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A defense of the Reformation



16-8

A DEFENCE OF THE REFORMATION,

IN ANSWER TO A BOOK ENTITLED

Just Prejudices against the Calvinists :

WRITTEN IN FRENCH BY THE REVEREND AND LEARNED

MONSIEUR CLAUDE,

Minister of the Reformed Church at Charenton;

AND

FAITHFULLY TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH,

By T. B.—M. A.



TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE,

INCLUDING

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE SPIRIT OF POPERY.

ALSO APPROPRIATE INDEXES.



By JOHN TOWNSEND.

“Our fathers, who lived under the dread of Popery and arbitrary power, are gone off the stage, and have carried with them the experience which we their sons stand in need of, to make us earnest to preserve the blessings of liberty and pure religion, which they have bequeathed us. O that I had words to represent to the present generation the miseries which their fathers underwent; that I could describe their fears and anxieties—their restless nights, their uneasy days, when every morning threatened to usher in the last dawn of England's liberty.”—*Sherlock*.

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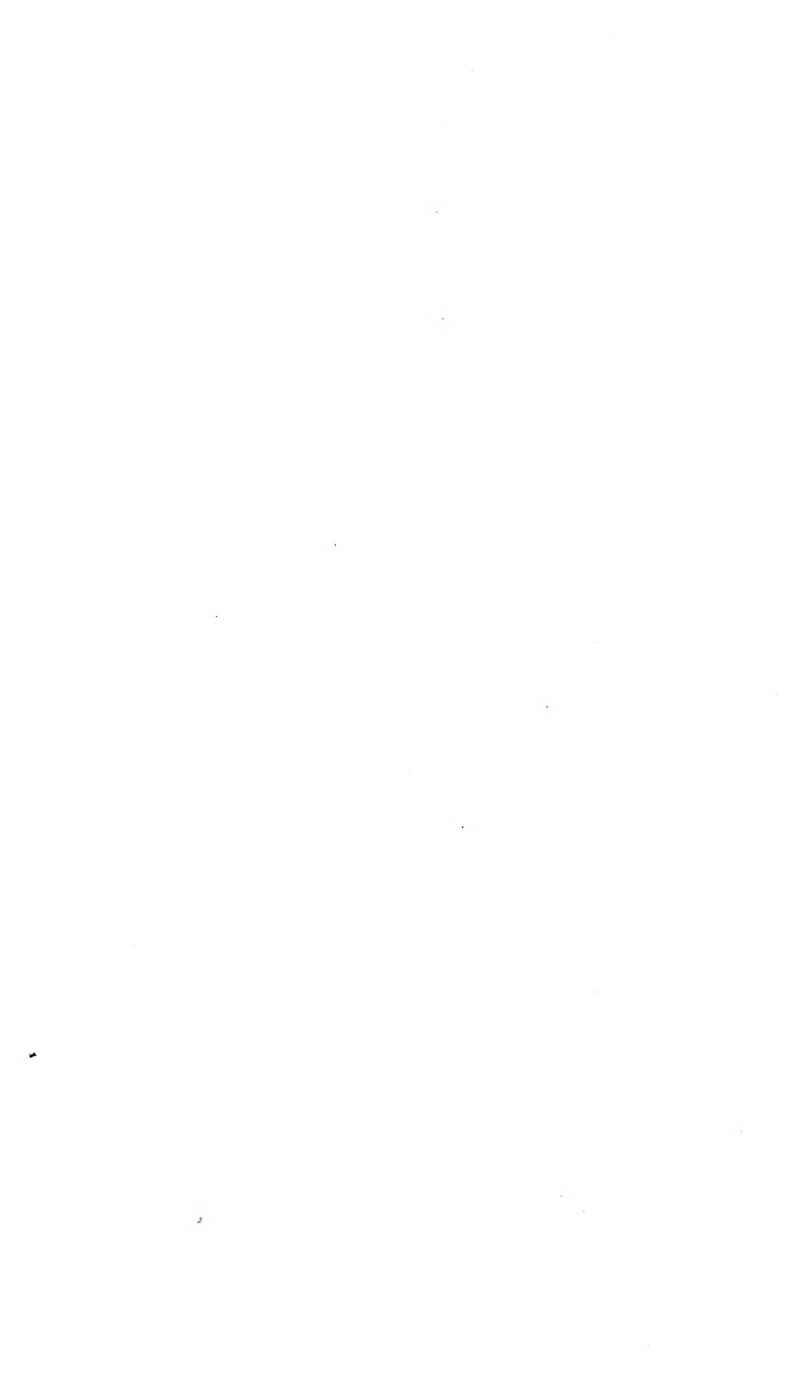
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A DEFENCE
OF
THE REFORMATION,
&c. &c.



The Third Part :

OF THE OBLIGATION AND NECESSITY THAT LAY UPON
OUR FATHERS TO SEPARATE THEMSELVES
FROM THE CHURCH OF ROME.



A DEFENCE OF THE REFORMATION,

&c. &c.

THE THIRD PART.

CHAP. I.

THAT OUR FATHERS HAD JUST, SUFFICIENT, AND NECESSARY CAUSES, FOR THEIR SEPARATION, SUPPOSING THAT THEY HAD RIGHT AT THE BOTTOM, IN THE CONTROVERTED POINTS.

WE should certainly be the most ungrateful persons in the world, if, after the favour that God has shewn us, in re-establishing the purity of his Gospel in the midst of us, we should not think ourselves bound to give him everlasting thanks. So great and precious an advantage ought to be deeply felt, and whilst we enjoy it with delight, we should pay our acknowledgments to the Author of it. But what ground soever we should have to rejoice in God, we must notwithstanding avow, that we should be very insensible in regard of others, if we could behold, without an extreme affliction, the misery of so many people who voluntarily deprive themselves of that good. Those who are at present engaged in the errors and superstitions from which it has pleased the Divine Goodness to deliver us, are our brethren, by the external profession of the Christian name, and by the con-

separation of one and the same baptism ; and how can we entirely rejoice, while we see them in a state which we believe to be so bad, and so contrary to our common calling ? I know that God only, who is the Lord of men's hearts and minds, can dissipate that gloomy darkness in which they are involved, and that it is our duty to pour out our ardent and continual prayers to him for his grace for them : but we ought not to neglect human methods, among which, that of justifying the conduct of our fathers on the subject of their separation, is one of the most efficacious ; and as it is by that especially that they labour to render us odious, so it is to that that I shall appropriate the continuation of this Work.

The separation of our fathers ought to be distinguished into three degrees . the *first* consists in that which they have loudly pronounced against the doctrine and customs of the Church of Rome, which they judged to be contrary to faith and piety, and which they have formally renounced : the *second* consists in this, that they have forsook the external communion of that church and those of its party : and the *third*, in that they have made other assemblies than hers, and that they have ranked themselves under another form of ministry . We have treated of the *first* already, where we have shewn the justice and necessity of the reformation which our fathers made ; the *third* shall be spoken to in the Fourth Part, and *this* is designed to examine the *second*. Our inquiry therefore at present, will be to know whether our fathers, in reforming themselves, ought to have separated themselves from the other party, who were not for a reformation ; or whether, notwithstanding the reformation, they ought yet to have abode with them in one and the same communion, and to have lived in that respect as they did heretofore . This is that which I design to make clear in the Third Part of this Work.

To enter upon this business, I confess that if we could suppose it as a certainty that all separation in matters of re-

ligion is odious and criminal, we ought to be the first in condemning the actions of our fathers; and that whatever aversion we should have for the errors and abuses which we see reigning in the Church of Rome, we ought to labour to bear them as patiently as it could be possible for us to do, in waiting till it should please God to correct them, and notwithstanding to enter into its communion, and to live under its ministry. But so far are we from being able to make a supposition of this nature, that on the contrary there is nothing more certain than this truth, that as there are unjust, rash, and schismatical separations, so there may be likewise not only just and lawful ones, but also necessary and indispensable ones. So the primitive Christians withdrew themselves from the Jewish Church, after it had obstinately remained in its unbelief: and afterwards, the orthodox in the first centuries held no communion with the Valentiniens, nor with the Manichees; nor in general, with those heretics who disturbed the purity of the Gospel with their errors. Nay when the Arians had even made themselves masters of the synods and churches, there was an actual separation made of a very great number of persons, as well of the body of the clergy as that of the people, who would not have any communion with them, and who endured upon that account all sorts of persecutions. Therefore also it was that St. Hilary Bishop of Poitiers earnestly exhorted the bishops and the orthodox people by a public letter that he addressed to them. “The name of *peace*,” says he to them, “is indeed very specious, and the mere appearance of *unity* has something splendid in it: but who knows not, that the church and the Gospel acknowledge no other peace than that which comes from Jesus Christ, that which he gave to his apostles before the glory of his passion, and that which he left in trust with them by his eternal command when he was about to leave them. It is this peace which we have taken care to seek when it has been lost, and to re-establish when it has been disturbed, and to preserve after we have

found it again. But the sins of our times, and the ministers or forerunners of antichrist, will not suffer us to be the authors of so great a good, nor that we should so much as partake of it. They have their peace which they boast of, which is nothing else but an unity of impiety, while they carry themselves not as the bishops of Jesus Christ, but as the prelates of antichrist." And about the end of his letter, "I exhort you," says he, "that you take heed of antichrist. Be not deceived by a foolish love of walls, nor respect the church more in roofs and in houses, nor strive any more on such frivolous considerations for the name of peace. As for myself, I find more security in the mountains, in the forests, in the lakes, in prisons, in gulls; for there it was that the Spirit of God animated the prophets. Separate therefore yourselves from Auxentius, who is an angel of Satan, an enemy to Christ, an open persecutor, a violator of the faith, who made a deceitful profession of the faith before the emperor, in which he joined blasphemy to that deceit. Let him assemble as many synods as he pleases against me, let him make me be declared a heretic, as he has often already done, let him proscribe me by public authority, let him stir up the wrath of the great men against me as much as he will, he can never be any other to me than a devil, since he is an Arian. I shall never have peace, but with those who, following the decree of our Nicene fathers, would anathematize the Arians, and acknowledge Jesus Christ to be truly God."*

St. Epiphanius also relates, that before the Synod of Seleucia, wherein Arianism was established, many people who found themselves to be under the jurisdiction of Arian bishops remained firm in the confession of the true faith, and set up other bishops themselves.† And the histories of Socrates, Theodoret, and Sozomen, may teach us, that while the Arians possessed the temples, and the sees of the

* Hilar. adv. Arianos.

† Epiph. hæres. 73.

churches, the orthodox held their assemblies apart, in the fields as well as in private houses.

With the same judgment St. Ambrose teaches, "That Jesus Christ alone is he from whom we ought never to separate ourselves, and to whom we ought to say, 'Lord, to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life.' That above all things, the faith of a church ought to be regarded, that we ought to hold it there if Jesus Christ dwells there; but if a people should be found there who are violators of the faith, or that an heretical pastor has polluted that habitation, we ought to separate ourselves from the communion of heretics, and to avoid all commerce with that synagogue. That we ought to separate ourselves from every church that rejects the true faith, and does not preserve the fundamentals of the apostles' preaching, without fear lest its communion should brand us with some note of perfidiousness."*

There could not therefore be a more unreasonable thing in the world, than to prepossess one's self in general against all manner of separation: for it is manifest that the communion of men is no otherwise desirable, than as it can consist with the communion of God; and that when that of men shall be found to be directly opposite to the true service of God and our own salvation, which is the only end of a religious society, we ought no longer to hesitate about our separation.

But to make out this truth yet a little more clear, we need but to set before their eyes what we have already said in the First Part, that the church may be considered either in respect of its *internal* state, inasmuch as it is the mystical body of Jesus Christ, the society of the truly faithful and the true elect of God, without any mixture of hypocrites and of worldlings, pure throughout as she is in God's sight; or in respect of its *external* state, inasmuch as it is a so-

* Ambros. Comm. in Luc. lib. 6. cap. 9.

ciety which, in the profession of one and the same religion, includes a sufficiently great number of the hypocrites and worldlings, who do not belong to the mystical body of Jesus Christ, nor are of the church, but in appearance only. That distinction is evident enough of itself, and needs not any proof, and our adversaries themselves will not oppose it. But although they do not oppose that distinction, yet they never fail of confounding these two things. For when they speak of the promises that God has made concerning the perpetual subsistence of his church, where it would be just to refer them to the church only as made up of the truly faithful, (since to speak properly, God looks upon them alone as his true church,) they refer them to the church inasmuch as it is mixed with the worldlings and hypocrites. And when the contest is about establishing the duties to which a religious society engages us, where it would be just to consider the church as mingled with the good and the wicked, the faithful and the worldly, such as it appears to us, they consider it as it is pure and without any mixture of hypocrites, such as it is in the eyes of God. We may say that this confusion is the source of all their errors, and the foundation of all the fallacies which they make on this matter.

We ought therefore, in order to our judging aright of a separation, to represent this distinction to ourselves, and to form within ourselves a just idea of it. For in the first place, it is without all doubt, that we never ought to separate ourselves from the communion of the truly faithful, who alone are the spouse of Jesus Christ, and his mystical body. If such a separation should go so far as to break the internal bond of that communion, which consists in having the same faith and Christian holiness, we could not make it without separating ourselves at the same time from Jesus Christ himself; and by consequence depriving ourselves of all hope of salvation, since there is no name under heaven given by which men may be saved, but only that of Jesus

Christ. If it should not go so far as to break the bond of *internal* communion, but only of the *external*, that is to say, no longer to acknowledge others for our brethren and members of the same body, nor to frequent the same assemblies with them, this is a true schism, which offends against the laws of charity, and which the authors shall especially answer for before the judgment-seat of God. And such were the schisms of the Novatians, the Donatists, the Luciferians, and many others, which were founded merely upon personal interests, or at least upon light and frivolous pretences.

It is further beyond doubt, that we ought not to break that external communion which it has with the worldly and profane that are mixed in a religious society, while they make a profession of the true faith, practising a sincere worship, and submitting themselves to that rule of manners which the Gospel lays down to us, although otherwise their lives and actions should very ill answer their profession. I confess that every well-ordered church ought to have its laws for the repressing of the vicious, and leading them back to repentance; and that when it cannot come to that end by the way of exhortation and censure, it has a right absolutely to cut them off from the body of that society. But besides that those kinds of excommunications ought never to fall upon a whole people, or upon a whole multitude, for fear of involving the innocent with the guilty; they never ought to be used, but in respect of impenitent sinners only, obstinate in their crimes, and publicly maintaining them. For the rest we ought to agree, that an exact discerning of the good and the wicked will not be made till the last day; and that till then, God would have us suffer that mixture, without partaking with the sins of the wicked, and without approving them; but yet without breaking under that pretence the bond of external communion. The reason of this conduct is, that it would not be possible for one to deprive one's self of the communion of the wicked, without depriving one's self at the

same time of that of many righteous, as St. Augustine has very well demonstrated against the Donatists. So that it would not be a sufficient reason for forsaking the communion of a church, only to allege a general depravation of manners, even when it should be true that it did reign therein.

But it is no less certain, that when it falls out that one party of the church considered in the second respect, that is to say, inasmuch as it is a mingled body of good and bad, should confirm itself in errors, and in practices contrary to the service of God and the salvation of men; and that it not only rejects the instructions given it upon that occasion, but would even force all others to have the same sentiments, and to practise the same worship, the separation of the other party is just, necessary, and indispensable. It is just; for in every case where there can be nothing else but an unjust communion, there is justice in a separation from it. But there can be nothing else but an unjust communion with a party which essentially destroys the true worship of God, which shuts up itself in errors directly contrary to men's salvation, and which through an intolerable tyranny would constrain all those who live in it, to make a profession of the same errors. It is then just for a man to separate himself from it.

But I say further, that that separation is necessary and indispensable, for divers reasons.

The First of all is, because of the visible danger whereby a man would insensibly expose himself to let his faith be corrupted, and his worship be violated, by the commerce to which that same communion would force him. In effect, when a man is in those assemblies, and sees himself under one and the same ministry with persons infected with errors, and engaged in a false worship, and who would force all others to be there too, what caution soever he should use, it is impossible that he should preserve himself in purity, or at least that he should not be in continual danger of corrupting himself, or falling into hypocrisy in making a profession

to believe that which he does not. He ought therefore to separate himself.

Secondly, He ought to do so by reason of the inevitable danger to which he would expose his children. For if it should be true that adult persons might live in communion with such a party as I have supposed without being infected with its poison, or without being hypocrites, which it is no ways possible for them to do, it would not be conceivable that their children could be exempted from that danger by ordinary ways, whatsoever care they should in other respects take of their education. It would be therefore to prostitute and destroy them, and by consequence for a man to destroy himself; for every one ought to answer before God as much for the salvation of his children as his own.

Thirdly, But besides these two interests, which impose an indispensable necessity on him, it is further certain that a man could not without a crime, nor even without a manifest contradiction, own those for his brethren, whom he believes God does not own for his children, and who are not in a condition to become such. A religious society is a mystical family, into which, to judge of it according to its natural appointment, one ought to admit those only who may be charitably and rationally judged to be in a state of adoption towards God, and at the farthest, such as are apparently in a state of conversion or of repentance: and in regard even of these latter, there ought to be some time intervene before the giving them external pledges of that communion, till their conversion or their repentance appear more fully. They suffer the wicked to be there, when their birth or their hypocrisy have externally introduced them, only by accident, to avoid troubles and scandals. And therefore it was that the ancient church acknowledged but three sorts of persons only to be in its communion, the faithful, the *catechumeni*, and the penitents; but as for those who taught false doctrine, or practised a false worship, it never had any union with them. The ancients not only had no communion with them, but to

shew how necessary and indispensable they judged a separation from them to be, they went so far as to refuse their communion with the orthodox themselves, when either by surprise or weakness, or some other interest, they had received heretics into their communion, although as to themselves they had kept their faith in its purity. We find in the Life of Gregory Nazianzen, that his father, who was also called Gregory, and who was Bishop of Nazianzen before him, having been deceived by a fallacious writing, and having given his communion to the Arians, all the monks of his diocess, with the greatest part of his church, separated themselves from him, although they well knew that he had not changed his mind, nor embraced heresy. And even the orthodox of the Church of Rome refused to hold communion with Pope Felix, as Theodoret tells us, although he entirely held the creed of the Council of Nice, because he held communion with the Arians. This I mention not absolutely to approve of that carriage, but only to shew how far their aversion went heretofore, which they had for holding communion with heretics.

Those who are prepossessed against all sorts of separation in the matters of religion, ought to remember, that the obligation that lies upon them to hold communion with those with whom they are externally joined, is not without its bounds and measures. We are joined together under certain conditions, which are principally the profession of a pure faith, or at least such as is free from all damnable errors, a worship freed from all that which is opposite to the essence of piety; in a word, a public ministry under which we may work out our own salvation. While these conditions remain, they make the communion subsist; but when they fail, the communion fails also, and there is a just ground for a separation, provided we observe these necessary cautions.

They cannot say, in this case, that we separate ourselves from the church, or that we forsake her communion, or that we break her unity. For the forsaken party being truly such

as we suppose it, ought not to be any more looked on as the church of Jesus Christ, but only as a party of the worldly who were before mingled with the truly faithful, and who through their obstinacy in errors and false worship had discovered themselves, and had themselves torn off the vail which as yet confounded them, after a manner, with the others. The orthodox in the first ages did not in the least break the unity of the church, when they would not hold communion with the Valentiniens, the Marcionites, the Montanists, the Manichees, and the other heterodox of those times, as I have noted already, any more than those who with so much constancy and resolution refused to hold communion with the Arians.

We ought not therefore hastily to condemn all kind of separation; and since there are such kinds of it as are necessary, just, and lawful, as there are such as are unjust and rash, it would be the extremity of folly to judge of all after the same manner, without any difference or distinction. The Roman Church herself, which has sometimes cut off whole nations, as France and Germany, from her communion, which may have been seen to have been so often divided into divers parties, whereof one has excommunicated the other, would not it may be freely suffer that we should treat of matters with this confusion. So that disputing at present about our separation with her, we shall demand no unjust or unreasonable thing, when we tell them that we ought to examine of what nature that separation is, to consider the reasons, and wisely to weigh the circumstances; for if our fathers separated themselves upon light grounds, and without having any sufficient cause, if they were even under circumstances which ought to have bound them to have remained united with the other party, which was not for a reformation, we shall agree with all our hearts to condemn them: but if, on the contrary, the reasons which they had were just, sufficient, and necessary, if there was nothing in the circumstances of times, places, and persons, that could hinder them

from doing that which they did, it is certain that instead of condemning them we should bless them; we should think ourselves happy in following their footsteps; and as for the reproaches and venomous accusations of the author of the *Prejudices* and such like, we should bear them with patience, looking on them as the effect of a blind passion.

Let us therefore begin to make that examination into the causes of our separation. Every one knows what the matters that divide us are; that they are not either points of mere discipline, such as that for which Victor Bishop of Rome separated his church from those of Asia, who should keep the feast of Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon; nor merely questions of the school, which consist in nothing but terms remote from the knowledge of the vulgar, as that which they call *trium Capitulorum*, which raised so many troubles in the times of the Emperor Justinian and Pope Vigilius; nor in mere personal interests, such as we may see in the schisms of anti-popes; nor purely in personal crimes or accusations, as in the schism of the Donatists; nor even in a general corruption of manners, although that was extremely great in the time of our fathers. The articles that separate us, are points that, according to us, essentially disturb the faith by which we are united to Jesus Christ, points which essentially alter the worship that we owe to God, which essentially deprave the sources of our justification, and which corrupt both the external and internal means of our obtaining grace and glory. In a word, they are such points as we believe to be wholly incompatible with salvation, and which by consequence hinder us from being able to give the title or the quality of a true church of Jesus Christ to a party which is obstinate in the profession and practice of them, and which would force us to be so too. I confess that we cannot say that our controversies are all of that importance; there are some, undoubtedly, which are of lesser weight and force, which it was fitting for them to reform themselves in, but which notwithstanding would not have given alone a just

cause of separation. In this rank I place the question of the *Limbus* of the ancient fathers, that of the local descent of Jesus Christ into hell, that of the distinction of priests and bishops to be of divine right, that of the keeping of Lent, and some others of that nature, where there might have been seen error and superstition enough to be corrected, but which would not have gone so far as to have caused a rupture of communion. So that it is not for these kinds of things that our fathers left the Church of Rome; they had more sufficient, more urgent and indispensable reasons in the other controversies, among which, that of justification by meritorious works and by indulgences, transubstantiation, the adoration of the eucharist, the sacrifice of the mass, invocation of saints and angels, religious worshipping of images, human satisfactions, the lordship of the Pope and his clergy over men's consciences, held the chiefest place. These are the true points which caused a separation; and if the others contributed any thing to it, it was only by the connexion which they had with these, or because they noted a general spirit of superstition contrary to true piety; or in fine, by reason of their number: for sometimes divers boils, less dangerous each to a part, all together make a mortal and incurable disease. However it be, it appears that our fathers had besides but too just and necessary reasons of their separation.

But to come to set out this matter in its full evidence, it will be requisite to see what they can say in opposition to what I have said. It seems to me, that they can take but one of these three sides. 1. Either to deny that the transubstantiation, adoration of the eucharist, the sacrifice of the mass, &c. which we call errors, are so in effect: or, 2. To say that even when they should suppose that they were errors, they would not nevertheless take away from the Church of Rome the quality of a true church. Neither would they be incompatible with salvation, and by consequence they could not be a sufficient cause of separation,

3. Or in fine, to maintain that even when these points should be a sufficient cause of separation, they could not be so at least in regard of our fathers, because our fathers were by right subject to their ordinary pastors, dependent upon their hierarchical government, and chiefly upon that of the Church of Rome, which they pretend is the mother and mistress of all others, and the centre of Christian unity; from whence it follows that they could never separate themselves, but that on the contrary they were bound to receive all the conditions it required to be in its communion. These are the only three things, in my judgment, which they can propose with any colour. I will examine the last in the following chapter; let us here consider the other two.

The first necessarily engages the man who will make use of it, to enter into an examination of the foundation of those matters, or which comes to the same thing, solidly to establish the infallibility of the Church of Rome, and of that party that adheres to it; which is a general controversy, that includes all the others, as I have shewn in the First Part of this Work: and by consequence, he must renounce all that wrangling dispute which goes only upon prejudices. The justice or injustice of our separation will depend on the foundation. For how can they assure themselves, that those things which we call errors and a false worship are, on the contrary, evangelical truths, and a right and lawful worship, without going on to that examination? which shews, as I have already frequently observed, that all those indirect attacks which they assault us with, are nothing else but vain amusings, and beatings of the air, which serve only to make a noise.

The second thing will not less engage them in the examination of the foundation of those matters, than the first. For in supposing that those things which we call errors are such in effect, they must necessarily see of what nature they are, and what opposition they have to true piety, to judge aright whether they are sufficient causes for a separation,

and whether conscience cannot accommodate itself to them. I confess that this is no very hard matter to be known; for how small a knowledge soever they may have of religion and the worship of God, they may very easily perceive, that if transubstantiation, for example, is an error, they cannot but adore the substance of bread in the room of Jesus Christ; they may easily perceive, that if the worshipping of images is forbidden by the Second Commandment of the Law, they draw upon themselves the jealousy of God, as he himself declares; they may easily perceive, that if the sacrifice of the mass is not in effect a propitiatory sacrifice, by which they may apply to themselves the virtue of that on the cross, they do an injury to the only sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and that they vainly seek the virtue of it in an act where it is not applied; they may easily perceive, that if the lordship that the Church of Rome or its councils usurp over men's consciences is ill-grounded, that they render unto men a kind of adoration which is only due to God alone, which cannot but be an unpardonable crime in regard of Him who has said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." But whether it would be an easy or a difficult matter to be known, that is not the business about which we dispute at present. It is sufficient to shew, that the separation of our fathers had just, sufficient, necessary, and indisputable causes; supposing that what they said of the errors of the Church of Rome were true, and that they could not be accused either of rashness or of schism, without contesting their supposition; nor that they could contest their supposition, without coming to an inspection into the very things themselves. Whence it follows, that all that dispute which they raise against us about forms, is but a mere vain wrangling, unworthy of any sound person. If that which our fathers have laid down concerning the errors which the Church of Rome forces men to believe for to be of her communion, be not true, we do not any further pretend to defend their separation; but if it be true, God and men will bear

them witness that it was justly done, and according to the dictates of an upright conscience.

They will say, it may be, that we ought not upon such light grounds to suppose that that which our fathers said concerning the errors of the Church of Rome is true; since they are the points in dispute, wherein the Church of Rome pretends that we are in an error, as we pretend that she is. But there cannot be any thing said more frivolous; for the supposition that we make, is in words of good sense and right reason, because we make it to force our adversaries to come to a discussion of the things themselves, upon which the judgment that ought to be made of our separation depends, and to make them acknowledge that all those accusations which they form against our fathers, that they have broken the Christian unity, that they have forsaken the church, that they have made a criminal schism, are rash accusations, unjust and precipitate, since they cannot rightly judge of their action, either to condemn or absolve it, until first of all they have examined the causes of their separation, and the reasons which they have alleged, which can never be done but by a discussion of the foundation. In effect, every accusation which has no certain foundation, and which one must be compelled to retract, is precipitate and rash. But that which they form against our fathers, before their having examined the foundation, is of that nature. It has no certain foundation, for they cannot know whether their action be just or unjust; and they may be forced to retract it, when they shall have examined their reasons. It is therefore a condemnable rashness in them who have a right to repel, till they have made that examination; and it is to oblige them to do it, that we suppose that our fathers had right at the foundation.

CHAP. II.

THAT OUR FATHERS WERE BOUND TO SEPARATE THEMSELVES FROM THE BODY OF THOSE WHO POSSESSED THE MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH, AND PARTICULARLY IN THE SEE OF ROME, SUPPOSING THAT THEY HAD A RIGHT AT THE FOUNDATION.

