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THE
CATHOLIC DOCTRINE
OF A
TRINITY

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AN HUNDRED SHORT AND CLEAR ARGUMENTS,
EXPRESSED IN THE TERMS OF THE
HOLY SCRIPTURE,
COMPARED AFTER A MANNER ENTIRELY NEW,

AND

Digested under the Four following Titles :

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. The Divinity of <i>Christ</i> . | 3. The <i>Plurality</i> of Persons. |
| 2. The Divinity of the <i>Holy Ghost</i> . | 4. The <i>Trinity</i> in Unity. |

WITH

A FEW REFLECTIONS, OCCASIONALLY INTERSPERSED,
UPON SOME OF THE ARIAN WRITERS,
PARTICULARLY DR. S. CLARKE :

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A LETTER TO THE COMMON PEOPLE,

IN ANSWER TO

SOME POPULAR ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE TRINITY



BY THE LATE

WILLIAM JONES, M.A. F.R.S.

RECTOR OF PASTON, IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, AND MINISTER OF
NAYLAND, IN SUFFOLK.



*Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God, Psal. xxxviii. 15.
Not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost
teacheth ; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 1 Cor. ii. 13.*

THE EIGHTH EDITION.



London :

PRINTED FOR F. C. AND J. RIVINGTON,
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1812.

*This TRACT is in the List of Books, dispersed by
" THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN
" KNOWLEDGE," as a Work well calculated to dis-
seminate the Knowledge of evangelical Truth, at a
Time when the Enemies of our holy Faith are busy in
their Endeavours to undermine it; and it may be had,
by the Members, on the Terms of the Society.*

TO THE
REVEREND AND WORTHY
THE VICE-CHANCELLOR,
THE HEADS OF HOUSES,
AND OTHER
MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
THE FOLLOWING DEFENCE
OF THE
DOCTRINE OF THE EVER-BLESSED TRINITY
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT TIME
BY
NATHANIEL BENTLEY

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

TO THE

THIRD EDITION.



MY Bookseller having solicited me to republish this little Treatise, I have corrected the typographical errors of the last edition, and enlarged some passages of the work itself.

The attempt of the late Bishop of *Clogher* to propagate *Arianism* in the Church of *Ireland*, induced me to keep the Doctrine of the *Trinity* in my thoughts for some years; and I had a particular attention to it as often as the Scriptures, either of the Old or New Testament, were before me. This little book was the fruit of my study; of which I have seen some good effects already, and ought not to despair of seeing more before I die.

Many other observations have occurred to me since the first publication, which I should willingly have added. But some readers might have been discouraged,

if I had presented them with a book of too large a size: and the merits of the cause lie in a small compass.

The republication of this work, though merely accidental, is not unseasonable at this time, when we are taught from the press*, (and the author seems to be very much in earnest) that the only sure way of reducing Christianity to its primitive purity, is to abolish all *Creeeds* and *Articles*. But the great rock of offence, with this writer, is the *Trinity*; to get rid of which, he would at once dissolve our whole ecclesiastical constitution and form of worship.

This wild project furnishes a melancholy confirmation of the censure passed upon us by some learned protestants abroad; who have reflected upon *England* as a country productive of literary monsters †; where some old heresy is frequently rising up as old comets have been supposed to do, with new and portentous appearances. And the reader whose sight can penetrate through the vehement accusations of *Papery*, *Bigotry*, *Persecution*, *Imposition*, and other fiery vapours with which this author has surrounded his performance, will discover little, if any thing, more than *Arianism* at the centre.

The Scripture is the only rule that can enable us to judge, whether that or the Catholic Doctrine of the

* In a new work, intituled *The Confessional*.

† *Carfaxov*. Pref. in *Pseudo Critic: Whistonii*.

Trinity is more agreeable to truth : therefore I have confined myself to this unexceptionable kind of evidence for the proof of the latter, and have made the Scripture *its own Interpreter*. But our adversaries, though they allow the sufficiency of the Scripture, and unjustly pretend to distinguish themselves from us by insisting upon it, do nevertheless make such frequent use of a lower sort of evidence to bias common readers, and shew the expediency of what they are pleased to call *Reformation*; that I have thought proper to exhibit a specimen of their method of proceeding in that respect, by adding to this edition *A Letter to the Common People, in answer to some popular Arguments against the Trinity*. These arguments are extracted chiefly from a small book, intitled, *An Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People*; a thing very highly commended by the author of the *Confessional* *. But in this author's estimation, every writer that opposes the faith of the Church of *England*, is *ipso facto* invincible : and consequently, this retailer of Dr. *Clarke's* opinions, who.

* “ Which book,” (says he) “ has passed through two editions “ without any sort of reply that I have heard of. This looks as if “ *able* writers were not *willing* to meddle with the subject, or that “ *willing* writers were not *able* to manage it,” p. 320. The Rev. Mr. *Landon* published an answer to this book in 1764, printed for *Whiston* and *White*: and he has mentioned another himself in a *note*. But had the case really been as he hath reported in his text, it will by no means follow, that a book is therefore unanswerable, because it hath received no answer. If this be good logic, I could present him with a conclusion or two, which he would not very well like.

ever he is, must come in for his share of merit and applause; which I by no means envy him.

So far as the Scripture itself hath been thought to furnish any objections to the received doctrine, I judged it the fairer and the surer way, to answer them as they were offered by Dr. *Clarke* himself; and have therefore no apology to make for neglecting some of his disciples, who have not made any improvement on his arguments; as I do not find that this gentleman hath: the second edition of whose *Appeal* was published in 1754, since which there have been two editions of the *Catholic Doctrine in England*, and one or more in *Ireland*.

By all the observations I have been able to make, the greater number of those who disbelieve the Trinity upon principle (for many do it implicitly, and are credulous in their unbelief) do not profess to take their notions of God from the Bible, but affect to distinguish themselves from the common herd by drawing them from the fountains of Reason and Philosophy. We cannot be persuaded, that the Trinity is denied by reasoners of this complexion, because the Scripture hath *not revealed* it: but do rather suspect, that some philosophers dissent from this point of Christian doctrine, because they are not humble enough to take the Scripture as a test of their religious opinions. In which case, the whole labour of collecting texts, and framing of comments, and
fishing

fishings for various readings, is an after-thought. It is submitted to rather for apology than proof: to reconcile readers of the Scripture to that doctrine, which they would be more jealous of receiving if they knew it to have been originally borrowed from another quarter. He that would deceive a *Christian*, can seldom do his work effectually without a Bible in his hand: a consideration, which may help us to a sight of the consequences, if persons were permitted to teach in our churches without any previous Enquiry concerning their religious sentiments, and so allowed to take the same liberty, either through mistake or ill design, as was taken by the arch deceiver in the wilderness*, who never meant to use the Scripture for edification, but only for destruction; not to apply it as an instrument of good, but to turn it, as far as he was able, into an instrument of evil. The Bible was given us for the preservation of the kingdom of Christ upon earth; as the Book of Statutes in this kingdom is intended to secure the authority of the government, together with the life, peace and property, of every individual: and we want no prophet to foreshew us the consequences, if all the malecontents in the nation were allowed to be public interpreters of the laws.

These considerations I leave the judicious to apply as they find occasion. I use them chiefly as hints, for

* *Matt. iv. 6.*

the benefit both of such as may be in danger of wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction, and of such philosophers as those alluded to by St. *Paul**, who through the *profession* of fancied *wisdom* fell into real *folly*, and purchased a reputed knowledge of things natural and metaphysical, at the lamentable expence of losing the knowledge of *God*.

* Rom. i. 22. 1-Cor. i. 21.

PLUCKLEY,

Jan. 1, 1767.

TABLE

OF THE

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE.

| | Page |
|---|-----------|
| <i>THE Christian Religion is distinguished from other Religions, by its object of worship</i> - | xiv—xviii |
| <i>Difference of opinions no argument against the truth</i> | xix |
| <i>Whence this difference proceeds</i> - - - | xx—xxvi |
| <i>Men differ about plain facts, as well as Choistian Doctrines</i> - - - - - | xxvi |
| <i>Men are subject to a state of mind, in which they cannot bear the Truth</i> - - - - - | xxvii |
| <i>Remedy against Error</i> - - - - - | xxix |
| <i>The fundamental Error of modern Arianism</i> - - | xxx |

CHAP. I.

| | |
|--|----|
| <i>The Divinity of Christ demonstrated by a comparison of such texts as serve to interpret one another</i> - | 1 |
| <i>Single texts abused by Arians, cleared up by a comparison with other texts</i> - - - - | 24 |
| <i>Divinity of Christ proved, by another series of arguments</i> - - - - - | 32 |
| <i>The word Consubstantial justified by the terms of Scripture</i> - - - - - | 35 |

CHAP. II.

| | Page |
|---|------|
| <i>The Divinity of the Holy Ghost demonstrated by a comparison of different texts</i> - - - | 42 |
| <i>Objections answered by the Scripture</i> - - - | 54 |
| <i>The great usefulness of the Old Testament, in this subject of the Trinity</i> - - - | 58 |
| <i>Dr. Clarke's sophistical treatment of the Bible</i> - | 59 |

CHAP. III.

| | |
|---|--------|
| <i>God is distinguished in the Old Testament, by a great variety of Plural names and expressions</i> - - | 63 |
| <i>The Divine Plurality is a Trinity of persons</i> - - | 74 |
| <i>The controverted text of 1 John v. 7. cited by the Latins before the council of Nice</i> - - | 79 |
| <i>An instance of Dr. Clarke's distress and sophistry, in evading the terms Lord of Hosts, as applied to Christ by St. John</i> - - - | 83 |
| <i>A caution against a trite artifice of the Arian writers</i> | 83, 84 |

CHAP. IV.

| | |
|--|-----|
| <i>The Unity of the Trinity demonstrated, 1. By the application of the incommunicable name Jehovah, and other Supreme appellations, to the three Persons</i> | 85 |
| 2. <i>By the same divine Attributes equally ascribed to them</i> - - - - - | 92 |
| 3. <i>By an ineffable communion, in the same acts of omnipotence</i> - - - - - | 94 |
| <i>A Summary of the whole work, in a conclusion</i> - | 98 |
| <i>A practical address to the Catholic reader</i> - - | 104 |

A LETTER TO THE COMMON PEOPLE.

| | |
|--|-----|
| <i>The origin and issue of Arianism</i> - - - | 110 |
| I. <i>Arian writers work upon the pride of the common people</i> - - - - - | 111 |
| II. <i>They</i> | |

CONTENTS.

xiii

| | Page |
|--|-------|
| II. <i>They tell them their common sense is a sufficient guide without the Clergy</i> - - - - - | 113 |
| III. <i>They invest the people with a right of judging as they please</i> - - - - - | 115 |
| IV. <i>They try to set them against the Athanasian Creed</i> | 117 |
| <i>Their objection returns much stronger upon themselves</i> - - - - - | 118 |
| V. <i>They forge a contradiction, and put it into the Athanasian Creed</i> - - - - - | ibid. |
| VI. <i>Fallible Arians rail at the orthodox for being fallible men; yet these fallible men do not deliver their own doctrines, but such as they receive from an infallible God</i> - - - - - | 119 |
| VII. <i>Their prostitution of Protestant Principles</i> - - - - - | 120 |
| VIII. <i>Faith of the first Reformers reflected upon by Arian writers; but is an argument against themselves</i> - - - - - | 123 |
| IX. <i>They think the reformed faith as bad as Popish Idolatry; but the ground of their accusation is weak and blasphemous</i> - - - - - | 125 |
| <i>They alter the Scripture to keep this accusation in countenance</i> - - - - - | 129 |
| X. <i>A sophistical objection to the Litany, by the author of The Confessional</i> - - - - - | 131 |
| XI. <i>The Arians plead seriously for the removal of the orthodox faith, because it is offensive to Jews and Turks</i> - - - - - | 132 |
| XII. <i>They encourage the people with the example of some Arian Clergymen</i> - - - - - | 136 |
| <i>They court the mob for their assistance against the Church</i> - - - - - | 138 |
| <i>A warning to the people not to be cheated once more into their own ruin; from which there will probably be no second Restoration.</i> - - - - - | 139 |

TO THE
R E A D E R.

THE Christian Religion is best known and distinguished by the God proposed in it, as the object of our faith and obedience: and as there is no true religion, but the religion of Christians, so there is no true God, but the God of Christians.

Before the coming of *Christ*, and the fulfilling of the Law, God was known by the name of *Jehovah*, the God of *Abraham*, and of *Isaac*, and of *Jacob*. The *Israelites*, who were the seed of *Abraham*, and drew their whole religion from a divine revelation, and the knowledge of the true God; and the people of every other nation, who were *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*, and *strangers from the covenants of promise*, were also without God in the world^a. Though they talked much of God, and wrote much of him, and offered him many sacrifices, yet they knew him not: the Being they served, was not God, but another in the place of him, falsely called by his name. And though some modern Christians have forgot there was any difference, yet the very *heathens* themselves, upon some occasions, were ready enough to allow it. *Naaman* the *Syrian*, when he was cured of his leprosy by the prophet *Elisha*, made a public confession of it—*Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel*^b. The same is affirmed by the inspired Psalmist—*All the Gods of the heathens are idols*^c; and God himself declares them all to have been *vanities*^d.

^a Eph. ii. 12.
iv. 22.

^b 2 Kings v. 15.

^c Psal. xcvi. 5.

^d Jer.

The case is now with the *Christians* under the Gospel, as it anciently was with the *Jews* under the Law: they believe in the only true God; while the unchristian part of mankind, who are by far the majority, either know him not, or wilfully deny him; as *Pharaoh* did the *God of the Hebrews* when he was told of him. And we are now got to such a pitch of indevotion and ignorance, that among those who profess and call themselves *Christians*, there are too many who are almost come to be *Heathens*, without knowing it. For there is a fashionable notion propagated by most of our moral writers, and readily subscribed to by those who say their prayers but seldom, and can never find time to read their Bible, that all who worship any God, worship the *same* God; as if we worshipped the three letters of the *word* God, instead of the *Being* meant and understood by it. The *Universal Prayer* of Mr. *Alexander Pope* was composed upon this plan; wherein the supreme Being is addressed as a common *Father of all*, under the names, *Jehovah*, *Jove*, and *Lord*. And this humour of confounding things, which ought to be distinguished at the peril of our Souls, and of comprehending *Believers* and *Idolators* under one and the same religion, is called a *catholic spirit*, that shews the very exaltation of Christian Charity. But God, it is to be feared, will require an account of it under another name; and though the *Poet* could see no difference, but has mistaken *Jove* or *Jupiter* for the same *Father of all* with the *Lord Jehovah*; yet the *Aposile* has instructed us better; who, when the *Priest of Jupiter* came to offer sacrifice, exhorted him very passionately to *turn from those vanities unto the living God*^a; well knowing that he whom the *Priest* adored under the name of *Jupiter*, was not the *living God*, but a creature, a nothing, a *vanity*. Yet the catholic spirit of a moralist can discern no difference; and while it pretends some zeal for a sort of universal religion, common to *believers* and *infidels*, betrays a sad indifference for the Christian religion in particular. This error is so monstrous in a

^a Acts xiv. 15.

land enlightened by the Gospel, and yet so very common amongst us at present, that I may be pardoned for speaking of it in the manner it deserves. And let me beseech every serious person, who is willing to have his prayers heard, to consider this matter a little better, and use a more correct form; for God, who is jealous of his honour, and has no communion with idols, will certainly reject the petition that sets him upon a level with *Baal* and *Jupiter*.

The *true God* is He that was in *Christ reconciling the world to himself*; there is none other but He; and if this great Characteristic be denied, or any other assumed in its stead, a man is left *without God*; after which, he may call himself a *Deist*, if he will; but his God is a mere idol of the imagination, and has no corresponding reality in the whole universe of beings.

The modern *Jews*, by denying their *God* to have been *manifest in the flesh*, are as effectually departed from the *true God*, as their forefathers were, when they danced before the golden calf, and called their idolatrous service a *feast to the Lord*. For the Being of God is not an object of sight, but of faith; it enters first into the heart; and if it be wrong there, the *first* commandment is broken: if a figure of it be set up before the eyes, then the *second* is broken likewise. The first forbids us to *have* any other God; the second, to make any graven *image* of him. Now though we make no image, yet if with the heart we *believe* in any God different from the true, the Idolatry indeed may be less, but the Apos-tacy is the same. And this seems to be the case of the *Jew*.

The *Mahometans* are another set of *infidels*, who *abhor idols*, but have in express terms denied the *Son of God*, and set up an idol of the imagination, a God in *one Person*. They inveigh bitterly against the *Christians* for worshipping *three Gods*; for so they state the doctrine of a Trinity in *Unity*, as some others have done beside them.

In answer to all these abominations of the *Deist*, the *Jew*, and the *Mahometan*, and to shew that no unbeliever of any denomination can be a servant of the *true God*, it is writ-

ten—*whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father*^a: and again—*whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not GOD*^b. And let the *Socinians*, who have not only vindicated the religion of *Mahomet*, but preferred it to the Christianity of the Church of *England*, which with them is *no better or other than a sort of Paganism and Heathenism*^{*}, let them consider what a share they have in this condemnation.

And to bring this matter home to the *Arians*; it is to be observed, that every article of the Christian Faith depends upon the Doctrine of a Trinity in Unity. If that be given up, the other doctrines of our religion must go with it, and so it has been in fact, that the authors who have written against the Trinity, have also disputed away some other essential parts of Christianity; particularly the doctrines of the *Satisfaction*, and of *original sin*.

The whole Bible treats of little else but our *creation, redemption, sanctification, resurrection, and glorification*, by the power of *Christ* and the *Holy Spirit*: and the reader will find hereafter, that there is neither name, act, nor attribute of the Godhead, that is not shared in common by all the persons of the Trinity. If, therefore, the persons of *Christ* and the *Spirit* are not *God* in the Unity of the *Father*, then the prayers and praises we offer to them, as the authors of every blessing, will not be directed to the supreme Lord and God, beside whom no other is to be *worshipped*, but to his creatures and instruments: which overthrows the sense of our whole religion: and drives us upon a sort of second-rate faith and worship, which, beside the blasphemy of it, can be nothing but confusion and contradiction. It is no wonder then, that the *Arians* and *Socinians*, with their several under-sects and divisions, who

^a 1 *John* ii. 23.

^b 2 *John* 9.

* See *Leslie's* Theological works, *Fol.* Vol. I. p. 218. where the reader may find a great deal more to the same purpose; and particularly an Epistle of the *Socinians*, to the *Morocco* Ambassador, in the time of *Charles II.* a great curiosity, wherein their whole scheme is laid open to the bottom by themselves.

have fallen into this snare, and departed from the divine *Unity*, while they pretend to be the only men who assert it, have never yet been able to agree in the forms of religious worship. Some of them allowing that *Christ* is to receive divine worship, but always with this reserve, that the Prayer tend ultimately to the person of *the Father*. So that *Christ* is to be worshipped, only he is not to be worshipped: and if you should venture, when you are at the point of death, to say with *St. Stephen*—*Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit*^a—and confess the person of *Jesus* to be *the God of the Spirits of all flesh*^b by committing your own Spirit into his hands; you are to take care not to die without throwing in some qualifying comment, to assure him you do it only in hypocrisy, not meaning him but another. Others, again, knowing this distinction to be vain and indefensible, and the same for substance with the *Latria* and *Dulia* by which the Church of *Rome* excuses her adoration of the *blessed Virgin*, &c. have fairly got rid of it, by denying to the person of *Christ* any divine worship or invocation at all; which is the case with our *Socinian Unitarians* here in *England*; for those of *Poland* are quite of another mind.

How far such differences as these must needs affect a *Liturgy*, it is very easy to foresee: and that it will for ever be as impossible to frame a Creed or a Service to please all those who bear the name of *Christians*, as to make a coat that shall fit men of all sizes*. *Prayer* and divine worship and religious confession, are the fruit and breath of Faith; and out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth

^a *Acts* vii. 59.

^b *Numb.* xvi. 22.

* *Hales* of *Eton*, in his sarcastic and malicious *Tract upon Schism*, proposes it as a grand Expedient for the advancing of *Unity*, that we should “consider all the *Liturgies*, that are and ever have been; and remove “from them whatever is scandalous to any Party, and leave nothing “but what *all agree on*.” He should have closed this sentence a little sooner; and advised us fairly and honestly to *leave nothing*; for that will certainly be the event, when the objections of *all parties* are suffered to prevail; there being no one page of the *Liturgy*, wherein *all* who pretend to worship God as *Christians*, are agreed.

speakeib^a: so that until we are agreed in matters of *faith*, there is neither hope nor possibility of our agreeing in any form of *worship*. God is the fountain-head, and religion the stream that descends from it. Our sentiments as to religion, always flow from the opinion we have formed of the divine nature; and will be right or wrong, sweet or bitter, as the fountain is from whence they are derived. It is the having a different God, that makes a different religion. A true God produces a true religion; a false God, a false religion. *Jews, Turks, Pagans, Deists, Arians, Socinians*, and *Christians*, all differ about a religion, because they differ about a God.

These few observations will be sufficient, I hope, to raise the attention of the reader; and persuade him, that a right faith in God is a much more serious affair than some would make it; that it is of the last concern, and hath a necessary influence upon the practice and holiness of our lives; that as no other devotion is acceptable with God, but that which is seasoned with love and charity and uniformity, the very mark and badge whereby his disciples are to be known from the men of this world, it is the principal duty of every *Christian* to know in *whom* he ought to *believe*, that *with one mind and one mouth we may glorify God*^b: for a right notion of God, will as surely be followed by a sound faith and an uniform profession in all other points; as false faith and a discordant worship will grow from every wrong opinion of him.

All that can be known of the true God, is to be known by *Revelation*. The false lights indeed of reason and nature are set up and recommended, as necessary to assist and ratify the evidence of Revelation: but enquiries of this kind, as they are now managed, generally end in the degradation of *Christ*, and the *Christian Religion*^{*}: till it can be shewn therefore that the Scripture neither does nor

^a *Matt. xii. 34.*

^b *Rom. xv. 6.*

* You may have a proof of this from the *Essay on Spirit*, by comparing the book with its *title*, which runs thus—*The Doctrine of the Trinity considered in the Light of Reason and Nature, &c.*

can shine by a light and authority of *its own*, the evidence we are to rest in, must be drawn from thence; and as we all have the same Scripture, without doubt we ought all to have the same opinion of God.

But here it is commonly objected, that men will be of different opinions; that they have a right to judge for themselves; and that when the best evidence the nature of the case will admit of is collected and laid before them, they must determine upon it *as it appears to them*, and according to the *light* of their own *consciences*: so that if they adhere as closely to their errors after they have consulted the proper evidence as they did before, we are neither to wonder nor to be troubled at it.

This very moderate and benevolent way of thinking, has been studiously recommended by those, who found it necessary to the well-being of their own opinions, that not a spark of zeal should be left amongst us. And surely it is no new thing, that the advocates of any particular error, next to themselves and their own fashion, should naturally incline to those who are softest and stand least in the way. Hence it is, that however magisterial and insolent they may carry themselves in their own cause; they always take care to season their writings with the praises of this frozen indifference; calling that *Christian Charity*, which is nothing but the absence of Christianity: and any the least appearance of earnestness for some great and valuable truth, which we are unwilling to part with, because we hope to be saved by it, is browbeaten, condemned, and cast out of their moral system, under the name of *heat, want of temper, fire, fury, &c.* They add moreover, that articles of faith are things merely *speculative*: and that it is of little signification what a man *believes*, if he is but hearty and *sincere* in it: that is, in other words, it is a mere trifle whether we feed upon bread* or poison†; the one will prove to be as good nourishment as the other, provided it be eaten with an appetite. Yet some well-meaning people are so

* See and compare *Deut. viii. 3.* *Amos viii. 11.* *Acts xx. 28.*

† *James iii. 8.* *1 Tim. iv. 1.*

puzzled and deceived by this sophistry, that they look upon concord among *Christians* as a thing impracticable and desperate; concluding a point to be *disputable* because it is *disputed*; and so they fall into a loose indifferent humour of palliating and thinking charitably, as it is called, of every error in faith and practice; as if the Church of *Christ* might very innocently be turned into a *Babel* of confusion.

Now that men do maintain opinions strangely different from one another, especially on subjects wherein it most concerns them to be agreed, is readily confessed; we are all witnesses of it: and, allowing them to be equally informed, there are but three possible sources from whence this difference can arise. It must be either from God, or from the scripture, or from themselves. From God it cannot be, for it is a great evil; it is the triumph of Deists and reprobates, and the best handle the enemies of Christianity ever found against it: and God is not the author of evil. Nor can it be from the scripture: to draw it thence, is but another way of imputing it to God. The scripture is his word; and he is answerable for the effect of his words when written or reported, as when they are suggested at first hand by the voice of his Holy Spirit. It remains therefore, that the only source of this evil must be the heart of man: and that it really is so, will be evident from the scripture, and the plainest matters of fact. The account we have of this affair is, in short, as follows—Ever since the *fall*, the nature of man has been blind and corrupt; his *understanding darkened*^a, and his affections polluted: upon the face of the whole earth there is no man, *Jew* or *Gentile*, that *understandeth and seeketh after God*^b; the *natural man*, or man remaining in that state wherein the fall left him, is so far from being able to discover or know any religious truth, that he hates and flies from it when it is proposed to him; he *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*^c. Man is natural and earthly; the things of God are spiritual and heavenly; and these are contrary

^a *Ephes. iv. 18.*

^b *Rom. iii. 11.*

^c *1 Cor. ii. 14.*

one to the other: therefore, as the *wisdom of the world is foolishness with God*^a; so the wisdom of God is foolishness with the world. In a word, the sense man is now possessed of, where God does not restrain it, is used for evil and not for good: his *wisdom is earthly, sensual*^{*}, *devilish*^b; it is the sagacity of a brute^c, animated by the malignity of an evil Spirit.

This being the present state of man, the Scripture does therefore declare it necessary, that he should be *transformed by the renewing of his mind*^d; and restored to that *sound mind*^e and *light of the understanding*^f, that *spiritual discernment*^g, with which the human nature was endued when it came from the hands of God, but to which it has been dead from the *day* that evil was brought into the world. And where the grace of God that should open the eyes, and prepare the heart to receive instruction^h, has been obstinately withstood and resisted; this blindness, which at first was only *natural*, becomes *judicial*; from being a defect, it is confirmed into a judgment; and men are not only unable to discern the truth, but are settled and rivetted in error: which is the case with all those to whom *God sends strong delusion that they should believe a lie, and have pleasure in unrighteousness*ⁱ. It is then they sit down in the seat of the scornful, as *fools that make a mock at sin*^k, and *despisers of those that are good*^l; hating and railing at their fellow-creatures, only because they are endued with the fear of God! This is the last stage of blindness; and it is referred to in those words of the Apostle—*If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*^m: as also in that lamentation of our blessed Lord over the City of Jerusalem—*If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes*ⁿ.

* $\Psi\upsilon\chi\iota\sigma\mu\sigma$, Natural.

- ^a 1 Cor. iii. 19. ^b James iii. 15. ^c Jude 10. ^d Rom. xii. 2.
^e 2 Tim. i. 7. ^f Eph. i. 18. ^g 1 Cor. ii. 14. ^h Prov. xx. 12.
and xvi. 1. ⁱ 2 Thess. ii. 11. ^k Prov. xiv. 9. ^l 2 Tim. iii. 3.
^m 2 Cor. iv. 3. ⁿ Luke xix. 42.

The

The absolute necessity of God's grace to *lighten our darkness*, has often been largely and faithfully insisted upon by the writers and preachers of the Church of *England*: but since the Spirit of *Deism* has crept in among us, it has been openly slighted and contemned by some, and too much neglected by others; which has given an opportunity to several sorts of Enthusiasts to make a wrong use of it: such as our *Quakers*, *Methodists*, and particularly the Reverend Mr. *William Law*, who, after writing too excellently upon the vanity of the world, and the follies of human life, (on which subjects he has no superior) has left us nothing to depend upon but *Imagination*, and reduced the whole evidence of Christianity to fancied impulses and inspiration: so as to render the scriptures useless, and the appointed *means* of grace contemptible. I have observed the like to have happened in many other instances; that where any essential point of doctrine has been dropt by the writers of the Church, or at least not brought out to view so often as it should have been, it has been taken up by others, (as all *tares* are sown while the husbandmen are *asleep*) and employed, under some false state of it, to the no small disadvantage of the Church and the Christian Religion.

To illustrate this subject a little farther, I shall make it appear by a few plain examples, that where mankind have been divided in their opinions with regard to any divine truth, it has not been owing to the ambiguity of its terms, or the defect of its evidence, but wholly and solely to the state and temper of the hearers. And thus *Christ* himself has instructed us in his parable of the *sower*; that where the good seed of the word perishes, it is to be imputed to the *ground* and not to the *seed*. How else can we account for it, that when St. *Paul* laid the evidence of the Gospel before a large assembly of *Jews* at *Rome*, some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not^a, though the same things were spoken to all? Such in general was the

^a *Acts* xxviii. 24.

success of the Apostolical preaching; some few *receiving the word with gladness*, while others opposed themselves and blasphemed. And though it be supposed, that *words* are more easily misunderstood than *facts*, and may admit of a greater latitude: yet *here* we shall find, that the same spirit which has divided mankind in what are called the more speculative points of faith, will also divide them in the plainest and most striking matters of fact. The resurrection of *Lazarus* was a matter of fact, seen and attested by a competent number of witnesses: but how different was the effect of it upon different persons! for while it had its free course with many of the *Jews*, and moved them to *believe on Jesus*, it only moved the *chief Priests* to hate him the more; and they consulted how *they might put Lazarus also to death*^a. When *Jesus* cured the blind and cast out devils, some rightly concluded—*Rabbi, thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou dost, except God be with him*^b: yet there were not a few, and they of the most learned and knowing too, who concluded far otherwise, that he *cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils*^c. So likewise, when the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles, and inspired them with the gift of tongues, some *devout men* were amazed and confounded at the miracle; plainly seeing the hand of God in it, and asking what it *meant*, what was the end and design of it? and being informed by *St. Peter's* discourse, that it was to confirm the mission of *Jesus of Nazareth*, *received his word gladly, and were baptized*^d; while others, to avoid the conclusion, *mocking, said, these men are full of new wine*^e. Here is a great multitude assembled together; all of them witnesses to the same fact: yet, in their *opinions* of it, they are as far asunder as drunkenness is from inspiration. But in this case no Christian will raise a doubt about the *real* inspiration of the Apostles; or deny the power of God to have been sufficiently manifested, because

^a *John* xii. 10, 11.^b *John* iii. 2.^c *Matt.* xii. 24.^d *Acts* ii. 41.^e *Acts* v. 13.

some were so profane and senseless as to ridicule it, under the name of drunkenness.

This self-deceit always operates by the assistance of some false principle contrary to the scripture; which gets possession of the heart by ministering to the passions. And till that be dispossessed, no truth will be suffered to enter which can in the least affect to destroy it. A man in such circumstances may see the truth staring him in the face; and the clearer he sees it, the more he will be enraged at it. He may be convicted, and left without a word to say, but what will expose the hardness and perplexity of his heart; but till it be emptied of its evil treasure, and he becomes as a little child that has nothing of *its own* to oppose to the Revelation of God, he cannot be *converted*: but will either shut his eyes and deny the evidence that is offered to him, or pretend it is a *nice point*, very difficult to be understood; and so give a perverse turn to it, though it be ever so plain and intelligible.

Till the Disciples of *Christ* resigned themselves up to be led into all truth by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, they were in the state of mind I am now describing; dull of hearing, and doubtful, and slow of heart. They were often warned of it; particularly in the following words — *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot BEAR them now*^a. And as the divine wisdom made choice of such men for the good of those who should come after, so these things are written of them for our admonition. They had laid it down as a first principle, that their master's kingdom was to be *of this world*: and formed all their reasonings and expectations accordingly. One was to *sit at his right hand*, another *at his left*; and they were ever disputing which should be *the greatest*. Any occurrence that flattered this notion, was gladly received and made the most of; and every thing that could not be reconciled with it was thrust out of sight. When *the son of man began to teach them, that he must suffer many things,*

^a *John xvi. 12.*

and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again^a; all these things were so destructive of their principle, that Peter began to rebuke him, as if he had heard blasphemy. Christ took an opportunity of inculcating this doctrine afresh, when they were in a state of conviction at seeing him perform a miracle; endeavouring, as it were, to surprize them into a confession of its truth: but the time was not yet.—While they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples, let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying; it was hid from them, that they perceived it not^b. The terms were clear and intelligible enough; and the ideas conveyed by them were all common and familiar: but if that saying were admitted, they must part with their beloved principle: therefore it follows, that they were afraid to ask him of that saying; lest he should carry on the subject, and leave them no way to escape. They had already heard more than they would believe, and therefore, as to any thing farther, thought it best to remain in the dark.

In short, where there is a taste and relish for the things that be of men, more than for the things that be of God, and some principle is imbibed wherein the passions are strongly engaged, men are to be persuaded of any thing and of nothing: ready to take up with every despicable pretence, to prop and support their favourite opinion; and deaf to the plainest words and most infallible proofs, if they tend to establish the other side of the question. For example; that a *Messiah* was to deliver their nation, was allowed by all the *Jews*; and they were well agreed as to the time of his coming, and the place where he should be born. It was to be shewn, that *Jesus of Nazareth* was the person: and for a proof of it, they were bid to compare the scripture with the things he did and taught. But

^a *Mat* viii. 31.

^b *Luke* ix. 43, 44.

though

though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him^a; and as if he had left the proof of his mission obscure and defective, they came very formally to him to ask a sign of him, after they had seen so many signs; and called out to the very last for better evidence, bidding him come down from the Cross, that they might see and believe^b. One would take these Jews to have been Sceptics, who would persevere in their doubtings against every proposition that could be offered. But if we judge from their behaviour upon some other occasions, there never was a more credulous generation upon the face of the earth. They could receive full satisfaction from the most childish and inconsistent tales that ever were invented. The self-contradiction of *Satan casting out Satan*; or the report of a few heathen soldiers, who witnessed what was done while they were asleep, could pass for good gospel; while the most evident miracles, and the clearest prophecies, were all nothing to the purpose, where they did not like the conclusion. And for the same reason, the whole gospel itself, while it is the savour of life to some, is a savour of death to others! as different as life and death! yet nevertheless one and the same gospel. It is like the pillar that stood between the camp of *Israel* and the host of *Egypt*; which was a cloud to the one, and light to the other^c. But who will deny that the light was clear to the *Israelites*, because the *Egyptians* saw nothing but a cloud of darkness?

Behold then the true source of all our religious differences: they proceed from the blindness and corruption of the human heart, increased and cherished by some false principle that suits with its appetites: and all the prudence and learning the world can boast will exempt no child of *Adam* from this miserable weakness: nothing but the grace of God can possibly remove it. Where that is suffered to enter, and the heart, instead of persisting in its own will, is surrendered to the will of God, the whole

^a *John* .xii. 37.

^b *Mark* .xv. 31.

^c *Exod.* .xiv. 20.

gospel is sufficiently clear, because no text of it is any longer offensive.

Of this happy change we have the best example in the apostles of our blessed *Saviour*; who when they first entered the School of Christianity, had a veil upon their hearts like the rest of their countrymen, and were strongly possessed by a spirit of the world, promising itself the full enjoyment of temporal honours and preferments. But the sufferings and death of their master having shewed the vanity of such expectations, and served in a great measure to beat down this earthly principle, they were ready for conviction; and then *their understanding was opened, that they might understand the Scriptures*^a. The evidence that before was dark and inconclusive, became on a sudden clear and irresistible; and they, who had lately fled from disgrace and death as from the greatest of evils, could now rejoice that they were found worthy to suffer. Their opinion was altered, because their affections were cleansed from this world: that mire and *clay* was washed off from their eyes in the true waters of *Siloam*, and now they could see all things clearly.

What has been here said upon the conduct of our *Saviour's* disciples and the unbelieving *Jews*, may be applied to all those who dispute any article of the *Christian Faith*; and particularly the doctrine of the ever blessed *Trinity*, as revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures. For we shall certainly find, that some false principle is assumed, which flatters the pride of human nature. It abhors restraint and subjection; and is ever aspiring, right or wrong, to be distinguished from the common herd, and to exalt itself against the knowledge of God^b. What this principle is, we shall very soon discover: it is publicly owned and gloried in by every considerable writer that of late years has meddled with this subject. I shall instance in the learned *Dr. Clarke*; because he is deservedly placed at the head of the *Arian* disputants in this kingdom.

^a *Luke* xxiv. 45.

^b *2 Cor.* x. 5.

He affirms in his first *Proposition*, that the ONE GOD, spoken of in *Matth. xix. 17*, and elsewhere, is only one PERSON; and then adds, “ This is the *first principle of “ Natural Religion *.”*”

So then here are two different religions; by one of which it proved, that the *one God* is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: that he is therefore *three persons*. But it is the *first principle* of the other religion, that he is but *one person*: though how that can be reconciled with the practice of the whole heathen world, who were so far from discovering this *one person*, that they held *Gods many and Lords many*², is not very easy to determine. And whence comes this Religion? it is confessed to be drawn from *nature!* it is the Gospel of the *natural man*, un-sanctified by divine grace, and uninstructed by any light from above; and owes its birth to that fountain of darkness and self-conceit, from whence has sprung all the confusion and imagination that ever was introduced into the religion of God. And what wonder, if *nature* should operate as strongly in an *Arian* or a *Socinian* against the mystery of the *Trinity*, as it did in the *Jews* against the *Law* and the *Prophets*, and in the unconverted disciples against the doctrine of the *Cross*? If it be laid down as a *first principle*, that God is but *one Person*; then it will be utterly impossible, so long as this principle keeps possession, that any person, of common sense enough to know the meaning of words, should quietly receive and embrace a Revelation in those parts of it, where it teaches us that God is *three Persons*: these two principles being so diametrically opposite, that while he holds to the one, a voice from the dead will not persuade him of the other. Therefore, I say again, we ought not to wonder, if that man should remain for ever *invincible*, who BRINGS to the Scripture that knowledge of God, which he is bound, as a Christian, to RECEIVE from it.

* See *Script. Doct.* p. ii. §. 1.

² 1 Cor. viii. 5.

What then will be the consequence in this case? The practice of the *Deist*, who carries on this argument to its proper issue, is to *deny* the Scripture-revelation, because his *natural Religion* is contrary to it; and they cannot both be true. But the partial unbeliever, who allows the Scripture to be supported by such external evidence as he cannot answer, while his reason objects to the matter contained in it; must follow the example of the *Jews*, and *reconcile* the Scripture where he cannot *believe it*. Thus they treated the Law of *Moses*. *We know*, said they, *that God spake unto Moses*^a: therefore they readily granted his Law to have a divine authority: but as it would not serve their turn in its own proper words, they put a false gloss of tradition upon the face of it, to hide its true complexion; and then complained that the Scripture was not clear enough: and if you used it as a testimony to *Jesus Christ*, they would stone you for a *blasphemer*.

What shall we say then; that the *Jews* were of a *different opinion* from the *Christians*? and that this was *their way of understanding* the Scripture? No: God forbid. For if we will believe the Scripture itself, it was their way of *denying* it. *Had ye BELIEVED Moses*, says our Lord, *ye would have believed me*: and he gives us upon this occasion the true grounds and reasons of their unbelief; because they *received honour one of another*, and had not the *love of God* in them^b. Every hypothesis of human growth, which was pretty sure to agree with their complexion, and reflected some honour upon themselves by exalting the nature of man, that can make a *religion for itself*, and comes in its *own name*; that they would gladly *receive*. But if any thing was offered to them in the name of God, to be received for the love of him, and the spiritual comfort of a pure conscience, and the hope of a better world: it was rejected, as an encroachment upon their *natural rights*, and an invective against the innocent pleasures of a carnal *Jerusalem*. And so it is with us at this time; for if an Author does but hang out the sign of *Nature and Reason* in his

^a *John ix. 29.*

^b See *John v. 39.—ad fin.*

title-page, there are readers in plenty, who will buy up and swallow his dregs by wholesale: but if God, of his infinite mercy and condescension, shews to them the *way of Salvation*, his words are to be abstracted from the evidence upon which he requires us to believe them, then put into this Alembic of *reason*, and demonstrated to be no *poison*, before they can be brought to taste them. And if they should happen to be a little disagreeable to flesh and blood, and the operation should miscarry, the fault is charged upon God, and not upon themselves who ought to have gone another way to work; as they will certainly find.

We conclude, therefore, because *Christ* has affirmed it, that every degree of doubt and disputation against the words of God, is just so much *unbelief*; proceeding not from the head or understanding, but from the heart^a and affections. And the World is filled with the vain jangling of uncertainty, for this short reason——*all men have not Faith*^b.

^a *Heb.* iii. 12.

^b *2 Thess.* iii. 2.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN all the *Texts* which are compared together in the following work, those particular words, whereon the stress of the comparison lies, are printed in *Capitals*; that the argument obtained from them may shew itself to the reader upon the first inspection. And I hope, after what has been observed to him in the foregoing discourse, that this is the only admonition he will stand in need of. The arguments I have drawn from the Scripture are, to the best of my knowledge, most of them new; and, if I may judge from my own mind, the manner in which they are laid down, is more likely to convince, than any I have yet seen. Had I thought otherwise, I could easily have forborn to trouble myself or the world with the transcribing and printing them. The end I have proposed is not to obtain any reputation (to which this is not the way) but to do some little good, of which there is much need. I do therefore sincerely recommend the following work, and every reader of it, to the grace and blessing of Almighty God, well knowing, that *unless the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain.*

C H A P. I.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

I.

Isa. viii. 13, 14. Sanctify the LORD OF HOSTS HIMSELF, and let HIM be your fear, and let HIM be your dread: and HE shall be for a sanctuary; but for a STONE OF STUMBLING and ROCK OF OFFENCE to both houses of *Israel*.

