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o

AN
APOLOGY
FOR
RUSHWORTH'S
DIALOGUES.

WHEREIN

The Exceptions of the Lords
FALKLAND and DIGBY
are answer'd:

AND

The *Arts* of their commended
DAILLÉ Discover'd.

By THO. WHITE, Gent.

Pfal. 63. 8.

Sagittæ Parvulorum factæ sunt plagæ eorum.

A Paris,

Chez Jean Billain Rue St. Jacques à l'ensign
St. Augustin. 1654.

AC 911.1654. W54

AN

APPOLOGY

FOR

BLISHWORTH

DIALOGUES

WHEREIN

the Expositions of the

Palms and

are answered:

AND

the Answer of their

Answers

By Tho. Whit

1654

Printed by

at the

for



TO

His ever Honour'd Cosen
M^r. ANDREW WHITE,
of the House of
THUNDERSLEY.

Honour'd Cosen,

*Though Kindred, Education, and
T known love all conspire to make
me obnoxious to any good Coun-
sel you please to give me; yet the
versness I have from answering Books,
ermitted me not, in our last interview, to
romise obedience to your directions. But,
nce that happines of seeing you, an una-
mious consent of other friends has made
e more steadily reflect on what you de-
d; and considering besides, that the
ctrine of Rushworth's Dialogues*

Epistle

takes a path not much beaten by our modern Controvertists, I resolv'd to imitate the example of the penitent Son, who, after denial, perform'd his Fathers commands. Behold then, here, the brood hatch and brought forth by your advice: 'pr heaven it prove worthy your acknowledging! which I say, not, to engage you in the patronage of what I deliver, farther than truth shal convince your judgment; or make the World imagin these Conceptions may find shelter in your breast: No, I am not cruel to my writings, as the Ostridge to her Eggs: when once they are laid, let nature play her part to foster or smother the Chicks, as she pleases. Let truth commend or condemn my sayings. He that is ready to renounce falsity, and acknowledge his weaknes, is stronger then envy, and beyond the shot of malice. Neither have I occasion to suspect any imputation should fall upon you for this publishing my Present to you, as I fear it happen'd to another friend. For, I apprehend, I may have written some Periods, which none wil expect should be approved by you; Only, who understand

Dedicatory.

The amplitude of your soule, may know, it is able to harbour with indifferency what is spoken against your own sense and consent; it being the gift and task of a wise man, Imperare liberis. What I have perform'd, wherein fail'd, is your part to judge; for my self, I can profess I desire not to irritate the meanest person, nor seek I the glory of oppugning the Greatest: my ayme is, to open and establish truth; Frivolous and by-questions I have on set purpose avoided. Whether all objections of moment are answered, as I cannot affirm, so I can protest I am no more conscious of declining any, then of dissembling, when I write my self

Your affectionate Cosen.

Paris,
Sept. 21.
1652.

and humble servant,


THO. WHITE.



A

Second DEDICATION to the same Person.

*Learned, and by me ever to
be honour'd Cosen!*

 Is so long since the former Address to you was written, that no wonder it should now be asham'd to come abroad without some excuse to justify the slowness of its pace; which is no other, then a simple protest, that it has not stuck in my hands for at least a whol yeer and an half. Upon these few words I could sit down and confidently promise my self your pardon; But emergent imputations force me to a larger Apology: The expedition in some other late Works of mine rendring the seeming neglect of *this* more obnoxious to exception; as if I were rather ambitious to display the errors of some of our own side, then the enormities of professed Enemies; and your self are conceiv'd to have a part in this suspicion.

Now

Epistle Dedicatory.

Now, since, from that long and constant commerce you have still maintain'd with true Vertue & Learning, I cannot but expect a great rationality and amplitude in your Soul, even to bear with the defectuousnes of others, as far as you see they govern themselves by that measure of understanding which God affords them, I find my self oblig'd to give you the best account I can of my proceedings, which I doubt not will prove so much an easier task, as you, with whom I am to deal, are of a higher strain, then our trivial discoursers; for, as I think, those who set up their rest, that there is no science to be attain'd by study, are pardonable, if they chuse opinions by pretence of devotion or reality of interest: So I give my cause for lost, if *they* be my Judges. But I hope the great fire of truth, which first kindled in my young breast a glowing of it, and an earnestnes of seeking it in *St. Thomas* his way, has not been by length of time as much quench'd in you, as quickn'd in me; and therefore with a full confidence I represent my Cause to you, not doubting but the evidence produce wil justify, if not the action it self, at least the necessity I have to act as long as the present perswasion is not forc'd from me.

To come then to my Plea; If *St. Peter* commands

Epistle Dedicatory.

mands us to be ready to give satisfaction to all that shall ask it, concerning the hope that is in us, by which is meant our belief, the basis and firm support of our hope; If the design of all that meddle with this sort of study should chiefly aim to shew, that the doctrines of Christianity are conformable to reason, and such as a prudent Person, though also learned, may imbrace, without prejudice either to his discretion, or knowledge: If the suggesting to our first parents, that God sought to govern them like fools, without the least discernment betwixt good or evil, be the greatest and unworthiest calumny Satan himself could invent to charge upon the Almighty: If it be the basest condition that can befall a rational Essence, and the most contrary both to God and man, whose natures consist in knowing and reasoning; what can I conclude, but that such Teachers, as, for ignorance or interest, obstinately resolve (in treating with those who are out of the Church) to maintain opinions, whereof no account can be made, either out of Antiquity or Reason, are unworthy the function they profess, and highly obstructive to the progress of the Catholik faith?

You, who have looked into the large Volumes of Controvertists on both sides, cannot but know they are petty questions, and the

Epistle Dedicatory.

impugnances of private opinions, that swell those vast Tomes into such an unwieldy and intolerable bulk; I'm sure not only I, but divers of my friends have had experience, that those very opinions (for opposing which, I am exclaim'd against) have been the retardment of the most ingenious and dis-interested party of Protestants; and that others, who were become Catholiks, out of a pure necessity which they saw of submitting themselves to some unerring authority, when they heard their faith declar'd in a rational way, found themselves eased, as it were, of chains and imprisonment, and translated into a natural state and liberty. I need not press, how ulcers in our vitals, are more dangerous then in our outward members; and that we cannot convince others, whilst our selves are ignorant in the Points we pretend to teach them. No wise Captain searches the Hospitals for *Perdues* & Forcers of breaches. It is a great step towards the reducing others to reason, if first we make our own thoughts rational. This is my endeavour, this is my fault, for which I am so deeply censur'd, even by Catholiks.

As for Persons, my writings neither name nor touch any: and those who make themselves pointed at by their forward boasts of defending the opinions I dispute against, ei-
ther

Epistle Dedicatory.

ther understand not me or themselves: for, did it deserve the pains, I would undertake to shew out of their printed Writers, that they doe not, with any universality, maintain those tenets I contradict. If in this present Treatise I have in one place descended to more particulars then my course and nature incline me to, I appeal to your own Judgment, whether I do more then follow my Adversary, by replying upon his very words; and therefore your commands ought to be my excuse.

But some think, at least this conjuncture improper to begin this Work, & I wish they could give me a good cause of delay; they should finde me very ready to accept it; But I know no time in which destructive Errors should live unconfuted; our great Master securing us by his example, *neque ad horum cessimus*; nor can your self be ignorant with what fury and violence the opposite opinion strives at this very day to possess the Church of God, and break the eternal Rule of Christian faith. Wherefore, though conscious of my own weaknes, and that, unless God extraordinarily shews his power, my endeavours wil take no place, yet *propter Sion non tacebo, & propter Hierusalem non quiescam.*

Your most obliged Cosen, and
obedient servant,

T. W.

27 March

1654.



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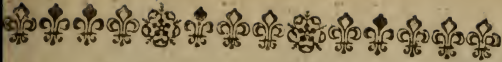
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A.D.



ADVERTISEMENT.

The Reader is desired to take notice, that this Apology particularly relates to the last Edition of Rushworth's Dialogues (in 8^o of the Long-Primer-Letter 1654, as which alone has felt throughout this Authors last hand) and principally undertakes the refutation of Lucius Lo. Falkland's Discourses of Infallibility, and George Lo. Digby now Earl of Bristow) his printed Letters to Mr Ken. Digby; which he performs in a stile modest and respectful, answerable to the dignity of their Persons, and civility of their Writings.

The Animadversions upon Daillé are apply'd to the English Translation by T. S. not to the French Original; wherein the Reader will easily pardon those uncourteous expressions he shall meet with, if he consider how little favour he deserves from his equals, that insolently condemns the Betters; nay perhaps approve the justice of so necessary a resentment; since 'twere unreasonable in him to pretend the least regard from his temporaries, that has compos'd so infamous and injurious a Libel against all Antiquity.



ERRATA.

PAge 13. l. 1. since in Const. p. 27. l. 13. Eight's, p. 58. l. 20. which were. p. 78. l. 10. handing p. 82. l. 16. to our ears. p. 102. l. 7. reatus, & l. 17. is there. p. 106. l. 2. be not. & l. 28. but by their. p. 119. l. 2. exposes. p. 127. l. 3. evident they cannot. p. 128. l. 5. part, that is, the- p. 137. l. 10. the venom. p. 142. l. last, attempt the other. p. 143. l. 1, 2, dele (but out of Scr. nor yet in that doe they use so fair play) p. 148. Parenthesis begins at (this, l. 10. and ends at being) l. 13. p. 152. l. 2. vivifying, & l. 25. in the first. p. 174. l. last, day, as com--- p. 179. l. 7. with. p. 193. l. 2. so few. p. 237. l. 28. not bound, p. 238. l. 19. certain varieties, p. 245. p. 243. l. 23. dele of, l. 7. in his. p. 248. l. last, shal not in.



AN
A P O L O G Y
FOR
T R A D I T I O N .

The Introduction.

Hus it will sometimes happen ;
that events of greatest impor-
T tance take their rise from smal
occasions. The *Controversy*, this
following *Treatise* undertakes,
began in a slight familiar conference be-
twixt two intimate friends and *kinsmen*, as
it were only for exercise to train themselves,
and practice their postures : but since by
the entrance of new *Allies* is become of so
high concernment, that what at first was a
private voluntary *skirmish*, seems now to
spread it selfe into a publique and solemn

War. Nor need I strain much to make good the *phrase*, since the *eminent Names*, on the one side, and the great advantage of ground on the other, may justly be admitted to supply the number of an *Army* in both.

And, because I desire to prepare my self with the fittest proportion I could for the *assaults* of my Adversaries, I have declin'd the Sword and Buckler, and taken up a single Rapier; chang'd the antique weapons of *Dialogue*, (though, in my opinion, they want neither ornament nor particular efficacy) into the modern *mode* of direct discourse: Wherein, as I confesse, *Their* gilded *Armour* shines more, and dazles the ey; so I fear not, when we come to charge, our courser steel wil prove substantial and impenetrable. However I shall not spend much time in *parley*; but after a short relation how I come to be drawn into the quarrel, and by what method I intend to carry it on, I shall immediately advance to a close *encounter*.

Before those *Dialogues* (wherein that original private conference is at larg delivered) were brought to light, or (as I think) fully conceiv'd in the Authors brain; an honoured friend, and Patron of mine had couch'd some smal, but quintessential part of their doctrin in a little pithy Present to

a new-converted Lady ; and having cited it afterward for brevity sake , in a controverfial Epiftle to an eminent Friend, engag'd it therby into an almoft fatal combat; nothing but truth being able to refcue it from fo potent an enemy. L. Dig

Befides, a deceased friend of mine having oblig'd me to declare my opinion concerning a witty difcourfe made by one of his acquaintance, extorted from me an unlick'd *Mola*, representing fuddenly and imperfectly, my judgement in reference to that Authors work. L. Falk This again, stirring the fame humours, drew the doctrin into an eminent danger of encountring opposition. Nevertheless, God fo ordering it, many years paff, in calm and happy daies of peace, the two Adverfaries (whom thefe occasions had provoked) not publishing their Labours, as things below their perfons ; till all-discovering time (as I believe) againft the Authors intentions , brought them both to light, and, by confequence, an imputation on thofe *Dialogues*, and a neceffity on me to dif-engage the honour of their Compofer.

In order to which, my intention is not to reply minutely to either of the Opponents works; muchles to handle any by-questions : but only to chufe out of them, or any others, what I conceive may poffibly be

thought as yet unanswer'd, and consequently capable of prejudicing those *Dialogues*.

By this reserv'd and moderate temper, I hope to free my self from all such incivilities as necessarily attend on the undertaking to convince a particular person of weakness or inconsequence in his discours, from which kind of captious proceedings, besides my Reason, I am beholding to my Nature for its extream averfnes. Besides, in answering a writing, many impertinent quarrels are pick'd, the substantial controverfie loft or confounded, and the Truth it self, by multiplicity, left more obscure then when the disputant began: for, where many questions are started and none deeply searched into, the Reader goes away without any resolution, more then what himself brought along with him. I intend therefore with all candor and fidelity, to select such objections as I think really interest the Controverfie; and handle them without relation to Books or distinction of Authors, or citations of places: as one who seeks Truth, not the glory of confuting or vanity of answering.

But some may be unsatisfied with my proceedings, and demand, if this be my intention, why do I cite *those Authors* in particular; and, as it were, make a shew of answering, without any effect: I desire those to consider,

consider, that the *names* of Author's carry weight, among two sorts of Readers; One, such as diligently peruse the books written on both sides; to whom I offer this satisfaction, that they may find the solution to any difficulty which occurs concerning this subject, in their writings: The other, such who look no farther then the Title page, or whether a book be answer'd or no, are insolent upon the writers name, and importunely clamorous, that 'tis a Piece beyond all possibility of reply, be it never so weak and trivial; to whom the simple profession that 'tis answered, is a wedg fit for their knot.

I must confesse, next to the assurednesse of my Cause, 'tis my chiefest comfort to deal with *Persons* of such *quality*: such as the Protestant party never produced before: it seems to have chosen them to live by, or die with. Two, whose Merits found the way of honouring their Descents, by their generosity; whose eloquence none were found to exceed, whose wits none wil be found to equal. What erudition in *Languages*, or acutenes in *Logick* could furnish, was treasur'd in their breasts: But above all, a comprehensive judgement, in managing the numerous and weighty affairs of a *Kingdom* to the very heightning that sublime and subtlest

subtleſt Office, (*Secretary of State*) which they both, ſucceſſively, exalted to ſuch a pitch, that it muſt expect a fall in whoever ſhall ſucceed them.

One is, the right honourable *George Lord Digby* (now *Earl of Briſtol*) ever mounting the ſcale of Honour to a degree ſo far above the reach of others, that 'tis even beyond their ſight: The other, *Lucius Lord Falkland*, who crown'd his deſerved *Lawrell* with a wreath of *Oaken Scyons*; dying in ſuch a poſture, as if miſchief could not have ravag'd *England*, had it not made its paſſage through the breaſt of that Martyr of Peace. I can accuſe him of nothing! but that he left this Book behind him; it being too plain what unhappy impreſſion it makes in his Friends, ſince my ſelf, almoſt a ſtranger, cannot read thoſe quaint and gentile expreſſions, thoſe rarities of wit, thoſe coruſcations of *Greek* and *Latine* remarques, and (which moſt of all ſurprizes my admiration) thoſe Noble ſweetneſſes and civilities ſo unexpected in a quarrelling Treatiſe; but I feel in my heart an unuſual ſorrow and regret, that our thoughts cannot ſtay on him, without the ſad check of a *ſuit*.

But, ſince we are out of hope to reſuſcite him that's gon, like the day he died on; let us (by *Dauids* example) leave theſe flattering

tering weakneses of nature, and seek severe reason in the controversy we pretend to manage.

THE FIRST ENCOUNTER,

*Explicating the Argument, by which
RUSHWORTH proves the Infal-
libility of Tradition.*

THe Dialogues (in whose defence we now appear, as Second) govern their discourse by this fair method: First, they treat and settle these definitions; *Tradition we call, the delivery of Christs doctrine from hand to hand, in that part of the world which, with propriety, is call'd Christian: By Christs doctrine, we mean that which was generally preach'd by the Apostles, and contains all such points as are necessary to the salvation of the World; not only in particular, to single persons, but for government of the Church, and bringing multitudes, with convenience, to perfection in this life, and felicity in the next. Which being establish'd, they immediately proceed to this general Position, that All Christ taught, or the Holy Ghost suggested to the Apostles, of this nature,*

is

is, by a direct uninterrupted line, entirely and fully descended to the present Church, which communicates with, and acknowledges subjection to the Roman: Adding also the convers of that proposition, viz. Nothing is so descended, but such Truths; nor any thing held by this tenure, but what is so descended; which being cast up, amounts to this great Conclusion, *No error was ever, or can be embraced by the Church, in quality of a matter of faith.*

The proof consists in this: Since 'tis confessed the Catholik Church goes upon this Maxim, that *Her Doctrin is received from Christ, and still handed along to the present generation*; they who cavil at this assertion, should assign some Age when they conceive an error crept in; and the maintainer should prove it enter'd not in *that Age*, Because *that Age* held nothing was to be admitted, as of Faith, except what was deliver'd to it by the former: but the Objectors themselves say, this supposed error was not deliver'd by the former, since they put it to be, now, first, believ'd; therefore the Age in which they imagin this error crept in, could not be the first that believ'd it.

And, lest some might reply, though the present Roman Church stands now upon the proposed maxim, yet anciently it did not; the same argument may be thus reiterated,

If this principle which now governs the Church had not always done so, it must have been introduced in some Age since the Apostles : name therefore the Age, and immediately 'tis urged, either the Church had assurance, in that Age, all she held was descended lineally, as we spake, from the Apostles, or not : If so, then questionless she held her doctrine upon that maxim ; For it is the only undoubted and *self-evident* principle : If not, then she wilfully belyed her self, and conspired to damn all her posterity, voluntarily taking up this new Rule of faith and commanding it to be accepted by all the world, as the necessary doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, descended upon the present age by universal Tradition from their Ancestors, and for such to be deliver'd to their children ; and all this against the express evidence of her own conscience. Thus far reaches the argument.

He that shall compare this perpetuation of the *Church*, with the constancy of propagating mankind ; and proportion the love of happiness and natural inclination to *truth*, (which is in the superiour part of mankind, and commands powerfully in it) to the material appetite of procuring *corporal* succession, and weigh what accidents are able and necessary to interrupt the progress
of

of one and the other, will find the propagation of *Religion* far stronger and less defectible, then *that* of *mankind*; supposing them once rooted alike in universality and settledness. Since therefore the means of conducting nature to its true and chief end, *Felicity*, are more principally intended, then those by which it is simply preserv'd in *being*; this Contemplator will clearly discern, that if humane nature continue to the last and dreadful day, this succession also of a *true Church* must be carried on through the same extent of time: there appearing indeed no purpose why the world should endure a minute longer, if this once come to fail; that part of mankind, which arrives to blifs, being the end why the rest was made, as mankind is the end for which all the other material Creatures are set on work.

Again, if a rational discourser should plot in his head how, with condescendence to the weakness of our nature, he might bring mankind to blifs; and, to this end, plant in it a perpetual and constant knowledg of the true and straight way thither; & did observe that Man in his immature age is naturally subject to believe, and after his growth, tenacious of what he had suck'd in with his milk: could he chuse but see, that to make the *Mothers* flatter
into

into their *Children* the first elements of the acquisition of Beatitude, and continually go on nursing them up in the maxims of piety, till their stronger years gave a steady settledness to their minds; must needs be the most sweet and connatural way that can be imagin'd, to beget a firm and undoubted assent to those happy principles.

If he think on, and chance to light on this truth, that the greatest part of mankind, some through dulness of understanding, some by the distractions of seeking necessaries for their subsistence, or at least conveniences for their accommodation, and others for the disfluence of nature to Pleasures and Vanities, are, to their very departing hour, wholly incapable of searching out their *Religion*, either by their own contemplation or the learned books of others: I cannot doubt but such a considerer would without the least difficulty or hesitation, conclude that, were it his design to set up a Religion, which he would have constantly and universally propagated, he must of necessity pitch upon this way; And so, with a resolute and pious confidence pronounce, if God has not already taken this course, certainly he should have done it.

To these considerations give my pen leave to add the confession of our Adversaries,
who

who boldly acknowledge the *Roman Church* has had universal Tradition for the whole body of its faith ever since *St. Gregories* days; which is now a thousand years, and very near two parts of the three that *Christian Religion* has endured. They confess those *Doctrins*, which are common to us and them, remain in our Church uncorrupted, and have still descended from Father to Son, *by vertue of Tradition*, since the very times of the *Apostles*. They will not deny the *Ages*, betwixt *Constantine* and *St. Gregory*, flourish'd with an infinity of Persons famous both for piety and learning; and the Church never more vigilant, never more jealous, being continually alarm'd by such Troops of powerful and subtle Hereticks: so that there is no likelihood, gross errors (such as *Idolatry* and *Superstition* import) could creep in undiscern'd, in those days. And perhaps, much less betwixt *Constantine* and the *Apostles*; the time being so short that it scarce exceeds the retrospection of those who liv'd with *Constantine*: At least that age could evidently know what was the faith of *Christendom* in the age of the *Apostles* great Grand-children, and they again be certainly assured of the *Doctrin* of the *Apostles* disciples, their Grandfathers. Which is an evidence beyond all testimony

mony of writers, that since *Constantines* time it was known by a kind of self-sight what the Grandchildren of the Apostles held, and it could not be doubted of them but they knew and held the doctrine of the *Apostles*; that, I say, in *Constantines* time, the publike doctrine of Christianity was the doctrine of the *Apostles*.

Besides, the communication of Christians being very difficult and infrequent, during those persecutions; the contagion also of heresies scatter'd it self slowly among Christians in those times. And here I shall note a ridiculous cavil, very common not only in the mouths of the more rash and shallow Protestants, but even in the writings of many of their gravest and most solemn Doctors, who cry out against the *Ignorance* of our Church, as the cause of our errors, and yet put the Ages in which they insult, that *Frigebat Scriptura cum vetustis Autoribus*, some hundreds of years after the time, wherein they acknowledg the doctrines, term'd errors, were already flourishing; as if they could proceed, from a defect which follow'd them: A slander so palpably absur'd that all the charity I have can scarce persuade me to think they are not blinded rather with malice than ignorance, that dare vent such gross contradictions.

And

And now, having abridg'd as 'twere, the whole sense of *Rushworths Dialogues* concerning *Tradition*, into this short *compendium*; I will apply my pen to answer what exceptions are taken, against either the forme or matter of that Discourse.

THE SECOND ENCOUNTER,

Defeating three oppositions made against Tradition.

THe first objection against the form is, that I put my Adversary to prove his position instead of going about to maintain my own. This they imagin, because I bid them assign the Age; which they take to be as much as a demand of them to prove that in such a time came in the error: but 'tis a plain mistake. For I do not require they should prove the error began in such an Age; but only exact of them, for Argument sake, to name the Age in which they find most difficulty for me to conclude, or wherein they conceive the sinnews of my discourse will be most slack and feeble: for the force of the main argument is indifferent
to

to any Age they can pitch upon, equally demonstrative in all, and so, by striking at every one, concludes against all. This I say not, any way to disclaim the advantage we Catholicks have, whilst we press our adversary to prove his *Thesis*, being no less a just then strong and secure retreat; and which I reserve my self the liberty of retreating to, perhaps, at another time: but now only urge him to name one Age at hazard, meerly to give way to the prosecution of the argument; a Justice I might do for my self, if I would, without his courtesie, and have all the laws of disputation bear me out in it.