BUT they will say, "Whatsoever we should pretend, we can never do otherwise than condemn the separation of your fathers, not for having no just grounds of separation, but because the right of separating one's self does not belong to all sorts of persons; and the Church of Rome being, by a special privilege, the mother and mistress of all others, we could never lawfully separate ourselves from her; and because it is on the contrary indispensably necessary to the salvation of men to obey, and to remain in her communion. So that your fathers being, on one side, subject to their ordinary pastors, they ought never to have divided themselves from their body, for what cause soever there should have been; and on the other side, there being no true church, and by consequence, no salvation to be had, otherwise than in the communion of the See of Rome, it is a crime for any to separate themselves from it, whatsoever pretence they can urge for that purpose."

This objection is founded upon two propositions: the one, That we never ought to separate ourselves from the body of her ordinary pastors; and the other, That we ought never to separate from the Church of Rome in particular.

As to the first of these propositions, I confess, as I have said elsewhere, that the people owe a great respect and obedience to the pastors that administer to them the nourishment of their souls, the words of eternal life: according to the precept of St. Paul, "Obey them that have the rule over

you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls." Heb. 13. 17. This obedience ought to be accompanied with a real esteem, that should make us to presume well of them, which should give us a readiness to be instructed by their word, and be very remote from calumnies, murmurs, and rash suspicions founded upon light appearances; and that obedience, that esteem, that good opinion, ought to be without doubt greater for all the body in general, than for particular men in it; for there is a greater probability that a whole body should contain more light, and by consequence more authority, than each private man could have. I say, that when even vices are generally spread over the whole body of the pastors, the people ought to labour to bear them with patience, and cover them as much as they can with charity, in praying to God that it would please him to cleanse his sanctuary, and to send good labourers into his harvest: and howsoever it should be, while they can work out their salvation under their ministry, they ought not to separate themselves from them.

But we ought not therefore to imagine, that the duty of a people toward their ordinary pastors should be without all bounds, or that their dependence on them should have no measure. That which we have said in the First Chapter touching the bonds of church communion, ought to be extended to the pastors and to the people; their duties are mutual; and there is none but Jesus Christ alone, on whom they can depend without conditions. To flatter the body of the pastors with that privilege, is to set up men upon the throne of God; to inspire them with pride, vanity, and negligence; it is to set up a lordship in the church, that Jesus Christ has forbidden, and to give pastors the boldness to do and adventure upon all things. It is certain, therefore, that the tie which the faithful have to their ordinary pastors, is limited; and that it ought to endure, only as far as the glory of God, the fidelity that we owe to Jesus Christ, and the hope of our own salvation, can subsist with their government. If it fall out so

that their government cannot be any further compatible with those things, in that case they ought to separate; and it would be to set up the most senseless, wicked, and profane proposition in the world, to say the contrary.

The ministry of the pastors is established in the church only as a mere external means, to preserve the true faith and worship there, and to lead men to salvation. But the light of nature teaches us, that when mere external means shall be remote from their end, and that instead of guiding us to their end, they turn us away from and deprive us of it, that then the love which we have for the end ought to prevail over that which we may have for the means; because the means are only desirable in reference to their end, or a production of that which we have for the end. So that when those who are wont to distribute to us aliments necessary to our lives, give us on the contrary poisonous food instead of aliments, and when they will force us to take them, we must no longer doubt that the interest of our lives ought to take us off from that tie which we might have had to those persons. A guide is an agent to conduct us to the place whither we desire to go; but when we know that that guide leads us in a false way, and that instead of helping us to go to that place, he makes us wander from it, it is no question but that we ought to separate from him, and renounce his conduct. The ordinary pastors are guides, men that ought to shew us the way to heaven; if therefore, instead of shewing us, they make us go a quite contrary way, who can doubt that we are bound to forsake them?

But they will say, How can they be forsaken, without resisting God himself, who has subjected us to them? Is not their ministry a divine institution, and is it not Jesus Christ who, by the testimony of St. Paul, has given some to be apostles, some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints? Eph. 4. 11, 12. I answer, That we must distinguish that which there is of divine in a ministry, from that which there is of human in it. That there should be ministers in

the church, is God's institution; but that the ministry should be committed to such or such persons, excepting the apostles and evangelists, who were the first pastors of it, that is in the disposal of men. The order of the ministry therefore is inviolable, because it comes from God: it is not permitted to any creature to abolish it. But it is not the same of persons raised to the office of the ministry; for as it is by the means of men that they receive their call, it frequently happens that their call is corrupted by the vices of those who give, and of those who receive it; in that respect it is corruptible. Intrigues, ambition, covetousness, and a spirit of pride and dominion, error, superstition, ignorance, and negligence, often mingle themselves with it, and sully the holiness of the ministry. When that corruption is only in some private men, the ordinary ways of discipline may be used against them; they may cut them off, or depose, or excommunicate them, according to the exigency of the case. But when it spreads over all the body in such a manner and to that degree that the safety of the faithful can no longer subsist under the conduct of those persons, and that there is no hope among them of any amendment, then the only remedy that remains is to separate from them: and it would be so far from either violating the order of God, or opposing the ministry that he had set up, that it would be on the contrary to deliver it, as much as in us lay, out of the hands of those who have invaded it, and to draw it out of that oppression to which they have reduced it. This separation therefore only regards those persons who were unlawfully called to the ministry, and who abused it against God and his church, and not that which it has of divine, but that which it has in it of human and corruptible; or to say better, that which it had actually corrupted in that call.

The choice of persons, and their elevation to ecclesiastical functions, being a human thing, and consequently exposed to all the accidents of men's weakness and corruption, we cannot imagine, without doing an injury to the wisdom of God,

that he would have so strictly and so severely tied his faithful to them, that they should not have had any power to separate in any case. For if it were so, it might happen that the truth might be forced to yield to heresy, and piety to impiety; it might happen that the children of God might be under the conduct of his declared enemies, without their being able to withdraw themselves; it might happen that the faithful might be engaged in an evident danger, or even in a necessity of losing the purity of their faith, through the contagion of their guides, and have no means to draw themselves out of it; all which is incompatible with the divine wisdom and goodness.

But is it not a very amazing thing, to see a people separate from the body of those who possess the offices of the church? It is, without doubt; and God will not therefore permit his children to be often reduced to so great a necessity: notwithstanding he permits it sometimes, to afflict his people, and to chastise them for the contempt they have had of his word and his favours. He permits it, to shew that the subsistence of his church and the salvation of his faithful does not absolutely depend upon human means, since those means may be perverted, and fall out contrary to their appointment. He permits it in fine, by those sad examples, to keep the pastors in humility, and in a care to acquit themselves faithfully of their charges, and to hinder the people from neglecting to instruct themselves in the mysteries of the Gospel, and that they should not rely with too much confidence upon their pastors. But when God reduces the faithful to that extraordinary necessity, besides that the scandal of a separation, and the other inconveniences that follow, cannot of right but be imputed to the pastors who have degenerated from their call, and abandoned the saving truth which was committed to them, and the due care of their flocks, to become oppressors of them; besides that, I say, it is evident that that scandal and those inconveniences, whatsoever they are, would never balance these two weighty interests, to wit, that of working

out one's salvation, and that of preserving the Gospel, which are so great, that nothing in the world can over-rule them. On the contrary side, the higher the order of those is elevated, who bestow those ecclesiastical charges, and the more general is the corruption of those who hold them, the stronger and more indispensable obligation lies on the faithful to separate themselves from them: for then the evil is in public channels, and death runs in the same places from whence they should receive their life. Just so as when the air of a town is infected, the necessity of withdrawing from it suddenly is so much the greater, because the air is of a more ordinary use than any thing else.

They who would not have us in any case have a right to separate ourselves from the body of those who possess the ministry, have never considered well of what nature that communion is, which the faithful have with Jesus Christ, and of what nature that is, which they have with their pastors. For if the people had a mediate communion with Jesus Christ, and an immediate one with their pastors; that is to say, if they were only united to Jesus Christ, because they are so to their pastors, and because the pastors are so to Jesus Christ, as the hand is united to the head, only because that is so to the arm, and because the arm is to the head, they would possibly have some reason to say, that there could be no case wherein the people ought to separate themselves from their pastors, because they could maintain that the pastors were a necessary medium for the people to be joined to Jesus Christ, as the arm is a necessary medium for the hand to be joined to the head. But it is quite otherwise. For the faithful are united to Jesus Christ immediately, and with their pastors mediately; that is to say, they are united to their pastors only because they are united to Jesus Christ, and because Jesus Christ is united to the pastors; so far are the pastors from being a necessary medium to the faithful to their being joined to Jesus Christ, that on the contrary, Jesus Christ is a necessary medium for them to be joined to their

pastors. Both people and pastors are united immediately with Jesus Christ, and by Jesus Christ we are united together; for Jesus Christ is the centre and bond of our mutual communion: therefore the apostle sharply censures the Corinthians for this, that they were divided among themselves, one saying, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, and another, I am of Cephas, and another, I am of Christ: "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" I Cor. I. 12, 13. Which implies this, that we are all immediately united to Jesus Christ, because it is he only who died for us, and in his name alone that we are baptized: and to pretend that the faithful are joined to Jesus Christ by his ministers, is to divide him into as many parties, or into as many sects, as there are ministers. But it manifestly follows from thence, that the faithful ought to be no further united with their pastors, than as it shall appear to them that their pastors are to Jesus Christ; and that they ought to separate from them, when it shall appear to them that they themselves are separated from him, and that they would separate the flocks which they have had committed to them. This is what the light of common sense dictates without further reasoning; for to what good would the communion of those pretended pastors tend, howsoever invested they should be in titles and dignities, without that of Jesus Christ?

That which I have said of their communion with them, I must also say of their dependence upon them. That which the faithful have upon Jesus Christ is immediate and absolute, and that which they have on their pastors is mediate and conditional: our souls and our consciences do not belong to them to dispose of at their will and pleasure. In this respect we belong to Jesus Christ alone, who has purchased us at the price of his blood, and who governs us by his Spirit and his word. The pastors are only ministers, interpreters, or the heralds who make us to understand his

voice, and all the dependence which we have upon them is founded upon that, which both they and we have upon Jesus Christ our Sovereign Lord, of which it is both the cause, and the rule and measure. We ought therefore to be subject to them, while they shall act as his ministers and his interpreters, while their actions and their government bear the characters of his authority. But as those ministers are men who may abuse their offices, and act against their own head, if it happen that the characters of the divine authority which subjects us to them do not appear in their word, if there appear a contrary character there, if instead of leading us to Jesus Christ they turn us from him, if they would govern as lords and not as ministers, if they claim that absolute obedience to themselves which we owe to none besides our Saviour; in a word, if to depend upon them we must violate the dependence which we have upon Jesus Christ, can they then say that we cannot and that we ought not to separate from them, and to renounce an unjust government?

If they would decide this question by the Scripture, St. Paul tells us, That if he himself, or an angel from heaven, should preach to us another Gospel than that which he has preached, he should be accursed. Gal. 1. 8. He says that upon the occasion of some false teachers that troubled the churches of Galatia; and speaking only of them, one would think that he ought to have been contented to have let his anathema fall upon those particular teachers that might err, and who had not so great an authority, but that one might very well separate himself from them, when they should happen to prevaricate. But to take away all pretence of distinction and wrangling disputes, he makes a most express choice of two of the greatest authorities that were among creatures, of an angel and an apostle, the only two created authorities to which God has communicated the favour of infallibility, and he has enjoined us to anathematize them, if it should happen that they should preach another Gospel than that of Jesus Christ. We know very well, that the

angels of heaven are incapable of ever committing that sin; we know very well, that he himself would never have committed it; and yet notwithstanding, he turns his discourse upon himself and upon the angels: and is not this to give us to understand, that there is no created authority, either in the heaven or upon the earth, upon which we ought absolutely to depend, and from which we ought not to separate, in case it would turn us from Jesus Christ? Let them tell us whether the dependence that the people owe to the body of their ordinary pastors, that is to say, of those who possess the offices of the church, who may have been very ill chosen, who may have intruded themselves by very bad ways, who may be carried out therein to all the passions and disorders of human nature; whether, I say, the dependence which they owe to them, be stronger and more inviolable than that which they ought to have for an apostle, and such an apostle as St. Paul; and even for an angel from heaven, if he should become a preacher? This latter dependence, notwithstanding, is not absolute, it may be lawfully broken upon a certain case: who will take the boldness to say, after that, that it cannot and ought not to be done in a like case?

But if to the Scripture we would add experience, that would teach us, that there have been sometimes those seasons, in which good men have been forced to separate themselves from the body of their pastors: for not to speak of the seven thousand which in Elijah's time preserved their purity against the idolatry whereinto the Church of Israel had fallen, who, according to all that appears, lived separated from the body of their idolatrous pastors, at least in a negative separation, we need but to turn our eyes to the example of the orthodox in the time of the Arians. For there are two actions evident in that history, one, that Arianism had invaded the body of the ordinary pastors, and the other, that those among the orthodox who were of any zeal and courage separated themselves from that infected body, and would

not own them for true pastors while they should remain in heresy. The first of these actions is justified by almost an infinite number of proofs, taken out either from history, or the testimony of the ancients. For before the death of Constantine, the Arians, who had been condemned in the Council of Nice, fell upon the person of St. Athanasius, and some time after they banished him as far as Treves. This was their first victory; but they did not stop there: they got over to their side the spirit of Constans, after the death of Constantine, who remaining sole emperor, employed all his authority, and the Arians all their artifices, to establish Arianism every where. The greatest part of the bishops fell either under their violence or seduction. Divers councils were assembled, and many forms of faith laid down there, which all tended to set up the doctrine of Arius, some more openly and others more privately. Those among the bishops who made any opposition, were cruelly persecuted, deposed from their places, sent into exile, and treated as heretics, or the enemies of the church's peace. Therefore it was, that Constans reproached Liberius, that he was alone, and that he opposed himself to all the world, in the defence of Athanasius. "When so great a part of the world," said he to him, "resides in thy person, that thou alone shouldst take the part of a wicked man, and dare to break the peace of the whole world." "I would be alone," answered Liberius; "the cause of the faith is not the more weakened. For heretofore there were but three found who resisted the command of a king."* Liberius himself was banished, from which he was not freed till after he subscribed to Arianism. And as the West was then less infected with this heresy than the East, the emperor caused a council to assemble at Ariminum, in which, after specious beginnings, the end was very unhappy: for the bishops renounced therein the orthodox doctrine, which made the Son

* Dialog. inter Constant. & Liber. apud Baron. ad ann. 355.

of God of one and the same essence with his Father. To this effect, they rejected the word *consubstantial*, which the Council of Nice had inserted into its creed, as a word that was scandalous, sacrilegious, and unworthy of God; which was no-where to be found in the Scripture, and they banished it from the church. This appears by the letter of that synod itself to the Emperor Constans, set down by St. Hilary, in which they gave the emperor thanks, “ That he had shewn them what they ought to do, to wit, to decree that nobody should speak any more either of *substance*, or of *consubstantial*, which are names unknown to the Church of God; and that they rejoiced, because they had acknowledged the very same thing that they had held before.” They add, “ That the truth, which cannot be overcome, has obtained the victory, so that that name unworthy of God which was not to be found wrote in the sacred laws, should not be for the future mentioned by any person.” And they declare, “ That they entirely hold the same doctrine with the oriental churches, and that they have rendered unto them and him a full obedience.”* It was for this reason that Auxentius Bishop of Milan, an Arian, said in his letter to Valentinian and Valens, emperors, “ That he ought not to endure that the unity of six hundred bishops should be broken by a small number of contentious persons.”† So that Vincent of Lerins makes no scruple to acknowledge, “ That the poison of Arianism had infected, not some small parts only, but almost all the world:”‡ and it was to that sense that Phæbadius a French bishop, who lived in those times, said, “ That the subtilty and fraud of the devil had almost wholly possessed men’s minds, that it persuaded them to believe heresy as the right faith, and condemned the true faith as an heresy.” And a little lower, having an eye

* Apud Hilar. in fragment.

† Apud Hilar. Post. Epist. advers. Arian.

‡ Vincent. Lerins. Commonit. 1. chap. 6.

to what had been done at the Council of Ariminum, "The bishops," saith he, "made an edict, that no one should mention one only substance, that is to say, that no one should preach in the church, that the Father and the Son were but one only virtue."*

I might add to these testimonies that of Gregory Nazianzen in the oration that he made in the praise of St. Athanasius: there, after having described the furies of George Patriarch of Alexandria and an Arian, and the impieties of the Council of Seleucia, he adds, "We may see one sort unjustly banished from their sees, and others put into their places, after their having subscribed to the impiety, which was required of them as a necessary condition. Plotting never ceased on one side, nor the calumniator on the other. This is that which has made many among us fall into the snare, who were else invincible; for although their error did not go so far as to seduce their minds, yet they subscribed notwithstanding; and by that means conspired with the most wicked men, and if they were not partakers in their flames, they were at least blackened with their smoke. This is that which has made me often pour forth rivers of tears, beholding wickedness spread abroad so wide and so much every where, and that those themselves that ought to have been the defenders of the word there, have become the persecutors of the orthodox doctrine. For it is certain that the pastors have been carried away after an insensible manner, and to speak with the Scripture, Divers pastors have left my vineyard desolate; they have abused and loaded that desirable portion with shame; that is to say, the Church of God, which the sweat and blood of so many martyrs before and since the coming of Jesus Christ had besprinkled, and which was consecrated by the sufferings of God himself, who died for our salvation. If you except some few, who have either been despised by reason of the

* Phæbad. lib. contr. Arian. p. 219.

obscurity of their names, or who have resisted by their virtue, (for it is very requisite, that there should yet have some remained to be, as it were, a seed and a root to Israel, to make it flourish and revive again,) all were swayed by the times. There was only this difference among them, that some were fallen deeper into the snare, and others more slowly; that some were the chief in wickedness, and others held the second place.”* Cardinal Baronius could not avoid making this reflection in setting down this passage: “So it was that Gregory deplored the ruin of the whole Eastern Church. But if we would add the ruin that befel the Western Church, which I have just before described, we shall easily judge, that there has not been any time since, wherein the whole Christian world has been more disturbed, than it was then, since almost all the preachers of the churches were fallen into the precipice, and that the face of the Catholic Church was never so dreadful.”†

But the second action which we have proposed, is not less certain than the former; to wit, That those among the orthodox who had any zeal or courage, separated themselves from the body of their ordinary pastors, and would not own them for their pastors while they remained in heresy. In effect, that was the chief cause for which they suffered so many murders and banishments, the Arians no ways tolerating those who refused their communion. The perpetual accusation wherewith they charged them, was, That they were the schismatics who had violated the peace and unity of the church. This is that which Auxentius reproached St. Hilary with, and Eusebius of Verceille, in the letter which I have before cited. “They are,” said he, “men condemned and deposed, who think of nothing but making of schisms wheresoever they come;” for so it was, that that false bishop called the just separation to which St. Hilary

* Greg. Naz. Orat. 21.

† Baron. ad ann. 359.

exhorted the faithful, by his writings, as we have seen in the preceding chapter.

Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, relates upon this subject, that the cruelty of the Arians proceeded to that height, that they forced, by all sorts of unjust ways, men and women to receive the sacrament at their hands, even to the opening of their mouths by force; and that those to whom they offered that violence, looked upon it as the most cruel of all punishments, that divers made so great a resistance to it, that they could not obtain their ends, and that in their rage they tore their breasts to revenge themselves of their refusals.* He himself testifies that the horror which the orthodox had to be found in the same assemblies with the Arians was so great, that having no churches wherein they could publicly worship God, they assembled with the Novatians, who had three churches in that city; because these latter were indeed schismatics, but not heretics as the Arians; and that if the Novatians had been willing, the Catholics would have made but one church with them.† Sozomen relates also, that the Emperor Valens, who was an Arian, having gone to the city of Edessa, and having learned there that the orthodox, that is to say, those who persevered in the faith of the consubstantiality of the Son, made all their assemblies in a field near the city, because all the churches were in the hands of the Arians; he punished the governor of the province, who suffered those assemblies, and commanded him to go thither the next day to hinder them with all his force from assembling themselves, and to punish those who should oppose themselves; that the people having heard that order, did not fail to meet there; and the governor having gone thither, and finding in the way a woman who was running thither with her little child, he asked her if she had not heard what the emperor had commanded? but that the woman without

* Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. 1. cap. 30.

† Ibid

being moved, answered him that she was not ignorant of it; and that it was for that very reason that she ran thither, to be there with others; which made such an impression upon the spirit of the governor, that he went back to the emperor, and acquainted him with that obstinate resolution, and caused him to revoke the orders he had given.* I confess that there were many of the orthodox who had not courage enough to go so far as a separation, and who contented themselves with only groaning under the Arian tyranny, in waiting for better times. But it is also certain, that those who had more zeal and courage withdrew themselves from the communion of those heretics, and that they believed themselves bound to do it for the making sure of their salvation. Therefore it was that Faustinus, in his treatise against the Arians, said, “That if any one did not believe that the society of the Arians could be rendered culpable, under a pretence that he had the testimony of his own conscience, which did not accuse him of having violated or renounced the faith there, it belonged to such a one to take heed, and to examine himself. But as for me,” adds he, “the cause of God being concerned, I judge myself bound to use more precaution, and to have a greater fear than those persons have. For it is written, A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he who is such, is perverted; and that he sins, being condemned in himself. And as to the punishment of dissemblers, it is written, All flesh shall worship before my face, saith the Lord God, and the saints shall come forth, and they shall see those who have transgressed against me; for the worm of the hypocrites shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched. Isaiah 66. 23, 24. The Apostle forbids us also to enter into fellowship with unbelievers. And elsewhere, after having given a description of sins, he condemns not only those who commit such things, but those

* Sozomenus Hist. Eccles. lib. 6. cap. 18.

also who consent to those who commit them. There are divers other passages in the Scripture, which forbid our companying with heretics; but I would only note these here briefly, to the end that you should not think, that it is out of a vain superstition, that we avoid the communion of those whom the divine justice has condemned."

Behold then two actions that I have proposed, in my judgment sufficiently justified; and by consequence, the right of separating ourselves from the body of our ordinary pastors, when they teach doctrines contrary to the true faith, which they would constrain the faithful to profess, established by an example, against which I do not see any thing which they can rationally oppose, or hinder it from being like to that of our fathers. For if they say that there were in that party of the orthodox that separated themselves, divers bishops that authorized that action; besides that, we may say the same thing of the party of the Reformation, in which they know that there was a very considerable number of pious and learned prelates; and even some, who had the courage to suffer death in the defence of that cause. Besides that, I say, it is certain that it is not the episcopal dignity that makes the Reformation lawful, it is lawful as often as it has causes that are just, sufficient, and necessary, at the foundation: and wheresoever those causes are to be found, the faithful people have as much right to separate themselves as the bishops. If the people had no right to separate themselves from the body of their pastors who should teach them false doctrine, it could not be by reason of the authority which the pastors have over the people, for the body of the pastors has at least as much authority over particular pastors, as it has over the people; so that if that reason were not sufficiently valid in regard of particular bishops, they may very well see that it would not be so in regard of the faithful people. In effect, a separation founded upon the fear of dishonouring God, and prejudicing one's own salvation, is a common right; and the laity are not less bound to it than the bishops.

since both the one and the other ought, according to the precept of the Apostle, to “work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.” Phil. 2. 12. If they say that the separation which fell out in time of the Arians was founded upon the authority of the Nicene Council, wherein Arius and his followers had been condemned; whereas that of our fathers is not established by the authority of any council, since there is not one that has condemned the doctrines and customs of the Church of Rome: I answer, That this difference is yet null and void. For not to mention, that the Arians of whom we speak called themselves the Catholics, and took it as a great injury when they were called Arians, or followers of Arius, and that their councils had pronounced nothing directly against that of Nice, their separation was founded upon the things themselves, that is to say, upon the necessity of acknowledging the Son of God to be consubstantial with the Father, in order to the acknowledging him to be truly God, and not upon the bare authority of the Nicene Council, to which they might have opposed that of the church then in her Councils of Ariminum and of Constantinople, which included all the East and all the West; and if they had had no more but that, they ought not to have separated from the body of their actually governing pastors, that they might have cleaved to a synod which was past and gone. It was therefore the importance of the truth that was contested, and that of the error that was opposite to it, which made the separation, and not the mere authority of the Nicene Fathers; and therefore it is that St. Augustine, disputing against Maximinus an Arian, would that they should set aside as well the Council of Nice, as that of Ariminum; and that they should only contend about the things themselves. Not but that sometimes the orthodox did set before them the Council of Nice, according to the manner of disputes, where one will neglect no advantage, for its being ever so small; but it was as a little help, and not as the essential reason of their separation, which was always taken from the thing itself, and from

the testimonies of the Scripture; so that that difference is very frivolous. If they say lastly, that the point that was controverted then, was one of a far greater importance than those upon which our fathers separated themselves; I answer, That indeed the article of the consubstantiality of the Son is one of the chief and most fundamental articles of the Christian religion; but that does not hinder, that those that are controverted between the Church of Rome and us, should not also be of the greatest importance to salvation, and sufficient to cause a separation. And when they would make the justice or injustice of ours to depend on that, they must quit all that vain dispute of prejudices, and go on to the discussion of the foundation itself.

The author of the *Prejudices* must not take it ill, that in endeavouring to decide the question concerning the right of the separation of our fathers, I make use here of his own testimony. For it is a matter surprising enough, that writing in his Eighth and Ninth Chapters, in which he would, he says, “convince us of schism, without entering upon a discussion either of our doctrine or our mission;”* that he should not have remembered what he himself had just before said in the Seventh. First of all, he there proposes this difficulty as on our side: “If the visible church were really fallen into error, as we suppose that it is possible for it to do, if it drive away the truly faithful from its bosom, if it persecute them, must those truly faithful needs be deprived of all external worship in religion? Must they needs cleave to the church to perish with them, since we suppose that it resides in them alone? Is it not against the Divine Providence, that the true worshippers of God, the true heirs of heaven, cannot form a church in the world, and that God has not left any means to provide against so strange an inconvenience?” He answers plainly, “That indeed that inconvenience is exceeding great; but that it is not necessary

* Chap. 8. p. 162.

that God should have provided against it by remedies; because he has resolved to hinder it from ever falling out, in always preserving the true ministry in his church. So that it can never be in a necessity of being re-established; and that very thing is a certain mark, that that inconvenience can never happen, in that God has not provided any remedy for it."* He says, that so it is that our ministers ought to conclude, and not to conclude as they do, in supposing that the visible church may fall into ruin, and that there is a necessity of having recourse to the establishment of a new ministry. Since immediately after, he adds, "But if the adhesion which they have to their sentiments hinders them from coming to agree to this consequence, they ought rather to conclude, that those pretended truly faithful must remain in that state, without pastors, and without any external worship; and that they should rather expect that God should raise up some extraordinarily, and with visible marks of their mission, than to usurp to themselves a right of creating ministers and pastors, and giving them power to govern the churches, and administer the sacraments."

