctrine, either of the *Syna-*
gogue or the *Church*. In which case if we submit, even
 where there is error in the Sentence, for Peace sake,
 and because we are come to the last Appeal; we wor-
 thily sacrifice private Good to publick Order. And
 such Submission is safe in point of property, though
 not in point of Doctrine; for we may, without Sin,
 depart from our property, but not from our Faith.

Now, much of this that has been said in order to
 the explication of the foregoing places, might have
 been

been well omitted, if I had designed this little Discourse for the use only of such *Romanists* as had been conversant with the writings of the Fathers. For then I should have needed only to have cited those Ancients, and shewed that their sense of these several places was plainly different from the modern interpretations of the Church Men of *Rome*. And, by this way of arguing, they are self-condemned. For they fall according to their own Rule of expounding Scripture by the unanimous consent of the Primitive Fathers, who with one voice, speak another sense. Those who doubt of this may receive satisfaction from the Learned Letters of *Monsieur Launoy*. *

* *Launoy* in Epist. ad Carol. magistrum ad Jacob. Bevil. ad Guil. Voell. ad Raim. Formensium in 5. par. Epist.

If God had promised an infallible Guide, or told us he had given one to his Church, he would, doubtless, have added some directions for the finding of him. For, to say in general, you shall have a Star which will always Guide you without all dangerous error; and not to inform us in what part of the Firmament it is to be seen, is to amuse rather than to promise.

Confid. III.

Now, God hath no where given us such direction. He hath no where pointed us to this *Church*, or that *Council*; to this *Person*, or that *Local* succession of Men. He hath not said the Guide is at *Antioch*, or *Hierusalem*; at *Nice*, or *Constantinople*; at *Rome* or *Avignon*.

You will say, he hath directed us to *St. Peter*. I answer; no more than to the rest of the Apostles, to whom he gave equal power in their Ordination; All of whom he made equally Shepherds of the Flock; † to all of whom he gave equal Commission to make Profelytes of all Nations. * And in this sense *St. Chrysostom* † affirmed concerning *St. Paul* that the whole World [or the World of the *Roman Empire*] was his *Diocese*. You will reply, that he promised, on him particularly

* *Joh.* 20. 21.
† *S. Mat.* 9. 36.
C. 10. 6.
2. *Pet.* 5. 2.
* *S. Mat.* 28.
16, 17, 18, 19.
† *S. Chryf.* in
1 *Cor.* 9. 2.
Τὸν οὐρανὸν
καὶ τὴν γῆν
καὶ τὰ ἕθνη
καὶ τὰ ἄσπερα
† *St.*

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† See R. H. Guide in Controv. Dif. 1. p. 5. and Socin. in Loc.

* S. Hil. de Trin. l. 6. dixit Petrus, Tu es filius Dei, &c. super hanc igitur Confessionis Petram Ecclesie edificatio est v. Launoy in Epist. ad Voellum.

† Revel. 21. 14. Ephes. 2. 20.

* Act. 2. 14, 41, 47.

I.V. Confid.

particularly, upon this Rock, or Stone, this *Képha* (a Syriac Word of the Masculine Gender †) *this Peter*; to build his Church. I answer, the Ancients took the Word as Feminine, * and understood it rather of his *Confession* than of his *Person*. If it was spoken of his Person, it was spoken by way of Emphasis, not Exclusion; for there were twelve Foundations † of these he might be called the first, having first preached the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles, * the Eleven standing up with him, and he speaking as the Mouth of the Apostolical Colledge.

We cannot, by the strictest enumeration, find out any living infallible Guide existing in any Age after *St. Peter* in the Christian Church.

1. This Guide could not be the Church diffusive of the first Ages. For the suffrages of every Christian were never gathered. And if we will have their sense, they must rise from the dead and give it us.

2. This Guide cannot be the Faith (as such) of all the Governours of all the Primitive Churches. The sum of it was never collected. There were anciently general *Creeds*, but such as especially related to the *Hereses* then on foot; and who can affirm, upon grounds of certainty, that each Bishop in the World consented to each Article, or to each so expressed?

3. This Guide is not a *Council* perfectly free and universal. For a Guide which cannot be had, is none. If such a *Council* could assemble, it would not err in the necessaries of Faith. For there cannot be a regular Flock without a Shepherd; and if all the Spiritual Shepherds in the World should at once, and by consent, go so much astray; the whole Flock of the Church Catholick would be scattered. And that would contradict the promise of Christ the Supreme; Faithful,

ful, Infallible Pastor. But there never was yet an universal Council properly so called: Neither can we suppose the probability of it but by supposing the being of one Temporal Christian Monarch of the World who might call, or suffer, it. In the Councils called *General*, if we speak comparatively, there were not many *Southern* or *Western Bishops* present at them. It was thus, at that first Oecumenical Council, the Council of *Nice*; though, in one sacred place (as *Eusebius* † Euseb. l. 3. vit. Const. c. 7. 8. p. 487. hath noted) there were assembled, *Syrians* and *Cilicians*, *Phœnicians*, and *Arabians*; *Palæstinians* *Egyptians*, *Thebæans*, *Libyans*, *Mesopotamians*; a *Persian*, a *Scythian* Socrat. E. H. l. c. 3. p. 19. Bishop; and many others from other Countries. But there was but one Bishop for *Africa*, one for *Spain*, one for *Gaul*; two Priests as Deputies of the infirm and Aged Bishop of *Rome*. Whilst (for Instance sake) there were seventeen Bishops for the small Province of *Isauria*; yet such Councils are very useful; such we reverence; but God did not set them up as the only * 7. Concil. Labb. Tom. 2. p. 50. &c. and the infallible Guides of Faith. If these were such Guides, what Guided the Church which was before them? By what rule was *Ebion* judged before the Council of *Nice*? How can we be infallibly Guided by them in Controversies of Faith not determined by them; nay not brought before them; nay scarce moved till these latter days? Such (for the purpose) are the Controversies about the vertue of the *Sacrifice* of Christ, and of *Justification* by the Faith of mere *recumbence* upon his Merits. Or how shall a private Man who errs in the Faith, be deliver'd from his Heresy, seeing he may die some years ere a Council can assemble, or, being assembled, can form its decrees. *Arius* vented his Heresy about ten years before the Council of *Nice* was called for the suppressing of it. And soon after he had given vent to it, it spread through-

out

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out *Egypt* and *Lybia* and the upper *Thebes*; as *Socrâtes* † has reported: And, in a short time many other Provinces and Cities were infected with the contagion of it. And, in the pretended Council of *Trent*, no less than five *Popes* were successively concerned; and it lasted, in several places longer than two legal lives of a Man.

* There was, indeed, a *Canon* in the *Western Church* † for the holding of a *Council* once in the space of each ten years: But that *Canon* has not been, hitherto, obeyed; and as affairs stand in the Church, it is impracticable. For the *Pope* will exclude all the *Greek* and *Reformed Bishops*: he will crowd the Assembly with Bishops of his own Creation; and with *Abots* also; he will not admit of former Councils unless they serve his purpose; not so much as that of *Nice* it self. * He will be the *Judge*, though about his own *Supremacy*. He will multiply *Italians* and others who, upon *Oath*, shew their votes to him. He will not hold a *Council* upon the terms approved by all *Romish Princes*. Nor did they agree at their last Council; the *Emperour* would not send his Bishops to *Bologna*, nor the *French King* his to *Trent*. And though the *French Church* believed the *Doctrines* of that Synod, yet they did not receive them from the Authority of it, but they embraced them as the former *Doctrines* of the *Roman Church*. And the *Parisian Faculty* (a) prepared the way to the *Articles of Trent*.