It is therefore to little purpose to demand, whether I ask of the first man that held such an opinion, or when it came to be universal (though the question be plainly of this matter, for we hold it was ever so;) nor is there any art necessary to answer it, the argument made being indifferent to all. The skill therefore required, is only to know what belongs to the form of demonstrating; for the most part, indeed, not found in the main discourses of Rhetoricians. But the adversary thinks, when the Question is put concerning a Doctrine's being *Universal*, it must suppose none to hold the contrary opinion; as if we could not know what is
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the publick Faith of *France*, because perhaps a few conceal'd persons may believe somewhat different. Wherin, he reflects not, that *Heresie* signifies the cleaving to a private opinion: so that, when there were any such in former ages, that very thing made them *Hereticks* (how good wits or great learnings so ever they had) if they dissented from the doctrine deliver'd by their forefathers. Heretics, Catholics cannot tell when the communicating of Children began, since *St. Austin* thinks it an Apostolical Tradition. We answer, we are of that mind too but with this qualification, that it was Tradition begun by some Apostles, not all in some Countries, not all, in some circumstances, not all: And therefore 'twas neither superstition to use it, nor sacrileg to leave it off; how strongly soever the opposer avers one of these two to be unavoidable.

The second opposition made against the form is, that 'tis a fallacy of that kind, called *Sorite*, in which the *Scepticks* found a great difficulty, that they used to present them against the *Stoicks* and other dogmatists, as insoluble and manifestly demonstrating there was no science. But, to understand the meaning of this objection, the demonstration propos'd is to begin from the Apostles time: and so it must be supposed

sed, that the next Age after the Apostles, in any controversy against new doctrines, examin'd no farther then on which side stood the verdict of the Apostles, wherof they could not be ignorant. The Argument therefore pressed that the next (that is, the third Age) must of necessity take the same method against its Novellists, convincing them of falsity, because their doctrine was contrary to *that* of those who had heard the Disciples of the Apostles speak. And so, since the Tradition of Faith was convey'd from age to age, stil with this caution, that the latter was to believe such a doctrine, because receiv'd from the former, upon this warrant that it descended lineally from Christ in the same manner, to them, as they deliver'd it to their posterity; it necessarily follows, that this doctrine could not but continue pure even to our present time: unless some age should prevaricate all bounds of truth and nature, and deliver something to the following age, as traditionally deliver'd from Christ, which had not been so receiv'd.

This argument, so propos'd (though I know not whether so understood) seem'd to the opponent like the ratiocination of one Mr. *Tbinn*, a melancholy Philosopher, who perswaded himself, a person might be found

that could leap from off *Pauls* (for sure he needed a high standing) to *Rome*, because 'twas possible some man might leap full twenty foot, and no doubt but another somewhat more, and still another more then he and so without end; therefore among all one quick springer would be found, who could make his jump from hence to the *Capitol*.

But certainly he that weigh'd the two arguments, might without extraordinary study, have found there was some difference in their form: *Mr. Thinn*, being oblig'd to take variety of men undetermined: but this argument engaging only sixteen ages, and peradventure, not needing above six, or in rigour, some three, and those such as have had a real existence, whereas the Worlds duration and latitude are not sufficient to find men enough to justify *Mr. Thinns* Process. This I say was obvious enough to any mean understanding, not preoccupied with prejudice against the conclusion. But one who had understood how *Aristotle* unwrap *Zeno's* fallacies, might easily have known that Infinity it self could not add more then one full foot to *Mr. Thinns* leapers: if the encrease were made by sub-proportional parts, wherof the first was one half foot; and if by equal quantities, as Fee

or Inches, he would soon come to an end of his addition, unlesse he put mens strength and nimbleness to be infinite. But to sit Judge of Religion, of eternal blis and damnation, some curious and unhappy wits dare think requires neither so much indifferency nor reflection as the composition of quantity.

Yet I cannot but admire it could scape a piercing ey to discern, that as the consequent of Mr. *Thinns* discourse is ridiculous and impossible, so *that* of the proposed demonstration is evident and undeniable. For what ingenuous forehead will deny, but such verities as all the world allows to remain still untainted in the Church of *Rome*, have descended by this traditionary way to us from Christ? Wherefore both the possibility and actuality of this way is not only acknowledg'd by the unanimous confession of all parties, but its force and efficacy made evident by the downright violence of reason: all the controversie being meerly about the multitude and sufficiency of the things receiv'd, not the impotency of the means to convey them to us.

But, to make an end of this petty Question, I appeal to all Masters, nay even Scholars in Geometry, whether this form of arguing be not the same that *Euclid*, *Archimedes*

medes and *Apollonius* use in their severest demonstrations? As when *Euclid* undertakes to demonstrate this plain and elementary *Theoreme*, that *No Circle can touch another in more then one point*; himself acts the part of the *Denier*, and according to the law of *Mathematicks*, supposes at random the other point, to see whether the *Proposition* be maintainable: and if the *Contactus* in the point assign'd be proved impossible, by an argument applyable to any other that can be offered, the *Theoreme* remains infallibly demonstrated, and the *Rules* of that precise and strict *Science* perfectly comply'd with.

The third opposition is drawn out of a conceited impossibility of the case; and so they demand how can it come to passe that all the *Doctors* of one age should meet together, to instruct the world of *Scholars* that are to succeed them in the next? an action, if not impossible, at least so incredible, as by no means to be aver'd without legitimate *Authority*, which they say, is wanting: And further, should we undertake, that not only all *Doctors*, but all men of one age met with the men of the next, to teach them; it were an enterprize highly impossible, as not to be thought of even among the wildest capriches of a *Romance*

mance: yet to so hard straits are we driven, that we must defend the possibility of this later assertion.

Which to compass, we distinguish this word, *Together*, as capable of signifying an *unity* either in *place* or *time*: and, if the Opponent mean one Age cannot meet another in a *Town* or great *Hall*, as *Councils* use, I am easily perswaded such interviews are impossible; but if this Assembly needs only the unity of time, I think it will require but a moderate stock of faith to believe, either that men of the same Age live together in that Age, or that Fathers meet with their Children. If then we put all Fathers and Mothers, all Pastors and Teachers to make one Age, and all Children and young persons, who come to be instructed, and afterward outlive their Tutors, to compose the other age; I see no great impossibility in this position, but a clear one in the contrary. For, I cannot believe the Opponents think, men, since Christs time, start out of mole-hills with clods on their heads, as it seems *Empedocles* and *Horace* imagined, and the *Toscans* of their wise *Tages*, high Master of their skill in *Augury*.

And this answer cuts off another difficulty, urg'd by certain Speculatists, that, because, in some rude times, they imagine the
learned

learned were few, and therefore subject to corruption by hopes or fears, they might more easily be prevail'd with to proclaim a false *Tenet* in that Age; whence, this claim of infallibility would remain broken: But the former answer saves it; for since neither the great multitude of Instructors, nor instructed persons can meet in any other assembly then that of the whole and open World, all possibility of corruption is evidently avoided.

THE THIRD ENCOUNTER,

*Solving two other Objections against the
infallibility of Tradition.*

THe fourth opposition denys the necessity of assigning any Age wherein an error may be said to have crept in; because (say they) an error might begin first in one Country, and insensibly steal over into another, without any notice taken of its novelty, so that there is no time wherein its beginning is discoverable: For proof, they instance in some error held by divers Hereticks in divers ages; and tell you, the best
Historian

Historian knows who was first mentioned to have broacht that error: whereas perhaps a less diligent or careless Writer may cite some middle or late Author, attributing to him the original invention of that opinion.

To this we reply, 'tis too desperate an Answer to call a hundred years an insensible time, to suppose all the Pastors stupify'd, and the Doctors asleep for a whole century together. At least, let us ask this fair question, Was there no Doctor or Bishop made it his business to promote that new opinion within a hundred years? If you say, no; how could an innovation of any considerable importance get footing which had no eminent patron? If you say yes; see whether that was not the occasion of impugning all heresies, when extraordinary persons divulged them: I, but you'll say, it was so transcendent a Doctor that he overtopped all. Here, I confess my weakness: for if some sky-faln Angel, indeed, should come, with tongue and pen more then humane, I doubt not but he might perhaps endanger a great part of the Church: but, if we make our comparison only betwixt men; who ever had the like reputation in the Greek Church, as *Origen*? yet he was condemned by the same Church. Who was more eloquent

quent then *Eusebius Casariensis*? more cunning then *Eusebius Nicomediensis*? more subtle then *Arius*? Let us add a faction so powerful, as to make ten Councils, to number three hundred Bishops; yet, notwithstanding all this, the *Arians* were condemned. The *Dragon* drew but a *third part* of the Stars; and the Apostle has armd us, even against the treachery of Angels; charging that, in spight of them, we cleave fast to what we have receiv'd, to what was Preach'd to us, that is, to *Tradition*: For rely but on what, in memory of our own age, the Church has universally held, and deliver'd, as from Christ, and no subtlety of men or Angels can make you mistake.

Yet, Let it be supposed, some unparallel'd Brain had the power to make a doctrine universal; could this stand with the still way of creeping in insensibly? Is not this position, that a Doctor was so great, & took so much pains to divulge his opinion, wrote so many Books in defence of it, that he overcame all opposers, and at last made it universal; and yet all this while the new doctrine stole in unawares, the Pastors of the Church never dreaming any such thing: is not this as very a Bull as to say, an Army shot off all their Attillery, that the Enemy might not discover where they lay? or to do, as is reported

ported of an acquaintance of mine, who being in good company, to ride through a Town, where he was afraid to be taken notice of, at his entrance set spurs to his horse, holding his Cane straight before him, and Trumpeted *Tararara Tararara* the whole length of the Town? Nevertheless, since 'tis for our side (says the *Zelot*) 'tis an invincible demonstration.

But we desire leave to consider one point farther; In what times came in the errours, our Adversaries so loudly complain of? see whether they be not those ages when there were great quarrels about innovations encroaching on the Church, and multitudes of exceptions taken: so that, had any side entertain'd a new errour, not common to both parties, especially if the novelties were any way notable, they could not have been pass'd over without mutual contradictions or upbraidings. The doctrines therefore which in those times pass'd unreprehended, and were currantly admitted among all parties, as being common to them all, without question were not *Errata, sed Tradita*. Whence, certainly it must needs appear a manifest folly, to think any errour could run through the Church so uncontrol'd, as to gain, without the least sign of opposition, an universality: and much like
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the story, that the great *Turk*, with an Army of three or four hundred thousand men should steal upon *Germany* by night and take all the good fellows so fast asleep that not a man should escape, nor so much as a *Goose* gaggle to wake the drowsy neighbours, and, having thus silently run over the Empire, should pass into *France*, and thence into *Spain*, and still catch them all napping without the least notice or resistance: whereof, if any slow and dull heart should doubt, as seeming indeed somewhat an improbable story, the reporter should immediatly prove all with a *why not?* since the Greeks had surpriz'd *Troy* so, and perhaps some other great Captain one single Town or Garrison.

Besides, if we venture to throw away a little faith on so extravagant a fable; the action will still remain impossible to be conceal'd. Who shall hinder the Conqueror from proclaiming such unparalleld victories, to applaud himself and terrifie the rest of the world? who can forbid his souldiers to Chronicle their own valours, and everywhere boast such un-heard of exploits? Certainly, were there no Catholick testimonies of these late unhappy divisions from the Church, yet would succeeding ages find evidence enough (as to the matter of fact)

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even in the writings of the Reformers themselves. How often do their Books insult o're the blindness of their Predecessors, and triumph in the man of God *Martin Luther*, and the quicker light *Jo. Calvin*, as first discoverers of their new-found Gospel? can we think it possible distracted *Europe* should blot out of her memory the sad effects of Schism and heresy, before the tears they have caus'd be wiped from her eyes? for my part, I am confident our once happy Island will never forget the graceless disorders of *Henry the eighth's* unfortunate intemperance, though there were not one English Catholick left in the world, to remember them by the smart he endures ever since.

Add to all this, the points, wherein *Protestants* accuse us, are the most palpably absurd positions that can fall into a Christians head; as, making Gods of Saints or Statues, which were the dotages of the basest sort of Pagans.

Nor is the example of errors often sprung and often quell'd again, of any advantage to the Opponent. For our question concerns opinions remaining till this day, and by himself, supposed to have gain'd the mastery of the Church, and never fail'd since their beginning: because all doctrines, which appear to have a *being* before any age
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the Adversary can name, are thereby evidently proved perpetual Traditions; especially when the Authors were such as lived in Communion with the Catholik Church then extant, and remain'd in veneration with the Church succeeding.

It methinks also since the opposer maintain it was more then a whole Age in working itself up to this universality, if the error were gross, it must without doubt have been a long time in one Country, before it passed into another; else we shall scarce find a reason why it became not general in a shorter period of years; and so it would easily appear, until such an age that new doctrine was never heard of: and in every Country the beginnings would be mentioned by the Historians and other writers: as, who came out of *Greece* into *France* to plant *Images*, who first introduced the *Priests* power of *absolution*, who invented the doctrine of preferring the *judgment* of the *Church* before our own *private* interpretation of *Scripture*; all which we see exactly perform'd against every considerable *Heresy*, a minute and punctual account being stil *upon Record*, who were the original contrivers, who the principal abettors, where they found patronage, where opposition, How long they lived, and when they died.

To evade this reason, is fram'd the next crimination, by saying what is answer'd has its probability, if the errors laid to our charge were *contrary* to Christian doctrine: But they only pretend to accuse us of *superfetations*, or false and defective additions to the Faith first planted; which excrescencies, only, the Reformers seek to take away. And, though it be manifest, when they come to charge us in particular, they instance in doctrines *substantially* opposite to the Faith of Christ, as *Superstition* and *Idolatry*, could their calumnies be justify'd against us: yet, because this objection civilly renounces such harsh and uncharitable language, let us see what may be intended by *Superfetations*.

Either the disliked additions are of *truths*, or of *falsities*. If, of *truths*, we expect they would demonstrate who has forbidden us to learn and advance our knowledg in Christian Religion, or matters belonging to it. Did God give his *Law* to Beasts, that have no discourse nor capacity, by joyning two *revealed* truths to arrive at the discovery of a third? Again, where is it prohibited for the Doctour and Preacher to know more then the Ideot and old wife? What fault then can even the proud and peevish humour of this age find in this point? If Hereticks

reticks will raise dust, and obscure the clearest articles of Christian faith, and that so maliciously, as without settling some further explication, the people are in danger of being perverted : is it a sin to establish such defences and Ramparts against encroaching errors ?

If the addition be of *falsities* ; let us examine how the Opposer knows they are false ? If he reply, because they are contrary to clear *Scripture* : then they are also contrary to that Faith which deliver'd *Scripture* to be true. If the points be not against *Scripture* ; either they crosse some known Article of Faith, or only the Principles of natural reason. If they be purely objects of natural reason (though truths) they belong not *so* to Religion, as to be accounted *Articles of Faith* : if they contradict some other fore-taught Article, then the Argument before explicated (concerning the infallibility of Tradition, and the creeping in of Errours against it) returns to its force. In neither of these, why are they false, or upon what grounds condemned ?

But peradventure he excepts not against the Truths, but the obligation to believe and profess them. Admitting then the additional points to be, in themselves, true : why will not the Opposer assent to them

Has he a demonstration against them? No, for then they could not be true. Has he such Arguments, that nothing opposite is equivalent to their eminent credibility? No; for, setting aside demonstration, no argument can be comparable to the *Churches Authority*. The reason therefore, if the inward thoughts be faithfully sifted, will at length appear no other, than the preferring his own Opinion before the judgement of the Church: which being the effect of an obstinate and malepert pride, makes no legitimate excuse for not believing.

THE FOURTH ENCOUNTER.

That unlearned Catholiks rely upon the infallibility of Tradition.

THE next exception is of main importance; for it undermines the demonstration at the very root, denying that the Church of *Rome* relies on Tradition: and having divided the believers into learned and unlearned, first undertakes to prove the unlearn'd not to be grounded on Tradition; at least, not for their whole Faith.

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For, if a question arise never thought of before, and once a Council determine the Controversie, that decree is accepted, as if it had come from Christ by Tradition; and all professe a readines to obey, and therefore are like to perform their word, if occasion be offerd. Besides, in Catechisms and instructions, the Common-people are not taught, that the doctrine comes handed down to them from the Apostles. In Sermons, we see, when any proposition of difficulty or concernment is treated, proofs are alleag'd out of Scripture and ancient Fathers: a practise even the fathers themselves continually observe, who, having propos'd a point, are ready to adde, it is not they alone that teach this doctrine, but the Apostles or Christ, or some renowned Father; never mentioning Tradition, unlesse to oppose or disable it, when some Hereticks have laid claim to it, as the *Quartadecimans*, *Chyliasts*, *Communicants of Infants*, and the like.

The charge I confess is fierce; let us see what powder it bears, what shot. We agree the Church comprehends both learned and unlearned, and so are bound to maintain that both sorts rely on Tradition. As for the first objection then, concerning the readines to embrace a Councils definition,

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with the same assent, as if the truth were descended by Tradition; I can either and indifferently grant or deny it: Since, if I please to grant it, I have this secure retreat, that a conditional proposition has no force, unless the condition be possible: and for the possibility of the condition, I distinguish the subject; which may be matter of Practice and Obedience, or a speculative proposition. Of the first I can allow the assent to be the same; that is, an equal willingness to observe it: Of the second, I deny it ever was or can be, that a Council should define a question otherwise than by Tradition; Therefore, to rely on the Councils definition takes not away, but confirms the relying on Tradition. This, if need were, could easily justify, by the expresse proceedings of all the principal Councils. Thus the condition having never been put, nor proposed ever will be, all this Argument rests solely on the Objectors credit, and is with as much ease rejected as it was proposed.

Now should I chuse (according to my above reserv'd liberty) to deny such equality of assent; the Opponent has offerd no proof, and so the quarrel is ended: for though I could produce instances to the contrary, I think it not fit to multiply questions when

the argument can be solved with a simple denial.

But how the Opponent can justify the second branch of his exception, that in *Catechisms* this doctrine is not taught, I am wholly ignorant. As far as my memory will serve me, I never heard the *Creed* explicated but, when the Catechist came to the Article of the *Catholick Church*, he told them how *Catholick* signify'd an universality of place and time; and that, for this title of *Catholick*, we were to rely on her testimony. Likewise, in the word *Apostolick*, he noted that the Apostles were the founders of the Church, and her doctrine theirs, as being first receiv'd from them and conserv'd by the Church ever since; and that for this reason we were to believe her Authority. Thus you see, that famous phrase of the *Collician faith* is built on this very principle we maintain. True it is, Catechists do not ordinarily descend to so minute particularities, to tell ignorant people whether any position may be exempt from this general Law. But then we also know the rule, *Qui nihil excipit, omnia includit.*

Sermons (upon which the third instance is grounded) are of another nature; the intention being, not so much literally to teach the Articles of Christian doctrine, as to persuade

persuade

erswade and make what is already believ'd
 sink into the Auditory, with a kind of wil-
 lingsness & easiness, that their faith be quick-
 ed into a principle of action to govern their
 lives, the principal end perhaps for which
 the *Scripture* was deliver'd and recommen-
 d to us. Therefore, neither the common
 practice, nor proper design or use of *Sermons*
 reaches home, to make us understand on
 what grounds the hearts of *Catholicks* rely;
 no after all disputations, retire themselv's
 to this safe guard, To believe what the *Ca-
 tholik Church* teaches; as none can be igno-
 rant that has had the least convers with such
Catholicks as profess not themselv's *Divines*.
 For the last period of this objection,
 where the *Fathers* are brought in to cry out
 against *Tradition*, and *Hereticks* made the
 pretendeders to that title: 'tis a bare as-
 sertion, without so much as a thin rag of
 proof to cover it; of which, I believe, here-
 after, we shall have particular occasion to
 discourse more largely. Thus cannot all
 the diligence I am able to use find any
 pound of difficulty in the belief of the
 learned, but that assuredly their faith is
 establish'd on *Tradition*, if they rely on the
 Church as it is *Catholick* and *Apostolick*,
 which all profess, from the gray hair to
 the youth that but now begins to lisp his *Creed*.

THE FIFTH ENCOUNTER

*That Catholick Divines rely on the same
infallibility of Tradition.*

Tis time now to come to the second part and see what is objected against the learned sort and the long Robe's Resolution of their faith into Tradition: At first is brought on the stage a couple of great Cardinals, *Perron* and *Bellarmin*; the former saying, out of *St. Austin*, that the *Trinity*, *Freewill*, *Penance*, and the *Church* were never exactly disputed, before the *Arians*, *Novatians*, *Pelagians* and *Donatists*: Whence is infer'd that, as more was disputed, so more was concluded; therefore more known and consequently not all deriv'd by Tradition.

But if we should answer, that disputing betwixt Catholicks and Hereticks, is, on the Catholick part, no other then proving and defending those points which were deriv'd by Tradition, and found in Christian action and behaviour, this argument will be cut up by the roots, and all pretence a

colour of it taken away : Which is the very truth of the business : this being inseparably the difference betwixt Heresy and Catholicism , that when those perverse novelties first peep out of their dark grots, the Catholick Religion securely possesses the World ; and upon such opposition is at first surpriz'd, and the Divines, perhaps, put to it about for plausible defences and reasons to satisfy unstable heads, who easily conceit themselves wiser then their forefathers, and scorn authority, unless reason be proportion'd to their capacity or humour to marshal it in.

Nevertheless, because disputing cannot otherwise but bring to light some deductions, consequent to the first & principally-defended Position ; I shall not deny the Church may come to know somewhat, which haply before she never reflected on. But then those new truths belong to the science we call *theology*, not to Faith ; and, even for those, the Church rely's on Tradition, as far as they themselves emerge from doctrines deliver'd by Tradition : so that the truth attested by the learned Cardinal out of *St. Austin*, is, that, by much canvassing, more clear proofs and answers are discovered, or more ample Theological science concerning such mysteries, acquir'd.

Bellarmin is brought in excusing *Pope John 22.* from being an Heretick, though he held no souls were admitted to the vision of God, before the day of Judgment; because the Church had not as yet defin'd any thing concerning it: I confess, many more might be produc'd deprehended in the like actions; and, before all, *St. Austin* excusing *St. Cyprian* on the same score. Now, to draw a conclusion from hence, this is to be added, that surely if there had been a Tradition, neither the *Pope* nor *St. Cyprian* could be ignorant of it, and therefore not excusable upon that account. But, in truth, I wonder this point is no harder press'd; for, if any would take pains and look into our *Schoolmen*, they might find very many of them maintain, that *Tradition* is necessary only for some points not clearly express'd in Scripture: whence it seems to follow they build not the whole body of their Faith upon Tradition.