We have already shewn him, and we shall yet further shew him in the end, that it is not without reason, that we suppose that the ministry may be corrupted in the church. We shall shew him also, that the consequence which we draw from it concerning the re-establishing of the ministry, is just and right; and that a faithful people have a right in that case to create their ministers and their pastors, and to give them power to govern their churches, and to administer the sacraments. But as we are only disputing at present about knowing whether we may separate ourselves from the body of the ordinary pastors, when they are fallen into errors incompatible with our salvation, and when they will force the people to profess the same errors; it shall suffice at present, to

* Chap. 7. p. 159.

take notice, that the author of the Prejudices comes to agree, that when persons are persuaded that the body of those who possess the ministry in the church is fallen into error, and when it drives away from its bosom and persecutes those who maintain the truth, they may remain separated, without acknowledging that body for their pastors, and without assisting in their external worship; provided that they do not make other ministers. But who sees not, that this is precisely to acknowledge the right of that separation, about which the question at present is? Who sees not, that it is, at least in that respect, a discharging our fathers from the accusation of schism, and to declare them further innocent of that crime, which he would design to lay to their charge at last? Our fathers did not collect that consequence of the author of the Prejudices, they did not conclude that the ministry must be incorruptible in the church, in that which it had of human in it. This is not a place to dispute whether they adhered too much to their own opinions; where because that in effect they judged well, that manner of reasoning is pernicious. Howsoever it were, they have concluded quite otherwise; they were persuaded that the body of those who possessed the ordinary ministry in the Latin Church, were fallen not only into one error, but into many, and into such as were contrary to men's salvation, that it was guilty of opinionativeness in maintaining them, that it did impose a necessity upon all to profess them, that it drove away from its bosom those who refused that obedience. It was upon this that they separated themselves from them, not acknowledging them any more for their pastors, and assisting no further in their external worship. Thus far the author of the Prejudices does not condemn them; he would only that they should have remained throughout without pastors, and without external worship. We shall see, in its place, whether there is reason for that or no; it is sufficient, that he consents that they should not any more have had those for their pastors, which

were so before, and that they should have withdrawn themselves from their communion and external worship; we demand no more at present.

We ought now to pass on to the second proposition, upon which the objection is grounded that I have proposed in the beginning of this chapter, and to examine whether the privilege of the Church of Rome is such, that we ought not upon any pretence whatsoever to separate ourselves from her communion. All the world knows, that this is the pretension of that church; and that it is for that, that she makes herself "the mother and the mistress of all others," and that she has also made it to be defined in her Council of Trent. It is upon that account, that one of her Popes, Boniface the Eighth, formerly determined, "That it was necessary to the salvation of every creature, to be subject to the Bishop of Rome." But clearly to decide so weighty a question, there seems to me to be only these two ways: The first is, to inquire whether that church can or can not fall into error, and cease to be the true church of Jesus Christ; for if it be true that she can never fall into errors, nor lose the quality of a true church, we must conclude that we ought always to remain in her communion. But if on the contrary she may err, and cease to be a true church, we must also conclude that we may and ought to separate ourselves, when there shall be a just occasion for it. The second way is, that, laying aside the question whether she may err or not, we examine whether it be true that God has made her the mistress of all other churches as she pretends, whether he has established her to be the perpetual and inviolable centre of the Christian unity, with a command to all the faithful not to fly off from her. For if it be an order that God has made, we cannot resist it without destroying ourselves; but if it be only an ill-grounded pretension of that church, her communion is neither more necessary, nor more inviolable, than that of other particular churches.

But as to the first of these ways, I have already shewn,

that it engages those who will follow it in the examination of the foundation; and in effect, the proofs that they set before us to establish the infallibility of the Roman See, are neither so clear nor so conclusive, that it should not be necessary to see whether the doctrines that the Church of Rome teaches, answer that pretension which she makes to be infallible, and unable to fall away; or to say better, those proofs are so weak and so trivial, that they themselves bind us to have recourse to the examination of the doctrines of that church, to judge of her pretension by them. These two arguments are equally good as to their form. The Church of Rome cannot err in the faith; therefore the things which she teaches us of faith, are true. And the things which the Church of Rome teaches us are not true; therefore the Church of Rome may err. I do not here examine the question, which of these two ways of reasoning is the more natural. I yield if they will, that they should choose the first; but when they shall have chosen it, good sense would also require, that if the things which they shall set before us to prove *this* proposition, "The Church of Rome cannot err in the faith," do no ways satisfy the mind, if instead of assuring us they plunge us into the greatest uncertainties, we must pass over to the other way; and by consequence we must enter into the examination of the foundation. But to judge of what nature those proofs are which they give for the infallibility of the Church of Rome, we need but a naked view of them: for they are not the express declarations of the will of God, although it should be very necessary that they should have such a one for the establishment of so great and peculiar a privilege, the knowledge of which is so very important to all Christians. They are not evident consequences drawn from some passages of Scripture, or some actions of the apostles: they are neither clear and convincing reasonings, nor even strong presumptions, and such as have much likelihood. They are strained consequences, which they draw as they are able from two

or three passages of Scripture, and which a man that should have never heard them speak of that infallibility, with all his circumspection would not have gathered.

They produce the testimony that St. Paul gives to the Church of Rome in his days, "That her faith was spoken of through all the world;" (Rom. 1. 7, 8.) and they consider not that he gives the same testimony to the Thessalonians, in far higher terms than to the Romans; for he tells them, "That they were an example to the faithful, and that the word of the Lord sounded from them, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place also:" (1 Thess. 1. 8.) although they do not conclude the infallibility of the Church of Thessalonica from thence. They do not see that he renders well near the same testimony to the Philippians, in adding a clause that seems much more express; to wit, "That he is assured of this very thing, that he which had begun a good work in them, would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" (Phil. 1. 6.) although they cannot notwithstanding conclude infallibility from thence in the behalf of the Church of Philippi. In effect, these testimonies only regard the persons who at that time composed those churches, and not those who should come after them; and do not found any privilege on them.

They produce the passages of the Gospel that relate to St. Peter, as this, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;" and this, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, &c.;" (Matt. 16. 18, 19.) and this, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; when therefore thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren;" (Luke 22. 31, 32.) and this, "Feed my sheep." John 21. 17. But to perceive the weakness of the consequence which they draw from these passages, we need only to observe that which is between two things, whereof it is necessary that we should be assured, before we can conclude

any thing. First of all, We must be assured that St. Peter was at Rome, that he preached and fixed his see there; for these actions are not so evident as they imagine; they are enveloped with divers difficulties that appear unconquerable, and accompanied with many circumstances that have no appearance of truth, and which make at least that whole history to be doubted. I confess, that the ancients did believe so; but they have sometimes readily admitted fables for truths; and after all, these are matters of fact whereof we have not any divine revelation, about which, according to the very principle of our adversaries, all the whole church may be deceived; and which by consequence are not of faith, nor can serve as a foundation for articles of faith of so much importance as these, That the Church of Rome cannot err, and that it is always necessary to salvation to be in her communion. Secondly, We must be assured that the Bishops of Rome are the true and ordinary successors of St. Peter in the government of every Christian church. For why should not they be his successors in the government of the particular Church of Rome, as well as the Bishops of Antioch in the particular government of that of Antioch? When the apostles preached in those places, where they gathered churches and settled pastors, they did not intend that those pastors after them should receive all the rights of their apostleship, nor that they should be universal bishops. They say, that there must have been one, and that that could have been in no other church, but that where St. Peter died: but all this is said without any ground. The church is a kingdom that acknowledges none besides Jesus Christ for its Monarch; he is our only Lord, and our Sovereign Teacher; and after that the apostles had formed churches, and that the Christian religion had been laid down in the books of the New Testament, the pastors had in those divine books the exact rule of their preaching and their government. Those who have applied themselves only to that, have always well governed their flocks, without stand-

ing in need of that pretended universal episcopacy, which is a chimerical office, more proper to ruin religion than to preserve it. In the Third place, We must be assured that St. Peter himself had received in those passages some peculiar dignity that had raised him above the other apostles, and some rights which were not common to all of them. But this is what they cannot conclude from those fore-cited passages: for granting that Jesus Christ has built his church upon St. Peter, has he not also built it upon the other apostles? is it not elsewhere written, That we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the Chief Corner-stone? Eph. 2. 20. Is it not written, That the New Jerusalem has twelve foundations, wherein the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are written? Rev. 21. 14. If Jesus Christ has prayed for the perseverance of the faith of St. Peter, has he not made the same prayer for all the other? "Keep them," says he, "in thine own name, that they may be one, as we are." John 17. 11. If he said to him, "Strengthen thy brethren," is it not a common duty, not only to the apostles, but to all the faithful? "Let us consider one another," says St. Paul, "to provoke unto love, and to good works." Heb. 10. 24. If he said to him, "Feed my sheep," did he not say to all in common, "Go, and teach all nations?" Matt. 28. 19. If he said to him, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven;" has he not said to all of them, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me?" Luke 22. 29. "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Matt. 18. 18. In the Fourth place, We must be assured that when there should be in all those passages some peculiar privilege for St. Peter exclusive from the rest of the apostles, that it is a thing that could be transmitted down to his successors, and not some personal privilege that re-

sided in him alone, and must have died with him. For can we not say, that the twelve apostles being the twelve foundations of the church, the privilege of St. Peter is to be first in order, because he was the first who laboured in the conversion of the Jews at the day of Pentecost, and in that of the Gentiles in the sermon that he made to Cornelius? May we not say, that Jesus Christ has particularly prayed for his perseverance in the faith, because that he alone had been winnowed by the temptation that happened to him in the court of the high priest? That he said to him alone, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," because that he alone had given a sad experience of human weakness? That he said to him thrice, "Feed my sheep," or my lambs, because that he only having thrice denied his Master by words full of horror and ingratitude, our Lord would, for his consolation and re-establishment, thrice pronounce words full of love and goodness? In fine, when those texts should contain a peculiar privilege, that might be communicated to the successors of St. Peter, we must be assured that that privilege must be the perpetual infallibility of the Church of Rome, and a certainty of never falling away from the quality of a true church. And this is that which they know not how to conclude from those passages. For in respect of the first, the church may have been built upon St. Peter and upon his first successors, and remain firm and unshaken upon those foundations, that is to say, upon their doctrine and example, although in the course of some ages the Bishops of Rome have degenerated, and changed the faith of their predecessors; and the words of Jesus Christ extended even to the successors of St. Peter would not be less true, when they should not extend themselves unto all those who bear that name. St. Paul has called the churches of Asia, in the midst of which Timothy his disciple was, when he wrote his first Epistle to him; he has, I say, called them, "the pillar and ground of the truth:" (1 Tim. 3. 15) for although those titles belong in

general to every church, it is notwithstanding certain that they regard more directly and more particularly that part of the universal church, I would say the churches of Asia, where Timothy resided when St. Paul wrote to him. But the word of this apostle does not fail to be true, although in the course of many ages those churches have degenerated from their first purity, and though the successors of Timothy lost it very quickly after. And as to the prayer that Jesus Christ made to God, that the faith of St. Peter might not fail, when they would extend it down to his successors, they cannot conclude a greater infallibility for them, than that of St. Peter himself, who, preserving his faith concealed at the bottom of his heart, outwardly denied his Master three times; and who, according to the opinion of our adversaries, lost entirely his love, and had fallen from a state of grace, being no more either in the communion of God, or in that of the mystical body of Jesus Christ. Let the Church of Rome therefore call herself infallible as much as she pleases, in virtue of the prayer of Jesus Christ, that infallibility will not hinder, but that she may externally deny the faith of Jesus Christ, that she may entirely lose her love, and the communion of our Saviour, and the quality of the true church, and by consequence, that we should not be bound to separate from her, while she should be in that state, and till it should please God to re-establish her.

See here of what force those proofs are which they produce to ground this special privilege of the Church of Rome upon. It is not hard to see, that a man of good understanding, who would satisfy his mind and his conscience upon so weighty a point, ought not to remain there; but that he ought to pass on to the other way of clearing that doubt which I have noted, which is, to judge of the pretension of the Church of Rome, by the examination of her doctrines and her worship. For it is there principally that the characters of truth and infallibility ought to be found, and by

consequence he must come to the foundation, and no further amuse himself with prejudices.

As to the second way by which I have said we might clear this question, Whether it be necessary to the salvation of Christians, to be joined to the Church of Rome? it consists in examining, Whether it be true that God has made her the mistress of all other churches? Whether there is any particular order that binds us indispensably to her? For if that be so, the separation of our fathers must be condemned; but if it be not so, we must judge of that church as of all other particular churches, and say that we cannot and ought not to separate ourselves from her, but when we have just and lawful causes so to do. There is no person who does not judge that we cannot pass over lightly a point of so great importance, which ought to serve for a general and perpetual rule to all Christians; and that if the Church of Rome would so set herself beyond a state of equality above other churches, it is necessary that she should produce for it some very express and indisputable order of God. But instead of that, she does nothing but reverberate the same passages which I have mentioned. She boasts herself to be the see of St. Peter: and under that pretence, she applies to herself all that she can find in the Scripture in favour of that apostle; and particularly the order that Jesus Christ gave him to feed his sheep, as if the office of the apostleship, in which Jesus Christ re-established him by those words, could be communicated to his successors; or as if the foundation that Jesus Christ supposed, and upon which he re-established him, in saying to him, Feed my sheep, to wit, that he should love him more than the rest, was not a thing purely personal in St. Peter, and whereof it was not in his power to transmit any part to his successors, nor by consequence to invest them with his office, which was restored to him only upon a supposition of that love; or lastly, as if the office of feeding Christ's sheep included an absolute and indispensable neces-

sity for the sheep to receive their death, when they should give it them under the name of their food.

It must be acknowledged that there never was a higher pretension than this of the Church of Rome: for what more could she pretend to, than to make heaven itself depend on her communion, and to leave no possibility of salvation to any but those who should be in her communion, and in subjection to her! but it must also be acknowledged, that there never was any thing worse established than that pretension. They allege in its favour, nothing that is clear and distinct; and even the consequences which they draw from it, are made after a very strange manner. This is, in my judgment, the reason why our adversaries, when they treat of this matter, do not insist much upon Scripture, but fly off presently to the fathers, and the usage of the ancient church: for by this means they hope to prolong the dispute to eternity, and that notwithstanding, the Church of Rome shall be always in possession of that despotical authority which she exercises over the churches that remain in her communion. In effect, the life of a man would scarce suffice to read well and thoroughly examine all the volumes which have been composed on one side and on the other, upon this question of the place that the Church of Rome and its bishops have held among the Christian churches during the first six centuries, and of the authority which they had then. But to say the truth, there is too much artifice in that procedure; for that the Church of Rome should be the mistress of all others, and that no one could be saved but in her communion, that does not depend upon the order of men, but only on that of God: and when they should find among the ancients a thousand times more complaisance for the See of Rome than they had, that may very well establish an ancient possession, and make clear the fact; but it can never establish the right of it. To establish a right of that nature, a word of God, an express declaration of his will, is necessary; for it is a right not only above nature, but even above

the ordinary and common favour that God gives to other churches, and which by consequence depends only upon God. And so it is but a wandering from the way, to go to search for the grounds of it in the writings of men. It is no hard matter to conceive, that those bishops which were raised to dignities in the metropolis of the world, and engaged in the greatest affairs, might manage matters so as to ascribe to themselves those rights which no ways belonged to them; nor to imagine that their flatterers and courtiers might ~~not~~ have offered more incense to them than they ought; nor that those persecuted ones who had recourse to their protection, might ~~not~~ have helped the increase of their authority; nor that the princes and emperors who had need of them, might ~~not~~ have given them those privileges which they ought not to have had; and which belong to a just title. All that which they allegè in their favour is suspected and to no purpose at all.

Notwithstanding there are, moreover, evident matters of fact, that let us clearly see that the ancient church did not acknowledge that universal episcopacy that the bishops of Rome pretend to, nor that absolute and indispensable necessity to be joined to their see to be saved, nor that their church should be the mistress of all the rest. 1. Every one knows that the bishops of Rome were anciently chosen by the suffrages of the people and of the clergy of that church, without any other churches taking part in those elections; which is a mark manifest enough, that they did not mean that those bishops should be universal bishops, nor that they should have a more peculiar interest in their creation, than in that of other bishops. Since the Popes were raised to that high dignity wherein we behold them at this day, each nation has thought that it ought in some manner to participate in their nomination, because the business was about one common interest; they would have the protectors of their interests in the college of cardinals, and princes themselves have interposed; but they can see nothing like that in the

primitive church. Rome alone made her bishops without the participation of other churches. 2. Victor Bishop of Rome having excommunicated the churches of Asia who celebrated the feast of Easter after the manner of the Jews, St. Irenæus with the bishops of France opposed themselves to that excommunication, and wrote as well to Victor as to the other bishops;* and in effect those churches of Asia did not cease to remain in the communion of the Catholic Church, notwithstanding that action of Victor, as it appears from the testimony of Socrates, who expressly says, that those who contended about the business of Easter, did not nevertheless refuse communion with one another. So that their bishops were called and received in the Council of Nice, without any difficulty;† for Eusebius notes expressly, among those who were called by Constantine, the Syrians, the Cilicians, and the Mesopotamians, who were Quarto-Decimans; he says, that Constantine would confer pleasantly and familiarly with the bishops about matters that were in question; and that he would bring them all by that means to the same opinion, even about the matter of Easter:‡ and St. Athanasius testifies, that it was to settle that difference, that all the world was assembled at the Council of Nice, and that the Syrians came to the same opinion with the rest, and that they earnestly contended against the heresy of Arius,§ which shews us that they assisted at the council, without any notice being taken of Victor's excommunication. From whence it is no very hard matter to conclude, what Æneas Sylvius Cardinal of Sienna, and afterwards Pope, has acknowledged in one of his letters, “That before the Council of Nice every one lived according to his own ways, and that men had but a very small regard to the Church of Rome.”||

* Euseb. lib. 5. cap. 24. † Sociat. Hist. Eccl. lib. 1. cap. 5.

† Euseb. de vita Const. lib. 1. cap. 7. & lib. 5. cap. 13.

§ Athan. Epist. de Synod. Arim. & Sel.

|| Epist. lib. 1. Epist. 288.

3. In the Sixth Century, a great trouble being raised in the church, upon the occasion of three writings; the one of Theodoret Bishop of Cyrus, the other of Ibas Bishop of Edessa, and the third of Theodore of Mopsuestea, which had been read and approved in the Council of Chalcedon, but whom the most judged to be heretical, Pope Vigilius openly took up the defence of those three writings, and vigorously opposed himself to the condemnation that the Emperor Justinian and the eastern patriarchs had made of them. But, in the end, being drawn to Constantinople, he changed his opinion, and consented to that condemnation; whether he was carried out to it by the complaisance which he had for the emperor, who had a great affection for that business, or whether out of some other principle.* However it were, that action appeared so criminal in the eyes of a great number of orthodox bishops, that they separated themselves and their churches from the communion of Vigilius and his party; and even the Church of Africa, assembled in council, as Victor of Tunis an African Bishop witnesses, who lived in those times, synodically excommunicated that pope, leaving him notwithstanding means to re-establish himself by repentance.† These actions prove, in my judgment, very sufficiently, that the faithful then did not look upon the Church of Rome as the mistress of all others, nor on the communion or dependence on its see, as a thing absolutely necessary to the salvation of Christians.

There can nothing be said in effect more opposite to the spirit of the Christian religion, than that imagination. God had heretofore fixed his communion with that of the Israelites, and established in Jerusalem and in its high priests, the centre of ecclesiastical unity. But when Jesus Christ brought his Gospel into the world, he changed that order, not by transporting the rights of Jerusalem to Rome, nor those of the high priests to the popes; but by abolishing

* Baron. ad ann. 548.

† Victor. Tunun, in Chron.

wholly that necessity of communion to a certain place, and that particular dependence on a certain see. This is what St. Paul clearly enough teaches in his Third Chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians: "In the new man," says he, "there is neither Greek nor Jew, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, neither Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free; but Jesus Christ is all, and in all." Col. 3. 11. He had had no reason to express himself after that manner, if that new man whereof he spoke had necessarily been a Roman, and depending on the communion of the Bishop of Rome. So also the same apostle, setting that evangelical church that Jesus Christ had assembled in opposition to the ancient and earthly Jerusalem, makes not that opposition to consist in this, that the one is Jerusalem, and the other Rome; the one the head city of Judea, and the other, that of the empire: but he makes it to consist in this, that one is earthly, and the other heavenly; the one below, and the other on high; the one tied to a certain place, from whence it cannot go, and the other independent on all manner of particular places in the world, and having no necessary dependence on any but heaven. For it is to this purpose that he calls the Jerusalem that is above, the heavenly Jerusalem, (Gal. 4. 21.) the city of the living God, the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, Heb. 12. 22. It is in the view of that, that Jesus Christ said to the Samaritan woman, "Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father: but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." John 4. 21, 23. The Samaritans would establish the centre of religion on the mountain where Jacob and the twelve patriarchs had built an altar to God; the Jews, on the contrary, established it in the city of Jerusalem. To all that Jesus Christ opposes not the capital city, as the new mountain which he had chosen; nor Rome as another Jerusalem, but the spirit and the truth; that is to say, faith

and piety alone, abstracted from all those relations to particular places, and independent on all cities and mountains.

The same thing is justified by the censure that St. Paul passed on the Corinthians, in that one said, I am of Paul, another, I am of Apollos, and another, I am of Cephas, that is to say, of Peter. 1 Cor. 1. 12. For we ought not to imagine that those men meant that they were so of Paul, or of Apollos, or of Peter, as to be no more of Jesus Christ, or that they would take Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, for heads equal to Jesus Christ. They were Christians, and they were not ignorant of the difference they were to make between Jesus Christ and his apostles. No, without doubt, they were not ignorant of it, but they would have subordinate heads, human heads, on whom they might depend by an external dependence, and that was necessary for them to be, by that means, linked to Jesus Christ, after the same manner that they would have us at this day to depend on the See of Rome. Wherefore did St. Paul say to them, Is Christ divided? Why did he not say to them, that as for Paul and Apollos, they had no reason to take them for their heads, but that it was far otherwise as to Peter, since God had set up him and his successors for ever to be the heads of the universal church? Why, instead of that, did he conclude after this manner, "That no one should glory in men: for all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's?" 1 Cor. 3. 21—23. Is it not to let them understand, that Jesus Christ is the only Head of the church, that there is only his communion that is absolutely necessary; and that as for other ministers, whosoever they were, they were appointed for our use, as all other things, to serve us, inasmuch as they lead us to Jesus Christ?

If the church under the New Testament ought to be inviolably tied to the See of Rome, how should the Scripture have been silent in so weighty a truth, which could not be

unknown without extreme danger, nor contested without evident damnation? Notwithstanding, we do not find any other Head of the church in those sacred books but Jesus Christ, nor any other High Priest but him. We do not find in the Scripture any universal bishop, nor ministerial head, or subordinate, or any particular church the mistress of all others. We find there indeed that Jesus Christ being ascended up on high, gave some to be apostles, others to be prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the assembling of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Ephes. 4. 11, 12. How came the apostle to forget, in that enumeration, the chief of all offices, to wit, that of the ministerial head of the whole church, and the universal vicar of Jesus Christ, in the government and conduct of his flock? If the Christian Church ought in that to resemble the synagogue, and to have, as that, a sovereign high priest upon earth, who should be the head of that religion, and who should have his successors, as the ancient high priest had; whence comes it that the Scripture has always regarded that ancient high priest as a figure of Jesus Christ, that it always referred it to him, and never to the Roman Bishops, nor even to St. Peter, who was then alive, and who should by consequence have exercised that pretended charge which they would make to descend from him?

There is therefore no lawful foundation in all that pretension of Rome and her see. We ought to pass the same judgment on all other sees and other particular churches, with which it is just we should hold communion while they teach good and sound doctrine, and that we should even bear with them when they should fall into some errors, provided they constrain nobody to believe them; but from which it is also just to separate ourselves when they shall fall into errors contrary to the communion of Jesus Christ our only Saviour, and when they would violently force all others to believe the same. If in a long course of ages

Rome has usurped by little and little the rights that do not belong to her; if she has found it very easy, through the ignorance or complaisance of men, in the divers intrigues of the world, to raise her throne as high as our fathers beheld it, and as we do yet at this day; if her flatterers have not failed always to raise her pretensions as high as heaven, and if she has been lulled asleep with the sound of those sweet charms that enchant her, we do not believe that that ought to prejudice our separation. We have no other aversion for her communion, than that which our conscience gives us; and if it shall please God to re-establish her in her ancient purity, she would not have so great a joy to spread forth her arms to us, as we should have an impatience to demand peace of her. But as long as we shall see her in that bad state wherein we are persuaded she is, we cannot but bewail and pray for her, and yet notwithstanding nobody can blame us for preferring our own salvation to her communion.

CHAP. III.

THAT THE CONDUCT OF THE COURT OF ROME, AND THOSE OF HER PARTY, IN RESPECT OF THE PROTESTANTS, HAS GIVEN THEM A JUST CAUSE TO SEPARATE THEMSELVES FROM THEM, SUPPOSING THAT THEY HAD HAD RIGHT AT THE FOUNDATION.

BEFORE we leave this matter of our separation from the Church of Rome, there yet remains two questions for us to examine; the one, Whether our fathers were not too precipitate in so great an affair, whether they did not act with too much haste, or whether they had sufficient motives, from the

conduct of those from whom they separated, to forsake in the end their communion: the other, Whether with all that, they can say that they separated themselves from the communion of the Catholic Church spread over the whole world, as the Donatists did heretofore, and whether they did not fall into the same crime with those ancient schismatics, against whom Optatus and St. Augustine so strongly disputed. I will treat of this second question in the following chapter, and this shall be devoted to the clearing of the former.

To effect this, methinks, we need but freely to set before their eyes all that I have said in the Second Part, touching the necessity that lay upon our fathers to reform themselves. For since it clearly results from those matters of fact which I have set down, that the popes and those of their party were so far from applying themselves seriously to a reformation, that they studied on the contrary only how to stifle the truth from the very first moment they beheld it appear, and to defend their errors and superstitions by'all manner of ways, who sees not that that inflexible resolution, which had not yielded either to the first or second admonition, rendered from that time the separation of our fathers just, and exempted them from all reproach? For when there are errors capable of giving ground for a separation, it ought to be deferred only upon a hope of amendment; and that hope seemed to be sufficiently destroyed, by those historical actions which I have already set down.

Notwithstanding, to shew them more and more how very prudent the conduct of our fathers was in that respect, and how full of circumspection, it will not be beside our purpose, to resume here the close of their story, from the unjust condemnation of Luther and his doctrine made by Pope Leo the Tenth, down to the Council of Trent, after which, we may say that their separation was full and entire.*

* All that history contained in this chapter, has been faithfully taken out of four authors, to wit, Sleidan, The History of the Council of Trent, of Father Paul, Thuanus and Raynaldus.

Luther therefore having been excommunicated by the Pope's bull, with all those who should follow his doctrine, after the manner that we have seen, he appealed to a free council, and proposed the causes of his appeal in a public declaration, which he caused afterwards to be printed, wherein with great humility he demanded of the emperor, the electors, the princes of the empire, and in general of all the powers of Gemany, that they would join themselves with him in his appeal; or at least that they would defer the execution of the bull, until having been lawfully called, and heard by equitable judges, he should be condemned. He protested, that in case his so just a demand should be refused, and that they should continue to obey the Pope rather than God, the consciences of his persecutors would remain chargeable before God's tribunal.

But those who had already condemned him for a like appeal to a council, did not leave off their prosecuting him for all that. The Pope did not fail to cause his bull to be published with great solemnity; he added even in that which they call *Cœna Domini*, which is published every year, a new clause bearing excommunication against Luther, and those of his sect. And because in his first condemnation he had given him three score days' time to recant, that term being expired, he pronounced a new and peremptory excommunication against him, by which he cursed him and his followers eternally, and declared them guilty of treason and heresy; he spoiled them of all their honours and goods, and enjoined all arch-bishops, bishops, prelates, preachers, &c. to preach, or to stir up others to preach, against them in all places. Notwithstanding, he earnestly solicited, as well by his letters as his nuncio's, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and all the princes of Germany, to employ all their power and authority against Luther and his followers. Those solicitations produced at that time the citation of Luther to the assembly of Worms, (of which I have spoken in the Second Part,) and in the end, the imperial edict, called the

Edict of Worms, which banished him from all the lands of the empire as a madman possessed with the devil, a devil clothed in human shape, a heretic, a schismatic. This edict forbade him fire and water, and the commerce of all the world; and ordained that after the term of twenty days, he should be taken and put into a strong prison, in order to be severely punished. But besides all this, it went much further, in that it extended to all his favourers, followers, and accomplices, and that his books should be publicly burned. Luther, giving way to this furious storm, withdrew himself for some time into a safe place, under the protection of John Frederick Elector of Saxony; and Leo, after having excited all that tragedy, died in the flower of his age, the first day of December in the year 1521. But the hatred of the Reformation did not die with him; he had for his successor, as well in that hatred as in his see, Adrian the Sixth, who was chosen the eighth of January 1522.