Notwithstanding all this, we firmly believe that at least the first four general Councils did not err in Faith; and it is pious to think that God would not suffer so great a temptation in the Church on Earth. Yet still we believe those Councils not to be infallible in their constitution, but so far as they followed an infallible rule. For the greatest Truth is not always with the greatest number: And great numbers may appear on contrary

† *Socr. Eccl. Hist.* l. 1. c. 6. p. 9.

* *From A. 1545. to A. 1563.*
† *V. Council. Const. sess.* 39.

* *V. Greg. magn. Ep. 6. 31. Leo. 1. Ep. 53. Gelaf. 1. Ep. 13.*
† *Concil. Labb. Tom. 10. p. 23, 379. & Pontific. Roman.*

(a) *A. D. 1542. in Coll. Sorb. See Richer. H. Conc. general. vol. 4. p. 162, 163, &c.*

contrary sides. The Council of *Constantinople* under *Constantine Copronymus*, consisting of three hundred thirty eight Bishops, decreed against the *use of Images* in Churches. Yet the second Synod of *Nice* consisting of about three hundred and fifty Bishops determin'd for it. And, a while after, in the *West*, the Council of *Frankford* consisting of about three hundred Bishops, reverfed that decree. And, after that, the Council of *Trent* did re-establish it; though there the voting Persons were not fifty. With such uncertain doubts of belief must they move who follow a Guide in Religion without reference to a further rule.

doubles
(see errata)

But, here, there is offered to us, by the Guide in *Object*. Controversies, * “ an Objection, of which this is the

“ sum. The fifth Canon of the Church of *England* * R.H. Annot. on D. Stoll. Answer. p. 82, 83

“ does declare that the thirty nine Articles were agreed
 “ upon for the avoidance of the diversities of opini-
 “ ons, and the establishing of consent touching true
 “ Religion. Consent touching true Religion is consent
 “ in Matters of Faith. Establishing of consent relateth
 “ both to Layety and Clergy. The third and fourth
 “ Canons of 1640. decree the Excommunication of
 “ those who will not abjure their holding *Popery* and
 “ *Socinianism*. The Reformed Churches in *France*
 “ teach the like Doctrine, threatening to cut them off
 “ from the Church who acquiesce not in the resolution
 “ of a National Synod. † The same course was taken
 “ with the *Remonstrants* in the *Synod of Dort*. * Where-
 “ fore Protestants ought not to detract from the Au-
 “ thority of general Councils, whilst they assume to
 “ themselves so great a Power in their particular Sy-
 “ nods.

† Art. 31. Ch.
5. du consistoire.
si un ou plufi-
eurs, &c.
* Syn. Dort. sess.
138.

The force of this Objection is thus removed. Every *Answer*. Church hath Power of admitting or excluding Mem- bers, else it hath not means sufficient to its end, the

order and concord of its Body. Every particular Church ought to believe that it does not err in its definitions ; for it ought not to impose any known error upon its Members. But though it believes it does not err, it does not believe it upon this reason, because God hath made it an infallible Guide ; but rather for this, because it hath sincerely and with Gods assistance followed a rule which is infallible. And, upon this supposition, it imposeth Doctrines, and excludeth such

(a) See *Artic.* as with contumacy dissent from them (a.)
20, 21, 22.

4. This Guide is not the present Church declaring to particular Christians the sense of the Church of former Ages. How can this declaration be made, seeing Churches differ, and each Church calls it self the true one, and pretendeth to the Primitive pattern. The Church of *Rome* hath, on her side, the suffrages of all the Councils and Fathers, the first, the middle the last, if *Campian* the Jesuite may be believed (b.) On the other hand *Monsieur Larroque* hath Written a Book of the Conformity of the Protestant Churches in *France* with the Discipline of the Christian Ancient Church, taking it for granted that their Doctrine was Catholick. And we likewise pretend, both to the Doctrine and Discipline of it. All of us cannot be in the right. The *Roman* Church, without any proof, calleth her self the Church Catholick; and she pretendeth to convey to us the sense of the Ancient Fathers and Councils ; which sense was that they understood formerly by the word *Tradition*. * And in this sense a *Romanist* said of Pope *Honorius* †, that he had broken the rule of *Tradition*. But how can we esteem that Church a faithful representer of the sense of the Ancients whilst the Reformed consult the Ancients with equal ability, and find a contrary sense in them ? Whilst the Church of *Rome*, * by a kind of Ecclesiastical Coinage, stampeth Divine Authority upon

(b) *Camp. Rat.*
3 p. 180. *Rat.*
5 p. 185.

* *Lib. diurn.*
Pontif. p. 35.
etenim hujus
Apostolicæ Tra-
ditionis nor-
nam quam ve-
nerandam
Sanctorum 318.
Patrum Con-
cilium quod
in Nicæa, &c.
est p. 43. hujus-
modi Evangeli-
cam Traditio-
nem.

† *Ant. Dezallier*
in Histor. Mo-
norib. p. 123.
* *Conc. Trid.*
Sess. 4. de cr. 1.

Books esteemed by the Councils and Fathers to be *Apocryphal*? † Whilst it hath forged decrees of Popes, *and (like a deceitful *Gibeonite*) rendred that which was really new, in appearance old and mouldy, on purpose to promote imposture? How doth it give us the sense of the Ancients, when it owneth what it formerly disowned as Canonical, the Epistle to the *Hebrews* †? When it taketh away the Cup which Pope *Gelasius* called a grand Sacrilege*? When it now rejecteth the Communicating of Infants which, in former times, was esteemed by many a very necessary point? When a former Pope *Gregory* condemns the Title of Universal pastor as Anti-Christian, and a latter insists upon it as the choicest flour in the papal Prerogative? When *St. Austin* (a) and from him the very Breviary (b) shall expound Christs promise, of being always with his Church, of the presence of his Divinity and of his Spirit, and not of his Body: And Pope *Innocent* the third shall interpret them, as meant also of his corporal presence (c)?

And, if the *Roman* Church falsifyeth written Tradition, how shall we trust her for Oral? And how and at what time did that Oral Tradition remove from *Greece* to *Rome* where the *Greek* Church, which it alloweth to have been once possessed of the true Tradition, is accused of Heresie? At the same time (I suppose) that the Chappel of the Virgin removed from *Nazareth* to *Loretto*. This principle of Oral Tradition is most uncertain to their Judges; and to those to whom they offer it, it is most obscure. It is a principle on which they can serve a purpose, in justifying novel Doctrines as Oral Traditions not known to any but the *Roman* Church, which pretendeth to the custody of them.

† *V. constit. Apost. can. Apost. conc. Laod. conc. Nic. I. S. Hieron. Prolog. Sc. Euseb. E. H. l. 4. c. 26. p. 149. Cron. l. 2. Sc. * V. Blondelli Pseudo-Isidorum.*

† *V. S. Hieron. in Isai. c. 6. 8. * Gratian in de Consecr. dist. 2. cap. 2.*

(a) *S. Aug. tract. 30. in Joh. Sc. tract. 50.*

(b) *Brev. Rom. Dom. infra. oct. Asc. 3. mo. lect. 7. p. 440.*

(c) *Innoc. 3. Myst. miss. l. 4. p. 196.*

5. God hath not set up any one Person in the Catholick Church in the Quality of an unerring Guide in the Christian Faith. The Bishops of *Rome* who pretend to this Prerogative, do but pretend: It is a tender point; and the *Popes Legates*, in the *Council of Trent*, * were enjoyned to give forth this Advertisement, that the Fathers, upon no account whatsoever, should touch it, or dispute about it. They who examine it, will soon reject it as false and useles.