1 *Pet.* ii. 7, 8. The stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a STONE OF STUMBLING and ROCK OF OFFENCE.

Instead of reasoning upon these words of the Prophet *Isaiab*, according to any private interpretation, I add another passage of Scripture, wherein they are expressly applied to the person of *Christ*; and then shew what must be the result of *both*. If the Scripture, thus compared with itself, be drawn up into an argument, the conclusion may indeed be *denied*, and so may the whole Bible, but it cannot be *answered*. For example,

The *Stone of Stumbling* and *Rock of Offence*, as the former text affirms, is the *Lord of Hosts himself*; a name which the *Arians* allow to no other but the one, only, true, and supreme God^a.

But, this *Stone of Stumbling* and *Rock of Offence*, as it appears from the latter text, is no other than *Christ*, the same stone which the *builders refused*; therefore,

Christ is the LORD OF HOSTS HIMSELF: and the *Arian* is confuted upon his own principles.

II.

Isa. vi. 5. Mine eyes have SEEN the King, the LORD OF HOSTS.

John xii. 41. These things said *Esaias*, when he SAW HIS (CHRIST'S) GLORY, and spake of HIM.

Jesus is the person here spoke of by *St. John*; whose *glory*, *Esaias* is declared to have *seen* upon that occasion, where the prophet affirms of himself, that his eyes had *seen* the *Lord of Hosts*: therefore,

Jesus is the LORD OF HOSTS.

III.

Isa. xliv. 6. Thus saith the *Lord*, the King of *Israel* and his Redeemer, the LORD OF HOSTS, I am THE FIRST, and I am THE LAST, and BESIDES ME there is NO GOD.

^a See an *Essay on Spirit*, p. 65. *Clarke's Doctr. of the Trin.* C. 10. §. 3, 402.

OF CHRIST.

Rev. xxii. 13. I (*Jesus*) am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, THE FIRST and THE LAST.

These titles of *the first* and *the last* are confined to him alone, *beside whom there is no God*; but *Jesus* hath assumed these titles to *himself*: therefore, *Jesus* is that *God*, *besides whom there is no other*. Or thus: there is no *God* besides him who is *the first* and *the last*: but, *Jesus* is *the first* and *the last*; therefore *besides Jesus* there is *no other God*.

IV.

Isa. xliii. 11. I even I am the LORD, and BESIDES ME there is NO SAVIOUR^a.

2 Pet. iii. 18. OUR LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

Jesus Christ then, is *our Saviour*; or, as he is called, *John* iv. 42, *The Saviour of the World*. But unless he were *God*, even the *Lord*, *Jehovah*, as well as man, he could not be a *Saviour*; because the *Lord* has declared, there is no *Saviour* beside *himself*. It is therefore rightly observed by the Apostle, *Phil.* ii. 9, that *God*, in dignifying the man

^a The argument drawn from this text will be equally convincing which ever way it be taken—*Jesus Christ* is a *Saviour*, therefore he is *Jehovah*, *the Lord*—*Jesus Christ* is *Jehovah*, therefore he is *the Saviour*. The best observations I have ever met with upon the name *Jehovah*, and its application to the second Person of the Trinity, are to be found in a *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity from the Exception of a late pamphlet, entitled an Essay on Spirit*—by the learned Dr. T. Randolph, President of C. C. C. in *Oxford*; which I would desire the reader to consult, from p. 61 to 71 of part I.

Christ with the name of JESUS, hath given him a name above every name, even that of a *Saviour*, which is his own name, and such as can belong to no other.

V.

Rev. xxii. 6. The LORD GOD of the *Holy Prophets* SENT HIS ANGEL to shew unto his *Servants* the things which must shortly be done.

Rev. v. 16. I JESUS have SENT MINE ANGEL to testify unto you *these things* in the *Churches*.

The *Angel* that appeared to *St. John* was the *Angel* of the *Lord God*, and the *Lord God* sent him: but he was the *Angel* of *Jesus*, and *Jesus* sent him: therefore, *Jesus* is the *Lord God of the Holy Prophets*.

VI.

Luke i. 76. And thou Child shalt be called the Prophet of THE HIGHEST, for thou shalt GO BEFORE the FACE of the LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS.

Matth. xi. 10. Behold I send my messenger BEFORE THY FACE, to PREPARE THY WAY before thee.

John the *Baptist* goes before the face of the *Lord*, that is, of the *Highest*, whose prophet he is, to prepare his way. But, he was sent as a Messenger before the face of *Christ*, to prepare his way; who, therefore, is the *Lord*, and the *Highest*.

VII.

VII.

The two following texts are but a repetition of the same argument: but as they speak of *Christ* under a different name, they ought to have a place for themselves.

Luke i. 16, 17. And many of the children of *Israel* shall he turn to the LORD THEIR GOD: and he shall go before HIM.

Matth. iii. 11. HE that cometh AFTER ME is mightier than I,—&c.

Here again, the *Baptist* is said to go before the Lord God of the children of *Israel*: but it is certain, he went before *Jesus Christ*, the only person who is said to come after him: therefore, *Jesus Christ* is the Lord God of the children of *Israel*. And the same title is given to him in the prophet *Hosea*,—*I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God*: which can be no other than the voice of *God the Father*, promising *Salvation* by the person of *God the Son*.

VIII.

Matth. xi. 10. Behold I send MY messenger before THY face, to prepare THY way before THEE.

Mal. iii. 1. Behold I send MY messenger to prepare the way before ME.

As this prophecy is worded by *St. Matthew* (as also by *St. Mark*^a and *St. Luke*^b) there is a personal distinction

^a *Mark* i. 2.

^b *Luke* vii. 27.

between Him who *sends* his *Messenger*, and *Christ*, before whom the *Messenger* is sent—I send MY messenger—to prepare thy way before THEE. But the *Prophet* himself has it thus—I send MY messenger, to prepare the way before ME. Yet the *Evangelist* and the *Prophet* are both equally correct and true. For though *Christ* be a *different person*, yet his he *one* and the *same God* with the *Father*. And hence it is, that with the *Evangelist*, the *persons* are not *confounded*; with the *Prophet* the *Godhead* is not *divided*. This argument may serve to justify an excellent observation of our Church in the *Homily* upon the Resurrection—“How dare we be so bold to renounce the presence of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*? for where *one* is, there is *God* all *whole* in Majesty, together with all his power, wisdom, and goodness.”

IX.

Ps. lxxviii. 56. They TEMPTED and provoked the MOST HIGH GOD.

1 *Cor.* x. 9. Neither let us TEMPT CHRIST as some of *them* also tempted.

These texts do both relate to the same rebellious acts of the *Israelites* in the *wilderness*. In the *former* of them, the person they *tempted* is called the *most High God*: in the *latter* he is called *Christ*: therefore, *Christ* is the *most High God*.

X.

John iii. 29. He that hath the Bride, is THE BRIDEGROOM*—(meaning *Christ*.)

But, according to the Prophet,

Isai. liv. 5. Thy Maker is thine HUSBAND, the LORD OF HOSTS is his Name.

And the *Church*, which is the *Bride of Christ*, can no more have two distinct *husbands*, than *Christ* can have two distinct *Churches*. As the Church is the *Bride*, the *Body*, the *Building of God*; and as there is *one Bride*, *one body*, *one building*; so is there on the other hand, *one God*, who is the *husband or Bridegroom*; *one Christ*, who is the *Head*; *one God with the Lamb*, who is the *Light of it*. Compare

* Another title of eminence, that shews *Christ* to be upon an equality with *God the Father*, is to be collected from the following Scriptures.

Psal xxiii. 1. The LORD (Heb. *Jehovah*) is my SHEPHERD.

John x. 16. There shall be one fold, and ONE SHEPHERD.

If *Christ* be not the *Lord*, in *Unity* with the *Father*, there must of course be *two distinct beings*, to whom the Scripture has appropriated this Character of a *Shepherd*; and that would make *two Shepherds*. But *Christ* has affirmed there is but *one Shepherd*, that is *himself*, THE SHEPHERD of the *Sheep*, v. 2. whom *St. Peter* calls the *chief Shepherd*, 1 *Pet.* v. 4. So again—

Psal. c. 3. Know ye that the LORD he Is GOD — we are His people, and the SHEEP of His Pasture.

John x. 3. HE (that is *Christ* himself) calleth His OWN SHEEP.

And again—*John* xxi. 16. Feed MY *Sheep*—said *Christ* to *St. Peter*: which, in the language of *St. Peter* himself, 1 *Pet.* v. 2. is—Feed the Flock of GOD.

also,

also, *Jer.* iii. 1. and 31, 32. *Ezek.* xvi. *Hos.* ii. *Matth.* ix. 15.—xxv. 1. 2 *Cor.* ii. 2. *Eph.* v. 23. *Rev.* xix. 7. and xxi. 2, 9.

XI.

Here follow some single texts, to which I add no parallels; there being no danger of mistaking their application.

John xx. 28. And *Thomas* answered and said,
MY LORD, and MY GOD.

XII.

Rom. ix. 5. Of whom as concerning the flesh
CHRIST came, who is over all, GOD BLESSED
FOR EVER. *Amen.*

XIII.

2 *Pet.* i. 1. Through the righteousness of OUR
GOD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.

The *Greek* is — τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν καὶ Σωτῆρι Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ — the very same, as to the order and Grammar of the words, with the last verse of this Epistle — τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, καὶ Σωτῆρι Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ — which is thus rendered in our English version — of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And so, without doubt, it should be in the other passage: there being no possible reason why, τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν, should not signify, our God, as well as τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, our Lord. It is not my design to cast any reflection upon the wisdom of our excellent and orthodox Translators (whose version, taken altogether, is, without exception,

exception, the best extant in the world) or to advance this as any discovery of my own: for the *Translators* themselves have preserved the true rendering in the *margin*; declaring it, by their customary note, to be the *literal* sense of the *Greek*.

There is another expression, *Tit. ii. 13.* that ought to be classed with the foregoing. *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing, τὸ μέγαλόν Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτηρῆς ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, of our Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.* Of which a great man, deep in the *Arian* scheme, gives this desponding account. — “ Many understand this
 “ whole sentence to belong to one and the same Person,
 “ *viz.* Christ: as if the words should have been render-
 “ ed, *The appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus*
 “ *Christ.* Which construction, the words will indeed
 “ bear; as do also those in *2 Pet. i. 1.* But it is much
 “ more *reasonable*, and more agreeable to the *whole tenor*
 “ *of Scripture*, to understand the former part of the words,
 “ to relate to *the Father*.” As for the *whole tenor of*
Scripture, it is a weighty phrase, but very easily made use
 of in any cause, good or bad; so I shall leave the reader to
 judge of *that*, after it has been exhibited to him in the fol-
 lowing pages. And as for the *reasonableness* of the thing
 itself, let any serious person consider, whether the doctrine
 of the Scripture is not more *rational* under the orthodox
 application of these words, than under that of this author.
 For to allow, as he does, that *Christ is God*, but not the
Great God, is to make *two Gods*, a *greater* and a *lesser*,

* *Clarke's Doctr. of the Trin. C. 2. §. 1. 541.*

which

which is no very *rational* principle. And I make not the least doubt but this author, had he been dressing up a system of *natural religion*, would have protested against a notion so absurd and impious. But when the *Scripture* was to be dealt with, he chose it as the lesser of two evils, the greater of which, was the doctrine he had *subscribed* to.

XIV.

2 *Cor.* v. 19. GOD WAS IN CHRIST, reconciling the world to HIMSELF.

It is allowed on all hands, that the *world* was reconciled by Christ Jesus to the *one, only, great, and supreme God*. But, this very *same God* (for the word is but *once* used in the whole sentence) was *in* Christ; manifest *in* the flesh, and *reconciling the world* to himself. And were there no other passage of Scripture to be found, this alone is sufficient to overthrow the whole doctrine of *Arianism*; which, as far as the Scripture is concerned, depends upon this one assertion—that “the word GOD, in Scripture, NEVER signifies a complex notion of *more persons than one*; “but ALWAYS means *one person only, viz. either the person of the Father singly, or the person of the Son singly*.” Which is absolutely false: for here it signifies *both*. The text considers *God* as agent and patient at the same time, and upon the same occasion; as the *reconciler* of the world, in the *person* of the *Son*; and the object to whom the *reconciliation* was made, in the *person* of the *Father*; yet there is but one word (*God*) to express them

• *Clarke's S. D. P. II. §. 33.*

both. So that the word *God*, though of the *singular* number, is of a *plural* comprehension. And thus I find it to have been taken by some of the most eminent writers before the council of *Nice*, “*Plasmatus in initio homo per manus DEI, id est, FILII & SPIRITUS,*” says *Irenæus*^a; putting the singular name of *God*, for the *two persons* of the *Son* and *Spirit*. And the same word, in the language of *Origen*, (if we are allowed to take the version of *Ruffinus* as genuine) includes the whole *three persons* — *Igitur de DEO, id est, de PATRE & FILIO & SPIRITU sancto*^b. And our excellent church has used the word *God* in the same comprehensive sense; as in the *blessing* after the communion service — *GOD ALMIGHTY, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.*

XV.

John xiv. 11. I am in the Father, and the Father IN ME.

Compare this with the foregoing article.

XVI.

1 Cor. v. 20. We are ambassadors for CHRIST, as though GOD did BESEECH you by us. We PRAY you IN CHRIST'S STEAD be ye reconciled to GOD.

The usefulness of this text to our present subject, lies in these words — “*In Christ's stead we pray, as though*

^a *Lib. V. §. 23.*

^b *De principiis. Lib. IV. c. 2.*

“*God*

“*God did beseech*”—where the interchanging of the names *God* and *Christ*, shews the *same person* to be intitled to *both*.

XVII.

1 *John* v. 20. We are in him that is true, even in his son JESUS CHRIST: THIS IS THE TRUE GOD and eternal life.

XVIII.

Col. ii. 8, 9. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after CHRIST: for IN HIM DWELLETH ALL THE FULNESS of the GOD-HEAD BODILY.

The *Apostle* foresaw, that a thing calling itself *Philosophy* would set all its engines at work to destroy the notion of *Christ's* true and absolute Divinity——“*For in him*”
 “(says he) *dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,*”
 “*Philosophy* will dispute this: and undertake to *demonstrate*”
 “the contrary. But if you listen to such *vain deceit*, it”
 “will overthrow your faith, and *spoil* you for a disciple”
 “of *Jesus Christ*; therefore——*beware.*”

XIX.

John i. 1. The WORD WAS GOD.

XX.

Isai. ix. 6. For unto us a Child is born, unto
 us

us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the MIGHTY GOD, the EVERLASTING FATHER.

XXI.

Jer. xxiii. 6. This is the name whereby he shall be called, the *Lord* (JEHOVAH) our Righteousness.

XXII.

Isai. ii. 17, 18. The LORD ALONE shall be EXALTED in that *day*: and the IDOLS he shall utterly abolish.

“ *Idolatry* is the reverse, and direct opposite to *Christianity* (or, the *day of Christ*.) To destroy this, was the great end of *Christ's* coming into the world.—But except he were *God*, the *very* and *eternal God*, of *one substance* with the *Father*, his Religion would be so far from *destroying Idolatry*, that it would only be a more refined and dangerous species of it. The prophet therefore, concludes all, that so he might acquit the worship of *Christ* from all charge of *Idolatry*, with this positive assertion; that it would prove the most effectual means of putting an end to all false and idolatrous worship: *the Idols he shall utterly abolish*. The like conclusion we meet with in the Apostle *St. John*; who having affirmed that *Jesus Christ* is the *true God and eternal life*, immediately subjoins and closes all with this advice,—*Little children, keep yourselves from IDOLS.*”

This

This remark is taken from the first volume of *an Essay upon the proper Lessons*; written, as I am told, by a gentleman of the Laity. There needs no apology for setting it down; it being of good use in the subject I am upon. And it also gives me an occasion of returning thanks to the pious and learned author of that excellent work, not for myself only, but for many sincere friends to the religion of *Christ* and the Church of *England*, among whom his labours are not without their fruit; and I am confident they will not be without their reward: but the author must be content to wait for it, till *Wisdom shall be justified of all her children*.

XXIII.

Rev. i. 8. I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the ending, saith the LORD, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY.

If the reader will be pleased to examine the 13th and 17th verses of this chapter, it will appear that this 8th verse was undoubtedly spoken from the mouth of *Christ*: who therefore has a just title to every name and attribute expressed in it; and among the rest, to that of *the Almighty*.

Origen, who certainly was no *Arian*, though often represented as such, by some who would be pleased to have the vote of so celebrated a genius, has the following observation.—“ Now that you may know the *Omnipotence* of
 “ the *Father* and the *Son* to be *one* and the *same* as HE is
 “ ONE and the SAME GOD and LORD with the FA-
 “ THER,

“ THER, hear what St. *John* had said in the *Revelation*
 “ — These things, saith the Lord, which is, and which
 “ was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” For who is
 the Almighty that is to come, but Christ ^a?

XXIV.

The texts that follow, with this mark (†) prefixed to them, are such as have been abused by the *Arians* to support their heresy: and to the best of my knowledge, there are some of every sort. But when the Scripture is brought to declare its own sense of them, they will either appear to be nothing to the purpose, or confirm and preach the faith they have been supposed to destroy.

† *Matt.* xix. 17. Why callest thou ME GOOD?
 there is none good but ONE, that is, GOD.

The objection is founded upon the *Greek*, which runs thus—Οὐδεὶς ἕστιν ἀγαθός, εἰ μὴ εἷς, ὁ Θεός. *There is none good but εἷς, one; and that (one) is, ὁ Θεός, God.* Whence it is argued, that the adjective εἷς being in the *masculine* gender, cannot be interpreted to signify one *being* or *nature* (for then it should have been EN, in the *neuter*) but *one person*: so that by confining the attribute of goodness to the single person of *the Father*, it must of course exclude the persons of the *Son* and *Holy Ghost* from the *Unity* of the *Godhead*.

^a Ut autem unam & eandem omnipotentiam Patris & Filii esse cognoscas sicut unus atque idem est cum Patre Deus & Dominus, audi hoc modo *Joan*, in *Apocalypsi* dicentem: Hæc dicit Dominus Deus qui est, & qui erit, & qui venturus est omnipotens. Qui enim venturus est omnipotens, quis est alius nisi *Christus*?—*De principiis Lib. i. c. 2.*

To

To say the truth, I think this is the most plausible objection I have ever met with; and I have sincerely endeavoured to do it justice. If it is capable of being set in a stronger light, any man is welcome to add what he pleases to it. For supposing the word $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ to signify *one person* (and in that lies the whole force of the argument) then if *one person* only is *good*, and that person is *God*; it must also follow, that there is but one person who is *God*: the name of *God* being as much confined hereby to a *single person*, as the attribute of *goodness*. But this is utterly false; the names of *God*, *Lord*, *Lord of Hosts*, *the Almighty*, *most High*, *Eternal*, *God of Israel*, &c. being also ascribed to the *second* and *third Persons* of the blessed *Trinity*. Take it this way, therefore, and the objection by proving too much, confutes itself, and proves nothing.

The truth is, this criticism, upon the strength of which some have dared to undeify their Saviour, has no foundation in the original. The word $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ is so far from requiring the substantive *person* to be understood with it, that it is put in the *masculine* gender to agree with its substantive $\Theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$, and is best construed by an adverb. If you follow the Greek by a literal translation, it will be thus—*There is none good*— $\epsilon\iota\ \mu\eta\ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ —*but the one God*; that is, in common English—*but God only*. And it happens that the same Greek, word for word, occurs in *Mark* ii. 7.—*Who can forgive sins*— $\epsilon\iota\ \mu\eta\ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ —*but God only*: so it is rendered by our translators: and we have a plain matter of fact, that $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ in this place cannot possibly admit the sense of *one person*, because *Christ*, who is *another person*, took upon him to *forgive sins*. In the parallel place of

of St. *Luke's* Gospel^a, the expression is varied, so as to make it still clearer—*εἰ μὴ μόνος ὁ Θεός*—not *εἰς* but *μόνος*, another adjective of the *masculine* gender: which, though it agree with its substantive *Θεός*, is rightly construed as an *adverb*—either the *alone* God, or *God only*. And the Greek itself uses one for the other indifferently—as, *ἐπ' ἄρτω μόνῳ*, *by bread only*^b—*ἐν λόγῳ μόνον*, *in word only*^c. The utmost that can be gathered, therefore, from these words, is no more than this; that there is *one* God (in which we are all agreed) and that there is *no* good beside him; which nobody will dispute. Whether in this God, there be *one* person, or *three*, remains yet to be considered: and the Scripture is so express in other places, as to settle it beyond all dispute.

If it should here be asked, for what reason *Christ* put this question—“Why callest thou me *good*?” I answer; for the same reason that he asked the *Pharisees*, why *David* in Spirit called him *LORD*^d; and that was to try if they were able to account for it. This ruler, by addressing our Saviour under the name of *good Master*, when the inspired Psalmist had affirmed long before, that *there is none that doeth GOOD*, no *NOT ONE*^e; did in effect allow him to be *God*; no mere man, since the fall of *Adam*, having any claim to that character. And when he was called upon to explain his meaning, for that *God* only was *good*; he should have replied in the words of St. *Thomas*—“My Lord, and my *GOD*;” which would have

^a *Luke* v. 21.

^b *Matt.* iv. 4.

^c *Thess.* i. 5.

^d *Matt.* xxii. 43.

^e *Psalms* xiv. 3.

been a nobler instance of Faith, and have cleared up the whole difficulty. If the case be considered, this man was a very proper subject for such a trial. Fully convinced of his own sufficiency, he comes to Christ in the presence of his disciples, to know what *good thing* he might do to merit everlasting life. Whence our Saviour takes occasion to correct his mistake as to the nature of *goodness*; and having tried this *good* and *perfect* man in a tender point, sent him away grievously dissatisfied.

XXV.

† 1 *Cor.* xv. 24. Then cometh the END, when HE shall deliver up the KINGDOM to GOD, even the FATHER.

Luke l. 53. He (*Jesus*) shall reign over the house of *Jacob* for ever; and of HIS KINGDOM there shall be NO END.

This of St. *Luke*, being a contradiction in terms to that of the *Apostle*, shews the former to be spoken *only* of *Christ's humanity*; as the latter relates *only* to his *Divinity*. When both are laid together, it is evident to a demonstration, that *Christ* is *perfect God*, as well as *perfect man*. As *man*, he *received* a *kingdom*, which again, as *man*, he shall *deliver up*, when his mediatorial office, for which he took the nature of man, shall be at an *end*. But there is a *kingdom* pertaining to him, which shall have *no end*. And this cannot be true, unless he is a *person* in that *God*, who after the *Humanity* has *delivered up the kingdom* shall be *all in all*. The distinction in this case between the *God* and *man* in the *joint person* of *Christ Jesus*, is warranted by another

other part of the Chapter, wherein the *Apostle* has given us a key to his own meaning. Since by MAN says he) came death, by MAN came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Here, it is evident, he is drawing a contrast between the *man Adam* and the *man Christ*; so that unless it be done on purpose, no reader can easily mistake the meaning of what follows.—Then cometh the End, when HE (that is the *man Christ*, the second *Adam*) shall deliver up the kingdom, &c. for so it must be, according to the tenor of the *Apostle's* discourse.

The *New Testament* abounds with expressions of this nature; but they have no difficulty in them, if it only be remembered that Christ is *man* as well as *God*; which the *Arians* are willing upon all occasions to forget. And it has been chiefly owing to an abuse of these texts, that they have been able to put any tolerable gloss upon their Heresy. The *Old Testament* seldom speaking of *Christ*, but as a Person of the Godhead before his Incarnation, does not afford them so many opportunities: and hence it is, that most of them confine their enquiries to the *New*, which is the history of him after his Incarnation, when he appeared as the first-born of many brethren^a, anointed above his Fellows (*Mankind*) receiving authority and dominion from *God*, who by a power superior to that of his human soul and body, put all things in subjection under the feet of it.

But some, for whose sake he thus humbled himself, and became obedient to the flesh, instead of receiving it with

^a *Rom.* viii. 29.

humility and devotion, even cast it in his teeth, and make it an argument *against* him: vainly imagining that they do honour to their supreme God, while they say with *Peter*—
 Lord, *be it far from thee: this shall not, it cannot, be unto thee.* And it is worth their while to consider, whether they may not fall under the same rebuke, when it will be too late to retract and change their opinion.

A solemn advocate of theirs, whom I take to be a *dissenter*, tells us—his *present concern is with the New Testament only*^b. And another writer of some figure, who, you are to suppose, is addressing himself to a *young Clergyman*, puts it into his head, that he “*may reject Arguments brought from the Old Testament to prove the Trinity, as trifling, and proving nothing but the Ignorance of those that make use of them*”^c. And I could wish that were all: for I had much rather be accounted a *fool* in their judgment, than find myself under a necessity of charging them with the horrible guilt, of *denying the Lord that hath bought them.*

XXVI.

† *Acts* x. 42.—That it is HE, which is ORDAINED of GOD to be the *judge* of quick and dead.

This passage will help us to detect, once for all, that common fallacy of our Adversaries, in misapplying such words as relate only to the *human* nature of *Christ*, and

^b A sequel to the *Essay on Spirit*, p. 8.

^c *Letter to a young Clergyman upon the Difficulties and Discouragements which attend the study of the Scriptures in the way of private judgment.*

erecting arguments thereupon to the degrading of his supreme Essence. *Christ is ordained of God, it is true: and the nature that receives power, must be inferior to the nature that confers it. But is his Godhead therefore ordained?* They tell you it is; and their scheme requires it: But the *Scriptures* declare the contrary.—GOD (saith St. Paul) hath appointed a day wherein HE will JUDGE the world in righteousness by that MAN *εἰς ἀνδρῶν*, (IN that MAN) whom he hath ORDAINED^a. The supreme God that was manifest in the flesh, and IN Christ reconciling the world to HIMSELF, shall remain in the same personal union with him, till he has judged the world, and is ready to deliver up the kingdom. And though our Judge shall even then retain the Character of a Man, yet as God who ordained him, shall be present with him in the same person, the act of the last judgment is equally ascribed to both natures. In the text just above cited, it is said—He (God) will judge the world; tho' it immediately follows, that a man, even the man Christ, is ordained to this office. And so we have it again in the Epistle to the Romans—*we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to ME, and every tongue shall confess unto GOD*^b. We are to give an account of ourselves at the judgment seat of Christ. And how does the Apostle prove it? Why, because it is written, that we shall give an account of ourselves to the Lord God, who swears that he liveth. But unless Christ, who is a man, be also this living God and Lord, this proof is not to the purpose.

^a Acts xvii. 31.

^b Isa. xlv. 23.

XXVII.

† *Acts* x. 40. Him GOD raised up and SHEWED HIM openly to us who did eat and drink with him *after he rose from the dead.*

John xxi. 1. After these things JESUS SHEWED HIMSELF again to his *disciples* at the Sea of *Tiberias*; and on this wise SHEWED HE HIMSELF.

The former text takes something from *Christ, as man*; in which capacity he was at the *disposal of the Father*. But the latter restores it to him again as *God*; under which character he is at his *own disposal*, and in unity with the Father. The same is to be said of the two articles which follow.

XXVIII.

† *John* iii. 16. God so LOVED the world, that HE GAVE his only begotten Son.

Ephes. v. 25. CHRIST also LOVED the Church, and GAVE HIMSELF for it.

XXIX.

† *Eph.* iv. 32. *Forgiving one another, even as GOD, for CHRIST'S SAKE, hath FORGIVEN you.*

Col. iii. 13. *Forgiving one another—even as CHRIST FORGAVE you.*

XXX.

† *John* vi. 38. I came down from heaven, NOT to do MY OWN WILL, but the WILL of HIM that SENT ME.

Matt. viii. 2. And behold there came a Leper and worshipped him, saying, LORD, if THOU WILT thou canst make me clean. And JESUS said, (Θελω) I WILL, be thou clean.

XXXI.

† *Acts* xiv. 29, 30. And now, LORD ——— grant — that *signs* and *wonders* may be done by the NAME OF THY HOLY CHILD JESUS.

It seems here, that *signs* and *wonders* were not to be wrought by *Jesus Christ*, as the *author* of them; but by a higher power of the LORD, put into action by the *name*, *Merits*, or *Intercession* of the *Holy Child Jesus*. Yet *St. Peter* makes this same *Jesus*, though in *heaven*, the immediate author of the *signs* and *wonders* wrought by his disciples upon earth.—“*Encas* (says he) JESUS CHRIST maketh the whole.” *Acts* ix. 34.

XXXII.

† *Matt.* xx. 23. To SIT on my right hand and on my left, is NOT MINE TO GIVE, but (*it shall be given*) to them for whom it is prepared of MY FATHER.

Yet our blessed Saviour has promised elsewhere, to bestow this reward in his own right—“*To him that over-*
“ *cometh*

“ *cometh will I GRANT to SIT with me in MY THRONE.* ”
Rev. iii. 21. This is sufficient to rescue the text from any heretical use that may have been made of it. But still there remains some difficulty, which with God’s help, I shall endeavour to clear up. It will appear to any person, not ignorant of *Greek*, that the original in this place does reserve to *Christ* that act of power and authority, of which the *English* version, by inserting a few words, seems to have divested him. The *Greek* is this—*ουκ εστιν εμον δου-
 ναι*—it is not mine to give, *αλλ’ οις ητοιμασαι*, but to them for whom it is prepared—“ *nisi quibus paratum est.* ” For in the eleventh verse of the foregoing Chapter, there is an expression exactly parallel—*αλλ’ οις δεδοται*—save they to whom it is given; or as *Beza* hath it—“ *sed ii quibus datum.* ” Now there can be no grammatical reason, why we should not take—*αλλ’ οις ητοιμασαι*—in the same manner; and then the text will affirm what it now seems to deny. For to say, that *Christ* cannot give any particular reward, save to them for whom it is prepared of his Father, is the same as to say, that to such he can and will give it; according to the common maxim—*Exceptio probat regulam in non-exceptis.*

The scope of the Text therefore, is to shew, that nothing can be granted even by Almighty power itself, where there is not a suitable merit or disposition in the persons who claim it. “ God shall give this honourable place to those, for whom it is prepared by an invariable rule of justice; whose victory of Faith being foreknown and accepted, a seat is allotted them according to it.” And the two passages being laid together, supply us with this principle.

ciple. As if our *Saviour*, who is the *speaker* in *both* places, had said—“*Tho’ it be not mine to give; yet, to him that overcometh, will I (even I myself) grant to sit with me in my Throne; because for him this seat is prepared.*” It is not owing to a defect of power in the Trinity, or in any person of it, that the divine purpose cannot be changed: but because it is impossible for the power of God to break in upon the order of his distributive justice. And it is upon this account only, that we read of *Christ*, *Mark* vi. 5. “*He COULD there do NO mighty work.*” For the *power* of doing a miracle was always present with him; but the *place* being *improper* because of their *unbelief*, made the thing impossible. In the same manner, that declaration of the *Lord* in *Gen.* xvii. 22, is to be accounted for, —*Haste thee, escape thither, for I CANNOT do any thing till thou be come thither.* No man would hence conclude, that the hand of God is straitened, or his power limited; but only that he does, and by his own nature *must*, act agreeable to the disposition of things and persons, known to himself.

XXXIII.

† 1 *Cor.* viii. 6. TO US there is but ONE GOD,
THE FATHER.

If we compare this with that expression of *St. Thomas*, —*John* xx. 28,—MY LORD, and MY GOD, we have the following argument:

To us there is but one GOD, the FATHER.

But TO US JESUS CHRIST is GOD: therefore, The Gospel has either preached *two Gods to us*, one *distinct* from

the other : or that *one God the Father* is here the name of a *nature*, under which *Christ* himself, as *God*, is also comprehended. And the same may be proved of it in several other places.

XXXIV.

† *Matth.* xxiii. 9. Call no man your Father upon earth, for ONE IS YOUR FATHER *which is in heaven.*

Ibid. v. 10. Neither be ye called masters, for ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVEN CHRIST. *John* iii. 13, *which is in heaven.*

Dr. *Clarke* has a particular Section^a, wherein he pretends to have set down *the Passages that ascribe the highest Titles, Perfections, and Powers* to the second Person of the Trinity. Yet he has wholly omitted the latter of these verses; though by a rule of his own making, it allows to *Christ* an higher title than any other in the whole Scripture. It is this same Author, who has laid so great a stress upon the word *one*, which he has insisted upon it can signify nothing else, but *one Person*; and the criticism is thought to be of such use and importance to his scheme, that his book *begins* with it; and in the course of his work it is repeated three times, nearly in the same words. But the passage now before us, if he had produced it, would have turned his own weapon against himself. For the word *one* is here an attribute of *Christ*; and if we argue from it in this place, as he has done in the other, it must prove, that

^a Chap. ii. §. 3.

one person only is our *Master*, and that this person is *Christ*: which excludes the Persons of the *Father* and the *Spirit* from the honour of that title; and so reduces that learned author's reasoning to a manifest absurdity.

We are to conclude then, that as the phrase, *one Master*, cannot be meant to exclude the *Father*; so neither does that other—*one is good* (supposing that were the sense of the *Greek*) or, *one is your Father*, exclude the person of *Christ*. And if the reason of the thing teaches us that it cannot, so the *Scripture* assures us in fact that it does not: the title of *Father*, being also ascribed to the second person of the *Trinity*. For *Christ*, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, says of himself—*He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be HIS GOD, and he shall be MY SON*^a. *Isaiab* calls him—*The Everlasting FATHER*^b. And again it is written—*They are the CHILDREN of GOD, being the children of the RESURRECTION*^c; But, says *Christ*—*I am the RESURRECTION*^d: therefore he is *God*, and hath us for his *Children*. If this be the case, the word *Father* cannot always be a name that distinguishes *God* from another person of *God*: but is often to be understood as a term of relation between *God* and *Man*: or as a modern *Divine* of our Church has well expressed it—“A word not intended for *God the Father* only, “the *First Person* of the *Trinity*; but as it is referred un- “to the *Creature* made and conserved by *God*; in which “sense it appertains to the *whole Trinity*.”

^a *Rev.* xxi. 7.^b ix. 6.^c *Luke* xx. 35.^d *John* xi. 25.

XXXV.

† *John* xiv. 28. MY FATHER IS GREATER than I.

The two preceding Articles will sufficiently justify what the Church has asserted with a view to this passage — That *Christ* is “*inferior to the Father as touching his Manhood.*” And the stream of the whole Scripture is against that use the *Arians* generally make of it; who stand in need to be reminded at every turn, that in the person of *Christ*, there is a *human* soul and body, the nature of a *man*, which as it cannot lay claim to what is spoken of *Christ* in unity *with the Father*, so must it receive to its own account whatever seems to degrade and disjoin him *from the Father*. It is indeed hard to say, which of the two heresies is the most unreasonable and unscriptural; that of the *Socinians*, which never considers *Christ* as any thing but a *mere man*; or that of the *Arians*, who never look upon him as any thing but a *supposititious God*. Between these two gross errors, lies the true Catholic Faith; which as it allows him to be *perfect God* and *perfect man*, is never offended, or put to its shifts, by any thing the Scripture may have said about him in either capacity.

XXXVI.

† *1 Cor.* xi. 3. The HEAD of *Christ* is GOD.

The name *Christ* does here stand, as in other places out of number, for the *man* *Christ*; otherwise it must follow, that as *Christ* is *God*, *God* is the head of *himself*; which is

is a contradiction; or that *one* God is the *head* of another God; which also is a contradiction.

This Text is capable of a good illustration from *Genes.* iii. 15, where we read, that the *heel* of the promised seed should be *bruised*: by which, the Church has always understood the sufferings of his *human* nature, metaphorically represented by the *inferior* part in man. So in this place, his *Divinity* or *superior nature* is as aptly signified by the *head* or *superior* part of the human body.

XXXVII.

† *Mark* xiii. 32. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels which are in heaven, neither THE SON, but the FATHER.

It is declared of *Christ* in another place, that he *increased in wisdom*^a: why should it be incredible then, that during the whole term of his humiliation in the flesh, something should still be left, which as man upon earth he did not know? If you suppose him to be ignorant of this matter as *God*, how is it that *St. Peter* confesses him to be omniscient, without receiving any rebuke for it, or being reminded of any particular exception?—LORD, *thou knowest ALL THINGS*^b.

XXXVIII.

† *John* i. 18. No man hath SEEN GOD at any time.

^a *Luke* ii. 52.

^b *John* xxi. 17.

John xiv. 8, 9. *Philip* saith unto him, LORD SHEW US THE FATHER—hast thou not SEEN ME, *Philip*? he that hath *seen* ME hath *seen* THE FATHER.

“ These words (says *Dr. Clarke*) do not signify, that “ he who hath seen the *Person of Christ* hath seen the *Person of the Father*.” No surely; but that he who hath seen all that was visible of *Christ*, hath seen the person, to whom was joined that invisible and divine *Nature*, which the Scripture has called by the name of *the Father*. And to shew that *Christ* (though he was *God* manifest in the *flesh*^a) is yet no other than the same *invisible God*, whom no man hath or can see and live, we are told, that “ when “ he shall appear (glorified, not with any *secondary divi-* “ nity, but with the FATHER’S OWNSELF^b) we shall “ be like him (fashioned like unto his own glorious body^c, “ and conformed to his Image^d) for we shall SEE him AS “ HE IS;” which no man ever yet hath done.

XXXIX.

† *1 Cor.* xv. 27. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that HE IS EXCEPTED (εκτος τῆς υποταξάντος) which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be SUBDUED (υποταγῆ) UNTO HIM—

^a *1 Tim.* iii. 16.

^b *Jhn* xvii. 5.

^c *Phil.* iii. 21.

^d *Rem.* viii. 29.

Phil. iii. 20, 21. We look for THE SAVIOUR, the Lord JESUS CHRIST—who—is ABLE even to SUBDUE ALL THINGS (υποταξει τα παντα) to HIMSELF.

It is manifest, therefore, that the *exception* in the former text, is not meant to set *one Person of God* above *another Person of God*; but only to distinguish the Power of the *Divine Nature* from that of the *human* in its greatest *exaltation*. As *Christ is man*, all things are *subdued* unto him by *ANOTHER*; as *Christ is God*, he himself is that *other*, and *able to subdue all things to HIMSELF*. And this will be sufficient to confirm the reader in what I have already observed, that the cause of *Arianism* borrows its chief support from the *humiliation* of *Christ in the flesh*. Search the very best of their arguments to the bottom, by a diligent *comparing* of the Scripture *with itself*, and they all amount to this great absurdity——*Man is inferior to God*; therefore *God is inferior to himself*: and this they prove, by *imputing* to *Christ's Divinity* what is said *only* of his *humanity*.

I have now presented to the reader's consideration the most noted texts, which, under the management of *Arian* or *Socinian* Expositors, may seem to have favoured their Doctrine. Many, I hope, will be of opinion, that the Catholic cause is rather beholden to them, particularly in this last instance, for the opposition they have made against it; inasmuch as the objections they have drawn from the holy Scriptures have directed us to some very clear proofs, which might otherwise have escaped our notice. If there be any other Texts more for their purpose than what I

have here set down, they have my free consent to produce and enlarge upon them as much as they please. In the mean time I shall proceed to give the reader some farther satisfaction, and endeavour to convince him, with the Blessing of God, that while *Heresy* is obliged to glean up a few scattered passages, hard to be understood, and for that reason, easy to be wrested by men of perverse inclinations: the Faith of the Church has the suffrage of the whole Bible, speaking in such words, as need not be refined upon by any metaphysical expositions, but only applied and considered.

XL.

Jude, 4. Denying the ONLY LORD GOD, and OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST—τον μονου δεσποτην θεου και Κυριον ημων Ιησου Χριστου.

As there is no article before *Κυριον*, the first and second comma are both meant of the same person; and the plain sense, when freed from the ambiguity of the English version, is this—*Denying the only Lord God and our Lord, Jesus Christ.* This literal sense of the Greek may be supported by the parallel Greek of *Phil.* iv. 20. *τω θεω και πατρι ημων.* There being here no article before *πατρι*, it would be violent and unnatural, to refer *θεος* to one person and *πατρι* to another: whence *Grotius* paraphrases the expression by—*Deo qui IDEM est Pater noster*; and thus may the other be rendered with equal strictness and propriety—*δεσποτην qui idem est Κυριος ημων*: and though we do not rest the proof of the Trinity on any single

single passage, yet is the more natural construction of this text very strong and conclusive for it.

If this should be denied, I think the *sense* also is capable of demonstration. The words include this proposition—There is, ο μόνος ΔΕΣΠΟΤΗΣ, *one supreme Governour*^a: Now if this term be applied to *Christ*, it must follow that HE is that *one supreme Governour*, in the Unity of the *Father*. But it is applied to him in the parallel place of 2 *Pet.* ii. 1. *Denying* (ΔΕΣΠΟΤΗΝ) *the Lord that hath bought them*—τοὺς ἀγοράσαντα αὐτοὺς. And if it should be doubted, whether this latter text be meant of *Christ*, it is demonstrated by another—THOU wast slain, and hast BOUGHT us (ἡγοράσας) unto God by thy Blood^b. If this chain of reasoning be inverted, the force of it will be clear and undeniable. 1. *Christ hath bought us.* 2. He that hath bought us, is ΔΕΣΠΟΤΗΣ, *the Lord, or supreme Governour.* But 3dly, there is, ο μόνος ΔΕΣΠΟΤΗΣ, *one only supreme Governour.* Therefore *Christ is he.*

XLI.

Jude, 24, 25. Unto HIM that is able — to PRESENT you faultless before the PRESENCE of HIS GLORY—to the ONLY WISE GOD OUR SAVIOUR.

Eph. v. 27. That HE (*Christ*) might PRESENT it to HIMSELF a glorious Church, &c.

It is the *only wise God*, who is able to present us before the presence of his Glory: but *Christ* is to present us, as

^a So Dr. Clarke has construed it, C. i. §. 3, 411.