After this new Pope had taken possession of his papacy, he sent a nuncio into Germany; and though, as we have seen, in his instructions he charged him in an express article seriously to acknowledge, before the Assembly of Nuremberg, the disorders both in the Court of Rome and in the whole body of the prelates and the rest of the clergy; he did not fail nevertheless to charge him also at the same time, to denounce terrible threatenings against Luther's followers: for so it was, that he called those who then embraced the Reformation. He wrote, with the same spirit, public and private letters to the princes and other states of the empire who were assembled together; and he omitted nothing to stir them up to make use of fire and sword, and the utmost violence, on that occasion. We may see those letters in Bzovius and Raynaldus, and find in them all the characters of an extreme passion. He uses there divers reasons to animate them, taken from their honour and their own interests. He sets before their eyes the example of the Council of Constance, wherein John Huss and Jerom of

Prague were burned; that of St. Peter in inflicting death on Ananias and Sapphira; and that of God himself, who made the earth swallow up Dathan and Abiram. He complains of them, and sharply censures them, in that they had not severely put the Edict of Worms in execution; and to stir them up the more, he assures them that the design of the Lutherans was to overthrow all human order, to dethrone all the princes, and to pillage all Germany, under a pretence of the Gospel. He repeated the same things in his instructions to his nuncio; and after having enjoined him to represent to the princes all that might move them to extirpate those supposed heretics, so far as to tell them that they ought to imitate the generosity of their ancestors, some of whom had carried with their own hands John Huss to the stake, he concludes with the words of Jeremiah when he prophesied the ruin of the Moabitish infidels, and which this Pope applied against those Christians, "Cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently, and who keepeth back his sword from blood." Jer. 48. 10. He wrote also to John Frederick Elector of Saxony, letters full of heat, wherein after having made a bloody invective against Luther and his doctrine, and having exhorted that prince to abandon him, he fiercely threatens him, that if he does not do it, he should feel the effects of his anger and that of the emperor. "I declare to thee," says he, "in the authority of God Almighty, and our Lord Jesus Christ, whose vicar I am upon earth, that thou shalt not go away unpunished in this present world, and that everlasting fire shall attend thee in the world to come. For we live at the same time together, both I Adrian Pope, and the Emperor Charles, whose truly Christian edict thou hast contemned, which he made against the Lutheran perfidiousness."

These letters wrought but a small effect in the mind of Frederick, who was a pious prince, and one that loved the truth; nor did they work much upon those of the rest of the princes assembled at Nuremberg; and the answer which

they made, deserves to be set down. It contained nearly these articles; " That they could not execute the sentence of the apostolic see against Luther, nor the Edict of Worms, without incurring themselves very great danger. That the far greater part of the people had been for a long time persuaded that Germany suffered a great many troubles on the side of the Court of Rome, by reason of its abuses, and that all the world was then fully instructed in it, by the writings and tenets of the Lutherans. That if they had rigorously executed the Pope's sentence and the imperial edict, the people would have believed that it had been only made to overthrow the truth of the Gospel, and to maintain and defend their evils, abuses, and impieties. That it was very well done of Adrian, to acknowledge the disorders of the Court of Rome; and that they earnestly entreated him, for the glory of God, for the salvation of souls, and for the peace and tranquillity of the public, seriously to put his hand to reform them. That they entreated him also to allow that the first-fruits of benefices, which they had given to the Popes for them to employ against the Turks, and which his predecessors had turned aside to other uses, should for the time to come be remitted into the public treasure of the empire, to be made use of according to their natural appointment. And as for the remedies which he required of them to put a stop to the course of the Lutheran error, that they saw none more proper, than speedily to call a free and Christian council in some town of Germany, wherein it might be allowed to every one, as well of the clergy as of the laity, to speak freely, notwithstanding all oaths and contrary obligations, and to take counsel together for that which they should judge to be good for the glory of God, for the salvation of souls, and the advantage of the Christian commonwealth. That notwithstanding, they would hinder Luther and his followers from writing any more, and they would give order that the preachers should teach nothing but the true, pure, and sincere Gospel, according to the doc-

trine and explication received and approved in the Christian Church.”

This answer extremely displeased the Pope's nuncio; he would not that they should speak of a free council; for it seemed to him, he said, that by that proposition they would give laws to the Pope. He approved still less, that they should touch upon the troubles of Germany, and the abuses of the Court of Rome; he required nothing but fire and sword against the Lutherans. Therefore he gave them his reply in writing, in which he insisted that the sentence of Pope Leo and the imperial Edict of Worms, which ordained that they should overthrow all the followers of Luther, should be executed according to their form and tenor, without any diminution. And as to the demand of a council, he said that they should have made it in terms more respectful, which should have given no grounds of umbrage to the Pope; and that by those clauses, “that the council should be free, and that men should be absolved from their oaths,” they seemed to go about to bind the hands of his holiness. The princes would notwithstanding have nothing changed in their deliberation, which they caused to be drawn up in the form of an imperial edict, and sent their grievances to the Pope, to the number of a hundred articles, which they called *Centum gravamina*. Raynaldus reckons up only seventy-seven, upon the testimony of Dolgastus. However it were, those griefs explained one part of the disorders that reigned then in the government of the church, and under which not only Germany, but all the rest of the West, groaned.

Thus it came to pass, that the endeavours of the Court of Rome and its partisans, to raise a persecution against those who demanded a reformation, were to no purpose for that time. But what they could not obtain at Nuremberg, they obtained elsewhere; for in that same year, 1523, they caused two Augustine monks accused of Lutheranism to be burnt alive, who suffered that punishment with an admira-

ble constancy; and at Anvers they made a convent of the Augustine friars to be pulled down to the ground, the prior of which, named Henry Suphanus, had before suffered death in the preceding year for the same cause.

Adrian enjoyed the papacy but one year and eight months, or thereabouts; for he was raised to it, as I have said, the eighth of January 1522, and he died the thirteenth of September 1523. His successor was Clement the Seventh. This man, marching after the steps of his predecessors, was not well settled in the pontifical chair, before he turned all his thoughts against those whom they called Lutherans; and to that effect, having been informed that the princes of Germany had bound themselves to meet again at Nuremberg, he sent thither Cardinal Campegius, in the quality of his legate. Notwithstanding he wrote to the emperor, who was then in Spain, earnestly soliciting him to employ his authority to make the Edict of Worms to be put in execution in his empire, and to dispose the princes to it. His legate being arrived at Nuremberg, vehemently insisted upon the extirpation of the Lutherans; and he made, for that purpose, divers orations in the assembly. But the princes would not follow his violent courses; they on the contrary obstinately demanded a free council in Germany, and ordained that each prince and each state should, while they waited for that council, call together within their jurisdictions, their learned, wise, and pious men, to examine the new tenets of the Lutherans, and to separate the good from the bad in them; and to examine also the complaints of their nation against the Court of Rome and its clergy. They added nevertheless, that each one on his part should do what he could to make the Edict of Worms to be executed; and that in fine, to conclude something firm, the states of the empire should meet together within a certain time at Spire. This declaration, which was afterwards drawn up and published in the form of an imperial edict, extremely provoked the Pope and all his creatures. They

complained of this, that in expectation of a council, they would submit the matters of religion to the judgment of a few wise, learned, and pious persons, saying, that it was the means to spread abroad every where the poison of heresy; for thus Raynaldus relates it. They could not endure the proposition of a free council; but above all things, they loudly cried out of this, that under that pretence they would defer the execution of the Pope's sentence and the Edict of Worms against the Lutherans, whose blood and destruction they only demanded. Clement made great complaints to the emperor, by the letters which he sent him into Spain, wherein, to animate him the more, he persuaded him that that was a manifest breach of his authority, and a design formed to withdraw themselves entirely from his obedience; and as these solicitations were extremely vehement and urgent, they forced the emperor to write into Germany to the princes, and to all the states of the empire, that it was his intention that they should punctually execute his Edict of Worms, that they should make that of Nuremberg void, and forbid them to hold the Diet of Spire. But before his letters came to Germany, the Legate Campegius had drawn off one part of the Roman Catholic princes, for the most part ecclesiastics, and having made them to meet at Ratisbon, under a pretence of a shadow of reformation that he had proposed, which consisted only in the most trivial matters, he caused them to enter into a league for the defence of the Roman Religion, and the destruction of the Lutherans. Soon after, they saw the effects of this league appear; for Ferdinand and the legate being gone into Austria, they condemned to death some persons upon the account of religion.

Clement elsewhere took the same care for all places, which they took in Germany, to hinder the progress of the Reformation. He wrote upon that subject into Switzerland, into Bohemia, France, Poland, Svedeland, Denmark; and he stirred up every where the princes, magistrates, and prelates,

to overthrow the reformed. Wherefore they beheld soon after, under his pontificate, the inquisitions taken up in that pursuit, the prisons filled with prisoners, and the scaffolds and the stakes filled almost generally in all places that owned his authority. It was at this time that Antonius Pratensis, Cardinal and Archbishop of Sens, held a provincial synod at Paris, the ninety-second article of which was framed in these terms: "We entreat the Most Christian King, our prince and sovereign lord, by the bowels of the mercies of God, that according to his singular zeal and incredible devotion for the Christian Religion, that he would suddenly banish from the lands of his jurisdiction all heretics, and that he would extirpate that deadly and horrible plague, which increases every day more and more." The ninety-third was framed after this manner; "Therefore it is, that the orthodox princes, if they would have any care for the Christian name, and would hinder the ruin of religion, ought necessarily to use all their endeavours to extirpate and destroy heretics." That archbishop was very much interested in the preservation of the ancient abuses: for we find in the Dialogue of the Two Parishioners of St. Hilary Montanus,* that he was Cardinal, Archbishop of Sens, Bishop of Alby, Bishop of Valence, Bishop of Die, Bishop of Gap, and Abbot of Fleury. We ought not to be astonished if he declaimed so much against the Reformation: he was in effect one of those who opposed themselves to it in France, with the greatest heat; and if any would know his character, they need but look to that which the authors of that same Dialogue say of him. "This Du Prat, was he not as great a prelate as a St. Hilary of Poitiers, a St. Martin of Tours, a St. German of Auxerre, and as a St. Lupus of Troye? He had alone full as many bishoprics as all those admirable saints had together, and moreover the abbey in which is the body of St. Benorist; but he has not

* Dial. 1.

done so many miracles as all those saints; and he never resided in any of those diocesses, nor even performed any other office of a bishop, than that ordinance against Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, Oecolampadius, Zuinglius; for as yet Calvin and Beza were not talked of. It is this good prelate to whom they attribute the taking away of the *pragmatic sanction*, that is to say, the pure observation of the ancient canons of the Church of France, and the having made the agreement between King Francis the First and Leo the Tenth, which has destroyed all the apostolical discipline in France, and abolished the canonical elections, and subjected France to a deplorable servitude." The same spirit that the Cardinal Du Prat had brought into France, reigned then in England, Scotland, Flanders, Austria, Poland, and universally in all places where the power of the Pope extended itself; for there was nothing talked of there, but the extreme punishments which they inflicted on those reputed heretics: and their very judges, who, touched with some compassion, did not readily do their duty, according to the humour of the Court of Rome, did not remain unpunished. For it was for this reason, that Pope Clement charged Cardinal Campegius, his legate, to remove those inquisitors who were in the Low Countries, and to put others in their places, who should better acquit themselves of so detestable a service, as Raynaldus relates.

But while they acted after this manner, the light of the Reformation did yet spread itself abroad in divers places, through an admirable blessing of God, who has always made the ashes of his martyrs the seed of his church. For not only Saxony had received it, but also a great part of Germany, a great part of Switzerland, Swedeland, Denmark, Prussia, and Livonia also. In the month of April, in the year 1529, an assembly of the princes and other states of Germany was held at Spire, whither Clement did not fail to send a nuncio. The first thing they did there, was to reject the assembly at the city of Strasburg, under a pre-

tence that it had abolished the use of the mass, without waiting for the imperial diet. This violent procedure was quickly after followed by a decree that Ferdinand Archduke of Austria, and some other princes who took part with the Court of Rome, made, and whom the emperor had expressly chosen for his deputy commissioners. They ordained, therefore, in the first place, "That those who till then had observed the Edict of Worms," that is to say, who not only had not received the Reformation, but who had persecuted it with all their might, "should for the future do the like, and force their subjects to do the same; and that as for those in whose countries that new doctrine had been spread abroad, provided they could not extirpate it, without putting themselves into a manifest danger of stirring up troubles, it should be their part at least to hinder any thing more from being innovated, till the calling of a council." Secondly, They ordained, "That above all things, the doctrine which opposed the substantial presence of the body of Jesus Christ in the eucharist, should neither be received nor proposed by any in all the compass of Germany, and that the mass should not be abrogated." In the third place, They decreed, "That they should not allow preachers in any place to explain the Gospel, otherwise than by the interpretations of the fathers." In fine, they ordained grievous penalties against the printers and booksellers who should print or vend for the future the books which contained the new doctrine. The other princes and states of the empire, beholding this manifest oppression, thought themselves bound to make an Act of Protestation to the contrary: they remonstrated, therefore, "That that new decree contradicted that which had been passed in the preceding assembly, where every one was to be free in respect of his religion: that they did not pretend to hinder the other princes and states from enjoying that liberty; but that, on the contrary, they prayed God that he would give them the knowledge of his truth: that they could not with a good conscience approve of

the reason for which they would allow them to retain the evangelical doctrine, to wit, lest they should fall into new troubles; for that would be to confess that it would be good to renounce that doctrine if it could be done without tumult, which would be a criminal and wicked confession, and a tacit denial of the word of God: that as to the mass, those who had abolished it, and who had re-established in its place the lawful use of the supper of our Lord, were led by the institution of our Lord Jesus Christ: that as for the doctrine that opposed the real presence, they did not believe that they ought lightly to condemn those who held it without hearing them; and that that proceeding was against natural equity, especially in a matter of so great consequence. In fine, that they could not consent to that decree, offering the reason of their conduct to the emperor and all the world: that they did appeal to a free council, and that in waiting for it, they would do nothing for which they should justly deserve any blame." The princes who made this Act of Protestation, were John Elector of Saxony, George Marquis of Brandenburg, Ernest and Francis Dukes of Lunenburg, Philip Landgrave of Hesse, Wolfgang Prince of Anhalt, to whom the cities of Strasburg, Nuremberg, Ulm, Constance, Reutlingen, Windseim, Memmingen, Lindaw, Kempten, Heilbrun, Issne, Wissemburg, Nortlingen, and St. Gall, joined themselves with a common consent. This Act of Protestation was made at Spire the nineteenth of April 1529, and from thence came the name of Protestants, which has been since given to all those who have embraced the Reformation.

Those princes and those cities sent in the end their ambassadors to the emperor, to give him an account of what they had done; but after divers delays, the answer was, that he would that they should obey the decree of Spire, or else that they should undergo the utmost punishments; that their emperor and the other princes had not less care of the salvation of their souls, and peace of their consciences, than

they; and that as for his own part, he desired a council, although it did not appear to him to be extremely necessary. This answer obliged the Protestants to meet at Smalcald, and some time after at Nuremberg, to provide for their own affairs; but they took no other resolutions than very general ones.

About the end of that same year, 1529, the emperor came into Italy, to be crowned there by the hands of the Pope, which was done at Bologna, with a great deal of magnificence and ceremony. They had there divers conferences together upon the matter of religion. The sentiment of the emperor was, that he ought to call a council; that of the Pope was, on the contrary, that he ought not to call one; but that the adversaries ought to be suppressed by force of arms. He offered for that purpose to furnish the emperor with money, and strongly to solicit all Christian princes to this war. Andreo Mauroceno the Venetian historian relates, that he explained himself particularly not only to the emperor, but even to the Venetian ambassador, entreating him to consult his senate; which the ambassador having done, the senate answered after a manner very opposite to the desires of that Pope, and dissuaded him from that war for various reasons: but all those reasons did not change the Pope's mind; he had too much horror for that free council that Germany required, and therefore it was, that he persuaded the emperor that it would be much better for him to make use of his authority on that occasion, and that if his authority should not be sufficient, he must proceed to open force.

The emperor therefore after this convened the imperial assembly at Augsburg, for the month of April in the year 1530, whither he went himself in person. The Pope also sent thither on his part his legate Cardinal Campegius, with Vincentius Pimpinella, and Paul Vergerius, his nuncios. There, the Protestants presented their confession of faith to the emperor, which was afterwards called *The Confession*

of *Augsburg*, in which they set down in the first place the chief heads of the Christian doctrine which they believed, and afterwards went on to the points of the Roman belief which they rejected. They opposed, through the advice of the legate, to that confession, a refutation composed by Eckius and John Faber, who notwithstanding would not hold any discourse by writing with the Protestants, whatsoever entreaties they should make to have liberty to defend themselves publicly, and to justify their doctrine. They made it to be only read in their presence; but they refused to give them a copy of it, unless upon condition that it should be kept secret in their hands, which would render it wholly useless to them, and which was a very unjust condition, in treating of a business of that nature, in which all the world had an interest. The author of the *History of the Council of Trent* relates, that Cardinal Matthew Lang, Archbishop of Saltzburg, who was in that assembly, said publicly upon the occasion of that confession, "That indeed the reformation of the mass was reasonable, the liberty of meats fit to be granted, and that the demand to be discharged from so many commandments of men was most just; but that it was a thing not to be endured, that one paltry monk should go about to reform all the world." He adds, that one of the emperor's secretaries said also, "That if the Protestant preachers had good store of money, they had easily purchased of the Italians the religion that agreed most with them; but that without gold, they could never hope that their religion should ever shine forth in the world."

There were many open conferences between the two parties, and they came so far as to agree upon some matters of less importance, but they could not agree upon any of the principal ones; and the Protestants saw, soon after, to what those conferences tended; to wit, to give ground to some secret practices, by which the emperor and the legate laboured to gain the princes each one in particular, sometimes by promises, and sometimes by threatenings, by which

nevertheless they could not be turned. In fine, after many negotiations to no purpose, the Protestants seeing that there was no hope of obtaining peace, but upon conditions very destructive to the Reformation which they had embraced, were forced to withdraw themselves, after having declared, "That they persisted in their appeal to a free and Christian council." And the emperor, who had made all those steps only to have a pretence of gratifying the Pope, by his carrying of things to extremities, made in the end his decree, with the other princes and states that remained, by which he established the Roman religion in the whole extent of his empire, in respect of the controverted articles, under pain of the imperial ban to all opposers, and to be pursued by arms as rebels and criminals; promising, notwithstanding, to solicit the Pope to the calling of a council precisely within the space of a year. The rigour of this decree obliged the princes and the other Protestant states to assemble yet again at Smalcald, and to make there a kind of league among themselves for their common defence; and yet notwithstanding they wrote to the emperor with great submission, praying him to mitigate his decree, and not to expose them as he had done to the violence of their enemies: they wrote also to the other Christian princes, as well to inform them of what had passed at Augsburg, as to justify themselves against the many false accusations wherewith they were charged, and to have them demand a general and free council, that should be held in Germany for the reformation of the church. The execution of this decree of Augsburg, for some time filled Germany with a thousand persecutions against the Protestants, by the authority of the imperial chamber.

Behold here, what the emperor did to satisfy the desires of the Court of Rome: it seems that he could have done nothing more vehemently; and yet notwithstanding the Pope was not thoroughly contented. He very much rejoiced to see the Protestants subjected to the most rigorous punishments. But that authority that Charles had taken upon

him to appoint those conferences to labour to bring those differences to an agreement, the consent that he had given to the abolition of some ceremonies, and above all, the promise of a council within the prefixed term of a year, were things that he could not digest, judging them to be too contrary to the sovereignty of his see. And because the emperor had pressed him about this last article of a council, and even his legate wrote to him that it was the general desire of all Germany, he returned this answer: "That having consulted the cardinals about it, divers of them had not found that a council was a very fit means for the rooting out of the present heresies, because that those things that had been decided by former councils, or already established by the practice of many ages, ought not to be again called in question. That this was a very bad precedent, and could not be done without very great scandal, and a manifest violation of the apostolic see. That nevertheless, if the emperor judged a council to be absolutely necessary, he might promise the Lutherans one, but with this condition, that they should presently depart from all their errors, and be obedient to their holy mother church; that they should hold her doctrines and her rites until it should be otherwise ordained by the council, to the decrees of which they should wholly submit themselves. That without this, the calling of a council would be very scandalous, and of exceeding bad example to all posterity. That as to the place where it should be held, he judged it absolutely necessary that it should be in Italy, and that he did not see any city more fit for it than Rome itself, which was the seat of the Christian faith; that if, notwithstanding, Rome did not please him, he might choose one either in Bologna, or Placentia, or Mantua." The Pope went even so far as to write to the Christian princes a circular letter, by which he advised them in the general of that which had passed at Augsburg, and that for the entire rooting out of heresy, he was resolved to call a council.

Notwithstanding, all these declarations consisted only in

words; for at the bottom his mind was wholly remote from the holding of a council; in which, as Guicciardine says, he apprehended that they might contest his papacy with him, which he had purchased by canvassings and money, and that they would take cognizance of the affairs of the Florentines, whom he had subdued and subjected to the family of the Medici by force of arms; or as the author of the History of the Council of Trent says, he feared lest they should beat down that excessive authority which the See of Rome had usurped over all other bishops, and over all churches. However it were, he would not have one; but he would that they should make use of fire and sword. And it was for this, that he wrote about that same time to Ferdinand the emperor's brother, exhorting him to go himself in person to Bohemia, to root out heresy there. He solicited also the emperor and the Christian kings to join their arms with those of the Duke of Savoy, against the Swiss cantons who had embraced the Reformation; and his intrigues, or those of his creatures, were so powerful, that they inflamed a bloody war between the reformed cantons and the others, wherein the reformed were beaten many times, which afforded matter of great joy to the Court of Rome.

In the year 1532, the emperor having called the Imperial Diet to Ratisbon, for the affairs of Hungary and Germany, which were threatened by the arms of the Turks, the princes and the other states assembled, seeing clearly already that the Pope and his court sought only to elude the council by divers pretences, solicited the emperor that he would be pleased to call one himself by his authority; and they represented to him, that it was his right in the quality of Roman Emperor; that other emperors had so used it, and that he was the head and protector of all Christianity, especially in case of the negligence and refusal of the Pope. The emperor would not hearken to this proposition, and yet nevertheless being urged by the necessity of his affairs, and having a war to maintain with the Turks, he granted a peace

to the Protestants, who were already seven princes, and four-and-twenty imperial cities. This peace was made at the mediation of Albert Cardinal and Archbishop of Mayence, and Lewis Prince Palatine of the Rhine; and the emperor made his decree public, bearing in it express prohibitions to trouble or disquiet any person for matters of religion only, till the holding of a general, free, and Christian council, which he should endeavour to have called within the term of a year; or in case that a council could not be held, till a general assembly of the states of the empire, wherein they might provide for the affairs of religion. This decree displeased the Pope and all his court extremely, who would neither have a peace, nor a council, nor any assembly of the states to treat of religion, as it evidently appeared afterwards. For after that the emperor had set the affairs of Hungary and Austria in order, and had been freed from the force of Solyman, he went into Italy; and having urged the Pope many times upon that subject, the Pope always eluded the proposition, as well by the conditions to which he required that the Protestants should submit themselves, well knowing that they would not agree to them, as by the default of the consent of the Kings of France and England, without whom, he said, it was to be feared that the calling of a council would create a new schism in the church. Thus the papacy of Clement passed away, who died the twenty-fifth of September 1534.

His successor, who was Paul III. followed the same path of Clement in regard of the Protestants. The first step that he made was to let his nuncio Paulus Vergerius declare, that he was resolved to call a council; but at the same time, he made these three things to be added, that he intended it should be held at Mantua and not in Germany, that he did not pretend to have any of his rights released, and that he would not endure that a national council should be held in Germany; upon which, he demanded the answer of the Protestants. A little after, the Protestants answered to this

effect: " That having already appealed to a *council*, they ardently wished for it; but that, as they had often declared, they demanded a *free council*, that should provide against the disorders of the church, and make a good reformation according to the word of God, and in the terms of Christian equity; and it was a council so qualified which they had appealed to. That the dispute being about matters wherein the See of Rome was visibly interested, and about others which the Pope defended, not in word only, but by those bloody edicts and extreme cruelties which they exercised against those who did not agree with them, there was no colour of reason that the judgment ought to be in their hands, nor that the council could be free, if the choice of the place and the persons who should compose it, and the form of procedure which they held, should depend upon their choice. That the Pope having already condemned them and their doctrine, it was against all manner of reason, for him to pretend to be the master of an assembly who should judge both them and the See of Rome. In fine, that the business being a common cause, it was the right of the emperor and the princes, in so important an affair, to make choice of the most fit persons, and those who were most capable of giving glory to God, and doing good to the Christian commonwealth: and that as for themselves, as they could not abandon the interests of the truth, they should do also all that should lie in their power for the re-establishing of peace and union." We may guess that this answer was not very agreeable to the Court of Rome; and yet notwithstanding the Pope did not fail to speak always of a council, and to exhort his cardinals to begin the reformation by themselves. He made divers orations to them for that purpose; and he went so far as to give charge to some of them to examine that which was most necessary to be reformed in their court, which had already alarmed them all. But at the same time, he assured them by one of his actions, by which they might very well judge of the little sincerity of his words, for he

created two young men, his illegitimate sons, cardinals, the one of fourteen years of age, and the other of sixteen: and when they represented to him their small age, he answered merrily, That he would supply that defect, by the number of his own, having years enough to spare them, if it was necessary.