* *H. Conc. Trid.*
l. 2.

Arg. I.

And, 1. Whether the Pope be or be not the Guide, the Men of the *Roman* Communion are exposed to dangerous uncertainty. For, it is not yet determined amongst them, whether they are to follow the *Pope*, with, or without, or against a *Council*. Yet a Pope hath owned a *Council* which deposed other Popes, and by decree, set it self above them, or rather vindicated the superiority due to it. Thus *Martin the fifth* received the Papal Mitre from the *Council of Constance*, after it had deposed *Gregory* the twelfth, *Benedict* the thirteenth, and *John* the twenty third. Again, there have been, by the account given us in their own Historians, † more than twenty formed Schisms in that Church; two or more Popes pretending at the same time to the infallible Chair, and each of them not being without their followers and giving Holy Orders. And at this time there is risen an Apologist

† See the Index
of *Onuphrii*,
vit. *Pontif. ed.*
Colon. 1610.

* *Steph. Baluz.*
in *miscellan.* l.
3. p. 471. to
514.

† *S. Bern. Ep.*
219.

* *Baluz. ibid.*
p. 514. *difficile*
tum erat, &c.

* for *Mauritius*, *Burdin* or *Gregory* the eighth, though he was ejected by the *Roman* Church, which received *Gelasius* into his place; *Burdin* being disliked by them as a Creature of *Henry* the Emperour. This Schism (saith *St. Bernard* †) distracted that Church and gave it a wound only not incurable. And *Baluzius* * professeth that it was then difficult to understand which of the two, *Gregory* or *Gelasius*, was the Legitimate successor of *Pope Paschal*. Now, how useles, to them,

is the pretence of a Guide, when they want some other Guide who should tell them which of the pretend-ers they may securely follow ?

Secondly, the Popes themselves, in their *Solemn Pro-Arg. II. fession*, suppose themselves liable to the misleading of the People even in Matters of Faith. For, having owned the Faith of the *Six general Councils*, “ * They further profess themselves and others to be sub-ject to an *Anathema*, if they advance novelty contrary to the a-foresaid Evangelical Tradition, and the integrity of the Orthodox and Christian Faith.

* *Lib. diurn. Pontif. 2. professio fidei. p.43. --- Unde & districti Anathematis interdictioni subicimus, si quis unquam, seu nos, sive est Alius, qui novum aliquid presumat contra hujusmodi Evangelicam Traditionem, & Orthodoxa fidei, Christianaq; Religionis integritatem, &c.*

Thirdly, If the Pope challengeth this Power of in-Arg. III. fallible Guidance, he must lay claim to it by his succeeding of *St. Peter* in the Chair Apostolical. But, then, by equal reason, the successors of each Apostle may challenge the office of an infallible Guide. For the Power which Christ gave to *St. Peter*, he gave to the rest : It was not special. And, for the Bishops of *Antioch* who first succeeded *St. Peter*, they have a much fairer pretence than those of *Rome*. The Truth is, *Hierusalem* was properly the Mother-Church : Though *Rome* was the Imperial City ; and if, by this means, the Popes had not sate higher, they would not have pretended to see further than others.

Fourthly, those who have considered the writings Arg. IV. of many Popes, and the decrees made by them, have found no reason to lay their Faith at their Golden-Sandal. It is manifest to every Learned Man that the Eyes of the Pope are not (metaphorically) like those of *Augustus* in which (it is said) there appeared a brightness like that of the Sun. If we had more of their History, and more of their Writings, we should find

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find more of their errors. They have shewed both ignorance and extravagance in opinion, and error in the Faith it self. There are not, perhaps, weaker or more absurd passages in any Ecclesiastical Writer, than we may find in the works of Pope *Innocent the third*, who was called the *Wonder of the World* *. He saith of *Subdeacons* that they represented the *Nethinims* † (or *Nathinnims* as he calls them ;) and that *Nathaniel* was one of that Order. * That the *Pope* does not use a *Pastoral rod*, because *St. Peter* sent his *Staff* to *Eucharis* the first *Bishop of Treves*, to whom *Maternus* succeeded, who, by the same *Staff*, was raised from the dead. † That the People have seven *Salvations* in the *Mass*, in order to the expelling the seven deadly Sins, and receiving the seven fold Grace of God. * That an *Epistle*, signifying in *Greek* an *Over-sending* or *super-erogation*, the word agrees very well to the *Apostolical Epistles*, which are superadded to the *Gospel*. (a.) He allots to each *Article* of the *Apostolical* and *Constantinopolitan Creeds*, a particular *Apostle*, and finds the mystery in all things that are twelve in number. For example sake, in the twelve loaves of *Shew-Bread* ; in the twelve *Tribes* ; twelve hours, twelve *Months*.

He gives this reason why *Water* is by the *Bishop* mixed with *Wine* in the *Holy Chalice* ; because it is said in the *Revelation* , that *many Waters* signify *many People*, and that *Christ* shed his *Blood* for the *People* (b.) He saith that *Judas* was not at the *Sacrament* (c) because he was not to drink it new with *Christ* in his *Kingdom*, which priviledge he had promised to all the *partakers*. He teacheth that *Mice* eat only the *Shews* of *Consecrated Bread* (d.) He professeth rather to venerate *Sacraments* than to prie into them (e) because it is written in *Exodus* the twelfth, concerning the *Paschal Lamb*, *Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with Water,*

* *Mat. par. A.* 1217. *stupor mundi.*

† *Ezra. 8.* 20.

* *Innoc. 3. Myst. misse l. 1. c. 2.* fol. 158.

† *Innoc. 3. ibid.* c. 62. fol. 165.

* *Ibid. l. 2. c.* 24. fol. 170.

(a) *Ibid. c. 29.* fol. 171.

(b) *Ibid. c. 58.* fol. 177.

(c) *Ibid. l. 4. c.* 13. fol. 189.

(d) *Ibid. c. 16.* fol. 190.

(e) *Ibid. c. 19.*

all
over

Water, but roſt with Fire. I have not narrowly ransacked the plaits of the Popes Veſtments, for this is obvious enough ; and ſo were a great many other ſayings of equal weakneſs ; but I am weary of the folly of them. There have been other Popes, alſo, injudicious even to duncery. *Eugenius the third* approved of the Propheſies or Enthufiaſtick Dreams of *Hildegardis*, in the Synod of *Tryers*, as Inſpirations. *Pope Zachary* judged the true Doctrinè of *Antipodes*, to be heretical in the caſe of the more Learned and Knowing *Virgilius* (a.) Herein the Pope committed a greater error than the poor Prieſt who Baptized in *nomina Patria & filia & Spiritus Sancta* (b;) and whoſe lack of Latin *Boniſacè* the German Apoſtle would have puniſhed by the Re-baptization of his Proſelytes, if the ſaid *Virgilius* had not, by application to that Pope, prevented it. It is true, *Virgilius* was accuſed as an Heretick who had ſet up another Sun and another Moon, as well as another World of Men whoſe feet were oppoſite to ours. But *Velferus* himſelf (c) hath the ingenuity to confeſs that this was meant only of the Sun and Moon as ſhining to our *Antipodes*, as well as to us : And that the accuſation was framed by ignorant Men who had not the acutenenſs to underſtand the Globular form of the Earth, and the ſcheme of the propoſer. Neither had *Pope Zachary* himſelf ſagacity enough to diſcern the nature of this ridiculous charge. He who can miſtake Truth for Hereſie, may miſtake Hereſie for Truth.