^b Rev. v. 9.

c 5.

members

members of the *Church in glory*, to *himself*: therefore *he* is the *only wise God*, to whom also appertains the *presence of Glory*; for that is no other than his *own presence, himself*.

This is another express instance, that $\mu\omicron\textcircled{\text{S}}\textcircled{\text{S}}$, the *only God*, is not God in *one person*, but the *Unity of the Trinity*. For if you confine this phrase, with the *Arians*, to the *single Person of the Father*, then of course you exclude the *person of Christ*, and then, it is manifest, you contradict the Scripture. For though it be affirmed in this place, that the *only wise God* is to *present* us before his *own presence*, yet the same is elsewhere expressed by *Christ presenting us to himself*. Which is no way to be accounted for, unless you believe *Christ* to be a partaker in the *Being*, attributes, and offices of the one, undivided, *only wise God, our Saviour*. Then there is no farther difficulty.

XLII.

Eph. iii. 2, 3. — The Dispensation of the Grace of GOD, which is given me to youward: How that BY REVELATION HE (*God*) made known unto me the mystery.

Gal. i. 12. I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but BY THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

XLIII.

1 Kings viii. 39. THOU, even THOU ONLY KNOWEST the HEARTS of all the children of men.

This,

This, it seems, is the privilege of *God ONLY* : but this *God is Christ* ; for says he,

Rev. ii. 23. All the Churches shall know that I am HE which *searcheth* the reins and HEARTS.

Indeed this latter verse speaks plain enough for itself without being compared with the former. It implies, that there is *one only* who *searcheth* the *hearts* of men, and that *Christ is he*. And the Greek will very well bear it ; as the learned reader will easily perceive. It is thus—*εγω ειμι ο ερευνων*—There is *ο ερευνων*, *one that searcheth* ; but—*εγω ειμι*—*I am He*.

XLIV.

2 *Pet. i. 4.*—*Exceeding great and precious promises*, that by these you might be (*θειας κοινωνοι φύσεως*) PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE.

Hebr. iii. 14. For we are made (*μετοχοι τα Χριστου*) PARTAKERS OF CHRIST, if we hold the beginning of our confidence (in the *precious promises* of God) steadfast unto the end.

What *St. Peter* proposes, as the end of our hope in the *promises*, is to be *partakers of the divine Nature* : but this, according to *St. Paul*, is to be *partakers of Christ* ; therefore *Christ is in or of the Divine Nature* ; the same *Allmighty God*^a and *Lord*, who declared to *Abraham*—*I*

^a *Gen. xvii. 1.*

am thy Shield, and thy EXCEEDING GREAT REWARD^a. So that these being compared together, are decisive for the Catholic *Homoousian* Doctrine, at which the *Arians*, from the Council of *Nice* to this very day, have been so grievously offended. And it has not been without reason. For if the word *Consubstantial* be applicable to the Person of *Christ*, it makes short work with their *Heresy*. To this end, it was fixed upon and agreed to by the Bishops of the whole Christian World*, as the most proper Bar and Badge of distinction between the *Arians* and themselves. But they object, that the term is *not scriptural*; nay, there are some, of no ordinary figure amongst them, who have not stuck to call it an invention of *Papery*^b; though it is well known, that at the time this was adopted by the Church, there was no such thing as *Papery* in the world. But the *name* is found to be of great use in amusing weak people, who have no ready stock of learning to con-

^a Gen. xv. 1.

^b *Essay on Spirit*, p. 151.

* I say, of the *whole Christian World*: though a late Author calls this *Oecumenical Council*, summoned for the condemnation of *Arius*, “a famous Contest; as if one half of the world had been divided against the other.” And he says, it was “determined by a majority of near twenty to one;” whereas, in truth, there were but five out of three hundred and eighteen, who denied the *Catholic Faith*. I mention this to shew how some things may be represented by some sort of people, who, if they are not ignorant, must think it their interest to impose upon you. What would you think of a man, who having been present at an *Assize*, should bring a report of it home to his family, and tell them he had been at a *famous Contest*, where there was a majority of near ten Jury-men, six witnesses, and a Judge, against the criminal? See *Ded. to an Essay on Spirit*, p. 9, 10.

tradict

tradict them, and, in some cases I fear, no good desire of being better informed. Who can think it a notable proof of their *zeal* as *Protestants*, that they take a pleasure in seeing their poor Mother, the *Episcopal Church of England*, the honour of the Reformation, and the dread of *Popery*, painted and dressed up for a *Jezebel*, by men of her own *hou bold*; who have shipwrecked their consciences by subscribing articles they never believed, and are growing fat upon the provision allotted by the Providence of God, only to support the Church in her journey through this world to the kingdom of heaven. A sight that would raise the indignation of a *Mahometan*! and almost move a *Papist* himself to pity and pray for us!

But I would hope there are some few amongst the favourers of *Arianism*, who are not gone quite so far out of the way, and would be ashamed of such low and base artifices, as can only serve to expose and discredit their cause with any man of common learning and honesty. To these I address myself: and now the *Scripture* is before us, let me ask them a plain question or two. Is not the word *Essence* or *Substance* of the same signification with the word *Nature*? and have not the Fathers of the Church thus expounded it? and is not this phrase—*of the same nature*—as conclusive for the *Divinity* of *Christ*, as that other—*of the same substance*? why then should that expression of the *Nicene Creed* be thought so offensive, when there is another in the *Scripture* so near of kin to it, that the *Arians* must be sensible they could gain nothing by the exchange? for the *divine Nature*, we all agree, can be but *one*; *three divine natures* of course making *three* different

ferent *Gods*. But the *Scripture*, compared as above, has asserted *Christ* to be of *this divine Nature*. And if people were once persuaded of that, all farther disputes about the word *Consubstantial* would be at an end. But peace and unity for *Christ's* sake, is a blessing of which God has deprived this Church for the punishment of it's sins: and as we do not seem to be in any posture of repentance, it is to be feared he will never restore it to us again in this world; but suffer us to go on from bad to worse, till the measure is filled up.

XLV.

It is a rule, laid down by St. *Paul*, that GOD swears by HIMSELF, for this reason, *because he can swear by NO GREATER*. *Heb. vi. 13.*

But *Christ* has sworn by himself:

Isai. xlv. 23. I have sworn by MYSELF,—that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

Which words being compared with *Rom. xiv. 10, 11*, are proved to be the words of *Christ*.—*We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ: For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess unto God.*

Christ, therefore, has sworn by HIMSELF: so that if the Apostle's rule be applied, he must for this reason be GOD, and there can be NO GREATER..

XLVI.

Eph. iv. 8. When HE (*Christ*) ascended up on high,

high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Yet the Scripture here referred to, expressly affirms the person who *ascended*, &c. to be the *Lord God*.

Ps. lxxviii. 17, 18. The chariots of GOD are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels: the LORD is among them, as in *Sinai*, in the holy place. *THOU hast ascended on high, THOU hast led captivity captive, &c.*

XLVII.

Heb. ix. 20. This is the Blood of the TESTAMENT which GOD hath *enjoined you*.

Ibid. v. 16. Where a TESTAMENT is, there must also of necessity be the DEATH of the TESTATOR.

God is a Testator: but, argues the *Apostle*, every *Testator* must *die*, before the last Will or *Testament* enjoined by him, can be of *force*. Therefore, if you keep close to the terms, the natural conclusion is, that GOD, being a *Testator*, should *die*, to make way for the *execution* of his *Testament*. But it being impossible that the divine nature of *God* should be capable of *Death*; it follows, that the *person* who *was* capable of *Death*, and did *die* as a *man*, was also *God* the *Testator*. And it is to express the strict and perfect union of the *two natures* in the *single person* of *Christ*, that what is true only of *one*, is predicated of *both*. Of this, two more examples shall be added in the articles that immediately follow.

XLVIII.

XLVIII.

Rev. v. 9. Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to GOD by THY BLOOD.

A distinction is here observed between the two natures of *Christ*: and the act of *redeeming* us by the *shedding* of his *blood* is ascribed to the *Lamb*, the *Messiah's* Humanity. But in another place it is imputed to his *Divinity*—*Feed the Church of GOD, which he hath purchased with HIS OWN BLOOD*^a: not *that God*, strictly speaking, has any *blood of his own* to shed; but that he who shed his blood for us, *as man*, was *God* as well as *man*: or, in other words, that *God* and *man* were united in the same person; something being predicated of *God*, which cannot possibly be true without such an union. So again—

XLIX.

Zech. xii. 4. — In that day, saith THE LORD —v. 10.—they shall look on ME whom they have PIERCED.

But, according to the Evangelist *St. John*, this *Scripture* saith,

John xix. 37. They shall look on HIM (*Christ*) whom they have PIERCED.

As it stands in the Prophet, the *Lord* (*Jehovah*) was to be *pierced*. So that unless the man *Christ*, who hung upon the Cross, was also the *Lord Jehovah*, the Evangelist is

^b *Acts* xx. 28.

found to be a false witness, in applying to him a prophecy that could not possibly *be fulfilled* in him.

L.

Phil. i. 10. That ye may be sincere and without offence, till the DAY of CHRIST.

2 *Pet. iii. 12.* Looking for and hasting to the coming of the DAY of GOD.

LI.

Isa. xl. 10. Behold, the LORD GOD will COME
—HIS REWARD IS WITH HIM.

Rev. xxii. 12. Behold, I (*Jesus*) come quickly, and MY REWARD IS WITH ME.

Amen: even so come LORD JESUS.

C H A P. II.

THE DIVINITY OF THE HOLY GHOST.

I.

John iii. 6. Το γεγενεμενον εκ τῆς Πνευματος ———
that which is BORN OF THE SPIRIT.

1 *John* v. 4. Το γεγενημενον εκ τῆς Θεου ——— what-
soever is BORN OF GOD.

The same individual act of divine grace, *viz.* that of our spiritual birth, is ascribed, without the change of a single letter, to *God*, and to the *Spirit*. Some *capacity* then there must be, wherein the *Scripture* makes no *distinction* between *God* and the *Spirit*:—and this is what the *Scripture* itself calls *the divine nature*; under which *God* and the *Spirit* are both *equally comprehended*.

II.

Acts xiii. 2. The HOLY GHOST said, separate ME *Barnabas* and *Saul* for the work whereunto I HAVE CALLED them.

Heb. v. 4. No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is CALLED OF GOD.

The shorter way is to ask this same *Saul*, *who* it was that appointed *him* to the *work of the ministry*? and his answer is no other than this—*Paul CALLED* to be an *Apostle*, *SEPARATED* unto the *Gospel*—By the *commandment* of *GOD OUR SAVIOUR*^a.

III.

Matth. ix. 38. PRAY ye therefore the LORD OF THE HARVEST, that HE will SEND FORTH labourers into his harvest.

Acts xiii. 4. So they being SENT FORTH BY THE HOLY GHOST.

In this act of *sending forth labourers* upon the *work* of the *Gospel*, the *Holy Ghost* is proved to be the *Lord of the Harvest*, to whom *Christ* himself had directed us to PRAY. Wherefore, they are not to be heard, who advise us to alter the *third petition* in the *Litany*; a *work*, to which I am sure the *Holy Ghost* hath not *called* us, and such as will never be consented to by any labourers of *his* sending:

IV.

Luke ii. 16. And it was revealed unto him (*υπο*^b) BY the HOLY GHOST, that he should

^a *Rom.* i. 1. and *1 Tim.* i. 1.

^b I set down the *preposition*, because it slays the *Arian* with his own weapon. It shews the prime *agency* and *authority* in this affair to have been that of the *Holy Ghost*, acting in his own right, and not as the *minister* or *instrument* of an higher power; for then, according to them, it should have been *δια*. For my own part, I lay no stress upon it; because I perceive, upon a review of the *Scripture*, that these two *prepositions* are used indiscriminately.

not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

Luke v. 28. And he BLESSED GOD, and said, LORD, now letttest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to THY WORD.

This *word*, was the *word* of the *Holy Ghost*; who therefore is intitled to the context, and is *God* and *Lord* to be *blessed* or *praised*; not under any imaginary restrictions and limitations, according to a certain degree of power delegated to him, an evasion you will meet with in some modern writers, but the Scripture, and common reason, instructed by the Scripture, disclaim and abhor it, as an inlet to all sorts of *idolatry*.

V.

John xiv. 17. HE (*the SPIRIT of truth*) dwelleth with you and shall be IN YOU.

1 Cor. xiv. 25. GOD is IN YOU of a truth.

VI.

2 Tim. iii. 16. All Scripture is given by INSPIRATION of GOD.

2 Pet. i. 21. Holy men of God spake as they WERE MOVED BY THE HOLY GHOST.

VII.

John vi. 45. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all TAUGHT of GOD.

1 Cor. ii. 13. Not in the words which *man's* wisdom teacheth, *but* which the HOLY GHOST TEACHETH.

This

This latter verse would prove the *Holy Ghost* to be *God* by itself: for I cannot find that *man*, in the style of the Scripture, is ever *opposed* in this manner to any *being* but *God* only. I will subjoin a few examples of it.

John i. 13. *Nor of the will of man, but of God.*

1 Thess. iv. 8. *He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God.*

Rom. i. 29. *Whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

VIII.

Acts v. 3. Why hath *Satan* filled thine heart to
LYE to the HOLY GHOST?

Acts v. 4. Thou hast not LYED unto *men*, but
unto GOD.

Dr. *Clarke* affirms, that “the Person of the *Holy Ghost* “is no where in Scripture expressly stiled *God*.” And then adds, by way of authority—“see the text, No. 66^a.” And what *text* would you suppose this to be? why, it is no other than that of *Acts* v. 4, where he IS expressly stiled *God*. The *Doctor* refers us to it, because he has added a long perplexed Comment to help us to *understand* it, I suppose; though a child may see the force of it without any comment at all. The substance of all he has said may be reduced to this—“*Ananias* lyed to *God*, because he “lyed to the Apostles, in whom *God* dwelt by his *Spirit*.” Thus he has tried to evade it; even by producing *one* proof of the *Holy Ghost*’s *divinity*, as an answer to *another*. For if the Scripture assures us that *God* dwelleth in us, and

our only argument for it, is, because the *Spirit dwelleth* in us; who can the *Spirit* be, but *God himself*? as it is proved in the following article. But before we proceed to it, I must beg the reader to observe how he has used and represented *Athanasius's* opinion upon this text. “*Athanasius himself* (says the Doctor^a) explains this text in “*the same manner: he that lyed* (saith he) *to the Holy Ghost,* “*lyed to GOD, WHO dwelleth in men by his Spirit. For* “^b*where the Spirit of God is, there is GOD.*” The difference, then, between this author and *St. Athanasius*, is no more than this: the former takes occasion to *deny* that the *Holy Ghost* is *GOD*, the latter to *prove* it, and both from one and the same text; which, if you believe the *Doctor*, they have explained in *the same manner*.

IX.

1 *John* iii. 21. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward *GOD*.

1 *John* v. 24. And *hereby* we know that *HE* abideth in us, by *THE SPIRIT* which he hath given us.

The Apostle's reasoning is this—“*The Spirit* abideth “*in us; and hereby* we know that *He* (*God*) abideth in “*us.*” But unless the *Spirit* be a *person* in the *Unity of God*, the conclusion is manifestly false.

X.

1 *Cor.* iii. 16. The *TEMPLE* of *GOD* is holy, which temple are *YE*.

^a No. 66.

^b ΟΠΟΥ ΓΑΡ ΕΣΤΙ ΤΟ ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΤΩ ΘΕΩ, ΕΚΕΙ ΕΣΤΙ Ο ΘΕΟΣ.

1 Cor. vi. 19. Know ye not, that YOUR BODIES are the TEMPLE of the HOLY GHOST?

XI.

Matt. iv. 1. Then was *Jesus* LED up (*υπο*) BY THE SPIRIT, to be TEMPTED, &c.

Luke xi. 2—4. OUR FATHER which art in heaven ——— LEAD US NOT into TEMPTATION.

It is not my business in this place to shew particularly in *what manner* and for *what end* God leads us into temptation. That it is no way inconsistent with the divine attributes, is plain from the case now before us: for *Jesus* was led up into the wilderness to meet his adversary and be tempted by him. And it is also plain from that petition in the Lord's Prayer, that *our Father which is in heaven* would not lead us into temptation: it being needless and absurd to pray that God would not do, what by the necessity of his nature, it is impossible for him to do. In this case, God is not the tempter: he only introduces us to the trial; and always provides, if we have the grace and prudence to embrace it, a way for our escaping, that we may be able to bear it.

But when *Jesus* was tempted, the leading him into temptation was the act of the Holy Spirit. Therefore as often as we repeat the Lord's Prayer, we address ourselves inclusively to the Person of the Spirit, under the one name of OUR FATHER; and certainly, he also is *our Father*, of whom we are begotten and born, even of the Spirit: and again, as many as are LED by the SPIRIT of God, they
are

are the *SONS of God*. Rom. viii. 14. See Art. I. of this Chapter.

XII.

2 *Cor.* i. 3. Blessed be *GOD*, even the *GOD* of ALL COMFORT.

If *all* spiritual comfort (sent from heaven) be of *God*, how is it consistent, that *the churches had rest*—walking in the COMFORT OF the HOLY GHOST^a, unless the *Holy Ghost* be a person in the Unity of *God*? and how can *he* be styled by way of eminence, THE Comforter^b, if there be a *God* distinct from him, who claims that title? for then he is not *the Comforter*, but *one* of the *two*; and *two* divine Comforters, like *two* Almighty's, would make *two* Gods; which is not a principle of Christianity, but of heathen Idolatry. And the same reasoning will hold good as to another of his titles. For the *Holy Ghost* is called, by way of eminence, THE SPIRIT^c, i. e. the true and principal, the head and Father of all other Spirits. Yet we are told that *God* is a Spirit^d: so that unless the *Spirit* be also *God*, we must believe in *two* supreme, distinct, and independent Spirits. And thus we justly argue for the divinity of *Christ*; that because *GOD* is LIGHT^e, and *Christ* is THE LIGHT^f. Therefore, he is and must be *God*; even the TRUE *God*, because he is the TRUE *Light*^g.

^a Acts ix. 3.

^b Ὁ παρακλητὴς, John xiv. 26.

^c 1 John v. 6.

^d John iv. 24.

^e 1 John i. 5.

^f John i. 4, 7, 8, and viii. 12.

^g John i. 9.

XIII.

1 *Cor.* ii. 11. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the SPIRIT of a man which is IN HIM? EVEN so the things of GOD knoweth ($\alpha\delta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$) none but the SPIRIT OF GOD.

The *spirit* of a *man* knows the things of a man for *this* reason, because it is *in him*. For the *same* reason, the *Spirit* of *God* knows the things of *God*, because it is *in the Godhead*; than which nothing farther need be desired to prove the *co-essentiality* of the *Holy Ghost*^a. If you take it otherwise, there can be no parallel between the two cases. For how strange would it be to say—the *human Spirit* knows the things of a *man*, because it is *in him*; EVEN SO, the *Divine Spirit* knows the things of *God*, because it is *out of him*. This text brings the matter to a short issue. The Church affirms the *Spirit* to be *in God*, as a *person* of the *same divine nature*: the *Arians* deny it, and will understand him to be *out of God*; not a person of the divine nature, but one inferior to, and distinct from it. To see on which side the truth lies, a man needs no other qualification but that of *faith*, to receive the *Scripture* as the infallible *word of God*: which the *Arians*, in most of their writings, have freely confessed it to be. If once they come openly to deny this, they are no longer *Arians*, but infidels of another denomination, with whom a different course is to be taken.

^a The *Scripture* uses the same *preposition* to denote the *co-essentiality* of *Christ*—*John* xiv. 11. *I am* ($\text{EN } \tau\omega \text{ Πατρει}$) *in the Father*. And xiii. 32. *God shall glorify him* ($\text{EN } \epsilon\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$) *in himself*.

XIV.

1 *Cor.* ii. 11. The THINGS OF GOD knoweth no man.

1 *Cor.* v. 14. But the natural man receiveth not the THINGS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

Here again, the Scripture makes no distinction, farther than that of personality, between *God* and the *Spirit of God*; but renders unto *God* the *things* that are *God's*, by rendering them to the *Spirit*, who is *God*.

XV.

Deut. vi. 16. and *Matt.* iv. 7. Thou shalt not TEMPT the LORD thy GOD.

Acts v. 9. How is it that ye have agreed to TEMPT the SPIRIT of the LORD.

The Spirit is here substituted as the object of that particular act of disobedience, of which, according to the *Law* and the *Gospel*, the only object is the *Lord our God*: therefore the *Spirit* is the *Lord our God*.

Dr. Clarke denies that in "any place of Scripture there is any mention made of any SIN against the Holy Ghost but only of a BLASPHEMY^a." He that can distinguish BLASPHEMY from SIN, must be an acute reasoner; when it is of *all sins* the greatest. But is it no SIN against the *Holy Ghost*, to *lye* to him, to *grieve* him^b, or to *tempt* him? why then did the Lord *swear* in his *wrath* against those that *grieved* him, if it were no SIN? and why was

^a S. D. p. 112.

^b *Eph.* iv. 30.

that commandment given in the Law, *thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God?* And if the Spirit be tempted, is not the Spirit the object offended by that temptation? this is the very thing that learned man was afraid of. He would have proved *blasphemy* to be no *sin*, lest the Spirit should appear to be the object of *sin*; for that would have proved him to be God, the author and giver of the Law: and that, again, would have spoiled his *Scripture doctrine*: so the short way was, to deny it.

XVI.

Gen. vi. 3. And the LORD said, MY SPIRIT shall not *always strive with man.*

The Spirit of the Lord strove with the inhabitants of the old world, endeavouring to reclaim them by grace, and waiting long for their repentance. But this is called, *1 Pet. iii. 20*, the long-suffering of GOD that waited in the days of Noah.

XVII.

Luke xi. 20. If I with the FINGER of GOD cast out devils.

The parallel place in St. Matthew's Gospel has it thus:

Matth. xii. 28. If I with the SPIRIT of GOD cast out devils.

The *finger of God* is a metaphorical expression for the immediate power and agency of God: and to say that Devils were cast out by the *finger of God*, is the same as to say, that they were cast out by God himself. But it appears

from the text of *St. Matthew*, that this particular act of the *finger of God*, that is, of *God himself*, was the act of the SPIRIT; therefore, the *Spirit is God himself*.

XVIII.

Ezek. viii. 1—3. The hand of the LORD GOD fell there upon me — and HE (the *Lord God*) put forth the form of an hand, and *took me* by a lock of mine head, and the SPIRIT *lift me up*, &c.

In this text, the name of the *Lord God*, and the name of the *Spirit*, do both belong to the same *person*. For though it be said that the *Spirit lifted up* the prophet, yet was it no other than the *Lord God* who *put forth the form of an hand and took him*: therefore the SPIRIT is the LORD GOD.

XIX.

Acts iv. 24, 25. They lift up their voice to God with one accord, and said, LORD, thou art GOD, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that therein is. WHO by the mouth of thy servant DAVID has said, &c.

The terms LORD and GOD are here used to express the divinity of *him*, who spake by the mouth of his servant *David*. But it was the *person* of the HOLY GHOST, who spake by the mouth of his servant *David*—for, saith *St. Peter*—*This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which* the HOLY GHOST by the mouth of DAVID spake, &c.

Therefore,

Therefore, the terms LORD and GOD are certainly used to express the divinity of the HOLY GHOST.

So again:

It was the LORD GOD of *Israel*, who SPAKE by the mouth of his holy *Prophets*, since the world began. *Luke i. 68, 70.*

But then, it is written—well SPAKE the HOLY GHOST by *Esaias* the *prophet*^a, &c. Therefore the *Holy Ghost* is the LORD GOD of *Israel*.

XX.

Psal. cxxxix. 7. Whither shall I go from THY SPIRIT? or whither shall I go from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, THOU art there.

The Psalmist, to acknowledge the omnipresence of the *Holy Ghost*, says—*Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?* and by what is immediately subjoined, he shews this to be the omnipresence of *God himself*—*If I ascend up into heaven, THOU art there.* So that the terms *thou*, and *thy Spirit*, are equivalent; i. e. equally conclusive for the immediate presence of the *divine nature itself*.

XXI.

It was said by the Angel—*Luke i. 32.*—*He shall be great, and shall be called the SON of the HIGHEST.* But the reason given upon this occasion WHY Christ was called the SON OF GOD, is this, and this only, *viz.*

^a *Acts xxviii. 25.*

because he was begotten by the *Holy Ghost*—"The
 " *Holy Ghost* shall come upon thee, and the power of
 " the HIGHEST shall overshadow thee: THERE-
 " FORE also that holy thing which shall be born of thee
 " shall be called the Son of GOD." v. 35.

When *Jesus* is called *the Son of God*, we understand the
supreme and true God, besides whom there is no other. The
Devils themselves allowed it, and said—" *Jesus*, thou
 " Son of God MOST HIGH!" But the Person in God,
 whose Son *Jesus* is said to be in this place, is the *Holy Ghost*,
 by whose power (called the *power of the highest*) he was
 begotten of the blessed virgin, and thence called *the Son of*
God.

Therefore, the *Holy Ghost* is *God*, and the *Highest*.

XXII.

The Prophet *Isaiab*, in his 6th chapter, tells us he saw
 the LORD OF HOSTS. And at verse 8, that he heard
 the voice of the LORD, SAYING—"Go and tell this
 people, hear ye indeed, but understand not, &c.

Yet these very words, which the prophet declares to
 have been *spoken* by the *Lord*, even the *Lord of Hosts*, were
 spoken by the *Holy Ghost*—Well SPAKE THE HOLY
 GHOST, by *Esaias the prophet*, unto our *Fathers*, saying,
 Go unto this people and say, hearing ye shall hear, and shall
 not understand^b, &c.

Therefore, the HOLY GHOST is the LORD OF
 HOSTS.

^a Luke viii. 28.

^b Acts xxviii. 16, 27.

The article of the Holy Ghost's supreme and absolute divinity being now established in the plainest terms; I shall proceed to answer, from the Scripture, the objections usually made against it from thence.

XXIII.

† *Matth.* xix. 17. There is none good but ONE, that is, GOD.

If this be a good objection to the divinity of *Christ*, it must be equally strong against that of the Holy Ghost, for it is argued from this passage, that the attribute of *goodness* is confined to the *single person* of God the Father; who therefore is a Being superior to, and different from *Christ* and the *Holy Ghost*. The error of this argument has been fully shewn above: for it is not *one person*, but *one God*, whom the Scripture has asserted to be *good*; and I now have an opportunity of confirming it, and of proving withal, that in the unity of this one God, besides whom no other is *good*, the person of the Holy Ghost is, and must be included. For it is written——*Thy SPIRIT is GOOD*;^a——so that if the same inspired Scripture which declares the person of the *Spirit* to be *good*, does also as plainly declare that *none* is *good*, but *God only*; then the Spirit is God, even the only true and supreme God; and we are as well assured of it, as if it had been said, “there is none good but one, that is *the Spirit*, who is one with God.” The Hebrew in this place is yet stronger than the English. It is not טוב *good*, but טובה *Goodness itself*, that is, divine,

^a *Psal.* cxliiii. 10.

essential, uncommunicated goodness, besides which there neither is, nor can be, any other of the like kind. There is one sort of goodness communicated to men upon earth; as we read, *Psal. cxii. 5, the good man sheweth favour, &c.* and *Acts ii. 24, that Barnabas was a good man, and full of faith, &c.* There is another sort of goodness to be found only in heaven, and that is the goodness of God, which is essential; but this goodness is also an attribute of the *Spirit*; who therefore is proved to be *very God*; and by that argument too, for the sake of which, some have *denied him to be God.*

XXIV.

† *Matth. iii. 16. The Spirit of God.*

The Spirit, say they, is not *God*, because he is only the *Spirit of God*. But so likewise the *human Spirit*, whence the Apostle has taught us to borrow an idea of the *divine*, is the *Spirit OF a man*; yet, was it ever pretended, that the *Spirit*, for this reason, is *one* being, and the *man* another? No, certainly: and the same must be true of *God*, and the *Spirit of God*; as far as the being of the *same man*, who is *one* person, can be an image of the *same God*, who is *three* persons. But there is the plainest testimony of Scripture, that the Spirit, though said to be the *Spirit OF Jehovah*, is also called by the express name of *Jehovah* himself. For it is written, *Judg. xv. 14, that the Spirit OF Jehovah CAME upon Samson.* Yet at chap. xvi. 20, it is said, that *Jehovah* himself DEPARTED from him. Till it can be shewn, then, that the person who came upon him was *one*, and the person who departed from him

him was *another*; it is undeniable, that the *Spirit*, though said to be OF *Jehovah*, is strictly and properly *Jehovah himself*.

XXV.

† *Heb. ii. 4.* GOD also bearing them witness with—*gifts* of the *Holy Ghost* according to his OWN will.

Hence it is objected, that the *Holy Ghost* is subservient and subordinate to the will of *another*; therefore he cannot be the supreme and true God. But if this *own will* of *God* should prove to be no other than the *will* of the *Spirit*, this imaginary objection of the *Arians*, which if it be an *error* must also be a *blasphemy*, will turn to a demonstration against them. And that the *will* of *God* really is the *will* of the *Spirit*, is manifest from 1 *Cor. xii. 11.* *All these worketh that one and the self-same SPIRIT, dividing to every man severally as HE (even he himself) WILLETH.*

XXVI.

† *Rom. viii. 26.* The *Spirit* itself maketh *intercession* for us.

The *Spirit* is not *God*, because he *maketh intercession* with *God*; and *God*, as it is imagined, cannot *intercede* with *himself*. But it is a matter of fact, that he has actually done this: therefore it is wicked and false to say that he *cannot*. For *God* reconciled the world TO HIMSELF, and it was done by *intercession*.

The other objections I meet with, are all of this stamp: as that the *Spirit* is said to be *given*, to *proceed*, to

be poured out, to be sent; and they argue that it is impossible for God to give, to proceed from, or to send, himself. But here the question is begged, that God is but one person, in which case it might be a contradiction: but the Scriptures demonstrate, as it will be seen in the following chapter, that God is three persons; and then there is no contradiction in any of these things. It is also to be observed, that the giving, proceeding, sending, and ministration of the eternal Spirit to Christ in glory, are terms that concern not the divine nature, but relate merely to the acts and offices, which the several persons of the blessed Trinity have mercifully condescended to take upon them, for conducting the present œconomy of man's redemption and sanctification.

By this time, I take it for granted, every pious reader must have observed, how copious and conclusive the Scriptures of the Old Testament are, upon the subject of the Trinity; and that without having recourse to them upon every occasion, it is impossible for me, or for any man, to deal fairly and honestly by the Apostolical doctrine of the Church of England. Our Lord himself has told us, that every scribe, or teacher, instructed into the kingdom of heaven, should bring forth out of his treasure, things NEW and old^a. It was his own practice. He appealed, at every turn, to the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, for the testimony of his own doctrine; and the Church has followed his example, from the days of the Apostles, almost down to the present times. And so far is the Old

^a Matt. xiii. 52.

Testament from being no part of the Scripture, that it is the book, and the only book, the Gospel calls by the name of *the Scripture*. It was this book, which the noble and faithful *Beræans* searched every day of their lives, to see whether the Gospel then preached, and afterwards published in the *New Testament*, was agreeable to it; with the intention either to receive or reject it, as it should appear to be recommended by this authority. It was this book, for his skill in which, *Apollos* is praised as one *mighty in the Scriptures*; the same Scriptures, of which *St. Paul* was bold to affirm, for the benefit of a brother *Christian*, that they were able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith that is in *Christ Jesus*. As long as this faith flourished in the Church, these Scriptures were much read and profitably understood: but now it is dwindled into a dry, lifeless system of morality, they are become in a manner useless; and some (it grieves me to say it) even of those who have undertaken to teach others, want themselves to be taught again this first element of Christianity, that the *New Testament* can never be understood and explained, but by comparing it with the *Old*.

Of this error and its consequences, we have a sad example in the celebrated *Dr. Clarke*; a man, whose talents might have adorned the doctrine of Christ, had not his faith been eaten up by an heathen spirit of imagination and philosophy. He published a book entitled, *The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*; a work of great pains and premeditation. In a short preface, he allows the subject to be of the greatest importance in religion—not to be treated of carelessly—but examined by a serious study of the

SCRIPTURE. And to convince the world that this and no other was *his own* practice, he affirms in his *introduction*, p. 17; and prints it in *capitals*, that he has collected ALL *the texts* relating to that matter. Yet his whole collection is finished and shut up without a single text from the *Old Testament!* I cannot find that he has even mentioned such a book. “The Christian Revelation,” says he, p. 1, “is “the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles.” This he calls, p. 4,—“The *books of Scripture* ;” and again, p. 5,—“The *books of Scripture*—not only *the rule*, but *the whole* “and the only rule of truth—the only foundation we have “to go upon.” And he proves it thus—“because no “man has since pretended to have any new revelation.” An argument that will prejudice few people in favour of his sincerity. For though there has been no *new revelation* SINCE the books of the New Testament, as we all confess: does it follow that there was no *old revelation* BEFORE them? and did this author never read, that the same GOD, *who spake in these last days by his Son, spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets*^a? yet he affects to know nothing at all of the matter.

And as to the use he makes of the *New Testament*, who would expect, that a man who has made *nothing* of one half of God’s revelation, should be very nice in his treatment of the *other*? In the first place, he has not vouchsafed to follow the Apostle’s direction of *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*, thence to collect their true meaning; but sets down his texts in such an order, as makes

^a Heb. i. 1.

them to be all single and independent of one another; and that gives all possible liberty to the imagination to thrust in what sort of comment it pleases. When he refers to any parallel place (which I think is *never* done, but on *one* side of the question) the reader is not directed to the text itself, but to the *meaning* he has fastened upon it. At the beginning of every chapter, he sets down his *own opinion* at large, as the *title* of it: and you are to believe, that all the passages of that division do certainly prove it; which if cleared of his comments, and compared with other texts, are found to prove no such thing, but the very contrary. And this he calls *the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity*: but if we call it by its true name, it is—Clarke's *Doctrine of the Scripture*; that is, of *half* the Scripture. How it came to pass, that he should thus boldly set down his own resolutions upon the most profound article of the *Christian Faith*, without consulting *all* the evidence that relates to it, or rightly examining *any part of it*: *how* this came to pass, God is to determine, to whom all things are naked and open. All I have to do with him, is to rescue the *Word of God* from such *deceitful handling*. And I have prevailed with myself to make these few reflections, because I find some modern objectors of a lower class, have used this book in conversation and in print, as the oracle of the party, taking the *Scripture* upon trust, as his principles would give him leave to retail it. I know it will be accounted an *hard thing*, and called *invidious*, to rake thus into the *ashes* of a writer, who is not alive to answer for himself. And I confess, I am very far from taking any *pleasure* in it. But
is

is it not much *harder*, that the ashes of this man should be scattered over the land, to breed and inflame the plague of heresy, till the whole *head* is sick and the *heart faint*, and the *whole body* full of putrifying blains and sores? *Arianism* is now no longer a *pestilence* that walketh in *darkness*, but that brazens it out against the sun's light, and *destroyeth* in the *noon day*. It is a *canker*, which if it be *encouraged* much longer, will certainly *eat out* the vitals of *Christianity* in this kingdom: and when the *faith* is gone, the *Church* in all probability will soon follow after it; for if the holy oil be wasted and spilt, the lamp that was made to hold it, will be of no farther use.

C H A P. III.

THE PLURALITY AND TRINITY OF
PERSONS.

I.

The *Hebrew* name so often used in the *Old Testament*, which we have translated by the word *God*, is *Eloim*, a noun substantive of the *plural* number, regularly formed from its *singular**, and very frequently joined with plural verbs and plural adjectives, to express a *plurality* in the divine nature: though for another obvious reason, it is generally constructed with verbs and pronouns of the singular number, and gives a good sense, though the Grammar of it be somewhat irregular.

The *Jews* would persuade us not to consider this word as a plural noun, but on some particular occasions. Whoever will be at the pains to examine their reasoning, will find it to be very childish and inconsistent, wholly owing to their hatred against the divinity of *Jesus Christ*, and the notion of a Trinity. But when the *Jew* is become a *Christian*, and the stumbling-block of the *Cross* removed

* מֵאֱלֹהִים and אֱלֹהִים: see the *Heb.* of *Deut.* xxxii. 17, and *Hab.* i. 11.

out of his way, he can allow the name *Elohim* to be *plural* as readily as other men; and it is one of the principal points he chuses to insist upon, to convince the world that his eyes are open, and he is sincere in his profession of the *Christian* religion.

John Xeres, a *Jew*, converted here in *England* about forty years ago, published a sensible and affectionate address to his unbelieving brethren, wherein he lays before them his reasons for leaving the *Jewish* religion and embracing the *Christian*. “The Christians, (says he*) confess
 “ *Jesus* to be *God*; and it is this that makes us look upon
 “ the *Gospels* as books that overturn the very principles
 “ of religion, the truth of which is built upon this article,
 “ the *Unity of God*. In this argument lies the strength of
 “ what you object against the *Christian* religion.” Then he undertakes to prove that the unity of *God* is not such as he once understood it to be, an unity of *Person*, but of *Essence*, under which more persons than one are comprehended; and the first proof he offers is that of the name *Elohim*.
 “ Why else, says he †, is that frequent mention of *God*
 “ by nouns of the plural number? as in *Gen. i. 1*, where
 “ the word *Elohim*, which is rendered *God*, is of the plu-
 “ ral number, though annexed to a verb of the singular
 “ number; which demonstrates as evidently as may be,
 “ that there are several persons partaking of the same
 “ divine nature and essence.”

* P. 53.

† P. 57.

II.

Gen. i. 26. And GOD said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness.

No sensible reason can be given, why God should speak of himself in the *plural* number, unless he consists of more persons than one. Dr. *Clarke* contrived the plan of his *Scripture Doctrine* so as to leave out this difficulty with many more of the same kind. Others there are who tell us it is a figurative way of speaking, only to express the dignity of God, not to denote any *plurality* in him. For they observe it is customary for a King, who is only one person, to speak of himself in the same style. But how absurd is it, that God should borrow his way of speaking from a King, before a man was created upon the earth! And even granting this to be possible, yet the cases will not agree. For though a King or Governor may say *us* and *we*, there is certainly no figure of speech that will allow any single person to say, *one of us*, when he speaks only of *himself*. It is a phrase that can have no meaning, unless there be more persons than one to chuse out of. Yet this, as we shall find, is the style in which God has spoken of himself in the following article. Though it be impossible to apply this plural expression to any but the Persons of the Godhead, there is a writer who has attempted to turn the force of it by another text, in which, as he says very truly, *the weakness of the argument will appear at sight*. God invites the people by the prophet *Isaiah*, and says, "Come now and *let us reason* together," Chap. i. ver. 18. Upon which he remarks, that, "if this form of expression
" puts

“ puts the children of *Israel* upon an equality with God, “ then we may allow some force in this argument.”

And so we may if it does not. For *let us reason* refers to an act common to all spirits; and therefore no Christian ever thought of arguing from it. But *let us make man* refers only to an act of the Godhead. All spirits can *reason*; but only the supreme Spirit can *create*. Therefore the author, instead of answering the expression, hath only brought together two texts as widely different as God and man.

If the King were to say to another, “ let us *see*,” or let “ us *break*,” no man would be so weak as to think that the expression denoted any equality or co-ordination in the person so spoken to. But if he should say, “ let us pardon “ a malefactor condemned by the law,” then the expression would admit of such an inference. And the objector might have been aware of these distinctions, if he had not prematurely settled his faith before he had consulted the Holy Scripture.

III.

Gen. iii. 22. And the LORD GOD said, behold the man is become like ONE OF US.

The *Jews* are greatly perplexed with this passage. They endeavour to put it off, by telling us, God must here be understood to speak of himself and his *council*, or as they term it בֵּית דִּין his *house of judgment*, made up of angels, &c. to which there needs no answer but that of the pro-

^a See an *Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People*, p. 139.

phet, who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor^b?

IV.

Gen. xi. 6, 7. And the LORD said—let us go down and there confound (*Heb.* let us confound) their language.

Another instance of this occurs in *Isaiab vi. 8.* *I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us?* Upon the plural word *Nobis, us,* there is a short note of *Junius* and *Tremellius*, which contains the substance of all that can be said upon the occasion—
 “*Nam consilium est Dei Patris, Filii, & Spiritus Sancti*”
 —*For this* (say they) *is a consultation of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.*—And it shall be proved to be so, in a proper place, from an inspired comment upon this Chapter of *Isaiab.*

V.

Gen. xx. 13. And it came to pass when GOD caused me to wander from my father's house, &c.

The *Hebrew* is—*Deus errare facerent*—*God they caused me to wander:* which, however strange it may sound to an *English* hearer, is the strict grammatical rendering of the original. And the expression is affirmed by *Junius* and *Tremellius*, with other commentators out of number, to respect the plurality of the persons in the Godhead. They have a short note upon it to the following effect—

^b *Rom. xi. 34.* and *Isa. xl. 13.*

Plurale verbum cum Dei nomine, ad indicandum S. Triados mysterium: which I mention, not in the way of an *authority*, but only to shew how clear the case is to an *Hebrew* reader, whose mind is without prejudice. And though others may have attempted to conceal such evidence as this under an heap of critical rubbish, yet if we are to come to no resolution till those who dislike the *doctrine* of a Trinity have done disputing about the *words* that convey it, the day of judgment itself would find us undetermined. And if we would but attend to this state of the case, and apply it also to other points of doctrine, I am well convinced it would shorten many of our disputes, and make the word of God a much more easy and intelligible book than it passes for at present.

VI.

Gen. xxv. 7. Because there GOD *appeared* unto him, &c.