The Pope's nuncio having received the answer of the Protestants, departed from Germany, and returned to Rome, where, after having made his report, he concluded that nothing more was to be thought on, than to oppress the Protestants by force of arms. This nuncio, who was Vergerius, had had divers private conferences with them, and even with Luther himself, whom he had laboured to gain by threats and promises, but he could not obtain his design. This forced the Pope powerfully to solicit the emperor, who at that time came to Rome, openly to declare war against the Protestants; and he had in this two great interests, the one to busy the emperor, whose power he feared in Italy, and the other to overwhelm the Protestants with his greatest force, without embarrassing himself by holding a council. The emperor consented to the desires of the Pope, and he was resolved, only to give a greater colour to the war, that a council should be first called, to let them see that he had tried fair means before he came to violence: but that he should call it under such conditions, as that the authority of the See of Rome should not incur any danger. A bull therefore was drawn up, dated June 12, 1536; the convocation of it was at Mantua, on the three and twentieth of May of the year following; and the emperor having solicited the Protestants to go thither, they made nearly the same answers that they had already done: they remonstrated therefore, in the first place, "That the calling of a council could not of right belong to the Pope alone, as well by reason that the disorders and corruptions of which they complained and desired a reformation, came for the most part from the See of Rome and its creatures, which for some ages since had infected religion

with divers errors and superstitions, and which moreover had been wholly overthrown in the government of the church; as because also, that that see was already the openly declared enemy to the reformation, and those who demanded it, having condemned them for heretics, and persecuted them in all places by fire and sword. So that having to give an account of all that to a council, it was against all reason to leave the calling of a council to the Pope alone, which of right ought to belong to the emperor and the princes." Secondly, they noted, "That the Pope by his bull pretended to frame the council out of his creatures, who were bound to him by an oath, and to remain also himself the judge and master of all the difference, which was a manifest fallacy and injustice, the firmer to establish his authority under the pretence of a council, and those abuses, the defence of which he had undertaken." In the third place, they took notice, That the Pope in his bull had said nothing of the manner of proceeding which they ought to use in the council, from whence they concluded, that his intent was, to make those things which they should treat of there, to depend upon the determinations of his see, human traditions, and the decrees of some later councils, and not upon the word of God alone. "That by this means, that would be no more a free and Christian council, but a Roman conventicle; which instead of tending to a holy reformation, could on the contrary tend to nothing but the confirmation of those evils which had for so long a time infested the church." As to the place where this pretended council was called, they represented, "That it was not just that it should be in Italy, where they could have no security for themselves, nor any liberty of opinion in a good conscience; and that the imperial assemblies who had demanded it, had always demanded that it should be in Germany: that they therefore besought the emperor, that he would be pleased to consider their reasons, and to endeavour that the council should be lawful, to the end they might happily unite to the

glory of God and the peace of Christendom, not forgetting what had happened at the Council of Constance to the Emperor Sigismund, who saw his authority trampled under their feet, and his letters of safe conduct violated, in the person of John Huss and Jerom of Prague." They caused in the end a writing to be printed, containing all these reasons, and divers others too long to transcribe, to justify themselves against the calumnies of their adversaries; and they published it, not only in Germany, but also in foreign countries. Some time after, the Pope published another bull, by which he prolonged the holding of the council, under a pretence that he could not agree with the Duke of Mantua, and a little after he assigned it at Vicenza. Notwithstanding, the prosecutions continued always against the Protestants every where, where the Pope had any authority. In Germany, the Imperial Chamber committed a thousand wrongs and outrages against them. In France, the flames were kindled in all the provinces; and although Henry the Eighth King of England had thrown off the yoke of Rome, yet he did not fail (to appear a good Catholic) to put to death without mercy all those who had learned the new religion. The same was done in Scotland, in Flanders, and in all the countries of the Duke of Savoy.

In the year 1539, the Pope published a bull by which he suspended the convocation of a council indefinitely, until it should be his good pleasure to have one held. And moreover, there was held in this same year an imperial diet at Frankfort, whither the emperor sent the archbishop of London as his commissioner, and decreed with him, that to labour to put an end to the differences about religion, he should make a friendly conference between the most learned and well-meaning persons both on the one side and on the other, who, without the intervention of the Pope, should have nothing before their eyes but the glory of God and the good of the church; and that notwithstanding, they should let the Protestants have peace for fifteen months, under con-

ditions that were yet harsh enough to them. But this ^{council} resolution so highly offended the Pope, that as soon as he had received the news of it, he dispatched away a nuncio to the emperor who was then in Spain, with orders to complain, and to hinder by all sorts of ways, that he should not authorize it by his consent. The Protestants having sent thither on their parts, the emperor would not for that time declare himself; but dismissed that business to another season. After which, he went into the Low Countries to appease some popular sedition there; and having there put the matter into debate, because he was to give some answer, Cardinal Farnese, who was legate there before him, opposed him with all his might, urging the inconveniences that might arise from such a conference, and that he had far better refer the cause of religion to a council, and notwithstanding, to fortify the Catholic league, to make the Protestants submit by fair means or foul; against whom he made a very long invective. This counsel notwithstanding did not then please the emperor; he appointed a diet to be held in Germany for the conference, and he invited all the princes to come in person thither, promising public safety to all; which obliged the cardinal legate to retire in great discontent. This cardinal, in his return, went into France, and obtained of Francis the First an edict against those whom he called heretics and Lutherans, which was afterwards published and executed through his whole kingdom with extreme rigour.

The conference was first assigned at Haguenaw, a little after at Worms; and the Pope, who feared the success, thought good to send thither his nuncio, Thomas Campegius, with Paulus Vergerius, in whom he reposed a great deal of confidence. But the policy of the Court of Rome was too averse to an accommodation, to suffer that conference to proceed far: the emperor therefore, at the urgent solicitation of the Pope, broke it off by express letters, and referred

it to a diet, which he would have held some time after at Ratisbon.

The Protestants saw clearly to what all these delays tended, and yet nevertheless they did not fail to appear at Ratisbon, whither the emperor came in person, and whither the Pope had also sent Cardinal Contarenius in the quality of his legate. This was in the year 1541. Moreover, the emperor caused a book to be presented on his part to the assembly, which chiefly treated of the articles of religion, and particularly of those which were in controversy; and he declared that it was his will that that book should be examined, and that it should serve as the theme or subject of the conference; for which he himself named the collocutors, by the consent of both parties, who referred that nomination to him. In this conference the collocutors agreed upon some articles, and could not agree upon some others; as upon those of transubstantiation, of the adoration of the eucharist, the sacrifice of the mass, the celibacy of priests, the communion under one kind, and the sacrament of penance. And the emperor having consulted the legate about this, to know of him what he should do on this occasion, the legate gave him his answer in writing, "That after having seen as well the articles agreed upon between the collocutors, as the others which they could not come to agree about, it was his judgment that he ought to ordain nothing about the rest, but that he ought to refer all to the holy see, which could in a general council, or otherwise, do that which it should judge necessary for the good of the church, and in particular for that of Germany." The emperor took this answer, as if the legate had consented that the articles agreed upon between the collocutors should immediately be received by both the parties; and he related it to the assembly after that manner. But there sprung up a kind of division between the bishops of one side, and the Roman Catholic princes on the other. For the princes would that the articles agreed upon should be received, and that the

rest should be referred either to a general or national council, or at least to a general assembly of the states of the empire; and the bishops on the contrary, who saw that this was the beginning of a reformation, were of opinion that they should reject those articles agreed upon, wherein they said that the Catholic collocutors had too much given way to the Protestants, and that they should change nothing either in religion or its ceremonies, but that they should refer all to a general or a national council. This dispute therefore having so happened, the legate feared lest they should upon this meddle with the affairs of the Court of Rome, so that he openly declared, by another public writing, that he did not mean that they should receive any articles, but that they should absolutely refer all, as well the agreed on as the others, to his holiness, for him to determine what he should think fit. He published yet farther another writing, by which he very much condemned as well the Catholic princes as the bishops, for that they had referred that business to a national council, in defect of a general one: and he maintained that the authority of the See of Rome was very much wounded in that reference, and that a national council could not deliberate about matters of religion. In fine, after a great many disputes, which only served more and more to discover the obstinate resolution that the Roman party had taken up not to suffer a reformation, this diet ended with a decree of the emperor, which referred the whole affair to a general council, or a national one in Germany, or to an imperial assembly, if they could not obtain a council, and that nevertheless the execution of the decree of Augsburg should remain suspended. All this passed in the year 1541.

See here what was the success of the Conference of Ratisbon. The year following, which was 1542, the Pope assigned the council to be held at Trent in the month of November; he sent a bull to the emperor in Spain, and after to the kings, exhorting them to send their ambassadors thither, and he himself deputed thither three cardinals in quality of

legates; he sent thither some bishops also. But this convocation had not then any effect, by reason of the war that was carried on about the same time between King Francis the First and the emperor. And this latter seeing himself to have two wars upon his hands, that with France, and the other with the Turks, made a new decree at Spire, by which he gave peace to the Protestants: but more than that, he ordained that they should make choice of some learned and well-meaning persons to draw up a formulary of the Reformation; that the princes should do the same; and that all those pieces being referred to the next diet, they should there resolve, with a common consent, that which they should judge fit to be kept about the matters of religion, till the meeting of a council. This decree was made in the year 1544. But the Pope was so nettled at this, that he wrote to the emperor in a very threatening style, complaining above all things of this, that he had not referred that which concerned religion to the decision of the Church of Rome, and that he had favoured those who were rebels to the apostolic see.

Some time after King Francis the First and the emperor made a peace; and one of the articles of their agreement was, that they should defend the ancient religion, that they should employ their endeavours for the union of the church, and the reformation of the Court of Rome, that they should jointly demand of the Pope the calling of a council, and that they should labour to subdue the Protestants. This obliged the Pope to prevent them. He therefore again assigned the council to be held at Trent the fifteenth day of March 1545, and dispatched away his legates thither; but at the same time he resolved to use all his endeavours to oblige the emperor to turn his arms against the Protestants, to oppose them at the same time with the spiritual and temporal sword; or to say better, to the end that the war might serve him for a pretence to elude the council. For that purpose he made use of the ministry of his nuncio, and afterwards of that Cardinal Farnese, whom he sent to the emperor as his legate, whose chief

pretence was, the refusals which the Protestants had proposed anew against his pretended council. He made therefore very powerful solicitations to the emperor by his legate, with offers to aid him with men and money, and even to cause him to be assisted by the princes of Italy; and the emperor, who on his side was very glad to take this occasion to subdue Germany to himself, readily accepted of this proposition; so that a war was concluded between them; but the conclusion was kept very secret, till the time of execution. Notwithstanding, the better to cover this design, the emperor appointed a conference of learned men to be held at Ratisbon, upon the subject of religion, according to his last decree; but he did not fail to cite the Archbishop of Cologne to appear before him, who had embraced the Reformation, and afterwards excommunicated him, and deprived him of his archbishopric. And as for the conference at Ratisbon, which gave some jealousy to the bishops who were already assembled at Trent, it was quickly after broken by the unjust conditions that some monks, who were there as the commissioners of the emperor, would impose on the Protestant divines. The council was opened the thirteenth of December of the same year 1545.

But, in fine, after a great many artifices and dissimulations, able to have lulled asleep the most vigilant, after a great many contrary assurances given to the Protestants, the emperor sent the Cardinal of Trent in haste to Rome, to give the Pope notice, that he should make his troops march with all diligence. The treaty which they had made together was published the eight and twentieth of July 1546, bearing this among other things, "That the emperor should employ his arms and open force to make those Germans who should reject the council, return to the ancient religion and to the obedience of the holy see:" and the emperor, soon after, openly declared himself as well by the letters which he wrote to divers cities in Germany, to the Elector of Cologne and the Prince of Wirtemberg, as by the answers that his mi-

nisters gave to the ambassadors of those towns who were with him. The Pope, on his side, presently published a bull dated the fifteenth of July, by which he commanded that they should make solemn processions, exhorting all Christians to put up prayers to God for the happy success of the war, which the emperor and himself had undertaken at their common charges, against the Germans who should either profess heresy, or protect it. Before this, he had written to the Switzers letters dated the third of June, by which he gave them notice of the emperor's design, praying them to send all the succours they possibly could. The emperor would at the beginning cover this war with another pretence than that of religion; but the Pope would never suffer him to do it. So that the emperor having no further way left to disguise himself, began with the proscribing of the Duke of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse, and moreover, he sent his army into the field. The Protestant princes, on their parts, took up arms also for their just defence.

The success of this war was not so happy for the Protestants; all Germany saw itself soon enslaved under the arms of the emperor; and according to all human appearance, the reformation also had been presently destroyed, if God, who never utterly forsakes his church, had not provided for it by his providence. It happened that the Pope and the emperor quarrelled about those temporal interests which were far more prevalent in their minds than that of religion, which fell out because the emperor would not readily subject Germany to the council of the Pope, and because the Pope used also all his endeavours to stir up new affairs for the emperor on the side of Italy. Moreover, a division fell out in the council; for the Pope having transferred it from Trent to Bologna, to have it more at his ordering, the greatest part of the bishops yielded to that transferring; but many also held themselves firm to Trent, and would not obey it; which made a great difficulty to arise, when the emperor and the princes of Germany came to demand, as they afterwards did,

that the council should be re-established at Trent; because those of Bologna stood upon it as a point of honour, not to go back to find those of Trent there. King Francis the First died in this time, and Henry the Eighth King of England being dead also, the Reformation was quickly after received in England, under the reign of Edward the Sixth, which a little disturbed the joys of the Court of Rome. They were yet more disturbed by the acts of protestation which the emperor had made against the assembly at Bologna, that he had treated it as an unlawful assembly and a conventicle, insisting that they should return to Trent, with threats that if the Pope continued to neglect his duty, he would himself out of his own authority provide for the disorders of the church. They were troubled also at the *interim* which the same emperor published afterwards throughout all Germany.

This *interim* was a certain formulary of religion that the emperor had made to be drawn up to be observed until the holding of a lawful council. He established therein the whole body of the Roman doctrine, and allowed only the marriage of priests and communion under both kinds. But although this formulary was neither approved by the one sort nor the other, that at Rome the Pope had censured it, and the Protestants looked upon it as the greatest of all their oppressions, the emperor did not fail to use violence to the Protestants to make them receive it. And this filled Germany with an infinite number of persecutions, such as those that conquerors when they cruelly abuse their prosperity (as Charles the Fifth did) are wont to make the vanquished suffer. But while he thus satiated himself with these violences and indignities, Paul the Third died at Rome the tenth of November 1549. The death of this Pope was followed with divers writings which wounded his memory in the most cutting manner in the world. But letting pass his manners, and the rest of his government, wherein we are not concerned, I shall only say, that the evils which our fathers suffered in all places for the cause of the Reformation during the fifteen years of his pa-

pany, cannot be expressed. For under the name of heretics, or Lutherans, they imprisoned them, they banished them, they deprived them of their estates, they massacred them, they burned them; and not to speak of our France, England, Scotland, Flanders, Holland, Brabant, Hainault, Artois, Spain, Savoy, Lorraine, and Poland, were as so many theatres, wherein there might be every day seen some of those tragical executions, and where they spoke of nothing but the extirpation and rooting out of these heretics.

Julius the Third succeeded Paul. This man freely transferred his council back to Trent, to make all opposition between the emperor and himself cease: but in the bull which he published, he declared that it belonged to him to rule and guide the council; that he remitted it to be followed and continued, in the same state in which it was when it was broken off; and that he would send his legates thither to preside in his place, in case he could not come thither himself in person. These clauses nettled the Protestants, so that seeing themselves pressed by the emperor to submit themselves to the council, they freely declared to him that they could not do it, otherwise than upon these conditions, to wit, "That they should begin to treat of matters all anew, without having regard to that which had been already done: that their divines should be received, and have a deliberative voice: that the Pope should not pretend to preside, but that he should submit himself to it: and in fine, that he should absolve the bishops from the oath by which they were tied to him: and that without that, they could not hold it to be a free council." Notwithstanding this declaration, the emperor made his decree, by which he ordained that they should submit themselves to the council, promising on his part that he would give safe-conduct to all the world to come thither, and to propose there all that they should judge necessary for the good of the church, and the salvation of souls; and that he would give order that all things should be treated and determined in a holy and Christian manner, according to the holy Scrip-

ture, and the doctrine of the fathers; and that the state of the church should be reformed there, and false doctrines and errors taken away.

Thus the council of Trent was continued, whither the Pope sent his legate and two nuncios to preside there in his name, with orders to begin the session the first day of May 1551, which was yet nevertheless prorogued to the first of September following. The Elector of Saxony and the Duke of Wirtemberg, both Protestants, with some imperial cities, resolved to send their deputies thither, and made them demand of the emperor's ambassador a letter of safe-conduct, in the same form that the council of Basil had given it to the Bohemians, with an intermission till their divines should be arrived. This demand was not without some difficulty; but the question having been agitated at Rome, they thought good to agree that they should have a safe-conduct in general terms, without delaying upon that account the decision of the chief matters: and before the expediting of this safe-conduct, they had determined the principal points touching the eucharist, to wit, transubstantiation, the real presence, the adoration of the host, the concomitance, the custom of the *Fete Dieu*,* the reservation of the sacrament, and the necessity of auricular confession before the communion. They agreed only with the ambassador of the emperor, that they should delay the decision of these four questions, "Whether it was necessary to salvation, that all should receive the sacrament in both kinds. Whether he that received in one, took less than he that received in both. Whether the church was in an error, when she ordained that the priests only should receive in both. Whether the eucharist ought also to be given to little children." Which was already a mere fallacy, as if the Protestants had nothing to propose but only about those four questions.

* When they solemnly carry their host in the streets to be worshipped upon *Corpus Christi* day.

When the Protestant deputies were arrived, they openly complained of the form of their safe-conduct, and they demanded one in the form of that of Basil to the Bohemians, but they refused it. They demanded that they might be heard in full council, but they would not; and they obtained with great difficulty to be heard in a congregation in the house of the legate. In this congregation they demanded, on the behalf of their masters, 1. "That the article of the superiority of the council above the Pope, decided in the Councils of Constance and Basil, might be laid down for a foundation." 2. "That the Pope, since he was a party in this affair, should not preside in the council, but that he should submit to it both himself and his see, to be judged there." 3. "That he should for this effect absolve the bishops of the oaths that he had given them." 4. "That the matters which had been already decided, should be judged of again after their divines had been heard, since they could not till then have come to the council, not having had safe-conduct." 5. "That they should defer all judgment till they came." 6. "That they should judge according to the word of God, and the common belief of all Christian nations." But the prelates would not hear these propositions, and the legate, who consulted the Pope upon all matters, and more especially upon these, had already thus vehemently explained himself, "That they had much rather lose their lives, than relax any thing of the authority of the holy see." Some days after, the divines of Wirtemberg and those of Strasburg arrived at Trent, and presented their confession, demanding that it should be examined, and offering themselves to explain and defend it; but this was to no purpose: for the Pope had expressly forbidden his legate to permit that they should enter upon any public conference, either *viva voce* or by writing, in the matters of religion. Thus things were carried on in this council.

But while affairs were managed after this manner, the Pope, who for some time before had been discontented at the

emperor, had made his treaty with King Henry the Second; and the king on his side had also very secretly treated with Maurice the Elector of Saxony for the liberty of Germany: so that matters were all on a sudden ready for a war; and the news being come to Trent, the Pope presently separated the assembly, giving order to his nuncios to give notice of it every where, and to suspend the council till another time. This war freed Germany from its slavery under Charles; he was forced to set all the princes at liberty whom he kept prisoners: and in fine, to make the peace which was concluded at Passau the last day of July 1552. By this peace it was concluded, that the emperor should call within six months the general assembly of the empire, there to provide means for the accommodating of the differences of religion, and that notwithstanding no person should be disquieted upon that occasion: and thus the *interim* of the emperor was abolished.

But if Germany had then any quiet, the persecutions were inflamed elsewhere against the reformed. Edward the Sixth being dead in England, and Mary having succeeded him, the Pope sent Cardinal Pole thither in quality of his legate, who negociated there the re-establishing of the authority and religion of the Pope. This made the flames to be kindled, and their punishments to be renewed after the most cruel manner in the world; for in one year only they caused an infinite number of the people to be burned for the sake of religion, and one hundred seventy and six persons of great quality. Elizabeth the daughter of Henry the Eighth, and sister to Mary, was confined to a close prison. On the other side, Ferdinand King of Hungary and Bohemia, and Archduke of Austria, made a rigorous edict upon the same occasion, for all the countries subject to him, and drove away from Bohemia alone more than two hundred ministers. The emperor, on his part, always caused the laws of the inquisition to be most rigorously observed in the Low Countries. The Duke of Savoy did the same thing in his

country. France every day beheld nothing but these sad executions : and yet nevertheless, all these bloody pursuits did but increase in all places the number of those who embraced the Reformation. Pope Julius the Third died the three and twentieth of March 1555, and Marcellus the Second was chosen in his place ; who not having held the see more than two and twenty days, had for his successor Paul the Fourth.

In this same year, there was an imperial assembly held at Augsburg, where the treaty of peace made at Passau was confirmed, and the freedom of religion granted by the Emperor and the King of the Romans in Germany. The decree was presently published. But notwithstanding, the people of Austria and Bavaria having with very great urgency demanded of their princes a reformation, it was refused them ; and they agreed only that they should receive the communion under both kinds, in waiting for a council. This did not fail to give great displeasure to the Pope, beholding, on one side, that all parts of the world were swallowed up by the superstitions and errors of his church ; and on the other, that even the Roman Catholic princes, of whom he expected an entire obedience, undertook without his consent to change something in religion. In this same time Charles the Fifth, weary of affairs, and having but a weak constitution, resolved to quit the world ; and for this effect, having made Philip his son to come to Brussels, he transferred to him the sovereignty of the Low Countries, and a month after he yielded to him the crown of Spain. He resigned the empire to Ferdinand his brother, and reserving to himself the pension of a hundred thousand crowns, he retired into a monastery. This happened in the year 1556, and he died two years after, on the one and twentieth of September 1558.

Pope Paul the Fourth, from the first beginning of his papacy, turned all his thoughts to avoid the council, and to make the rigours of the inquisition to rule in all places, say-

ing, "That this was the only means to destroy heresy, and the only fort of the apostolic see." For to effect this he made an ordinance which he caused all the cardinals to sign, by which he renewed all the censures and punishments denounced by his predecessors against the heretics, and declared that all the prelates, princes, kings, and emperors, fallen into heresy, ought to be held fallen from and deprived of all their benefices, estates, kingdoms, or empires, without any other declaration; that they could not be re-established by any authority, not even by that of the apostolic see; and that their goods should be given to the first possessor. He quarrelled at the same time with Ferdinand, maintaining that the resignation of Charles in his favour could not be done but by his hands; and that in that case it belonged to him to make whom he should please emperor. Notwithstanding, two things fell out that gave him a great deal of grief; the one, that Mary Queen of England being dead, Elizabeth succeeded her; and that the Emperor Ferdinand having proposed to the Protestants in the Diet of Augsburg, which was held in the month of February 1559, to seek to put an end to the differences of religion by the way of a council, the Protestants had declared to him, as they had often done, that they could have no hopes of any accommodation by the way of a council of the Popes. That they would submit themselves to a free, general, and Christian council, not called by the Pope, but by the emperor and Christian kings, where the Pope should hold his place not as president and master, but as a party, and submit himself to the judgment of the council. That for this end it was necessary that the Pope should release them of the oath by which he held all the prelates bound to his see, to the end that the prelates and divines there might give their opinion freely, and that all should be judged by the word of God alone, and not by the Roman constitutions and their pretended traditions. That it was just that their divines should be heard, and that they might declare their opinion in the decision of those dif-

ferences, and by consequence, all the acts and all the decrees made at Trent remaining as not made, that they should treat the things anew. That with these conditions they consented with all their hearts, and submitted themselves to a council: but not otherwise. So that the emperor, seeing well that the Pope and his court would never agree to those conditions, nor consent to any council, at least unless they should be masters of it, further confirmed the treaty of Passau, and settled the peace of Germany about the matter of religion, leaving to every one the liberty of his conscience. This mortally wounded the Pope; but elsewhere, he comforted himself with hearing that his solicitations with the other princes to continue the rooting out of the heretics by fire and sword, and every where all the rigours of punishments, had a very great effect in France, in Spain, and in the Low Countries. Henry the Second died the third of June of the same year 1559. The Pope died also quickly after, to wit, the eighteenth of August of the same year. His last words were to recommend to the cardinals “the holy office of the inquisition;” for so he called it: assuring them that it was the only pillar of the See of Rome. His memory was very much detested by all the people, who immediately after his death burned the new prison of the inquisition which he had caused to be built, broke his statues, and overthrew his coat of arms throughout all the city of Rome.

Pius the Fourth succeeded him; and it was under him that the Council of Trent was consummated. He followed entirely the spirit of his predecessor; for he presently moved the Duke of Savoy to turn his arms against his subjects of the valleys of Piedmont, to reduce them by force to the obedience of his see; and because that in France they had resolved to call a national council, to labour by this means to put a stop to the course of the Reformation, against which the fires and punishments practised till that time had done nothing, he opposed himself vehemently to it, and sent to

King Francis the Second a nuncio, purposely to dissuade him from that national council, and to exhort him to follow the way of the punishments that he had before practised: and that of his arms, if it were necessary, till it should be provided for by a general council, offering for that purpose to assist him with all his power, and to cause the King of Spain and the princes of Italy to assist him also. The nuncio faithfully acquitted himself of his charge; but the king still persisted in the design of a national council, and it was resolved in his council, that they should seek for the means to call it, in case the Pope should not speedily call a general one. This was the resolution of an assembly held at Fountainbleau, in the month of August 1560, which no ways pleased the Pope; for he saw well that this national council was a very bad example for Germany, where till then his predecessors had hindered it. So that seeing no very good means to ward off that blow, and apprehending that other nations would do the same things, he suddenly took up a resolution to assemble his council at Trent. But besides that reason of national councils which he apprehended, he was further carried out to it by divers other motives; for he saw that the reformed religion had spread itself abroad every where. In Spain the inquisitions were taken up only with condemning and burning them; and they had always some new matter for the exercise of their cruelties. It was the same in the Low Countries. England had wholly thrown off the yoke of Rome, and embraced the Reformation: Scotland had done it as much. All Prussia and Livonia had done the same. In France the number of the Protestants was very much increased, and they had the liberty of their consciences granted them. The Duke of Savoy could not compass his design, with all his forces, only in some of the valleys of Piedmont. Besides, those which remained fixed to the interests of the Pope, were very much discontented with the conduct of his court; the greatest part of his Catholics had acknowledged the necessity of a refor-

mation, and they made harangues about it in the public assemblies. The princes themselves, who most supported the See of Rome, every day encroached upon his authority, and gave him trouble enough. He resolved with himself therefore to assemble his council; but at the same time also he made it his design to manage it so well, that the success should be advantageous for himself. To this effect he published his bull, bearing this with it, that he took off the suspension that had been made, and called it to Trent, on Easter day in the year 1563. He sent thither five legates to preside in his place; and after divers delays, in fine, the council was opened by his order the eighteenth of January 1562, and matters were treated there afterwards after the same manner in which they had been treated before under Paul the Third, and under Julius; that is to say, that the Pope reigned there absolutely, and nothing was done there but according to his will. His see was exalted more than before, the disorders of the government of the church were rather confirmed than corrected there, and the errors, and superstitions, and worship set up by men, instead of being reformed, were on the contrary established there, and passed in the force of a perpetual and indispensable law. Such was the success of this assembly.

It would be too long to relate minutely that which passed there. Any may read with pleasure and with profit all the particularities in some of the famous historians of those times. It shall suffice me for the present to say, that after the manner that the Popes took there for the governing that council, we ought not to think it strange if they obtained their ends, and if they always turned things to which side they pleased. First of all, they took a particular care to fill it with Italian prelates; so that they alone almost always were above half the number of all the other nations joined together. By this means the Court of Rome might very well assure itself of the council; for although all the prelates that composed it should not have been bound to the Popes by an

oath, yet the Italians were more particularly dependent upon them, and they would not fail thoroughly to represent to them the interest that Italy had to preserve to itself the ecclesiastical government over other nations; and to maintain, by consequence, the authority of Rome. Secondly, they kept up a stock of money in the hands of the legates, to help the poor bishops, and to gain them more and more to them, and to make also presents and gratifications to persons who could render them most service. For they judged it to be the best means to draw the most to them, either by the acknowledgment of the good offices received from them, or by the hopes of receiving them for the time to come. In the Third place, the Pope was not contented with presiding in the council by his legates, he would farther, that the propositions should be made and carried by them only. And it was for this that the legates of Pius the Fourth unjustly insinuated it into the decree of the opening on the eighteenth of January 1562, that they should treat of matters *proponentibus Legatis*; and when some Spanish prelates would have opposed that clause, saying that it was unusual in councils, and that it wholly took away all liberty from the assembly, where every one ought to have a right to propose, they derided them, and let them alone without giving them any answer. The Pope himself having heard of that opposition, commanded his legates that they should remain obstinate in that decree, and that they should not remit so much as one point: and the King of Spain having made some complaints, upon the advice that his ambassador gave him, the Pope eluded them, and would change nothing.