Now that Popes have erred not only in leſſer things, but even in Matters of Faith, is plain from Hiſtory. I will inſtance, only, in *Vigilius*, and *Honorius*, forbearing to ſpeak of *Liberius* and divers others who ſwerved from the truly Ancient Catholick Faith.

Pope Vigilius framed a *Conſtitution* in favour of the three Chapters or *Neforian*-Writings of *Ibas* Biſhop of *Edeſſa*,

(a) *Epist. Zach. p. ad Bonifac. inter op. M. Velferi. in l. 5. Rer. Bot. p. 143. de perversa autem Virgili] Doctrina, quam contra dominum & animam suam locutus est, quod scil. alii us mundus & alii homines sub terra sint, aliisq; Sol & Luna, si convictus fuerit is a confiteri, hunc accito Concilio ab Ecclesia pelle Sacerdotii honore privatum.*
 (b) *Velfer. op. Ibid. p. 147.*
 (c) *Velf. Ibid. p. 149.*

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Edeffa, Theodorus of Mopsuestia, and Theodoret Bishop of Cyrus. This *Constitution* was published by Cardinal *Baronius* † out of Ancient Manuscript in the *Vatican Library*: And he calls it a *Decree* * in defence of these *Chapters*. In this *Decree* the Pope doth not only justify these *Heretical Writings*, but, with the Followers of *Theodorus*, he falsly chargeth upon the *Council of Chalcedon* the *Epistle of Ibas* *, and calls it *Orthodox*. This charge the *Fathers of the fifth general Council* (a) shew to be unjust and false. That *Council* condemneth those three *Chapters* as *Heretical*. And, together with them, it condemneth (b) *Pope Vigilus* and others under the name of *Sequaces* or Followers of *Nestorius* and *Theodorus*. *Baronius* himself acknowledgeth that the *decree* of that *Council* was set up against the *decree* of that *Pope* (c.) These *Chapters* had not been condemned if they had not contained in them the *Nestorian-Heresie*. The *Epistle of Ibas* does, in particular manner, extoll *Theodorus*. And the *Council* affirmeth concerning his *Creed*, that the *Father of lies composed it*. And it denounceth a *Curse* against both the *Composer* and the *Believers* of it. Yet doubtless, these writings were, in themselves, inconsiderable enough. But the *Council* opposed them with such rigour, because the *Faction* had made them very popular, and advanced them into the *Quality* of a kind of *Bible of the Party*.

For *Pope Honorius*, he fell into the *Heresie of the Monothelites*. * That is, of those who held that there is but one *Will* in both the *Natures of Christ*. This *Doctrine* he published in his *Epistles*. This he declared in the *sixth general Council* † he is, in the

† *Baron. Annal. A. 553. N. 48. ed. Colon. p. 486.*

* *Id. Ibid. N. 218. p. 419.*

* *Id. An. 553. N. 192. p. 511.*

(a) *Conc. Constantin. 2. Col. lat. 6.*

(b) *Defin. Conc. col. 8.*

(c) *Baron. Annal. 553. N. 212. p. 417.*

— *Astutus est (ut apparet) adversus Vigilii constitutum, licet pre reverentia ipsum non nominaverint.*

Vigour
6

* *Dezall. Hist. mon. scrus. 5. p. 192. 193. Altera phrasis Honoriana longe difficilior, minime tamen dissimulanda, ea est, quod dicat aperte. Unde & unam voluntatem fateamur dom. nostri Jesu Christi.*

† *Syn. 6. act. 13. See Richter. Hist. Conc. General. vol. I. p. 569. &c.*

the seventh Council * condemned as a Monothelite. And he was expressly anathematized for Confirming the Wicked Doctrine of Sergius.

The guilt of Heresie in Honorius, is owned in the Solemn Profession of Faith made by the Popes at their entrance on the Papacy (a.) This matter is so manifest that Melchior Canus (b) professeth, no Sophistry is artful enough to put the Colour of a plausible defence upon it. A late Romanist hath undertaken to write the History of the Monothelites (c); and the Defence of Honorius seemeth to be the principal motive to that undertaking. Yet so great

is the power of Truth, and such, in this case, is the plainness of it, that, in the Apologist himself, we find these concessions: That the Pope (a) was condemned by the Council, and that the Council was not to be blamed †; that Pope Leo the second owned both the Council and the Sentence, and that Honorius was Sentenced as an Heretick. * He would abate this guilt by saying (b) that Honorius erred as a private Person, and not as Head of the Church, because his Epistle was hortatory, and not compulsive. It is true, he erred not as Head of the Church, for such he was not, neither as such was he owned. But he erred as a publick person and with Heretical obstinacy. For Pope Leo, as he noteth, said concerning him, that he had made it his business to betray and subvert the Holy Faith. (c)

Now this matter of Fact sufficeth for the refuting all the fallacious reasonings of the patrons of Papal infallibility. For all must agree that they are not un-

* Syn. 7. Añ. ult. p. 886. Con. in Labb. Richer. H. Conc. Gen. vol. 1. p. 658. Ad calc. ejusd. Añ. 7. in omn. editionibus Concil. legitur Epist. Synod. quam Tarasius, &c. — Et diserte narrat cunctos Patres — Honorium damnasse.

(a) Lib. diurn. Pontif. Conf. fid. 2. p. 41. Autores vero novi heretici dogmatis, Sergium, Pyrrhum, Paulum, & Petrum Episcopos, una cum Honorio (qui pravis eorum assertionibus fomentum impendit) pariterq; & Theodorum Pharamitanum, & Cyrum Alexandrinum, cum eorum imitatoribus, &c.

(b) Melch. Can. Loc. com. l. 6. c. ult. p. 242, 243. &c.

(c) Anton. Dezallier. Hist. Mon. Par. 1678.

(a) Id. ib. p. 224, 225, 226.

† 218.

* Id. p. 220.

(b) P. 207, 208,

(c) Id. p. 122. profana prodicione immaculatam fidem

subvertere conatus est. — Flammam confovit, p. 123.

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(d) Socr.
Christ. p. 40.

erring Guides who actually err. The *Sieur de Balzac* (d) mocks at the weakness of one of the *Romish* Fathers who offered four reasons to prove that the *Duke D'Espernon* was not returned out of *England*: And offered them to a Gentleman who had seen him since his return.

Arg.
Confid. V.

There seemeth no *fitness* in the constituting of such a Guide; nor any *necessity* for it.

Had it been *agreeable* to Gods Wisdom, his Wisdom would not have been wanting to it self. God having made Man a Reasonable Creature, would not make void the use of deliberation, and the freedom of his judgment. There is no vertue in the Assent, where the Eye is forced open, and the Light held directly to it. It is enough that God, the rewarder of them who believe, hath given Men sufficient faculties, and sufficient means.

* R. H. Annot.
on D. St. Answ.
p. 81.

And, seeing Holiness is as *necessary* to the pleasing of God, and to the peace of the World, as Union in Doctrine (to which there is too frequently given a lifeless Assent;) seeing there must be Christian Obedience as long as there is a Church; seeing (as the *Guide in Controversy* * himself urgeth) *the Catholick Church and all the parts of it are believed, in the Creed, to be Holy as well as Orthodox*; We ask not the *Romanists* an impertinent Question when we desire them to tell us, why a means to infallibility in the judgment, rather than irresistibleness in the pious choice of the Will, is to be, by Heaven, provided in the Church? Both seem a kind of Destination of equal necessity.

Prop. V.

But, though the Reformed, especially those of the Church of *England*, see no necessity for an infallible Guide, nor believe there is one on the face of the Earth, yet they do not reject all *Ecclesiastical Guidance*; but allow it great place in matters of Discipline and Order; and

and some place also (though not that of an unerring Judge) in Matters of Faith.