For satisfaction of this difficulty, I must note, there is a vast difference betwixt relying on Tradition, and saying or thinking we do so. The *Platonists* and *Peripatetick* are divided about the manner of vision; *Aristotle* teaching, that the object works upon the eye; *Plato*, that the eye sends out a line of Spirits or rays to the object: Yet nothing

were more ridiculous then to affirm, the *Platonists* saw in one fashion, the *Peripateticks* in another. Some (as I fear may be experienc'd in too many of our modern *Scepticks*) are of this desperate and unreasonable opinion, that we have no maxims evident by Nature, but contradictories may be true at once; the rest of Philosophers think otherwise: yet we see, in all natural and civil actions, both sides proceed, as if those maxims were evident and irresistible. So likewise, there is a wide distance betwixt these two questions what a man relies on for his Assent or Faith, & what he says or thinks he relies on. Look but among the *Protestants* or other *Sectaries*, they are all taught to answer, *they rest wholly on the Bible, the Bible, for their Faith*; but nine parts of ten seek no farther then the Commands of their own Church: that is, all those who either cannot read or make it not their study to be cunning in the Scriptures, or have so much modesty as to know themselves unable to resolve those many intricate controverted points by the bare letter of the Text; who, perhaps are not the less numerous, but certainly the more excusable part of *Protestants*.

Whence, farther, it is clear that, to ask on what a private person grounds his belief, and on what, the Church? is yet

a more different question ; especially, if you enquire into what he *thinks* the Church resolves her faith. For, supposing the Church, as to some verity, should rely on Scripture or Councils ; a Divine may know the Church holds such a position, and yet (though of a just size of learning) not know, or, at least, not remember on what ground she maintains it : and in that case, no doubt but his faith stands on the same foundation with that of the Church ; yet he cannot, perhaps, suddenly tel, whether it be resolved into Scripture or Councils. To conclude therefore this demand, whether *Bellarmin* himself rely'd on Tradition, for all points ? has not the least resemblance with this other, whether he thought the Church did so ? And, to come yet closer to the question ; 'tis evident, every believer, under that notion, *as a believer*, is unlearned and ignorant : For, as such, he rests upon his teacher, who in our present case is, undoubtedly, the *Church as Catholick and Apostolick* ; so far, therefore, the *Collier* and *Bellarmin* depend on the same Authority. As for the other part of the interrogatory, on what he thinks the Church rely's for her doctrine ? it may be enquir'd either in common or particular. In common (relating generally to the body and substance of Catholick doctrine,) there is no doubt,

doubt, among Catholicks, but their reliance is upon *Tradition*, this being the main profession of great and small, learned and unlearned, that Christian Religion is and has been continued in our Church, since the days of our Saviour, the very same faith the Apostles taught all Nations, and, upon that *core*, they receive it: Speaking thus therefore, no Catholick makes any scruple but Religion comes to him by Tradition.

There remains now, only, what learned men think, concerning the ground wheron the Church rely's, in some particular cases: which we have already shewn concerns not their private belief, as 'tis the foundation of their spiritual life; for, so, they rely on the Church, and what the Church rely's on: and by consequence, it will prove but a matter of opinion in an unnecessary question belonging purely to Theology, not Faith, whatever is said in it. Whence Divines in this may vary without any prejudice to the Church or salvation, either in private or in order to Government; seeing the main foundation is surely established, that every believer, as such, rely's on the Church immediatly. This difficulty therefore is so far resolv'd, that it little imports what opinion *Bellarmin* or any other private Doctor holds in the point: since it follows
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not that the Church, or any particular member thereof, rely's on such a ground; no not *Bellarmin* himself, though he conceive, in some points, the Church rely's on Scripture or Councils.

But, since *St. Austin* marches in the head of this Troop for defence of *St. Cyprian*, let us proceed with more diligence and respect in reconciling the difficulty. We are to remember, 'tis a different question, to ask Whether an opinion be Heresy? and, Whether the Maintainer be an Heretick? the opinion becomes heretical by being against Tradition, without circumstances; but the Person is not an Heretick, unless he knows there is such a Tradition. Now, *St. Cyprians* case was about a doctrine included in a practice, which, he saw well, was the custom of the *African*, but knew not to be so of the universal Church, till some congregation of the whole Christian World had made it evident. And herein consists the excuse *St. Austin* alledges for *St. Cyprian*; 'tis true, I have no assurance this Apology can be alledged for *John 22*. but another perhaps may, that the multitude of Fathers (which he conceiv'd to be on his side) might perswade him, the opposite opinion could not be a constant Tradition. There remains only *Bellarmins* excuse to be justify'd

justify'd, which is not of so great moment : Divines helping themselves by the way that occurs best to them, and missing in such reasons, without any scandal to their neighbours.

One of these two solutions will generally satisfy all such objections as are drawn from some fathers mistakes against the common Faith. For nothing can be more certain, then, if any Father had known the doctrine, contrary to his error, to have been universally taught in the Catholick Church, by a derivation from their ancestors, beyond the memory of any beginning, he would readily without dispute have submitted to such an Authority, and so much the sooner, as he being neerer the Fountain, could less doubt that the stream, of which he saw no other rise, reach'd home to the Spring-head. This therefore is evident, that whoever erred, knew nothing of such a Tradition, whence so'e're that ignorance took its root: the severall causes of which depend upon the severall cases of their mistakes, here not pressed, and therefore not examin'd.

THE
SIXTH ENCOUNTER,

*Disabling three other Arguments brought
against Tradition.*

THe seventh objection pretends, not only different, but opposite Traditions might be deriv'd from the Apostles. And this they support with these two crutches: one consists in a demurrer, that the contrary is not proved: the other in an Instance, that it plainly hapned so in the case of the *Quartadecimani*, who inherited from St. *John* a certain custom, which was condemned by a practice deriv'd from some other Apostles. But the weaknesse of this objection appears by its very proposal: For, since all Catholics, when they speak of Tradition deliberately and exactly, define it to be a *Doctrin* universally taught by the Apostles, we may safely conclude, where two Apostles teach differently, neither is *Tradition*: And that this word, *universally*, may not seem, by slight of hand, cog'd into the definition, on purpose to take away this objection; the necessity of it is evident: because, all that weare
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the name of *Christian* unanimously agreeing that, in point of *truth*, one Apostle could not contradict another; wherever two such Traditions are possible to be found, it absolutely follows, no point of *truth* is engaged: An inference expressly verified in the example of the *Quartadecimans*; their contention being meerly about a Ceremony, not an Article of Faith. Wherefore, only indifferent and unnecessary practises are subjects of such a double Tradition: and, by consequence, such Traditions are not of Christian believe, or concerning matters here, in controversy; this very definition rather directly excluding them.

The eighth Argument seems to take its rise from our own confessions; telling us, We acknowledge some points of Faith to have come in later then others, and give the cause of it, that the Tradition (whereon such points rely) was, at the beginning, a particular one, but so that yet at the time when it became universal, it had a testimony even beyond exception, by which it gain'd such a general acknowledgment.

The example of this is in *certain Books* of Scripture, as the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, and the *Apocalyps*; whereof, in St. *Jerom's* time, the *Greek Churches* refus'd the one, and the *Latin* the other; yet now both have prevail'd
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into an universal reception. To which I return this clear answer: 'tis the nature of things acted, (that depend on Physical and mutable causes,) to have divers degrees in divers parts, according to the unequall working of the Causes: and so, Christ having deliver'd, by the hands of his Apostles, two things to his Church, *his Doctrin, as the necessary and substantial aliment thereof,* and *his Scriptures, ad abundantiam;* it was convenient, the strength of *Tradition,* for one, should far exceed its strength for the other; yet so, that even the weaker should not fail to be assured and certain. Upon this reason, the *Doctrin* was deliver'd to all the Apostles, and by them to the whol community of Christians: the *Scriptures,* to some particular person or Church, (yet such whose credit was untainted) and from them, by degrees, to be spread through the whol Church, and communicated to the *Pastors,* in the *Books themselvs;* to the *people,* by their *Pastors reading and explications.* For, who does not know, before Printing was invented, the Bible was not every mans money? Whence it appears, *Scriptures* are derived to us by a *lower degree of Tradition,* then that of *Catholik doctrin;* and consequently our *Faith* and *acceptance* due to them is not of so high a nature as what we are bound to

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in respect of doctrine. For the sense of Scripture is to be judged by the doctrine: as the Church and custom of Antiquity teaches us: alwaies commanding and practising, that no man exercise his wits in interpreting the holy Scripture against the receiv'd Faith of the Church; as, in all matters of science, they who are Masters in the Art, judge the text of Books written upon such subjects by their unwritten skill and practical experience.

And here I would willingly ask, what such Protestants as object this to us, can answer for themselves? since they directly profess not to know Scripture by the Spirit, and therefore must necessarily rely on Tradition; especially those who take for their rule to accept only such Books for Canonical, as were never doubted of: for they cannot deny, but the Scriptures were receiv'd in one Church before another; as the Epistles of St. Paul, St. John, or St. Marks Gospel, &c. and how do they admit the Apocalyps, so long refused by the Greek Churches, whom they use to prefer before the Latin?

But they presse us farther; that, if a particular Tradition became universal, this depended on the Logick of those Ages, to discern what testimony was beyond exception. I demand what signifies Logick? do they

they mean common sense, sufficient to know three and four make seven; or wit enough to comprehend and manage with a just degree of discretion, the ordinary occurrences in humane actions? If they do; I must confess it depends on *Logick*: For I cannot think God Almighty deliver'd the Scriptures to Apes or Elephants, who have a meer imitation of reason in their outward carriage; but to Men, that have truly understanding, and a capacity of evidence within their Souls. But, if they take *Logick* for an ability to discourse beyond the reach of ordinary prudence, and that human evidence which governs our lives; I see no occasion of expecting any such *Logick* in our present question.

The ninth attempt consists in a diligent survey of our *Fortifications*, to spy out some *breach*, or weaker place, by which error may creep into the Church. This I cannot call an Argument; for none are so unwise as to make such a consequence: It may be therefore 'tis; unlesse they bring strong proof of this necessity in some particular instance, that may shew it to be an exception from the common maxim, *à posse ad esse non valet consequentia*: And yet, in this discourse, I find not so much as the very *posse*, which I thus declare. If any should deny that

George could leap over *Pauls-steeple*; and a quaint Oratour (to maintain the affirmative) should largely discourse, how the rise of the last footing, the help of a good staffe, the cast of his body, and many such circumstances give advantage to the leap; but never think of comparing these with the height of the Steeple: no sensible person would say, he had proved the possibility of performing such a wild and extravagant enterprize. So, he that discourses at large, how errours use to slide into mans life, without comparing the power of the causes of errour to the strength of resisting, which consists in this principle, *Nothing is to be admitted, but what descends by Tradition*; as also, without considering the heat and zeal still preserv'd alive in the Churches bowels from the great fire of *Pentecost*: says no more towards proving an errour's overrunning the Church, then the Oratour we exemplified, for *Georges* leaping over the Steeple. Wherefore this attempt is so far from the business, it deserves not the honour of being accounted an Argument.

Yet, because we compar'd the propagation of the Catholique Faith, to the perpetuation of Human kind, let us propose the like discourse against it: and say, that in *Affrick* or the Land of *Senega*, there are under earth,

great mines of *Arsnick*: Whereof one may at some time or other, vapour a contagious smoak, which, encountering with a strong wind from the South, may breed so great Plague in all the North Countries, that none can escape it; and hereupon presently conclude, that all, on this side the *Line*, are quite dead, and those who seem to live and discourse are but phantasms and have nothing of real in them: though I believe the instances (brought in, for declaration of groundless a conceit) may seem better to deserve that name.

THE SEVENTH ENCOUNTER

*Answering the Greeks and some Divine,
who object new Beliefs to the Catholick
Church.*

THe first is of the Greeks; *Hieremie Nil* and *Barlaam*, who profess to stand to Tradition and the first seven *General Councils*, and can be no way disprov'd, say's the objector, unless by what shall be as forcible against the Catholick cause. But truly this instance is so lame, it needs a new making, before it be answered: For the Au
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
nor expressees not in what points of difference betwixt us and them; he intends to urge it. If, about *shavings* or *fastings* and the like; we shal have no quarrel against him; about the *Procession of the holy Ghost*, I doubt he will find himself entangled in an equivocation, betwixt the matter and manner of that mystery. However, *that all arguments against them will serve against us*, is but the Authors liberal addition; without any proof or means to guess at it. That they accuse us, to corrupt Tradition by sowing tares among it; has two parts; he justify's my plea, that we rely on Tradition, since they charge us with endeavouring to corrupt, not disclaim it: the other, that we do indeed corrupt it, is only said not proved; and farther shews that the plea of the Greeks is *non-Tradition*, alleading only this; that their Fathers do not deliver the doctrine of the *procession* of the Holy Ghost, not that they say the contrary; which clearly demonstrates, there are no opposite Traditions between them and us.

As little force has the Note cited out of *Artullian*, to prove that he thought more eas to be believ'd, then what was drawn from antiquity; because he was content private men might begin good customs in their own houses: For sure he could not

believe, that *omnis fidelis* could *constituere* for the whole Church, or even for his neighbours house. So that we need a great deal of Logick to draw from this remark, the creeping of an error into the Church: no word being so much as intimated, that this good custom should be against what was already receiv'd; which had been enough to make it rejected, and not comprehended, in *Tertullians* known judgment.

There is another instance, strongly urg'd and largely dilated; but, if I guess right, the more 'tis open'd, the more credit it has. It is out of a history by one *Wadding*, an *Irish* man, concerning two Treaties of two Kings of *Spain* with two *Popes*, to tear from them a definition for the *Immaculateneſs* of our *Ladies Conception*. (I follow an Author's words who has read the book, and it seems to have found a great violence in the carriage of the business, which made him express it, by the word *tearing*.) Who this *Wadding* is, I know not, for I have heard of more than one; but whether this be any of them, I am totally ignorant, having never seen the Book nor any other signs by which to discover the Author.

Out of this Book they collect three arguments: One from *Waddings* testimony; another from the State of the question in the hand

andles: a third, from his practice, joyntly with the practice of divers others of the same degree. For the first, I am desirous notice should be taken of the Authors condition; When he wrote this book, he was Secretary to the Bishop of *Carthagena*, and he his Kings *Ambassador*, to move the *Pope* to refine our Ladies Conception without original sin; and, in solliciting this, to use an extraordinary importunity: Wherin I see two circumstances that concern the qualification of his Book; One, that he was to act business of great heat; and, if his zeal were not conformable to the eagerness of his senders, he was like to have little thanks for his pains; The second that he was Secretary to an Ambassador, by which he had priviledg to say and publish *Dicenda Tacenda*, whether they were his own opinions or *τὸ χόρι* , so they any way advanc'd his cause.

Now, this encouraged Secretary undertakes to affirm, that many things have been defined against the opinions of some Fathers; and in the present case, he says, peradventure, it has been defin'd, that our Lady was free from all actual sin: He adds, the validity of Hereticks Baptism, the beatification before the day of Judgment, the spirituality of Angels, the souls being im-

mediatly created, and not *ex traduce*, the Assumption of our Lady, and her delivery without pain. To *Wadding* we may add *Salmeron*, who has the boldness to say *Doctores quo juniores eo perspicaciores*. *Pozz* is no less audacious, in citing opinions defin'd against the Fathers. *Erasmus* says *myriade Articulorum proruperunt*. *Fisher*, Bishop and Martyr, and as learned as any in his age consents that *Purgatory* was brought in by little and little: and *Indulgences*, after men had trembled a while at the torments of *Purgatory*. *Alphonsus de Castro* puts, in the rank of newly receiv'd Doctrines, *Indulgences*, *Transubstantiation*, and the *procession of the holy Ghost*. But beyond all, is the fact of *Clement the eighth*, a grave and wise Pope who, desirous to end the controversy between the *Dominicans* and the *Jesuits* accused by them of *Pelagianism*, neither sent for learned men, by way of a *Council*, to know what their *Forefathers* had taught them, nor examin'd with which of them the purest Ages sided: but refer'd the whole matter to what *St. Austin* said: and so it had been defin'd, had not *Cardinal Perron*'s advice prevail'd. And *St. Austin* was so various in his own opinion, that he knew not himself what he held: whereas, before him all the ancients sided with the

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Jesuits. Thus far that Book:

I know this term *Defining*, is frequently used by our Divines in matter of the Churches determinations; nor do I see any great inconvenience in the word, if the thing be understood, to wit, that *Defining* is nothing else but the *acknowledging and clearing a Tradition*, from the dirt and rubbidge opposers had cast upon it. For the rest, that some Fathers have had their eyes ty'd, in particular points, so far as not to see the force of *Tradition*, by which the Church had notice of the truth of some Doctrine, is a thing not to be doubted. And, if it were it or necessary, I could bring instances of Divines, in our daies, so blinded by arguments, that they see not the light of *Tradition* in some particular questions: wherein, the expressions only changed, they hold condemned heresies: So short is the spear of our discourse, if not directed by a carefulnes to well-employ our Logick, or by a secret grace steering us towards truth beyond the ability of our Reason.

But, what prejudice can be infer'd out of these sayings, against Tradition, I understand not: unless this be taken for a Maxim, that every one must necessarily know, of a special point, that it is deriv'd by Tradition, because really 'tis so; an inconsequence

quence, I hope already sufficiently demonstrated. Now, if these two can stand together, that, truly the *Church* has a *Tradition* for a point, and nevertheless some learned man may be ignorant of it; this argument has no force at all.

As to the positions he cites for newly adopted into the family of faith, he fairly shews the priviledg he and his Master had to speak any thing that sounded to his purpose, and let his adversaries take care whether true or no: For, nothing is more clear, then that the validity of Baptism by Hereticks was a Tradition, and decided by It: so, the *Beatifical vision of the Saints before the day of judgment*. The spirituality of Angels is not yet held a matter of Faith, but only a Theological Conclusion: as likewise, the souls being concreated to the perfecting of the body. Then for the blessed Virgin's being free from actual sin, as also her Assumption, and her delivery without pain (which others add) these either are known by Tradition, or not matters of Catholik Faith: and so, no ways advance our Adversaries pretences. For *Alphonfus de Castro*, 'tis plain by his very expressions, either he means the manner only, or at most some circumstances unessential to the things, and therefore certainly not cited without some

ome violence offerd to his words.

Poza is a condemned Authour : and *Salmeron's* saying not to be followed, or to be understood (as it is, whence he took it) in such things as later disputes have beaten out more plainly; *Erasmus* was learned in Criticism, and one whom, if not others, his very English Patrons, *Warham* of *Canterbury*, *Fisher* of *Rocheſter*, and *More* in the *Chancery*, exempt from all calumny of being a deſer- or of the ancient Faith: beſides his own Books, eſpecially his *Epistle Ad Fratres inferioris Germanie*, by effects demonſtrate his loyalty; whatever bad impreſſions a certain liberty of practiſing his wit too freely may have made in ſome even great and eminent perſons. But, what he ſpeaks concerning Articles of Faith, he either took from the ſcoldings of ſome ignorant Divines, (who are ready to call every word, they found not in their books, when they were Schollers, Hereſie) or elſe becauſe, truly, he underſtood not what belong'd to Deciſions in that kind.

There remain two Authorities really conſiderable; one of the holy Biſhop *Fisher*; the other, of the prudent *Pope*. As for the firſt, I conceive there is a great equivocacion through want of care and warineſſe in diſtinguiſhing. For, let us take either the Council

cil of *Florence* or *Trent*, in which we have the Churches sense concerning both *Purgatory* and *Indulgences*; and see whether the holy Bishop says any of the points, those *Councils* defin'd, are either denied by the *Greeks*, or brought in by private revelations or new interpretations of Scripture. For, how could he be ignorant, that the *Greeks* had agreed to the *Latin Church*, about the definition of *Purgatory*, in the *Council of Florence*; or forget himself so far, as not to remember a publick practice, *Indulgences*, in all the ancient Church, for remission of the *Penal injunctions* laid upon sinners? Besides, he says, the *Latins* did not receive *Purgatory* at once, but by little and little. Whence 'tis evident, by the name *Purgatory*, he means not only so much as is established in the *Council*, but the manner also and circumstances were introduced by revelations of private persons and argumentations of Divines. The like he expresses of *Indulgences*, saying, *They began, after men had trembled a while at the pains of purgatory*. Whence it is plain, he contented not himself with the precise subject of the *Councils* Definitions, or the sense of the Church; but included also such interpretations as Divines give of them. So that, by speaking in general terms, and not distinguishing the substance of *Purgatory*

gatory, from the Accidents and dressing of it; as likewise, in *Indulgences*, not separating what the Church has alwaies practiz'd from the interpretative extention which Divines attribute to them; he is mistaken to suppose new Articles of Faith may be brought into the Church. Neither imports it, that he uses those words, *No Orthodox man now doubts*; for that's true of such *Conclusions* as are term'd *Theological* and generally receiv'd in the Schools, yet are not arriv'd to the pitch of making a point of *Catholick belief*: besides, he expresses himself, that this generality extends no farther, then *That there is a Purgatory*.

In *Clement* the eighth's action, the main point is to consider, on what grounds he sought to establish the Definition he went about to make. And, upon the immediate step, we both joyntly stand; to wit, that it was to finde out, whether parties opinion was conformable to *St. Austin*: But, if I mistake not, my Adversaries make not the same apprehension of it that I do. They seem to take *St. Austin* for one Doctour, peradventure a great one, peradventure the chief, but yet only one: I apprehend him as the *leading Champion* of the Church in the Question of *Grace*; whence it follows, that the Doctrin of *St. Augustin* was the Doctrin of all those
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Catholick Writers, by whose demonstrations and authority the *Pelagians* were condemned; that is, it was the faith of the Church in that age, and consequently, which the Church continued ever after.

Farther, because *St. Austin* neither had the Authority to bring in a new Faith, nor pretends it; but both proves his doctrine to have descended from his Forefathers, and found *Pelagius* his opinion condemned, before he medled with it, by some Council; that is, by the apprehensions of the then present Church; and, as it spread from Country to Country, was still found contrary to the receiv'd doctrine, every where planted in their hearts before *Pelagius* contradicted it. Therefore, I say, I cannot but esteem, that, in the point of *Grace*, it is all one to say, *the Doctrine of St. Austin*, and *the Doctrine of the Apostles*, planted by them and continued to *St. Austins daies*, illustrated by him, and transmitted to his posterity, even to our present time. If this be true, (as no Catholick can deny, nor prudent person doubt but we esteem it so) *Pope Clement* had great reason to endeavour the decision of that question by the Authority of *St. Austin*: since the doctrine of *St. Austin* was evidently the faith of that Age; and the faith of that Age the faith of the Christian Church

Church, from the Apostles to us.

But we have another quarrel about St. *Augustin's* doctrine, that It is so uncertain, himself knew not what he held. Nor do I wonder such a thought should fall into the head of a Gentleman-Divine; especially in a Liberty of wit, to censure, without the least respect or reverence of Antiquity: But I tremble to hear, that some (of whom we are in justice as well as charity bound to expect more staydness and Religion) seem so wedded to their own Sect, as to mutter the same. My answer, I believe, is already understood.

I say therefore, such as have made it a principal employment of their lives, to be perfect in St. *Augustin*; those who with great attention had read his Polemical Treatises against the *Pelagians*, (as I take it) some *five and thirty* times, were of another mind: And so are all those who at this day study him, not to make him speak what they think, but to make themselves speak what he thinks.