Here again the *Hebrew* verb is *plural*—*Deus revelati sunt*—*God they appeared, or were revealed to him.* So again in *2 Sam. vii. 23.*—*even like Israel whom God went to redeem*: which in the original is—*iverunt Deus ad redimendum*; the verb being in the *plural*. A celebrated *Latin* translator^a of the Old Testament has ventured to render it—*iverunt Dii ad redimendum*: but *Dii* in *Latin* is not answerable to *Elohim* in the *Hebrew*; and, in strictness, may be thought to countenance the notion of *Tritheism* or a plurality of *Gods*; which is abhor-

^a *Pagninus* in his interlineary version published by *Montanus*.

rent from the express doctrine of the Scripture: and against which the name *Elohim* is purposely guarded, by its being connected so very often with verbs and pronouns in the singular.

VII.

Deut. iv. 7. What nation is there so great, that hath GOD *so nigh* unto them? &c.

In the two preceding articles we have seen the name of God connected with *plural verbs*: it is here joined to a *plural adjective*, whose termination is the same with its own; for the original has it—*Elohim Kerebim*—*Deus propinqui*—*God who are so near*. Another instance of which we have in *Josh. xxiv. 19.* *Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is an holy God.* For the *Hebrew* reads it—*Deus sancti ipse*,—*he is a God who are holy ones*. And again, *Psal. lviii. 12.* *Doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth*: the *Hebrew* of which is—*Deus judicantes in terra*—*a God (i. e. divine persons) who are judging in the earth*.

VIII.

Several other nouns there are beside the name *Elohim*, as well adjective as substantive, that are set down in the plural number, where it cannot be denied that the Being of God is to be understood by them.

Mal. i. 6. If I be a MASTER, where is my fear? The *Heb.* is אֲדֹנִים *Adonim*, in the plural—*If I am masters, &c.*

Isai. liv. 5. *For thy maker is thine husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name.* Here also the *Hebrew* substantives for
thy

thy maker and *thy husband*, are both plural—בַּעֲלֶיךָ עֲשִׂיךָ. And to prove that עֲשִׂיךָ cannot signify *thy maker*, in the singular number, it is also found connected with the word *Jehovah* in its singular form without the ם inserted; as in *Isai. li. 13. And forgettest the Lord thy maker*—עֲשִׂי יְהוָה.

Eccl. xii. 1. Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, &c. The Hebrew of which is—Remember אַח בּוֹרְאֶיךָ thy *Creators*, in the plural. And there is nothing strange in this, when we can prove so easily that the world and all men in it were created by a *Trinity*.

Instead of the usual names of God, *adjectives* expressing some divine attribute are very frequently substituted: and these also occur in the plural, as in the following examples.

Prov. ix. 10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge (קִרְשִׁים) of the HOLY ONES is understanding. Another instance of which may be found in *Chap. xxx. 3. see also Hosea xi. 12. in the Hebrew xii. 1.*

Eccl. v. 8. There be HIGHER than they. The Hebrew is (גְּבוּרִים) *high ones*, in the plural; and is understood even by the *Jews* themselves to mean the *holy and blessed God*. *Junius* and *Tremellius* put *altissimus* in their text, but acknowledge the Hebrew to be *alti—plurale pro singulari sup. relativo, mysterium S. Triados notans.*

Psalms lxxviii. 25. Man-did eat Angels food.

The word (אֲבוֹרִים) *mighty ones*, is never used for *Angels*; and must in this place signify *God*, for the two following

following reasons: 1. Because *Abir* in the singular is several times used absolutely as a name of God; who is called *Abir Israel*, the *mighty one of Israel*, and *Abir Jacob*, the *mighty one of Jacob*. *Gen.* xlix. 24. *Psalm* cxxxii. 2. where the LXX. have rendered it Θεός. 2. Because our blessed Saviour, in discoursing upon the *Manna*, *John* vi. 31—33, quotes this part of the Psalm, and calls that *the bread of God from heaven*, which in the Psalm itself is called *the bread of the mighty*. Therefore *Abirim* is put for *Elohim*, and is taken in the plural because God is plural.

IX.

Dan. iv. 26. And whereas THEY commanded to leave the stump of the tree-roots, &c.

At the 13th verse of this Chapter we read only of one *watcher* or *holy one* coming down from heaven, of whom it is said that HE cried—*leave the stump of his roots in the earth*. Yet the number is here very remarkably changed from *he said* to *they commanded*. And though the words of the curse upon *Nebuchadnezzar* were pronounced by A *watcher* and An *holy one* in the singular; nevertheless, at the close of the speech, this *matter* is declared to be by the *decree of the WATCHERS* and *the demand by the word of the HOLY ONES*^a. Now it is very certain that the judgments of God are not founded upon the *decree* and *word* of Angels, or of any created beings: therefore this *watcher* could be no created angel, but a person in the

^a Ver. 17. Compare this with *Prov.* ix. 10. cited in No. VIII. of this chapter.

Lord *Jehovah*, who condescends to *watch over*^a his people, and is called the *keeper of Israel*, that *neither slumbereth nor sleepeth*. The change of these verbs and nouns from the singular to the plural, can be accounted for upon no other principle: it is a case to which there is no parallel in any language, and such as can be reconcileable only to the Being of *God*, who is *one* and *many*. We are to collect from it, that in this, as in every act of the Godhead, there was a consent and concurrence of the persons in the Trinity; and though there was *one* only who *spake*, it was the *word* and *decree* of *all*. There is an instance of this sort in the New Testament. The Disciples of *Christ* were commanded to *baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. And, without doubt, the baptism they administered was in all cases agreeable to the prescribed form. Nevertheless we are told of some, who were commanded to be *baptized in the name of the Lord*^b, and particularly, in the *name of the Lord Jesus*^c: so that there was a strange defect either in the baptism itself, or in the account we have of it; or the mention of one person in the Trinity, must *imply* the presence, name, and authority of them all; as the passage is understood by Irenæus—in *Christi nomine subauditur qui unxit, & qui unctus est, & ipsa unctio in qua unctus est*. Lib. III. cap. 20.

^a *Jer.* xxxi. 28.

^b *Acts* x. 48.

^c *Ibid.* viii. 16.

X.

Dan. v. 18. The most high GOD gave to *Nebuchadnezzar* a kingdom and majesty and glory and honour.

V. 20. And THEY took his glory from him.

Here again, the word *they* is a plain relative to the *most high God*. Nor can it otherwise be agreeable to the sense of the history, or the reason of the thing itself, considered as a matter of fact. For who was it that *took away* the glory of the king? It was not the work of *men*, but a supernatural act of *the most high God*; to whom *Nebuchadnezzar* himself hath ascribed it—*those that walk in pride HE is able to abase*.

I might here subjoin in proof of a *plurality*, those numerous passages of the Old Testament, wherein God is spoken of, or speaks of himself, as of *more persons than one*. I will produce a few of them, to shew that such are not wanting.

Gen. xix. 24. The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.

Psalm cx. 1. The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, &c.

Dan. ix. 17. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant—for the Lord's sake.

Prov. xxx. 4. Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?

Isa. x. 12. When the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Jerusalem, I will punish, &c.

Ibid. xiii. 13. I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

Ibid. xxii. 19. And I will drive

drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down. *Ibid.* lxiv. 4. Neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him. *Hos.* i. 7. I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God. *Zech.* ii. 10, 11. I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord; and many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me unto thee. *Ibid.* x. 12. And I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord.

The passages hitherto produced in this Chapter are designed only to prove an *indefinite* plurality in God. In the remaining part of it, I shall bring forward another class of texts, which shews this plurality to be a *Trinity*.

XI.

Psalm xxxiii. 6. By the WORD of the LORD were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the *breath* (*Heb.* SPIRIT) of his mouth.

The *breath* or spirit of the Lord's *mouth*, does undoubtedly mean the third person of the Trinity; who is called, *Job* xxxiii. 4. *The Spirit of God, and the Breath of the Almighty.* And it should here be remembered, that when Christ communicated the *Holy Ghost* to his disciples, he did it by *breathing* upon them^a: a demonstration that *Christ*

^a *John* xx. 22.

our Saviour, who, as a *person*, is the *word* of the Lord, is in *nature* the Lord *himself*; because the spirit or *breath* of the *Almighty* is also the *breath* of *Christ*. And this fact is also decisive for the word *FILIOQUE*, so much controverted in the *Nicene Creed*.

XII.

Psal. xlvi. 16. And now the LORD GOD and his SPIRIT hath sent ME.

The speaker in this verse is no other than *Christ*, who at ver. 12. calls himself *the first and the last*, and does here declare himself to be *sent*, not only by the *Lord God*, but also by his *Spirit*: which should be taken some notice of, because the *Arians* have objected to the co-equality of the *Son* with the *Father*, because he is said to be *sent* by him. But if this should hold, it will follow that *Christ*, for the same reason, is also inferior to the *Spirit*. The author of an *Essay on Spirit*, whose violent proceedings in the Church have chiefly moved me to draw up these papers, is warm in the pursuit of this argument, that *Christ* is inferior to the *Father*, because he was *sent* by him. “We may therefore,” says he, “fairly argue, as our Saviour himself does upon another occasion—that as *the servant is not equal to his Lord, so neither is he that is sent equal to him that sent him*^a.” Not quite so *fairly*: for here is a gross misrepresentation, of which, and of many other things, this author should give us some account, before he proceeds any farther in the work of *reformation*; it being a

^a Page 93.

maxim, I think, with the wise and learned, that a man should always reform *himself*, before he undertakes to reform the world. Upon the occasion he refers to, our Saviour has said—*The Servant is NOT GREATER than his Lord; neither is he that is sent GREATER than he that sent him*^a. But in the place of this, he has ventured to substitute another reading that comes up to his point, and agrees better with the intended work of Reformation—“*he that is sent is not equal to him that sent him*,” printing the word *equal* in a different character to make it the more observable; and then puts an objection of his own *forging* into the mouth of our blessed Saviour. He professes himself a great enemy to *human compositions*: and we have reason to believe him, where those compositions are not *his own*. But his making so free with this and many other texts, does not look as if he was any great friend to the compositions of the *Holy Ghost*; and can do but little credit to a *Vindicator* of the *Holy Scriptures* from the cavils and scoffs of an Infidel.

XIII.

Isa. xxxiv. 16. Seek ye out of the Book of the *Lord* and read—for MY mouth it hath commanded, and HIS SPIRIT it hath gathered them.

In these words, there is *one* person speaking of the *Spirit* of *another* person: so that the whole *Trinity* is here included. Whether God *the Father* or God *the Son* is to be

^a *Job* xlii. 16.

understood as the speaker, it is neither easy nor material to determine. I am rather inclined to think it is the *former*.

XIV.

Numb. vi. 24, &c.

The LORD bless thee and keep thee.

The LORD make his face to shine upon thee,
and be gracious unto thee.

The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee,
and give thee peace.

After this form the High Priest was commanded to bless the children of Israel. The name of *the Lord*, in Hebrew *Jehovah*, is here repeated *three* times. And parallel to this is the form of Christian Baptism; wherein the three personal terms of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, are not represented as so many different names, but as one *name*: the one divine nature of God being no more divided by these three, than by the single name *Jehovah* thrice repeated. If the three articles of this benediction be attentively considered, their contents will be found to agree respectively to the three persons taken in the usual order of *the Father*, *the Son*, and *the Holy Ghost*. The *Father* is the author of *blessing* and *preservation*. Grace and *illumination* are from the *Son*, by whom we have *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ*. Peace is the gift of the *Spirit*, whose name is *the Comforter*, and whose first and best *fruit* is the work of *Peace*.

Petrus Alphonsi, an eminent *Jew*, converted in the beginning of the 12th Century, and presented to the font by

Alphonsus a king of *Spain*, who wrote a learned treatise against the *Jews*, wherein he presses them with this Scripture, as a plain argument that there are *three persons* to whom the great and *incommunicable* name of *Jehovah* is applied. And even the unconverted *Jews*, according to *Bechai*, one of their *Rabbies*, have a tradition, that when the high Priest pronounced this Blessing over the people—*elevatione manuum sic digitos composuit, ut Triada exprimerent*—he lifted up his hands, and disposed his fingers into such a form as to express a Trinity. All the foundation there is for this in the Scripture, is *Lev. ix. 22*. As for the rest, be it a matter of fact or not, yet if we consider whence it comes, there is something very remarkable in it. See *Observ. Jcs. de vois. in Pug. Fid. p. 400, 556, 557*.

XV.

Matth. xxviii. 19. Baptizing them in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST.

XVI.

2 *Thes. iii. 5*. The LORD (the *Holy Ghost*, see c. 2. art. 4. 18.) direct your hearts into the love of GOD (*the Father*) and into the patient waiting for CHRIST.

XVII.

2 *Cor. xiii. 14*. The grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the love of GOD, and the communion of the HOLY GHOST.

In this and the foregoing article, the *order* of the *persons* is different from that of *Matth.* xxviii. 19. The Holy Ghost having the *first place* in the former of them, and Christ in the latter: which is a sufficient warrant for that clause in the Creed of *St. Atkanafius*—"In this Trinity, none is afore or after other." And *Dr. Clarke*, I presume, apprehended something of this sort; because he has corrected the Apostle, and transposed the order of the persons in *2 Cor.* xiii. 14, without the least apology, or giving his reader any warning of it. §. LV. p. 377.

XVIII.

1 *John* v. 7. There are THREE that bear record in heaven, the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST.—

There has been much disputing about the authenticity of this Text. I firmly believe it to be genuine for the following reasons: 1. *St. Jerom*^a, who had a better opportunity of examining the true merits of the cause than we can possibly have at this distance of time, tells us plainly, that he found out how it had been adulterated, mistranslated, and omitted on purpose to elude the truth. 2. The Divines of *Lovain* having compared many *Latin* copies, found this text wanting but in five of them; and *R. Stephens* found it retained in nine of sixteen ancient manuscripts which he used. 3. It is *certainly* quoted twice by *St. Cyprian*^b, who wrote before the council of *Nice*: and also by *Tertullian*; as the reader is left to judge after he

^a Præf. ad Canōn. Epist.

^b De Unit. Eccl. 109. Epist. LXXIII.

has read the passage in the margin ^a. Dr. Clarke, therefore, is *not to be believed* when he tells us, it was “never cited by any of the *Latins* before St. *Jerom* ^b.” 4. The sense is not perfect without it; there being a contrast of three witnesses in heaven to three upon earth; the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*, whose testimony is called the *witness of God*; and the *Spirit*, the *water*, and the *blood*, which being administered by the Church upon earth; is called the *witness of men*. He that desires to see this text farther vindicated from the malice of *Faustus Socinus*, may consult *Pool’s Synopsis*, and Dr. *Hammond*, and I wish he would also read what has lately been published upon it by my good and learned friend Dr. *Delany*, in his volume of *Sermons*, p. 69, &c.

But even allowing it to be spurious, it contains nothing but what is abundantly asserted elsewhere; and that both with regard to the Trinity in general; and this their divine *Testimony* in particular. For that there are *three* divine persons who *bear record* to the Mission of Christ, is evident from the following Scriptures:

John viii. 17, 18. *The Testimony of two men is true.*

I am ONE that bear witness of MYSELF.

The FATHER that sent me beareth witness of me.

¹ *John* v. 6. *It is the SPIRIT that beareth witness.*

And Christ has also mentioned upon another occasion, a plurality of witnesses in heaven, — *WE speak* (says he)

^a Connexus patris in filio, & filii in paraclete, tres efficit cohærentes, alterum ex altero; *qui tres unum sunt*, &c. *adv. Prax.*

^b See the text in the 2d Edition.

that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not OUR Witness^a! which can be no other than the witness of the Trinity; because it is added—no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven; therefore no man could join with Christ in revealing the things of heaven to us.

XIX.

Isa. vi. 3. And one cried unto another and said, HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is the LORD OF HOSTS. See also *Rev. iv. 8.*

“ They are not content (says *Origen*) to say it once or twice, but take the perfect number of the Trinity, thereby to declare the manifold holiness of God; which is a repeated intercommunion of a threefold holiness; the holiness of the *Father*, the holiness of the only begotten *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*^b.” And that the *Seraphim* did really celebrate all the three persons of the Godhead upon this occasion, is no conjecture; but a point capable of the clearest demonstration.

The prophet tells us, ver. 1. *he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne*; and at ver. 5. that *his eyes had seen the king, the Lord of Hosts*. Now if there be any phrase in the Bible to distinguish the true God, it is this of the *Lord of Hosts*. I

^a *John iii. 11.*

^b Non eis sufficet semel clamare sanctus, neque bis; sed perfectum numerum Trinitatis assumunt, ut multitudinem sanctitatis Dei manifestent; quæ est trinæ sanctitatis repetita communitas; sanctitas patris, sanctitas unigeniti filii, et spiritus sancti. *Orig. Hom. in loc.*

never saw it disputed by any *Avian* writer. The author of an *Essay on Spirit* confesses it^a; and Dr. *Clarke* supposes the name *Lord of Sabaoth* (Jam. v. 4.) proper to the *Father* only. So that in this *Lord of Hosts*, sitting upon his Throne, there was the presence of *God the Father*.

That there was also the presence of *God the Son*, appears from *John* xii. 41. *These things said Esaias, when he saw his (Christ's) Glory, and spake of him**.

And that there was the presence of *God the Holy Ghost*, is determined by *Acts* xxviii. 25. *Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the Prophet unto our Fathers, saying, &c.* then follow the words which the prophet affirms to have been spoken by the *Lord of Hosts*.

The text of *John* xii. 41. which being compared with this of *Isaiab*, proves the second person of the Trinity to

^a P. 65.

* It is written at ver. 3.—*Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of HIS GLORY.* This St. *John* has affirmed to be the *Glory of Christ*; but it was the glory of the Lord of Hosts: therefore Christ is the Lord of Hosts. And if the parallel passage of *Rev.* iv. 8. be compared with this, it will appear (as it hath already Chap. I. Art. XXIII.) that he is the *God Almighty* spoken of in that book. The Greek version of the LXX. hath it thus:

αγιος, αγιος, αγιος Κυριος σαββαωθ.

In *Rev.* iv. 8. it is, αγιος, αγιος, αγιος Κυριος ο θεος ο παντοκρατωρ. Whence it evidently appears, that Κυριος ο θεος ο παντοκρατωρ, is equivalent in the language of heaven to *Jehowab Sabaoth*: therefore, as *Christ* is the *Lord of Hosts* of the Old Testament, he is thereby proved, *ipso facto*, to be the *God Almighty* of the New. Which shews the weakness of those frequent remarks Dr. *Clarke* has bestowed upon the word παντοκρατωρ, as the great term of distinction between the person of *Christ*, and that of *God the Father*.

be

be the *Lord of Hosts*, is evaded by Dr. Clarke in the following manner: “ The *Glory* which *Isaias* saw, *Isa.* vi. 1. is “ plainly the glory of *God the Father*; whence the followers of *Sabellius* conclude, because St. *John* here calls it “ the *Glory of Christ*, that therefore the Father and the Son “ are one and the same individual person^a.” It is concluded by the Orthodox of the Church of *England*, that the person of Christ, and the person of God the Father, are not one and the same individual person, but one and the same *Lord of Hosts*; because the Scripture, thus compared, hath affirmed them so to be; and THIS is the conclusion Dr. Clarke should have answered. But instead of this, he has produced the monstrous and impossible doctrine of *Sabellius*, that they are one and the same individual person, and answered that: which to be sure is easily done, and is quite foreign to the purpose. The other conclusion, which is the only true and natural one, is kept out of sight, because it cannot be answered: and this of *Sabellius* is slurred upon his credulous readers, as the doctrine of the orthodox, who disclaim and abhor it. This is no slander; for let any person read his book with a little circumspection, and he will soon find who and what he would mean by the followers and doctrine of *Sabellius*. And let me give the reader the following caution, which he will find to be of great service in detecting the fallacious answers of the *Arian* writers in their controversies with the orthodox. Always be careful to examine whether they have replied to the proof itself, or to something else in the

^a P. 102.

place of it. For when you have obtained any clear evidence from the Scripture, that two or more persons are one *God*, one *Lord*, &c. they will give a new face to your conclusion, by changing the terms *God* or *Lord*, which are names of a *nature*, for that of *person*, which can belong only to an *individual*. And then they shout for victory. O, say they, this man is a *Sabellian*! he believes *three persons to be one person*! But on the other hand, if you make it appear, that in the *Unity* of the one *God* or *Lord* there are more persons than one, then they change the word *persons* for that of *Gods*: so that you are confuted this way also; and they cry you up for a *Tritheist*, a maintainer of *three Gods*! By the help of this artifice, *Dr. Clarke* attempted to deal with the *Scripture*; and the Author of an *Essay on Spirit* with the *Creeds* and *Liturgy* of the Church. And, though it be a matter scarce worth mentioning, thus also the Authors of a *Monthly Review* have attempted to deal with *myself*. Some time ago I published a *full Answer to the Essay on Spirit*, which has since been reprinted in *Ireland*, and I humbly hope may have done some little service. But when these Gentlemen had deliberated with themselves upon it for three or four months, it was retailed from their scandalous Shop as a system of *Tritheism*, *Sabellianism*, and what not? I hope *God* will forgive them! and this is all the answer I shall ever make to such men and such writers.

C H A P. IV.

THE TRINITY IN UNITY.



IF there be any diversity of nature, or any essential subordination in the persons of the Godhead, it must be revealed to us either in their *names*, or their *attributes*, or their *Acts*; for it is by these only that they are or can possibly be made known to us in this life. If the Scripture has made no difference in any of these, farther than that of a *personal* distinction (which we all allow) we are no longer to doubt that there is a natural or essential *Unity* in the three Persons of the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*. It shall therefore be shewn in this Chapter, by a sort of proof more comprehensive than what has gone before, that these Persons have the same *Names*, the same *attributes*, the same counsel or *will*, and all concur, after an ineffable manner, in the same divine *Acts*: so that what the Scripture is falsely supposed to have ascribed to God in *one* Person, will appear to be ascribed by the same authority to God in *three* persons. That therefore, these three persons are but *one* God; they are three distinct *agents*, yet there is but one and the same divine *agency*: or, as the Church has more fully and better expressed it, that “ that
which

“ which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same
 “ we are to believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,
 “ without any difference or inequality ^a.”

I.

The Trinity in Unity is the *one Lord*, the *Creator* of the world.

Psal. xxxiii. 6. By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath (Heb. Spirit) of his mouth. The whole Trinity therefore created the world: yet this Trinity is but *one Lord*: for it is written,

Isai. xlv. 24. I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens ALONE, that spreadeth abroad the earth BY MYSELF. It follows therefore, either that the word and spirit, did not make the heavens; or, that the Father, with his word and spirit, are the ALONE Lord and Creator of all things.

II.

The Trinity in Unity is the one Supreme Being or Nature, distinguished from all other Beings by the Name *Jehovah*. For the Scripture gives us the following position.

Deut. vi. 4. The Lord our God is ONE JEHOVAH: and again, *Psal. lxxxiii.* Thou whose name ALONE is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.

Yet Christ is *Jehovah*.

^a Proper Preface upon the feast of Trinity.

Jer. xxiii. 6. This is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH our righteousness.

So is the *Spirit* also.

Ezek. viii. 1, 3. The Lord JEHOVAH put forth the form of an hand and took me, — and the SPIRIT lift me, &c. see also CHAP. II. Art. IV. and XXIV.

Therefore, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are the ONE Jehovah: they are three persons, yet have but *one name* and *one nature*. And it is the great advantage of this argument, that the Name *Jehovah* is not capable of any such equivocal interpretations as that of *God*; it has no plural; is incommunicable to any derived or created being; and is peculiar to the divine nature, because it is descriptive of it. The Author of an *Essay on Spirit* has endeavoured to avoid the force of this proof, by pretending that there are two *Jehovahs*, one a distinct Being from the other. But in this he has exposed the cause he meant to defend, and left the argument in a worse state than he found it; for if there be *two*, then it is false that there is a *most high over all the earth, whose name ALONE is Jehovah*; and let him try if he can reconcile it. Dr. Clarke also pretends, in the Titles to two of his Sections, wherein the collection of texts is very numerous, to have set down the *Passages wherein it is declared* that the Second and Third persons *derive their Being* (that is the expression he was not afraid to make use of) *from the Father*. But he has not produced one such passage; no such thing being *declared* in the whole Bible; and the contrary to it is plainly revealed under this application of the name *Jehovah*.

III.

The Trinity in Unity is *the Lord* absolutely so called; in Hebrew, *Adonai*; in Greek, ο Κυριος.

Rom. x. 12. * *The same LORD over all, is rich unto all that call upon him.*

Luke ii. 11. *A Saviour which is Christ the LORD.*

Rom. xi. 34. *For who hath known the mind of the LORD, or who hath been his counsellor? Which Lord, as we learn from the prophet whence this is quoted, is the Spirit; for it is written, Isaï. xl. 13. who hath directed the SPIRIT of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? That the person of the Spirit is the Lord, is also plain from 2 Cor. iii. 18. now the Lord is that Spirit—ο δε κυριος το Πνευμα εστιν—we are changed from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord; καθαρεις απο κυριου Πνευματος, as by the Lord the Spirit: which is all along to be understood of the personal Spirit, because the apostle begins expressly with that at the 3d verse of this chapter. And it was from the authority of these words—*The Lord is the Spirit*—added to those of ver. 6.—*the Spirit giveth life*—that the council of Nice borrowed the following clause of its Creed—“ *I believe in the Holy Ghost, the LORD and GIVER OF LIFE.*”*

* The Reader is desired to observe, that as I cannot in all cases fix upon a text that does precisely distinguish the *person* of the Father, I shall therefore be frequently obliged, as in this instance, to set a passage down in the *first* of the three ranks, that does confessedly denote the *true God*.

IV.

IV.

The Trinity in Unity is the *God of Israel*.

Matth. xv. 31. *The multitude glorified the God of Israel.*

Luke i. 16, 17. *The children of Israel shall be turn to the Lord THEIR GOD: and he shall go before HIM* ——— that is, before Christ.*

2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3. *The SPIRIT of the Lord spake by me ——— the GOD of Israel said, &c.* So that unless he who *spake* was *one* being, and he that *said* was *another*; the *Spirit* is the *God of Israel*.

* *Dr. Clarke* allows that the word *him* means *Christ*, yet denies that he is intended by *the Lord their God*, which is the *antecedent* to it: and calls this a *manner of speaking*^a.

V.

The divine *Law*, and consequently the *authority* whereupon it is founded, is that of a Trinity in Unity.

Rom. vii. 25. *I myself serve the LAW of GOD.*

Gal. vi. 2. *Fulfil the LAW of CHRIST*.*

Rom. viii. 2. *The LAW of the SPIRIT of Life*.*

The divine *Law* then, is the law of *God*, *Christ*, and the *Spirit of life*. But it is written *James iv. 12.* *There is ONE LAWGIVER who is able to save and to destroy: therefore, these THREE are ONE.* And here we have the true reason why the Scripture has represented the whole Trinity as *tempted* and *resisted* by the *disobedience* of man. For *sin* being the transgression of the *Law*, and the law being derived from the undivided authority of the

^a No. 534.

Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, every breach of it is an offence against the Trinity: therefore it is written,

Deut. vi. 16. Thou shalt not TEMPT the LORD thy God.

1 Cor. x. 9.——neither let us TEMPT CHRIST.

Acts v. 9. How is it that ye have agreed together to TEMPT the SPIRIT of the Lord? For Dr. Clarke's opinion of this matter, see Ch. II. Art. XV.

****** *Dr. Clarke has left both these texts out of his collection; though he pretends to have set down all the highest expressions relating to Christ and the Spirit.*

VI.

The *mind* and *will* of God is the mind and will of a Trinity in Unity.

The *mind* of God.

1 Cor. ii. 16. Who hath known the MIND of the LORD?

Ibid.——We have the MIND of CHRIST.

Rom. viii. 27. He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the MIND of the SPIRIT.

The *will* of God.

1 Thess. iv. 3. This is the WILL of GOD.

Acts xxii. 14. The God of our Fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know HIS WILL.*

2 Pet. i. 21. Prophecy came not in old time by the WILL of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the HOLY GHOST.

* This passage is meant of *Christ* and of *his will*. *The God of our fathers (said Ananias) hath CHOSEN thee, &c.*

&c. but the *person* in God who appeared to *Ananias* and said of *Saul*, *he is a CHOSEN vessel unto ME*, was the *Lord*, even *Jesus*, *Acts ix. 15, 17*. For want of comparing the Scripture with itself, *Dr. Clarke* has set down the text of *Acts xxii. 14*. as a character of the *Father only*.
No. 366.

VII.

The *Power* of God is the *Power* of a *Trinity* in *Unity*.

Eph. iii. 7.—*The grace of GOD given unto me, by the effectual working of HIS POWER*.

2 Cor. xii. 9.—*that the POWER of CHRIST may rest upon me*.

Rom. xv. 19.—*signs and wonders by the POWER of the SPIRIT of God*.

The Scripture therefore has ascribed *divine power*, and that in the same exercise of it, (the *ministry* and *miracles* of *St. Paul*) to *Christ* and the *Spirit* in common with *God the Father*. So that when all *glory* and *power* is ascribed to the *only wise God*, what *God* can that be, but the *Trinity*? Upon this principle the Scripture is easily reconciled: upon any other it is unintelligible, as the reader may soon find by consulting *Dr. Clarke* and some other of the *Arian* writers; who to avoid this plain doctrine, have tried to amuse us with a religion made up of scholastic niceties and unnatural distinctions, which no man can understand, and which themselves are not agreed in, nor ever will be to the world's end. Yet they often dispute against us from the acknowledged *simplicity* of the Scripture!

VIII.

VIII.

The Trinity in Unity is *Eternal*.

Rom. xvi. 25, 26. *The ministry*—made manifest according to the commandment (*αἰώνως*) of the EVERLASTING GOD.

Rev. xxii. 13. *I (Jesus) am the FIRST and the LAST* *.

Heb. ix. 14.—*who through (αἰώνως) the EVERLASTING SPIRIT.*

* Dr. Clarke allows these words, in *this place*, to mean *Christ*, yet where the same words occur in Rev. i. 8. with the addition of the epithet *Almighty*, he denies it^a; though they are demonstrated to be spoken of the same person by the context and tenour of the whole chapter †: and he tells us, the character in one place *differs* from the other. So that upon his principle, the Scripture has revealed to us two different beings, both of whom are the *first and the last*, yet not *coeternal*. Which is sufficient of itself to justify all that was said above concerning his *distinctions*, &c. See Ch. I. Art. III.

IX.

—Is TRUE.

John vii. 28. *He that sent me is TRUE.*

Rev. iii. 7. *These things saith he*—*that is TRUE, he that hath the key of David, &c.*

1 John v. 6. *It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the SPIRIT is TRUTH* — *ἡ ἀληθεῖα* THE truth.

^a See No. 686, 414.

† See the note at Ch. III. Art. XIX.

X.

— is Holy.

Rev. xv. 4. Who shall not fear thee, O LORD, and glorify thy name? for THOU ONLY art HOLY.

Acts iii. 14. But ye denied THE HOLY ONE, and desired a murderer to be released unto you, &c. See also *Dan. ix. 24.* and *Rev. iii. 7.*

1 John ii. 20. Ye have an unction from THE HOLY ONE; that is, an anointing from the Holy Ghost, who is called,

John xiv. 26. ΤΟ ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΤΟ ΑΓΙΟΝ, The Spirit the Holy one.

XI.

— is omnipresent.

Jer. xxiii. 24. Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the LORD?

Eph. i. 22.—the fulness of HIM (Christ) that filleth all in all.

Psal. cxxxix. 7, 8. Whither shall I go then from thy SPIRIT? If I go up into heaven THOU art there; if I go down into hell, THOU art there also.

XII.

— is the fountain of life.

Dent. xxx. 20.—love the LORD thy GOD, for HE is thy LIFE.

Col. iii. 4. When CHRIST who is OUR LIFE shall appear, &c.

Rom. viii. 10. The SPIRIT is LIFE.

XIII.

XIII.

The Trinity in Unity *made* all mankind.

Psal. c. 3. The LORD *he is* GOD, *it is* HE *that hath* MADE US.

John i. 3. By HIM (Christ) *were* ALL THINGS MADE.

Job xxxiii. 4. The SPIRIT of GOD *hath* MADE *me*.

XIV.

— *quicken the dead.*

John v. 21. The FATHER *raiseth up* the dead and QUICKENETH *them*.

Ibid. — *even so* the SON QUICKENETH *whom he will*.

Ibid. vi. 63. *It is* the SPIRIT *that* QUICKENETH.

XV.

— *instruct us in divine knowledge.*

John vi. 45. *They shall be* all TAUGHT of GOD.

Gal. i. 12. *Neither was* I TAUGHT *it but by* the revelation of JESUS CHRIST.

John xiv. 26. *The Comforter, the Holy* SPIRIT, *will* TEACH *you all things*.

XVI.

— *have fellowship with the faithful.*

1 John i. 3. *Truly our* FELLOWSHIP *is with* the FATHER. — Gr. Κοινωνία.

Ibid. *And with* his Son JESUS CHRIST.

2 Cor. xiii. 14. *The FELLOWSHIP (κοινωνία) of the HOLY GHOST be with you all.*

XVII.

—are spiritually present in the elect.

1 Cor. xiv. 25. *GOD is IN YOU of a truth.*

2 Cor. xiii. 5. *CHRIST is IN YOU except ye be reprobates.*

John xiv. 17. The SPIRIT dwelleth with you and shall be IN YOU.

So again,

2 Cor. vi. 16. *GOD hath said, I will DWELL in them.*

Ephes. iii. 17. That CHRIST may DWELL in your hearts.

Rom. viii. 11. His SPIRIT that DWELLETH in you.

XVIII.

—reveal to us the Divine Will.

Phil. iii. 15. God shall REVEAL even this unto you.

Gal. i. 12.—neither was I taught it but by the REVELATION of JESUS CHRIST.

Luke ii. 26. It was REVEALED unto him by the HOLY GHOST.

So again,

Heb. i. 1. GOD who SPAKE unto the fathers by the prophets.

2 Cor. xiii. 3. *Ye seek a proof of CHRIST SPEAKING in me.*

Mark xiii. 11. It is not ye that SPEAK, but the HOLY GHOST.

And as prophecies are revealed *by*, so are they also delivered *in the name*, that is, by the special authority of each person in the Godhead. For though the usual introduction to any divine revelation be—*Thus SAITH the LORD*—yet we also find the expressions—*These things SAITH the SON of GOD. Rev. ii. 18. And—Thus SAITH the HOLY GHOST. Acts xiii. 3.* with many other passages to the same effect.

XIX.

—raised the Body of Christ from the grave.

1 Cor. vi. 14. GOD hath both RAISED UP the Lord, and will also raise us up by his OWN POWER.*

John ii. 19. Destroy this temple, and in three days I WILL RAISE IT UP.

1 Pet. iii. 18. Christ—being put to death in the flesh, but QUICKENED by the SPIRIT.

* See Art. vii. of this Chapter.

XX.

—conduct the people of God.

Isai. xlvi. 17. I am the LORD thy GOD, which LEADETH thee by the way that thou shouldst go.

John x. 3. He (Christ the Shepherd) calleth his own sheep by name, and LEADETH them out.

Rom. viii. 14. As many as are LED by the SPIRIT of God, they are the sons of God.

XXI.

—— give a commission and authority to the Ministers of the Gospel.

2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. *Our sufficiency is of GOD, who hath MADE us able* MINISTERS.

1 Tim. i. 12. JESUS CHRIST——*counted me faithful, PUTTING me into the* MINISTRY.

Acts v. 28. *Take heed therefore to all the flock over the which the HOLY GHOST hath made you* OVERSEERS.

XXII.

—— sanctify the elect.

Jude, 1.——*to them that are* SANCTIFIED by GOD, the FATHER.

Heb. ii. 11. *He that* SANCTIFIETH *and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them* brethren.

Rom. xv. 16. *Being* SANCTIFIED by the HOLY GHOST.

XXIII.

—— perform all spiritual and divine operations.

1 Cor. xii. 16. *It is the same* GOD *which* WORKETH ALL IN ALL.

Col. iii. 11. CHRIST *is all and* IN ALL.

1 Cor. xii. 11. *But* ALL *these* WORKETH *that one and the self-same* SPIRIT.

CONCLUSION.

LET us now take a review of what has been collected in these papers, and sum up the evidence in its own natural terms.

It has appeared from the *first* Chapter, that *Christ Jesus*, whose Divinity is daily blasphemed amongst us, because it is not proved in the Scripture, is the *Lord of Hosts*^a, the *first and the last*^b, than whom there is *no greater*^c, and beside whom there is *no God*^d: that he is the *Saviour of the world*^e, the *Lord and God* of the *holy Prophets*^f, and *Apostles*^g, the *most high God*^h, the *searcher of all hearts*ⁱ, comprehended and made known to us under the name of *that God* to whom *the world was reconciled*^k. Who though he *was* the *Word of God*, that *came forth* from the Father into the world, yet he *was God*^l, and of the same *divine nature*^m with him that sent him. Though he was perfect *man*, of the *seed of Abraham*, born of his mother, and in *all things* made like to his brethren; yet *the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily*ⁿ. Though he suffered, died^o, was pierced upon the Cross, and redeemed us by his *blood*; yet that blood was the blood of *God*^p, and upon his Cross *Jehovah* was pierced^q.

That the objections urged against all these positive proofs, proceed wholly upon false principles; being drawn,

^a Chap. I. Art. I. II. III. ^b III. ^c XLV. ^d III.
^e IV. ^f V. ^g XI. ^h IX. ⁱ XLIII. ^k XIV.
^l XIX. ^m XLIV. ⁿ XVIII. ^o XLVII. ^p XLIX.
^q XLIV.

partly,

partly, from *natural religion* and *Philosophy*, which never was nor ever will be subject to the *law of God*; and is not intended so to be by those who set it up and dispute for it. Partly from the œconomical offices and humiliation of *Christ* in the *flesh*^a; in which it is nevertheless affirmed, that *God* himself was made *manifest*^b. And lastly, from the *unity*^c of *God* so often asserted and insisted upon in the *Scripture*; not in opposition to the *Godhead* of *Christ*, but to the *Idols*^d then worshipped all over the heathen world. Hence it is, that *God* is called the *true God*; for they were *false* ones: *one God*; for they were *many*^e: the *living God*^f; for they were *vanities* without life. Yet in the place of these *idols*, who are to supply the contrast, they have substituted the person of their blessed Redeemer, the *true God*^g, the *everlasting Father*^h, the *Lord of Glory*ⁱ, who is able to *subdue all things to himself*, and of whose *kingdom* there shall be *no end*.

From the *second Chapter* it has appeared, that the *Holy Ghost* is our spiritual *Father*^k, by whose divine power we are *begotten* to a new life; and to whom we daily *pray* that he would not *lead us into temptation*^l. That he is the *Lord*^m, even the *Lord of Hosts*ⁿ, the ruler of the *Christian œconomy*, *calling* men to that *honour* in his church, which *God only*^o can bestow upon them. That he is incomprehensibly *united* with *God*, and sensible of the omnipotent *will* in himself; *even as* the *human Spirit* is united to

^a XXV. XXVI. XXXIX. ^b 1 Tim. iii. 16. ^c XXIV.
 XXXIII. ^d XXII. 1 John v. 21. ^e 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. ^f Acts
 xiv. 15. ^g 1 John v. 20. ^h XX. ⁱ 1 Cor. ii. 8. ^k Ch. II.
 Art. I. ^l XI. ^m III. ⁿ XXII. ^o II.

man, and understandeth its *own thoughts*^a. That *his power*, is the immediate power of *God himself*^b; his *inspiration*, is the inspiration of *God*^c; his *presence*, the presence of *God*^d. That he is *God*^e, even the *highest*; for the *man* Christ Jesus, who is the *Son of God* and the *Son of the highest*, was so called BECAUSE he was begotten of the *Holy Ghost*^f.

That the objections usually brought to disguise and destroy this evidence, are taken from the *unity*, the *attributes* and *will* of God, and the *ministration* of the *Spirit* in the œconomy of grace; all of them falsely interpreted. For as to the *unity* of God, it is not an unity of *person*. As to the supreme attribute of *goodness*, it is also possessed by the *Spirit*. As to the *Will* of God, according to which the gifts and graces of the *Spirit* are distributed, it is opposed to the will of *man*, not to that of the *Spirit*; which is said to blow *where it listeth*, and to divide or distribute unto every man his gifts, not as *man* the receiver, but as he himself *willeth*^h.

It has appeared from the *third* Chapter, that God is signified to us throughout the Old Testament by a name that is pluralⁱ, and proved to be such from many particular instances; yet generally so restrained and qualified, as to destroy the suspicion of a plurality of *Gods*. That to this common name of God, many other plural names and expressions are added^k; and that an interchanging of the

^a XIII. ^b XVII. ^c VI. ^d IX. V. XX. ^e VIII.
^f XXI. ^g XXIII. XXIV. ^h XXV. ⁱ Chap. III. Art. I.
^k V. VI. VII. VIII.

plural and *singular*^a is frequently observed, which neither grammar nor reason can account for upon any principle; but that of a real divine plurality. That the *persons* of God are *three* in number, precisely distinguished on some occasions by the personal names of the *Father*, the *Word*, or *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*^b, and also by different offices. That the same term is not always peculiar and proper to the same person; because the words *God*, *Lord*, *Jehovah*, and *Father*, are sometimes applied to one person, sometimes to another; while at other times they are not personal, but general names of the *divine nature*. That in the *Lord of Hosts*^c, sitting upon his throne, and speaking of himself in the *plural* to the Prophet *Isaiah*, there was not *one* person only, but *three*; The *Father*, *Jesus*, and the *Holy Ghost*, all expressed under *one* name in the Old Testament, but personally distinguished to us by three different ones in the New, where this matter is referred to.