At the beginning of the Reformation the *Protestants*, though they refused the judgment of the Pope their Enemy, yet they declined not the determination of a Council. And, in the Assembly at *Ausburgh*, the *Romanists* and *Protestants* agreed in a Council as the Umpire of their publick difference. At this the Pope was so alarumed (saith the *Sieur de Mezeray* *) that he wrote to the Kings of *France* and *England*, " that he " would do all they would desire, provided they hindered the calling of a Council.

* *Hist. Fran.*
A. 1530.

In the Reformation of the *Church of England* great regard was had to the Primitive Fathers and Councils. And the aforesaid *French Historian* was as much mistaken in the affairs of *Our Church*, when he said of our Religion, that it was a medly of the *Opinions of Calvin and Luther* (a,) as he was afterwards in the affairs of our *State*, when he said King *James* was elected at the *Guild-hall* King of *England* (b.)

(a) *Mez. Hist.*
A. 1548.

(b) *Id. ib. A.*
1603.

The *Romannists* represent us very falsly, whilst they fix upon us a private Spirit, as it stands in opposition to the Authority of the *Catholick Church*.

Mr. *Alabaster* (c) expresseth one motive to his conversion to the *Roman Church* in these Words: " Weigh together the Spouse of Christ, with *Luther*, " *Calvin*, *Melaucthon*: Oecumenical Councils with private opinions. The Reverend and Learned Fathers " with *Arius*, *Aetius*, *Vigilantius*, Men always in their " time Burned for Hereticks [of which words, the former are false reasoning, the latter are false History.]

(c) See 7.
Racsters 7 motives of W. A.
p. 11, 12.

The Bishop of *Meaux* (d) reasons after the same fallacious manner, " Supposing a Protestant to be of " this persuasion that he can understand the Scriptures " better than all the rest of the Church together, of

(d) *Confer.*
avec M. Claus.
de. p. 110.

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which perswasion he saith very truly, that it exalteth Pride, and removeth Docility.

(d) R.H. An-
not. on D. St.
Answ. p. 84.

The *Guide in Controversies* (d) puts the Question wrong in these terms. "Whether a Protestant, in refusing the submission of his judgment to the Authority or Infallibility of the Catholick Church in her Councils, can have, in several Articles of necessary Faith, wherein the sense of Scripture is controverted, as sure a Foundation of his Faith, as he who submits his judgment to the foresaid Authority, or also Infallibility? Here the Catholick Church is put in place of the *Roman*, Authority and Infallibility are joyned together; and it is suggested dishonestly concerning the Reformed, that they lay aside the Authority of the Catholick Church in her general Councils. Authority may be owned where there is no infallibility; for it is not in Parents Natural or Civil: Yet both teach and govern us.

If others reject Church-Authority, let them who are guilty of such disorderly irreverence, see to it. The Christians of the Church of *England* are of another Spirit. Of that Church this is one of the Articles:

Art. 20.

"The Church hath power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, and Authority in Controversies of *Faith*. There

* Mr. Selden in
his *Colloquies*; "
a Ms. in the
word Church.
Sect. 5.

is a Question (saith Mr. Selden*) about that Article concerning the power of the Church, whether these words [of having power in Controversies of Faith] were not stolen in. But, it's most certain; they were in the Book of Articles that was confirmed; though, in some Editions, they have been left out.

† *Doctr. & Po-
lit. Ecd. Angl.
A. 1617. p. 129.*

They were so in Dr. *Möcker's* †; but he is to be considered in that Edition as a private Man. Now this Article does not make the Church an infallible *Guide* in the Articles of Faith, but a *Moderator* in the Controversies about Faith. The Church doth not assume

that

that Authority to it self in this Article which, in the foregoing *, it denied to the Churches of *Jerusalem*, * *Artic. 19.*
Alexandria, *Antioch* and *Rome*. When perverse Men will raise such Controversies, who is so fit, for Peace sake, to interpose, as that Church where the Flame is kindled? There can be no Church without a Creed; and each particular Church ought to believe her Creed to be true, and, by consequence, must exercise her Authority in the defence of presumed Truth. Otherwise she is not true to her own constitution. But still she

acts under the caution given by *St. Augustine*. (a) (a) *S. Aug. de verb. Dom. super Mat. Ser. 16.*
 " You bind a Man on Earth: Take heed they be just
 " bonds in which you retain him. For Justice will
 " break such as are unjust in sunder. And whilest the

Church of *England* challengeth this Authority, she doth not pretend to it from any supernatural gift of infallibility, but so far only as she believes she hath sincerely followed an infallible Rule. For of this importance are the next words of the Article before remembered.

" ——— It is not Lawful for the Church to ordain
 " any thing that is contrary to Gods word written.
 " ——— And besides the same it ought not to enforce
 " any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvati-
 " on (b.)

(b) *Art. 20.*

After this manner the Church of *England* asserteth her own Authority; and she runs not into any extrem about the Authority of Councils, or the Catholick Church.

We make Confession of the Ancient Faith expressed in the Apostolical, Nicene, or Constantinopolitan and Athanasian Creeds. The Canons of forty reject the Heresie of *Socinus* as contrary to the first four general Councils (c.) Our very Statute-Book hath respect to them in the adjudging of Heresie. (d) Yet our Church still teacheth concerning them (e), that " things by them

(c) *Can. 5.*
 (d) *1 Eliq. R. Sect. 36.*
 (e) *Art. 21.*

ordained.

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“ ordained have neither Strength nor Authority, unless
 “ it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy
 “ Scripture.

When Controversies arise, especially when the doubts concern not so much the Article of Faith it self, as the Modes of it, we grant to such venerable Assemblies a Potiority of Judgment: Or if we assent not, yet for Peace sake we are humbly silent: We do not altogether refuse their Umpirage. We think their Definitions good Arguments against unquiet Men who are chiefly moved by Authority. We believe them very useful in the Controversies betwixt us and the Church of *Rome*; and as often as they appeal to Primitive *Fathers* and *Councils*; to *Fathers* and *Councils* we are willing to go with them, and to be tryed by those who were nigher to the *Apostles*, in the Quality of *Witnesses* rather than *Judges*. We believe that in matters of Truth of which we are already well perswaded, there may be added by the Suffrages of *Councils* and *Fathers*, a degree of Corroboration to our Assent. In sum we say with *S. Austine* * that there is of *Councils* in the Church of God a most wholesome [though not an infallible] Authority. And if *S. Gregory Nazianzen* never saw (as he saith) a happy effect of any *Synod*, (a) this came not to pass from the Nature of the means as not conducive to that end, but from the looseness of Government, and the depraved manners of the Age in which he lived: For such were the times of *Valens* the Emperour.

* Ep. 118. *Concil. in Eccl. Dei saluberrimam esse Auctoritatem.*

(a) *Greg. Naz. Ep. 42, ad Procopium.*

It is true, there are some among us, though not of us, who, with disdainful insolence, contemn all Authority; even that of the Sacred Scripture it self. These pretend to an infallible Light of immediate and personal Revelation. It hath hapned according to the Proverb, every Man of them hath a Pope within him. *Henry Nicholas* puffed up many vain ignorant people with this Proud

Proud Imagination. *Hetherington* a-Mechanick, about the end of the Reign of King *James*, advanced this notion of Personal Intalkibility. His followers believed they could not err in giving deliberate Sentence in Religion (a.) And this was the principle of *Wynstanley* and the first Quakers, though the Leaders, since they were embodied, have in part forsaken it.

(a) See Dr. Deronsons white wolf.