Behold therefore the Court of Rome well nigh already assured of two great points; to wit, on the one side, of the greatest number of persons; and on the other, of the propositions that should be made in the council. There remained nothing but to make sure of their deliberations; and for this they practised divers means. The two most general, were that of the congregations at Trent itself in the house of the chief

legate, and that of the congregations at Rome. The former consisted in this, that from the beginning of the council under Paul the Third, they unjustly made this order to be established, that in imitation of that which had been made in the last Council of Lateran, that there should be made divers particular congregations to examine the matters there that the legates should propose to them, that afterwards the same matters so digested be brought to a general congregation which should be held in the house of the legate, where every one should tell his opinion; and that after this, they should frame the decrees to contain them, and make them to pass in council. The second consisted in this, in that from the first beginning the Pope had deputed some cardinals at Rome to consult about the affairs of the council, and to have as it were the overlooking of all that should pass there; so that before they came to make any decree, the legates at Trent had discovered the bottom of the sentiments of the prelates, and the reasons of every one, since before they concluded any thing they sent all to Rome, from whence they received their orders, and the deliberations of the council wholly made to their hands; and this is that which they called *the Holy Ghost coming in a cloak-bag*. But besides these two ways, they had yet others, which although they were not of that importance, did not fail to have their use. We must place in this rank, the method that they took to examine all the speeches, and all the other actions that should be done before the prelates, of the council, before they should recite them, to the end that nothing should be advanced which was not agreeable to the time and place, that is to say, to the designs and interests of Rome; for by these means the council thought to make the pulpits ring with nothing but the praises of the holy see, and imprecations against the heretics; and that none would be so stupid as to bring in any thing free or bold into his discourse, well knowing that the censors would not suffer it, and that it would be to meddle with affairs to no purpose. We must here also place the method that the legates openly

took, and which they always observed afterwards, to reckon the opinion of each individual; whereas in the Councils of Constance and Basil they had counted their opinions by nations, which divers would fain have had done also at Trent; but the legates opposed themselves to it with all their might. But they drew this advantage from that order, that Italy alone had twice as many voices as all the other nations together; and we may say, that they only made the decisions. We must further rank here another method which they took, to make in the first place the points of doctrine to be agitated by particular congregations of monks and other scholastic divines, which treated of them after their usual manner; and afterwards to carry some extracts or abridgements of their disputes to the congregations of the prelates, who for the most part understood nothing of that gibberish of the school: so that almost always they made their decrees without having examined the matters of them, or hearing the reasons of one side and of the other, without reading, without meditation, without study, and sometimes even without any understanding of the terms; which having obliged Bruce Martel Bishop of Fesola to represent of what importance it was that the general congregation should be thoroughly informed of what they did, and that it should take cognizance of matters itself; the legates, nettled at this boldness, made immediately a sharp censure upon it, and wrote to the Court of Rome to have him taken notice of. We ought also to place here, the recourse that the Pope had to the ambassadors of the princes, to render the bishops of their nation favourable to the interests of the Court of Rome. This is what Pius the Fourth knew very well how to practise on the subject of the residence of the bishops, when he heard that the greatest part of voices went about to declare it of divine right; for he spake earnestly of it to the ambassadors of Venice and Florence; and he engaged them to make divers remonstrances of it to their bishops. The same things were done many times. We must add here yet farther, the ordinary direction of the

legates to put off to another time the decision of the points that they could not carry on their side at one time, and to pass over to other matters, to busy the prelates with, and to have time notwithstanding to advertise the Court of Rome, and to gain the chief to the contrary party. We ought to place here also the ordinary artifice of the same legates to put off the sessions, to make many difficulties arise about matters, and after divers circuits, to cause in the end the articles to be sent to the Pope which they could not make an end of, by reason of the great opposition of the nations. In one word, they used in the management of this assembly all that was most refined, most forcible and profound in human policy, promises, threats, secret negotiations, canvassings, diversions, delays, authority, and in general nothing was forborn that could turn and corrupt men's minds. The Pope and his court had a great many difficulties to overcome, and oppositions to surmount, which often put them into great troubles, and inquietudes, and fears; but in the end, they were so well served, that they remained masters, and saw all things succeed according to their desires.

See here after what manner things went at Trent, and by what degrees they tended to make an entire breach of communion between the Roman and Reformed party. Let any now judge, if in all this conduct, our fathers had not just and lawful causes for a separation. 1. They saw in the contrary party an invincible resolution to defend and preserve the errors and superstitions of which they demanded the correction. 2. They saw that resolution go so high, as to constrain them to fall back again into those errors against all their knowledge, and the motions of their own consciences. 3. They saw that this violence which they offered to them had no bounds; for it went not only as far as disputes, not only so far as the ordinances and decrees, but even to excommunications and anathemas, that is to say, to a separation and schism with a curse. 4. They saw that they joined to all this punishments, not in one or two places, but in all; not by popular heat,

but in cold blood, and in the usual ways designed for the punishment of the greatest villains. 5. They saw that those punishments came from the perpetual and general inspiration of the Court of Rome, which did not cease persecuting them in all places; and which proceeded so far, as to search for them in their most hidden retreats. 6. They saw that they refused the most equitable and necessary conditions, without which they could not proceed to a just examination of religion, nor to a holy and Christian reformation, and that instead of that, the Court of Rome would always remain sole mistress and arbitress. Lastly, they saw, that instead of returning to the purity of Christianity, by taking away out of the field of the church so many corruptions that defaced it, so many false opinions that destroyed it, so many kinds of worship contrary to true piety that dishonoured it, and destroyed the salvation of souls, these prelates on the contrary would establish things that custom only, and the tradition of some ages, had for the most part introduced; that they would establish them, I say, for the future in force of a law, to be incorporated into their religion as essential and indispensable parts of it, to which they would subject the minds and consciences of men, of which they ordained the practice and belief, under penalties of anathema; cutting off and separating from the body of their society all those who should hold a contrary opinion and practice. Let any judge, whether our fathers could after that still preserve church communion with a party, in which they could see no reflection either of the spirit of truth, or Christian purity and charity; and whether, all hope being taken away of ever reducing them to the right way of the Gospel, or even of being able to live with them without wounding their consciences by a detestable hypocrisy, in pretending to believe that which they did not believe, and to practise a worship which they held unlawful, there not remaining any further means for them to abide in that communion without partaking of their errors, without exposing their children, and without rendering themselves

culpable before God; let any I say judge, whether they did not do well to separate themselves. I confess, that when a man is joined with others in one and the same body; he ought not lightly to proceed to a rupture; there are measures and behaviour to be observed, that prudence and Christian charity require of us; and as long as we have any hope of procuring the amendment and healing of our brethren, or where there is at least any way for us to bewail and to mourn for their sins, without losing our own innocency, and their constraining us to partake in their crimes, we ought not to forsake them. But when that hope is lost, and when that means of preserving our own purity is taken from us, when instead of being able to bring them back, we see, on the contrary, that their communion does but make us to cast ourselves into an unavoidable danger of corrupting ourselves, it is certain that we ought to withdraw from them, lest in partaking with their sins, we should draw the just condemnation of God upon ourselves. "Be not partaker with other men's sins," says St. Paul, 1 Tim. 5. 22. "but keep thyself pure."

CHAP. IV.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE OBJECTION OF THE AUTHOR OF THE PREJUDICES, TAKEN OUT OF THE DISPUTE OF ST. AUGUSTINE AGAINST THE SCHISM OF THE DONATISTS.

IT seems to me, that what I have laid down hitherto, discovers to us clearly enough that the only way to decide the question of our separation, to know whether it is just or unjust, is to enter into the discussion of the foundation of our controversies, and that it would be the highest injustice to go about to

condemn us without ever hearing us. Notwithstanding, whatsoever we may have to say, and how strong soever our reasons should be, the author of the Prejudices pretends to have found out a certain way to convince us of schism, without entering upon any other examination; and for this he employs the Eighth and Ninth Chapters of his Treatise. "I would," says he, "go farther, and convince them of schism, without entering upon any discussion of either their doctrine or their mission, by their separation alone."*

All that he says upon that subject, may be nearly reduced to this; "That there is a church, from which one ought never to separate, under any pretence whatsoever, and from which all those who separate themselves are schismatics, and out of the state of salvation. That the infallible and perpetual mark to know this church, according to St. Augustine and the other African fathers, is, visible extension throughout all nations, because that visible extension according to them contains the church at all times, and that it is a negative mark, that is to say, that every society which has not that extension, is not the church: so that this reasoning is always sound, Your society is shut up in a little part of the world; therefore it is not the church: and that it is by this principle that St. Augustine has disputed against the Donatists, and convinced them of schism." This is the sum of his Eighth Chapter. In the Ninth, he labours to apply these general maxims to our separation: and, 1. he says, "That our communion is not spread over all the world, any more than that of the Donatists, and that not having that visible extension, which is the perpetual mark of the true church, it follows that it is not so, and by consequence that we are all schismatics." 2. He says, "We carry the principle of the Donatists much farther than those schismatics stretched it; for as for them, they did not say that there ever was a time in which the church had wholly fell into apostasy, and that

* Prejug. ch. 8. p. 161.

they excepted the communion of Donatus; but as for us, we will have it that there has been whole ages in which all the world had generally apostatized, and lost the faith and treasure of salvation." 3. He labours to shew that the societies of the Berengarians, of the Waldenses and Albigenes, &c. in whom he says we shut up the church, could not be this Catholic church of which St. Augustine speaks. And lastly, He concludes from thence that we are schismatics, and by consequence out of a state of salvation.

Before we enter upon the particular examination of the propositions whereof this objection is made up, it will be proper to note, that there is nothing new in all that, and that it is nothing but that same mark of visible extension that the greatest part of the controversial writers of the Roman communion have been wont to propose, when they would give the marks of the true church. There is this only difference to be found in it, that the others labour to ground this upon what they produce out of the passages of the Scripture, whereas the author of the *Prejudices* grounds his argument upon the sole authority of St. Augustine and some fathers. But when it should be true that St. Augustine and the African Fathers, disputing against the Donatists, should have pressed this visible extension of the church too much, and urged it further than they ought, will the author of the *Prejudices* believe that he ought to hold all those things that the fathers have advanced in their disputes for infallible, and all their reasonings and hypotheses to have been so? Does he not know what Theodoret himself, who was a father, has noted concerning some of those who were before him, "That the vehemence of disputation had made them fall into excesses, just as those who would rectify a crooked tree, turn it too much on the other side from that straightness which it ought to have?"* And is he ignorant of what St. Athanasius said concerning Dionysius of Alexandria, whose authority the

* Theod. Dial. 3.

Arians objected to him, "That Dionysius had said so, not with design to make a simple exposition of his faith, but occasionally having a respect to the times and persons. That a gardener is not to be found fault with if he cultivate his trees according to the quality of the soil, sowing one, planting another, pruning this, and plucking up that."* "We must," says St. Jerom, "distinguish between the different kinds of writing, and especially of polemical and dogmatical. For in the polemical, the dispute is vague, and when they answer to an adversary, they propose sometimes one thing, and sometimes another; they argue as they think fit; they say one thing and do another: or as the proverb says, they offer bread, and give one a stone. But in the dogmatical, on the contrary, they speak openly and ingenuously."† We may easily apprehend by that, that we ought not to hold for canonical all that the fathers may have wrote in the heat of their disputes, or to take what they have said according to the rigour of the letter, since they themselves acknowledge, that having the pen in their hands, they often advance things that on other occasions ought not to be pressed. So that though it should be true that St. Augustine and the African Fathers had made that visible extension an inseparable and perpetual mark of the true church, yet we should not fear to say, in respect of them, what St. Augustine himself has said concerning St. Cyprian, whom the Donatists objected to him: "I do not hold the writings of Cyprian for canonical; but I examine them by the canonical Scriptures. That which I find in them conformable to the holy Scriptures, I receive with commendation, and I reject, with the respect that I owe to his person, what I find in them disagreeing thereto."‡ We should make no scruple to apply to them, what the same St. Augustine has said, on the subject of St. Hilary and some

* Athanas, Epist. de fide Dion. Alex.

† Hierom. Epist. ad Pammach.

‡ Aug. contr. Crescon. lib. 2. cap. 32.

other fathers, whom they alleged to him: "We must thoroughly distinguish these sorts of writings from the authority of the canonical books. For however we should read them, yet we cannot draw convincing testimonies from them; and it is allowed us to depart from them, when we see that they themselves have departed from the truth."* It is therefore certain, that the author of the Prejudices has but weakened his proof, when instead of labouring to establish it on the Scripture, as the rest have done, he restrains it to the mere authority of St. Augustine and some fathers.

We have thought that we ought to have freely represented this to the author of the Prejudices, to oblige him a little to moderate his pretensions; for he imagined that the sole authority of St. Augustine and some fathers was enough to *convince* us: *I will*, says he, *convince them*. We have frequently told him already, and shall tell him here again, that the Scripture is the only rule of our faith; that we do not acknowledge any other authority able to decide the disputed points in religion, than that of the word of God; and that if we sometimes dispute by the fathers, it is but by way of condescension to those of the Church of Rome, to act upon their own principle, and not to submit our consciences to the word of men. But because that he may also imagine, under a pretence of this declaration, that we have no other way to answer his argument, I shall undertake to answer here, and shew him, if I can, that he has abused the authority of St. Augustine, and that he has neither comprised, nor had a mind to comprehend, either the true sentiments of that father, or ours. This is that which I design to shew him in this Chapter and in the following. But before we enter upon this matter, it will be necessary to clear in a few words the history of the Donatists, and to represent what was the beginning of their quarrel, and what their separation was. The author of the Prejudices had some interest to leave his

* Aug. Epist. 48.

readers in the ignorance of those particular matters of fact; but since he and I have not the same view of things, he ought not to take it ill that I supply his defect, and that I lay down that which he would not.

In the year 306, God having given peace to the church, after the cruel persecutions of Dioclesian, the people of Carthage being assembled by the direction of some neighbouring bishops, chose Cæcilianus for their bishop in the place of Mensurius, who had been dead some time before, and Cæcilianus afterwards received his ordination at the hands of Felix Bishop of Aptungus. This election had displeased some of that church through their private interests, so that they formed a party against him; and this party having called Secundus Primate of Numidia with a great many other bishops to the number of seventy, they made his ordination void, and ordained one Majorinus in his place. Cæcilianus was upheld by a great part of the church, and kept himself in his bishopric. Majorinus was upheld also by those of his party, and the bishops of Numidia; which made them set up at Carthage *altar against altar*; that is to say, that each bishop set up his assemblies apart, and so the church of Carthage was rent. But this division did not stop at Carthage; for the bishops of Africa took part, some with Cæcilianus, and the others with Majorinus; one of these was called Donatus, from whose name all that sect came in the end to be called Donatists.

Each party laboured to fortify themselves by reasons; the Donatists, on their side, at first accused Felix the ordainer of Cæcilianus, and afterwards Cæcilianus himself, of having been *traitors*, that is to say, of having delivered their Bibles to the Pagans for them to burn them, during the persecutions. The others, on the contrary, maintained that it was a false accusation, of which they had neither conviction nor proof, because that Cæcilianus had not been heard before his condemnation; and they also accused some of those who had condemned him, of having been themselves *traitors*,

and to have mutually absolved one another of that crime in a synod which they had held. The quarrel growing high, the Donatists presented a petition to the Emperor Constantine, to entreat of him some judges; because that in Africa they were all divided, and parties. The emperor commissioned for that purpose, Milchiades Bishop of Rome, Merodes Bishop of Milan, Maternus Bishop of Cologne, Rheticius Bishop of Autun, and Marinus Bishop of Arles. These judges met together with some other bishops of Italy, all in number to nineteen, and having taken an exact knowledge of that business, they justified Cæcilianus, and confirmed him in his bishopric; nevertheless, without making void either the ordination of Majorinus, or that of his successors: but the Donatists would not acquiesce in this judgment. They said, that Milchiades had himself been a *traditor*, and that he defended the *traditors*. They had recourse again to the emperor, who ordained that the cause should be searched again, and determined in a council at Arles, where the Donatists having been again condemned, they appealed to the emperor's own person; and the emperor having taken cognizance of it himself, condemned them.

After all this, the obstinacy of the Donatists was so great, that instead of submitting themselves to so many judgments, they chose rather to separate themselves from the whole church. They made therefore a general schism with the whole Christian world; and to colour it with some appearance of reason, they maintained that all the world had fallen into apostasy through the mere communion which it had with the *traditor* Cæcilianus. They would no more own either any church or Christianity in the world, but what was in their party; and they rebaptized all those who had been baptized in the church since the business of Cæcilianus. St. Augustine and the other fathers of Africa had fairly told them that Cæcilianus was innocent; that though he should not have been innocent, the judges could have done no less than to have absolved him, there having been no proofs

against him; and that though even the judges should have judged wrong, yet all the world could not have been guilty of that crime, since the greater part of the churches, and of the persons that composed them, had had no knowledge of that affair; that though they should have had knowledge of it, they could have done no otherwise than to refer it to judges; or lastly, not being willing to refer it to judges, prudence and charity would have obliged them to have born with the wicked in the external communion of the church, rather than to have broken peace and Christian unity for personal crimes, which were not communicated to them who had no part in them. All these reasons did not hinder the Donatists from remaining obstinate in their conclusion, which was, that all the church had lost its righteousness by the communion which it had with Cæcilianus; and that there was no more any Christianity in the world, except in the party of Donatus. From hence it was, that the question arose between them, which of the two parties was the church.

Upon this history, we must make four observations, which perhaps will not be impertinent in the end.

The first is, That the Donatists would not own that party for orthodox which was contrary to them, whom they accused neither of any error in the faith nor any depravation of worship, and that the church on its side did not accuse the Donatists of any heresy in the faith. For as for the question of the validity or invalidity of the baptism of heretics, neither the one nor the other made that the occasion of their breach, and it was not upon that that the Donatists founded their separation. "We confess both one sort and the other," said Cresconius, "one and the same Jesus Christ, born, dead, and risen again. We have one and the same religion, and the same sacraments, and there is no difference between us about the practice of Christianity."* St. Augustine said also, "That their difference was not

* Aug. cont Crescon. lib. 2. cap. 3.

about the head, but about the body; that is to say, that their dispute was not about Jesus Christ our Saviour; but about his church:”* and elsewhere, “That they agreed in baptism, in the creed, and in the other sacraments of our Lord.”† All the pretence of this rupture was the personal faults of two or three bishops, which were not proved on one side nor owned on the other, and whereof the greatest part of the world had no knowledge: so that the dispute concerning the church was not between two communions that contested one with the other about the purity of doctrine, but between two communions which mutually acknowledged one another to be orthodox, yet disputed one with the other the title of the quality of the church of Jesus Christ.

The second observation that I shall make is, That the opposite party to the Donatists, and which the Donatists acknowledged to be orthodox, was then actually and in effect spread over the whole earth; that is to say, that it had a great extent among the nations thereof: whereas that of the Donatists was shut up within one small part of Africa. It was upon this, that they abused a passage of the Canticles, (Cant. 1. 7.) which they read after this manner, “Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flocks to rest in the south:” explaining this *in the south*, as if he would have noted the place, and said in *Africa*, whereas it should be read at *noon-day*, merely to note the hour of the day when the shepherd led his flock under some shade for their rest. This is that which makes St. Augustine also speak to them sometimes of the apostolical churches, and those to whom St. John wrote his Apocalypse, with whom they had no communion, and to reproach them so often for being separated from all the world.‡

The third observation is, That that society which the

* Aug. lib. de unit. Eccles. cap. 4.

† Aug. Ep. 48.

‡ Aug. lib. de unitat. Eccles. cap. 14.

Donatists acknowledged to be orthodox, and which was in effect spread over many nations, had not cut off the Donatists from its communion, nor had separated the former from it, if they had not excommunicated them, nor pronounced anathemas against those who should not hold Cæcilianus to be innocent, or the traditors to have been good men. When any one of them returned to the church, they did not seek to make them renounce any other thing than their schism, nor to embrace any thing besides peace. And even in the judgment of the Synod of Rome, Milchiades and his brethren offered to hold communion with the bishops that Majorinus had ordained;* and in the conference at Carthage, they offered to the Donatist bishops to own them for bishops, and to preserve their sees to them, without requiring any other condition of them than that of brotherly unity.† It was therefore the Donatists who separated themselves wilfully out of a mere spirit of division, and the church was, in respect of them, in a passive separation.

Lastly, The fourth observation is, That although the Donatists should have had any just occasion to separate, yet they had urged their separation notwithstanding as far as it could go; for they had carried it so far, as even to break that general bond which yet in some measure united all those who make an external profession of Christianity, good and bad, orthodox and heretics, which yet in some manner make but one body, in opposition to pagans, and other people absolutely infidels. Their principle was, That all the Christians in the world, except the party of Donatus, being sullied with the contagion of the *traditor* Cæcilianus, all that they had also done became sullied, by the uncleanness of their persons; and upon this principle, they condemned the Christianity of the universal church, they rejected her baptism and her sacraments, although

* Aug. Epist. 162.

† Colat. Cart. 1. art. 16.

at the bottom they had the same with her, and they looked upon that society to be no otherwise than an assembly of pagans and infidels, with whom they would have nothing common. This is what St. Augustine reproaches them with in divers places in his writings: "They say that they are Christians; but they say also that they *only* are so.* They make no scruple to say, that they know that out of their sect there are no Christians."† "You hold," says he to them elsewhere, "that all Christian holiness has been abolished among the nations where the apostles had established it, because they have communicated with those whom your fathers condemned in their Council of Carthage.‡ Therefore it was that they thought themselves grievously affronted, when the Catholics called them their brethren; they fled from their communion, they would not so much as sit together with them; and they rebaptized all those who had been baptized in the church, when they came over to their communion, neither more nor less than if they had come out of paganism, because they maintained that in effect the church was absolutely perished throughout all the earth, except in their party.

These are the matters of fact that I have thought myself bound to explain. We must now return to the objection of the author of the *Prejudices*, and examine it in the meaning of St. Augustine and the African Fathers: the propositions of which it is composed. The first is, "That there is a church from which it is never allowed any man to separate himself, under what pretence soever, and from which all those who do so separate themselves are schismatics."§ This first proposition is ambiguous, and so confused, that it is difficult to comprehend in what sense the

* Aug. contr. Epistol. Parmen. l. 1. c. 2.

† Ibid lib. 2. cap. 2. & alibi passim.

‡ Aug. lib. de Eccl. unit. cap. 16. Aug. contr. Gaud. lib. 3.

§ Prejug. ch. 2. pag. 162.

author of the Prejudices has meant it. Every one knows that there is in the world a body of people, or of nations, who profess themselves to be Christians, and to whom one may still in some manner give the name of the church, because that all such Christians are yet in some respect within the general call of the Gospel. Is it therefore this church of which he means to speak? But what likelihood is there, that to accuse us of schism, he should have formed so vague an idea of the church, since he knows very well that we are no more separated from this body than the other communions that compose it are, or than the Church of Rome herself in particular is? Every one knows that this body of Christians is divided into divers communions, or particular societies, that bear the name of churches; as the Greek, the Roman, the Protestant, the Coptick, the Jacobite, the Nestorian, the Armenian. Does he mean any one of these churches? But if that be so, why does he not distinctly and without any hesitation tell us which it is, and if he would that it should be that of Rome, what ground is there to believe that he would have it so? Why did he not explain himself, why did he hesitate, even to say, "That it should be in our choice, whether that church should be the Greek, or the Nestorian, or the Jacobite, and that he did not pretend to determine it?"* To what purpose are all these goings about? Every one knows still that God always preserves in the world his truly faithful and his children, who are the true church, which he has predestinated to eternal salvation. But the author of the Prejudices has formerly declared himself against this notion of the church, and he is so very earnest to reject it, that we cannot impute it to him without doing him wrong. We cannot even believe that he means that we ought not to separate ourselves from a communion when it is orthodox, and when those who separate themselves from it are schismatics. For

* Chap. 3. p. 177.

he has also declared himself against this notion of the church, "because," says he, "in taking this way, the examination of schism would be remitted to that of the opinions, and that we must always know whether the communion that they forsake is orthodox,"* which is that which he would avoid. What therefore is this church? "It is," says he, "the Catholic Church wheresoever it be."† We are now as wise as we were before; for it always remains to be inquired into, What is that Catholic Church? I freely confess, that it seems to me that he would point it out to us by a certain mark, which is its visible extension throughout all nations; but in effect, he does it not: for he says, in the end, that this is but a negative mark, that is to say, "that every society which has not that mark, is not the church:"‡ so that, according to him, this is a mark only proper to shew what it is not, and not to shew what it is. Whence therefore shall we know what this church is? Moreover, his proposition is not only ambiguous through the word *church*, but it is further so through that of *separation*, for there is more than one sort of separation: there are such as are unjust and criminal in their own nature, and there are others which are only so in causes and circumstances; there are also such as are permitted, and those that deserve to be condemned; there are necessary ones, and such as are rash; so that one cannot make any general proposition upon this matter, which would not be captious, and calculated to mislead. It is necessary therefore, in order to his acting with sincerity, that the author of the *Prejudices* should openly explain his meaning, which he labours to establish by the authority of St. Augustine and the other fathers; and after having so cleared and established it, he should propose the conclusion that he would pretend to draw from it; for then, we should see whether we ought to yield or deny it. But to begin a *convincing* argument by a principle so vague and

* Chap. 5. p. 174.

† Ib. p. 177.

‡ Ib. p. 184.

so confused as this that we have seen, and even to affect that confusion, without being willing to explain himself, is in my judgment a procedure very fit to be suspected, and which may justly make us doubt, that instead of a convincing argument, he gives us nothing but a fallacy.

To clear this doubt, it will be here necessary to give a plain and distinct idea of the doctrine of St. Augustine upon this subject about which we are disputing. First, then, we must know, that this father acknowledged that the truly faithful only, and the truly just, in opposition to the wicked, the worldly, infidels and heretics, were the true church properly so called; and this is what may be proved by an infinite number of passages. "It must not be imagined," says he, in his answer to Petilianus, "that the wicked belong to the body of Jesus Christ, which is the church, under a pretence that they corporally partake of the sacraments. The sacraments are holy even in such persons; but they serve only to increase their condemnation, because they give and receive them unworthily. And as for them, they are not in that assembly of the church of Jesus Christ, which, consisting in his members, increases by being compacted and fitly joined with the increase of God. For this church is built upon a rock, according to what our Saviour said, 'Upon this rock I will build my church,' and the others are only built upon the sand, as the same Lord said, I will liken him who heareth my words, and doth not what they teach, to a foolish man who built his house upon the sand."* And elsewhere, "Both the good and the wicked may baptize; but there is but one only God, always good, who can wash the conscience. The wicked are therefore at present condemned by Jesus Christ, because they have a wicked and defiled conscience, and at present they are not of his body which is the church, although the church herself is ignorant that they are not; for Jesus

Christ cannot have any of his members condemned. So that they baptize, being themselves out of the church. For God is not pleased that all these monsters should be reckoned among the members of that only dove, nor that they should enter into his enclosed garden, the keeper whereof can never be deceived.”* And elsewhere, “Whether they seem to be in the church, or whether they be openly discovered to be out of it, that which is flesh is always flesh. Whether the chaff, dry as it is, dwells in the air, or whether it be blown thither by the occasion of some temptation, as by the wind, it is always chaff. Those who, being hardened by carnality, are mingled in the assembly of the saints, cease not to be separated from the unity of that church which is without spot or wrinkle.”†

It is therefore certain, that St. Augustine acknowledged none to be properly the church, but the truly faithful and truly righteous. But because that these faithful and these righteous are mixed with the wicked, the worldly, and heretics, in the circle of the same external call, as the chaff is with the good seed in the same floor, or as the tares are mingled with the good wheat in the same field;

We must note, in the second place, that St. Augustine gives another notion of the church, which he calls the *mixed church*;‡ and it is to explain this notion, that he sets before us all the comparisons that the Scripture makes use of to represent the mixture of the good with the bad in the same call; that of the field where the Son of man casts his seed, and where the enemy arose in the night and sowed his tares also, so that the wheat and the tares must grow there together till the time of harvest; that of the net which the fisherman cast into the sea, and which enclosed equally the good and bad fish; that of the floor where the good grain

* Aug. contr. Crescon. lib. 2. cap. 2.