In the *fourth* and last Chapter, the passages of the Scripture have been laid together, and made to unite their beams in one common center, the *Unity* of the Trinity. Which unity is not metaphorical and figurative, but strict and real: and there can be no real unity in God, but that of his *nature*, *essence*, or *substance*, all of which are synonymous terms: this unity considered *in itself*, is altogether incomprehensible: but it is one thing to read and to know that there *is* a divine nature, and another thing to describe it. That it is proved to be an unity of essence; 1st. because the three persons are all comprehended under the same individual and supreme appellation. They are

^a IX. X.

^b XVIII.

^c XIX.

the one *Lord* absolutely so called^a. *The Creator of the world*, and the *God of Israel*^b. 2dly, because they partake in common of the name *Jehovah*^c, which, being interpreted, means the *divine Essence*: and what it signifies in one person, it must also signify in the others, as truly as the singular name *Adam*, in its appellative capacity, expresses the common nature of all mankind. And this name neither is nor can be communicated, without a contradiction, to any derived or inferior nature, as well on account of its signification as its application, which is expressly restrained to *one only*. 3dly, It is farther proved, in that the *authority*^d, the secret *mind*^e or counsel, and the *power*^f by which all things are established and directed, is ascribed to *Christ* and the *Spirit* in common with God the Father; and that in the same exercise of it, and upon the same occasions. 4thly, because there is a participation of such divine *attributes*^g as cannot subsist but where they are original. Our understanding, if it be moderately instructed, will satisfy us there can be *one only* who is *eternal*, and possessed of *holiness, truth, life, &c.* in and from himself. Yet the whole Trinity is *eternal, holy, true, living* and *omnipresent*: therefore these *three* were, and will be *one God* from everlasting to everlasting. 5thly, and lastly, Because there is a concurrence of the whole undivided Godhead in all those *acts*^h, every one of which have in them the character of a divine wisdom and omnipotence; and express such an intimate union and communion of the

^a Chap. IV. Art. I. III.^b IV.^c II.^d V.^e VI.^f VII.^g VIII. IX. X. XI. XII.^h XIII. &c. ad fin.

Holy Trinity, as the understanding of man cannot reach, and which no words can explain. For though it is and must be *one God* who doth all these things, yet it is *the Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*, who gave us our being, instruct and illuminate us, lead us, speak to us, and are present with us; who give authority to the church, raise the dead, sanctify the elect, and perform every divine and spiritual operation.

This is the God revealed to us in the holy Scripture; very different from the *Deity* so much talked of in our systematical schemes of *natural* divinity; which with all its wisdom, never yet thought of a *Christ* or an *Holy Ghost*, by whom *nature*, now fallen and blind, is to be reformed, exalted, and saved. The Bible we know to be the infallible word of God; the rule of our faith and obedience. I find this doctrine revealed in it; therefore I firmly believe and submit to it. And as the Liturgy of the Church of *England* hath affirmed the same in all its offices, and contains nothing contradictory thereto; I believe *that* also: and hope the God whom we serve will defend it against all attempts toward reforming *Christianity* out of it: that the Church militant here on earth, may continue to agree in this fundamental doctrine with the Church triumphant in heaven. For there the Angels rest not day and night, praising this *Thrice-Holy*^a, blessed and glorious Trinity. They have neither time nor inclination to dispute against that Glory, which they cannot stedfastly behold. And had we a little more humility and devo-

^a Chap. III. Art. XIX.

tion, we should not abound so much with disputation. If, in such a subject as this, we trust to our own reason, and it should prove at last to have betrayed us into error, irreligion, and blasphemy; what shall we have to say in excuse for ourselves? we shall not dare to plead the dignity and strength of our rational faculties before the tribunal of Him, who came into the world to bring the wisdom of it to nought. And if the Religion of *Jesus Christ* is to be corrected and softened till it becomes agreeable to the natural thoughts and imaginations of the human heart, then in vain was it said—*Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.*

As for him, who is convinced that God is wiser than himself; who *believes* as he ought, and as the Catholic Church of Christ hath given him an example from the beginning, *his* danger lies on the other side: and while I venture to give him warning of it, *I beseech him to suffer the word of exhortation*, and to take in good part the *faithful wounds of a friend*. Let him take care then, that while he values his orthodoxy, he be not led unawares to *overvalue* it, by drawing false conclusions from it, and conceiving himself to be *already perfect*. If he knows and believes in the true God, he doth well: but let not that which is an honour to him be any encouragement to dishonour God; the knowledge of whom will only serve to increase our condemnation, if we live in any *lust of concupiscence*, even as the *Gentiles who knew him not*. And though it be the *faith* of a Christian, and not his *morality*, that distinguishes him from the rest of mankind; yet that faith must appear in the conduct of his life; even as love

to a friend is best witnessed by a readiness to do him service. It is true, the service is not the love, nor of equal value with it; yet the love that refuses the service will be accounted as nothing. The *mystery of faith* is an invaluable treasure; but the vessel that contains it must be clean and undefiled; it must be *held in a pure conscience*; as the *mannâ*, that glorious symbol of the *word of faith* preached to us by the Gospel, was confined to the Tabernacle, and preserved in a vessel of gold. A mind that is conformed to this world, and given up to its pleasures, though it repeat the creed without questioning a single article of it, will be abhorred in the sight of God, as a vessel unfit for the master's use; and unworthy, because unprepared, to stand in the *most holy place*. It is the great excellence of faith, that it can produce such a transformation in the life and manners, as no other principle has any power to do; and many are possessed of this truth without applying it to their own advantage. It is to be feared, that a consciousness of this damps their zeal, and creates that poor, pitiful, cowardly indifference, so much in vogue; which if it had not by accident found the name of *charity*, would have been ashamed to shew its face in a Christian country. They are cold and backward to promote any religious conversation; they will not appear to be in earnest about their faith in the Eyes of the world, lest they should be forced to abridge somewhat from the gaiety of their lives, and to *live as they speak*. But let them remember, that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*: no dross or impurity of this world will be suffered to continue in his sight. And in this, he has no hard master, *reaping where*

he hath not *sown*, and requiring the fruit of good works without giving us strength and ability to bring them forth. He has provided for us the precious blood of the Lamb, and offered to us the assistance of his Holy Spirit, that we may be enabled to *serve* that living God in whom we *believe*. If we are purged by *him*, we shall be *clean*: if *he* washes us, we shall be *whiter than snow*: and when the kingdom of God shall come, and his glory shall appear, we shall be prepared to *behold his face in righteousness*.

This, and no other, is my sincerest wish and prayer for every Christian, who shall give himself the trouble to peruse these papers; in which I pretend to no merit but that of a *transcriber*; which I shall always esteem to be honour enough, where the word of God is my original. And if they should be any way instrumental to promote so good an end, he will not have read, nor shall I have written, in vain.

A
LETTER
TO THE
COMMON PEOPLE,
IN ANSWER TO SOME
POPULAR ARGUMENTS
AGAINST THE
TRINITY.
BEING AN
APPENDIX
TO THE
Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity.

LETTER

OF THE

COMMONS

IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

RESOLVED

THAT

YEAS

AND

NOES

BE

RECORDED

A

LETTER

TO THE

COMMON PEOPLE.

MEN AND BRETHERN,

AS Christians and Members of the Church of *England*, you have been taught, that the True God, whom you are bound to believe and worship, is a *Trinity in Unity*. In the *Name* of these three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, you have been *baptized*: and in the Litany are directed to pray to this *Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God*, that he would *have mercy upon us miserable sinners*.

From the first propagation of the Gospel, there has been a sort of men in the Christian Church, who had too high an opinion of their own knowledge and wisdom to submit quietly to this doctrine. They pretended it was contrary to their reason and common sense, and impossible in the nature of things, that the true God should be
made

made manifest in the flesh for the Salvation of the world; and hence they argued, that the Incarnation must either have been a delusion, a fact brought to pass only in shew and appearance; or that the Person incarnate must have been some created Being, far inferior in power and dignity to the divine Nature itself.

About three hundred years after the death of Christ, when Paganism, or the worship of idols, was losing its influence in the Roman empire, this heresy, being come to its full growth, did immediately supply the place of it, and prospered to such a degree, that it overspread the greatest part of the East, and ended at last in the imposture of the false prophet *Mahomet*; whose doctrine was readily embraced wherever *Arianism* prevailed, and no where else among Christians; and his disciples do at this day most zealously deny that Trinity which you worship.

When the teachers of the Church found themselves disturbed, and their people corrupted more and more by the daily increase of this heresy; upwards of three hundred Christian bishops, many of whom had been tortured and maimed in the heathen persecutions, assembled together at the city of *Nice*, in *Bythinia*, and one *Arius*, a principal promoter of this wickedness, was summoned to appear before them: his doctrine and writings were condemned; the Faith which these holy men had brought with them to the council was declared, and is now preserved in the *Nicene Creed*; which form we make use of in the Church because it comprehends the sense of our faith in a few words. But we do not rest our belief upon the *authority* of any human form, because the doctrine therein expressed

is secured by the unquestionable authority of the Old and New Testaments.

The evidence of this faith, as it is found in the Scripture, I have endeavoured to extract and methodize in the best manner I could. The work was made public rather with an humble and charitable desire to assist the studies of the younger Clergy, than to instruct the common people; and therefore it was first printed at *Oxford*. Nevertheless, I am well persuaded, that so many of the arguments therein contained are level to all capacities, that an unlearned reader may thence be able to satisfy himself, and inform his Christian neighbours. I shall therefore have no occasion in this place to urge any new evidence from the Scripture, but only to refer to some of the old; it being the design of this Address to obviate a set of *popular* arguments, which have been made use of by some nameless writers to turn your affections from the doctrine of the Trinity; most of which might be applied with as much propriety to prejudice you against any other article of faith in the Christian Religion.

I. You know, my dear brethren, that *pride* is a very prevailing passion in human nature; and unless we are very much upon our guard, and are fortified with the true principles of Christian humility, we are all of us in danger of being ensnared by it. Men are proud of their clothes, and proud of their riches, and proud of their titles; but, above all, they are proud of their understanding. Some men are endued with a strength of mind which enables them to bear up with cheerfulness under
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the common trials of sickness, and losses, and disappointments; while, perhaps, the same men cannot endure the thought of being *cheated* and *imposed upon*, because it is a reflection upon their *understanding*. Our adversaries, therefore, hoping to make the stronger impression, apply themselves first of all to your pride, and inform you, that this doctrine of the Trinity is *imposed upon your consciences by Church Authority*^a. But if the fact be laid before you, it will soon appear that no point of faith is thus imposed upon you by the Church of England. The points of faith which you are required to believe are interwoven with all the forms and offices of our public Liturgy. They are collected together for the younger sort of people in the Church Catechism; and for all teachers, whether clergy or laity, they are drawn out more at large in the *Articles of Religion*, generally printed at the end of the Book of Common Prayer. So that all the articles of faith being imposed in the same manner, it will follow, that they are *all* imposed by *Church Authority*, or none of them. Let us put it to the trial, and begin with the first article of the *Creed*—*I believe in God the Father Almighty*. How is this article imposed? Does the Church determine by her own authority whether there is a God or not? And so for the rest. Does the Church determine whether there is a *Christ*, or a *Holy Ghost*? whether there will be a *resurrection of the dead*, and a *life everlasting*? Certainly the Church neither does nor can pretend to determine any

^a See the title-page of a pamphlet called "An Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People," &c. printed for *Miller*, in the *Strand*.

of these things for us; because where any thing is determined by authority, such authority must be superior to what it determines: to suppose which, in this case, would be equally false and presumptuous. Therefore the truth of the matter is this; that the Church does only declare that faith which it has received; and instead of her *imposing*, this faith is *imposed* upon the Church by the uncontrollable authority of God in the Holy Scripture, to which every private Christian is referred for the proper evidence of any particular doctrine, and for that of the Trinity amongst the rest. Those articles which are of a nature inferior to the Church itself, are the only subjects of Church authority. Thus, as the *body is more* than the *raiment* that is worn upon it; so the life and being of the Church is superior to those outward regulations, which serve only to the order, decency, and well-being of it; and which the Church may, for this reason, appoint, alter, and improve by her own authority. But if any man informs you, that points of faith, or moral practice, are *imposed upon your consciences* by the same authority, he has either mistaken the case, or is himself endeavouring to impose upon your understanding.

II. "But "the Gospel," they say, "was designed for persons of all capacities, and unless *all persons of common sense* are qualified to understand what the Lord requires of them, we must "charge Almighty God with dealing unfairly with his creatures^a." Now if the Gospel be so

^a Ibid. p. 2.

easy, that nothing but bare common sense is wanted for the understanding of it, why do these authors write so many books to help you to understand it in the *Arian* sense? If you are able, as they flatter you, to instruct yourselves out of the Gospel, then their practice is a contradiction to their principle, and their labour is superfluous by their own confession. My brethren, we do not argue in this manner; we know that you have sense and ability to understand the merits of a cause, and are ready to hear reason, when it is plainly represented to you: but if you were able to make all things intelligible to your own-selves, we should neither preach to you, nor write books for you.

When God appointed *Teachers* in his Church (1 Cor. xii. 28.) he certainly did not suppose that the congregation would be equally capable of teaching themselves. If this were true, then indeed God would seem to have dealt unfairly with Christian people, by appointing a ministry of learned men, and providing for their instruction, as if bare common sense, with the Bible in its hand, were not so sufficient as our adversaries would have you believe; in opposition to *us*, but not to themselves.

The duty of a Christian Minister is to *teach*; his studies are intended to qualify him, and his time is set apart for that purpose. For the bulk of the people, God hath appointed labour and business of another kind, as necessary to support themselves and their families; and *their* duty is to *bear*. But if God has required you to do our work and your own too, then your lot is hard indeed. You will not, therefore, think it any reflection upon your common

mon sense, that God has appointed an order of Teachers in his Church, who will never desire you to believe what they are not at all times ready to prove; but will rather beseech him that these Teachers may be endued with faith and affection to fulfil the *labour of love* to which they are called, and courage to declare that truth which they have learned from the Holy Scriptures; and by thus praying for the Clergy, you will convince them, that God hath added *Grace* to your *common sense*, and that you practise that Christian charity which is more acceptable in His sight than the attainments of learning and knowledge; for these are no more than temporary qualifications, and are to be used only as means; but Charity is the end and perfection of all.

III. They tell you, moreover, that people of all sorts have a *right to judge for themselves in matters of Religion*^a. As this principle very nearly affects the peace of the Christian world, and the salvation of individuals, I would advise you to enquire strictly into the meaning of these terms; and to consider how far they may be justified, and how far they are to be condemned. *Right* is a pleasing thing, and *liberty* is an old temptation; but if any Christian doth so assert his right against an human law, as to depart from his obedience and subjection to the divine law, such a right will do him no good when he has got it, because it will not protect him under religious mistakes against the su-

^a Ibid. p. 133.

perior judgment of God ; so far from it, that it is probably one of the chief mistakes he will have to answer for.

When they assert that you are to *judge* for yourselves, they must mean, either that you are to judge of truth by its proper evidence; or that by a certain prerogative of conscience, you are to *guess* for yourselves what is right or wrong, without any evidence at all. If only the former of these senses is intended, they say no more than we all say, and what the Church hath said ever since the Reformation. If the latter is also allowed, and unlearned people have a right to follow their conscience (that is, their *inclination*) without any evidence, or with some false and partial representation of it; then it will follow, that the difference between good and evil is not real, but imaginary; that truth and falshood, like temporary fashions, are not the objects of reason but of fancy; which doctrines, if admitted in their full latitude, would turn all reason and religion upside down: and I think they have done it in part already.

When they come to apply this principle, they take occasion to add, that *if you are convinced* of such doctrines as they teach you, *viz.* that God Almighty is only one and the same person; that the Holy Ghost is *first minister* in the government of the Church; that he has *angels to assist him*; that Christ is to be honoured with *mediatorial worship*, &c. “then you have a *right to protest* against the *Athanasian Creed* ^a.” But I say, neither you nor I can possibly have

^a P. 115.

any such right as this, unless we are convinced by *sufficient reasons*. Our persuasion can never be turned into an argument; unless it be also maintained, that a man who is persuaded can never be mistaken. The *Mahometans* are convinced, that their *Alcoran* is a divine revelation; that all Christians are guilty of blasphemy in believing, and idolatry in worshipping a Trinity in Unity; and that they have a right to protest against the foundations of the gospel of Jesus Christ. But as they are convinced of these things for very *bad reasons*, we pity the blindness of their understanding, and only laugh at the right they have assumed, as one of those many groundless castles, which human vanity and bigotry have builded in the air.

But allowing that *Arians* thus convinced have a right of protesting, what are orthodox *Christians* to do on the other hand? have *they* no right? does a persuasion confer a right on one side, and none on the other? that would be very unreasonable. Therefore we, who are convinced that the Creed of *Athanasius* is more agreeable to the Scripture than the doctrines of *Arianism*, have a right to remonstrate against the repealing of it; though we can never expect to do so, without being persecuted and reviled for it as long as we live.

IV. To prejudice your minds against the *Athanasian Creed* they inform you, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as there set forth, is *not expressed in the words of Scripture; there are no such propositions to be found in the declarations of Christ and his Apostles*^a. By this it is meant, that you do

^a P. 5.

not find any such expressions as—*Trinity in Unity—not three Eternals, but one Eternal*—and such like. The best course you can take upon this occasion, is to argue with them upon their own principles, which generally stop a man's mouth sooner than any other. Ask them, where they find it asserted in the words of Scripture, *Almighty God is one supreme intelligent Being, or Person?* Ask them, in what chapter or verse, Christ or his Apostles did ever declare, that *the Holy Spirit is first Minister in the Government of the Church*; and where it is said that he has *Angels for his Assistants?* Ask them, again, where they meet with the proposition—*the worship of Christ is inferiour, or mediatorial?* And you might ask them twenty more such questions, which they can never answer upon their own principles: so that they have employed an argument to corrupt you, which returns upon themselves, and with this disadvantage on their side, that they have departed from the *sense* as well as the *words* of Scripture; but the Church, if, besides the words of Scripture, it uses others, does still retain such a sense, as the words of Scripture will clearly justify.

V. But lest you should believe this, they assure you the *Athanasian Creed* has proposed a downright contradiction as an Article of Faith: and if this be the case, then indeed we must allow that such a contradiction cannot be justified by the words of Scripture. “You must believe (say they) “if this Creed has any weight, that three Gods **is** one “God.” If you examine the Creed itself, you will

find no such doctrine as they have put into it; but, on the contrary, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are NOT THREE GODS, but ONE GOD; and again, “ We are *forbidden*, by the Catholic Religion, to “ say, there be Three Gods.” I pray you to observe this; and to consider with yourselves, whether our adversaries, supposing them to be satisfied in their own consciences that they were able to confute the Catholic doctrine of *Three Persons, and one God*, would have endeavoured to take advantage of your simplicity, by putting this false notion of *Three Gods* into the place of it?

VI. Upon other occasions, they try to give you an ill opinion of our ecclesiastical forms, by calling them the *decrees of fallible men*^a, and *Creeeds of human invention*^b; which is a very mean objection, unless they who make it, and propose a contrary sort of belief, are themselves *infallible*. We readily own that the persons, who drew up the forms used in the Church, were men like ourselves. But did they deliver the doctrine of these forms as *their own* doctrine, or the doctrine of Almighty God in the *Scripture*? If they delivered it as their own, then their *fallibility* would be a pertinent consideration: but if it is the doctrine of the *Scripture*, then the fallibility of the men who delivered it, is nothing to the purpose; and as such only we take it, using our own private judgment in relation to the *men*, but submitting our reason to the *infallible Spirit of God*. A judge who sits upon the bench by the

^a P. 5.

^b P. 37.

king's authority, to determine civil causes, is a fallible man: but so far as he makes the law of the land the rule of his judgment, he is infallible. And we never attempt to persuade you, that the teachers of our Church are infallible, but so far only, as they make the Scripture the rule of their judgment. Therefore, when you hear them reflected upon as fallible men, do them so much justice as to ask yourselves the question, whether they who make this objection are themselves infallible? Is not the Author of an *Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People*, a fallible man, when he tells you, in terms of human invention, that God is one *supreme intelligent Agent, or Person*? that the Holy Spirit is his *first Minister*? that Christ did *really suffer in his highest capacity**? that he is to be honoured with *Mediatorial Worship*? Doth he not deliver these doctrines as a fallible man? Yea verily, not only as one who *may be*, but who actually *is*, deceived, if the Scripture is true.

VII. As a farther encouragement to opposition, you are taught that any body may deny the Trinity upon *Protestant principles*. And here give me leave to tell you, my friends, that there are some people who seem to think it is the profession of a *Protestant*, not to *believe* but to *deny*; and that a man is no good Protestant, unless he disputes every thing that falls in his way. Had this been the true Christian spirit, our Saviour would probably have recommended it to his hearers, by setting a bear, or a tyger, or a fox, be-

* P. 57.

fore them, and proposing these creatures, as the best examples of it. Instead of which, he shewed them what his followers ought to be, by presenting to them a little child as their pattern; whence the people were to understand, that as a little child receives the instruction of its parents, without any of the perverse disputings of a corrupted mind; so ought they to receive the kingdom of heaven, that is, the doctrine of the Gospel. This is a disposition lovely in the sight of God and men, and so far from rendering the possessors of it more liable to be imposed upon, that none but persons of this temper are able to discern the truth when it is offered, according to that expression of Christ—*I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* There would be more peace in the world than there is now, if men would but remember this; and there would be more wisdom too: for none are so blind as they who are always boasting of the quickness of their own eye-sight; they are so filled up with the opinion of their understanding every thing, that it is impossible to make them understand when they are mistaken.

But it may be dangerous to enlarge any farther upon this subject lest it should be suspected that I am leading you into Popery.

There is however, a very false light, in which your liberty, as Protestants, is represented to you, and therefore I think it my duty to make you aware of it. “*No Protestant* (hey say) can, consistently with acknowledging the Scripture as the only rule, charge you with the least presumption, for bringing decrees not found there to

“ the test of a rational enquiry ^a.” The decree here alluded to is the doctrine of a *Trinity in Unity*. As to myself, my whole Book bears witness for me, that I thought it my own duty, and would have it also be your practice, to bring this doctrine to the test of Scripture, as the only sufficient rule in such a case. And I am persuaded, no reasonable Christian will have any objection to your proceedings, if you examine in the best manner you are able, *whether the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity is found in the Scripture, or not*. But we shall charge you justly with a great deal of presumption, if you undertake to compare it with Scripture as a decree *not found* in Scripture: for this is to beg the question; that is, to take it for granted that a decree is *false*, and then compare it with the Scripture to see whether it be *true*. If this is your method, you must unavoidably conclude as your advisers have done before you. To prevent which, I recommend those words of the wise man—*He that answereth a matter, before he heareth it, it is folly, and shame unto him* ^b. A Protestant who enters upon a mock enquiry with these prejudices and anticipations, is guilty of great injustice towards his Christian brethren, and is all the while putting a trick upon himself.

If you consult the discourse to the reader, prefixed to the *Catholic Doctrine*, you will see, toward the latter end of it, upon what grounds I have charged the learned Dr. Clarke, and his followers, with this unfair practice of *bringing to the Scripture that knowledge which they ought to receive*

^a P. 6.

^b Prov. xiv. 13.

from it. Perhaps you never heard any history of that Author, therefore I will tell you thus much of him: that he was a man greatly to be respected for his temper and scholarship; but it happened, unfortunately for his character as a Christian, that he wrote a celebrated book upon the *Being and Attributes* (or perfections of God;) and having discovered, as he thought, by the force of his own wit, what God was and must be in all respects, he rejected the Christian doctrine of the Trinity; and to put the best face he could upon his Unbelief, spent much of the remainder of his life in writing ambiguous comments, and finding various readings, that is, in *picking holes* in the Bible.

The Author of an *Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People*, calls him, *the immortal Dr. Clarke*^a, and has borrowed from him the substance of that whole book, which was the worst thing he ever wrote in his life. The glittering characters of *great*, *learned*, and *immortal*, are frequently thrown out with an intention to dazzle the eyes of common readers; and chiefly by those writers who are most forward to accuse us of an implicit obedience to *human authority*, and *the decrees of fallible and interested men*. But if you leave the faith and hope of a Christian, your loss will be equally great, whether you are tempted to it by the Pope of Rome, or by the *immortal Dr. Samuel Clarke*.

VIII. Now we are upon the subject of human characters, I will propose to you, on the other hand, those learned and godly Martyrs, who were concerned in re-

^a *Preface.*

forming the Church of England from the errors of Popery. If the doctrine of the Trinity is so contrary to the Scripture, as our adversaries would have you believe, how did it happen that these men, who were certainly endued with all the advantages and ornaments of human learning, and had the Bible so often in their hands, that they translated every word of it into the English tongue, suffered this doctrine of the Trinity to stand unreformed? I will shew you how the *Arians* endeavoured to solve this difficulty, which is indeed a very great one. They say, "it may fairly be presumed, that as they were just come out of the gross corruptions of Popery, they did not see the whole truth as it is in Jesus ^a." So that notwithstanding their resolution to reform, yet Popery hung about them still, and they did not reform *so much* as they ought to have done. But if you are to be guided by presumptions, you will soon discover, that the fairer presumption is on the other side, when the nature of men and things upon such occasions is rightly considered. When tares, growing amongst wheat, are to be plucked up, there is not nearly so much danger that any tares should be left behind, as that some of the wheat should be plucked up along with them. If you have a crooked stick in your hand, and would make it straight, the first step you take is to bend it too much the contrary way; after which it may come to be right at last. Just so it happens, that if mankind are offended with any thing, and sensible of a past error, they are apt to fly from it with such an undistinguishing aversion, as to fall, before

^a *Ibid.* p. 4.

they are aware, into the contrary extreme : and their prejudice, if they have any, is not *for*, but *against*, what they are correcting. Instead of doing too little, they are in danger of being in such a heat as to *over do* every thing they set about : whence it is most naturally to be inferred, that our Divines, who reformed the errors of Popery, were not then inclined to act in favour of Popery. A spirit of Reformation is an excellent thing ; and I wish to God it abounded amongst us more than it does, provided it would exert its force against those real corruptions, which are but too visible to all serious members of the Church of England ; but unless it is tempered with great wisdom and caution, it degenerates naturally into a spirit of contradiction. Which things being considered, I would advise you not to be influenced by any presumptive reflections upon the judgment of our first Reformers, till the *Arians* are able to prove, by some *direct evidence*, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as now expressed in our Creeds and Offices, is an unreformed article of *Popery*.

IX. Our adversaries lay so great a stress upon this charge of popery, and find it so convenient at every turn, that they are determined to make papists of us at any rate : therefore they assure you, in words not fit for a Christian to repeat , that “ the church of *Rome* had as good a right
 “ to impose the worship of angels, and the *Virgin Mary*,
 “ upon the consciences of men, as the church of *England*
 “ had to impose the worship of the Holy Spirit as God,
 “ and of Three Persons as one God ^a.” The papists,

^a P. 123.

without question, will thank them for putting the worship of the *Virgin Mary* upon a level with that of the *Holy Spirit*. But this respect being paid to the papists at our expence, it is proper you should be made acquainted with the merits of this affair.

The papists do not pretend to justify their worship of the blessed *Virgin* by any precept or example of the Scripture; but tell you, in some fabulous legends, what heavenly favours have been granted to her worshippers; that ignorant people may be encouraged to the like idolatry. But where will the *Arians* find any such stories imposed by the church of England, to justify the worship of the *Holy Ghost*?

If you ask the papists how they can prove that we ought to worship the blessed *Virgin*, the best argument they can alledge, is the practice and infallibility of their own *Roman catholic* church: but do we ever attempt to quiet your scruples with any pretensions to unscriptural authority, or personal infallibility?

Let us pass at length to the Scripture itself, which will shew you how dangerous it is for unlearned and well-meaning people to trust themselves in the hands of an *Arian* reasoner.

Doth the Scripture, in any chapter or verse of it, call the bodies of Christian people the *Temple* of the *Virgin Mary*? But the apostle *St. Paul* saith—*Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost*^a? And what is the use of a temple? Is it not an house of prayer,

^a See *Cath. Doct.* Chap. ii. Art. 10.

praise, and sacrifice? He that has a temple must be entitled to divine honours in it; or we shall be guilty of *idolatry* when we worship him in his *own temple*; which is absurd. The apostle himself makes this practical inference in the words which immediately follow—*Therefore glorify God in your body*. And if the word *God* in this place denotes an object of worship exclusive of the Holy Spirit, (as our adversaries are obliged to suppose, or give up the point) then it will follow, that the *Temple* belongs to one Being, and the glory and worship to another; which is one of those many strange things you are bound to believe, before you can be of the *Arian* opinion ^a.

Can you find it any where written in the Scripture, that the angels of heaven worshipped the *Virgin Mary*? Read the sixth chapter of the prophet *Isaiab*, in which the *Seraphim* ascribe *Glory* to that *Lord of Hosts* who spake the following words to the prophet—*Go, and tell this people, bear ye indeed, but understand not, &c.* Now *St. Paul* teaches us, in the last chapter of the *Acts*, that these words were spoken by the *Holy Ghost*. So that when we say, “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the HOLY GHOST,” we have the example of the seraphim in heaven for this way of worship; a consideration which will make us easy under all the opposition it meets with here below in the world ^b.

When you have reflected upon these things, then you may ask yourselves the question, Whether Christians who

^a You may see the Author of the *Appeal* driven to this absurdity, and endeavouring seriously to uphold it, if you consult his book, p. 61, 62.

^b See *Catb. Doct.* Chap. III. Art. XIX.

are *born of God* are any where said to be born of the Virgin Mary? Whether the Apostles, who were *called of God* to the ministry of the Gospel, were called of the Virgin Mary? Whether the Virgin Mary can be *tempted* and *blasphemed* by sinners? Whether she conferred *divine inspiration* upon the prophets of the Old, or the apostles of the New Testament? Whether we are baptized in the NAME, that is, into the *religion* and *worship* of the Virgin Mary? But all these things, and many more, are true of the *Holy Spirit*; who dwelling in our body as in his own temple, is therein to be served and glorified; and being also worshipped and glorified, together with the Father and the Son, by the angels of heaven, I think we have a better right to worship him here upon earth, than the papists have to worship the Virgin Mary.

Our adversaries would persuade you we have so little to say upon this subject from the Scripture, that it is a great favour in them not to *triumph* over us, and *insult* us for it^a. As if it were no insult upon the Church of England to suppose her worship as groundless as the idolatry of the papists!

The Argument drawn from the words of *Isaiah* with those of *St. Paul* is very plain, and very close: "The Lord of Hosts, whom the seraphim glorified, spake those words which were spoken by the Holy Ghost: therefore the Holy Ghost is the Lord of Hosts whom the seraphim glorified." Yet the author of the *Appeal* declares, that *nothing can be more fallacious than this way of*

^a See *Appeal*, p. 104. note.

reasoning, and that he could in the same manner conclude that *Isaiab* is the Lord, because the words of the Lord (*I was found of them that sought me not*) are applied to *Isaiab*, Rom. x. 20. Where the apostle thus introduces them—*But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not*^a. This author, I believe, is the first Christian who did ever suppose, that the apostle applied the words in this verse to the person of *Esaias*; or those in the preceding to the person of *Moses*. This, however, is not worth insisting upon, because he has mistaken the nature of the argument. The force of it lies here; that the speaker of the words above-mentioned, as they stand in the prophet *Isaiab*, is called by the name of *the Lord of Hosts*, was glorified by angels, seated upon the throne of heaven, and sent a prophet by his own authority; and this speaker, as *St. Paul* informs us, was the Holy Ghost. If the Scripture doth any where assert that *Isaiab* spake under the same name, and with the same circumstances, then we shall be ready to allow that the cases are parallel, and will worship *him* also. Had the objector expressed himself clearly, his meaning would have appeared to be this: that because God speaks by a prophet, and speaks also by his Holy Spirit, as much may be inferred in honour of the one as of the other. But when God speaks by a prophet, he speaks by *another*; when he speaks by his Spirit, he speaks *by himself*. He reconciled the world by *Jesus Christ*, but not as by another; for *God was in Christ re-*

^a P. 63.

conciling the world to himself. So when he speaks by his Spirit, he speaks by himself; as truly as a man utters his voice by the *spirit* or breath of his *own* mouth; or searcheth his own thoughts by the operation of his own mind. I am not afraid to insist upon this comparison, because I borrow it from St. Paul; and it demonstrates such an unity between God and the Spirit of God, as Christians believe, and *Arians* do not: nor do they attempt to get over it by any solution I have yet seen, which will not also prove that a man and his spirit must be two different beings; or that we may correct an Apostle's argument till it squares with our own opinion. In this manner reasons the author of the Appeal. *The Spirit is represented as a Person who searcheth the deep things of God, and consequently he cannot be God*^a. But if he cannot be God, because he searcheth the things of God; then the spirit of a man cannot be man, because it knoweth the things of a man. But observe how he proceeds: "No man, says he, can know, or make known to others the thoughts of a man, but *either* the man himself, *or* he to whomsoever *the man will discover them.*" In which words the premises are manifestly changed. The Apostle saith, *what man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of a man which is in him*; that is, the man himself: but the author of the Appeal says, *either the man himself, or some other.* The Scripture itself gives us the Catholic conclusion; this alteration of Scripture will admit of the *Arian* conclusion.

^a P. 66.

From St. Paul's comparison, the Spirit is God himself; from this author's, he is *either* God himself, or some other.

X. In a book lately published against the *Articles of Religion*, under the title of *The Confessional*, I have met with a new objection to our way of worship; which, as it can deceive none but common readers, I shall present you with it in this place. "The Athanasian Creed says," as the author of this work observes, "that in ALL THINGS the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped^a." Then he asks, "Is this the case in ALL our forms of worship? Turn back to the Litany" (that is, *turn forward*, the Litany stands *after* the *Athanasian Creed*) "and you will see three distinct invocations of the three Persons, to each of whom the term *God* is assigned, implying a sufficiency in each, in his *personal* capacity, to hear and grant the petition." This, he assures you, is a *remarkable* and *notorious deviation* from the *Athanasian* maxim; and that others might be given *in great abundance*.

By an *Athanasian*, he means a *Christian* maxim; but calls it *Athanasian*, that your faith may seem to *stand in the wisdom of men*: and our deviation from this maxim is evident to him, from the three distinct invocations in the beginning of the Litany. But if you look into the Litany itself, you will discover, that these three invocations are followed by a fourth, addressed to the "Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three Persons and ONE GOD." In

^a *Confessional*, p. 319.

the three former petitions, the *Unity in Trinity*; in the fourth, the *Trinity in Unity* is worshipped. But of this fourth he takes no notice; and then accuses the Church of a *remarkable* and *notorious* deviation from her own maxims; whereas he ought to have taken the *whole* address together, and then have urged his exceptions, if any such could have been reasonably made against it. To take one portion of any form, abstracted from another which completes it, and then charge his brethren with defects and contradictions of his own making, is agreeable neither to sound criticism, nor indeed to common equity. Such a practice as this will convict even the Scripture itself of atheism: for if you leave out the words—*The fool hath said in his heart*, there will remain the naked assertion—*there is no God*. Or it might be proved from the Gospel, as I once heard it attempted by an excommunicated infidel, that the Old Testament is now to be utterly condemned and laid aside, because it is said—*Hang all the law and the prophets*. But if the sentence be taken in that form in which the Scripture hath given it, the sense is entirely altered; and so it happens with the objection lately discovered by the author of the *Confessional*. His brethren, as you have seen, accuse us of believing in *Three Gods*; and he mocks at our worship, as if it could be reconciled with no other principle.

XI. But it is said farther, that the doctrine of the Trinity is an *offensive doctrine*^a, which has *done infinite mischief*

^a P. 66, of the *Appeal*.

to the cause of Christ's religion, and that it is *in vain to expect the conversion of Jews, Mahometans, and Heathens*^a, so long as we hold this doctrine necessary to salvation.

On such occasions as this, the Gospel, I fear, will countenance but a very small degree of compliance. In matters indifferent, and for the sake of those who have not yet broken the bond of peace and Christian unity, every concession ought to be made that can be made with innocence. But if we once quit our moorings, to launch out into the boundless ocean of worldly Policy, miscalled Moderation, in search of proselytes, whose pride, pleasure, and merit it is, not to be found and converted, we shall be rewarded with shame and disappointment, and shall also make shipwreck of our own faith.

The *Socinians* objected it to us long ago, that the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation prevent the conversion of *Mahometans, Jews, and Pagans*. And the same doctrines hinder our *Arians* and *Socinians* too from being converted: the true character of the Christian Saviour, and the true object of Christian worship, being so essential to the Gospel, that no man is to be accounted a convert, till he agrees with Christians in these articles. Were we to alter the Christian faith into what Jews, Turks, and Pagans believe, then we should gain them all; for then we should be agreed; that is, we should cease to be Christians as well as they.

If this reasoning is of any force in one case, it must be admitted in others. The Trinity, they say, is so offensive to the Turks, that we shall never gain them till it is

^a 133 *Ibid.*

given up. No: nor then neither. For *Mahomet* gave them a liberty of having several wives; but *Christ* hath taught us, that *God in the beginning made them male and female*, and that a Christian must have no more wives than *Adam* had. Of this doctrine I may therefore say, with as much reason as the *Arians* do of the Trinity, that it has *done infinite mischief*, and that we can *never expect the conversion of Mahometans*, so long as it keeps its place in the Gospel of Christ. If an *Arian* or *Socinian* were to preach in the streets of *Constantinople*, insisting properly upon this doctrine, he would make no converts: for the Turk will as soon be persuaded to worship the Trinity in Unity, or even three different Gods, as submit to have no more than one wife. And this may serve to shew the weakness and absurdity of such popular arguments: to which, I apprehend, our disputants against the Church would not apply themselves so very often, could they depend safely upon better topics. If the present faith and worship of the Church are against the Scripture, that is enough; and we shall want no other arguments to persuade us out of them. But if they are not, I leave you to judge, my friends, whether we ought to forsake them out of civility to the *Turks*, who pray five times a day that they may never become Christians.

But there are *Papists* in the world who have souls to be saved as well as the *Turks*; and what would they think of us, if we should gratify Jews, Heathens, and Mahometans, by denying the Trinity? They have always been sound in the belief of this doctrine; and we could never hope to recover any proselytes from the errors of

Popery;

Popery ; but, on the contrary, should make the religion of Protestants more odious than ever, if, under the name of Reformation, we were to root up the foundations of the Gospel. You have heard, perhaps, that they have called us *Heretics* for these two hundred years past ; and very falsely : but if we should abjure the Christian Trinity, we should no longer have the name for nothing ; but should be guilty of adding that truth to the accusation, of which they would not fail to make their advantage. And lastly, the far greatest part of Protestants would reject us.

These things being considered, we are brought at length to the following issue : that to please some, we must part with the doctrine of the Trinity ; and to please others, we must keep it. Which may shew plainly enough what I have had in view from the beginning of this Epistle, that merely popular arguments are of no use towards settling points of scriptural doctrine ; but may be turned this way or that, as the manager finds it most convenient. Discretion and charity are indeed to be consulted by every Christian, and on every subject ; but a writer who has a good cause to maintain, and knows where its proper strength lies, will not go out of his way to amuse people with what is nothing to the purpose. Whereas, if a cause is not so strong as it should be, popular considerations serve to put the reader into an heat ; and when a man's passions are up, he will hear no reason on one side, and requires none on the other.

XII. There is one more of their insinuations, which is the last I shall make any remarks upon at present ; and it is this, *viz.* that “ there are several Clergymen of the “ Church of *England*, who groan under the weight of “ the *Atbanasian* forms and worship, that would be very “ glad of your assistance to be delivered from so great a “ burden upon their consciences ^a.” For the credit of the Church of *England*, I hope there are not many such : but if any Clergyman should be so mistaken as to imagine, that a contempt for any of the Christian doctrines is an argument of their superior sense and learning, they are more truly the objects of Pity, than of Envy or Imitation : and your *Arian* counsellors, who are so forward to caution you against *human authority*, will give me leave to advise you not to depend upon *human example*. An error is still an error though it resides in a Clergyman ; and instead of being thereby sanctified, is only more deformed and dangerous than it was before. A profane oath, or a curse, would sound the more horrible, if a Bishop were to have the uttering of it. A toad is an hideous creature in every situation ; but is never so much abhorred as when it creeps into the best room of the house. The ministers of Christ are the *salt of the earth* : and if this salt *have lost its savour*, *wherewith shall it be seasoned ?*

The Scripture will teach you, that the worship of the Golden Calf was a grievous sin, though *Aaron*, who was a Clergyman, had the making of it. And there was a time, when the whole body of the Clergy, I mean the

^a *Appeal*, p. 120.

Jewish, determined Christ himself to be a blasphemer and deceiver, and were instant with loud voices requiring that he might be crucified.

Those Clergymen, who, like Dr. *Clarke* and his follower, the author of the *Appeal*, do by their own confession believe *two different Gods*, while they falsely accuse us of believing *Three*, would undoubtedly be very glad to be well rid of a Trinity in Unity; as the Turks were, when they took the religion of *Mahomet* into the place of it. And if they should at length prevail, by dint of popular clamour and importunity, of which some wonderful effects have been seen in this kingdom, the Turks, and the Jews too, would congratulate them upon their victory; and so would every determined Deist and Atheist in the nation. Yet, after all, none of them would worship that imagined inferior Deity, whom this author would persuade you to worship.

I believe it also to be very true, that they would, as their advocate tells you, be *very glad of your assistance*. And I have been considering with myself in what form and manner your assistance can be administered. They can hardly mean, that you should assist them with the pen, and write books upon *Reformation*; for very few amongst you are scholars: nor with the tongue, for you are no orators. And I know not how you can assist them otherwise, except it be with fire and sword, as the reforming Clergy were assisted in the last century, when loyalty was malignity, and episcopacy was anti-christianity, and the most miserable oppression and slavery

of two thirds of the people, was celebrated as a state of Christian liberty to the prevailing party.