But these Enthusiasts have intituled the Holy Spirit of God to their own Dreams. They have pretended to Revelations which are contrary to one another. They can be Guides to themselves only, because they cannot by any supernatural sign prove to others that they are inspired.

And such Enthusiasm is not otherwise favoured in the Church of *England* then by Christian pity, in consideration of the infirmity of Humane Nature; but in the Church of *Rome*, it hath been favoured to that Degree, that it hath founded many Orders and Religious Houses, and given Reputation to some Doctrines, and canoniz'd not a few Saints amongst them. The Inspiration of *S. Hildegardis*, *S. Catharine of Siena*, *S. Teresa*, and many others seemeth to have been vapour making impression on a devout fancy: Yet the Church of *Rome* in a Council under *Leo* the Tenth, hath too much encouraged such distemper as prophesie*.

* Conc. Lac. sess. 11. A. 1516. in conc. Labb. Conc. Max. p. 291. Caterum si quibusdam eorum Dominus futura quaedam in Dei Ecclesia inspiratione quam revelaverit, ut per Amos prophetam ipse promittit, & Paulus Ap. pradicatorum princeps Spiritum, inquit, nolite extinguere, prophetas nolite spernere, hos aliorum fabulorum & mendacium regi connumerari, vel aliter impedi dari minime volumus.

For private Reason, it is the handmaid of Faith; we use it, and not seperately from the Authority of the Church, but as a help in distinguishing true from false Authority. And in so plain a case as Heresie, if our Church thinketh a private Man may without an infallible Guide on Earth judge aright of it, it does but believe as *Pope Adrian* believed, as he professed in a Synod at *Rome*, of which profession report is made

in

† *Syn. Nic. 2. Art. 7. sec. vers. Anastasii. Licet enim Honorio post mortem Anathema sit dictum ab Orientalibus, sciendum tamen est quia fuerat super hæresi accusatus, propter quam solam licitum est minoribus majorum suorum moribus resistendi, vel prae vos sensus libere respondendi, &c.*

in the second Synod of *Nice* †. For, speaking of the Sentence against Pope *Honorius*, he excuseth it in point of good behaviour, because it was given in the case of Heresie. For in that case, and in that case alone, he allowed Inferiors (so he was pleased to call the *Oriental* Bishops) to reject the corrupt sense of those who are superior to them.

I will hasten to the next Proposition, after I have added one thing more which relates to the guidance of Ecclesiastical Authority : And it is this. Those of the Unlearned Laity who are Members of the Church of *England*, have much more of the just guidance of Ecclesiastical Authority than the like order of Men in the Church of *Rome*. For the Authentick Books of that Church being all written in the Latin Tongue, the illiterate People resolvè their Faith into the ability and honesty of their Confessor or Parish Priest. They take it upon his word, that this is the Doctrine, this the Discipline, this the Worship, of their Church. Whereas each Minister in our Church can direct the People to the Holy Bible, to the Books of Homilies, Articles, Canons, Common-Prayer, Ordination, as set forth in their native Tongue, by publick Authority. Of this they may be assured by their own Eyes, as many as can but competently read. They do not only take this from the mouth of a Priest, but from the Church it self. Where the Laws of the Church and the Statutes of the Civil Government are written in an unknown Tongue, there the Unlearned depend more upon private than publick Authority ; for they receive the Law from particular Priests or Judges.

Prop. VI.

Though Ecclesiastical Authority be a help to our Faith; yet the Holy Scripture is the only infallible Rule of it ; and by this Rule and the Ministerial Aids of the Christian Church, we have sufficient means without Submission

Submission to papal Infallibility, to attain to certainty in that Faith which is generally necessary to Salvation.

I do not mean that, by believing the whole Canon of the Scripture in the gross, we thereby believe all the necessary Articles of the Faith, because they are therein contained. That looks too like a fallacy; and it giveth countenance to an useles Faith. For he that believes on this manner, hath as it were swallow'd a Creed in the lump only, whereas it is necessary for a Christian to know each particular Article and the general Nature and Tendency of it. Otherwise his Faith will not have a distinct influence upon his Christian behaviour to which if it were not useful, it were not necessary. To believe in general as the Scripture believes, is with the Blind and Flexible Faith of a *Romanist*, to believe at adventure. He believes as his Church believes, but he knows not what is the belief of his Church; and therefore is not instructed by that Faith to behave himself as a Member of it.

The Scripture is that rule of Faith which giveth us all the particular Articles which are necessary to eternal Life.

By this rule the Primitive Fathers govern'd themselves, and this they commended to the Churches. And *Clemens Alexandrinus* (a) does in terms, call the Consent of the Old and New Testament the *Ecclesiastical Canon*, and the *Touchstone of true and false*. I will not multiply Testimonies; enough of them are already collected (b).

I will rather pursue the Argument before me, in these three Assertions.

First, a Protestant without the submission of his Judgment to the *Roman Church*, may be certainly directed to the Canonical Books of Holy Scripture.

F

Secondly,

(a) *Cl. Alex. Strom. 2.* ἡ γὰρ ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἡ συνωνυμία, &c. &c. *Strom. 7.* — ἀληθῶν καὶ ψευδῶν κερτήριον.
(b) *V. Davenant. de Judice Normâ fidei.* c. 12. p. 53. &c. *D. Till. Rule of Faith. part. 4. sect. 2. p. 320.* &c.

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Secondly, He may without such submission, sufficiently understand the Rule of Faith, and find out the Sense of such places in those Canonical Books, as is necessary to the belief of a true Christian.

Thirdly, This rule of Faith is the principal means of Union in Faith in the Christian Church.

Affert. I.

First, a *Protestant* without the submission of his Judgment to the *Roman* Church may be certainly directed to the Holy Scriptures.

It is commonly said by Men of the *Roman* persuasion, but injudiciously enough, that we may as well receive our Creed from them, as we do our Bible. The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* might have said the like to the People of the *Jews*. But with the good Text, they conveyed down to them a very false gloss, and misinterpreted the Prophecies, as meant of a pompous temporal *Messiah*. But, for the Reformed, they have received neither Creed nor Bible from the Church of *Rome*. The first enumeration of those Books they find in the *Apostolical* Canons, and in those of the Council of *Laodicea*; no *Western* writings. They have received the Scriptures from the Universal Church of all Ages and Places, the Copies of them having been as widely dispersed as the Christians themselves. And they receive them not from the infallibility of any particular Church, but upon the validity of this sure principle, that all the Christian World, so widely dispersed, could not possibly conspire in the imposing of false Books upon them.

For particular Churches, we may, of all others suspect the *Roman*, in reference to the Scriptures. For what sincerity of dealing may we hope for from such a Cabal of Men as has forged decrees of Councils and Popes, obtruded upon the World Apocryphal Books as Books Canonical, purged out of the writings of the Fathers such places as were contrary to their Innovations,

vations, depressed the Originals under an imperfect Latin Copy, and left on purpose in that Copy, some places uncorrected for the serving of turns. For example sake, they have not either in the Bible of *Sixtus*, or in that of *Clement* (both which, though in War against each other, are made their Canon) changed the word [*She*] in the third of *Genesis*, (a) for [*That, or, He.*] But, contrary to the Hebrew Text, to the Translation of the Seventy, to the Readings of the Fathers, they persist in rendring of it after this manner; *She shall break thy Head.* They believe this Reading tendeth most to the Honor of the blessed Virgin, whom they are too much inclined to exalt, in the Quality of a Mother, above her Son. The *English* Translation of *Doway* hath followed this plain and partial corruption.

(a) Gen. 3.
15.