But this question *transiit in rem judicatam*, since, when it was handled at *Rome* before the *Congregations*, when both oppositions and defences were solemnly made by the proof of present books, when the maintainers of the opinion accus'd of *Pelagianism*,

nism, were the choicest wits and ancientest Scholers could be pickt out of that so famed *Society*: nevertheless, almost in every Congregation the sentence of *St. Austin* was judged to be against them; as is evident, both out of the printed *Compendium* of the Acts of those Congregations, and the very manuscript Acts themselves, extant at this day.

But, let us hear the Pope himself speak. Upon the 8. of *July* was held the second Congregation; His Holiness began with these words. *Nos personaliter vidimus congeriem locorum, quam vos, qui Molinam defendistis, induxistis ex Augustino; & nullus inventus est qui faveat, immo contrarium tenuit Augustinus: Unde mirum quòd tot artibus utamini.* And hence it seems they were forc'd to corrupt *St. Austin* to the Popes face the 30 of *September* following; which being discovered, the Authour died of melancholy and disgrace. Again, in the tenth Congregation, the same Pope taxed them, *Quod Scholasticis, maxime suis, non Scripturâ, Conciliis, Patribus, uterentur.* A sign how sound their way of doctrine is, how sincere their proceedings to defend it.

Yet, 'tis urged farther, that the Fathers who lived before *St. Austin*, are generally of the contrary opinion. This is a simple
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assertion without proof, and my name is *Thomas*: I would entreat therefore such of my Readers as light on this objection, to remember that the question, of the force of *Grace*, and liberty of *Free will*, consists of two truths; that seem, like the *Symplegades*, to butt at one another, as long as we look at them afar off; but if we make a neerer approach, they shew a fair passage betwixt them. So then, it is not hard that one who studies the question for pleasure, especially in such Fathers as wrote before the combating of the truth by Heresies, should be deceiv'd, by the seeming overlaying of that side, which the Fathers had occasion to inculcate; though they meant nothing lesse then to prejudice the verity, which stands firm on the other side the *fretum* of this disputation. Adde to this, that *St. Austin* himself examin'd the Fathers, and found in them the doctrine he maintain'd; nor could it be otherwise, the general apprehension of the Church being against *Pelagius*. Therefore I shal follow the advice of the Proverb, and be fearful to *leap before I look*: especially, since a great reader of *St. Chrysostom* solemnly profess'd he could shew as strong places in him for *Grace*, as in *St. Austin*; though he be the man chiefly set up against *St. Austin*.

THE EIGHTH ENCOUNTER,

Shewing, our Ladies immaculate conception is not likely to become an Article of Faith.

AS for the state of the question, about *our Ladies being conceiv'd in Original sin* some would willingly perswade us, the Negative is in great probability to be defin'd; whereas certainly there is no Tradition for it (if *Wadding's* sayings be rightly reported.) But if *defining* signifies the clearing of Tradition, (as we explicate it) nothing can be more evident, then that there is no probability of defining the negative part: rather it may be in danger of being, at least, censured, for rashly putting an exception in the generall rule of Scripture, which expressly condemns all but our *Saviour* to Original sin; except the defenders can shew good ground for the priviledg they pretend, which I much doubt. For, as far as I can understand, the warrant of that opinion stands upon a devotion to our Lady, arising chiefly from a

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perswasion that original sin is a disgrace to the person in whom 'tis found: So that, if the people were taught original sin is nothing but a disposition to evil, or a natural weakness, which, unless prevented, brings infallibly sin and damnation; and that in itself it deserves neither reproach nor punishment, as long as it proceeds not to actual sin, the heat of vulgar devotion would be cool'd, and the question not thought worth the examining.

However, ther's no great appearance of deciding that point in favour of the negative; since the earnest solicitations of two potent Kings could so little prevail towards it: For, all that was done had only this design, to appease the seditions sprung up in *Sivil* by occasion of a *Dominicans Confusions*, in which he affirm'd that our Lady was *Conspirata* with *Original sin*. But, the controversy was so uncivilly carried, that it scandaliz'd our English Merchants; as one of them there present told me not long after, meeting him at *Dunkirk*.

But because this objection is much urged, let us see the probabilities of its being decided. The first is, that the maintainers of the Affirmative are only a few of one *Order*; and some few taught by them: But, if good count be made, I believe these few will

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prove some thousand or fifteen hundred the most learned in the Christian world. Their *Order* is known to have always been the flower of the Schools; to have been in the Inquisition many ages in their hands; to have a stile of Divinity of a higher strain than ordinary; by their great study and adherence to the Doctrin of *St. Thomas of Aquine*: Their Monasteries numerous, especially in *Spain* and *Italy*; no great Convent wherein there are not a dozen or more great and learned Divines, almost all the honours amongst them being distributed according to the probate of ability in knowledge: so that the *Order* is no contemptible part of the *Learning* of the *Church*. Neither is it credible their Schollars can be few much less, as this Author passionatly terms them, *unus et alter*.

He objects farther, the subscriptions of many Prelates, Orders and Universities to the general acclamation of the people, the weighty necessity of cutting off scandal. That some Universities oblige the Schollars to make vows to maintain the negative; and in a word that the Affirmers hold against the whole Church. Nor do I doubt that many Prelates, Orders and Universities subscribed the Negative, as peradventure to the Petition, or that the people

ople (who follow the greater cry) did demand the same: but, that the Affirmers held against the whole Church, I totally deny, and shew manifestly the contrary. For, *Buls* having been accepted and standing force; by which all *Censure* against the Affirmative is forbidden, and no one syllable obtain'd any way derogatory to the Probability of the opinion; but generally, *caveat* to the contrary expressly put into such instruments and the Defenders of the Negative submitting to them: 'tis clear, that all the maintainers of the Negative allow the Affirmative to be probable, and by consequence not against the consent of the Church; since it seems to imply a flat contradiction, that the Church should believe the Negative to be true, and yet at the same time admit the affirmative may be true.

Now, as for Universities, there are entire ones for the Affirmative; and that, not on the score of *St. Thomas*, but of the *Fathers*. That Universities strive for the Negative, so much as to make men take vows, I know not: The Article of *Paris*, as I hear, is only that they shall not teach it in the University; else-where every one is free. As for hindring scandals, 'tis a necessary part of Government; but certainly obliges not a defining or deciding of Truths according

ding to the inclinations of the people, push'd on by the clamours of violent Preachers.

Notwithstanding all this, our adversary presumes this very point may prove an Article of Faith; especially, if a Council should meet about the decision: wherein he proceeds with a very high confidence, it being, as he thinks, now ready to topple into a matter necessary to salvation. But I am far from that mind: for I see the fervours of the Schools are a quite different thing from the judgments of the Church, and how little all those tumults moved the Court of *Rome*, and certainly would have made far less impression in a general Council. The controversy betwixt the *Jesuits* and the *Dominicans*, what a busle makes it in the School and in the world; while it stands upon the fairer tongue, upon motives esteemable by the people, and meer plausibilities? Whereas coming to be examin'd before the *Pope* in Congregations, it could not hold water; but the weaker part was forc'd to break off the course of judgment, by mingling Princes quarrels into Ecclesiastical questions. I dare confidently say, if the Point of *our Ladies Conception* were to be handled, either in a Council or grave Congregation: the party that free her (set-
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ting aside the passions of Princes) would be distressed to find an argument that themselves should hope would endure the discussing. And so, the pretty gradations of our imaginative adversaries, who so easily frame a ladder for this opinion to climb up into a matter of Faith, is like an odd attempt of an acquaintance of mine; who, being come out of *Lancashire* to go beyond-sea, and repuls'd at *Dover* for want of a Pass, put off his hose and shooes and began to wade into the sea; when, being asked what he meant, he answer'd he would go on foot, since they would not let him pass in the Boat; for, said he, I have often waded through the *Beck* at my Fathers door when the bridg was taken away. By which counterfeiting of simplicity he got to be admitted into the ship: whereas those who make their argument from the School-discussions to Church-definitions, will (if I am not mistaken) remain on the wrong side of the water.

THE NINTH ENCOUNTER.

*Shewing the unanimous agreement of
Divines, that all infallibility is from
Tradition.*

THe third argument is drawn from this *Waddings* proceedings and his consorts, with the addition of another not unlearned man (according to the courf of these times) who puts Scripture and definitions of the Church to be the adæquate ground into which our Faith is resolv'd. Besides, 'tis urg'd, that even those who speak of Tradition, seek it not in the testimony of the present Church, but of the ancient Fathers. This being already answer'd in the sixth Objection, we need not here add much to it; For what imports it, if *Wadding* and his associates understood not upon what grounds the Church uses to resolve and decide controversies, (and therefore bring Revelations, Metaphorical expressions of Scripture, the cry of the people, a multitude of School Divines, and the like arguments) so that in their lives and believing or acting

as Christians, they proceed not out of these grounds, but, by the *Colliers* principle, rely on the Church, and by her, on what she rely's. *Galileo* dislikes the notions of wet and dry, which *Aristotle* gives: do they therefore disagree or not know one anothers meaning, when they talk of a wet and dry cloth? Among our modern Philosophers great quarrels there are about the explication of *time* and *place*: yet this hinders not, but that in common discours, when they speak of years and days, Country's and Towns, they make a shift to understand one another.

The reason is; because these conceptions (used in ordinary discours) are planted in them by nature; the same objects working the same effect upon souls of one nature: But the other notions are made by study and artificial proceeding, and prove false or true according as the precedent discourses are fallible or solid. Even so, believing is made by nature in us, and is all alike in those to whom the object is proposed alike: But to explicate and declare it, happens differently among Doctors, as they understand better or worse.

Now then admit all those we call Schoolmen were against the doctrine I maintain; though I conceive such an universal agreement

ment impossible, unless they be supposed to demonstrate their *Tenets*, (which if they do, I readily submit; if not) what doth it impeach the opinion I defend? or what would it avail to bring one or more on my behalf, whose authorities may be rejected with the same facility as offer'd; since they neither carry with them security from error nor evidence of Truth? let us therefore permit *Divines* to try out their own quarrels in their own Schools: not mingling them in our business.

Yet, to give some satisfaction, let the objector answer me himself: Does not the greater part of *Divines* seek out *Tradition*? Yes will he say: but not that *Tradition* which rely's on the present Church: for they seek it in laborious quotations of *Fathers*, in all ages. Let's agree then in this, They seek *Tradition* as well as I: But I pray what do they intend by so great labour in heaping of *Fathers*? do they mean it was those *Fathers* opinion? and so make their conclusion good, because such a number of *Doctors* held it: or do they farther pretend, out of these *Fathers* testimonies, to shew it was the publick doctrine of the Ages in which they lived? If the adversary be as ingenuous as he is ingenious, he will confess they pretend to argue the *publick belief*
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out of this numerous Catalogue. Nevertheless, for fear some other may be more reserv'd, let's remember, what was before objected, that some points have been defin'd, notwithstanding the opposition of many Fathers; and this, by the verdict of these Divines: Whence it clearly appears that this numbring of Fathers would not make a doctrine certain to them; unless they thought the sense of the respective Ages were imply'd in it: Therefore, in conclusion, it is evident that they also rely, for Faith, upon the succession of it through divers ages; which is the same as the Doctrine's being handed from the Apostles to us. So that you see we all agree; and I, whom you took to be particular in this conceit, am thus far of the common opinion.

But the adversary urges, that I come to the knowledg of this succession, by the testimony of the present Church; whereas they who search it in Fathers find it by the consent of antiquity. Suppose it be so: what difference makes this? It is too great a servility to be bound not to say any word but what has before said in my adversaries way: Yet, at least, can he justify this? do not those Divines according to what himself would have them say, profess that the present Churches definition makes a certainty in
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our Faith? Admit then the present Church (in a Council or otherways, as it shall please those Divines) should define, that a point doubted of were come down by Tradition, from the Apostles to us; would not they say, Tradition were sufficiently known by such a Testimony? Surely it cannot be deny'd; I ask again: whether the professing a point of doctrine to be hers, by receiving it from hand to hand; be not to testify and define that Tradition stands for this doctrine? Therefore all such Divines confess Tradition may be known by the testimony of the present Church.

Why then do they use such diligence in collecting so many passages out of Fathers? chiefly for this reason, because Sectaries deny that principle: therefore they are forc'd for their satisfaction (not for instruction of Catholicks) to take so much pains with little thanks many times. Though it be true their learned labours confirm, besides, some weak believer, and enlighten the borders of Catholick Faith: and so in themselves are both ornamental and profitable to the Church.

And now, what if I should add, that these very Doctors hold there is no security of Faith, but only by *Tradition*? I know I am thought subject to talk Paradoxes: nevertheless

theless, because it is a point important to the unity of the rule of Catholick Faith, out it shall go, and the discours be neither long nor obicure. I ask therefore, do not these Doctors require to the *certainty* of a *Definition*, that the *Definers* proceed without malice or negligence, and use all human endeavours to discover the truth? I cannot answer for every particular, but am sure the principal Divines require these conditions: otherwise they doubt not but the definitions may be erroneous. I ask again; what *certainty* can we have of this proceeding of the *Definitors*? or was there ever Council yet, against which the condemned Party did not cry out, that they had fail'd in observing them? I conclude therefore two things; first, that, in the Churches definitions of this nature, there can be no more then the certainty of moral Prudence, according to these mens opinions, (if they follow their own grounds:) Secondly, that there is no Moral quarrel betwixt Sectaries and them, concerning the infallibility of such definitions: for the exception generally, in the first condemnation of any heresy, rises from this part, Whether the Judg proceeded equally? and not, Whether, if he did so, his authority were to be rejected? there being seldom found so blind a boldness in any as to say, a
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Judge does him wrong, and yet proceeds rightly : for either he judges what he understands not, and that's rashness ; or, seeing the right, he pronounces wrong, and that's malice : both which are unexcusable from injustice. So that, I believe, in this point, they do not assure the Church against Heretics, though both sides should agree in the speculative part, that the *Definitors* were infallible.

I know, Divines say, Catholiks are bound to believe the *Definitor* proceeded as he ought, unless the contrary be evident ; and I see they speak with a great deal of reason : but withall, I see this maxim is a principle of Obedience and Action, not of Infallibility and belief.

I have yet a little scruple about this doctrine. For, either the *Definitors* are assur'd the doctrine they define is true, or no : If not, how can it be said they proceed rationally, who determine a position, as certain, which they see not to be so ? If they are, then the Opinion was certain, before the Definition, on some ground precedent to, and independent of it ; and so, not made certain by the definition, but only declar'd to the ignorant, by the Authority of the Definer, that it was and is certain, upon other grounds. Now, excepting *Tradition*, *Scripture* and *Definit*

ons, I know not any thing men seek into for an irrefragable Authority: Therefore, what is *defin'd*, must be, before, certain, either by *Scripture*, or by *Tradition*.

Let those Divines, now, chuse which they think fittest to cleave to: For *Rushworth* has declared his opinion sufficiently; and it is clear enough, what all they must say, Catholiks or Protestants; who think the *Scripture* needs *Explicators*, to make a point certain. Neither can we doubt of this, if we look into the actions of the *Catholik Church*; where we see an *Heretick* is term'd so, for chusing an *Opinion* against the *Faith* certainly received, and in possession of the *Church* from which he separates himself. But this separation is, at the beginning of the error, and before the interposure of the *Church*: He is therefore an *Heretick*, before any decision makes him so.

THE TENTH ENCOUNTER

That there was no Tradition for the error of the Chiliaists.

BESIDES the objections we have already endeavour'd to answer, some other instances

stances are urged : As, of *Origen*, whose doctrine being explicated in such large volumes, how an Adversary can draw it into the compass of Tradition, or how it can be argued, that the condemning of him was a breach of Tradition, I know not. But chiefly they insist upon the *Chiliasm* error, as an unquestionable Apostolicall Tradition. To try the business, let us remember, we call'd Tradition, the handling of a doctrine, preach'd and settled in the Church of God by the Apostles, down to later ages. Now then, to prove the *Chiliasm* opinion was of that nature, the first point is to evince, that it was publish'd and settled by the Apostles : the contrary whereof is manifest out of *Eusebius* History, who relates that the root of it was a by-report collected by *Papias*, a good, but credulous and simple man. His goodness surpris'd *St. Irenæus* ; who (as may be infer'd out of his *Presbyteri meminerrunt*) learned it of *Papias*, (for the plural number does not infer that there was more than one, as all know that look into the nature of words ; or, if there were more, they may be such as had it from *Papias*) *St. Justin* the Martyr esteem'd it not, as a point necessary to salvation ; but rather a piece of Learning higher than the common : since he both acknowledges other Catholics held the

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the contrary, and entitles those of his persuasion *κατὰ πάντα ὀρθογνώμονες*, right in all opinions, that is, wholly of his own mind; for no man can think another right in any position, wherein he dissentes from him: Nay, he shews that the Jew (against whom he disputes) suspected his truth, as not believing any Christian held this opinion; so rare was it among Christians; nor does he ever mention *Tradition* for it, but proves it meerly out of the *Prophets*. Whence it appears, there is no ground or probability this was ever a Tradition, or any other then the opinion of some Fathers, occasioned by *Papian*, and confirm'd by certain places of Scripture, not wel understood, most errours being indeed bolster'd up by the like misapplications; a scandal that ever since the practice of the Tempter upon Christ himself, may wel be expected to importune Christians.

But first is objected in behalf of the *Chilists*, that they had no Tradition against them. To which I reply, A contrary Tradition might be two waies in force against them; one formally, as if it had been taught by the Apostles directly, *Christ shall not raign upon earth a thousand yeers, as a temporall King*: The other, that something impossible with such a corporal raign was taught

taught by Them : and of this I finde two
 one general, another particular ; the gene-
 rall one is , that the pleasures and reward
 promised to Christians are spiritual , and
 the whol design of the Christian Law aim
 at the taking away all affections toward
 corporal Objects ; whereas this Errour ap-
 points corporal contentments for the re-
 ward of Martyrs, and by consequence, either
 encreases, or at least fosters the affection to
 bodily pleasures and temporal goods : The
 particular one is, that Christ being ascended
 to Heaven , is to remain there till the uni-
 versal judgment : Wherefore it is evident,
 by the later , that it is against Tradition ;
 and, by the former , that it is not only so,
 but a Mahumetan, or at least, a Jewish
 errour, drawing men essentially to dainna-
 tion : as teaching them to fix all their hopes
 and expectance hereafter on a life agreeable
 to the appetites of flesh and blood.

'Tis opposed also , that the Fathers of
 the purest Ages receiv'd it, as deliver'd from
 the Apostles. A fair *Parade* : but, if we un-
 derstand by the Fathers, *One*, St. *Irenæus* ;
 and him deluded by the good Zeal of *Pa-*
pian (as *Eusebius* testifies) but good even to
 folly (for lesse cannot be said of it,) where
 is the force of this so plausible argument ?
 Adde to this that the very expression of *Ire-*

neus proves it to be no Tradition; for he sets down the supposed words of our *Saviour*, which plainly shews it is a *Story*, not a *Tradition*; a *Tradition* (as we have explicated it) being a sense delivered not in set words, but settled in the Auditors hearts, by hundreds of different expressions explicating the same meaning.

There follows *Justin Martyr's* testimony, That All Orthodox Christians in his age held it; (for $\delta\omicron\xi\alpha$ and $\gamma\nu\acute{\omega}\mu\eta$ (say they) are not so different, but one may be taken for the other.) Nevertheless, there is no such saying in *Justin*; for, however $\delta\omicron\xi\alpha$ and $\gamma\nu\acute{\omega}\mu\eta$ may pass one for the other, yet the word $\omicron\rho\theta\acute{o}\delta\omicron\xi\omicron$ has (by Ecclesiastical use) an appropriation to the Catholik or Christian right believers, which descends not from the Primitive, and so cannot be transfer'd to the Derivatives from $\gamma\nu\acute{\omega}\mu\eta$: Wherefore $\omicron\rho\theta\acute{o}\delta\omicron\xi\omicron\mu\omicron\nu$ is neither fairly nor truly translated *Orthodox*.

No more does it help the Adversaries cause, that *Justin* compares the maintainers of the contrary opinion to the *Sadduces* among the Jews: For, he mentions two sorts of persons denying his position; wherof one he resembles to the *Sadduces*, the other he acknowledges to be good Christians, and says they are many, or (in the elo-

quent usage of the word *πολλὰς*) the *Commonality* of Christians.

Nor wil the next Objection give us much trouble, That none oppos'd the *Millenar* error before *Dionysius Alexandrinus* : To which we apply this answer : First, for any thing we know, it was hidden and inconsiderable till his time, and then began to make a noise, and cause people to look into it. Secondly, there are probable Motives to perswade, it was impugn'd long before : For, it being clear, that both Heretiks and Catholiks sustain'd the contrary, we cannot wel suppose it was never contradicted till then, though the report of it came not to their ears; since, who considers the few monuments we have of the first Ages, must easily discern the hundred part is not deriv'd to us, of what was then done. But lastly, admit there was no writing against it till *Dionysius Alexandrinus* does it follow, there was no preaching neither ?

As little can be gathered out of *St. Hierom's* being half afraid to write against it both because he did write against it, as is clear in his comment upon *St. Matthew* and upon *Ezekiel*, where he calls it a *Jewish Fable*, l. 11. and because the multitude he speaks of, argues nothing of Tradition, but

the numerosity of that sort of believers, occasion'd by the writings of the Heretick *Apollinaris*, as the same Saint testifies, *Comment. 10. in Esaiam.* Neither doth St. *Austin* stick to condemn it, since those words *c. 7. 24. de Civit. Dei, esset utcunque tolerabilis*, signifie, that it is not tolerable.

Yet truly I cannot but admire, that he who puts the *Chiliasts* opinion to have been deriv'd duely and really from the Apostles by verbal Tradition, should conceive that either St. *Hierom* or St. *Austin* could think such a Tradition to be no sign of the Churches doctrin, or not care whether it were or no: which seems to me the same as to impute to these Saints a neglect of what they thought to be the Churches opinion; or elf, to the *Church*, a neglect of what was Christs doctrin, if She would not accept what She knew was descended verbally from Him; or, at least that St. *Austin* and St. *Hierom* lay this great slander, of neglecting the known doctrin of Christ, upon the Church.

THE
ELEVENTH ENCOUNTER,

*That there was Tradition for the Trinity
before the Council of Nice.*

THE *Chiliad* error seems to have been only an Usher to the *Arian*; which speaks far louder for it self. And that learned Cardinal *Perron* is placed in the front of their Evidence, whose testimony is, that The *Arians* would gladly have been try'd by the writings yet remaining of those Authors who lived before the Council of *Nice* for in them will be found certain propositions, which now (since the Church-Language is more examin'd) would make the Speaker thought an *Arian*. From whence the Opposers infer, that before the Council of *Nice*, there was no Tradition for the mystery of the blessed Trinity. But to maintain this consequence, I see no proof for the Cardinal's words clearly import that the Fathers before that Council (though being Catholiks, they knew and held the mystery of the Trinity, yet) in some phrases spake like *Arians*: How then can any man dra

draw out of this Antecedent, that these Fathers believ'd not the *Trinity*, or had not receiv'd by Tradition the knowledg of that Mystery? I confess my self unable to see the least probability in such an inference.