We know, but too well, that the Gospel, with all its doctrines, is an insupportable *burden* to those who do not believe it: and so is the law of the land to those who do not like to be under the restraint of it. Some men are fond of liberty in one shape, and some in another. Some think as they please; and others act as they please. This latter sort of people, many of whom are *groaning under the weight* of political *forms*, would also be very glad of your assistance toward amending the constitution, and restoring gentlemen to that state of freedom, in which they might follow their consciences without any danger. And, perhaps, they would not object to your assistance as unwarrantable in the sacred cause of liberty, though you should accomplish their purposes by pulling the magistrate from his chair, the judge from his bench, the two houses of parliament from their seats, and the King from his throne.

These are the prospects I have before my eyes, when I hear Deists and Socinians haranguing the public upon the subjects of Conscience and Imposition: which prospects having been once realized in this Church and Kingdom, cannot be deemed altogether chimerical. Such popular reasonings as I have now been contending with, have already produced the most fatal consequences, to the triumph of the Papists, and the scandal of the Reformation: they have deceived you once: and unless you are upon your guard, they will deceive you again:

and

and the last error shall be worse than the first; worse in itself, and worse in its consequences. It pleased God to deliver the Church from its captivity under the Puritans, and the people from their infatuation: but if experiments, when they have been tried, leave us no wiser, or, perhaps, not so wise as they found us, it is much to be questioned whether we shall again meet with the like indulgence: at least, it will be safest always to bear in mind that course of divine Providence in a similar instance, proposed as a warning to all Christians by the apostle St. Jude, How that the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not.

Those authors who would stir you up to seditious motions, make you so many fair speeches, and lay claim to so much candour and charity, that you may easily mistake them for your best friends. But I must now leave you to judge for yourselves, whether a writer, who lies sculking in the dark, under a nameless title-page, can really love you better than one, who is not afraid to subscribe his name at length to what he has written, and is exposing himself for your sakes to be reviled and persecuted in the monthly publications of infidel Critics, who on account of the information I have here given you, with a desire to clear away some of that dust, which they and their friends are perpetually throwing into your eyes, will find, if possible, some worse names for me than they have ever done yet. They have expressed their wrath against me more than once or twice; and probably they will now do it again. But
a little

a little more ill language will do me no harm; and if I can do you any good at such an expence, it will all be cheerfully taken by your

Very sincere Friend,

PLUCKLEY,
Dec. 16, 1766.

and most affectionate

Brother in Christ,

WILLIAM JONES.

AN

ESSAY



ON THE

C H U R C H.

BY THE

REV. W. JONES, M. A.

AUTHOR OF THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.



A NEW EDITION,

PUBLISHED BY DESIRE OF THE

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

*For my Brethren and Companions' Sake, I will wish thee
Prosperity. Yea, because of the House of the Lord our God,
I will seek to do thee good.*

PSALM CXXII.

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1800.

ESSAY

C H U R C H

BY W. W. W.

CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.

PAGE

*Of the Distinction between the World
and the Church; with the Nature
and Character of both Societies,* I

CHAP. II.

*Of the Means of Grace, and the Marks
by which the Church of Christ is to
be known,* - - - 18

CHAP. III.

*The Errors which tempt men to leave
the Church, and make them easy when
they are separated from it,* - - 37

CHAP. IV.

On the Abuse of the Reformation, &c. 74

A 2

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| <i>A short View of the present State of the Argument between the Church of England and the Dissenters,</i> | - | 81 |
|--|---|----|

POSTSCRIPT.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|-----|
| <i>An Account of the first Separation of the Dissenters from the Church of England,</i> | - | - | - | 118 |
|---|---|---|---|-----|

PREFACE.

P R E F A C E.

THE three great Subjects, with which a Christian Minister is concerned, are the Word of God, the Church of God, and the Christian Life. Circumstances and occasions will sometimes direct his thoughts to one of these, and sometimes to another: but so long as any of the three are before him, he is within the circle of his duty.

I was led to the subject of the following Essay, by an accident. I am a Curate in a country parish; who make it my business, and have found it my pleasure, to teach the children of my people, privately in my own house, and publickly in the Church; and I am, for the present, the only *Sunday Schoolmaster* of the place. In the course of

my instructions, I had occasion to observe, that the Catechism of the Church of England, though a most excellent Summary of the Christian Doctrine, is deficient in one point, viz. *the Constitution of the Church of Christ*; the knowledge of which, in a certain degree, is necessary to the preservation of that *Charity* which is the *end of the Commandment*; and, for the want of which, so many are drawn away from the Church, who would certainly have remained with it, if they had known what it is. Yet is our Catechism not so deficient, but that it includes the grand distinction betwixt the *World* and the *Church*; which distinction being explained, I found we were possessed of a leading idea, which gave so much light to my young pupils, that I determined to go through the subject.

As I have been persuaded, ever since I began to think on these things, of the great importance of uniformity in worship amongst Christians: so have I been led to observe,

on the other hand, the many evil consequences of Non-conformity, with the dangerous delusions of the mind, arising from the harangues of preachers pretending to extraordinary gifts, while they are but half-learned in the Gospel, which they undertake to publish, and are greatly mistaken in the spirit of it. I see how some men are cheated with the appearance of being converted to godliness; when they are only converted from one sin to another; from loving the world, to hating their neighbours; from the coldness of Church devotion, to an uncharitable heat against the Church itself; from the moral philosophy of some of our pulpits, to the Antinomian Faith, which gives men a license to sin; from the drunkenness of the body, to the intoxication of the mind, with spiritual pride and false doctrine.

I am well assured, that if this subject of the Church, now so much neglected, and almost forgotten by those who are most

concerned to understand it, should come to be better considered; there would be more true piety, and more peace, more of those virtues which will be required in Heaven, and which must therefore be first learned upon earth.

Some amongst us err, because they *know not the Scriptures*; and others, because they never considered the nature of the Church. Some think they can make their own religion, and so they despise the word of God, and fall into infidelity. Others think they can make their own Church, or even be a Church unto themselves; and so they fall into the delusions of Enthusiasm, or the uncharitableness of Schism. But, as there is nothing to enlighten the minds of men in the doctrines of salvation, but the word of God; so, is there nothing that can unite their hearts and affections, but the Church of God. *Ye are one bread, and one body*, saith the Apostle; one body

by partaking of one bread; and that can only be in the same communion.

In the weighing of these things, the prevailing spirit of the times, and the sanction which it may have given either to the profligate sinner, or to the presumptuous saint, are of no account upon the scale. In the settling of principles, we are never to consider how the world hath practised, but how God hath taught. The practice of the multitude, how great soever that multitude may be, hath no influence upon truth: yet it will stagger the minds of many, and carry them away, as with an overbearing torrent. Happy are they who have a better rule to direct them: They know that man *applauds, highly applauds,* what *God abominates*: and the higher the applause, the more room there is for suspicion. They know that the voice of the multitude was against Jesus Christ, when but few were for him; and they had hid themselves, and

and dared not to speak their minds. When Noah followed the direction of God in building the Ark, for the saving of his house, the world was against him. To them no ark was necessary, because they had determined amongst themselves, that there would be no flood; and consequently, that Noah was a bigot, whose undertaking, while it exposed himself, was an invidious reflexion upon the age. When the father of the faithful followed the calling of God, there were none to stand by him and encourage him; he was separated from his nearest relations; and wheresoever he went, he was under fears and dangers from people of a false persuasion. When Jesus Christ brought with him from Heaven, that Light which was to be the glory of his people; one ruler of the Jews came to him by stealth in the night, to consult him as a teacher, come from God. So great was the authority of a blinded multitude, that a ruler of the people was afraid of
being

being brought into disgrace, by conversing personally with the Saviour of the world!

The times, therefore, and the people who live in them, are never to be considered by us, when we are seeking or following the truth, on the ground of its own proper evidence. When it was asked, with a design to perplex the people, who, *of the Rulers*, or of *the Pharisees*, had believed? our Saviour gave them a different rule: Why do ye not *of yourselves*, said he, *judge what is right*; without going first to consult those, who are blinded by false learning, and, with an appearance of great sanctity, have imposed upon the people? "See," saith one, "how fast our doctrine is increasing! all the learned are going after it; and you must all submit to it in a very short time." And who are they that thus reason with us? The very same persons, who declaim so loudly on the fallibility of all men; and yet hold themselves to be

be little less than infallible in the choice of their own opinions. Let error rise as high as it can; and let truth sink as low as a wicked world can reduce it; the difference between them is the same as ever; and we shall still find it wiser and better to follow the setting sun, as *Columbus* did when he discovered the Indies. The meteor of Heresy, which blazes, and dazzles us for a while with its appearance, will burn out, and leave not a spark behind; while the sun only sets to rise again. Such will be the fate of the Church, and of the doctrines of truth by which it is supported.

There never was a time from the beginning of the world, when there was not a party against the Church of God: and our Israel must have its enemies, as that Church had which came out of Egypt. In the first age of the Gospel, the Apostle St. *Jude* spoke experimentally of those whom he then saw, or prophetically of those whom
we

we should see, that they go in the way of *Cain*, and run after the error of *Balaam*, and perish in the gainsaying of *Corah*. If our governors were as cruel as *Pharaoh*, some would rejoice at it, and upbraid us with every disadvantage we might be under from hard usage; as a sign that the Church is a thing of no consequence, and that all those who belong to it are the vassals of the state. If the Church were as pure as *Abel*, the envy and jealousy of *Cain* would hate its offerings and sacrifices. If its order and œconomy were as perfect as in that Church which covered the face of the earth in its passage to Canaan, the self-interested spirit of the mercenary *Balaam*, would endeavour to bring a curse upon it, and blast its greatness. If its governors were as manifestly supported in their commission, as *Moses* and *Aaron*; the spiritual pride of *Corah* would set up the holiness of the congregation against its priesthood, and the power of the people against the civil magistrate,

gistrate, who gives it protection. But none of these things ought to stagger or surprize a reader of the Scripture: they are all to be expected: *these things were our examples*: and the Church would not be the Church of God, if there were none to rise up against it.

With these considerations in his mind, and not without them, a reader will be prepared to examine what I have written upon the Church. If any of our Dissenting brethren should look into this little piece, and find the matter so represented as to engage their attention; my prayer shall be with them, that God may give them the grace to cast out the bitter leaven of a party-spirit; to lay aside all temporal motives and interests, and consider the Church (as I have done) only so far as it is related to the *other world*. To any particular or national Church, all temporal alliances are but momentary considerations, which pass away with the fashion of this world; and

the Church may be either with them, or without them, as it was in the first ages: but the Church itself, under the relation it bears to Jesus Christ, abideth for ever.

the Church may be...
 or without them, as it was in the first
 ages, but the Church...
 relation it bears to...
 the rest of the world.

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ESSAY
ON THE
CHURCH.

CHAP. I.

OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE WORLD
AND THE CHURCH; WITH THE NATURE AND
CHARACTER OF BOTH SOCIETIES.

TWO things of a contrary nature are best understood when they are placed near to one another, or compared together in the mind. The summer is better understood, and more to be valued, when we compare it with the winter; a season in which so many comforts are wanting, which the summer affords us. The blessings of government are more acceptable, when compared

pared with the miseries of anarchy. We have the like advantage, when we compare together the *church* and the *world*, those two societies of which we are members: of the world by our natural birth; of the church by our spiritual birth in baptism. When we are admitted into the Christian covenant, we renounce this world as a *wicked* world, and become members of the church, which is called the *holy* church. Both these societies are influential on those who belong to them; the one corrupts, the other sanctifies: therefore it is of the last importance to mankind to consider and understand the difference between them.

If we ask, why the world is called wicked, we shall find it to be such from the nature and manners of its inhabitants: for the world, as it means the system of the visible creation, can have no harm in it. There can be no wickedness, where there is no moral agency nor freedom of action.

From the sin of Adam, and the effects of his fall, the state of man by nature is a state of sin. The Scripture is so express in this, that it is not necessary to insist upon it. A disposition to evil comes into the world with every man, and
is

is as a seed, which brings forth its fruit throughout the course of his life. Many evil passions disturb and agitate his mind; and from the ignorance or darkness which prevails in him, he knows not that he is to resist them in order to his peace and happiness, nor hath he ability so to do, if he did know it. The worst and the most violent of all his passions is pride, which affects superiority, and delights in vain shew and pompous distinction; whether it be that of wealth, or honour, or wisdom. Covetousness disposes him to take all he can to himself, and pay no regard to the wants of others; whence the state of nature is a state of war, in which men plunder and destroy one another; not knowing the way of peace, which consists only with restraint, and must be taught them from above; *the way of peace have they not known*, saith the Scripture.

Man knows all things by education, but nothing by nature, except, as the Apostle saith, what *he knoweth naturally as a brute beast*. The world, as we see it now, is under the restraint of laws, which in some countries are better in themselves and better executed than in others: but if there were no laws and no governments

to execute them, then we should see what a scene of destruction and misery this world would be, through the sinfulness of man's nature. Fraud, rapine, and cruelty, those three dreadful monsters make strange havock amongst us, notwithstanding the laws and regulations of society: what then would this world be without them?

With respect to God, the state of man is a state of rebellion, alienation, and condemnation. His ways are so opposite to the will of God, that he is said to be *at enmity* with him. He has no alliance with his Maker, either as a child, a subject, or a servant; but being under a general law of disobedience, can inherit nothing from God but wrath and punishment.

You will see this account verified by the plainest declarations of the Scripture.—First, as to the enmity of the world against God. *If the world hate you*, saith our Lord when he came to save it, *ye know that it hated me before it hated you*. Secondly, as to their alienation or departure from all alliance with him—*you that were some time alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works*; saith St. Paul, Col. i. 21: and again, speaking of the natural state of the *Ephesians* before their conversion, he describes them

them as *aliens and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.* In which passage, there is something farther than appears from the sound of the words; for when we read, *without God in the world*, the words, *in the world*, are emphatical, and denote this *wicked world*, such as we have been describing it, of which they that are members, must of course be without God, and without hope: they belong to a society which knows him not.

Then, thirdly, that the world is under condemnation; *we are chastened of the Lord*, saith St. Paul, *that we should not be condemned with the world*: whence it is evident, that the world, as such, is under condemnation, and can expect nothing of God, but punishment for sin.

We are now prepared to take a review of this society called the world. It is composed of men lost by the fall; disposed to all manner of evil: ignorant of the way of peace; at enmity with God, and with one another; delighting themselves in the pride of appearance, and the vanity of distinction. In a word, *the whole world lieth in wickedness*, and they that are condemned for sin, will be condemned *with the world*,

world, whose condemnation, therefore, is a thing of course. What human philosophy may say of this description of the world, we are not to regard: if it is the description which stands in the Holy Scripture, we are not to consider what men may say of it. A proud world will never be pleased to see an humiliating description of itself.

Such then is the world, and such are we all, so far as we are members of it. God therefore of his infinite mercy takes us out of this wicked society, and *translates* us into another. He *delivers us from the power of darkness, and translates us into the kingdom of his dear son*; and without this translation we are inevitably lost. You are here to observe, that the *kingdom* of Christ is one of the names of his *church*; and they that are in it, as it is distinguished from the world, are called *children of the kingdom*. Its nature is totally different from the kingdoms of this world (of which we shall see more hereafter) for as the world is called *wicked*, so the church is called *holy*, and all the holiness that can be in man, must be derived from thence. If we enquire how, and in what respects, the church is holy, we find it must be so from its
relation

relation to God. It is called the *church of God*, and he being holy, every thing that belongs to him must be so of course. And further, it is a society, or body, of which the Holy Spirit is the life; and this life being communicated to those who are taken into the church, they are thereby made partakers of an holy life, which is elsewhere called *the life of God*; from which life they are *alienated* who are out of this society. It is holy in its sacraments; our baptism is an holy baptism, from the Holy Spirit of God; the Lord's Supper is an holy sacrifice: the ordinance of absolution is for the forgiveness of past sin, that the members of the church may be recovered from sin to a state of holiness, and peace with God. The church is holy in its priesthood; all the offices of which are for the sanctification of the people.

The contrary nature of the two societies I have been speaking of, will now be better understood, when they are compared together. In the one, men are in a lost condition; in the other, they are in a state of salvation: for as the world is *alienated from God*, the church is in alliance and covenant with him, and partaker of his promises. As the world is under con-

demnation, the church is under grace and pardon of sin: its baptism washes away original sin, and gives a new birth to purity and righteousness; its other sacrament of the Lord's supper maintains that spiritual life which is begun at baptism, as meat and drink support the life we receive at our natural birth. As the world is *without hope*, the Christian hath *hope in death*, through the Resurrection of Christ, and is assured, that he who is united to the life of God, can never die: for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. While the wicked are to perish with the world which they inhabit, the children of God are *heirs with Christ of an eternal kingdom*.

The Church is also holy, when by the word Church, we understand the Building or place in which the people assemble to accomplish the Service of God. As the world, on the other hand, hath always had its unholy Places of Assembly, its theatre, its Idol Temples, &c. which unsanctify and pollute those who frequent them. Under the Jewish State of the Church, the temple is called the *holy temple*, or *holy place*; (*Heb.*) and a part of it was called the *most holy place*. Our Saviour allows that the Temple *sanctified the gold,*

gold, which was offered in it, and consequently all other offerings and sacrifices there made. Now, if that temple was holy, whose glory was to be done away, certainly the place of Christian worship, called the church, must be holy also. For why was the Temple at Jerusalem holy, but because the presence of God attended it? And has he not promised to be in the midst of us? And must not our churches therefore be holy upon the same account? And are they not guilty of a great sin, who treat any church with irreverence? Much more if they despise or defile it? For it is said, *he that defileth the temple of God, him shall God destroy.*

But nothing will shew us the difference between the world and the church, so effectually, as when we consider who is at the head of each society. Christ is the *head of the church*, and the Devil is the *prince of this world*, who is also called the *God of this world*. They who are in the church, are in the kingdom of Christ; which, though not *of this world*, as not deriving its power from thence, is yet *in the world*. They who are *of this world*, are in the kingdom of Satan, and under his power: as the heathens are said to have been before they were redeemed

from it, and brought over to the kingdom of God: which translation was signified by the redemption of the Hebrews, from under the power of Pharaoh.

If we enquire into the respective characters of the head of the church, and the prince of this world, as they are described under a variety of names, the opposition is wonderful; and it will be found very instructive, because there is the same opposition betwixt the children of each.

The head of the church is called *Jesus the Saviour*: the head of this world is a *destroyer*; in Hebrew, *Abaddon*: in Greek, *Apollyon*.

The one is the *true light*, that is, a spiritual light to the soul of man; the other is the *prince of darkness*.

The one is a *shepherd*, gathering the lambs with his arm, and feeding his flock; the other is a *lion* who goeth to and fro in the earth, *seeking whom he may devour*.

The one is a *lamb*; meek, innocent, and spotless: the other is a *serpent*; deceitful, subtle, and with poison under his lips.

The one is the physician of souls, who went about healing the sick, and raising the dead: the other is the inflicter of diseases, *bowing men down*

down with infirmities; binding them with the bonds of affliction; and was *a murderer from the beginning*; for he brought death into the world, by the temptation of man in Paradise. Men murder individuals; but Satan murders a whole world at once: and is the prince of murderers.

The one delivers men who are under temptation to sin; the other is the *tempter*, who leads them into it. And as the one is the *advocate* of sinners, interceding for them as their *priest* and *mediator*; the other is the grand *accuser*, who is therefore called the *Devil*, which signifies an accuser.

And lastly, (for I think we need go no farther at present) the one is the *truth*, the other is *a liar, and the father of lies*.

The like difference is found in the children of this world, and the children of the kingdom of God; that is, between the *wicked world*, who are under the *power of Satan*, and the *Holy Church*, which is the *flock of Christ*, and takes him for its pattern. It cannot be otherwise; the spirit of the head must be diffused through the members; and you will see it to be true: first, with respect to the Holy Church

of Christ; whose disciples are taught to relieve one another in their wants, and save one another in their distress; rejoicing and suffering together, as the members of the same body; and doing good unto all men. His ministers are *shepherds*; his followers, from the first ages of Christianity, were *accounted* and treated as *sheep for the slaughter*, and were patient and unresisting. They exhort and encourage one another to good works, and being united together under a bond of peace, their *charity covereth a multitude of sins*; that is, it hideth and concealeth the many failings of their brethren for the love of Christ, instead of aggravating their offences, and judging them unmercifully. They are children of light, who derive the light of wisdom from the word of God; and walk openly and honestly, as in the day. In their conversation, they are true and faithful, and give you a direct answer, without disguise or subterfuge.

Such ought to be the members of the holy Church of Christ: this is the character intended for them, though many fall short of it, and some totally depart from it. But the visible church membership of men, does not depend upon their manners and opinions; nor indeed

upon any thing they can do for themselves; because it is the gift of God, by his ministers; so that a man in a holy church may be an unholy man: for the kingdom of heaven, or church of Christ, is like a net cast into the sea, which gathers of every kind, both bad and good; and an effectual separation is never made between them, till the Angels drag this net to the shore, to gather the good into vessels, and cast the bad away. If we bear this case in mind, it will deliver us from a great deal of perplexity. It is truly a sorrowful fact, that the children of God, in too many instances, depart from their proper character: but the character proper to the world, is, in all respects, like that of Satan, wicked and miserable.

As the devil is the prince of this world, his children set their affections upon it; and it is the main purpose of their lives to obtain and enjoy it at any rate. For this they sell their souls, and if they get the world in exchange, they think they are gainers by the bargain.

As he is the prince of darkness, so do they fall into ignorance, and blindness of heart, and love darkness rather than light, that their deeds may not be reprov'd. They hate the word of
God,

God, as owls and bats hate the day-light; and dispute fiercely for their errors, lest information and conviction should bring them to repentance.

As the Devil is a *destroyer*, so do the children of this world destroy one another. Their wise politics produce war and desolation; their error and delusion of mind stir them up to the persecution of the servants of God: and wherever we see oppression, and cruelty, and persecution, there we see the spirit of the Devil, the father of persecution, who, by violence, will terrify and compel, where he cannot persuade.

As he is a serpent, so his children are a generation of vipers, double-tongued, and deceitful; smooth and flattering on some occasions, but waiting to give a deadly bite when they are offended and provoked. Their way is crooked and uncertain, like the path of a serpent. An honest man, whose path is direct and plain, can never tell what to make of them, because they pretend to be going one way, while they are going another; and they often gain their end by it; as the twistings of the serpent carry him to the point he aims at.

As

As Lucifer fell from Heaven for rebellion, all his children are impatient under authority; and in this capacity they are called *sons of Belial*; which means, that they can bear no superior. Patience, and obedience, and submission, are essential to the Christian character. Christ himself is our pattern, who allowed that the power of Pilate, so unjustly exercised, was *given him from above*, and submitted to his sentence, when he could have struck him dead upon his bench. But resistance is the Devil's doctrine, and the world's practice. The Gospel teaches us, that the things which are highly esteemed among men, are an abomination in the sight of God, and here we see it verified; nothing is more detestable to the God of peace, than the sin of rebellion; and nothing is more magnified and applauded by the children of this world; who have set what they call *the power of the people*, above the power of God Almighty. He ordains government, and kings are his ministers; but the people are told, that they have power to overthrow his ordinance, and judge his vicegerents.

As the Devil is a *tempter*, his children act under him in that capacity: most wicked men
have

have a strange desire to make all others as wicked as themselves. The world is full of seducers, who tempt men to false principles, and immorality of life. Some get their livelihood by the corruption of other people; and most infidels and heretics are so diligent in spreading their opinions, that if the friends of truth were equally zealous, the world would not be able to stand against them.

As the Devil is the grand accuser, so doth the world delight itself in evil-speaking. Railing and slandering is their great amusement. Evil words are not pointed against evil things. The world delights to asperse those, who are unlike to themselves. There never was a good man, nor ever will be, who was not evil spoken of, and depreciated in the judgment of the public; and the rule is so universal, that our Saviour saith to all Christians, *Woe be unto you, when all men speak well of you.* False prophets were well spoken of by the people; and there must be something false and spurious, some *evil with the appearance of good**, in every popular character that pleases the world.

* Καλον κακον ανι' αγαθοιο.

HESIOD.

As the Devil is the father of lies, so all they that are of the Devil are liars, who will never make a scruple of a lie to hurt others, or serve themselves. The whole Heathen religion was one great lie, in opposition to the truth of the Divine law. Much evil is threatened to those who put evil for good, and good for evil; who make the heart of the righteous sad, by predicting evil to them, and by promising happiness and prosperity to the wicked. Thus did they speak of old, who were called *false Prophets*; and it would be happy for us if there were none of them amongst us: but, wherever they are found, they are the ministers of Satan: and how fair and fine they may speak on some occasions, it is no proof of their goodness; for Satan is sometimes, as it serves his purpose, *transformed into an angel of light*, and affects an holy and heavenly character; and then he is most a Devil, because he can most deceive.

CHAP. II.

OF THE MEANS OF GRACE, AND THE MARKS
BY WHICH THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS TO
BE KNOWN.

HAVING explained the nature of these two societies, the Holy Church and the wicked World; we must consider the use of the Church, and the marks by which it is to be known. It is promised, *that he who believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved.* But how shall we have this baptism, unless we have it from those whom God hath appointed to baptize? It is also promised, *he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life:* and how shall we receive the body and blood of Christ, but from the Church, to whom he said, when he instituted the Lord's Supper, *Do this in remembrance of me?* This being the commemorative Sacrifice of the New Testament, it can be offered only by a priest; and all the world cannot make a priest. The Ministers of the Old Testament were ordained
to

to their office by an immediate commission from God to Moses, the Mediator of that time betwixt God and the people. The Ministers of the New Testament were ordained by Christ himself; from whom the authority descended to others, and shall reach, through a variety of hands, to the *end of the world*.

This is the way God hath been pleased to take, to make men holy, and bring them to himself, through this dangerous world, as he brought Noah and his family out of the old world into the new, by means of an ark, which was a figure of his Church. It is therefore of infinite consequence, that we should be able to know, with certainty, whether we are in the church or out of it. If we are out of it, we are *in the world*. If we had been out of the ark, we should have been drowned. It is true, we may be in the church, and yet be lost; for was not Ham in the ark, who was a reprobate? But if we are out of the church, how can we be saved?

I would not, for the whole world, unworthy as I am; I say, I would not, for the whole world, and all the kingdoms of it, be in doubt, whether I was *translated*, or not, into the *king-*
dom

dom of Jesus Christ. I would not be in doubt, whether I have the *Sacraments*, or whether I have them not. But how can I be sure in this case, unless I know *what* the kingdom of Christ is; *where* it is to be found: and what are the *marks* by which it may be known? Many strange abuses in religion have arisen on occasion, and under the specious name of, *the Reformation*; a very good word; but it hath been applied to a great many bad things, even to madness and blasphemy. We are fallen into times when some say, *lo, here is Christ*, or, *lo, there*; in the *desert*; or in the *secret chambers*; and are bid to *take heed* that no man *deceive* us. What a terrible case should we be in, if we had no sufficient warnings given to us, and no rule to go by! But as the lightning which cometh from the East shineth unto the West, so plain and notorious was the establishment of Christ's kingdom in this world: together with the form of its constitution, and the orders of its ministry, in all the countries wherever it was planted. It would be unreasonable; indeed it would be lamentable; it would seem as if God had mocked us, contrary to the nature of his mercy, that he should publish a way of salvation,

tion, and leave it uncertain where it is to be found.

From what is said of it in the Gospel, it is impossible that the Church should be a society obscure and hard to be distinguished. *Ye are the light of the world*, said Christ to his Disciples, *a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid*. Light is sure to shew itself; and it comes in strait lines, which direct us to its source. A city placed upon a mountain, is so elevated above other objects, that it cannot be difficult to find it; rather, it is impossible to miss it; it *cannot be hid*: and Christian people in all ages seem to have agreed, that it shall not be hid: for when we approach a city in any part of Christendom, the churches are generally first seen towering over all other buildings.

Christ has given us a precept, that under certain circumstances, we should *tell* our case to the *church*: but unless it be known what and where the church is, this cannot be done. The precept therefore supposes, that the Church must be known to us. The same must follow from the injunction of St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews.—*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch*
for

for your souls, as they that must give account.
 Chap. xiii. 17. The Rulers of the Church must therefore be known to us; for it is impossible we should do our duty, and submit ourselves to them, unless we are sure who they are.

The Church then, must, in its nature, be a society manifest to all men. Some may slight it, and despise it, and refuse to hear it; but they cannot do even this, unless they know where it is to be found.

When we enquire more particularly what the Church is, it may be best to proceed as we are obliged to do in some other cases; first, to learn what it is not; that we may go upon right ground, and understand with more certainty what it is.

The Church then, as a society, is not the work of man; nor can it possibly be so. I have laid the foundation of all my reasonings upon this subject, in the distinction betwixt the Church and the World, as two separate parties. The Church is so named*, because it is *called* or *chosen out of* the World. 'Till it is so called

* In Greek Εκκλησια.

out of the world, it hath no being: but it cannot call itself, any more than a man can bring himself into the world.

Our Christian calling is as truly the work of God, and as much independent of ourselves as our natural birth. The Church must have orders in it for the work of the ministry: but no man can ordain himself, neither can he (of himself) ordain another, because no man can give what he hath not. *How shall they preach, saith the Scripture, unless they be sent?* And again, *no man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.* Nay, even *Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest, but he that said unto him, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.* The Church must have *promises*; without which it can have no reason or encouragement to act: but no man can give it those promises; which are *exceeding great and precious.* The Church must have *power*, without which it can do nothing to any effect: but there is *no power but of God.* It must have power to forgive sins; the *forgiveness of sins* in the Holy Catholic Church, being an article of the Apostles Creed: but *who can forgive sins, but God only?* It must act in the
name

name of God, or not at all; because it acts for the salvation of man: but no man can act in the name of God, but by God's appointment. No Ambassador ever sent himself, or took upon him to sign and seal treaties and covenants (such as the Sacraments of the Church are) without being sent; that is, without receiving authority so to do, from an higher power. The act would be so far from beneficial, that it would be treasonable. If an army were to raise itself without commissions, what would such an army be, but a company of banditti, leagued together to plunder and destroy the honest subjects of an established community?

Nothing therefore is plainer, on these considerations, than that the Church neither is, nor can be from man. It is no human institution; and as it acts under God, if it acts at all, it must act by his authority and appointment. It is properly called the *Church of God*, (of the *living God*, in opposition to the profane societies, self-erected for the worship of dead Idols) and mankind might as reasonably presume to make God's World, as to make God's Church.

Farther enquiry will shew us, that the Church is no confused multitude of people, independent
of

of one another, and subject to no common rules; but a regular society, like to other societies, in some respects, and unlike them all in others. It is called *a body, a family, a city, a kingdom*. A body is a regular structure, the limbs of which being joined together, are subordinate and subservient to one another, and are animated by the same soul or spirit. So saith the Apostle, *for by one spirit we are all baptized into one body*. 1 Cor. xii. 13. It being also called a *family*, the members of it must have some common *relation* to one another: being called a *city*, it must be *incorporated* under some common *laws*; and being a *kingdom*, it must have some form of *government* and magistracy. Families, cities, and kingdoms, are societies; and the Church, being represented by them, must be a regular society. But in this the Church differs from all other societies, because they belong to this world, and their rights and privileges are confined to it: whereas the Church extends to both worlds, the visible and the invisible, and is partly on earth, and partly in Heaven. In its earthly members it is visible; in its rulers, it is visible; in its worship, it is visible; in its sacraments, it is visible. But be-

ing also a spiritual society, it hath a *life* which is *bidden*, and in the inward and spiritual Grace of all its outward ordinances, it is invisible. As a kingdom in which God is Judge, and Christ is a Mediator, and Angels and Saints departed, are members; it takes in the heaven itself, and is the *heavenly Jerusalem*, which is the *mother of us all*; insomuch, that when we are admitted into it, our *conversation is in Heaven*, and the Angels of Heaven are our *fellow-servants*; all making one great family under Jesus Christ, in whom *all things are gathered together in one, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth*: on which consideration, what is rightly done in the Church on earth, stands good in Heaven, as if it had been done there; and the Apostles of Christ received from him, the *keys of the kingdom of Heaven*, with a power of *binding and loosing*, which extends to Heaven itself: and when Christians go to Heaven, they are not carried into a new society, for they are already, by the grace of God, translated into it by baptism; whence the Apostle speaks of their translation, not as a thing expected, but even now brought to pass. He *both translated us, &c.* Col. i. 13.

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The Church doth also differ from other societies, in that it is Catholic or universal; it extends to all places, and all times, and is not confined to the people of any nation, or condition of life, but takes in Jews, Greeks, and Barbarians, the rich and the poor, the bond and the free; and is therefore properly signified in one of our Saviour's parables by an *inn*, where all that offer themselves are accepted. The commission of Christ to his Apostles, was to *teach and baptize all nations*.

The Church being a kingdom, not *of* this world, is of a spiritual nature, and in that capacity it is invisible; but as a kingdom *in* this world, it is visible, and must have a visible administration. To know what this is, and whence its authority is derived, we must go back to the Gospel itself.

Jesus Christ was sent from Heaven by the Father, and invested with the glory of the Priesthood by an actual consecration, when the spirit descended upon him. As the Father hath sent him, *so did he send his Disciples*, and gave them authority to send others: so that the Church which followed, derived its authority from the Church which Christ first planted in

the world; and the Church at this day must derive its authority after the same manner, by succession from the Church which went before; the line extending from Christ himself to the end of the world: *lo*, said he, *I am with you always, unto the end of the world*: certainly, not with those very persons, who all soon died, but with those who should succeed, and be accounted for the same; for a body corporate never dies, till its succession is extinct*.

Our Saviour at first ordained his twelve Apostles according to the number of the tribes of the Church of Israel. Afterwards he ordained other seventy, according to the number of the Elders, whom Moses appointed as his assistants. When the Church in Jerusalem was multiplied, seven Deacons were ordained, by

* “ Take away this succession, and the Clergy may as well be ordained by one person as another: a number of women may as well give them a divine commission;—but they are no more Priests of God, than those who pretend to make them so. If we had lost the Scriptures, it would be very well to make as good books as we could, and come as near them as possible: but then it would not only be folly, but presumption, to call them the word of God.” See the *second Letter to the Bishop of Bangor*: Postscript.

the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, to preach, and baptize, and minister, in distributing the alms of the Church. Here then, we have three orders of men, each distinct from the other; the twelve Apostles, the seventy Disciples, and the seven Deacons; and by these the first Christian Church in Jerusalem was governed and administered. The Apostles were superior in office to the Disciples; because, when Judas fell from the Apostleship, one was chosen by lot out of the Disciples into the Apostleship: the Deacons were inferior to both; and it appears that they were appointed by the laying on of the hands of the twelve Apostles; for it is said, Acts vi. 2, "*the Twelve called the multitude of the Disciples unto them,*" &c. That the Apostles appointed others to succeed to their own order, is evident from the case of Timothy; who in the antient superscription, at the end of the second Epistle, is said to have been *ordained the first Bishop* of the Church of the Ephesians. He is admonished to *lay hands suddenly on no man*; therefore he had power to ordain: and he is likewise admonished not to *receive an accusation against an Elder,* (or Presbyter) *but before two or three witnesses*: there-

fore he had a judicial authority over that order. Directions are given with respect to the Deacons of the same Church; therefore, in the first Church of the Ephesians, there was a Bishop, with Elders and Deacons under him; as in the Church which began at Jerusalem, there was the order of the Apostles, of the Disciples, and of the Deacons. In the Christian Church, throughout the world, we find these three orders of Ministers for fifteen hundred years, without interruption. The fact therefore is undeniable, that the Church has been governed by Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, from the Apostles downwards; and where we find these orders of ministers duly appointed, the Word preached, and the Sacraments administered, there we find the Church of Christ, with its form, and its authority.

The wisdom of God is here very evident, in appointing the Orders of the Christian ministry after the pattern of the Jewish Church, which was of his own appointment so long before. That there might be no uncertainty in a case of such consequence to the souls of men, there was no novelty, but a continuation of the like administration with that which had all along been

been known and acknowledged in the Church. *Aaron* was an *Higb Priest*, with a ministry peculiar to himself; under him there was an order of *Priests*, twenty-four in number, who served *by course* in the daily sacrifices and devotions of the Tabernacle and Temple; and these were assisted by the whole tribe of the *Levites*. As the law had its passover, its baptisms, its incense, its sacrifices, its consecrations, its benedictions, all to be realized under the Sacraments and Offerings of the Gospel; so its Ministry was but a pattern of the ministry which is now amongst us; and we cannot mistake the one, if we have an eye to the other; such is the goodness of God in directing and keeping us, through all the confusions of the latter days, by a rule of such great antiquity, to the way of truth, and keeping us in it.

The great use of the Church is to receive and minister to the salvation of those who are taken out of the world: but this it cannot do without the truth of the Christian doctrine; the Church is therefore as an instrument, or candlestick, for the holding and preserving of this sacred Light. It is called the *Pillar and Ground of the Truth*; not as if it had any right of making

or imposing doctrines of its own; for the ground and the pillar do not make the roof, they only support it; nor doth the candlestick make the light, it only holds the light. And these similitudes will be found just, if we pursue them farther; for as when the pillars are removed, the building must fall; and when the lamp or the candlestick is broken, the light will be extinct; so if the Church be taken away, the Truth falls along with it; as we have seen, and do see, in this country. Our Quakers, who are farthest from the Church, are totally departed from the truth of Christian doctrine; and many of those separate congregations, who were Puritans and Believers in the last age, are Socinians and Infidels in this: a consideration which should prevail upon sincere people of all persuasions, who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, to lay aside their animosity, and unite against the Socinians, who are the common enemies of all Christian people, and are now endeavouring to overthrow the Faith of our Creeds and Articles.

When we speak of the *use* of the Church, we should never forget the great benefit and information which arises from the *fasts* and *festivals* of

of the Church; (totally neglected by the Sectaries) by the course of which, the piety of Christians is directed to all the great subjects of the Gospel: some of which might otherwise never be revived in our thoughts during the whole year. But the Church spends its year with Jesus Christ, and follows him in faith, through all the great works of his Mediatorial Office, from his *Advent* to the sending down of the Holy Ghost on the day of *Pentecost*. On this ground, the Work of Mr. *Nelson* is of great value to all Christian families; and we have reason to hope it will never fall into disuse: though all persons, fanatically inclined, are very cold to the merits of it, and the Sectaries, it is to be supposed, must reject it on their own principles.

Here I must add, that the wisdom of God is farther manifest, in appointing a provision for his Ministers, *independent of the people*. The maintenance of the Jewish Priesthood was from God; for the Tythes and Offerings, on which they lived, were first *dedicated* to God, and *from him* transferred for the support of his ministry. So doth he himself state the case by the Prophet: *Ye have robbed me*, saith he, *in*

Tithes and Offerings; as if they were his own property: and so they were; for being dedicated to God, the first proprietor of all things, they belong to him before they belong to his Church. The wisdom and piety of Christian states followed the rule of the Scripture from the earliest times; and it still obtains in this country. And what would be the consequence if it were not so? While the minister depends only upon the God to whom he is accountable, he dares speak the truth: but where he is dependent on the people, and the people are corrupt, then he must accommodate himself to their fancy. For this reason, if the people of a congregation, who chuse their own Minister, fall into heresy, they rarely or never get out of it, because they will bear no teacher, but one who is of their own persuasion, and will flatter them in their errors.

I have nothing more to say upon the nature of the Church, but to shew the extent of its authority. Every society must have power over its own members, to *admit* or *exclude* as the case requires: it cannot otherwise subsist. The Church, from the days of the Apostles, always exercised the power of excommunicating notorious offenders, and of absolving and restoring true

true penitents. Excommunication is nothing but a reversing of baptism; and they who have authority to baptize, must have authority to excommunicate. The Church must also have authority in directing its own worship and services, as to time, place, ceremonies. *Let all things be done decently and in order*: but what is *decency*, and what is *order*, is not specified, and must be left to the discretion of the Rulers of the Church. The Church has no authority to ordain any thing contrary to the Law of God; nor doth the Law of God depend upon the authority of the Church. There are three sorts of things about which the Church is conversant; *good*, *bad*, and *indifferent*: the good oblige by their own nature; the bad cannot be enforced by any authority: therefore the authority of the Church must extend to things indifferent; that is to order and discipline, to circumstances of time, place, forms of worship, ceremonies, and such like: and to disobey because they are indifferent is to deny that God hath given power to his Church to regulate any one thing whatsoever.

Ought we not, on the foregoing considerations, to magnify the goodness and wisdom of

God, who hath provided a Church for the reception of lost mankind, and given to it the light of truth, and the means of grace? No subject can be plainer than this of the nature and constitution of the Church: and the necessity of its ministry and ordinances to the salvation of man, and the preservation of truth, charity, peace, and godliness, is as clear as the Sun. What a blessed thing it would be for us, if all people could see this! What temptations, corruptions, tumults, and miseries, would it prevent amongst mankind! But, alas, they are ever ingenious in defeating the purposes of God for their own good. They have ways and expedients, not only of making themselves easy without the benefits of the Christian Church, but of actually casting them all off with a high hand, as needless, superstitious, dangerous, and even sinful, and anti-christian; not helps to salvation, but hindrances. How this matter is, and with what reasonings they deceive themselves; we shall discover with very little inquiry.

CHAP. III.

THE ERRORS, WHICH TEMPT MEN TO LEAVE THE CHURCH, AND MAKE THEM EASY WHEN THEY ARE SEPARATED FROM IT.

THE means of Grace, and the promises of God, being with his Church, they who would be made partakers of them, must apply to the Church: and who would not? Who would not willingly flee from Sodom on fire to take refuge in Zoar? When the storm is abroad, the beasts have sense to fly to a place of shelter: and as the wrath of God is denounced against this world, men must be enemies to themselves, if they refuse to be delivered in the way which God hath appointed. But we know nothing of this world, if we think all men are friends to their own spiritual interest. Many will rather have recourse to their own imaginations: and when pride hath got possession of them, they are above being directed.