Secondly, A Protestant may without Submission of his judgment to the *Roman* Church, find out, in the Books of Holy Scripture, the necessary Articles of Christian Faith. *Affert. II.*

Two things are here supposed; and both of them are true.

First, That the Scriptures contain in them all the necessary Articles of our Faith.

Secondly, That the sense of the Words in which these Articles are expressed in Scripture may be found out by a Protestant, without the Submission of his judgment to the Papacy.

First, The Scriptures contain in them all the necessary Articles of the Faith. This is true, if the Scriptures themselves be so: For this they Witness*. *St. Paul* (b) faith of the Old Testament, as expounded of Christ, that it was able to make a Man wise unto Salvation. Much more may this be affirmed of the entire Canon. The Apostles preached the necessities to Salvation, and

* See S. Job.
20. 30, 31.
C. 21. 25.
(b) 2 Tim. 3.
15. 16, 17.

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* *Iren. l. 3. c. 1.* what they had preached they wrote down * concern-
 † *Euf. Hist.* ing the manner of it, *Eusebius* may be consulted †. For
Eccl. l. 2. c. 14. the Primitive Fathers, they allowed the Scriptures to
 be a sufficient Rule. *Irenæus* said of them they were
 * *Iren. l. 2. c.* perfect *; and of the words of St. *Austine* this is the sense;
 47. *S. Aug. de* “ Among those things which are plainly set down in
doct. Christ. l. “ Scripture, all those things are to be found which com-
 2. c. 9. “ prehend Faith and Good Manners. Nay, the *Romanists*
 themselves attempt to prove their very additional Ar-
 ticles out of the Bible. That there are in it the Articles
 of the Apostolical Creed, is evident enough to a com-
 mon Reader. But how the *Romish* Articles should be
 found in that Bible which was written some hundreds
 of years before they were invented, is a riddle beyond
 the skill of *Apollo*.

Secondly, the sense of the Scriptures, in matters ne-
 cessary to Salvation, may be found out by Men of the
 Reformed Religion, without Submission to *Roman* In-
 fallibility. The *Learned* know the Originals, and the
 true ways of Interpretation. And amongst us, those
 of the Episcopal Clergy have obliged the World with
 such an Edition of the Bible in many Languages as was
 not before extant in the *Roman* Church. And a *Romanist*
 who writes with great mastery in such matters, pre-
 fers it before the great Bible of *Paris* (a.)

(a) *V. P. S. p.*
Hist. Critique. p.
 — Mais elle est
 583 plus ample
 & plus com-
 mode; &c.

For those of the Laity who are Unlearned, they
 have before them a *Translation* which errs not in the
 Faith. And the phrases are not so obscure, but that, by
 study and Ministerial helps, they may understand them.
 They have, before them, a *Translation* which errs
 not in the Faith. Of this the *Italians* and *French* may
 be convinced by comparing the *Translations* of *James*
de Voragine, and the *Divines* of *Louvain* with those of
Signior Diodati, and *Olivetian* or *Calvin*. And the *Eng-
 lish* may receive satisfaction in this matter by compar-
 ring

ring their Translation with that of *Doway*. In all of them they will find the same Fundamental Doctrines of Faith. And were there any such material alteration made in our Bible, it would appear by the notorious inconsistency of one part of the Canon with another: It would have been, long ago, detected, and exposed to publick shame, both by the *Romanists* and the other Dissenters from our Communion. But the former are not able to produce one instance; and the latter agree with us in the use and excellence of the Translation, though in other things, they extremely differ from us: And where they do but dream we err they forbear not to proclaim it. In so much that a difference in the Translations of the Psalter which concerns not Faith or Manners† and a supposed defect in the Table for keeping *Easter* have been made by them publick Objections* and stumbling blocks in the way to their Conformity. It is true, there is a *Romanist* who hath raved against the Bible of the Reformed, in these extravagant words (a;) “The Sectaries have as many different Bibles, in Canon, Version, and sense, as are days in the year. ——— The Sectarian Bible is no more the Word of God than the *Alcoran*, *Almanack*, or *Æsops Fables*. Of great corruption he speaks in general, but his madness has admitted of so much caution, that he forbears the mention of any one particular place.

The Learned *Romanists* understand much better, and the Ingenuous Will confess it. And they are not ignorant that we Translate from the Original Tongues, after having compared the Readings of the most Ancient Copies, and of the Fathers: Whilst they Translate the Bible from the *Vulgar Latin*, which, indeed, in the New Testament is a tolerable, but in the Old, a very imperfect Version. If our *English* Bible were turned into any one of the Modern Tongues by a Judicious *Romanist* who could

† See Hook. *Eccl. Pol. Book fifth. Sect. 19.*

* Mr. Hs. peaceable design renewed. p. 14.

(a) A. S. Reconciler of Religions, Printed 1663. c. 11. p.

38, 39.

(a) *Histoire
Critique. Ch.
25 p. 392, 393.*

could keep Council, it would pass amongst many of that Church for a good Catholick Translation. And this is, the rather, my persuasion, because I have read, in Father *Simon* (a,) that not unpleasant story concerning the Translation of Mr. *René Benoist* a Doctor of the Faculty of *Paris*. This Doctor had observed that a new Latin Translation of the *Organon of Aristotle*, performed by a person who understood not the *Greek* Tongue, had been very well received: Upon this occasion he was moved to turn the Bible into the *French* Tongue, though he was ignorant of those of the *Greek* and *Hebrew*. For the accomplishing of this Design, he served himself upon the *French Translation of Geneva*; changing only a few words, and putting others of the same signification in their room. But, it seems, he was not exact enough in this change of words. For he having overlooked some words which were used by the *Genevians* and not the *Romanists*, a discovery was made by the Divines of *Paris*, and this Edition of the Bible was condemned by them, though published under the name of one of their Brethren.

I do not say that such places of Scripture as contain Matters of Faith, are plain to every Man. But those who have a competence of capacity, who are not prejudiced against the Truth, who pray to God for his assistance, who attend to what they read, who use the Ministerial helps which are offered to them, shall find enough in Holy Writ to Guide them to everlasting life. In finding out the sense of the Scriptures, the Church gives them help, but it does not, by its Authority, obtrude the sense upon them. The Guides of it are as Expositors and School-Masters to them: And by comparing phrase with phrase, and place with place, and by other such ways, they teach them how to judge of the meaning themselves. They give them
light

light into the nature of the Doctrine, they do not require them to take it upon trust. They endeavour to open their understandings that they may, themselves, understand the Scriptures. And if they cannot themselves understand the Doctrine, it will be of little use to them in their lives. For they then believe in general that it is a necessary Truth; but what Truth it is or for what ends it is necessary, they apprehend not. A Foolish Master in the *Mathematicks* may require his Schollars to take it upon his word that a Problem is demonstrated: But a wise and useful teacher will give them light into the manner of the demonstration, in such sort, that they themselves shall at last be able to judge that it is truly performed: And till they can do this, they are not instructed. St. *Hierom*

relates it in praise of *Marcella* a Roman Lady (a,) that she would not receive any thing from him after the *Pythagorean* manner, or upon bare Authority. She would, with such care examine all things, that *She seemed to him, not so much his Schollar as his Judge.*

(a) S. Hierom.
in pref. ad
Commens. in
Epist. ad Galat.
— Ut sentirem
me non tam
Discipulam ha-
bere quam ju-
dicem. v. Psal.
119. 99.

It is certain that there are great depths and obscure Mysteries in the Holy Bible. But the Doctrines of Christian Faith are, to the sincere and industrious and such as wait on God in the way of the Reformed Church, sufficiently plain. But to the Idle, the prejudiced, the captious, Light it self is Darkness.