If it be permitted to guess what *they* aim at that make this objection: I believe it is that, some propositions concerning the *Trinity*, by disputation and discussion, have been either deduced or clear'd, which before were not remark'd to draw so much consequence upon the mystery, as since is found they do: out of which they think it follows that such propositions were not deliver'd by Tradition, and so not our whole Faith. To this the answer is ready; that, as he who says a mystery was taught by the Apostles, does not intend to say the Apostles taught what the words were, in every Language, which were to signify this Mystery; so neither is his meaning that they taught, now many ways the phrase in one language might be varied, keeping the same sense: But, as they left the former to the natural diom of the speaker or writer, so the latter to the Rules of Grammar; as likewise they left it to the speakers skil in Logick, to contrive explications or definitions for the terms wherin they deliver'd the Mysteries.

It is not therefore to be expected that men,

who had receiv'd the Myſtery ſimply and plainly, ſhould, without both art and attention, know how in different caſes, to explicate it according to the exact rules of Science. And thus, the defect of the argument or arguer is, that he ſuppoſes, not only the main verity ſhould be formally convey'd by *Tradition*; but all manner of explication and in all terms, which the ſubtlety or importunity of Hereticks could afterward drive the Catholicks to expreſs this Myſtery by: a task both impoſſible to be perform'd, and moſt unreaſonable to require, and perhaps unprofitable if it were done.

Nor therefore does it follow that ſomething is to be believ'd, which came not down by Tradition: For, as he that ſays *Peter is a man*, ſays he is a living creature, a body, a ſubſtance, (though he uſes not thoſe words,) becauſe all is comprehended in the term *Man*; ſo, he that delivers *One God in Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt*, delivers, that thoſe perſons are not *Alia* but *Alij*, and that truly the Son is not an Inſtrument, a commanded ſervant &c. Yet, as it may happen, that one man ſees another to be but knows not what the definition of him is; nor needs he ordinarily know it, becauſe he knows the thing defined: ſo may it alſo chance that ſome Fathers, who knew well

well enough the mystery, might falter in explicating it precisely according to the rigour of Logick; and 'tis no good consequence, The Fathers were less exact in some expressions concerning the Trinity, therefore they held it not or had not learn'd it by *Tradition*.

Yet I must also intimate, these differences of speech proceeded many times from the various usage of the words; as the Greeks generally say, the Father is *cause* of the Son; the Latines abhor it, calling him *Principium*: which difference is not in the meaning, but in the equivocation of the expression. So we read in St. *Athanasius*, that he found an opposition in some people; one sort saying there were in the Trinity three *Hypostases* and one *Ousia*; another three *Ousia's* and one *Hypostasis*: and St. *Hierom*, though perfect in the Greek Tongue, was so exceedingly troubled with this question, that he sent to St. *Damasus* for the resolution of it; yet he well knew there was no difference in the sense, but only in the terms; however he fear'd lest, by the wrong use of the words, he might unawares be drawn into a wrong meaning. So likewise did St. *Athanasius* find, that the two former parties, of which we spake, agreed in the Catholick sense, though their *words* were opposite.

The reason of this opposition is the nature of these two words, *Ousia* and *Hypostasis*, which primarily and radically signify the same thing; *Aristotle* telling us, that *Hypostasis* is *prima* or *primò substantia*, which in Greek is *Ousia*: whence it appears, this word, *Ousia*, does not signify what in Latin is call'd *natura*, (to which the word *substantia*, by use, is now appropriated, when we speak of this mystery) but only in a secondary sense. Again, the word *Hypostasis* is deriv'd from *Substando*, or *Subsistendo*, and therefore usually translated *Subsistentia* and might properly be express'd by *Substantia*.

Now, applying this to the mystery of the *Trinity*, Because in God there is one common *Nature*, abstrahible from three *properties*; therefore the *nature* seems to *substare* to the said *properties* and so deserv the name *Hypostasis*: wherupon some explicated the *Trinity* to be *una hypostasis, et tres Ousie*. For *Ousia* being deriv'd from *ὄν* or *Ens*, and *Ens* or *Substantia* and (in Greek) *Ousia* signifying primarily what the Schools term *Suppositum* (that we see with our eyes, a demonstrable singular, named substance, as *Bucephalus*, *Atbos* &c. which among men (if restrain'd to particulars) is call'd *Socrates* or *Plato*, (if us'd at larg) in the common name a person:) these men, very Catholickly, said three *Ousia's*

ia's and one *Hypostasis*, meaning three Persons and one God. But, the Fathers of the Council of *Nice* (by much pondering these words, by their debates with the *Arians*, and to determine a rule in speaking, that Catholicks might not be subject, through equivocation, to be drawn into error,) agreed upon the contrary; because *Hypostasis* was more commonly in use for that we call a *Person*, and *Ousia* was rather a School term fetch'd from Philosophers books, and therefore might, with less violence to common language, be taken in a secondary sense. Thus it became the rule of speaking in the Church, to say three *Hypostases* and one *Ousia*.

Besides, those speeches which *Perron* cites are not so harsh, but as, in a rigorous interpretation, they are false, so, in a moderate sense, they contain undeniable truths. Philosophers divide instruments into *Conjuncta* and *Separata*; and, among the *Conjuncta*, number up our Arms and Legs &c. which are our very substance: It does not therefore follow, if the *Son* be called an *Instrument*, that his *substance* is distinguish'd from the *Substance* of his *Father*; because the *Instrumentality* consists in nothing but the difference of their notional conceits of *Being* and *Knowledg*, wherof *Knowledg* seems to be
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but the *Vehiculum* of *Being* towards the operation or effect: So likewise, whoever works by a power that is not in himself, otherwise then from another in whom 'tis *principaliter* and (as the Greek speaks both anciently and at this day,) *Authoritative* may, not improperly, be said to be commanded; though the other be not his *Master* or *Better*. Neither is there such rigour in the genders of *aliud* and *alius*, but that *aliud* is many times apply'd to the person; and only Ecclesiastical use, grounded on the height of propriety and distinction of Genders, binds us to this manner of speaking, which for unity and charity sake we observe.

Out of what has been discours'd about the name *Ousia*, we may easily solve the seeming contradiction of the Council of *Antioch* to that of *Nice*: for, if *Ousia* may signify a *person*, (as we have shew'd it does, in its best and chiefest signification;) then *Homousion* signifies *the same person*. So that the Council of *Antioch*, denying Christ to be *Homousios* to his Father, deny'd no more then that he was the same person with his Father; which no subtlety can ever prove to be against the Fathers of the *Nicen Council*. Nor is this said to reconcile contradictories, but discover equivocations: For that this was the true reason of the opposition

tion, is easily deduc'd out of both St. *Athanasius* and St. *Hilary*, and the question which St. *Hierom* made to St. *Damasus*.

But it may be urged, if there were a verbal Tradition, how could the Christians, through want of caution, contradict one another: or, had it been as known a part of Religion as *the Resurrection*, how could *Constantine* have so slighted it, when it first rose, or *Alexander* the holy Bishop for a while have remain'd in suspense? To this I answer, If, by *verbal Tradition*, be understood, that the Tradition was deliver'd in *set words*; certainly those *set words* could not be doubted of, though their sense must needs be capable of eternal controversy: but the meaning of *verbal*, here intended, is only as contradicting to *written Tradition*; which (being in *set words*, whose interpretation is continually subject to dispute) is therefore oppos'd to *Oral* or *mental*, where the *sense* is known, and all the question is about the *words* and *expressions*.

Nevertheless, suppose it had been deliver'd in a set and determinate phrase, and that Hereticks began to use other words; a controversy might be about those terms which the Hereticks introduc'd, and many might demur, uncertain of the question in such new expressions: as we see, those who
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rely on Scripture are in perpetual quarrels about the sense; whereas, to Catholics, the *sense* of their Faith is certain, though the *words* be sometimes in question.

The reason therefore, why, at *Arius* his first broaching that desperate heresy, *Alexander* remain'd a while in suspence, was not that he understood not his own Faith, but because he apprehended not what *Arius* meant, nor whether his propositions were contrary to the receiv'd truth: But when once *Arius* broke into those speeches, that *Christ was a creature*, and that *there was a time when Christ was not*; then that holy Bishop likewise broke into those words, *Quis unquam talia audivit?* and this is the crime which *Socrates* reprehends in *Arius*, that he began to move points *προτερον ἀνοξέτασα*, formerly not question'd, but receiv'd with an uniform consent and credulity. As for *Alexanders* praising, sometimes one, sometimes the other party, it proves no more then that he was a prudent man: though *Ruffinus* seems to tax him of oversoftness. But, because few falsities can be void of all truth, and few truths (at least before much discussion) totally free from all mixture of circumstantial error; therefore it could not be otherwise then well, to praise both sides ingenuously, according as they spake truth and reason, and

and discommend them, when they fell into falsities.

As for *Constantine's* slighting the Question at first, it shews no more but that, then, he did not penetrate the consequence of it, or rather, was not well inform'd concerning it. For, ordinarily, the craftiest and most active party are they who make the first report; and if themselves be in the wrong, (as many times such are more eager and diligent than those that hold the right) their remonstrance is accordingly. And so it was: for, *Constantine* receiv'd his first information at *Nicomedia*; very probably too, from *Eusebius*, Bishop of that City, a most perverse adherent to *Arius*: nor did *Constantine* himself know wherein the question consisted; as appears by this, that in his whol Letter there is not one word of explication of the point, but only in common, that it was of slight questions, not belonging to the substance of Faith; the *Arians* stil craftily endeavouring to diminish the importance of the controversie. Besides, we have good ground to believe, that some learned men in Court were prevented by *Arius*, and sollicitated into a secret favour of this error; from whom, 'tis likely, proceeded that motion of *Constantine* to the Council, for determining the point out of

Scripture. Nor imports it, that the Bishop contradicted not this proposition of the Emperour in words; because they had reason to follow it, (though not to that end to which the Emperour propos'd it, *viz.* the solution of the question, but) to the conviction of the *Arians*, and satisfaction of the world.

For, to speak to the reality of the business, there was no doubt among the Fathers about the truth or falsity of the main matter, (being fully satisfied concerning that, by Tradition, even from their childhood:) but the question was about the answer to their enemies proofs, and to consult what arguments and reasons should be alledged against them; for the satisfaction of the Church, and the world without the Church, and for the exprellion of the Catholik doctrine, in such words as the *Arians* could not equivocally interpret to their own perverse meaning: especially, finding they had so puzzled the world with the dust they had rais'd in mens eyes, that even some good Catholiks could scarce see their way, but were in danger of stumbling against the blocks those Hereticks maliciously cast before their feet. *Ensebius Casariensis* testifies of himself, that He thought *Alexander's* party had held the *Son* of God to be divided from

from the *Father*, as one part is cut from another in *Bodies*; which would have made God a body, and truly two Gods.

For these reasons was their *magna conquisitio*, their turning of Scriptures, and their meeting in Council, as *St. Athanasius* witnesses, speaking in the name of the very Council it self, in his *Epistle de Synodis*: We met here (says he) not because we wanted a Faith, (that is, *because we were uncertain what to hold*) but, to confound those who contradict the truth and goe about novelties.

Neither can any argument be made out of *Eusebius's* Epistle to some *Arians*, in which he says, The Bishops of the Council approved the word *homoousion*, because they found it in some illustrious Fathers: for, though the inward sense of that term was perfectly traditional, yet was it not til then precisely fixt to that particular expression. But the same Bishops consented to the Excommunication of the Contradictors, *to hinder men from using unwritten words*: and was not that a proper and prudent remedy to prevent the inconveniences that easily arise from confusion and uncertainty of language; when every one phrases the mystery, according to his private fancy, and governs not his terms by some constant and steady rule,

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as, the writings of the Apostles or ancient Fathers: which interpretation exactly agrees with the Greek of Eusebius, *φώναις ἀγνάφοις*, that literally and truly signifie Words written neither in Scripture nor any where else, as the word *ὁμοούσιον* was in the Fathers. And so, I need not alledge He was a secret *Arian*; though, if he were, his testimony, as far as it reaches, would be so much the more efficacious against them, as *Theodoret* employs it.

Now, by all this may be seen, why in Councils there are engag'd so many disputations: for no calumny can be so impudent as to deny, the Fathers know their Faith before they meet there; which is plainly imply'd by the Hereticks ordinary protesting against them, as unfit Judges because they are parties, and therefore refusing to come to the Council; besides, the possession of the old Religion being as publick and notorious, at such times, as the Sun it self at noon: wherfore, to say they come to seek out or dispute their Religion, by those long conferences, is a pure folly. They then hold their Religion upon *Tradition* or *possession*: but dispute things, either for regulating the Churches language, that all Catholiks may keep a set form of explication of their Faith; or else to convince their

Adversaries out of such grounds as themselves admit.

To dispute, whether a *Council*, not confirm'd by the *Pope*, makes an Article *de fide*, or no? concerns not the difficulty now before us; and engages Catholick against Catholick, which is not our present work. In the mean while, out of all which has been said, we may gather, that there is no appearance the Catholick Doctrin, concerning the *Trinity*, was diversly taught before the Council of *Nice*, and, then first, establish'd out of the Scriptures: but, that it was the known and confessed faith of all the Ages before, as St. *Athanasius* expressly teaches; avowing confidently he had demonstrated it, supplicating the Emperour to permit the Catholicks to live in the belief of their Forefathers, and upbraiding his adversaries that they could not shew their progenitors. And to say the truth, unless a man be so perverse as to affirm Christians did not use the form of *Baptism* prescrib'd by Christ, there can be no doubt of the *Tradition* of the blessed *Trinity*: the very words of *Baptism* carrying the *Tradition* in themselves.

Lastly, 'tis objected, there was no reason for the Council of *Nice*, in this quarrel, to look into *Tradition*, since they had such abundance of *Scripture*. But we must

put out our eyes, if we do not see that even at this day the *Arians* are so cunning as to avoid the strongest Texts of *Scripture*, and explicate them by other places; and that 'tis impossible to convince, in this manner any Heretick, as long as one place can explicate a hundred opposed. The Council therefore, at last, (though favour'd with as much advantage as *Scripture* could give over its adversaries) was forc'd to conclude out of *Tradition*: as *Theodoretus*, *St. John Damascen*, and chiefly *St. Athanasius* himself confesses: a necessity which the Rules of *St. Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *St. Basil*, and *Vincentius Lyrinensis* (who teach, *it is to no purpose to dispute with Hereticks out of Scripture*,) and our own experience of above a hundred years, plainly convince and fully justify to any rational man, whose humour or interest is not to have all Religion obscure and doubtful.

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THE
TWELFTH ENCOUNTER.

That the necessity of Communicating Infants is no Tradition; But Prayer to Saints is.

There are yet two instances urged against Tradition. One that, for six hundred years, 'twas believ'd necessary to give the holy *Eucharist* to children; which custom has now been a long time disused. The proof, as far as I know of the necessity, is drawn only out of St. *Austin* and St. *Innocentius*, and some words of St. *Cyprian*; The former of which Fathers are cited to make this argument against the *Pelagians*, The *Eucharist* cannot be given, unless to those who are baptized: But the *Eucharist* is necessary for *Children*: Therefore *Baptism* is necessary for them. To which I answer with a formal denial, that any such argument is made by those holy Fathers: For their discourse runs thus, It is necessary for *Children* to be incorporated into Christ's mystical body; but this cannot be done without *Baptism*: therefore *Baptism* is necessary

cessary for *Children*. Whether of us take the right sense of these Fathers, let the Books judg; I will only add, 'tis a great shallowness to think the *Pelagians* (who deny'd the necessity of Baptism) should admit the necessity of the *Eucharist*, or that it was easier for those Fathers to prove the necessity of the *Eucharist*, then of *Baptism*; So that, their argument must be suppos'd, by the objector, to be drawn *ex magis obscuro ad minus obscurum*.

Yet, because, especially, *St. Austins* words seem equivocal, I will briefly set down the state of the question. *St. Dennis* tells us, no Priestly function was compleat without the administration of the blessed Sacrament: Thence came a custom to communicate those who were baptiz'd. This custom reached even to Infants, but neither universally, that is, in all Churches nor indispensably: For, it was only then used, when *Bishops* were present at Baptism; as is apparent, both because *Communion* was never administered, anciently, but after *Confirmation*; and because, it was always held for the complement of all Priestly Benedictions, as is before declared: Besides, in some Churches, there is not the least sign that ever it was given to *Infants*.

Another thing to be understood is, that *St. Austin*

Austin uses to explicate the Communion to be an incorporation into Christs mystical Body ; of which no doubt but the Sacramental body is both a figure and cause. This *St. Austin* himself, upon the sixth of *St. John*, plainly delivers, and, in his phrase, takes the *eating* and *drinking* of *Christs Body* to be *Faith* or *Baptism* : So do *Orosius*, *Prosper*, *Fulgentius* and *Facundus*, either explicating or following him. This equivocal manner of speaking makes those, who are either not attentive enough, or not willing to have him speak orthodoxly, construe his words *Grammatically*, that are spoken *Allegorically* ; which last his best Interpreters, and most expert in his works, accompt to be his opinion.

But to conclude this History , After their loud and full cry, as if the prey were in their sight, which I believe wii never come within their reach, (for a deep mouth is a sign of slow heels;) let us see how necessary the *African Church* (an objection more strongly urged) thought *Baptism* it self was to *Infants* , that is, in how perpetual use. And presently *Tertullian* (the mainly cited and glorify'd for *St. Cyprians* Master) tells us *lib. de Bap. c. 18. Itaque pro cujusque persone conditione ac dispositione, etiam etate, cunctatio Baptismi utilior est.* *St. Austin* (Disciple

to the other two) reports what hapned to himself, having ask'd Baptism in his Childhood, by reason of a sudden danger of death: which being passed, his Baptism was defer'd by his Mother; *Quia viz. post lavacrum illud, major et periculosior in sordibus delictorum eatus foret*; and adds, *ita jam credebam, et illa, et omnis domus, nisi solus pater*. And that *this* was not the Faith of that house only, but of the whole Country, is evident from these words; *unde ergo, etiam nunc, de alijs atque alijs, sonat undique in auribus nostris: Sine illum, faciat quod vult, nondum enim Baptizatus est*. If then Baptism itself was not perpetually administred to Infants, can we think the Eucharist was? or is here any probability it was so us'd to children, as not to be also often omitted, and that lawfully?

Maldonatus (a grave man, otherwise) exceeded, and I wonder he is tolerated, speaking so directly against the Council of Trent, after the publishing of it. But his assertion is manifestly fals: Since, 'tis known *Communion* was not used to be given but after *Confirmation*; and *Baptism*, without *Confirmation*, was held sufficient for salvation; as is beyond cavil, expressed by *St. Hierom, in Dialog. cont. Lucifer.* about the middle.

The last instance is of *Prayer to Saints*, which is proved not to have proceeded by *Tradition* from the Apostles time ; by four arguments. First , because divers Fathers held that the souls of Saints were not receiv'd into Heaven , till the day of Judgment ; therefore certainly they would teach no prayer to Saints. The Antecedent I will not dispute ; not that I believe it , but that I know not what it is to our question : For, suppose they are not ; may they not nevertheless pray for us ? we Catholics think that *Jeremy* the Prophet was not in the *Macchabees* days admitted into Heaven , yet we make no difficulty to believe that he did *multum orare pro populo & sancta civitate*. Those Fathers that are cited for the *Receptacles* , are acknowledg'd to placethe Saints in *Sinu Abrahamæ* ; and our Saviour teaches us , that *Dives* pray'd to *Abraham*. The Protestants, as well as we, allow prayer to living Saints : wherever then the dead Saints are , are they worse then when they were living , that they may not be pray'd to ? But the principal answer to destroy utterly this objection, is , that those who say we learn by *Tradition* , that *Saints are to be pray'd to* , say likewise we have learn'd by *Tradition* that Saints go to heaven , that is, are admitted to the sight of God, before the day of Judgment.

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The next proof is, that prayer to Saints began with a doubting preface of *ἤτις αἰσθησῆ-σιν*; to which I find my self no ways engaged to frame a particular answer, having no farther ground from my Adversary (who cites not any Author) to explicate the meaning of this objection. I remember, *Cardinal Richelieu*, at his death, is reported to have taken his kinsman, *Marshal de Meilleray*, by the hand, and told him that, *if the next world were such as was figured to us here*, (I deliver what I conceive to be the sense, not the words) *he would not fail to pray for him*: Now some, who had a hard opinion of that great Person, would press out of this speech, that he beleev'd not the Immortality of the Soul. Whether this also be pretended to be the meaning of that Optative term, *ἤτις αἰσθησῆσιν*, I cannot judge; for then I should easily admit it has some force against the Tradition of praying to Saints: But, if it be but an Oratorical expression and obtestation, such as is in *St. Paul*, when he presses men to good works, by the like phrase; I know not how it reaches any way to his intent, and much less against the receiving of this use by Tradition: except the objector suppose that, truly, the first Prayer he finds in writing was the first that ever was made, which is neither proved nor probable.

The third opposition is out of *Nicephorus Calixtus*, who reports, that Prayers to the *Virgin Mary* were first brought into the publick *Liturgie*, by *Petrus Gnaphæus*, a Heretick. The consequence I should make out of this antecedent is, that, seeing the Author's being a Heretik (a condemn'd and hated Person) could not hinder this institution to take root and be approved, 'tis a sign it had a deeper foundation then of his beginning: not that it was before in the *Liturgie*, but that it was an ordinary practice among Christians; which use, because we know no origin it has in *Scripture*, must have been out of *Tradition*, and not of a short time: how our Adversary wil prove the contrary, I am not able to make any likely conjecture.

The last argument is drawn out of the confession of our own Doctours, who affirm, there is no Precept for praying to Saints in the Church of God (for so much is meant by those words, *sub Evangelio*;) and yeild the reason, that Pagans might not think themselves brought again to the worship of men. Which Antecedent having two parts, the non-precept, and the reason thereof: out of the first part nothing can be deduced; out of the second this consequence is inferred, Pagans would be equally scandaliz'd
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by the Permission, as by the Precept. Wherefore, if it be commanded, neither certainly ought it be permitted.

Although no law obliges one Divine to maintain the reasons of another, yet I see no such evidence in this consequence, as, for it, to renounce the reason: for, me thinks, if those we call *Saints*, were meant to be Gods, we should of necessity be bound to worship them; whence it follows, if it be not necessary to worship them, neither are they Gods, nor the worship exhibited to them, such as is due to God; but only of that degree which we give excellent creatures: a position so conformable to Nature, that it can scandalize none but the enemies of Perfection; who, under pretence of avoiding Idolatry, take away the due honour and excitation to Vertue. But, which way, out of a *non-Precept*, can be infer'd the *non-Teaching* of the Doctrin, I cannot imagine; since what those Doctors hold, continues true at this day, when it cannot be denied that *Praying to Saints* is both taught and practiced: For though, in our prayers, there be some directions to Saints; yet, generally, Christians are not bound to such devotions, and they that are, 'tis but their own voluntary acceptance of the obligation to which such prayers are annexed.