The example of Naaman is very instructive on this part of our subject. When he was ordered
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to seek the cure of his leprosy, by washing seven times in Jordan, the proud Syrian refused to comply with the ceremony, because he could not see how it should have any effect. Nevertheless, when he had thought better of it, that ceremony, unaccountable and useless as it might seem to his carnal reason, cured him of his distemper. By the Church and its ordinances, every Christian is put to the same trial; whether he will submit to such things as reason cannot account for? Whether he will look for an effect, to which the cause is not adequate, without the interposition of an invisible power? The children of God are still exercised by this trial. Some accept the terms proposed; they believe the promises of God, and are saved. Of the rest, some do not see how they can be saved in this manner; and others spend their lives in vanity, and never think whether they can or cannot. Men are influenced by two principles totally opposite, *Sight* and *Faith*: the Christian walks by *faith and not by sight*; the disputer of this world believes nothing but what he sees, and so is incapable of the benefits of Christianity. It does not appear to him how power can come from Heaven, and be de-

livered down in succession by the imposition of hands : how water, which washes the body, can *wash away sins* ; how bread can be made the vehicle of spiritual life ; so he lives and dies the dupe of a dead philosophy, which admits of nothing spiritual in a religion whose benefits are all of a spiritual kind.

From the nature of the Church, we see how necessary it is, that men should be taken into it out of this wicked world. We see how the promises of God are confined to the ordinances of the Church ; and that there can be no assurance of salvation without them. If we reflect on these things, we cannot but consider it as an inestimable blessing, that God hath appointed such a plain and certain way of leading us through the means of Grace to the hope of Glory. We may perhaps wonder *why* men should endeavour to deprive themselves of these benefits ; and how Christian people, so called, can satisfy themselves under a causeless departure from the great Law of peace and charity. I will therefore proceed to shew how they deceive themselves. There are three false principles, which, if admitted, would supersede the necessity of any church.

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The first of these is the doctrine of an absolute unconditional election to salvation. For if God, by a mere act of his sovereign will, and according to an irreversible decree, elects men to eternal salvation, without regard to conditions and circumstances; then no visible ordinances are necessary as means of grace; they are all superseded, and we are as safe without them as with them. This doctrine is so convenient to all the irregular classes of Christian people, who have cast off the Church and its authority, that it has been much insisted upon almost from the beginning of the Reformation; and has done infinite mischief. For he who is divided from his brethren, with this doctrine in his mind, is thereby confirmed and fortified in his errors. In vain shall we recommend the benefits of Church Communion to him, who is saved in consequence of a decree, made before the Church or the world had a being. God hath elected him, without any regard to outward ordinances; and so the want of those ordinances can never render his election of no effect. And supposing his doctrine to be true, who can deny the consequence? But the doctrine is false. Thus much of it is true; that, according to
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the Scripture, man is chosen, or *elected*, out of *the World*, by the free Grace of God, without any respect to his own works, (of which he can have none till he is called; being in the state of an un-born infant) and brought into God's Church, where he is in a state of salvation. But he may fall from this state, or be cast out of it by the authority which brought him into it, and forfeit all the privileges of his election; therefore the Apostle gives us this warning; *let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall*: and St. Peter bids us *give diligence to make our calling and election sure*. How can that be, if we are elected to salvation, by an irreversible decree? We need take no pains to make that sure, which in its nature is irreversible. Paul was a vessel *chosen of God*; and yet this same Paul, supposes it possible for him to fall from the Grace of God, and become a *castaway*. *

Election

* Another proof of this argument may be found in 1 Cor. 8, c. xi. "Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother *perish* for *whom Christ died*?" The true notion of predestination is to be met with in Eph. 1, c. xi. xii. where those are said to be predestinated to the praise of God's glory who *trusted* in Christ. Our attainment of eternal happiness

Election therefore, as it is spoken of in the Scripture, hath been grossly misunderstood: for there is no such thing there as any election of individuals to final salvation, independent of the ordinances of the Church. Election is an inward and spiritual grace; but there is no such thing administered to man without some outward sign. A man might tell us that he is *ordained* to preach the Gospel: but we know this can never be without the *laying on of hands*. He may tell us he is one of God's elect; and if the reality of his election were to depend upon his own report, how should we confute him although he were guilty of all manner of wickedness? If we believe him on his own authority, we may be tempted to be as wicked as he is: and multitudes have, by this doctrine, corrupted one another, and fallen into what is called *antinomianism*; a neglect of God's Commandments, as not necessary to those who are elected independent of works and sacraments. To secure us from all such delusions,

piness is the *consequence* of our belief in Christ, and the irreversible decree of God is, that those that believe in him should not perish, and this is probably the only sense in which the doctrine of predestination and election can be maintained from Scripture.

God

God hath affixed some outward sign or pledge to all his inward gifts, to assure us of their reality, and prevent imposture. Therefore, where there is an inward calling, there is an outward calling with it; where there is regeneration, there is the Sacrament of Baptism; and the Gospel knows of no regeneration without it. I might shew how this doctrine of absolute election is dishonourable to God, and contrary to his most express declarations. How it encourages some to presumption, pride, and ungodly living*; and how it drives others to despair and distraction †, who have not, nor can bring themselves

* I remember a woman in a country parish, who used to boast much of her own *experiences*, and insult the people of the church as reprobates; *goats* who were to be placed on the *left hand*, at the day of judgment; while she and her party were the true elect, the *sheep* who were to be placed on the right hand. Such was the usual strain of her conversation. But after a time, I heard that this *elect lady* was gone off with the husband of another woman. She was a severe critic on the Clergyman of the parish, as one who had many Popish actions, because he made a practice of turning to the East when he repeated the Creed; and though he was much attended to as a preacher, she said it all signified no more than the *barking of a dog*.

† When Dr. Sparrow was Bishop of Exeter, there rarely passed a day, without a note or notes brought to Priest, Vicar,

themselves to an assurance of their own personal election to the favor of God: but my business in this place is only to remark, how convenient this doctrine is to all those who do not come to God in the ordinary way of his institutions, nor can prove themselves to be members of his Church.

A second doctrine, on the ground of which men place themselves above the Church, is that of immediate inspiration. For if men are now receiving new direction from Heaven, and God speaks in them as he did in Moses, and the Prophets, and the Apostles, they have no need to consult either the Scriptures or the Church: for they are independent of both, and have an higher rule. This is the reason why no impression can ever be made upon a Quaker, by arguments from the Scripture. He answers, that the Scriptures (as applied by us who do not understand them) cannot be brought in evidence against him; because (to speak in the

Vicar, or Reader, for the prayers of the congregation, for persons *troubled in mind* or *possessed*; which, as some judicious persons conjectured, was occasioned by the frequent preaching up of the rigid *Predestination* doctrines in some places in that city.

Preface to the *View of the Times*.

Quaker

Quaker language) he has within himself the same spirit that gave forth the Scriptures; and the Revelation which is past, must give place to that which is present. Nothing blinds the eyes of men so effectually as pride; whence he who is vain enough to believe, that he is under the direction of immediate inspiration, must believe many other strange things. Such people therefore never fail to despise the ministry and worship of the Church, and make light of all its institutions. The Apostles of Jesus Christ foreseeing by a true revelation, that there would be false pretensions to inspiration in the Christian Church, as there were false prophets among the people of the Jews, give us warning not to *believe every spirit*, (that is, not to believe all those who pretend to speak by the spirit) but to *try them* whether they speak by the spirit of *truth*, or the spirit of *error*. There are many good rules to direct us on this occasion: but there is one which every body can understand. The spirit of truth is the spirit of love, and peace, and unity: the spirit of error is the spirit of hatred, and contention, and discord. The former tends to unite men into one body; the latter sets them at variance, and divides them
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into parties. *Beloved, saith St. John, let us love one another; for every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God.* When the great rule of Charity is broken, and men lay claim to the spirit of God while they have no title to it, then they are open to the delusions of evil spirits: and accordingly many have uttered hideous blasphemies, under a persuasion that they are speaking by the spirit of God. Some have proceeded so far as to personate God himself*. Certain it is, that the sect who have departed farthest from the Church and its ordinances, are the most forward in their pretensions to immediate

* In the beginning of this century, there was a sect of *Camisat Quakers* in London, in whose assemblies persons of both sexes, particularly young girls, pretended to deliver prophecies, with strange screamings and distortions. One of these people, (horrible to relate) was seen to take another by the arm, and looking him broad in the face, said, *Do you not acknowledge me to be the eternal and unchangeable God?* To which the other, falling down and trembling, answered, *I do acknowledge thee, &c.* Many fine people from the court-end of the town, who would have paid but little respect to the benediction of a Bishop, were seen bending their knees, for a blessing, to these frantic females. See *View of the Times*, vol. 4, p. 235.

inspiration;

inspiration; and even where this is pretended to in a lesser degree, a contempt for the Church and its ministry, seldom or never fails to attend upon it in the same proportion*.

A third doctrine which makes the Church of no effect, is the sufficiency of *moral virtue*; and a perilous doctrine it is. It comes forward with a more sober face, but it hath less of the Gospel than of Enthusiasm or Predestination. For on this ground, a man need be of no Church, of no sect, nor even a Christian believer; because moral honesty, which forbears thieving and cheating, may be found in a Turk or an Heathen. When people would appear to be what they are not, and endeavour to supply their defects by fine words and plausible pretences, we call them hypocrites: and I will assure the Reader, there is a great deal of cant in the world, beside that of fanaticism and affected devotion. Impiety can act the hypocrite upon occasion, and magnify moral virtue when it is

* The author of the *Snake in the Grass* prefixed a most excellent preface to that work, on the Enthusiasm of *Antonia Bourignon*; shewing the original and tendency of hers and every other delusion of the same kind; which preface the reader will do well to consult.

set in opposition to the love of God. It is not unusual for persons to praise a man's character; not because they love his virtues, but because they hate his rival. So do some bad men praise morality, because they hate devotion. This is too frequently the case with those who make a false estimate of what they call a *good life*; leaving out the duties most essential to the life of a good Christian; and these are a very large party. Heresy and schism, till they turn into profligacy, never fail to descant upon the sufficiency of moral duties; and in this they are joined by the whole tribe of Deists, Infidels, and moral Philosophers, who are glad to hear of a rule of morality, (such, by the way, as themselves are to define and determine) which will serve them as a substitute for the Christian life, and all the forms of Church devotion. Here also we find those Christians, who live in the habitual neglect of the means of grace. I have heard people who never were at the altar, and perhaps never intended it, comforting themselves with this consideration, that they never did any *harm* to any body: when they should rather have asked themselves, what *good* they ever did to themselves, or to any body else, for
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the *love of God*? Without which, all the virtues of man are nothing; and if he places any dependance upon them, they are worse than nothing. If a man is to be saved by the Christian religion, he must be a Christian in his life: but simple morality is not Christianity: it has neither *faith, hope, charity, prayer, fasting, nor alms*, which are the duties of the Christian life. If we mean to serve God, we must serve him in his Church, and conform to its ordinances. If we do good to our neighbours, we must do it on a principle of faith; and a cup of cold water given on this principle, is of more value in the sight of God, than all the treasures of the Indies, if they are distributed from the proud heart of unbelief: and he is certainly in unbelief, who doth not direct himself by the rules, and act upon the principles, which God hath delivered to the Church.

Nearly related to the sufficiency of moral virtue, is the principle of *sincerity*, which was set up in the last age, as sufficient of itself to justify man in the sight of God, independent of the authority and benefits of his Church: so that if a man be not a *hypocrite*, it matters not what religion he is of. If sincerity, *as such*, inde-

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pendant

pendant of any particular way of worship can recommend man to the favour of God, then there can be no difference as to merit between a sincere martyr, and a sincere persecutor: and he that burns a Christian, if he be but in earnest, hath the same title to God's favour, as he that is burnt for believing in Jesus Christ. This position, (in the sense of it) absurd and monstrous as it must appear, was the support of a controversy in this kingdom, in which a Bishop led the way *, and was followed and applauded by all the libertines and loose thinkers of the

* Thus did the famous Bishop *Hoadley* comfort all the Sectaries and Enthusiasts of his time “ When you are secure of your integrity before God—this will lead you not to be afraid of the terrors of men, or the vain words of regular and uninterrupted succession, authoritative benedictions, excommunications—nullity or validity of ordinances to the people on account of niceties and trifles, or any other the like dreams.” I can venture to say, there never was a cause more effectually battled and exposed upon earth, than this of Bishop *Hoadley*, against the Church, and Church Communion, in the *Two Letters*, and the *Reply of Mr. William Law*, which every Clergyman of the Church of England ought to read, that he may know what ground he stands upon, and against what enemies he may be called forth to maintain it,

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nation, who foresaw that the argument would end in the dissolution of the Church as a society : and therefore they made him a thousand compliments.

If we consider how the mind of man is influenced by custom and education, and that his conscience and self-approbation will be according to his principles ; then we shall see that sincerity, if admitted, would sanctify all the wickedness under Heaven. St. Paul, as a zealous Jew, *verily thought* (that is, he was *sincerely of opinion*) that he *ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth* ; so he persecuted the Christians furiously, and *breathed out threatnings and slaughter*. Now, as he had a good meaning in all he did, to what end was he converted, when his sincerity would have saved him in his former way ? After his mind was better enlightened, he pronounced himself to have been the *greatest of sinners*, for what he had done in the *sincerity of his heart*.

Thus it would be in all other cases ; he that acts sincerely upon bad principles, must be a bad man : a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit : and, *not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth*.

Upon the whole, he that will be saved, must be saved in the way which God hath appointed, and not in any way of his own. We shall be judged at last according to God's word, not according to any persuasions we may have taken up, through the prejudices of education, or the perverseness of our own hearts; all of which are indeed no better than dreams, having no foundation but on that loose bottom of human imagination, on which are built all the visions of the night, and all the heresies in the world.

If these doctrines of *absolute election*, immediate *inspiration*, the sufficiency of *moral virtue*, and justification from *sincerity*, were true; it would follow, that God is unwise, inconsistent, and improvident. For if he appoints a visible Church and its ordinances, as necessary to make us members of the kingdom of Heaven; and if he began the way of salvation by *adding to the Church such as were to be saved*; and yet, with all this, has another *private* way of saving men, by a *secret decree* which has no regard to any outward means; he is inconsistent in ordaining them. And also, as the doctrine of *immediate Inspiration*, or *new Revelation*, without any signs or credentials from Heaven, opens a way to

every possible delusion of the mind, either from its own vain conceits, or the suggestions of evil spirits; God must be improvident, in not securing us against such dangerous impositions, which may introduce all kinds of wickedness into the world, under the sanction of a divine authority: an impostor having nothing to do, but to persuade himself, as any madman may do, that he acts by immediate inspiration. With this persuasion, men have butchered one another to make bloody baptisms; have set themselves up as Kings and Rulers of the new Jerusalem; have taken plurality of wives, and blasphemously personated God himself*. All the disorders of the last century were committed by fanatics, who assumed a privilege of seeking the Lord, and consulting, and receiving answers from him; while their minds were bent upon the most horrible crimes of Rebellion, Robbery, Sacrilege, Persecution, and Murder.

Then as to *moral virtue*; if that can *save* those who are *not added to the Church*, it must follow, that man never was lost, and that Christ

* See *Ross's View of all Religions*; particularly the account of the Anabaptists of Germany.

need not have come into the world. If *sincerity* in any persuasion, good or bad, will recommend us to the favor of God; then will lies, if we do but *believe* them, answer all the purposes of *truth*: then is there no difference between good and evil; and it cannot be worth while to convert Jews, Turks, or Heathens, to the Gospel, because they are as safe in their own way. Such are the pleas, by which some men of necessity, and some of malignity, seek to justify themselves, when they leave the Church, or despise, or neglect its ordinances. But *the foundation of God standeth sure.*

After what hath been said, few words will be wanting to convince any thinking person of the dangers and evil consequences which must attend the sin of causeless separation.

If men for salvation are brought out of the World into the Church, they cannot possibly forsake it, without hazard to their salvation. If the promises of God, and the means of grace are committed to the Church, we lose them when we leave the Church: at least it will be very hard to prove that we carry them away with us: and who would chuse to
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be under any uncertainty in a case of such importance ?

Another evil is that of breaking the great rule of charity in our worship. We are commanded to glorify God with *one mind and one mouth*, and all to *speak the same thing*. How contrary to this is the practice of following different ways of worship, some totally disagreeing with others ; and some not deserving the name of any worship at all ; for in some of our assemblies, people meet for no purpose but to hear one another talk. There is no Praying, no confession of Sins, no Absolution, no Thanksgiving, no Litany, no Sacraments ! We read, that the Apostles, when the Holy Ghost descended, were *all with one accord in one place* ; and so ought Christians to be, if they would preserve the presence of the spirit amongst them, who is the spirit of unity. And as the spirit of unity in worship, disposes men to a more peaceable and charitable temper ; so the spirit of division and fanaticism is attended with violence and bitterness of language, and an intolerant persecuting humour toward all who are not fanatics ; especially toward the members of the Church of England, which is deservedly

placed at the head of the Protestant reformation*.

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* An author who put out a *Syllabus of Lectures*, in the year 1778, on the *Principles of Non-conformity*, speaks in the person of Jesus Christ, upon the tribunal of judgment at the last day, and supposes him presenting to the world on that tremendous occasion, his *faithful servants*, the Non-conformist ministers, as the great objects of his favour; and at the same time sending off those *holy tyrants*, the Bishops of the Church of England, into everlasting fire, with that dreadful sentence—DEPART! And what are they to be damned for? Because they could not approve of *Non-conformity!* a religion of *negatives!* They saw enough of its fruits to dislike it in former times, from its first appearance in this kingdom: but they did not see, as we do now, that its end is *infidelity*: to which it hath been tending for many years past, and hath now attained it in the writings of Dr. Priestley, and the Unitarian Association. These Lectures, with this dreadful sentence of damnation to the Bishops, by Brother Robinson, were approved by the *Easter Association of Essex, at Harlow*, and recommended to the *Sister Churches* by order of all. June 18, 1778. Of what character must these Sister-Churches be, if they are of the same spirit with Brother Robinson? Surely they are not *chaste virgins*, presentable to a meek and merciful Saviour, who prayed for his murderers; but unmerciful harlots, cursing and damning the established Church for retaining Episcopacy. Had there been no Non-conformity, the poor Bishops might have escaped like other men, and have been entitled

There is also great hazard of losing the *doctrines* when we leave the *worship* of the Church.

entitled to their chance of mercy, through the merits of their Redeemer, who died for them, and for all men, and sent forth the first Bishops by his own immediate authority. What would such Non-conformists do, if they had it in their power, who are provoked to such uncharitable ravings under the present most mild and moderate state of the Church of England?

But the most superlative instance of fanatic malignity I ever yet saw, is to be found in the works of *Milton*, whose malignity was rendered more malignant by the depressed and afflicted condition to which the Church was then reduced. He was a man of a bright and perfect imagination, and gifted with a wonderful choice of beautiful and descriptive expression. But the weapon is the worse for its sharpness, when malice hath the handling of it: and imagination is a mirror which can reflect the fires of Hell as well as the lights of Heaven; of which, I think, we have an example in the following invective against the Bishops of the Church of England; ‘ But they—that by the impairing and diminution of the true faith, the distresses and servitude of their country, aspire to high dignity, rule, and promotion here, after a shameful end in this life (which God grant them!) shall be thrown down eternally into the darkest and deepest gulph of Hell; where under the despiteful control, the trample and spurn of all the other damned, who, in the anguish of their torture, shall have no other ease than to exercise a raving

Church. When the ten Tribes revolted from the worship at Jerusalem, they soon lost the truth of their law, and fell into an idolatrous worshipping of the Calves they had set up in Dan and Bethel. Their government was troubled with great disorders, and their confusion ended in their utter dispersion. When men leave the worship of the Church, it is very natural for them to become disaffected to its doctrines: and they, who hate the Christian Faith, will take part with those who are against the Church; because they foresee, that if the Church be destroyed, the faith will be lost; as the light goes out when the lamp is broken. One of the most blasphemous books that ever was written in this country against the Christian

and bestial tyranny over them, as their slaves and negroes, they shall remain in that plight for ever, the basest, the lowermost, the most dejected, most underfoot, and down trodden vassals of perdition.' Conclusion of *Milton's Treatise on Reformation*: vol. 1, p. 274. If it were put to my option, whether I would be an Ideot, without a single faculty of mind, or a single sense of the body; or whether I would have *Milton's* imagination, attended with this fiery spirit of fanaticism; I should not hesitate one moment to determine.

Faith,

Faith, was all of it apparently directed against the *Church*: on which consideration, many, who then believed the Christian doctrines, were drawn in by a disaffection to the Church, to take part with an infidel.

2. I am to remark farther, that with those who are ignorant and ill-instructed in the nature and use of the Church, there is a perverse prejudice in favour of *preaching*; and consequently a shocking neglect of those duties which belong to the people. It is a fine easy way for people with itching ears, to hear a preacher talk them into Heaven; while they neglect all the more essential parts of divine worship. Many hear a Sermon with the same vain curiosity as people hear a speech upon a stage, and consult nothing but their own amusement. And while the whole of the ministerial duty is supposed to consist in preaching, a man, who can bawl and rant, is tempted to take himself for a minister of Jesus Christ, without any regular mission; of which sort we have multitudes in this kingdom at this time: and it is to be feared they are increasing. It is no uncommon thing for persons of all persuasions to meet in the same Church to hear the same preacher; many of

whom have no communion with one another at any time: how is a preacher to please such a mixt multitude of hearers, but by leaving the Church of Christ out of the question, and preaching a loose sort of Christianity, which will fit them all? Perhaps, if he were to speak the plain truth, and, from a sincere regard to their souls, give them such information as they stand most in need of, many of them would leave him with indignation: as there were those who would *walk no longer* with Jesus Christ, because they were not able to bear the things that were spoken by him. There is a fashion of inviting people to *come to Christ*, without telling them where and how he is to be found. Besides, it is a great mistake to suppose, that the whole of religion consists in our taking of Christ; it is beginning at the wrong end: for Christ is to take us, as he took the little children in his arms and gave them his blessing*. He said

* Mr. Locke, in his *Reasonableness of Christianity* (a strange piece of divinity) is in the same mistake. He makes baptism a *visible act*, whereby those, who believed Christ to be the Messiah, *received him* as their king. So again in the same style, he says, that b^{aptism} men *enroll themselves* in

said to his disciples, *ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.* There is a covenant between us and God, into which God, of his infinite grace, takes us; we do not take him, neither can we: and this confines us to the ordinances of the Church, which are not of us, but are the gifts of God's free grace to us miserable sinners: and Christians are united to God, and to one another, by the services of prayer, and the participation of the sacraments, more than by the hearing of the word of God without them; which many hear for reasons of vanity and uncharitableness. Who are the best friends every minister hath in his parish? They who attend the prayers and sacraments with him; who are edified by his *priesthood* as well as by his *preaching*; and are active in the great work of their own salvation.

3. As the latter times of the Jewish Church were very corrupt, and the doctrines of God

the kingdom of Jesus; which is but to say in other words, that they *write their own names* in Heaven. From such language as this, it is too apparent, that Mr. *Locke's* Ideas of the Christian Priesthood and Sacraments, were exceedingly low.

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were rendered of none effect by the inventions of men: it is agreeable to the prophecies of the New Testament, that *offences must come amongst us; that men must arise, out of the Church, speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them: also that many will not endure sound doctrine, but heap up to themselves teachers (of their own appointing) having itching ears.*

These and many other like passages give us notice, that there must be a falling off from the faith, with confusion and disagreement in the Christian society. If we look at our own Church, we have but a melancholy prospect; and cannot help observing, that it approaches too near to the state of the Jewish Church before its destruction. As they had corrupted the doctrines of Moses and the Prophets, and in consequence of it were divided into sects (for as truth unites, error always divides men) so have we corrupted the doctrines of the Gospel, and are miserably divided in consequence of it. I could name *some doctrines*, which if our Saviour were now to deliver in the metropolis of London, with the same freedom and authority as he did at Jerusalem, I verily believe he would be persecuted and put to death by people called *Christians*,

tians, as he was of old by those who were called *Jews*. The Church of Jerusalem was infested with temporising and philosophising Jews, who were farthest of all others from the faith, while they affected to be wiser than all the rest of the people. The *Sadducees* believed neither Angel nor Spirit, and said there was no Resurrection. The *Herodians* were politicians and men of the world, who flattered Herod that he was the Messiah. The *Pharisees* were a proud sanctified sect, very godly in outward shew, but full of hypocrisy within. They justified themselves and despised others, as not good enough to stand near them, or belong to the same Church with them. Of the sect of the *Essenes*, we have no particular account in the New Testament; but from all we can learn, I take them to have been the Quakers of that time, who had thrown off all external rites of worship, and affected a religion perfectly pure and philosophical. The Sadducees were the Socinians of Judaism; who had nothing spiritual belonging to them, and had reduced their law to an empty form. The venality and avarice of the Jews of our Saviour's time, were notorious, and provoked his indignation. Their temple, filled with buyers and
sellers,

fellers, was turned into a den of thieves: and, God knows, there is too much of a worldly traffic amongst us; which is too far gone to be reformed, and too bold to be censured—*venduntur omnia* *!

4. But whatever abuses there may be in the Church, it is our duty to make the best of it. The Church is our spiritual *mother*; and we may apply those words of the wise man, *despise not thy mother when she is old*; not even if she should be in rags and dotage. The doctrine of the Church of England is, by profession, still pure and apostolical; and, whatever faults it may have contracted, it cannot be worse than the Church which our Saviour found in Jerusalem: yet he still recommended to the congregation, the duty of obedience to their spiritual Rulers. *The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat*;

* “ CHURCH LIVING.

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Perjury, which is now in a very growing state, may, in time, come to market with as much boldness as her sister *Simony* hath done for many years past.

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all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do. Bad as the Church then was, our Saviour never forsook it, but *taught daily in the Temple*: and his Apostles attended upon its worship at the hours of prayer; and probably continued so to do, till they were dispersed. Neither Christ nor his Disciples ever considered the doctrines of Church-authority, and Succession, and Conformity, as *vain words* and *idle dreams*, as our Socinians have done of late years; and after what hath been said, their views want no explanation.

5. In our behaviour toward those who have departed from us, let not us, who honour the Church, fall into the error of those who despise it. Let us not betray any symptoms of pride in censuring with severity, but rather, with hearts full of sorrow and compassion, lament the differences and divisions which expose the Christian Religion to the scorn of its enemies. Infidels are delighted to see that Christians cannot understand one another; for thence they are ready to report, that there is no sense amongst them all, nor any reason in their religion; for that, if there were, they would agree about it. In this also the Papists triumph; they boast of their
advantage

advantage over the Reformed, in that they are preserved in peace and unity*, while we are torn to pieces with factions and divisions. Hence they reflect upon the whole reformation, as a natural source of confusion; that they belong to *Jerusalem*, and we to *Babel*; that when we leave their Church, the city upon the hill, we never know where to stop, till we get to the bottom: that is, till we have run either into the madness of Enthusiasm, or the profaneness of Infidelity. How shall we stop this wide mouth of scandal, while appearances are so much against us? However, this reproach doth not reach us of the Church of England; who, in doctrine and profession, are where we were two hundred years ago. Let those who have left us, try if they can answer the Papists upon this head: it is their business to account for the confusion which they only have introduced †.

If

* But see Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History; where he proves by incontrovertible evidence, that the Romish Church has not always maintained her boasted unanimity.

† It is too much the fashion of the times to divide the Christian Religion only into two classes, one including the Papists, and the other comprehending the motley herd who

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If the Clergy of this Church have any desire to preserve it, they must consider for what end the Church is appointed. A Christian Church is a candlestick, to hold forth the Light of the Gospel. When it ceases to answer that end, it is of no use as a Church; and the world may do as well without it. Great things have been attributed of late times to moral preaching: but there is no such thing as telling people what they are to *do*, without telling them what they are to *believe*; because the *Christian morality* is built upon the *Christian faith*, and is totally different from the morality of Heathens. *Deism*, so called, is a *Religion without Christianity*; it has neither the Father, the Son, nor the Holy Ghost, into whose name Christians are baptised. It has no Sacraments, no Redemption, no Atonement, no Church Communion, and consequently no Charity; for Charity is the love and unity of of Christians as such. *Natural Religion* is but another name for *Deism*; it is the same thing in

are disunited from the Church of Rome, and who are all distinguished by the general name of Protestants. Whereas the Sectarians are many of them as widely removed from us of the Church of England as we are from the Papists.

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all respects; and I may challenge all the philosophers in Europe to shew the difference. Therefore to recommend moral duties on the ground of natural Religion, is to preach Deism from a pulpit: and we should ask ourselves, whether God, who upholds his Church, to declare salvation by Jesus Christ alone, will preserve a Church, when it has left the Gospel, and holds forth the light of Deism in the candlestick which was made, and is supported in the world, only to hold forth the light of Christianity? What else is it that hath made way for the Enthusiastic rant of the Tabernacle? When the wise forsake the Gospel, then is the time for the unwise to take it up; but with such a mixture of error and indiscretion, as gives the world a pretence for never returning to it any more: and then the case is desperate.

‘ *Deism*, properly so called,’ (saith a certain writer) ‘ is the *religion essential to man*, the true
 ‘ *original Religion of reason and nature* — It is in
 ‘ Deism, properly so called, that our more discerning and rational *divines* have constantly
 ‘ placed the *alone excellency* and true Glory of
 ‘ the *Christian* institution. — *The Gospel* (says
 ‘ Dr. Sherlock) *was a Republication of the Law*
 ‘ of

of Nature, and its precepts declarative of that
 original Religion, which was as old as the crea-
 tion.—If natural Religion (says Mr. Chandler)
 be not a part of the Religion of Christ, 'tis
 scarce worth while to enquire at all, what his
 religion is: from whence it seems very natural
 to infer, that the other parts of the Religion of
 Christ, are scarce worth any thing at all of our
 notice.' [*Deism fairly stated by a moral Philo-
 sopher*: p. 5, 6, 7.] See the whole Book,
 which proceeds on this principle; that natural
 Religion being admitted, it must be a perfect
 scheme, a compleat structure; and that Chris-
 tianity, as a superstructure, is unnecessary: and
 it is lamentable to see what advantage this
 author takes of the unguarded concessions, some
 celebrated Christian preachers and controver-
 sialists of the Church of England, who did not
 foresee, or did not consider, the consequences
 of their doctrines.

Dr. Taylor, some time since a Dissenting
 teacher at *Norwich*, a man of considerable
 learning, was the author of certain Theological
 Lectures, which I have reason to think have
 met with a more favourable reception than they
 deserved among some of the Clergy of our own
 Church,

Church, and have been even recommended as elementary tracts to young Students in Divinity. In the first chapter of these Lectures, I find a rule of interpretation repugnant to the rule given us by the Scripture itself, which directs us to *compare spiritual things with spiritual*, that is, to compare the Scripture with the Scripture, that we may keep to the true sense of it. But here it is laid down as a fundamental rule, that we should always interpret the Scripture, in a sense *consistent with the laws of natural Religion*; for that the *law of nature, as it is founded in the unchangeable nature of things, must be the basis and ground-work of every constitution of Religion which God hath erected*. This rule of Dr. Taylor pre-judges the Scripture before we come to it, and inculcates into inexperienced Students of Divinity, the very principle that hath ruined us, and given us up as a prey to the Deists; it allows them the advantage they have contended for against the peculiar doctrines of Revelation, as *scarce worth any thing at all of our notice, in comparison of natural Religion*. For here, I say, before we descend to the Scripture, we are possessed of a system, founded in the unchangeable nature of things; from which, whatsoever the

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the Bible may seem to reveal, we are never to depart. Let us then suppose, that our Christian Baptism teaches us to believe in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: what have we to do? Natural Religion hath already determined, from *the unchangeable nature of things*, that God is but *one person* *. Therefore we must *interpret* the form of Baptism to *such a sense*, as will still leave this doctrine of *nature* in possession; either by teaching that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are, in reality, but *one person*; or that Jesus Christ is no person in the Godhead, but a *mere man, like ourselves*; or, that Christianity is not true, &c. So in like manner, by another anticipation, natural Religion makes every man his own Priest and his own Temple: therefore it cannot possibly admit the true and proper Priesthood of Jesus Christ; but must reject the whole doctrine of atonement, and the corruption of man's nature; for this is incompatible with the idea of a natural Religion; inasmuch as corrupt nature must produce a cor-

* “ This (says Dr. Clarke) is the *first principle of Natural Religion.*” See Mr. Jones's *Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity*; p. 15, of the sixth Edition; where this is considered more at large.

rupt Religion. If we say that nature is not corrupt, we overturn the foundations of the Gospel; which teaches us, that *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them.*—Man, it seems, is so far from *knowing* the spiritual things revealed to him in the Scripture, that, as he now is *by nature*, he is not in a condition to *receive* them (they will be *foolishness* to him) till he is enabled so to do by a new faculty of *discernment*, which is supernatural and *spiritual*. It is therefore easy to foresee what must be the consequence, when Dr. Taylor's rule is admitted; and the younger Clergy of this Church take him for their guide. They will take the doctrines of nature, and work them up with the doctrines of the Scripture: that is, they will throw natural Religion into the Scripture, as Aaron threw the gold of Egypt into the fire: and, what will *come out*? Not the Christian Religion, but the philosophical *calf* of Socinus.

Mr. Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity* may be read with safety, by those who are already well learned in the Scripture: but what a perilous situation must that poor young man be in, who, perhaps, when he can but just construe
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the Greek Testament, or before, is turned over to be handled and tutored by his renowned veteran; who, with a shew of *reasonableness*, and some occasional sneers at orthodoxy, and affecting the piety and power of inspiration itself, has partly overlooked, and partly explained away, the first and greatest principles of Christianity, and reduced it to a single proposition, consistent with Heresy, Schism, Arianism, Socinianism, and Quakerism.

CHAP. IV.

ON THE ABUSE OF THE REFORMATION, &c.

TO the *Doctrines* which are pleaded in defence of separation, I might have added the use which has been made of the *historical event* of our Reformation from the errors of the Church of Rome. Here the Dissenters are in confederacy with the Papists against us. The Papists object, that by the *fact* of our separation from their Church, the *principle* of separation is admitted; and being once admitted, it will multiply sects and divisions amongst us, and justify them all, as much as it justifies us. This is the very argument, which the Dissenters have repeated an hundred times; and they borrowed it originally from Rome, whose emissaries were detected among the Puritans in the days of Elizabeth, feeding them with reasons and objections for the multiplying of schism, and the weakening of the Episcopal Church of England: and God knows, they succeeded but too well.

However,

However, the link which unites these two parties, may easily be broken. They both agree, that the Reformation of the Church of England was a *Separation* from the Church of Rome, of the same kind, and on the same principles, with the separation of our Dissenters. But to say this, is to assert, that the Pope had a *legal* authority over the Church of England; when in fact it was an usurped authority; and the Church of England reformed itself, as a national Episcopal Church, on the ground of its original independence on the See of Rome. Therefore, till our Sectaries have given up this point to the Papists, and made the Church of England legally dependent on the authority of Rome, the case of our Reformation affords no precedent to their separation. This Bishop *Hoadley* knew; therefore he allowed the authority of the Church of Rome, and made the Reformation of this Church a forcible Separation, or Schism, that all the Sectaries might be justified by our example. But he goes to a greater length: he maintains, that we did not reform, because the doctrines of the Church of Rome *were actually corrupt*, but because we *thought them so*; putting our Reformation on the foot of *opinion*, not of

reasonable right, and actual knowledge: and opinion being once admitted as a rule of Reformation, will hold as good against us, as against the Papists: nay, it will stop no where, till it make every man a Church to himself; with such doctrines as he likes, and without any one Christian ordinance whatsoever. When we descend to reason and authority, a weak cause may soon be overthrown; but if *opinion* is to justify, the Quakers may stand their ground; and so may Socinians, Mahometans, Jews, and Heathens; because the opinions of men, from the force of custom and habit, will go with the persuasion in which they have been educated. The Papists wish to put all Reformation from their Church, on such a foot, that the principle may be ruined by its own absurdity: and in this our Sectaries, with Bishop Hoadley for their advocate, have given them all the advantage they can desire.

Popular power is another engine which hath been turned against the Church; that is, against the authority of God and his Ministers; and if this is admitted, then must that be right which the people set up, whatever it may be. All unlawful authority affects to ride in upon the

backs of the people : and the patriots of Pagan Rome, while they trampled upon captive kings, and looked upon all nations as made to be their slaves, were always flattering the *people* of their own commonwealth, with the conceit of their own *majesty*. The *Geneva* discipline went upon this principle ; and they were followed therein by our Puritans and Independents. But the Scripture is so expressly against it, that its friends were tempted to corrupt the text of the New Testament, to give it countenance. In the History of the Ordaining of the seven Deacons, in the sixth Chapter of the Acts, the text says—*whom WE may appoint over this business*—giving the appointment to the *Apostles*. But the words were altered into—*whom YE may appoint*—giving the appointment to the *people*. One of the largest and the most numerous Folio Editions of the Bible ever printed in this country, which is that of *Field* 1660, several copies of which are still to be seen, upon the Reading-desks in our Churches, has this corruption ; as many others had from the years 1640 to 1660. *Field's* edition was worked off in the time of the Usurpation, and was to have been published under the authority of the Parliament ; but

not coming forth till after the Restoration, the Title Page was changed, and it made its appearance *cum Privilegio*.

From this falsification of the Apostolical History, it is easy to foresee (and every young reader should be aware of it) how the English History, particularly that of the last century, must have suffered under the hands of the same party; what falsities and forgeries must have been propagated, to conceal the truth, to defame and blacken the best characters, and to justify the worst. Sometimes these bold experiments brought the authors of them into great embarrassment. Mr. *Baxter*, in two editions of his *Saint's Everlasting Rest*, printed before the year 1660, instead of the *Kingdom of Heaven*, as it is in the Scripture, calls it the *Parliament of Heaven* (and, if like their own, it must have been a Parliament *without a King*) and into this Parliament he puts some of the *regicides*, and other like *saints*, who were then dead. But in the editions after the Restoration, he drops them all out of Heaven again, and restores the kingdom of God to its place, in the language of the Gospel. Lord *Brook* was one of the saints whom *Baxter* thus dis-

canonized:

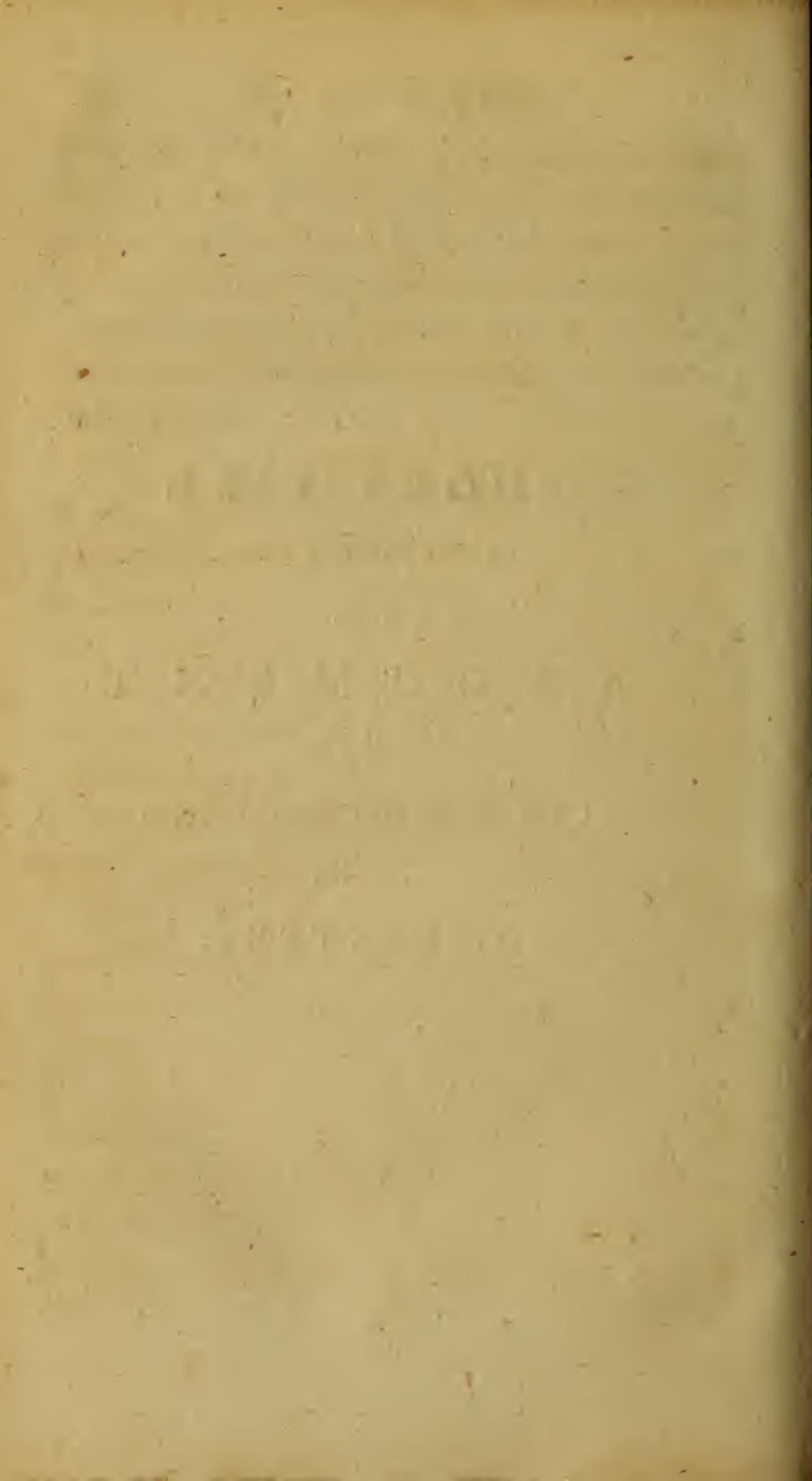
canonized: of whose remarkable end Lord *Clarendon* gives an account; Vol. II. Chap. vi. p. 114.