The *Romanists* affright with this pretence of obscurity and profoundness; as if we must not adventure into any part of the Waters, because in some places, we may go beyond our depth. If there are hard and difficult places which the *Unstable* wrest; who required their meanness to make a judgment of that for which they might perceive themselves to be insufficient? But whilst St. *Peter* speaketh of some few places in St. *Paul's* writings which are obscure, he does, at the same time, suppose

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suppose many others to be plain enough for the capacities of the Unlearned. And if they be evil Men, though very Learned, they will wrest the plainest places ; and (as some did in St. *Hieroms* * days) they will draw violently to their private sense a Text of Scripture which is incongruously, and with reluctance applied to it.

* S. Hieron. in Ep. ad Paulin. ad sensum suum incongrua apparent Testimonia — Ex ad voluntatem suam S. Scripturas repugnantem trahunt.

It is true all Sects of Christians cite the Scriptures ; but that does not prove the obscurity of those Sacred writings : It rather shews the Partiality, Boldness, and Sophistry of those who alledge them. All Laws are obscure if this Argument hath force in it. For every Man, in his own case, has the Law on his side. Men take up their opinions and Heresies from other reasons ; and then, because the name of Scripture is venerable, they rake into the several Books of it, and they bend and torture places, and force them on their side by unnatural construction. So do the *Socinians*, producing all the niceties of Grammar and Criticism in a matter of Faith. Yet the Guide in Controversies (a) useth it as an Argument against the plainness of this Rule of Faith, that the *Socinians* cite the Holy Scriptures in favour of their Heresie. But is not this Argument two-edged ? And will it not cut as well on the other side, and do Execution against the words, of Fathers and Councils, and the Apostolical Creed it self ? For the *Socinians* (those especially who are turned *Arians*) since *Petavius* hath furnished them with Quotations, will cite the writings of the Ancients : And *Slichtingius*, a mere *Socinian*, * hath expounded every Article of the Creed in a sense agreeable to the Heresie of his Master.

* V. Confess. fid. Christ. ed. nom. Eccles. Polon. &c.

But, if the Scriptures were so obscure in necessary matters, what remedy would be administered by the *Roman Church* ? They cannot offer to us any Ancient ;
Infallible

infallible exposition. What the Antients have said, the Reformed generally understand much better then Popes, amongst whom there have been some who could scarce read the Holy Gospel in Latin. For the Fathers of the earliest Ages, they were more busied in writing against Heresies, then in explaining of Scriptures. Nor, to this day hath the *Roman* Church, given any Authentick Collection of Expositions, either of the Ancients or of her own. And if we must go to any Church for a comment on the Scriptures, let the *Roman* be one of our last Refuges. For it is manifest that the Key the Papalins use, is the Worldly Polity of that Church. And as they like, so they interpret. Had not they governed themselves by this art, we should not have found in the writings of their Popes, and in the very Canon Law it self, those words which were spoken to *Jeremiah* expounded of the Supremacy of the Bishop of *Rome* “ (a) I have set thee over
 “ Kings, to root out, to pluck up, and to destroy.
 (b) The *Donatists* found their Church in these words of the *Canticles*, “ Tell me (thou whom
 “ my Soul loveth) where thou feedest ; where thou
 “ makest thy Flock to rest at noon. For they ex-
 pounded this (as it liked them best) of the Flock of
 their party in the *Southern Country of Africa*. Such
 Expounders of Scripture are those Popish Writers, who
 interpret [*Feed my Sheep*] of the Universal Monarchy
 of the Bishop of *Rome*, and conclude that a Pastor must
 drive away Wolves or depose Princes hurtful to the
 Church. “ But the straining of such Metaphorical ex-
 “ pressions (as an excellent Person * saith) proves
 “ only that they want better proofs. And, by a like
 “ way of interpretation, from the same Text it might
 “ be concluded that all Christians are Fools, because
 “ Sheep are silly Creatures.

(a) V. Inno. 3. in decret.

Greg. L. I. tit.

33. c. 6. Greg.

7. Ep. 1. 8. Ep. 21.

Extrav. de Ma-
 jor. & Obed. c. 1.

P. Pi. 5. in Bul-

la Cont. R. Eliz.

in Camd. An-

nal. A. 1. 570.

(b) Jerem. 1. 10.

* D. Falkner in

Christ. Loy.

p. 315.

42 *Of a Guide in Matters of Faith.*

No expositions are more besides the sense of the Text, or more ridiculous, then some of those which may be found in the Authentick Books of the *Roman Church*. And those who composed them appear to have looked asquint on the Scriptures. For whilst they looked on them, they seem to have looked another way. I will instance only in a few of those many absurd expositions, with which the *Roman Breviary* abounds.

The words of the Angel to the Holy Virgin [a Sword shall go through thine own Soul also] are (a) interpreted of that word of God which is quick and powerful, and sharper then any two-edged Sword. And this sense is designed as an evasion of their reasoning, who from that Text, conclude concerning the blessed Virgin, that she died, and was not miraculously assumed. The Ascension of *Elias* is thus expounded. (b) "He was taken up into the aerial, not the ætherial, Heavens; from whence he was dropped in an obscure place on Earth, there to remain to the end of the World, and then to expire with it: They say † of *Job*, "That when he spake of a Bird, and of her path in the Air, he, by a figure, called Christ a Bird, and, by the motion of it in the Air, figured also our Lords Ascension.

(a) *Domin. infra Octav. Nativ. in 2. nocturno Lect 8. p. 175.*

(b) *Dom. infra Oct. Asc. in 3. Noct. p. 443.*

† *Infra. Oct. Asc. 3. Noct. Lect. 8. p. 447.*

We may perceive, by these few Instances, what an entrance into the sense of Scripture is like to be given, whilst a Pope has the Key of Knowledge in his keeping.

Affert. III. Thirdly, If Men would use the Church as their Ministerial Guide, and admit of the Scripture as the only Rule by which all Matters of Faith are to be measured, they would agree in the proper means to the blessed end of Unity in the Faith. This was the persuasion of

* *S. Aug. Cont. Max. l. 3.*

St. Austin who thus applieth himself to *Maximinus* *; "Neither ought I at this time to alledge the Council " of

“ of *Nice*, nor you that of *Ariminum*: For neither
“ am I bound to the Authority of the one, nor you to
“ that of the other. Let us both dispute with the Au-
“ thorities of Scripture which are Witnesses common
“ to both of us.

Whilst the *Romanists* ascribe the differences which arise amongst the *Reformed* to their want of an infallible Guide, and to their different interpretations of the Scriptures, they unskilfully derive effects from causes which are not the natural Parents of them. There is (saith St. *Austine*) one Mother of all strifes, and she is *Pride*. Neither doth the Scripture divide us, nor does the infallibility of their judge unite them. Their Union (such as it is) ariseth from the mighty force of their External Polity; and they speak not differently because they dare not; and the strength of that Polity arose at first from *Rome*, not as the Chair of *St. Peter* but as the Seat of the Empire. Our divisions like theirs, arise (as all Wars do, be they Ecclesiastical or Civil) from the unruly Lusts and Passions of Men. And from these likewise, arise generally the misinterpretations of plain Laws, and Rules; the sense of which must be made to chime according to the Interest of prejudiced Men, or else they will not give attention to them. If the Lusts and Passions of Men were mortified; all Christians agreeing in the certainty of the Scriptures, though not of any Living Guide; and the words of the one being as intelligible as those of the other: All might agree in one Creed, and put an end to those unnecessary Controversies which entangle Truth, and extinguish Charity.

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