THE THIRTEENTH ENCOUNTER

Reflecting on certain considerations: and shewing that there is nothing able to disprove the Church of Rome's Communion to be the signe of the true Church.

ALTHOUGH, out of the whole preceding discourse it be evident that this way I defend, makes the Churches Definition depend upon the *Tradition* of the point defined, and not *Tradition* upon them; as if, because *by Tradition*, we know the Churches Definitions to be true, therefore we know the truth deliver'd by *Tradition*: Nevertheless, since there may be some truth in this reflexion, That *Tradition* is known sometimes by *Definition*, let us see what can be said against it: Tis first, therefore, put into consideration, whether since four Disciples of Christ have written Gospels, or the Gospel, that is, as much as they preach'd (for they preach'd nothing but the Gospel:) if God would have us trust the Church, he
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was not both to specific so much, very plainly, in them, and farther deliver such signs as were necessary ever to know Her by.

For answer, I ask a cross question, Whether, if God Almighty would have all men see by the *Sun*, he was first to tell them which It is, and paint 'Its picture on every wall, that so we might know which is the *Sun*? And because my question may seem rather offensive then deserving any answer I proceed to the application; and ask, Whether any of those Christians, of whom Sain *John* says, *exierunt ex nobis*, could doubt which was the Church, wherof he had been a part and left it? And, since you cannot answer otherwise then affirmatively, I think I need not repeat the same question, of *Arius* and *Pelagius*, and *Luther*. If then God has provided for all these, that they were taught to yeild obedience to the definitions of this Church, so clearly, that they could neither doubt which Church was their teacher, nor of what Church he spake; how dare they presume to accuse him of deficiency in his providence? The same Authority that gave you the *Scripture*, and told you it was the *Word of God*, said likewise, that what she taught was *no lesse* the *Word of God*. If you believe her report for the *Book*, why refuse you it for the *Doctrin*? If her recom-

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ends be not security enough for the one, they will certainly prove far less for the other; since, unlesse I am strangely mistaken, the doctrine of the *Catholik Church* is not so hard to believe, as the story of the *ible*: let any *Atheist* or discreet *Moore* or *agan* be judge.

Oh, but since the Evangelists wrote *Gosfels*, they wrote all they preach'd; for they preach'd nothing but the *Gospel*. The *Gospel* is known to be the same with the Greek *Evangelium*, that is, the *Good-spel*, or happy tidings of Christs comming: so that the Book or Preaching which tels us *Christ is come*, is a *Gospel*, be there; never so much, more or lesse, in the Book or Sermon: how then it can be infer'd out of the name *Gosfel*, that the Apostles writ as much as they preach'd (for it is not credible they preach'd all they wrote) I am not able to comprehend.

The second consideration is, how we know when the Church has defined? To which I answer, In the practice of sixteen ages it has no more been doubted, when the *Church* had *defined*, then when a *Parliament* had *enacted*: Why then is there required more information? But, some Divines say more, some less to be enough. Let them be doing in the Schools, as long as the practice

Etice goes on sufficiently for the Church government.

Thirdly, we are to consider, Whether sufficient notes be left to know the Church by. But who shall use these notes? Catholicks? They are in the Church. Hereticks? They know what Church they forsook. Pagans? They look not into the Scriptures to find the Churches mark. Peradventure those Hereticks whose separation is so long since, that they remember not out of what Church they went. But none are grown so aged yet. However the marks of the Church are apparent enough in Scripture, if there want not wil in the seeker to acknowledg them.

The fourth consideration is, Whether points of Faith, or to be of Faith, be infinite (new ones continually springing) or finite? if finite, why are they not all delivered at once, to make an end of incertitude and defining? The answer is, they are both finite and infinite: finite, in *gross*, and wholly deliver'd by the Apostles, wholly believed and practis'd by this present Church; but infinite, in the *detail*, by which mans wit can parcel out this general stock of Faith. For, as soon as any sharp and crafty Heretik has varied some proposition, necessary to the explication of a fore-believed Doctrin, there may be occasion of setting some new propo-

proposition, which shall be no other than a part of what was formerly believ'd in *Substance*, though not so explicitly deciphred. As he that professes Christ is a Man, implies he has a mans Nature, a mans Understanding, and Will, and Action; though this word *Man* distinguishes not precisely these faculties: nor does he that repeats all these qualities in particular, say any more than he that said in general he was a Man. Now then I answer the objection, as *Æsops* Master did those who would have bound him to drink up the Sea: stop the Rivers (said he) and I will performe my bargain: So say I, hinder impertinent curiosities from importuning the Church, and her Truths will be undoubtedly seen in her belief and practice, without making new Definitions.

The last objection; that it will appear a shift to say the Churches definitions are certain, and yet not let it be known when he has defin'd, of it self falls flat to the ground: both because I take not that way; and, if I did, since we are not troubled about knowing our Churches Definitions, who have the burthen of obeying and do it in practice, the Objectors are confuted as *Diogenes* did *Zeno*, (when he disputed against *motion*;) by walking before him.

For all this, the Church of *Rome* must not
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escape yet: And so, we are told that, if she were design'd for the *Pharos* to know the rest of the Church by, somewhat had been advan'd; for, otherwise (say they) we can assign no mark of the true Church, the *Roman* being deny'd to be such as we make her. First, I answer, we have no need of recourse to the Church of *Rome*; it being the infallible distinctive sign of the Church, to lay claim to the *banded Doctrin*, or, *Tradition*, which evidently appears cannot be claim'd by two: For, if two agree in a point to day, and one dissent to morrow, it were madness to say the disagreeer can lay claim to yesterdays opinion.

Secondly, we say, if we would fly to the *Roman* Church, the oppositions force us not from it: For, why is not *Cardinal Perron* answer to *Plessis* invincible, that the whole Church condemn'd *St. Cyprians* proceedings? Likewise the *Asian Bishops* were condemn'd in the Council of *Nice*. The *African Bishop* question was about the enacting a Law, which nevertheless, was carried for the *Bishop of Rome*.

If the *Fathers* remit us to the *Apostolical Churches*, whose successions were, then, visible and evident; what's that to us, now, when all successions are interrupted, save only that of the *Roman Church*? The definition

of the *Council of Calcedon* is known to be only the conspiracy of a *Cabal*, never approved as legitimate; but revers'd afterwards: So that all these angry darts turn their points against their Authors; the judgment in every instance having past in favour of the Church they oppose. But this question, concerning the Church of *Rome*, is of greater extent and importance than to be huddled up in one sheet of Paper: Therefore, let us leave Her to the acknowledg'd Majesty she possesses in the Christian world; and not, by slight objections and answers, rather seem to undervalue her Dignity, than either oppose or defend her Authority.

You present us therefore next, with what is kept for the closing of our stomachs; and they are two dishes: One, that at last we Catholics resolve into *Reason*, as well as *Protestants*. To this I answer, if you mean we must see *Reason* why we give credit to *Authority*, I agree with you: But then, since Reason is on both sides, Why (say you) must it be a *Wall* to us, and a *Bulrush* to others? He tell you. *Reason* has two parts, *Demonstration* and *Sophistry*; and, in *Demonstrations*, that evidence which governs our lives, is the most familiar to us, and consequently, besides its firmness, 'tis the most clear and least denyable: Now, this propo-

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sition, that we ought to *believe* a *knowing* person, in that wherein our selves are *ignorant*, is, of this nature, a *Maxime* that governs all our life, publick and private: wherefore our ground or *Reason*, is a *wall*, a rock, or if any thing be yet more solid. On the other side, of all parts of *Sophistry*, that which is built on broken ends of obscure sentences of dead men, who cannot declare themselves, is the most weak and contemptible: and this being that you rely on, *Reason* therefore to you is weaker and more deceitful than any *Bul-rush*.

The second dish is, that whatever is deliver'd in defence of the Church of *Rome*, only proves that, *as yet*, she is the true Church: not that she cannot leave the way she is in and fall to reform (as her adversaries call it;) or that there may not happen some *Skism* among the Churches *now* adhering to her, where both parts may claim *Tradition* and then where is the guide? To this I answer, I will not weigh the proofs of other for the eternity of the *particular* Church of *Rome*: since there is no contest betwixt us here, about that: but those who are acquainted with *controversies*, cannot be ignorant, that our writers intend to prove *Her* indefectibility. All I'll say is, did you but agree with us, that she is at *present* the true Church,

Church, it would be argument enough for you to submit, til the cases happen which you suppose possible; and I should think my self too grating and severe towards a Person, in other respects extreamly recommendable, if I should press harder, then upon him, nor could I desire a repast more delightful to my soul, then to have seen *that* in practice concerning him, which is now too late to be hoped.

THE FOURTEENTH ENCOUNTER.

Four other Arguments revers'd.

Much is the condition of Religion; when the liberty of chusing is permitted to all that have the boldness to challenge it; who having no other Scales, to poise any arguments propos'd them, then the affection to their own wils or prejudice against others reasons, suffer every light objection to overthrow the most weighty and solid Demonstration. Therefore am I forc'd to follow certain other Adversaries (my chase being confin'd only to the *noble game*) to every by-turn and beat every little bush;

bush, where either the necessity of a desperate cause, the fables of some wild Reporter, or the craft of any juggling Hypocrite can drive them to hide their weak heads in.

As for reason, in our present business they tel you, every one is born in *liberty* to Religion, and, til it be demonstrated he is bound to acknowledg some Teacher, the presumption stands for *liberty*, and, 'tis merely of curtesy and graciousness, they take the pains to bring arguments for the Negative. This I shal answer as the *Caprich* of some pragmatical Chaplain; not having incivility enough to entertain the least suspicion that so great a Wit, stored with Art, in a busy a time about questions of government should bring forth so mishapen a Monster. But alas! what cannot an unruly fancy that bites the bridle of reason? Say the my young Divines, of Politick, of Patern government, what you say of Religion: not the absurdity so palpable, it wil make you asham'd? That no child is bound to honour Father and Mother, till it be demonstrated to him he ought to do so? That no Subject to obey the Magistrate, till, after long dispute his power be evidently proved legitimate? Pass from these to Arts, and every one may play the Physitian, the Pill-maker, the Judg, (for Doctor of Divinity, you fr

y give your licence to all the world) without having any Master or Teacher, what a goodly Common-wealth you will make?

But 'tis reply'd, *Nullum tempus occurrit veritati*, no more then *Regi*; since *veritas prior est Rege*. I, Sir, but in your major you put *veritas*, and in your *minor, falsitas*. For, what is your truth, when you come to declare your self, but probable arguments, of which nothing is more certain, then that they have no truth in them? a proof, as such, still carrying its truth in its force of concluding; but probable arguments have no force to conclude, and consequently, no truth. For, the truth of a *saying* is different from that of an *argument*: a true *argument* being *that* which *proves* the thing to be; a true *saying* which only *affirms* it to be.

And, if we look into it, we see, what I say is but the Law of Nature, and naturall constancy: for as, *to not act*, 'tis enough to have *no* reason; but, *to act*, we ought to have a *positive* cause: so, *to remain* in the Religion of our Birth and Education, there is no other reason requir'd, then because we are in it; whereas, *to change*, we must have efficacious motives to perswade us.

Here, my Adversary wil exult, and think, at least, Protestants cannot become Catholics,

likes, without evidence, which he conceives impossible. And, I grant his consequence, if he can prove his supposition. For, to my sight, nothing is more clear then, that Protestants *chang'd* their Religion from being Catholiks, and that upon but probable grounds: whence it is evident, no Protestant, who is formally such, (that is, holds his Religion on probable arguments, against the Catholik Church) but stands in a continual formal rebellion against *Her*, who by his own acknowledgment was once his Magistrate, and against whom himself confesses he has no more then probable exception.

Therefore, whoever, of a Protestant becomes Catholik, goes so far with evidence, that he reconciles himself to a government under which he once was, and had no just reason to depart from it, (none being sufficient to excuse so great a disorder) and so, ought, under peril of eternal damnation, return to his first obedience. For, where he is, he is certain to find no security; since, his relyance, by his own verdict, is at most but upon plausible arguments: whereas, under the other government, there may be certainty, for ought he knows; of which there is this fair motive, that they all professe it, which is more forcible for the credit of

it, then what ever he can say in abetment of the contrary. Rashly, therefore, he opposes himself to follow a false way, a way that assuredly leads to unavoydable precipices.

They reply, the *Turks* also agree in the *Law of Mahomet*, and yet that brings no evidence their Law is true. But alas! they observe not that, in saying so, they unawares call themselves no Christians: For, to us, this consent is no argument *Mahometanism is true*, because it carries no farther then that *the Law is Mahomets*; And so far is manifest out of *their* common agreement: therefore, in parity, 'tis evident, out of the consent of *Christians*, that the doctrine handed down from the *Apostles*, is *Christ's*; and the doubt may perhaps remain with the Objectors, but not with us, whether *Christ's* doctrine be true? as neither we nor they doubt that *Mahomets* preaching was false.

And seeing the case is common to all Christians, against the Roman Catholik, he only relying on *Tradition*, they all renouncing it, he only can run his Religion up to the Person of *Christ*, and there leave it securely establish'd, upon the infallible credit of his word. And as no other sort of Christian society can pretend to this priviledge, so neither can they with any colour of justice, exempt

exempt themselves from the Authority of that Church that enjoys it: an Authority, which, if ever she had, and such as she claims it, is of so unchangeable a nature, being constituted by God, being the *rock* on which the salvation of mankind is built, and the fundamental *stone* of the Church, no time nor variation of material accidents can prejudice or prescribe against it. Wherefore, if Protestants at first departed unjustifiably, they remain for ever guilty of the same crime, til they restore themselves to the Primitive union.

Again, who, unless he had renounc'd all morality, ever call'd it *liberty*, not to know, or not be bound to the rules and principles of good life? Sure these objectors either think religion concerns not good life, but is a vain and empty *Idea* in the air, little important whether it be known or no: or forget themselves so far, as to fall into the sequel of this gross absurdity. Besides, who can be so desperately passionate, as to term it liberty, to have no good *government*; and relaps again to the rude state of barbarousnes, where murder, rapes, & a thousand intolerable insolencies are publikly permitted? For, if we cast our eyes on the End of Religion, we shall see, that to want the due Rules, is as inconvenient towards the direction of mankind to final beatitude

beatitude, as the Laws of *Canibals* are destructive to all civil and friendly society. So that 'tis to be ignorant of all reason, to cry up a liberty to have no Religion, or to chuse one indifferently, as unconcern'd whether it be right or wrong. Were it not better plainly to avow the preference of the pleasures and profits of this world, before hopes so far off as the future life; then, with these ambushes, to ensnare unwary souls into the same inconveniencies, under title of *a probable Religion*?

And truly, if we look upon their lives, we shall find that *hoc Janus summus ab imo Personat*. I intend not by this any waies to derogate from the old *Roman vertues*, in this sort of people, as if there may not be found *Regulus's*, or *Cato's*, or *Seneca's* among them: for, I doubt not but the very vapour of Christianity has this wholsom effect among whom it passes, to breed in them as *Heroick* spirits as ancient *Rome* ever saw, and more too, if the like occasions presented themselves: But Nature, and Generosity, and Opinion, too often challenge their shares, or rather mastery, in such actions; and how little can justly be ascribed to the hope of heaven, I rather suspect than declare.

• To return therefore to our discourse. The *Jew*, the *Turke*, the *Heathen*, can pretend a pro-

profession of his Religion; for all these stick to such conclusions as their principles afford them: But the *Christian*, who calls Christs doctrine *his*, and confesses that he or his Sect has deserted those who alone pretend to the *successive livery and seisin* of it, can no way presume to the possession, till he plainly demonstrate the clearness of his title. Wherefore, it avails not any drowsie, rather then quiet, nature, to say his Father, (and peradventure Grandfather) was Protestant before him, and therefore he is *Possessor bonæ fidei*, whilst he pretends only probable arguments: for so long he implies the possession to be unjustly detain'd from the advers party, who has the actual receipt by succession; especially when this so unparalleled a Riot is committed without sufficient evidence, by the very Actors confession. A *Protestant* then, has no better claim to possession of Christs Doctrine, by his so long continuance in Heresie, then the *Parricide* in *Aristotle*, who, having beaten his Father pleaded that his Father had beat his Grandfather, and his Grandfather his great Grandfather: as though such a graceless *entail* could prejudice the law of Nature.

Though not so absurd, yet as weak is another Objection taken from the Jewish *Cabala*: however, it seems worthy of thanks

to the Suggestor. What it was, is not hard to guess, our *Saviour* himself having given us the hint of it, when he reproach'd the *Jews* for following the *Traditions* of their *Fathers* or *Elders*, to the ruin of Gods commands. But to decipher it better, I ought to divide it into *matter* and *form*. The form I call the *Rules*: the matter, what was deliver'd or found out by these *Rules*. As for the *matter*, it seems in some way proportion'd to the proceedings of certain of our *Divines*, who pretend to be *mysticall*; and their employment is, in the sublime mysteries of our Faith, to invent or imagine what they think congruous circumstances, to move the affections to petty devotion: which imaginations, as they are fram'd out of good intentions, so have they many weaknesse, and little or no doctrine in them. Conformable to this we may conceive that, after there were no more *Prophets* among the *Jews*, (who fail'd them, not long after the second building of their *Temple*) the *Rabbins* began to frame explications on their Books of holy *Scripture*, and the mysteries learn'd from the *Prophets*. These interpretations, according to the degree of their skill and prudence, some perform'd better, some worse. But, as the *Jews* were a superstitious and ignorant Nation, not having principles
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of true knowledg naked before their Eys; but wrapt up in Metaphors and Allegories; all together went among them for sound Law. Til, after our Saviours time, and the dispersion of that generation, some foolish knave, to give authority to this mess of good and bad jumbled together, invented the story how *Moses* had deliver'd this doctrine to the *Sanhedrin*, and they had conserv'd it, by *traditional* conveyances from Father to Son. A story as impossible and incredible, to one who penetrates into the carriage of that Nation, as the Fables of *Jeoffrey of Monmouth*, and *King Arthur's* conquering *Hierusalem*.

Now, if we look into the *form*, we shall find it more ridiculous then any *Gypsies* canting, or the juggling of *Hocus Pocus*, and as pernicious to true Doctrine, as any *Pseudomancy*. To make good this censure, I shall in short describe their form: it consists in inventing the *sense* of Scripture by three abuses of the *Letter*, which (as far as my memory serves me, for I have not the books necessary) are these. One by taking every letter of a word, for a whole word beginning with that letter: Another, by changing letters, according to certain rules fram'd by themselves: The third, to find numbers of years or other things, by the numbers which
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the letters of the word compound, in such Languages where their letters are used for cyphers. So much being deliver'd in short, I cannot conceive any indifferent judgment so blunt, that he sees not how far these ridling ways of explication are from the natural intention of a Writer; and how destructive to all truth, if used otherwise then for pleasure and as a disport of chance and encounter. Our Country man, Doctor *Alabaster*, invented a far more convenient trick, by purely dividing words and joyning the ends of the former to the beginnings of the following: as we also do, sometimes in English, to disguise common words; and the Hebrew is far more apt for such knacks. But he found this age too subtle, to cozen any considerable number with such trivial bables: Whereas the *Cabala* gain'd upon the *Valentinians* and *Gnosticks*, to build prodigious errours, in very good earnest, upon their more ridiculous invention. I am not ignorant some eminent persons have been pleas'd sometime, to give way to such toys, through luxury of wit and gayety of humour: But it is one thing to play for recreation, and a far different to establish a *Basis* of Faith and doctrine, which is abominable, on such Chimerical dreams. And yet, this it is our Opposer would Fa-
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ther, upon no less then *Moses* and the *Sanhedrin* and all the sacred Magistracy of the old *Law*.

Let us give a step farther and see, if it were true, how like it were to our case. The *Tradition* we speak of, is the publick preaching and teaching and practice exercised in the Church, settled by the Apostles thorrow the World: This *Cabala*, a doctrine pretended, as deliver'd to few, with strict charge to keep it from publicity, and so communicate it again successively to a select Committee of a few; wherein you may see as fair an opportunity for juggling and cozenage, as, in our case there is impossibility. The *Moderns* therefore, who profess *Cabala*, may say they receiv'd it from their predecessors: but they can yeild no account why any Age may not have chang'd that which was in the breasts of few shut up together in a chamber; and so ther's no possibility of farther assurance, then the vote of a Council of State, for its being deriv'd any higher.

But the Arguer demands, whether they cannot ask me, In what age or year their doctrine was corrupted? And I answer, they may very boldly: But, if I assign an age or year, can they acquit themselves in point of proof? clearly they cannot: for, since there

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was no Register nor visible effects of this doctrine (it being forbidden to be divulg'd) 'tis evident, *that* cannot convince it was not corrupted in that year or age. He urges farther, the notoriousness of the ly, so impudent as few would venture on: not reflecting that he speaks of a secret, altogether incapable of notoriousness. May not they add, says he, the dispersion of their Churches through so many Countries and Languages? I yeild they may, but to no purpose, unless they continue *Sanhedrins* in every Country: For otherwise, this dispersion will prove but the derivation from their Council of *Tiberias*, or such like time, which is nothing to the succession from *Moses*. Add to this, that the Nation since Christs time, is infamous for falsifying doctrines and corrupting Scriptures: and, even in our Saviours time and long before, their *Rabbins* were justly branded with the foul imputation of frequent forgery; their Sects and heresies being grown up to that desperate height, as to deny there were any spirits, or shall be any Resurrection, which is the very top of impiety.

But (what is no less to be consider'd, then any thing yet offer'd) the very subject of the question is different. The *Church*, we speak of, is a vast and numerous body, spread

o're the world; and he must be a mad man that would go about to deny this *Body* has remain'd perpetually visible, from Christs time to ours: however some Heretick may pretend the invisible part, *viz.* that the *Faith* has been interrupted. But, for the *Sanhedrin*, what assurance, nay what probability is there of deriving its pedigree, from *Moses* to the daies of our *Saviour*? In all their oppressions during the time of the *Judges*, in the division of the *Tribes*, in the reign of their *Kings*, in the captivity, first of the ten, then of the two other *Tribes*, very little mention of any such Magistrate, much less evidence of a perfect continuance. How far then, are we from having any certainty of a doctrin's succession, by them, of whom 'tis very obscure, whither any such persons were or no?

A third objection is collected, from the natural proness in Mankind to conserve *Tradition*; by which they intend to shew Religion is corrupted: Wherin you may note the force of wit and Logick, to draw arguments against a truth, even out of these very causes, which are made to conserve the truth impugned. The arguments are three. First, that divers Fathers, for zeal to the received doctrin, were very earnest against the belief of the *Antipodes*, which, now, is an
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ocular certainty. That divers Fathers did oppose that doctrine, I willingly grant : but that it was for zeal to Religion, and not through the opinion of absurdity in Philosophy, I am not satisfy'd, nor does the Author bring any proof. I remember they object, as absurd, that men should stand feet to feet; I remember they conceit those under us would fall into heaven; for the rest, some places of Scripture are alledg'd; so that, not out of zeal to Tradition, but through misunderstanding the Scripture, they fell into this error. Yet I deny not there may, perhaps, be some argument out of Religion; as men confirm their opinions from all they can.