† Aug. de Bapt. contr. Donat. l. 1. c. 17.

‡ Aug. passim.

is mixed with the chaff; and that of the house in which there are vessels of gold and silver, and others of wood and earth. It is for the same thing that he makes use of the distinction of "the *true* body of Jesus Christ, and the *mixed* body of Jesus Christ;"* meaning by *true*, the truly faithful and righteous only, and by *mixed*, the faithful and righteous joined with those who are not so; and that both together, by reason of their mixture in one and the same external call, make in a manner but one and the same body. He makes use for the same purpose of the distinction of being *of* the church, and being *in* the church; and he would that none but the truly faithful and righteous are *of* the church, but that the others are *in* the church;† and by this means he forms two ideas of the church, the one distinct, and the other confused: the distinct restrains the church precisely to those in whom she properly consists, and who are her true members, and these are the truly righteous and faithful; but the confused includes all those who externally profess themselves to be Christians, the good wheat and the tares, the chaff and the good seed, the good and the bad fish, the vessels of gold and silver, and those of wood and earth; and in this confused notion, the church is the field, the floor, the net, and the house, whereof the holy Scriptures speak.

But as this mixture which I have spoken of may be understood two ways, either in respect of manners, or in regard of doctrines;

We must note, in the third place, that this notion of the mixed church, according to St. Augustine, is divided into two; for he would have us sometimes conceive of it as a body wherein the righteous are only mingled with the unrighteous, that is to say, with the wicked, whose manners are vicious and corrupted, and sometimes also he would have us conceive it as a body where the heretics are mixed with the

* Aug. de Doctr. chr. l. 3. c. 32.

† Aug. de Bapt. contr. Donat. l. 7. c. 51.

truly faithful, as well as the righteous with the unrighteous. In the former case, the mixed church is a pure communion in respect of doctrine, but corrupted in regard of manners; and in the second, it is a communion not only corrupted in regard of manners, but impure also and corrupted in regard of its tenets. These two sorts of mixture are without doubt in the hypothesis of St. Augustine; the first made the whole subject of his dispute against the Donatists: and as for the second, he often explains himself in his books, and particularly in the Psalms against the Donatists, where he says, "That after Jesus Christ had purged his floor by the preaching of the cross, the righteous were as the new seed which he spread abroad over all the earth, to the end they should make another harvest at the end of the world. But that this harvest grew up amidst the tares, *because there are heresies every where. Hæc messis crescit inter zizania quia sunt hæreses ubique.*"* In that same Psalm, and elsewhere in divers places, he quotes the example of the Jewish Church, in which he says that the saints, the prophets, and the righteous, were mixed not only with the wicked, whose manners were debauched and criminal, but also with the superstitious and idolaters; this leaves no difficulty about it; for idolatry is the greatest of all heresies.

We must note, in the fourth place, that St. Augustine would have us consider the mixed church in two different states. For as for that which respects men's manners, he says that sometimes the wicked do not prevail over the righteous, either in number or authority; but that sometimes also they prevail in such a manner, that the good are often oppressed under their multitude, and this is that which he treats particularly of in his Third Book against Parmenian. And so in regard of heresies, he means, that sometimes they grow so powerful, as to infect almost all the

* Aug. Ps. contr. Donat.

body: and this is what he expressly shews in a letter to Vincentius a Donatist Bishop, and in that which he wrote to Hesychius.*

Thus it is that St. Augustine has conceived of the church, and according to these different notions, and these different states, he has spoken differently of separations from it. As for that which regards the truly righteous and faithful, there is no question but that he thought that we ought to have not only an internal communion of charity with them, founded upon the unity that is between all the members of the mystical body of Jesus Christ, who have all one and the same faith, one and the same piety, and the same righteousness; but an external communion also, which consists in joining with them in the same assemblies, in partaking of the same sacraments, in approving their faith, piety, and good works; and in one word, in accounting them their brethren, as far as it is possible for them to know them. But this is not that which makes the difficulty; all the question is concerning the mixed church, and all the dispute is to know how, according to St. Augustine, the corn and the tares, that is to say, the truly faithful and the heretics, ought to remain together in the same communion, and in what case they might separate themselves.

We must therefore note, in the fifth place, that in the doctrine of that father, there is a certain separation that a man can never make, under any pretence whatsoever, without being a schismatic; and that there is another that he may lawfully make, and which it is sometimes necessary that he should. He has distinguished between two external bonds that should unite us to one another; the first is that of the external and general call to Christianity, the second is that of the participation of the same sacraments, and the same assemblies. It is the first bond that St. Augustine would have to be inviolable, not only in regard of the faithful

* Aug. Ep. 48. & Ep. 80.

between themselves, but also in regard of the wicked and heretics; and not only while we suffer them to be in the public assemblies, but even then when we excommunicate them, and deprive them of the communion of the sacraments. And thus it is that he understands that which Jesus Christ said in his parable, “That the tares ought not to be plucked up which the enemy had sown among the good wheat in the same field; but that he would leave both to grow together until the harvest:” (Matt. 13. 29, 30.) and it is this kind of unity whereof he says, that *there is no just necessity of ever breaking—Præcidende unitatis nulla est justa necessitas*;* it is the unity of the same net that enclosed both good and bad fish, the unity of the same floor that contained both the good seed and the chaff, the unity of the same field where the tares grew up with the wheat, the unity of the same house where there are vessels of wood and earth, with those of gold and silver: and in a word, this unity that we call the external and general call to Christianity. It is therefore first of all in this sense that he means that there is a church from which we ought never to separate ourselves, under any pretence whatsoever, and from which all those who separate themselves are schismatics; for he understands it of that mixed church, that field, that floor, that net, that common house, out of which we must never go forth, nor drive out others, however wicked and heretical they may be, there being none but God who can make this separation, and who will in effect make it at the end of the world. And as it was thus that the Donatists had separated themselves, so it was chiefly upon this that he convinced them of schism; for they owned none for Christians, but those of their own party; they rejected the baptism of all the rest; they looked upon them as pagans, who had no more any shadow of Christianity; and when proselytes came over to them, they made them pass through all the

* Aug. contr. Ep. Parmen. lib. 2. cap. 11.

degrees of the *catechumeni*, before they would receive them; and they began to make them Christians anew, as if they had come out of a society of absolute infidels, as I have noted in my fourth observation on their history. This distinction that I have of these two sorts of separation, is clearly to be found in the doctrine of St. Augustine. He notes both the one and the other in his Third Book against Parmenian, where he treats of this matter very largely. "When any brother," says he, "that is to say, any Christian among those who are in the society of the church, falls into sins so great that they judge worthy of an anathema, I would have them proceed to his excommunication, if that may be done without any danger of schism; but yet it ought to be done with that charity that St. Paul recommends to us, to wit, that we should not treat him as an enemy, but correct him as a brother; for you are not called to pluck up, but to correct. If he does not acknowledge nor correct his fault by repentance, he wilfully goes out of himself from the church, and it will be his own will that separates him from the Christian unity. Our Lord himself said to his servants, when they would pluck up the tares mixed with the wheat, 'Leave them to grow up together until harvest;' and he gives the reason, to wit, 'Lest,' says he, 'that in plucking up the tares, you pluck up the wheat also.'"^{*} See here precisely these two separations whereof I speak, the one that deprives of the communion of the sacraments, and the other which breaks off Christian unity; one which is but to *correct*, and the other which goes as far as to *pluck up*. This father alleges, for the same thing, the example of St. Paul, who in the excommunication of the incestuous person in Corinth, did indeed deliver that miserable person to Satan; but only "for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus;"[†]

* Aug. contr. Ep. Parmen. l. 3, cap. 2.

† Ibid. cap. 1.

that is to say, that he deprived him of the communion of the sacraments, but that he did not wholly pluck him up out of the field of the church.* He alleges yet further, what the same apostle wrote to the Thessalonians, "If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed: yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." 2 Thess. 3. 14, 15. He alleges lastly, that which St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians touching the same incestuous penitent, that they ought to pardon him; "lest Satan should get an advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his devices." 2 Cor. 2. 11. "What means the apostle," says he, "by these words, 'Lest Satan should get an advantage over us, for we are not ignorant of his devices?' It is that under the appearance of a just severity, he sometimes persuades to a violent cruelty, desiring nothing more than to break the bond of peace and charity, well knowing that while that bond shall be preserved among Christians, he cannot hurt them, and that his devices and designs would vanish."† There cannot be a more perfect example of that first separation given, than that of the Donatists in respect of the church; for as I have said already, they so absolutely separated themselves from it, that they did not own it to be any longer Christian in any manner, and therefore it was that they re-baptized all those who came over to their party. But we cannot also give a better example of the second, than that of the church itself, in regard of the Donatists; for although they would separate themselves from the church, yet the church did not fail to look upon them as Christians, and in some manner as brethren. "The Donatists," says St. Augustine, "are impious in going about to re-baptize all the world; but as for us who have better sentiments, we dare not even disapprove of the sacraments of God in a schismatical communion. In respect of the things about which we agree, they are yet with us;

* Ibid. cap. 1.

† Ibid.

and in respect of the things about which we differ, they are separated from us. This approach to us, and this separation, are not ordered by the motions of the body, but by those of the mind; and as the union of bodies is made by the continuity of the places they fill up, so the union of spirits also is made by the consent of wills. If those who have forsaken the unity of the church do other things than those that are done in the church, they are in that respect separated from her; but if they do that which is done in the church, they remain as yet in that respect in a common union. The Donatists are therefore with us in some things, and they are separated from us in some others.”*

I cannot here avoid taking notice of the error into which the author of the *Prejudices* seems to have fallen, about the meaning of these words of St. Augustine in the Second Book against Parmenian, *Præcidendæ unitatis nulla est justa necessitas*—*There is no just necessity to break off union*. For it seems that he thought that this maxim regarded all manner of separation, not considering that it only respects that of the Donatists, which consisted in the breaking the general bond of Christianity, and not that which consists in refusing our communion to those who corrupt religion by their pernicious superstitions and errors. If he had taken the pains to have read ten or twelve lines higher, he had found that St. Augustine had strongly established the necessity of separating ourselves from heretics. “St. Paul,” says that father, “writing to the Galatians, manifestly forbids them to hear those who did not preach Jesus Christ, but a falsehood and a lie. ‘If any one should preach another Gospel to you than what you have received, let him be anathema.’”† He would that we should pronounce an anathema against those who preach to us any thing beyond what we have received. He says elsewhere, that there can

* Aug. de Bapt. contr. Donat. l. 1. c. 1.

† Aug. contr. Ep. Parmen. lib. 2. cap. 11.

be no just necessity of breaking of unity. Who sees not that he must make a distinction, and that, according to him, there is a separation that is good, just, and necessary; and another, unjust, unlawful, and schismatical?

Although this distinction is unquestionable, yet I shall not fail to produce here a canon that establishes it, out of the very doctrine of St. Augustine, as clearly as we can desire it. It is in the Decree of Gratian, under the name of Pope Urban, in these terms; "Some men say, that when we excommunicate persons who have deserved to be excommunicated, we go against the parable of the Gospel, where our Lord forbids us to pluck up the tares out of his field. They say also, that this is contrary to St. Augustine, who assures us that we ought not to divide its unity, and that we must tolerate the wicked and not reject them. But, first, we answer, That if we ought not to excommunicate the heretics and the wicked, St. Augustine would have done ill to have joined himself to the legates of the holy church of Rome, and to some other holy bishops, to excommunicate Pelagius and Cælestius, and to separate them from the church, because they brought in a new heresy into it. But why also did the same St. Augustine, with the whole church of God, hold the Donatists to be justly excommunicated, against whom these things are written; and why did not they receive them into their communion, but only after signs of repentance, and the imposition of hands? Jesus Christ, who proposed the parable of the tares, did not he clearly ordain excommunication elsewhere, saying that if our brother would not obey the church correcting him, we ought to reckon him as a heathen and a publican? That which manifestly shews us, that it is one thing to excommunicate, and another to pluck up; the discipline of the church excommunicates, but it does not pluck up." See here precisely that which St. Augustine himself said, *Non estis ad eradicandum, sed ad corrigendum*. From whence appears the truth of that which I have said, that according to this father, there is a bad separation, and

that is schismatical in its own nature, and another that is not so; and that although it is never permitted us to make the former, yet it does not follow that we may not make the latter, provided we do it upon just causes, and observe the rules of prudence and charity in it.

We must therefore lay it down as a certain truth, that St. Augustine thought that we might sometimes break the communion of the sacraments and assemblies; we are only concerned to know in what case he thought that that separation should be made.

To make this point clear, I shall say, in the sixth place, that when St. Augustine considered the church in the mere mixture with the wicked; that is to say, in the mixture with those whose manners are vicious and criminal, he taught, that those who are in office in the church, may proceed to the excommunication of impenitent sinners, when those sinners are few in number, and when there is ground to believe that they may disturb the peace of the church; but if the crime includes a whole multitude, and that the body in general is infected, then he would that the good should content themselves to preserve their own righteousness, without partaking of the sins of the wicked; he would that they should groan under it, and pray to God; but he would not that they should separate themselves. "When the evil," says he, "has seized the greater number, nothing remains for the good to do, but to groan and lament." And a little lower, "If the contagion of sin has invaded the multitude, then it is necessary that discipline should be used with mercy, for the counsels of separation are vain, pernicious, and sacrilegious."* But when he considers the church not only as a mixture of good and wicked, but also as a mixture of the truly faithful and heretics, I maintain that he has formally acknowledged the justice and necessity of a separation, not only in regard of some particular persons, but in regard even of entire societies,

* Aug. contr. Ep. Parmen. lib. 5. cap. 2.

provided they go not so far as that which he calls *eradication*. We have already noted that he would, according to St. Paul, that we should pronounce an anathema against those who preach another Gospel than that which he has preached. But this very thing gives the faithful a right to reject the communion of heretical societies, and to separate themselves from their assemblies. In his Book of the True Religion, he exemplifies it as a very strange thing, and very condemnable, that the heathen philosophers, who had other sentiments concerning divinity than the people, should partake in the worship of the people. “In their schools,” says he, “they had sentiments differing from those of the people, and yet notwithstanding they had temples common with the people. The people and their priests were not ignorant that these philosophers had opinions contrary to theirs touching the nature of the gods, since every philosopher was not afraid of publishing his opinions, and of labouring at the same time to recommend them to others; and yet nevertheless, with that diversity of sentiments, they did not fail to assist at the public worship without being hindered by any body.”* A man that speaks after this manner, would not think it ill, that any should separate themselves from heretical communions. But he explains himself still more clearly afterwards: for he says, “That if the Christian Religion should do nothing else but correct that vice, it would deserve infinite praises.” And he adds immediately after, “That it appears by the example of so many heretics that have deviated from the rule of Christianity, that they would not admit to the communion of the sacraments those who taught concerning God the Father, his wisdom and his grace, otherwise than the truth would allow them, and who would persuade men to receive their false doctrine.—But that is not only to be found true in regard of the Manichees, and of some others who have other sacraments than we, but also in

* Aug. de ver. Relig. cap. 1.

regard of those who, having the same sacraments, have sentiments differing from us in other things, and errors which they obstinately defend; for they are shut out from the Catholic communion, and the participation of those same sacraments which they have common with us.”*

From whence comes it to pass therefore, you will say, that St. Augustine seems sometimes to ascribe to the orthodox the right only of a passive separation, in regard of heretical societies? that is to say, that he would not that we should separate from them, even then when they separate themselves. For he says in some place, that though the *traitors* should have openly maintained in the church that their action was good and holy, that is to say, that they ought to have delivered up their Bibles to the pagans for them to burn them, and that though they should even have wrote on that subject, “provided they had not set up their assemblies apart, nor separated themselves, yet we ought not to have abandoned, for them, the good wheat:”† which signifies this, that we ought not to separate ourselves from those, though their doctrine whereof he had spoken was detestable, contrary to faith, conscience, and good manners. In effect, he speaks almost always of the heretical societies of his time, as of those who had cut themselves off from the communion of the church, and whom the church had not rejected. I answer, that St. Augustine would have us suffer the communion of heretics in certain cases, but that he would have us also in other cases to separate ourselves from them. While we are in no danger of partaking with their errors, neither in effect nor in appearance, but that we may preserve the profession of our faith pure, without consenting to impiety, or seeming to consent to it, and that there should not be on the part of the heretics that obstinacy of opinion, he would have us suffer their communion. For it is the

* Aug. de ver. Relig. cap. 5.

† Contr. Crescon. lib. 3. cap. 38.

manifest doctrine of this father, that in the society of the church no one is responsible but for his own crimes, and not for those of others, at least if he take no part with them, or do not approve them, or consent to them. So that while there is no obstinacy in maintaining error, while there is no danger of being seduced, and while one is not bound to take any part in the evil, nor to hide one's faith and piety under the veil of hypocrisy, this father yields that we should have communion with heretics, as the ancient prophets had communion with the idolaters of their times, and as Jesus Christ and his disciples had communion with the Pharisees and Sadducees, and were found among them in the same assemblies. But when there is an invincible opinionativeness, and error is so deeply rooted that there is no more hope of its being healed, St. Augustine would, in this case, that a man should separate himself from their communion. This is that which he teaches in the same Book of the True Religion; "The church," says he, "suffers their error, while they have no accusers, or do not defend their false opinions with obstinacy; but when they are accused, and defend themselves obstinately in their opinions, she separates them from her communion;"* which is formally to acknowledge the right of active separation in an orthodox church. And from the same we may evidently conclude, that this father does not approve that we should remain in an heretical communion when there is the least necessity of partaking in error, wickedness, or superstition, whether in effect or appearance; and that he would on the contrary conclude, that in this case the good should separate themselves, for the preservation of their own righteousness. But to throw a still greater light on this matter, we must note that, according to the doctrine of this father, every society, whatsoever it be, that determines a false doctrine, and publishes books of it, to teach posterity, and who will have none receive its communion but those who

* Aug. de ver. Relig. cap. 6.

approve that doctrine, in giving the orthodox a just occasion to separate themselves, she herself first of all breaks the bond of unity, and it is she that makes the active separation, and becomes schismatical. This is that which he teaches in his treatise against Cresconius. This Donatist had said to him, that if he did not approve of the crime of the *traditors*, if on the contrary it displeased him, he ought to fly from and abandon the church of the *traditors*. To answer to this, St. Augustine says, first of all, that though there should have been *traditors* in his church, yet he ought not to forsake it, while he did not communicate with their crime; and that on the contrary he condemned it, and laboured to correct it by preaching and discipline. He proves it by the example of St. Cyprian, who declaimed against the vices of the church, but who did not separate himself from it: and by that of David, of Samuel, of Isaiah, of Jeremiah, of Zachariah, and other saints, who cried out against the transgressors of the law, yet without separating themselves notwithstanding. Since immediately after he adds, “Is it that the *traditors* have instituted some new sacraments, or some new baptism? Is it that they have composed books to teach others to do or imitate the action of the *traditors*, or that they have recommended those books to posterity, or that we hold and follow that doctrine? If they had done so, and suffered no person to have been in their communion but those who would read their books, and approve that doctrine, I say that they would have separated themselves from the unity of the church; and if you saw me in their schism, you would then have reason to say, that I was in the church of the *traditors*.”* These words note clearly what I have said, that when a church teaches a false doctrine, which it makes to enter into the use of the sacraments, and that it would receive into its communion none but those who approve it, it is not only just to separate from her, but it is she herself that breaks the bond

* Contr. Crescon. lib. 3. cap. 38.

of the unity of the church, and casts herself into schism. But this is precisely that which the Church of Rome does in respect of us; for she has not only decided as of faith, the doctrines that we do not believe to be true; she has not only set forth books to teach those tenets to posterity, but she has cut off all those from her communion, who will not believe them after the manner that she teaches them. So that we have in this respect a just reason to say, that it is she that has made the active separation; and if it be true that we have reason in the foundation, it is she that has broken the Christian unity, and to which the schism ought to be imputed, and not to us, who are in a mere passive separation. From whence, by the way, it further follows, that to the deciding the question of the schism that is between us, and to know which of the two parties is to blame, we must necessarily come to the discussion of the controverted articles. For if the Church of Rome has decided nothing that is not conformable to the Gospel, she has a right to reject all those from her communion, who refuse to believe her doctrine; we will grant this: but if she has decided errors, it is certain also, that the necessity which she has imposed on others to believe and practise them in order to their being in her communion, renders her guilty of schism. All depends therefore on the discussion of the foundation. For there is no ground left of doubting that according to the doctrine of St. Augustine, it is not only permitted, but even necessary to the orthodox in some certain cases, to be no longer joined in the assemblies of those who teach those errors, and to live separated from their communion. We shall see, in the close, whether that multitude and visible extension can take away that right from a small party restrained to a few persons and places; for there remains nothing but this doubt to be taken away: but to effect this, we must go on to the examination of the second proposition of the author of the *Prejudices*.

“The infallible and perpetual mark,” says he, “to know

the church by, according to St. Augustine and the other African Fathers, is a visible extension throughout all nations; because that visible extension, according to them, agreed with the church in all ages, and that it is a negative mark; that is to say, that every society which has not that extension, is not the church: so that this arguing is always just—Your society is shut up in a small part of the world, therefore it is not the church. It is,” adds he, “by this principle, that St. Augustine has disputed against the Donatists, and convicted them of being schismatics.”

This proposition is not less captious nor less ambiguous than the former. For if the author of the Prejudices means that that visible extension is a perpetual mark of the orthodox communion, that always distinguishes it from impure or heretical communions, so that this orthodox communion, as far as it is visible, can never be restrained to a few persons and places, it is certain that this was not the opinion of St. Augustine, nor that of the other fathers; and it is certain also, that the celebrated authors of the Church of Rome reject the proposition in this sense, as false and absurd; and that, in effect, it is manifestly contrary to experience. To set forth the truth of what I propose, I will begin with experience; and as that of our age presents itself first to our view, I say, that if we must act at this day according to the principle, *That the true orthodox church ought to be visibly extended over all nations*, we must conclude that there is no true orthodox church in the world. For it is most true, that of all the communions which at this day divide Christianity, there is not any one to whom this mark is applicable. I will not say that there are divers parties in the known world which have not so much as yet heard of Christianity, nor that there are others who after having received it have absolutely rejected it to embrace the Mahometan religion. I will not here speak of the Greek communion separated from the Roman, or of the Coptick or Nestorian, or of the Jacobites or Armenian, which evidently have not that visible

extension throughout all nations. I will only speak of the Roman and the Protestant, as they are at present. "He must," says the author of the Prejudices, "be wholly blind, that can dare to maintain that the society of Calvinists, which is wholly shut out of Italy, Spain, Flanders, a great part of Germany, Swedeland, Denmark, Muscovy, Asia, Africa, of almost all America, is that which Jesus Christ has spread over all the world."* But before he argues after this manner, he ought to take heed, that we cannot say the same thing of the Roman communion. For is it not true, that it is at this day excluded from Swedeland, Denmark, a great part of Germany, a part of Switzerland, a part of Greece, Muscovy, Africa, Ethiopia, Persia, Tartary, China, Japan, of the Indies, and from the greatest part of America? And the author of the Prejudices ought not to pretend the prevailing of some colonies of missionaries, whom the Pope sends here and there to gain proselytes: for since he will not have it that we should gain any thing by the colonies of English and Dutch, who have established themselves in all parts of the world, why would he help himself by the missionaries and pensionaries that the congregations *de fide propaganda* maintain in foreign countries? Why should they be more reckoned for any thing than those colonies of English and Dutch, who have the exercises of their religion as free as those of the Roman communion? "They are," says he, "such merchants as are in those countries, only for the sake of trade."† But do not those merchants pray to God in the form of their religion, in whatever country they may be, and with whatever design they are there? Is it that those merchants, being so much tied as they are to their trading, make no open profession of their religion, or that they have not in the greatest part of those places where they are their ordinary assemblies, with their ministers, as well as the missionaries? He must yield in good earnest, that the Christians are now

divided and separated from one another, about matters of faith and worship, in their different societies or communions, of which each one has its seat and bounds apart, beyond which we cannot say they are visibly extended, if we would speak with any reason; and that there is no one that is throughout all nations in the form of a communion or visible society. From whence it follows, that all this dispute of the author of the Prejudices is but a beating the air, and which he can never apply to any real subject.

The experience of *former* ages is not less contrary to the proposition of the author of the Prejudices, than that of *our* age. For if we consult history, we shall find that it has often fallen out, that an heretical communion has spread itself every where, while the orthodox communion was so limited, that it did not seem to take up any space. If in the time of the Arians they had disputed by this principle, by which the author of the Prejudices would decide our differences; I mean, if they would have treated that communion as heretical that was not visibly spread over all the nations, and that as orthodox which was, the Arians had easily overcome. “The heresy of the Arians and Eunomians,” says St. Jerom, “possessed all the East, except Athanasius and Paulinus.”* St. Hilary says the same thing: “The greatest part of the Ten Provinces of Asia, excepting Eleusius and some others, do not truly know God.”† “In those times,” says the author of the Life of St. Gregory Nazianzen, “the church was oppressed by the Arian heresy; many bishops were banished and vexed by torments and calumnies a thousand ways; many presbyters, and many numerous flocks, were brought down to the utmost misery, exposed to the injuries of the weather, as no more having any house of prayer where they might meet. That heresy had almost filled all the earth, and it triumphed, being upheld by the power of the emperor; so that good men had not so much as the justice of the laws

* Jerom, contr. error. Joan. Hierosol.

† Hilar. de Syn.

against the wicked. And because the pastors, or to say better, the concealed wolves, under the appearance of pastors, had the liberty to drive the orthodox bishops out of the churches, who alone were worthy to serve Jesus Christ the Sovereign Bishop, it happened, that some overcome with fear, others deceived by fair words, others gained by money, others surprised through their own simplicity, embraced that heresy, and opened their bosoms and gave their communion to their adversaries.* This was that which obliged the fathers to elevate the little number and the little flock above extension and multitude. "Where are those men," saith Gregory Nazianzen, "who reproach us with our poverty, and insolently boast themselves of their riches, who would define the church by multitude, and condemn the little flock? They measure divinity, they weigh the people in the balance, they esteem the earthly, and cover with injuries the lights of the world; they heap together the common stones and despise the precious, not remembering, that the more the sands surpass in number the stars, the more the ordinary stones surpass the precious in quantity, the more those stars and precious stones surpass the sands and the ordinary stones in purity and excellency."† This father, who had seen in his time the heretics masters of the whole church, and their communion spread very wide and far in the East and in the West, while the orthodox durst not appear, was so far from having the faith and the true orthodox church to be regulated by that extension, that he made on the contrary this extension a ground of reproach to the Arians; taking that for a mark of heresy, which the author of the Prejudices would have us take for a mark of orthodoxy. "Are you ignorant," says he, "that the faith, as miserable and forsaken as it is, is a thousand times more precious than impiety in splendour and abundance? Is it so, that you prefer the multitude of the Canaanites, before one Abraham, or all the inhabitants of So-

* In vitâ Greg. Nazian.