But to return to the subject of popular Election. I have an author before me, a disclaimer against *Priestcraft*, who finds the right of the people in the History of the Election of *Matthias* to the Apostleship. “*Matthias* is elected,” says he, “*to testify that ordination might be valid by the votes of the people only, without the immediate interposition of Heaven.*” He calls the Assembly of Apostles and Disciples, who were an hundred and twenty in number, *the people*; of whom we know that *eleven* were Apostles; that *seventy* more were ordained Ministers; and nothing appears, but that (the *women* excepted) all the rest of this assembly were of the Ministry likewise. But supposing them to be *the people*, how does it appear, that ordination was valid by their *votes*? Where is the account of this voting? The election is referred to God in the determination of a lot.—*Thou, Lord, shew whither of these two thou hast chosen.* Here the immediate interposition of Heaven is applied for; but our orator says, this ordination was from the votes of the people only,

only, without any such interposition of Heaven*. These two examples may be sufficient to shew the wretched shifts, and bold experiments, to which men are driven in the handling of the Scripture, to uphold the Anti-christian doctrine of a Church, derived from the authority of the people.

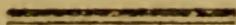
* See *the Axe laid to the Root of Priestcraft in four Discourses*, Disc. iv. p. 5.

SHORT VIEW
OF THE PRESENT STATE
OF THE
A R G U M E N T
BETWEEN THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
AND THE
DISSENTERS.



A

SHORT VIEW, &c.



THE excellent *Hooker*, in the Preface to his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, gives us a curious and clear account of the zeal and artifice with which the first Puritans maintained and recommended their schism against the Church of England. But every member of this Church should see, within as short a compass as may be, how the same cause (allowing for the difference of times and fashions) is maintained now.

A worthy Divine distinguished himself some thirty years ago, in *Three Letters to a Gentleman dissenting from the Church of England*; which Letters were much attended to at the time, and procured the author the notice and encouragement of Archbishop *Secker*. He afterwards reduced the substance of them into a small manual, addressed to a *Dissenting Parishioner*,

with the pious desire of *guiding him to the Church of England*: and an excellent little piece it is. But as the zeal of our Dissenters permits nothing of this kind to pass, without the appearance of an answer, it is probable they set one of their best hands upon the work of writing a short *reply* to it; that the Dissenting parishioner might *not* be guided to the Church of England. This *reply*, which was printed at *Birmingham*, (that modern mint of base money, and false doctrine) I have, with some difficulty, procured; and I shall produce, in their order, such arguments as I have found in it; from which it will be seen, how the Dissenters of the present age defend their separation.

1. They make very light of the sin of *Schism*, as a thing which has nothing frightful to *wise* people; although it be dressed up by us in a frightful form, to terrify the *ignorant*, and such as are *children in understanding*.

Such is *Schism*, when it is committed against *us*; but when it comes home to *themselves*, they have entertained a very different opinion of it, and have carried the principle of unity as high as the most zealous of the Church of England. Liberty of conscience, when it operated against *themselves*,

themselves, was called, *curfed Toleration*, that *hideous monster of Toleration*, in a book subscribed by the Ministers of the Province of London, Dec. 14, 1647 *. We are then agreed, that Schism must be of pernicious consequence, and that it is a grievous affliction to the Christian society; though we are not rightly agreed as to the objects of Schism. If considered in itself, it is the opposite to St. Paul's Virtue of *Charity*; as any intelligent person may see, who reads the 13th Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians as a continuation of the 12th Chapter. And if Charity is the greatest of all virtues, its contrary, which is Schism, must be the greatest of all sins; therefore we justly pray against it in the Litany. Whether the Dissenters ever follow our example, is more than I know; though it

* See a friendly debate between a Conformist and a Non-conformist. Edit. 3, p. 76. That the Dissenters are, to this day, of the same *intolerant spirit*, is not to be doubted; and I have had repeated demonstrations of it under my own eye, who have seen a small minority of Dissenters, though unprovoked, stir up such a furious opposition against a Church, and its Minister, that a good man, of a peaceable temper, made this reflexion upon it to his Clergyman:—
 ' Sir, I perceive we should not have so much as a barn to
 ' worship God in, if they could prevent it.'

can scarcely be expected that they should pray against, while they continue in it, and think it hath nothing frightful to *wise* people. But if we may judge of it by its fruits, (and there is no better rule) what envy and hatred, what disputings and railings, what cruelty and persecution, what rebellion and sacrilege, hath it not produced in this kingdom? and they who acted these things were so far from taking shame to themselves, that they laid all the guilt of them upon the Church, which they persecuted and plundered! We should be glad to forget these things, but that there are some amongst us who delight in the memory of those unhappy times, and chew all the murder and the mischief of them over again, which is the case with the author of the *Confessional*, and other writers of the same spirit. As to the corruption of doctrine, which follows upon Schism, it was so apparent to the actors in the Schism of the last century, that it forced from them, that testimony above-mentioned, against the *curst* nature of *Toleration*. Three-score different sects, some holding monstrous and blasphemous opinions, rose out of the Presbyterians of that time. Now, to make light of all these things, as if Schism, which is a root
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of bitterness, *i. e.* an active principle of mischief in the mind, were but a slight offence, a mere scarecrow to *wise* people, is to deceive men, and bring their consciences and souls into a fatal snare. Nay, it is not only to deceive them, simply, but with the very deception which brought death into the world. The tempter suggested to our first parents, that they *should not surely die*; and that their apprehensions of danger arose from the *ignorance* and *childishness* of their *understandings*.

2. They plead next, that their Schism, with respect to the Church of England, is no more than a Separation from an *human establishment*; for that the Church of England has *no foundation* but upon *the King and the Parliament*; whereas the Church of Christ is *founded upon the doctrines* taught by the Apostles.

If our Church has *no foundation but upon the King and Parliament*, then certainly it is not founded upon the Authority of Christ, and consequently it is no Church of Christ. But will any man say, that a national Church, being a member of the Catholic Church of Christ, ceases to be such, when adopted as a part of the constitution, and established by the civil power?

Suppose

Suppose it were persecuted by the civil power; and its ministers and worship were proscribed; would it therefore cease to be a Church of Christ? Certainly not: for the Church of the Hebrews in Egypt, was still the Church of God, though the people were under a cruel edict not to serve him, and God owned it as such, and delivered it at last. Do the powers of this world unmake the Church by their reception of it, when they do not by their persecuting of it? Do its Bishops and Priests cease to be Bishops and Priests? Do its Sacraments cease to be Sacraments? Doth its discipline cease to be Christian discipline, and lose its authority, because the state admits of it, and establishes it? I say, suppose they were to declare against all these things, as the Heathens and Jews did in the first ages of the Gospel, their declaration would signify nothing: because the Church, in its Priesthood and Sacraments, derives its authority only from Jesus Christ, which the persecution of the civil powers cannot reach; much less can their allowance turn it into an *human* authority, and render it of none effect. But we shall see hereafter, how all this is overthrown, by another plea which the Dis-

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senters (forgetting *this*) have made use of to defend their separation from the Church of England.

To say, that the Church of Christ is founded upon the *doctrines* taught by the Apostles, is a gross mistake. *Doctrines* can no more confer authority of office to Church ministers, than the Statute book in England can make a justice of the peace; whose power must come to him by personal deputation. A written law does nothing, till there comes an executive power, lawfully ordained, to administer and bring it to effect. Let any Dissenter shew us the text or doctrine that will make a Priest. We can soon shew him one which tells us how Priests must be made.—*No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*; who was called by an outward consecration, from a person whom God had commissioned to consecrate: and the power thus given descended by succession to his posterity. The power of *absolution* was given by Christ to the Christian ministry, and without this power there can be no such thing as a Church of Christ. The Priesthood had the power of *absolution* under the Law of Moses; and even the Priests of Heathenism were never
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considered as the representatives of the people, but of the God to whom they belong; to pronounce blessings and forgive sins in his name. But the Presbyterians are so far from claiming this power to themselves, (though supposed to be in all the Priests of the world) that they mock at it in us, and call it Popery and Juggling; and a Church so rejecting a power essential to the nature of priesthood, is in a state of abjuration against its own existence.

3. They say, the Church of England hath imposed such articles of faith, as the Gospel hath not imposed; for which imposition Christ hath given no authority.

This objection extends to every Church upon earth, that requires any articles of faith, as terms of Church Communion; and it proves too much if it proves any thing. The Gospel, it is true, imposes nothing but *Baptism*, and its *Faith in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*: all other articles are intended for the defence and security of this one in its proper extent. And such articles will be more or less, according to times and occasions, as the adversaries of the faith assault it on different sides, and with different principles of offence. The
Gospel

Gospel does not require that we should renounce the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; nor set down the Apostles' Creed, as a condition of communion: and, if we had a mind to be perverse and captious, we might argue, that a man may come to Christian Baptism with his mouth shut, and not say one word for himself, because the Gospel hath not set down the form, nor specified the terms of the Baptismal Covenant; though the intention or sense of it (what we are to renounce, and what we are to believe) is clear throughout the New Testament. The Church of England hath articles expressly against Popery: but the Gospel hath imposed no such articles; it knew nothing of Popery; and the principle of the Dissenters would leave us defenceless against the Papists, as well as all our other enemies, and is contrary to the fundamental principle of all society, and even of nature itself. We have no occasion here to enquire, what the Articles of the Church of England are; because the objection extends to all articles whatsoever, except such as are set down in the Scripture, which sets down nothing but baptism; and is so brief in its accounts, that every true principle of the Christian Faith might be
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be evaded, if we were to lay hold of some short expressions, and make them *exclusive*, contrary to common rules of reasoning, the plainest facts, and the nature of the case, as some have done; particularly the celebrated Mr. *Locke*, who contends, that the Christian Gospel has but one article, namely, *that Jesus Christ is the Messiah*; whereas the one great condition of Salvation, in the Gospel, is Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; therefore the great and fundamental article of the Gospel, is that of Faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

4. From the preceding article, which asserts that the Church of England hath imposed articles which Christ hath not imposed; it is argued, that in opposing the Church of England, they oppose *an invasion of the kingly authority of Jesus Christ*.

Jesus Christ doth not act in person, but hath commissioned his Church to act for him, and hath promised to be with it, and support its authority, to the end of the world. Therefore, to argue *for* Jesus Christ *against* his Church, is to set up Jesus Christ against himself; and the like objection may be made against all the Churches in the world: which, so far as they
act

act for their own just rights, *under* Jesus Christ, may be said to act *against* him. Every true Church is bound to assert and defend the faith it hath received: but its enemies will call this necessary defence an *imposition*, and then contend, that they are free from all obligation. But with what grace doth this argument come from the party, who imposed their own *solemn league and covenant* on men's consciences in this kingdom, at the peril of their lives and fortunes, and proscribed them as *malignants* if they refused to take it; for which there certainly is neither precedent nor precept in the Gospel? How marvellously do the opinions of men change, when they argue *for themselves*, and when they argue *against us*!

5. To explain away the offence of Schism, it is farther argued, that as there were *Schisms* among the *Corinthians*, when it does not appear that there was any *separation*; so there may be a separation where there is no Schism: because Christians may still be *united in heart and affection*, though they perform the offices of religion in different places and in different ways.

The history of facts in this country gives us a different prospect of things, and indeed it is pre-

preposterous to suppose, that if we sow in Schism, we shall reap in Unity: or, in other words, that if we murder and mangle the body of the Church, we shall preserve charity, which is the life and soul of it. It is true, we shall not dispute much about any thing, if we are *indifferent* to every thing: but misguided religious zeal is not of this insipid character. The ordinance of Parliament of the 11th of August 1645, for *putting in execution the directory*, has these words:—“ If any
 “ person or persons whatsoever, shall, at any
 “ time or times hereafter, use, or cause the
 “ aforesaid Book of Common Prayer to be used
 “ in any Church, Chapel, or public place of
 “ worship, or in any private place, or family,
 “ within the kingdom of England, or the do-
 “ minion of Wales, or port and town of Ber-
 “ wick: every person so offending herein, shall,
 “ for the first offence, pay the sum of five
 “ pounds of lawful English money; for the
 “ second offence, ten pounds; and for the
 “ third, shall suffer one whole year’s imprison-
 “ ment, without bail or mainprize.” This law was one of the fruits of Schism; and there never was a law more severe and cruel. The king was then living, and the *private* worship of his
 family

family is not excepted. But these were days of religious madness; we know better now. So it is said; but I fear with very little truth. What would not that persecuting spirit do, if it had power, which is so conspicuous in the *Syllabus* of Mr. *Robinson's* Lectures, a *Dissenting teacher* at *Cambridge*? How fresh is the remembrance (or ought to be) of the riots in London, which shook the kingdom, and brought us so nearly to ruin in a few days: all conducted by a fanatic Presbyterian, with a rout of forty thousand disorderly people at his heels? And if the principles of fanaticism can perform such wonders here, even in a man without learning, without parts, without morals, without sense: how dreadful may their effects be upon a future occasion! and who can tell how *soon* that occasion may happen? especially as Dr. *Priestley*, another *Dissenting teacher*, is now threatening us with impending ruin, from himself and his party; who give us warning, that they have long been, and are now, *conveying gunpowder* under our *foundation*, to blow up the *old rotten fabric* of the Church of England? Neither is that zeal totally departed which produced the cruel edict of 1645, against the use of our Liturgy; a Dis-
senter

sender (to my knowledge) having been lately heard to declare, that every Common Prayer Book in England *ought to be burned!* and this was from a person, who, abstracted from these paroxysms of religious bigotry, was of a peaceable and quiet temper! Add to this, that practice, which is almost universal with the Dissenters, of *forcing* their servants and dependants into the *worship of the Meeting-house*, however strong their affections may be to the worship of the Church by birth and education. But our Dissenting apologist assures us, Christians may still be *united in heart and affection*, though they worship God in different places: and that there may be separation without Schism, as there was Schism at Corinth without separation. But these smaller Schisms of the Corinthians, which did not actually separate them into different communions, were yet, according to the Apostle, very reprehensible, and of bad tendency: therefore, actual separation, being Schism in the extreme, must be more reprehensible. To suppose it less, is to contradict the reason of things; as if it should be argued, that because we may hurt a man without killing him, therefore we may kill a man without hurting him.

6. How-

6. However, if there should be any Schism betwixt the Church of England and the Dissenters, they say the *guilt* of it is with the Church, who will not *yield to weak brethren in things which are confessed to be indifferent and of small moment.*

With what propriety can things of *small moment* be introduced, as objections to our Communion, after it has been asserted, that the Church of England is *no Church of Christ*? If that objection be good, all things of *small moment* are superfluous. For who can be obliged, or who indeed will consent, to be a member of a Church, which is no Church of Christ? “Leave things indifferent (saith this reply) as they are in their own nature, and as Christ hath left them, and the separation is over.” So then, if these indifferent things were removed, the Dissenters would communicate with a Church, which is no Church of Christ! Who can believe this? Is it not much more probable, that the Dissenters do not mean to throw up the separation for any concessions that can be made by a Church, which, in their opinion, is itself separated from the Communion of Jesus Christ? These objections are so inconsistent, that they

leave small hopes of the possibility of a reconciliation. For if all these small things were removed, still there will remain the insuperable (and we trust, uncharitable and groundless) objection, that the Church of England is no Church of Christ: and that Dissenters cannot upon any principle communicate with a Church, which they think to be excommunicate. The case between us is very bad under this representation of it; but it becomes, if possible, more hopeless in what follows.

7. For the Reply tells us, that the Dissenters do not stand out for the *value* of the things required, which are matters of *indifference*; but stand up in defence of that *liberty*, wherewith Christ hath made them free, and will not be brought into bondage.

Do they think then, that Christ hath given them *liberty* to break the peace of the Church, for matters *indifferent*? That is, to destroy peace, essential to salvation; to save liberty, the creature of human pride? Another apologist of the Dissenters, the author of *The independent Whig*, puts this matter out of question; and affirms without reserve, that *Schism* is so necessary to the preservation of *liberty*, that there can
be

be *no Liberty without Schism*. What would the Christian world be, if this principle were universally followed? No two of us could consent together; because the one must lose his *liberty*, till he goes off into *Schism*; so it would break all Christian societies into individuals. *Liberty* and *bondage* are words of strange significations in this land, which it would be tedious to display. Only let us distinguish, that there is no bondage in dutiful submission; for that is the *service of God* which is *perfect freedom*: nor any liberty in unreasonable disobedience; for that is the bondage of Satan, who works in the children of disobedience, and puts them to a great deal of trouble; making them restless and impatient, and leading them such a wearisome life, that if it were not called liberty, they would wish themselves out of the world.

8. The Church of England is accused of taking away the Bread and the Cup, unless people will receive kneeling; and Christ hath not made kneeling a necessary term of Communion.

Nor is it necessary with us; because we administer the Sacrament to the sick or the infirm, either sitting, kneeling, or lying. Kneeling is

proper to an act of devotion; such the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is now, and not a social act of eating, as at the Passover, when it was first instituted. Kneeling may admit of a bad construction, because the Papists kneel and worship the Host: but Charity will give it a good construction, and then all the difficulty is over. However, let us call it an *imposition*: yet why should the enjoining of it be objected to by the very people, who imposed on all that took their solemn league and covenant, the posture of *standing*, with the ceremony of *lifting up the right hand bare*? But, what is still more to the purpose, one of their apologists assures us, they make no scruple of giving their Sacrament to all those who chuse to kneel in a Meeting-house*. Therefore it is not the *thing*, (though that is sometimes highly exclaimed against) but the *enjoining* of the thing that ren-

* “ In some of our Churches, there are some who receive *standing*, some *kneeling*.—Nor is there, I believe, amongst our ministers, one in five hundred, who would refuse to give the Sacrament either standing or kneeling, to any one who thought either of these the fittest posture of receiving.” *Dissenting Gentleman's Answer to the Rev. Mr. White's Three Letters.* P. 21.

ders it offensive: and it appears from this case, that Dissenters will do that to please themselves, which they will not do to please God; who hath enjoined us all to be at peace with one another, and to agree in his worship.

Sponsors in Baptism, and the signature of the Cross, are objected to. But the first is only a prudent provision, as a farther security for the child, if the parents should die, or be of such characters as renders them unfit for sponsors; which the child cannot help. The signature of the Cross can give no offence (as one should think) to any person who delights in the memory of the Cross itself. The purest ages of the Church used it on all occasions, particularly in exorcisms, which were antiently a part of Baptism; and there are some pretty clear intimations in the Scripture for the use of some signature on the forehead; and the first of all signatures is that of the Cross. For motives of worldly traffic, the Dutch, instead of preferring it to a place in their foreheads, trample it under their feet: and our Dissenters reject it from an affection to their Schism. If the Papists are superabundant and superstitious in the use of the Cross, what is that to us? If they repeat the

Lord's Prayer twenty times in an hour, are we not to repeat it all * ?

9. It is farther objected to our Church, that the people have a right, an *unalienable* right, to chuse their own ministers; which with us they are not permitted to do.

As for the patriotic term *unalienable*, it is applied to the rights of *nature*, which are *unalienable* because they are *inherent*. But here, it can only mean, that the Dissenters claim it, and are resolved not to part with it. On this part of the subject, I must lament with tears in my eyes, the great abuses in the Church of England, in respect to patronage and admission into Church-livings. But in bad times, no regulations are sufficient to secure us from corruption; and even the very means appointed to *keep out* bad men, will *let them in*: for there are times, when persons of no conscience or character may act *with impunity*; and the worst of men are the most ready to play with all religious securities. That this case would be mended if the choice of ministers were always with the people, is by

* See the use of the Signature of the Cross in Baptism, fully and learnedly vindicated in *Bennet's Abridgment of the London Cases*, chap. vi.

no means clear. For nothing is so common as for people to be divided in interests and affections on very unworthy motives; and thence many great and scandalous disturbances arise; and a parish is so divided into parties, that perhaps they do not come into humour again for some years. Besides; suppose a *Socinian* should have got possession of a pulpit, and preached the people (or a few of the most *active, noisy,* and *cunning,* who overbear all the rest) into Heresy: whom would they chuse, but a Socinian, at the next vacancy? And would it not be much better that an Orthodox minister should be put upon them? If the people have this right, then all the people have it; and consequently a Socinian congregation have a right to chuse a Socinian minister. How the Scripture hath been handled, as to this affair of popular election, was noted in the Postscript to the *Essay on the Church*.

10. Though the Dissenters have no ministry by *Succession*, they make light of this defect, and think they are as well off as we are, because they say, our *right of ordaining came down to us through the channel of Popery*.

Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in a Church,

were no invention of Popery, nor is our succession any more affected by Popery, than the Apostles' Creed, which is also *come down to us through the channel of Popery*; and so is *Canon of the Scripture* itself: yet we take the old Creed and the old Scriptures, and think them as good as ever. The Church of Rome is under such an opprobrium with Protestants, that it is a convenient bugbear, brought forward upon all occasions by those who want better argument, to frighten us out of our Church principles, and cover the weakness of their own innovations. But the succession of Church offices is no more affected by the errors of Popery, than a man's pedigree is affected by his bodily distemper, or the distempers of his parents; and if the man, by alteratives and restoratives, is cured with the blessing of God, he returns to the state of his purer ancestors of a remote generation. A self-originated upstart, who has been railing at him for things past, in which he had no share, may take his name, and claim his inheritance; but when his title comes to be examined, the true right will appear, and justice will take place.

If we trace the pedigree of the Church of England far enough backwards, we find a
Christian

Christian Church of the Episcopal form in Britain, with an independent right and authority of its own, before *Austin* set his foot in the country, as the messenger of *Rome*. At the Reformation, this Church did but return to its original rights, with an Episcopacy independent of the Pope, and enjoyed it for some years, with the general approbation of the people, and there was no such thing as a Presbyterian in the nation. It was approved and congratulated for its felicity by the reformed of other countries: and even *Calvin* and *Beza*, then little thought that they should have any followers so *mad*, (I use their own word) as to reject such an Episcopacy as ours, which had freed itself from the usurpation of the Papacy. *Calvin*, in his Epistle to Cardinal *Sadolet*, said of those who should reject such an hierarchy, that he should think them, *nullo non anathemate dignos*, i. e. "that no curse could be too bad for them." *Beza* would not believe that any could reject the order of Bishops in a reformed Church. *If there be such*, said he, *God forbid that any man in his wits should assent to the madness of those men* *. And in the same Book †, speaking of the hierarchy of England

* *Ad Tract. de Ministr. Evang. ab Hadr. Sarav. Edit. Belg. c. i.*

† Cap. 18.

and her Bishops, he says, *Let her enjoy that singular blessing of God, which I wish may be perpetual to her.* Such at that time were the sentiments of *Beza* and *Calvin*; who afterwards found it convenient to change their style; and, when the war was carried on against Episcopacy itself, the expurgatorial authority of their editors in later editions expunged these charitable attestations out of their works; which hath a very guilty appearance.

11. The Dissenters plead, that what is called the Act of Toleration, has given a sanction to their separation, and taken away the sin of it. They are “not chargeable with Schism, since they who have the *power of continuing or altering our Church at their pleasure, have given them liberty to withdraw, and have taken their places of worship under their protection as well as ours.*”

If I understand this plea right, it is a millstone about the neck of all the rest; because it shews, that the apologist of the Dissenters hath argued without principles, and so hath fallen into a manifest contradiction. He began with mocking at the Church of England, as having no foundation but upon *the King and Parliament*:

or,

or, as another Dissenter hath expressed it, in the like insulting strain, as “ *built upon the foundation of the Lords and Commons, the King himself being the chief corner stone.*” And they have argued, that it even ceases to be a Church of Christ, because it acts under the allowance of the civil power. Yet in their own case, the King and Parliament, by an act of Grace, can make Schism to be no Schism! The protection we have from the civil government is cast in our teeth, as a disadvantage, which extends even to the *unchurching* of us, and throwing us out of the kingdom of Christ; but the same thing (supposing them to have it) takes away from them the guilt of their separation! And thus they give to the King and Parliament, the privilege of God himself, who only can forgive sin: which is more than we ever allowed them.

It is a very false suggestion, that our civil government can alter the Church *at their pleasure*. There is, indeed, a sense, in which it may be said, that a man has *power* to do whatever he can do by *force* and violence: but still there is an essential difference between the power of force and the power of *right* and *authority*. The Church of England never can be altered

legally, without the consent and act of the *Convocation*, who are a part of the constitution: and if it were otherwise done, it must be done by an act of violence, against the rights of Englishmen; for Englishmen do not lose their rights by being Christians and Churchmen; as their enemies are inclined to have it. There can be no power of authority in laymen to make or unmake a Church, any more than there can be a power in the Church to make or unmake the civil constitution; and nothing can confound these powers but an overbearing principle of infidelity; from which may God deliver us; who hath promised that the gates of Hell (the judicial power of the adversaries of Jesus Christ) shall not prevail against us. Suppose the civil power should make an act, that the King shall ordain Priests, or that Priests shall not baptize children, nor consecrate the Sacrament; what would such an act signify? Therefore, they have not the power to alter the Church *at their pleasure*; for this might be their pleasure, if their wits, or the grace of God were to forsake them. Such a power, if it were claimed, was never exercised even by Heathen persecutors. However, the Dissenters do not seem unwilling that such a
tyran-

tyrannical power should be exercised, and appear to relish the idea of it, if it be but turned against the Church of England. No one *spiritual* act can be exercised, nor is it claimed by the civil power in this country; which can neither baptize, nor ordain, nor absolve, nor consecrate, nor excommunicate; although the Dissenters, in the heat of their zeal, have given the state a spiritual power, and even more, over us and themselves too. But the state can say, who shall or shall not partake of temporalities: and this very state will say, some more, some less, as long as the Church accepts of their protection, and enjoys a legal maintenance and support under them. Worldly politics in such a case will be sure to interfere, and abuses will arise. Churchmen will be apt to accommodate themselves to the views and inclinations of the state, or some of the acting members of the state, who are their friends: their doctrines will change with the times; their consciences will become too flexible and easy, and the people whom they teach will be in danger from them. There is no convenience in this world without its inconvenience. When the state was schismatical in the days of the grand usurpation, the Church of
that

that time could find no such sin as *sacrilege* in the Scripture, for the fear of giving offence to their patrons, who were deep in the guilt of it: and the *Assembly of Divines* (as it was remarked long ago by Bp *Patrick*) avoided all mention of it in their *Annotations*.

12. The Dissenters hold themselves blameless, because many persons of the Church of England, and some of great and popular character, have justified and even applauded their separation.

I find great stress laid upon this circumstance, which is blazoned out with pompous words and splendid quotations, as well of what hath been *spoken* (or so reported) as written. But the fear or favour of men, especially of men too attentive to the interests of this world (as some of their friends have certainly been) is a very unsound bottom for the Dissenters to rest upon: and so they esteem it themselves, when it is on our side. But if any false brethren amongst us take part with them, all such are *excellent men, ornaments of the establishment*, and of unanswerable authority. Sometimes the Dissenters are all for the Scripture; Jesus Christ is their only King; and to him they appeal for the rectitude of their
pro-

proceedings: but if they find a flatterer amongst us, they make the most of him: and some such are always to be found; for all are not Israel that are of Israel; and it doth not follow, that a man must be true to the Church of England, because it hath introduced him to a seat in the House of Lords. Temporal considerations bring some men into the Church, whose hearts and affections never were, nor ever will be with it. Of such no honest man can approve; and therefore the approbation of such, with all their testimonies and certificates, is but of little value at last. Bishop *Hoadley* was of this character: a Socinian in principle: who, while he was celebrated by the enemies of the Church of England, (and perhaps assisted toward his advancement) for having banished all *Mitres* and *Lordships*, and *Spiritual Courts*, out of the *Kingdom of Christ*, was, himself, an answer to every thing he had written; who scrupled not to adorn himself with a Mitre and a Lordship in one of the first preferments in this Church; while he was a greater favourer of those who were out of it, than of those who were in it; unless they were in it upon his own principles.

Amongst

Amongst other bright ornaments of the Church who applaud the separation of the Dissenters, the authors of the *Free and Candid Disquisitions* are brought in. These are not only tender to the Dissenters, but they rather think we shall never do well without them; that they are necessary to *preserve the virtue of the nation*; to save our *religious liberty*; to prevent the return of *slavery*; and to serve as a check, lest we should cast a *favourable aspect toward Rome*. These things are fairly said, but not truly; and if we consider a little farther from whence they came, little honour will accrue to the Dissenters from the Testimony of these authors. For it is by no means clear that they were *members of our own Church*, though they most solemnly and repeatedly professed themselves so to be in their work. It was suspected very early, that they were not such as they called themselves, but enemies under the disguise of friends. Of this their work itself carries some internal marks, which seem to have escaped them unawares.—*Ficta cito ad Naturam reciderint suam*. The author of *Free and impartial Considerations* on the *Free and candid Disquisitions*, pressed them with this (Anno 1751) and with great appearance

ance of reason. He told them farther, " It begins now to be reported, and I partly believe it, that an eminent Dissenter, well known by his writings, has had a hand more or less in the Disquisitions*. But, some few years after, in 1758, when this secret had been searched a little farther, or had transpired of itself, I find an author, and, I believe, a very honest one, asserting in the plainest terms, that those authors were actually Dissenters; and taxing the party very roundly with their prevarication, in these words: " Amidst the greatest indulgence, and in open defiance of the laws, they impugned and libelled our Liturgy, and our Constitution—without the least proof or foundation: they charged our Liturgy with all the defects, with all the faults, improprieties, and corruptions, which had been suggested by Papists, Heretics, Enthusiasts, and the most inveterate enemies of our constitution. And for fear the people should say, that an enemy had done this, they, by the most solemn and repeated insinuations, declared themselves to be *true and dutiful sons*

of the established Church *.” If, after such professions, these writers were Dissenters, their Disquisitions exhibit such a scene of treachery, prevarication, self-adulation, and ingratitude, to the government *under* which, and the established Church *with* which they live, as is scarcely to be paralleled in history.

On this supposition, all the fine things those authors thought fit to say of the Dissenters, and their virtues, and the nature and merits of their separation, are of no authority; for that Dissenters should praise Dissenters, is nothing wonderful; but, if Dissenters did this, under the name of *true and dutiful sons of the Church*, then such praise is against them in every word of it. What sort of principles they must be, which can reconcile men's consciences to such Jesuitical frauds and disguises, they who practice them are bound to consider.

If the Dissenters think they can justify their separation by the *praise of men*; let them proceed fairly, and take it, such as it is, *all together*. They should remember, and estimate

* Case of the Royal Martyr considered with candour, p. 333, 334.

properly, how much of it comes from the bench of our Bishops, and how much from the seat of the scornful: how universally they are befriended and admired by Deists, Free-thinkers, Socinian Philosophers, and loose-livers; who delighting to see the Church opposed, and Christian people divided, are exactly of the same opinion with some of those great ornaments of the establishment of whose testimony our apologist hath so loudly boasted. “*I heartily thank God,*” says the author of *The Independent Whig*, “*that we have Dissenters, and I hope we shall never be without them.**”

13. The last and the most general argument on which the Dissenters depend; and which, if it were just, would render all other arguments superfluous, is this; that all men *have a right to judge and chuse for themselves in matters of Religion.*

This is an extensive principle, which justifies all sects, and supersedes all institutions and sacraments whatsoever. It also shews the Dissenters of this day, who have recourse to it, to be quite a different class of men, from the *Puritans*

* Vol. iii, p. 223.

in the days of *Elizabeth*; for here they extend their claims from Schism up to Heresy, and beyond it, even into the privileges and immunities of infidelity itself. The Puritans formerly judged against us in our discipline: but the Dissenters, and their friends, now judge against us in our doctrines. For, thus saith the author of the *Independent Whig*, another apologist of the Dissenters.—“No man ought to pay any submission to that *doctrine* or discipline which he *does not like* :” and the war, which was once carried on against *Prelacy* and *Ceremonies*, is now turned against *Articles* and *Creeds*.

If the Dissenters at large have this right of chusing what they *like*, and rejecting what they *dislike*: then the *Quakers* have it: and why not the *Jews* and the *Mahometans*? For, I desire to know, what there is betwixt us and them, but *matters of Religion*.

As to this affair of *chusing*, especially in *matters of Religion*, there are strange examples of human perverseness and wickedness. How often did the people *chuse new Gods*? *Heresy* is so called, because it is a doctrine which a man doth not *receive* but *chuse* for himself; and if his choice is of *right*, there can be no such thing

thing as Heresy in the world. But *Heresy* is reckoned among the *works of the flesh*; and they that *heap up teachers to themselves*, are said to do it of *their own lusts*. Thus every case becomes desperate: for *lust*, being an irrational, brutal principle, hears no reason; and nothing but disorder and confusion can follow, when this principle takes the lead in religion. When men *took wives of such as they chose*, and had no rule but this rule of choice; the earth was soon *filled with violence*: and if men may take what they chuse in Religion, sects and divisions, strife and envying, rebellion and sacrilege, without end, must be the consequence: and so it is already recorded in the annals of this kingdom.

POSTSCRIPT.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST SEPARATION OF
THE DISSENTERS FROM THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND.

THE preceding short View of the Argument betwixt the Church and the Dissenters, having brought the authors of *Free and Candid Disquisitions on the Liturgy of the Church of England*, under our consideration; I cannot help mentioning on this occasion, that I have a Manuscript in my possession of seventy-two sheets, containing Remarks on that work, written immediately after its publication, by one of the first Scholars, and best Divines of this century.

The public never did, and probably never will, receive any information from these papers; but to me they have been very entertaining and instructive. In one of the Author's Notes upon a large Quotation from the Epistles of *St. Cyprian*, I find the following account of the
the

rise and progress of the Schism, which hath troubled the state of the Church, more or less, ever since the Reformation; and as this little work may fall into the hands of some readers, who never heard, whether our Dissenters originally divided *from us*, or *we from them*; it may be useful to shew how the case stands. The fact is this; they *went out from us*, after the full establishment of this Church.

‘ For, in the year 1548, 2 Ed. vi, the *Archbishop* of *Canterbury*, and twelve of the other principal *Bishops* and *Divines*, joined in a *Committee*, drew up the *Form of celebrating the Lord's Supper*; and, after that, of the rest of the *Common Prayer*; chiefly from the best *primitive formularies* of *Public Prayer* they could find; which was soon after confirmed by *Authority of Parliament*, with this *Testimony* subjoined, viz. that *None could doubt, but that the authors were inspired, and assisted therein, by the Holy Ghost*. At the same time, (as *Nichols*, in his *Defensio Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, • observes) it was the peculiar happiness of our *Reformation*, that it had been *established* by the concurrent *Authority* of the *Church* and *State*, so we enjoyed the most perfect agreement and unanimity of all orders

orders of men among us; the very name of those swarms of *Sectarists* (the filthy *pollutions* whereof have, *since, infected* so far, and wide) being then not so much as heard of in our land. Neither did any one, either at home or abroad, (the envy, ill-nature, and heterodoxy of *Calvin* only excepted) charge us, in the least, with any remains of *Popish* leaven, as mixt with our *services* and *orders*, or any thing that looked that way: but all men honoured our *Church*, as the most *Holy Mother* of the people of *God* committed to her, as well as the most strenuous opposer of *Antichrist*, and the chief bulwark of the *Reformation*. And so matters continued; not a *dog moving his tongue*, or sowing the least seed of *Schism*, or *Dissention*, to corrupt her. Till under the persecution in *Queen Mary's* time, when, many flying (as it was to be expected) into the Protestant States abroad, there settled themselves into little *Chapelries*, or *Churches*, by permission of the *Magistrates*, according to the order of the *Common Prayer*, and *Service of the Church of England*. Only, at *Frankfort*, one *Fox*, a man of a turbulent innovating spirit, with others associated to him, were drawn into fondness for *Calvin's Plan*, (*schismatical*, as it was,

was, from all *Christian Churches since the Apostles*) and made themselves a *new farrago* of *Public Prayers*, as opposite to the *English*, and consequently to those of all the *Primitive Churches*, as they could devise: which, upon *Queen Mary's* death, they brought home with them: and, in preaching and writing, endeavoured to *force*, or *palm* upon the people; but yet, without any *direct*, and *open Schism*: till one *Cartwright*, in a Theological Disputation held at *Cambridge* before the *Queen*, [*Elizabeth*] being rebuked by her for his unreasonable and turbulent manner of conducting himself in it, thereupon went off, full fraught with *spleen* and *spite*, to *Calvin*: from whence returning, with *new ulcers* added to his *old sores*, and causing fresh disturbances, he was expelled his *College*, and deprived of the *Margaret-Professorship*, by *Dr. Whitgift*, who was head of the same *College* [*Trinity*] and *Vice-Chancellor* of the *University*: Whereupon, with others of his own *Calvinistical cast*, he began to set up his *Novo-puritanical Schism*, with *classes*, *conventicles*, &c. in avowed contempt and rebellion against the *Church*. The smoking brands of which fire of *Schism* being blown up by the tainted breath of his

followers, broke out, in half an age, into a flame that once set three kingdoms into a blaze, brought one of the best of Kings to the block, extirpated *Episcopacy*, and the *Peerage*, so as without the visible interposition of Providence, there appeared no more hopes of their restoration for ever. Neither are the *coals* of the *old brands* yet quenched, but they burn still under the embers of *sedition*, wherewith they are raked up, and threaten, yet, new and worse *fires*, perhaps to the *civil*, but certainly to the *religious state* of things among us; which God avert!"

This good man did not live to see the dismembering of the British empire, by the separation of the American Colonies, begun and carried on by the same party both here and there, to the loss of so many thousand lives, and the oppressing of the people with new and endless burthens of taxes. So notorious was the case, that even the gentlemen of the army, who had an opportunity of making proper observations, and were properly disposed to make them, brought home this report with them to the Mother country, that if the Church of England had but obtained that timely support

port in the Colonies, for which it had so often petitioned, the American rebellion had never happened: and if this government shall be as remiss toward itself, in the Mother country, as it has been toward the Colonies, the same evils will soon break out at home.

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II.

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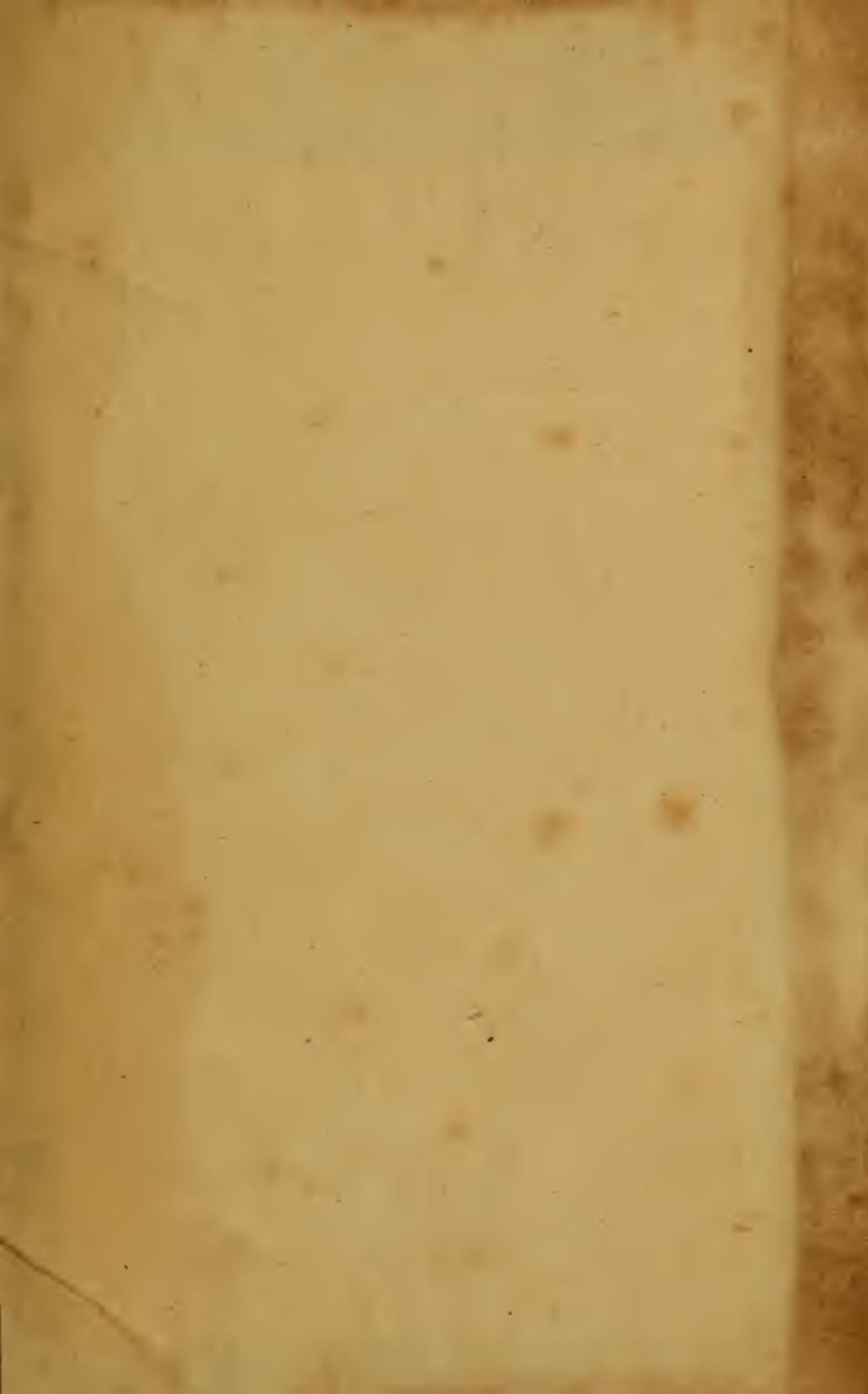
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