The second proof, I imagin touches the History of *Virgilius*; who, for a like opinion, is reported to have lost his Bishoprick. But 'tis a mistake; for that holy man was no Bishop when he was charg'd with this error, That he held there was another Sun and Moon, belonging to the hemisphere opposite to us, and a new world: nor is it certain, whether truly he thought so, or recanted, or was falsely accus'd; but well known he was afterward made Bishop, and lived and dyed with opinion of sanctity.

But though the two first proofs are slender, the third wil require more strength to

resist it; and therefore 'tis especially recommended to the Reader, to look on the place: it being in a Council and our own proper confession, and so apparently strong and altogether insoluble; if the Author be *inexpugnabilis Dialecticus*, as well as St. *Augustine*, in his *Burlesque* phrase.

Thus then begins this Onset, which our Adversary manages with as much civility as strength. I wil also desire you (says he) to look into the 584. Page of the *Florentine Council*, set out by *Binius*: and there you wil find, that the *Latins* confess they added to the Creed, *the proceſſion of the holy Ghost from the Son*, because the contrary opinion seem'd to them, by consequence, opposite to a confes'd Tradition of Christs eternal Divinity: which yet appears by what *Cardinal Perron* has excellently shown, not to be contradictory to Faith, but that this consequence was ill drawn: which may have been in other points too, and so have brought in no smal number of errours; since neither was their Logick certain to conclude better, nor were they less apt to add to their Creeds accordingly, at any other times, then they were at that. Thus far the charge: And I have been obsequious to so ingenious a request; as wil, I hope, appear by my answer, if I first wash my hands from *Cardinal Per-*

on, with whom I do not engage: nor need, since the *Council* has age and can speak for itself. As also, by the way, note that, since the addition of *Filioque*, (which was about the year 440, in St. Leo's time) there has not any tittle been added to the Churches Creed; though very many Heresies have been condemn'd. So that the Objector is forward in his assertions, without seconding them with solid proofs.

To come now to the Combate, I doubt much he, who was so sollicitous to have me look into the Council, was not so careful as to cast an eye upon it himself: Else he would have found, the question had not been of *adding* the words *Filioque*, or *ex ro*
o, but of the *using* them; the *adding* having been for the controversy with *Photius*, the *u*
ng for the expression of our belief; which the Council says, consists in two points; First, that the Divinity is the *same* in all the three Persons, that is, there is not three Divinities in three Persons, nor yet one Divinity from which the Persons or Personalities be
ρασηατι different, and not *λεγω μονον &*
τινοισι. The Second, that none should have any cause to suspect the holy Ghost to be *ου*
νοτε το παλεις: Wherefore, the insufficiency of the consequence, which (he says) Cardinal *error* demonstrates, is not to our purpose;

no such inference appearing in the Council: the *Latins* or *Roman Church* only professing that, if the holy Ghost did not proceed out of the Father and the Son, as one *principium* or cause, then the Divinity were divided in the Father and Son, and, by consequence, in the Holy Ghost too, and so *ἑν τρισὶ τμήμασι* as the Council speaks.

Whence, we may see, the Opponent mistook the whole case, there being no question of the cause of adding, but of what was express'd; nor any dispute of Christs Divinity, but of the *Unity* of the *Divinity* with the *Persons* and in *it self*; Nor any drawing of consequences, but an expression of Catholic doctrine; nor any supposed error; but a truth confess'd both by Protestants and us: and finally, the words are said to be used, to express this point, that *He proceeds from the Son*; and not question'd *why* the opinion is held, that He proceeds from the Son, which is far different from what we now contend about.

There is another objection, and Cardinal *Perron* made the Author, as having reported, out of *Isidore*, that the Jews conspired together to abolish the book of *Wisdom*, because it spake too plainly of Christ. The story the Objector himself wil not avouch, because it would rank the Book (by
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him pretended to be *Apocryphal*) too high: yet, though it be acknowledg'd fals, he conceives it strong enough against us, because it shews such a thing might be done. Let us poize a little the weight of this Argument: It might have been done; therefore your Tradition may fail you. First I demand, how you prove it might have been done; because *Isidore* said it was done. The *Spanish* Conquerors, when first they enter'd the miracles of the Western World, reported, They climb'd up great hills in the Sea: Therefore was it possible? They talk't much of waters which restor'd Youth: Therefore is it credible? But *Isidore's* authority convinces this. If it were *Isidore* the holy Bishop of *Sevil*, somthing were said: But 'tis *Isidore*, surnamed *Mercator*, one that collects and patches together truths and falsities, almost indifferently; at least our men spare not to reject him in matters of great moment. Thus the bare possibility, that it might have been done, is not, it self, yet, sufficiently prov'd.

But let us pass that, and, without much straining our charity, grant among Jews it might have been done, as not a few think the very Law was lost in the times of their wicked Kings or other oppressions: what inference can they make against Christian Tradition? Of Books of Scripture, perad-

venture there was a time, when some one, or rather any one might have been lost; because it was in few hands: shall we therefore conclude the same possibility of suppression, when we treat of Doctrins universally profest by so many Millions? when we dispute of Practices every day frequented by the whole Church.

Stil ther's one jarring string, that grates my ears with its loud discord; though the stroak come not from the hand of these objectors, yet I wil endeavour to put it in tune. Some sick heads roving up and down in their extravagant phiansies wil needs entertain a wild conjecture, that at first our Saviour was indeed stil'd God, and though the learned, who had the knack of distinguishing, knew wel enough the inward meaning then signify'd only a most eminent aud god-like person, yet the common People understanding their Preacher simply, as the letter sounded, came by degrees universally to believe his true and real divinity. But with what ingenuity can such rambling wits think the chief Principle of Christianity should be so negligently taught? or accuse so many holy Saints of those purest times to be such deceitful Teachers? Besides, did not their rashness blind them, they would easily see the raising the Person of Christ, from

from humane to divine, would necessarily infer a notorious change in the solemn Prayers of the Church and daily devotion of the People, which certainly would give so great a stroak to both, it could not possibly be attempted, either undiscern'd or unresisted. Lastly the Christian Faith being delivered not in a set form of words, but in sense a thousand ways explicated & enforc'd according to the variety of occasions and capacity of the learners: how can any ambiguity of phrase endanger them into a mistake, who attend not so much to the dead letter, as the quickning sense, so variously express'd, so often incultated to them by their masters?

THE FIFTEENTH ENCOUNTER,

*Declaring the state of this Question,
Whether the Scripture can decide con-
troversies?*

THere remains yet a second part of our Apology; for, as this is the Catholicks principle to adhere to the authority of the Church, that is, to the living word written in their Breasts, which governs all their actions relating to religion: so on the other
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side, whoever have at any time, (under the pretence of reformation) oppos'd her Authority, such have constantly rais'd up their Altar against Tradition, upon the dead letter of the Scriptures: Which, as the Catholick Church highly reverences, when they are animated by the interpretation of Tradition; so, by too much experience, she knows they become a killing letter, when abus'd, against the Catholick sense, in the mouths of the Devil and his Ministers.

But, before we set our feet within the lists, I am bound to take notice of an opposition, no less common then slight and absurd: and this it is. When we retire to *Tradition*, after both parties have lost their breath in beating the aerial outside of Scripture, they presently cry out, Cannot *Aristotle*, cannot *Plato* make themselves be understood? why then should not the *Bible*, as wel, determine Controversies? If this were not after sixteen hundred years of experience, after so much pains of our own, since *Luthers* time, idly cast away, in tossing the windy balls of empty words, without coming to resolution of any one point, peradventure it were pardonable: but now, alas, what can it be, but an obstinate desire of darkness and a contempt of Gods Law and truth, by a bold and irrational assertion and loud clamours

clamours to beat down the Catholick Church; like *Dametas* in the Poem, striking with both hands and his whole strength, but winking all the while?

Let us, therefore open our Eys and look thorow this objection; *Cannot Plato and Aristotle make themselvs be understood?* Yes; but what then? *Ergo* the Scripture can determine controversies? The supposition wherin all venom ly's is conceal'd; which thus I display: As *Aristotle* wrote of *Physicks* and *Metaphysicks*, so the Scripture was written of those controversies which since are risen among Christians: But *Plato* and *Aristotle* can make themselvs be understood concerning those Sciences: therefore the *Scripture* can do as much concerning these Controversies. This ought to be the discourse. But had it been cloth'd in so thin and transparent a dress, the Authors would have blusht to thrust it into light: For, tis a most shameless Proposition, to say the *Scriptures* were written of the Controversies, long after their date, sprung up in the Christian world.

Beginning from *Genesis* to the *Apocalyps*, let them name one Book, whose theme is any, now-controverted, Point betwix Protestants and Catholiks. Tis true, the intent and extrinsical end of writing St.

Johns Gospel was, to shew the Godhead of Christ, which the *Arians* afterward deny'd; but that is not so directly his theme, as the miraculous life of our Saviour, from whence the Divinity of his Person was to be deduc'd: and yet the design so unsuccessful, that never any Heresy was more powerful, then that which oppos'd the truth intended by *His* Book.

But, I suppose, their reply wil be, they purpose not to say the Scripture was written of our present controversies, but of the precepts of good life and Articles of Faith necessary to them, about which our controversies arise. If this be their meaning, their Assumption is as ridiculous, as, in the other, their *Major* or chief Proposition. For, their argument must be framed thus. As Scripture was written of the necessaries to good life; so *Aristotle* and *Plato*, of Physicks and Metaphysicks: But *Aristotle* and *Plato* writ so plainly, that all questions, rising about their doctrine, can be declared out of their words: therefore all questions relating to good life, may also be clear'd out of Scriptures. Wherin the *Minor* is so ridiculous to any that have but open'd a Book of Philosophy, that 'tis enough, not only to disanul the proof, but discredit the Author.

And yet were it true, the consequence would not hold: For whoever considers what belongs to the explication of Authors, knows, there is a great advantage to discern the sense of those who proceed scientifically, above the means to understand one that writes loose Sentences. An *Archimedes*, an *Euclid*, a *Vitruvius* will be of far easier interpretation, where the Subject is of equal facility, then a *Theognis*, *Phocylides*, or *Antoninus*, because the antecedents and consequents do, for the most part, force a sense on the middle propositions, of themselves ambiguous. Now, the works of *Plato* and *Aristotle* are generally penn'd, though not always so rigorously, yet stil with an approach to the Mathematical way: The Scripture uses a quite different method, delivering its precepts without connexion betwixt one another. And though I deny not but, peradventure, the Articles of our belief have, in themselves as much connexion, as the severest discourses of those Philosophers: yet the style, wherein they are couch'd in the Bible, is accommodated to vulgar capacities, and the delivery by way of plain and direct affirmation, without attending to the artificial rules of demonstration.

But, because no controversy can be clear and fit for decision, unless it be prepar'd by
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an exact and rigorous stating the Question; I first intend to set down my own sentiment, which I conceive is also that of the Catholick Church: and afterward what I collect to be the opinion of my Adversaries; leaving them this free and just liberty, to correct me if I mistake their mind.

First then, we Catholiks no way doubt but the Scripture is the word of God, and of infallible truth, if rightly understood: and that whoever, being out of the Church, receives the Scripture in that quality; the ground of such reception (if rational) can be no other, then because we taught him so, and deliver'd it to him, as such. For I do not intend to dispute against those *Spiritati*, who, by an Enthusiastical light, can judge of Scripture without sense and reason: And, to those, who pretend either Fathers or other Christians out of our Church, I answer, my meaning is to comprehend in *our* Church the Fathers; for so goes our position; and consequently all *Señs* either receiv'd the Scripture immediately from us, or from those who received it from us.

Secondly, we doubt not but the Scripture is highly profitable, for the enablement of Preachers to teach, reprove, confirm, in all points of Catholick doctrine, both concerning Speculation and Practice: and by consequence

sequence that the Church were not so thoroughly furnisht for all kind of exigencies without it; for which reason it is of particular usefulness, and indeed necessity to the Church.

Thirdly, we confesse the Bible contains all parts of Catholik Doctrine, in this sense, that all Catholik doctrine may be found there, by places and arguments be deducted thence, nay more, be topically or Oratorially proved out of it: so that, if an *able* Preacher be in a Pulpit, where he speaks without contradiction, with a full and free scope; he may, meerly discoursing out of Scripture, carry any point of Catholik doctrine before the generality of his Auditory, and convince at the present such a part of them, as either are but indifferently speculative, or have not taken pains in the question.

Fourthly, I affirm, that if any point be brought to an *eristical* decision before Judges, where the parties on both sides are obstinately bent to defend their own positions, by all the art they can imagin: so the question be not, which part is true, but only which is more or less conformable to Scripture; the Catholik position may be victoriously evidenced, by arguments purely drawn from thence, compared and valued according to
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true *Criticism*; without ayd of Fathers, explications, or any other extrinsecal helps. Thus far I esteem all good Catholiks ought to hold; and believe that all, κατὰ πάντα ὁμοθυμαδόν, doe, *de facto*, hold.

Now then, to come to the true difference betwixt our Adversaries and us: I understand it consists in this, That having stated a material point, (as whether that which we see and touch in the *Eucharist* be truly Christs body, or only a figure of it, it self remaining substantially Bread) and that this question be to be handled contentiously before Judges, each party pretending to convince and demonstrate, by quotation of places critically exalted to their highest force: whether the Scripture (I say) be a sufficient Storehouse to furnish either side with Texts, unavoidable and convincing beyond any shadow of reply; in the judgement of sworn and expert judges, who are wel practis'd what *convincing* signifies, and how much the various acceptions of words and mutability of meanings import in the construction of sentences. This is that wherein I engage the Catholik Negative; and suppose all Adversaries must hold the Affirmative.

And the first reason of my supposition is, because I never see them attempt any other way

way of disputing, but out of Scripture: nor yet, in that, do they use so fair play, as to put the places which favour them on the page of receipts, and those which Catholics bring to the contrary upon that of expenses; and then having by rules of good Criticism examined the qualities of both, prefer that party which is more deserving.

Next, I know not how that man dare hew his face before any person of common sense, who shall first acknowledg he goes against the opinion of the whole present Age wherein he lives, against the undoubted testimony of a thousand years before him, against the known laws both spiritual and temporal, publikely renouncing all obedience to all kinds of Magistrate, empower'd by God and Man with just authority to conserve those laws; that shall accuse all his kindred, Ancestors, and whole Country of blindness and ignorance, and pretend all the world is bound to desert them and follow him: and this in a matter, concerning no less an interest then Eternity: and after all this so arrogant bawling and high demands, being ask'd what evidence, what proof he can bring to introduce so great a mutation in the world, shall be forc'd to confess, he can but play at cross and pile with them, to
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know which of the two sentences is true which fals. For, setting aside real and irrefragable conviction, what is there left in speculation, but meer contingency?

Now this strange boldness, this incredible presumption was undeniably *Luthers* case and if his, then certainly all his followers. For, neither is the weight and authority of so many ages become less pressing and efficacious against his adherents, nor their first plea improved or amended, but rather weaken'd: if by his and all his fellows labours, as yet no evidence is produced (an infallible sign none is likely ever to be made:) Nor is the change of temporal law and Princes any motive, to him that goes upon pure reason, and seriously aymes at the good of his soul.

Again, he whose discours is not convincing, and yet wil be meddling with truths of highest importance, is either ignorant of that defect, and then he deserves the name of a rash temerarious fellow that dares, in a matter of such consequence advance Propositions (by passion or precipitation) whose quality himself understands not: or else he knows he does not convince; then let him at the beginning of his Sermon express much, and tel his Auditors, he is come to speak to them concerning their salvation

and propose new Tenets about it; but, in very deed, he can neither prove the old Tenets are false, nor those which he shall propose, to be true: Can any one think, if the Auditory have either wit enough to discover so grosse an Impostor, or never so little honesty to care what becoms of their souls, or love to Christianity; they wil not with great indignation pull his *jump* o're his eares, and tumble him out of his Pulpit? Now what difference is there (so the mischief be done) whether it be foretold the people or no; saving that, to conceal the wrong, is a more wicked and destructive piece of cunning?

Another consideration is, that in *practical things*, more probability approaches to certainty, and, by multiplication, contingencie at last begets perfect Necessity; but, in *speculation*; not so. For, as there is more probability to throw seven upon two dice, in forty trials then in foure: so, in five hundred, most certainly that cannot fail to be the cast: the reason is, because the number of casting so exceeds the variety of *chances*, that it makes first a difficulty, and after an impossibility of missing. Now, in *speculation*, if no particular cause precisely compel, and determine the effect, variety can prevail nothing; so that, rigorously spea-

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king a conclusion is no neerer being true, for a hundred unconvincing Arguments, then for one: whence it follows, where there is no demonstration, neither Opinion is securely the better. He therefore that pretends the introduction of a change in a speculative point, ought either to promise evidence and conviction, or else content himself with silence: for 'tis absurd to move any one to change his *assent* (I speak not here of a *practicall resolution*) without promising him some abetterment.

Lastly, as far as I can penetrate, he that has a changeable and uncertain Religion, has none at all. For, I conceive a Religion (as we now discourse of it) is the knowledge by which we are to guide our selves in our way and progress towards eternal felicity: so that, if the Religion any one professes be not the true, he cannot by its principles perform what is requisite to the gaining of that end: Neither is any knowledge which such a *Probablist* has, the right and proper means of cultivating his soul in order to future happiness; and therefore it is as impossible an untrue Religion should lead to Heaven, as a false way, to London. Now, if a Religion that is not true, be no Religion, he that doubts whether he has the true, is in doubt whether he has any Religion or none.

and he that pretends no farther then to doubt about Religion, pretends not to know he has any: but, the act of *knowing* cannot be had, if he that has it, does not know he has it; therefore he that pretends not to know he has a Religion, confesses himself to have none.

The same is clear in practice. For suppose an Apothecary had compos'd a drug for his Patient; but being uncertain whether to administer it like a potion or a glister, should sometimes give it one way, sometimes the other: or a Guide, having undertaken to conduct a Stranger thorow some untroden Wildernes, & for want of assurance which way to take, should lead him up and down as in a Maze, first to the left hand, then to the right: were not these excellent Masters in their crafts, and worthy of continual imployment; but with this condition, that they practis'd their Arts upon none but one another? Then, if Religion be the knowledge of conducting our souls to heaven; is not he like to make good speed, that acknowledges himself uncertain of the way? who to day marches forwards, and to morrow goes as much backward; to day *confesses* and *adores* Christ in the *Eucharist*, to morrow blasphemes him, and damns all that adore him; to day *prays to*

Saints, bears respect to a *Crucifix*, and a compassion to the *dead*, to morrow cries out against all, as Idolatry, Superstition, and meer inventions of lucre?

Still there remains with me one other scruple about this point. Divers great Brains have undertaken the commendations of things, which mankind, is so far from delighting in, that very few can endure them; this aversion rising out of a judgement, not taken up by humour, but taught by nature, which justly abhors all that diminishes or destroys its being, as *Blindness*, *Folly*, *Sickness*, and the like: and contrived many persuasive forms and witty inducements, to invegle their Auditory into an evident absurdity. Others we find, who, by whole Sects, maintain'd that all propositions were indifferent; and their practice was, of every subject to speak copiously and plausibly on both sides: and this in good earnest, out of a settled belief that they could make which side they pleas'd the more probable. I ask then, whether the probability either of these two sorts of wits bring for their paradoxes, be sufficient to chuse a point in Religion? If you say, I What imports it in any point which party you take, that is, whether you have any Religion or none? If you say, no; what mean

means do you prescribe us to know when a probability is great enough; or, who's he that is able to judge the degrees of probability, when they are sufficient, and when not?

Peradventure you may say, In the first case, the evidence of nature shews their probability to be clearly absurd: and I could answer, why may not Nature sometimes be deceiv'd, as *Anaxagoras* would perswade us, when he maintain'd Snow was black? but I need not; 'Tis enough to remember, The questions of Religion are concerning actions whose effects appear not to us; and yet, ordinarily the effects are the chief means to frame arguments, and produce certainty, in practice, that the cause is right. 'Tis enough to remember eternall blisse belongs to the next world; and the Mysterys we dispute, are such as the Son of God only has seen and brought us tydings of. But, what wil you say to the second sort of disputer, who equall all probabilities; and are men, against whose eloquence, erudition, and prudence in other things, you cannot except? To all this I can yet add one plain but very considerable reflexion; that certainly, to prove any position, those wild capricious Brains cannot find weaker *places* for their arguments, then a mute, ambiguous, dead writing, not quickned with reason and discourse:

course : which yet, is the boasted ground of all that renounce the infallibility of the Church, in matters of supernaturall belief.

THE SIXTEENTH ENCOUNTER.

*Examining five Texts brought for the
sufficiency of scripture.*

THe case thus stated, we have won the field: If I have err'd in framing the question, let them correct it, with these two conditions, that they propose it so, as to leave themselves a *Religion*, and *different* from ours: for unless both these submitt, the quarrel betwixt us is at an end. But if I have rightly exprest the point in controversie, let them bring one place of Scripture that comes home to the question, and carry the Bays. Their position must include these two branches: That Scripture is intended for a ground to decide Controversies in such a contentious way as I have set down: and sufficient to perform this charge. For the former I dare confidently affirm, there is not in the whole Bible an expression so much as glances towards it. And though the

the second includes the first, and can have no verity nor subsistence without it; yet since there are some who discovering not the first, can perswade themselves they finde the second, we wil try how solidly they proceed.

First then, they cite certain Texts in which they say, *the Scripture gives us salvation*: But there is a wide difference betwixt giving salvation, and being the whol means or adequat cause of it, which is the point to be maintain'd, if they wil prove the Scripture sufficient; else call Faith, Sacraments, good works, preaching, &c. must be absolutely excluded as unnecessary, since of every one of them may be said, it gives salvation: Whence in common already appears these arguments are so weak and defective, they carry not half way home to our question: Yet let's see at least how far they reach.

In the fifth of *St. John*, Christ bids the Jews *search the Scriptures, because you think* (saith he) *you have eternal life in them*. Our Saviour was discoursing there of such as bore witness to him: and having nam'd his Father and *St. John*, at last he descends to the Scripture and tells them to this purpose, *You think to have life in the Scriptures; though you deceive your selves in that*

“ that opinion ; for you have only the kil-
 “ ling letter , and not the verifying spirit :
 “ Nevertheless search them , for they bear
 “ witness that I am the true life , to whom
 “ you will not through want of charity
 “ and love of God have recourse to seek it.
 “ Therefore you refuse me , who come in the
 “ name of my Father , a sign of Truth , be-
 “ cause I seek not mine own interest : But
 “ you will receive Antichrist or some
 “ other who shall come in his own name ,
 “ which is a mark of deceit and falshood ,
 “ so pervers are you . This is our Saviours
 discours : of all which to this argument
 belong only these words , *You think you have*
life in the Scriptures ; that is , (it I understand
 the Text) you deceive your selves , if you
 think you have life in them ; which surely
 must needs be a very strong reason to prove,
 Scriptures give salvation : though if the
 question were not of the Text , I should
 make no difficulty of the conclusion .

And it may be noted that our Saviour
 descends to the proof of Scripture , in the
 last place : putting *Miracles* the first , as mo-
 tives able to convert *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* :
 in the second *Preaching* , specially they shew-
 ing some good affection to their Preacher
St. John : Lastly , the mute words of Scrip-
 ture . And as for *St. John* , our Saviour ex-
 pressly

pressly says he cites him, in condescendence to them, that they might be the rather moved to embrace the truth, by that esteem they had already entertain'd of their Preacher. Whereas for Scripture there was only their own conceit, which our *Saviour* seems to reprove as an humourfom and froward obstinacy, that they would not be convinc'd by the palpable demonstration of his *Miracles* (the easiest and surest way) nor rest upon the preaching of his *Precursor*, whom themselves confess to be a Prophet; nor lastly make a diligent search without prejudice, into *Scripture*, which, if interpreted with charity and humility, might have led them to him and salvation.

The next place is *John 20. These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and believing may have life in his name.* 'Tis true both Scripture and Faith give life; but not the least mention made here of any such quality in either of them. This only is declar'd that the end of *St. Johns* writing the Gospel was not to make a compleat History either of our *Saviours* Acts or doctrin; but only to specify such particulars as prove that Christ was the true consubstantial Son of God: to keep them out of the Heresy then beginning to rise, that they might continue true believers

vers in the Church of God, live according to its Rules and be saved by so living, that is, by being true *Christians* or *Jesuits*; which is certainly the sense of these words, *in his name*, or, *in the name of Jesus*, as to be baptiz'd in the name of *Jesus*, signify's to be enroll'd among the company known to be *his*.

Now from this Text we may clearly collect that *St. Johns Gospel* was not written by the Authors intention for any such end as the argument urges: Nor, that it gives life, more then this one Article does, that *Jesus is the true son of God*; Nor yet that this Article gives life, but that life is to be had in the name of Christ, whatever these words signify: Only it may be infer'd that life cannot be had without this Article; but not that this alone is able to give life, or that it cannot be believ'd without *St. Johns Gospel*, or that *St. Johns Gospel* of it self is sufficient to give life without the concurrence of *Tradition*. So that there is no appearance from this proposition that life either can be attain'd by Scripture *alone*, or cannot be had *without* it.

The third Text is out of 2 *Tim. chap. 3.* That the *Scriptures* are able to make him wise to salvation through the faith of *Jesus Christ*. The paraphrase of the place, as I understand

it, is, *O Timothy!* be constant in the doctrine I have taught thee; and this for two reasons; One common to all converted by me, because thou knowest who I am that deliver'd it to thee; This is the first and principal reason, *the authority of the Teacher*: Another peculiar to thee, because from thy infancy, thou art vers'd in the holy Scriptures, which are proper to make thee wise and understanding in the law of *Jesus Christ*, or to promote and improve thy salvation, which is obtained by the faith of *Jesus*. So that, he speaks not of *Timothy's* becoming a Christian, but his becoming a through furnisht (or extraordinary) Christian, a Doctor and Preacher.

And the ground on which I build this explication is derived from the words following, where the Apostle expresses this vertue of the *Scriptures* being *profitable to teach and reprove*; as also from this consideration that the sequel, *Be constant to my words or Doctrin, because the Scripture can teach thee the truth of Christs doctrine*, is not very exact, but rather opposite to the former, and plainly inducing the contrary; as if one should argue, Follow not my doctrine, because mine, but because the Scripture teaches thee it: which directly contradicts the intention of the Apostle, as appears in the vers immediately

diatly precedent, *Be stedfast in those things thou hast learnt, knowing by whom thou wert instructed*; whereas this other discourse is perfectly consequential, Stand to my doctrine because the Scripture confirms and seconds it, making thee able to defend and prove by arguments, what I have simply taught thee to be true, by the sole evidence of *Miracles*, which beget Faith, not Science.

But to grant our Adversary the less proper sense and consequence, that the Scripture was to contribute to the salvation of *Timothy* himself; still ther's an equivocation in those words, *through, or by the faith of Jesus Christ*: which may be refer'd to those, (*to make thee understanding*) Either so, that the sense be, *The Scriptures (in which thou hast been vers'd since thy infancy) will contribute to thy salvation, so that thou understand them according to the Faith of Jesus Christ which I have orally deliver'd to thee*; and this is, in direct terms, the Catholick Rule, that the interpretation of Scripture is to be govern'd by Tradition or by the faith and doctrine so receiv'd, and formally depends from the first words, *Remain constant to my doctrine*: Or, by another explication, which is more material and flat and most incredible, That the old Scripture (for of that only the Apostle speaks, no other being written while

Timothy

Timothy was a child) should be able, without relation to the knowledg of *Christ* by other means to make a man understanding enough to be saved by the Faith of Him; as may be seen by *St. Peters* being sent to *Cornelius*.

So that, of these three senses, the first is nothing to our adversaries purpose, and nevertheless is the best; The second positively and highly against him: the third incoherent to the words precedent and following, and in it self, an incredible proposition. But give it the greatest force the words can, by any art, be heightned to, they come nothing neer the state of the question proposed which concerns the decision of all quarrels carried on by litigious parties: Whereas this Text is content with any sufficiency at large to bring men to salvation: a point not precisely now controverted betwixt us. Besides *Timothy* being already a Christian, 'tis a pure folly to think the Apostle sent him to the *Scriptures* to chuse his Religion.

The words immediatly following the place explicated are urged for a new Argument: They are these: *All Scripture is inspired from God; and profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, (that is, good life) that the man of God become perfect, being furnisht to every good work.* The paraphrase, accor-

according to my skil is thus, *The holy Writ spake of, is any Book inspir'd from God, and profitable to teach things unknown, reprehend what is amiss, to set straight what is crooked, to instruct in good life; that the Church of God, or any member therof, may become perfect, being, by instructions and reprehensions applyed out of Scripture, by such preachers as Timothy, fitted to any good work or all kinds of good works.* This I conceive the natural meaning and most conformable to the Text, were we to seek the interpretation of it indifferently, without any eye to our present controversy. And in this sense, 'tis a cleer case, the Apostle speaks of the benefit of Scripture, when explicated and apply'd by a Preacher, in order to the perfecting of those that hear him.

But if, by importunity the adversary will needs have it, that the Scripture should give the quality of being *ἀστὶ* to the person himself that reads it; to content him, I shall not hinder him of his mind, but only prove it nothing to his purpose: For still this must be the sense, that it produces in the reader the excellencies requir'd in a Preacher, namely to make him do all those good works which are expected of him; as teaching, reprehending, &c. so that one way or other, still the Scripture is apply'd to furnish

nish him with Precepts, Arguments, Examples, and such like instruments of persuasion: but of giving the first Catechism, or binding ones self Apprentice to the Bible, to learn the first rudiments of Christian profession, ther's not the least word or syllable that colours for such a conceit: nor can it indeed consist with the direct meaning of the place; since the being already a Christian, is plainly suppos'd in *Timothy*, by St. Pauls institutions *viva voce*, before any exhortation to this use of Scripture. So that, here is no question concerning the first choyce of Faith, but of perfection after Faith: much less any mention of convincing in *foro contentioso*, about which is all our controversy.

Another place is *Acts 26*. where St. Paul, defending himself before *Agrippa* and *Festus*, against the *Jews* accusation, who calumniated him that he spake in derogation of the Law, and brought in a new doctrine to the disturbance of the people; made only this answer, that he preach'd nothing but what the Prophets had foretold. His words are these: *The Jews for this (teaching Christs doctrine) finding me in the Temple, would have kill'd me: But I having obtain'd succour from God until this very day have persisted testifying (or protesting) to great and little, that I spoke*
nothing

nothing but what the Prophets and Moses had foretold should come to pass; as, that Christ was to suffer, that he was to be the first should rise from death to life, and preach light both to Jews and Gentils. This is the true interpretation of the Greek Text, as far as ly's in my power to explicate it, according to the intention of St. Paul. I deny not but the words singly taken may be interpreted, *I have persisted testifying to great and litile, and in my Sermons saying nothing but what &c.* But this explication is neither so proper to his defence, nor at all advances the Adversaries cause: For since St. Paul tells us directly what the points are of which he spake; whatever can be gathered out of them, only this is said, that these three points were foretold by Moses and the Prophets: and on the other side, the discours is imperfect, running thus, *I preach'd indeed many other things; yet nothing but what was in Moses and the Prophets, to wit, that Christ was to suffer, &c.* His meaning therefore is, that since he was in hold, his perpetual endeavours had been, to shew that these things he was accused to have preach'd against the law, were the very marrow of the Law and foretold by Moses and the Prophets: and that, whereas the Jews expected Christ to be a temporal King, who by force of Arms should restore the house

of *Israel*, to a great and flourishing estate, the truth was quite contrary; for, according to the doctrine of *Moses*, and the Prophets, He was to be a passible man, to suffer death, afterwards to rise again triumphantly, as the first fruits of the Resurrection, and to send his Disciples both to Jews and Gentiles to spread the light of the Gospel throughout the world.

What advantage against the necessity of *Tradition*, can be drawn out of this place of Scripture, which doth not so much as talk of the extent of Catholick doctrine, much less come within kenning of our Controversy, is beyond my reach: This I know, that, to say all points of Catholick doctrine can be sufficiently prov'd out of *Moses* and the Prophets, is an assertion I believe our Adversaries themselves will deny; as being both ridiculous in it self and absolutely discrediting the necessity of the new Testament: and yet clearly, without maintaining so gross absurdities, they can make no advantage of this Text.

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THE SEVENTEENTH ENCOUNTER

*Examining such places as are brought
against the admittance of any, but
Scriptural proof in Religion.*

WE are at last come to those places in which they most glory, conceiving themselves able by them utterly to destroy all *Traditions*: These are such as forbid to add or detract from the holy *Scriptures*: which, though commonly so explicated by Protestants, yet certainly cannot but appear to every child altogether impertinent to our controversy. For, tis a far different question, Whether we were bound to put new or *Apocryphal* Books into the *Canon* (which our adversaries charge us to have done) or to take none out (which we charge them to do?) from that now in debate. Whether there be any other means of assuring matters of Faith, beside the Bible? or rather, Whether Scripture in an eristical and contentious way, be a Rule sufficient to decide all controversies in Religion? Nevertheless let us see the Texts they alledge for their opinion: *Deut.* 4. 2. *Iosh.* 1. and others

thers to the same effect.

My first answer is ; suppose these places imported all the force our adversaries pretend , we are not in the least degree concern'd : since all that's said is clearly spoken of a certain Book or Law , properly and specially belonging to the Jews : and no more obliging Christians than the Book of *Leviticus* or the Law of Circumcision.

Secondly : since it is held as a main distinction and opposition betwixt the Laws of the *Jew* and of the *Christian* , that those of the *Jew* were to be written in *Stone* and *Paper*, and those of the *Christian* in the *hearts of men by Tradition* : it would rather follow (if such Analogy were to be made) that because nothing but Scripture is to be given to the *Jew*, only *Tradition* is to be pressed on the *Christian*.

Thirdly, to the end this place may have the effect endeavoured by the arguer , all the rest of the Bible , except *Deuteronomy* or such other Book , to which the Texts cited particularly relate, may be burnt, or at least cast out of the *Canon* ; and not have any power to decide controversies, even in the Jews law. I know 'tis answer'd, that Protestants deny not such Books : Neither do we accuse them of it ; only we conceive we may safely say , they contradict themselves,

in pressing these places to that effect of one side, and admitting the Books on the other.

My fourth Answer is, that the *Law* it self enjoyns in certain cases, other precepts to be added; remitting the people upon any doubt, first to *Judges*, and afterwards to the *High Priest*, and commanding their declarations to be obey'd, and under greatest penalties punctually observ'd: So that, the consequence drawn out of these places, is both weak in it self and prejudicial to them that use it.

Nor is the inference our adversaries wrest out of the last Chapter of the *Apocalyps* less unreasonable then the former: where, he that adds or detracts any thing from that Prophecy is accursed: whence pleasant discourers will needs conclude; that Christian doctrine is no otherwise to be proved but by Scripture. Questionless, to speak more pertinently to the Text, they should have said, it was to be prov'd out of nothing but the *Apocalyps*: but because that would appear too palpable and absurd, they included the rest of the Scripture violently against the express letter and meaning of the Text. This Argument seems to me, as in the fam'd Astrologer Mr. *Lilly*, had obtain'd a Protection from the State, that none should

should presume to abuse his *Prognostications*, by foisting in counterfeit ones, or blotting out any part of his; and thence, one should boldly infer that all our Courts of Justice were commanded to judge such cases as came before them, only out of *Lilly's Almanack*: with this sole difference, that the arguer here unjustly cogs in the whole Scripture, instead of the single Book of the *Apocalyps*, which makes his consequence far weaker and more unexcusable than the other; as I confess the similitude I use agreeable rather to the impertinency of the objection, than to the dignity of the subject.

To these two may be parallel'd that Preface of *St. Luke*, so strongly urg'd by some. The words, as I understand them, are these. *Seeing many have endeavoured to compile a history of the things in great abundance acted among us; according as they who were from the beginning eye-witnesses and instruments of the Gospel, have delivered to us: I also have thought fit (excellent Theophilus) since I was present at all, things almost from the beginning, to set them down to thee in order, that thou mayest know the certainty of the Reports which thou hast been taught.* This is the Text, though others interpret it otherwise; who (if they will urge any thing out of their own explication) must first justify it against this.

But out of this, First St. *Luke* pretends no more then to tell *our Saviours life*, like a good Historian; however some of his excellent sayings cannot be deny'd their place in his life, as is testified by the same St. *Luke*, in the first of the *Acts*: and therefore we ought not expect to know more from him, then was fit for an Historian to report; that is, the eminent deeds and sayings of our Saviour. Now, the end express'd in the Text for the writing of this History may be understood two ways: One, that *Theophilus* might know which reports were true, which false: The other, that *Theophilus* out of the recital of Christs miracles and heroical actions might understand the greatness of his person, and by consequence the certainty of his holy doctrine, which depends from them; But whether one or the other, however there is not a word that this Book should serve for a Catechism, to teach him and all the world the entire body of Christian doctrine, which must be our Adversaries meaning.

There are yet two passages I must not omit, because our Adversaries make great account of them: one is the fourth Chapter of the first to the *Corinthians*, *That you may learn in us, not to be wise beyond what is written.* To understand this place, you must know

know there grew some emulations betwixt the disciples of the Apostles, (if I may guess) betwixt those of St. Peter and St. Paul. This St. Paul reprehends at large: but for fear of making the breach wider, instead of closing it, would not name St. Peter, chusing rather to put the case, as if it had pass'd betwixt himself and Apollo: and first uses this argument, that Paul and Apollo are but Ministers of Christ: therupon after some diversion, he comes to tel them, how all that any man has, is from God and for the people; and concludes, to have all esteem'd as the Ministers of Christ and dispensators of his Mysteries: And after he has express'd how little he concerns himself, whether he be wel or ill reputed by them, concludes, telling them he had taken those two names of Paul and Apollo, to teach them this point; and then brings in the words alleadg'd, which I may venture to paraphrase thus. *I have disguis'd my discours concerning the esteem you ought to have of your Preachers, under the names of Apollo and my self; that, by what I teach you to be due to our persons, you may learn not to be affected to your Preachers, above what I have written to you about a dozen lines before: to wit, that they are all ordain'd for you Ministers of Christ and dispensers of his Mysteries; to the end one of you do not swell with pride*

or choller against another in any mans behalf, and so breed Schisms and contentions among your selves.

This is the meaning of the Apostle; as will appear to any judicious understanding, that can be content to read and diligently weigh the whole composition of the discourse. And here we are unwillingly constrain'd to observe the desperate shifts of many of our adversaries, into which either the rashness of their passions or necessity of their cause engages them: for so, in the Text we now treat, they presently snapt at a piece of a sentence, where they found this charming word (*written*;) and that was enough for them, without ever troubling their heads to consider or sense or connexion in order to the framing a legitimate argument. For, had they but taken the immediatly precedent line, *These I have disguised into Apollo and myself for you*, and then brought in the words cited, *That you may learn in us, not to be wise above what is written*; the nonsense would have declar'd it self, and stumbled the Reader, who could not but presently have check'd at the inconsequence. And the verse following would be likewise incongruous to these, *that you be not sweld one against another for any man*: For, what connexion can either the words precedent, or sub-

Subsequent have, with this, that, You are to learn your Faith out of the Scripture? and yet I have translated the Latin *Sapere* or Greek *σοφειν*, against the true sense, for the objectours advantage; whereas the true meaning is not to esteem them higher, or bear themselves, as if their Masters were higher: and thus the very English Translation yeilds it.

The latter place is out of the first to the *Galatians*, where he warns them, that *whoever comes to preach any doctrine, besides that which He had taught them, they should refuse him communion, or account him execrable.* This passage I have always esteem'd very strong and pregnant for *Tradition*; and our Adversaries call it a most illustrious proof against it. I confess at first I was at a loss to imagine how they could frame an argument out of so unfavourable a Text: but at last, I perceiv'd it might perhaps be thus, *St. Paul* (said they) preach'd nothing but what was written, as he testify's to *Agrippa*; so then, all he preach'd was *Scripture*: But he commands them to receive no other doctrine, but what he deliver'd them: Therefore, he enjoynd them to make *Scripture* the Rule of their Faith. This is (as far as I can find) the full epitome of their discourse upon this Text.

But

But, considering that what is in Scripture may be deliver'd by preaching, without an mention of Scripture; me thinks though all St. Paul taught the *Galathians* had been written, yet it follows not He commanded the *Galathians* to hold the doctrine from Scripture; For those two words, *what was Evangeliz'd to you*, and *what you have receiv'd* signify so plainly *preaching*, that I can collect nothing from this place, but that they were to hold their Faith *because He had preach'd it*; then which 'tis impossible to imagine a more efficacious argument to demonstrate *Tradition*.

And, to this effect, he exaggerates his own quality; that he was one who had not receiv'd his doctrine *from man* nor by the *intermise of man*, but immediatly by revelation from Christ: and afterwards, (upbraiding the *Galathians* for their inconstancy) asks them, whether they had receiv'd their Christianity by the works of the Law, or *ex auditu fidei*, by hearing of the *Gospel*? So that in effect, his command is to the *Galathians* to stand to his preaching, that is, to *Tradition* for their Faith: and this not only against all men but even Angels, should they come down from Heaven to preach any thing contrary. For, that the word *præter* may signify *contrary*, is too well known to

be insisted on; But, that it signify's so here, the particular occasion of this discourse makes evident; St. Paul expressing that *some intruded themselves seeking to overturn the Gospel of Christ*: and charging upon them that, whereas they had *began in spirit, they ended in flesh*, and the like; Wherefore it is plain, he spake of doctrine contrary to what he had preach'd. But if *præter* be taken for *besides*, it will signify *besides Tradition*, not *besides Scripture*: there being not the least mention of Scripture: Now, how soundly it is proved that St. Paul taught nothing but what was *written*, is before examin'd; which yet if admitted true, were nothing to the purpose. For, 'tis not the Catholik position, that all its doctrines are not contain'd in Scripture: but not held from thence nor to be convinced out of the naked letter, especially in a pertinacious dispute: A question certainly not so much as dream'd of in this place of St. Paul.

And now to close this whole discourse, I shall only add one short period: as a prudential reflection upon the different fitness and proportion these two methods have, in order to determine controversies. That, in case where any two parties disagree, *Tradition* is very seldom so much as pretended by both, and if at all, still in points of less importance:

portance: wheras *Scripture* is continually alledg'd by all sides, how numerous soever their factions be, and how fundamental soever their differences: An evident sign, the way of resolving by *Tradition*, is incomparably preferrable to that of judging by the bare letter of *Scripture*: especially if, still upon examination, one of the pretended opposite Traditions prove, indeed, either not sufficiently universal or not positively contrary to the other, but, perhaps a particular custom of some *Province*, as *Rebaptization*: or only a meer negative Tradition, as that of the *Greeks* concerning the *Holy Ghost*.

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THE EIGHTEENTH ENCOUNTER,

Declaring the reasons of the Authors concluding, without proceeding to the examination of the Fathers Testimonies.

I Have omitted the petty quiblets of Criticism which our Adversaries use to press in divers of the places I explicated: not only because they are often false, most commonly strain'd, and always such pigmy bulrushes, that they merit no admission into a grave discours: but chiefly, because, considering largely the Antecedents and consequents to the Texts alledged, I found the substance of them wholly mistaken and nothing to our purpose: and that such arguments are the abortive issue of immature brains, not able to distinguish the force of Canon shot, from a Faery's squib or a boys pot-gun.

And I dare (had I good conditions) maintain that, in all the differences betwixt Protestants and us Catholicks, they cannot
produce

produce one place of Scripture, in which the words can bear a sense that comes home to the state of the question. I know many urge those of the Decalogue against Images To which I answer, with words analogical to those of *St. Paul*, Who (speaking to the *Galathians*) protested that whoever circumcis'd himself, as a thing necessary or because of the old Commandment, was bound to keep the whole Judaical law: So say I, whoever condemns Images, upon this prohibition of *Moses*, is bound to keep all the law of the Jews: For, if these words be a law to us, because they are written in theirs, all that's written in their law must be so to us; since he that made one, made all; and, for whom he made one and deliver'd it to them, for them he made and deliver'd all the rest, as one entire body of law to be observ'd by them. He therefore that counts himself bound by this Law, must (if he have common sense) esteem himself equally obliged to all the rest.

Upon the same reason hangs the *keeping of the Sabbath day*; for, of all the *Decalogue*, these are the only two points unrepeated in the *new Testament*: so that, all the rest we are bound to accept in vertue of that, but these two we cannot. Wherefore, whoever holds, *The Sabbath day is commanded by God,*
either

either does so because he finds it in the *old Law*: and to him I protest he ought (in consequence to this judgment) submit to all that law and become a *Jew*: or else, because he finds it in observation among Christians, that is, in *Tradition*: and to him I protest, he is bound to embrace all that comes down by *Tradition*, namely, the whole Roman Catholick Faith: Therefore, every rigorous observer of the *Sabbath*, is bound in common sense, either to be a *Jew* or a *Catholick*.

To make an end, I know our adversaries alledg many sentences of *Fathers* to prove the sufficiency of Scripture: wherof the most part I am sure are as far beside the state of the question, as those places of Scripture we come now from examining. However, I finde my self, not concern'd to look into them: pretending no farther at this present, then to consider the ground upon which those I oppose rely, for their assurance, that Scripture is sufficient to decide controversies, according to the state of the question, as it is proposed. Now, because they reject wholly the Authority of *Fathers*, from a definitive sentence in matter of Faith: it is impossible for them, (if they are not quite *Bed-ams*) to rely on their Authority for acceptance of Scripture; for what can be ima-
gin'd

gin'd more palpably absurd then to receive upon their credit the whole Rule of Faith, and yet not take their words for any one Article of Faith? and consequently what can be imagin'd more vain and fruitless then for me to lose my labour in striving to shew that Protestants have no colour from Antiquity, to expect this al-deciding power in Scripture, whilst themselves aver the whole multitude of *Fathers* is not capable of giving a sufficient testimony for their relyance on Scripture: since therefore there is nothing like a ground in Scripture, and they scorn all ground except Scripture, I must leave them to the freedom of doing it without ground.

FINIS.

70 B