† Greg. Nazian. Orat. 25.

dom, before one Lot, or all the Midianites to one Moses? Notwithstanding you know, that these saints were but strangers and foreigners among those people. I pray tell me, whether the three hundred that lapped the water with Gideon were not more to be esteemed than all those thousands who shamefully forsook him; whether the servants of Abraham, who were few in number, were not to be preferred to all those kings who with their innumerable armies were overcome? But I pray yet farther tell me, how you understand that which is said, 'When the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant only shall be saved;' and this other passage, 'I have reserved to myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal?' The matter will not go as you imagine; no without doubt; for God takes no pleasure in a multitude. As for you, you reckon your thousands; but God reckons those who work out their salvation: you heap up a great pile of dust; but I assemble the vessels of election. There is nothing so great before God, as the pure doctrine, and a soul that is filled and adorned with the tenets of the truth."*

St. Athanasius, or if you will Theodoret, is not less express about the subject of a small number, in opposition to that extension and multitude, than St. Gregory Nazianzen. "Shall we not," says he, "hearken to Jesus Christ, who says, That many are called, and few chosen; that strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find that gate, or this way? What man of good understanding will not rather choose to be among this small number that enters into life, than to be joined to this multitude that goes to perdition? If we had lived in the age of St. Stephen, should we not have rather chose his party, though it should have been forsaken by all else, buried under stones, and exposed to all manner of reproaches, than the

* Greg. Nazian. Orat. 32.

party of that multitude which thought that the faith ought to follow the greatest number? One man alone who has the truth on his side, is more to be esteemed than ten thousand presumptuous men; and this is what the Scriptures of the Old Testament confirm; for when millions of men fell under God's sword, one Phineas alone opposed himself in the breach, and put a stop to the anger of the Lord. If he had not resisted that torrent which bore down all the others; if he had approved that which the multitude did, he had never himself been commended above all, he had never put a stop to the flood of divine vengeance, nor had saved that remnant, which was after that the object of God's mercy. It was therefore a thing worthy of praise, that one man alone should boldly maintain right and justice against the opinion of the multitude. Go if you will, and be drowned with the multitude that perished in the deluge, but give me leave to save myself in the ark with that small number. Be consumed if you please with the inhabitants of Sodom, I shall not fail to go out of it with Lot alone."*

Thus these fathers spoke concerning the state whereto the orthodox communion might be sometimes reduced, and into which it had been in effect reduced; which evidently shews us that this visible extension is not a perpetual mark of the true church, and that it is not so very necessary that this arguing should be always just—*Your society is not spread every where over the world; therefore it is not the church.* Vincent of Lerins has also acknowledged this in his admonition against heresies; for he owns that it may sometimes fall out that heresy invades the whole church, and he makes a question what he ought to do in that case. "What ought we to do," says he, "when some new contagion endeavours to infect not one part only, but the whole body of the church in general?" *Quid si novella aliqua contagio non jam por-*

* Athanas. tom. 2. tract. Quod veritas non multitudo. Judic.

*tiunculam, sed totam pariter ecclesiam commaculare conetur?"** What visible extension could the orthodox communion have throughout all nations, in those unhappy times, in which the same Vincent of Lerins says, that the greatest part of the good were put to death, or imprisoned, or banished, or condemned to the mines, or hid in deserts and caves, exposed to savage beasts, to hunger, thirst, and nakedness? *Horum pars maxima interdictis urbibus protrusi, atque extorres, inter deserta, speluncas, feras, saxa, nuditate, fame, siti, affecti, attriti, et tabefacti sunt.*† What visible extension could that same orthodox communion have in the time wherein St. Athanasius cried out after this manner, “Who is there among the servants of Jesus Christ, that these rebels have not calumniated, or whom they have not lain snares for? Who is there that the emperor has not banished upon their false accusations, he who has always so readily hearkened to them, who has always so constantly refused to hear whatsoever should be said against them, and who never refused to believe all that they have said against others? Where now-a-days shall we find a church that worships Jesus Christ with liberty? If churches have any piety, they are in danger; if they dissemble, they are always in fear. The emperor has filled all with wickedness and hypocrisy, as far as things depend on him. I know that there are every where many persons who have piety and a love of Jesus Christ; but in what place soever they are, they are forced either to conceal themselves, as the prophets, and as the great Elias, till they find some faithful Obadiah, who should hide them in a cave, or of themselves go to dwell in the deserts. For it is most true, that these wicked men make use of the same calumnies against the good, that Jezebel made use of against Naboth, and the Jews against Jesus Christ. And the emperor, who stirs up himself to defend heresy, and to overthrow the truth, as Ahab overthrew Naboth’s vineyard, res-

* Vinc. Lerins. Common. 1. cap. 4.

† Ibid. cap. 6.

fused nothing to the desires of these heretics, because these heretics also spake to him only according to his desire.”* The fathers had then no concern to seek for the true church either in that visible extension, or in that temporal glory or splendour: or in a word, any where else than in the true faith, and there it is that they seek for it in effect. “The church,” says the author of the Commentary on the Psalms attributed to St. Jerom, “does not consist in her walls, but in the truth of her tenets. She is where the true faith is. For, as to the other, it is but fifteen or twenty years since the walls of these churches were in the power of heretics. They possessed all these churches which you see. But the church was where the true faith was.”†

As the author of the Prejudices has not scrupled sometimes to make use of the testimonies of our own authors, when he thought he could draw any advantage from them, he will not, it may be, take it ill, if I oppose to him also upon the subject about which we now dispute, the testimony of two men famous in the Roman communion, and who well deserve to be heard; the one is Driedo, whom Bellarmine calls *a most learned man*, and the other is Bellarmine himself, both very great defenders of the Church of Rome. See here therefore what Cardinal Bellarmine hath wrote in the name of both, in his Controversies of the Church. “We must note,” says he, “according to the doctrine of Driedo, that it is not necessary that the Catholic Church should have that extension in all places, all at once, or in the same time, that is to say, that there should be the faithful in all provinces, and that it is enough if that be successively done.” From whence it follows, that when there should remain but one province alone that should retain the true faith, this province would not fail to be truly and properly called the Catholic Church, “provided that we see clearly that it is the same

* Athanas. Ep. ad vitam solitar. ag.

† Jerom. Comment. in Psal. 133.

church, which sometimes or at divers times is found spread over all the world.”* Could any one have more clearly contradicted the author of the Prejudices? He would that this visible extension through all nations should be a perpetual mark of the true church; and these here say, that it is sufficient that it is *sometimes*, and even in divers times *successively*. He would that this extension should be the mark of the church *for all following ages*; and these maintain, that it is not necessary. He would that this reasoning should be always just—Your society is shut up in a small part of the world, therefore it is not the church; and these say, that when there should remain but one only province that should retain the true faith, this province would not cease to be properly and truly called the Catholic Church.

But it may be that Bellarmine had not observed, that his opinion and Driedo’s favoured the Donatists, and that it was contrary to the doctrine of St. Augustine. This may be so in effect; not only because a man in writing may not have all things in view, but because also, at the bottom, the sentiment of these doctors is very remote from that of the Donatists, and that it does not encounter that of St. Augustine. It is yet true, that Bellarmine saw that they could make that objection, which he has prevented and answered; this I say, to the end the author of the Prejudices may see, that this which he has treated of as an argument, and as a *convincing* argument for which he has made two chapters, Bellarmine has looked on as a very trivial objection, which he proposes and resolves in a few words. “They will say,” says he, “that this is to fall into the error of Petilianus and the Donatists, who maintained that in truth the church had been spread over all the world, but that it was afterwards lost in all the provinces, and remained no where but in Africa, against which St. Augustine disputes. I answer, that the error of the Donatists consisted in two things; the first, that

* Beharm. de notas Eccl. l. 4. cap. 7.

they would have it that the church should be in Africa only, in a time wherein it manifestly increased throughout all the world: the second, in that they could not connect their Church of Africa with that which had before been spread through all the world; for in that church they had always good and bad, as St. Augustine proves, whereas they would compose theirs of the righteous only."

This answer of Bellarmine overthrows all the pretensions of the author of the *Prejudices*; for it establishes these following propositions. 1. That visible extension is not a mark of the true church, but in a certain time, that is to say, when we see it manifestly increase throughout all the world; from whence it follows, that this mark is vain at other times. 2. That the argument of St. Augustine concludes only for the time then being, by reason of that manifest fruitfulness; from whence it follows, that it is very impertinent that the author of the *Prejudices* goes to apply it to these last ages, wherein we maintain the field of the church has been fruitful only in errors and superstitions. 3. That if the Donatists had accused all the world to have fallen into heresy, and if they had said, by consequence, that it was not the time of fruitfulness for the church, it had been in vain for St. Augustine to allege to them the visible extension of his church, to exempt himself from entering into the discussion of that accusation; from whence it follows, that it is also in vain that the author of the *Prejudices* proposes the visible extension of his, since we say that it is fallen into fundamental errors. 4. That the argument of St. Augustine concluded, because the Donatists agreed that his communion was orthodox; from whence it follows, that that of the author of the *Prejudices* concludes nothing, since we question that orthodoxy of his church. 5. That by consequence visible extension is not a mark that can make us know which is the true church, when the dispute is between two societies contesting that orthodoxy between themselves, but at farthest only when the dispute is between

two societies that mutually own one another to be orthodox; from whence it follows, that the author of the *Prejudices* makes use of this mark to no purpose, since our chief question is to know whether the Church of Rome is orthodox or no. All these consequences, which flow naturally from the answer of Bellarmine, contradict the argument of the author of the *Prejudices*; and it concerns him to see after what manner he can decline the authority of this cardinal.

But some will say, lastly, It may be Bellarmine was deceived, and that he had not well understood the state of the question which was between St. Augustine and the Donatists, nor well comprehended the true hypothesis of that father. I confess that this may be; but it may be also that he did well understand it, and that the misconstruing should be on the side of the author of the *Prejudices*. This is that which must be further cleared, and for this effect we must note a thing that the author of the *Prejudices* seems not to have understood; which is, that if the Donatists had accused the society of St. Augustine of heresy, St. Augustine had been very well able to have proved that they were schismatics; but that he had notwithstanding been able to conclude from thence that his society was the true church. The reason of this is, because they had broken the general bond of an external call that St. Augustine would have them obliged to keep, even in regard of heretics; so that, according to him, they might very well have been schismatics, although the church which they had forsaken had not been the true church. He proved therefore that his society was the true church, only because they acknowledged it to be orthodox, and did not lay to its charge either any error in the faith, or corruption in worship. For in supposing that confession, it manifestly appears that that time was a time of the increase of the church, since it cannot be denied that the church does not then increase, when the true doctrine is spread abroad in all places; from whence it would

follow, that the society which taught that true doctrine throughout the world was the true church, rather than a small party that were shut up within one province only. So that the error of the Donatists consisted in this, in that they would have restrained the church to themselves in Africa in a time wherein it manifestly increased in all nations; and this increase was manifest, by the acknowledgment which they themselves made, that the society that was spread over all the world was orthodox. This is that precisely that Bellarmine would say: he would have St. Augustine reason after this manner; In a time wherein it manifestly appears that the church increases, it is an error not to acknowledge that society that is spread over all the world to be the true church of Jesus Christ, in opposition to a small party. But in this time, it manifestly appears that the church increases, since by your own confession it is the true doctrine, and not heresy that multiplies itself: therefore it is an error not to acknowledge at this time the society that is spread over the world to be the true church. This is, in effect, the true reasoning of St. Augustine; and Bellarmine is no ways deceived in it. But it clearly follows from thence, that according to St. Augustine, that visible extension may be sometimes a mark of the true church in opposition to a small party; to wit, then when the true and pure doctrine is spread abroad every where, because that is the time of the increase of the church: but it does not follow that this mark is perpetual, since the time of that increase does not last always. From whence it appears, that the arguing of St. Augustine can have no place in the question that is between the Church of Rome and us. In one word, then when we contest the title of the true church with a society that does otherwise own us to be orthodox, then visible extension decides the question, according to St. Augustine. But then when we contest that title with a society that accuses us with false doctrine, that visible extension decides nothing; and the difference cannot be

determined, but by the discussion of the foundation itself. St. Augustine alleged it in the former case, and the author of the Prejudices alleges it in the latter.

What need we to do more to set down this truth in its full evidence, and to give the author of the Prejudices entire satisfaction? Do we need to let him see that if they had accused the society of St. Augustine of false doctrine, that father had not pretended in this case that that visible extension should have decided the contest, but that he would have decided it at the foundation? Need we to go yet farther, and to shew him that St. Augustine has formally acknowledged that there have been in effect times wherein the true church has had no visible extension? If we could shew him these two things, he would methinks have some reason to be contented, and to leave us in peace about this business of extension. Let us therefore endeavour to satisfy him about these two articles. The first will be decided, if we here appeal to what I have related of that father on the occasion of what Cresconius had said to him, that he ought to withdraw himself from the church of the *traditors*. “Is it,” says he, “that the *traditors* have composed books, to shew that we ought to do or imitate their action? Is it because they have recommended those books to posterity?” Is it because we hold and follow that doctrine? If they had done that, and if they would have permitted none to remain in their communion but such as would read those books and approve that doctrine, I say that they would have separated themselves from the unity of the church; and if you saw me in their schism, you would then have reason to say that I was in the church of the *traditors*. We need no great learning to understand, by this discourse, 1. That St. Augustine had acknowledged, that if in effect his society had determined a false doctrine, if it had framed books about it, and suffered no person in its communion who had not approved it, it had lost the title of the true church, although that visible extension should have been secured to it. 2. That if

the Donatists, who were but a small party, had accused them, it would have admitted them to proof, without a wrangling with them about that extension. For he who says, "Is it because we hold and follow that doctrine?" makes us sufficiently see, that he would not have refused them liberty to come to a proof, if his adversaries had said that they held and followed it indeed. And it ought not to be said that St. Augustine makes not that supposition in regard of the whole of his society, but only in regard of some *traditors*: for he makes that supposition in regard of that same society that Cresconius had called *the church of the traditors*; and these words, "Is it because we hold and follow this doctrine?" leave no place for that evasion.

See here the first article; the second is yet more explicit in St. Augustine; for no one can doubt that he has not acknowledged that there have been, in effect, times wherein the true church has scarce had any visible extension. This is that which he has done in his letter to Hesy chius, wherein he treats of the state of the church in those miserable times which Jesus Christ foretold in the four and twentieth of St. Matthew: "Then the sun," says he, "shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light; the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." The church shall not appear, "because the wicked becoming persecutors, shall no more observe any bounds in their cruelties. Temporal prosperity shall accompany them every where; so that seeing no occasion of fear, they shall say, Peace and security to themselves. Then the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, because many in whom grace seemed to be resplendent, shall yield to the persecutors, and some of the most firm among the faithful shall be troubled." *The church, says he, shall not appear—Ecclesia non apparebit.** She will not therefore have then

* Aug. Ep. 80.

that visible extension which the author of the *Prejudices* would have to be her perpetual mark for all ages. He further acknowledges the same thing in his epistle to Vincent, where he treats of the state of the church under the Arians. There he teaches, in express terms, "That the church is sometimes obscured and covered with clouds, through the great number of offences: that she is then only eminent in her most firm defenders, while the multitude of the weak and carnal is overwhelmed with the floods of temptation. That under the reign of the Arians, the simple suffered themselves to be deceived; that others yielding through fear, dissembled, and in appearance consented to Arianism. That indeed some of the most firm escaped the snares of those heretics, but that they were but few in number in comparison of the rest. That nevertheless some of them generously suffered banishment, and some others lay hid here and there throughout the earth."* I pray tell me, what visible extension could the orthodox communion have then, which subsisted only in a small number of the firm, of whom even the greatest part had suffered exile, or lay hid here and there throughout all the earth? I confess, that history notes that there were yet some small flocks in some places of the East and of the West, who set up their assemblies apart, as at Edessa, at Nazianzen, at Antioch, and in some provinces of France and Germany; but what was this in comparison of the Arian communion, which had filled the churches, and held councils, as we have so often proved.

We must therefore seriously confess that this visible extension is a vain and deceitful mark, when they would make it perpetual to the true church, as the author of the *Prejudices* would make it, and that no one could abuse with greater injustice the authority of St. Augustine than he has done. We must profess also, that a small handful of the

* Aug. Ep. 48.

faithful, a little party, have right to separate themselves from the whole multitude; I mean, from a communion spread over all the world, which has on its side the ministry, the pulpits, the councils, the schools, titles, dignities, and all that retinue of temporal splendour, when it has not the true faith. For the rest, that which I have handled in this chapter about the two former propositions of the author of the *Prejudices*, already sufficiently lets us see the falseness of his argument. For if he would take the pains to read this chapter with ever so little application, he would see all these following propositions well established there. 1. That in general this author has not comprehended the true hypothesis of St. Augustine, nor the state of his dispute against the Donatists. 2. That he can draw no advantage from the divers ways in which that father conceived the word *church*. 3. That the separation which that father judged to be fit to be condemned as wicked, under what pretence soever it should be made, is wholly different from that which is between the Church of Rome and us. 4. That there is not any Christian society from which one may not lawfully separate one's self, in a certain case and manner. 5. That that which is disputed between the Church of Rome and us being of this number, they must consider the causes and circumstances of it, rightly to judge of it, and not pretend to convince us of schism, without entering upon any other discussion. 6. That according to the principles of St. Augustine, the Church of Rome is schismatical in respect of us, supposing that she is in error, because it is she that has broken Christian unity, and that we are in respect of her in a passive separation. 7. That it is absurd to make that visible extension a perpetual mark of the true church, which way soever they take it. 8. That this pretended mark is contrary to the experience of our age, and does not properly agree to any one of those societies which at this day divide Christianity. 9. That it is contrary to the experience of the ages past, and to the doctrine of the fathers.

10. That it is rejected in the sense of the author of the *Prejudices*, by some famous doctors of the *Roman* communion. 11. That it has no foundation in the dispute of St. Augustine against the Donatists. 12. That it is even directly opposite to the doctrine of that father. These are the just and natural consequences which are drawn from the things which I have handled in this chapter; I will examine, in the following, the other propositions of the author of the *Prejudices*.



CHAP. V.

A FURTHER EXAMINATION OF THE REASONING OF THE AUTHOR OF THE PREJUDICES UPON THE SUBJECT OF OUR SEPARATION.

THE third proposition of the author of the *Prejudices* is already sufficiently confuted by what I have said. He says, that since our society is not visibly extended throughout all nations, therefore it cannot be the true church. But we have shown him, that we cannot at this day rationally attribute that visible extension throughout all nations to any of the societies that divide Christianity, and by consequence, that it is a chimerical mark; by which we may conclude, that there is no true church in the world, since there is none which is not visibly excluded from many nations. We have shown him, also, that his pretended mark does not agree either with the experience of the ages past, or with the doctrine of the fathers, or even with that of the doctors of the Roman Church; and that instead of having any foundation in the doctrine of St. Augustine, it is evidently contrary to him. So that we have nothing to do at present, but to go on

to the examination of the fourth and fifth propositions. They bear this sense, "That the Calvinists urge the principle of the Donatists much farther than ever those schismatics did: for as for them, they did not say that there was any time wherein the whole church had fallen into apostasy, and they excepted the communion of Donatus; whereas the Calvinists would have it that there have been whole ages wherein all the earth had generally apostatized, and lost the faith and treasure of salvation. That the societies of the Berengarians, the Waldenses, and the Albigenses, &c." in which he says that some of us include the church, "could not be that Catholic church whereof St. Augustine speaks."

To establish that which he lays to our charge concerning the entire extinction of the church, he first produces the testimony of Calvin. "This is," says he, "that which Calvin has distinctly declared in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, where, after having pretended that the threatening that St. Paul uses against those who do not remain in the state of grace, where the goodness of God had sent the Gospel, in declaring to them that they ought to fear being cut off, as the Jews, from the covenant of God, he addresses himself to the whole body of the Gentiles converted to Jesus Christ. *Ad totum Gentium corpus,*" adds he. "And certainly that horrible apostasy of the whole world which has fallen out since, manifestly shews us, that this advice of St. Paul was not unprofitable. For God having diffused in so great an extension of countries, almost in a moment, the waters of his grace, so that religion flourished every where; within a very little while after, the truth of the Gospel was vanished, and the treasure of salvation banished out of the earth. But whence could that change come, unless from this, that the Gentiles were fallen away from their call? and therefore it is that he clearly professes, in a letter to Melancthon, that they had separated from all the world. *Plusquam enim absurdum est postquam*

discussionem à toto mundo facere coacti sumus alios ab aliis desilire.”* The author of the Prejudices yet further makes use of an article of our Confession of Faith to prove the same thing, which says, “That we believe that no one ought of his own authority to thrust himself into the government of the church; but that that ought to be done by election when it is possible, and while God permits it. Which exception we emphatically add to it, because it has failed sometimes, and even in our time, in which the state of the church was interrupted, till God had raised up men after an extraordinary manner to order the church anew, which was in ruin and desolation.” Grounding himself on these two passages, he exults over Monsieur Vigerius, the author of the discourse in the *Book of the Perpetuity of the Faith*, because he had declared, “That none of us had ever said that it could be possible that the church should no longer subsist, and that he defied Monsieur Arnaud to shew him only one author among us who had thought so. Before he had expressed such desires,” says the author of the Prejudices, “it would have been well to the purpose that he had better informed himself about that which not only some authors of his sect have wrote, but the master of all their authors, which is Calvin, who says a great deal more than that which is contained in that ‘Book of the Perpetuity of the Faith,’ since he looks upon the church not only as possible to perish, but as having effectually done so for many ages, so far as to say that the threatening of St. Paul, which he pretends to be spoken to the whole body of the Gentiles, had its effect, that all the Gentiles had fallen from their call through a general apostasy, that the light of the Gospel had vanished in respect of them, and that they had lost the treasure of salvation.” It is upon this foundation that he builds his proposition, and pretends to make us pass for worse men than the Donatists.

* Prejug. ch. 9. p. 200, &c.

But all this is nothing else but an effect of the unjust and violent hatred that this author has conceived against us; and Monsieur Vigerius had reason to deny that which he has denied. As the dispute here is only to know what our hypothesis is upon the point of the perpetual subsistence of the church, it would be sufficient methinks to stop the mouth of the author of the Prejudices, to tell him that he troubles himself to no purpose; that we do not believe that entire extinction of the church throughout all the world which he lays to our charge, and that he has mistaken the meaning of Calvin, and that of our Confession of Faith; for there is no likelihood that he should better know what we believe than we ourselves, nor that he should be a more faithful interpreter of the sense of Calvin, and that of our Confession of Faith, than we ourselves. Notwithstanding, to make the character of the author of the Prejudices more and more known, and what judgment we ought to make of that which he proposes when he speaks with the greatest confidence, it will be good to relate here the testimony that Monsieur the Cardinal of Richlieu has given to the Protestant Churches, concerning that which they believe and teach upon the subject of the perpetual subsistence of the church until the end of the world. For we might say that he had the author of the Prejudices in his view; and wrote about this matter only to confute him. "There is not," says he, "any point in controversy between our adversaries and us, about which their Confessions of Faith speak so clearly, and agree so uniformly, as this, which I may truly say ought not to be put into the number of the controverted points. The Confession of Augsburg, which may be said to be as well the rule as the source and origin of all the other Confessions of Faith of our adversaries, says in express terms that the church ought perpetually to remain one and holy. That of Saxony says that the article of the Creed which declares the church holy and catholic, was inserted therein only to confirm the faithful against the

doubts that they might have of the stability of the church. That of the Switzers does not only affirm this truth, but sets down the same reason for it that I myself have made use of above; since it says, that God would from all eternity that men should be saved, we must acknowledge this truth, that the church has always been for the time past, that she subsists for the present, and that she will do so till the end of the world. The Scotch hold this article to be so undoubtedly true, that it compares the belief of it to that of the mystery of the Trinity, saying, That as the faithful believe the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, so they also constantly believe the perpetuity of the church. The Flemish contains the same truth, and gives the reason, altogether founded upon the royalty of Jesus Christ, which being perpetual, supposes in all times some subjects over whom he must reign. The French Confession alone says nothing upon this occasion; but it is so far from saying nothing of it through the difficulty that they found in this point, that, on the contrary, the certainty which they had of it was, in my opinion, the cause of their silence. She does not therefore, it may be, speak any thing, because she did not think she could doubt of so evident a truth, of which her founders have spoken so clearly for her. Luther teaches it in terms so express, that he makes perpetuity to enter into the definition of the church, as a quality that, making a part of its essence, is altogether inseparable from it. He draws the duration of the church from an article of the Creed and the words of Jesus Christ, which bind us to believe it, saying that it is an article of faith taught in the Creed, and founded upon the promise of Jesus Christ, who ought always to have a holy Christian society in this world, that should subsist until the consummation of ages. Calvin does not say less, and his words are not less express. 'We must,' says he, 'hold it for certain, that from the beginning of the world there never was a time wherein the church of God was not, and there never will be, till the consummation

of ages, in which it shall not be.' Upon this foundation refuting Servetus, who maintained that the church had been banished from the world for a certain time, he says boldly, that to say that God had not always preserved some church in this world, would be to accuse him of a lie, because he has promised that it shall endure as long as the sun and moon. Beza speaks as the Flemish Confession, which acknowledges that the reign of Jesus Christ is perpetual, and also that he ought always to have subjects over whom to exercise that kingly office. Du Moulin and Mestrezat are not less ingenuous in this point,* &c." Thus it is that Monsieur the Cardinal of Richlieu has justified us against the author of the Prejudices. He could not, in my judgment, have spoken either more clearly or more forcibly.

In effect, they cannot, without ignorance or calumny, ascribe that opinion of the entire extinction of the church throughout all the world to us. We say indeed, and we say it with an extreme grief, that the church has been for some ages in so great an obscurity, that we can scarcely see any traces of the natural beauty of Christianity shine forth there; ignorance, error, superstition, like thick clouds, have covered the face of religion, and the government of the church has fallen into such strange disorder, that we can see nothing but confusion in all parts; so that the church could not but appear in a very deplorable condition under that eclipse. This is that which Calvin means by that entire defection of the world whereof he speaks in the passage that the author of the Prejudices has alleged, and that which is also represented in our Confession of Faith by that ruin and desolation whereinto we say the church was fallen. But how great soever that ruin may have been, we do not believe, as the Donatists do, that the church had absolutely perished, or that it was entirely extinct through all the world. We do not so much as believe that it was restrained

* Monsieur le Cardinal de Richelieu, liv. 1. c. 4.

to those societies which the passion of their enemies has laboured to cry down under the name of sects, calling them Berengarians, Waldenses, Albigenses, Petro-busians, Henricians, Wickliffites, Hussites, &c. and over whom the author of the Prejudices has exulted so fiercely after his usual manner. Those societies were yet the most illustrious part of the church, because they were the most pure, the most enlightened, and the most generous; but the church did not wholly and entirely reside in them. For, not to speak of the little children that died before the age of discretion, and to whom we do not doubt that God was merciful, we are persuaded that while errors and superstitions might be seen to reign in their pulpits, in their books, in their schools, and in the councils, and that a great number were filled with them, that God preserved to himself amidst the people a considerable number of the truly faithful, who have kept their faith and their consciences pure, by reason of their simplicity, contenting themselves with the principles of the Christian Religion, adoring one God only, their Creator and Father, putting their confidence in Jesus Christ alone, dead and risen again for them: and as to the rest, living holily and Christianly, without embarrassing themselves either with the opinions of the school, which they did not know, or the superstitions wherewith they beheld Christianity loaded, and which the sole instinct of their conscience could make them reject. We no ways doubt, that even among the most enlightened persons, there has been a great number who have groaned under so many corruptions as they saw the church afflicted with, and who, in waiting for better times, have kept themselves without bearing a part in them. But we say nothing upon this subject, but what the fathers have said, and in particular St. Augustine, concerning the state of the church under the domination of the Arians. For they have said two most remarkable things. First, that while the wicked and the heretics possessed the pulpits, while they preached

their blasphemies there, while they were masters of the councils, while they had the multitude and the powers of the world on their side, while they persecuted the good to the utmost, and while all seemed to stoop under their yoke, God preserved in that corrupted ministry a considerable number of the truly faithful, who kept under the veil of their simplicity their faith pure, receiving that which they preached of good to them, and not being infected with the bad. The second thing that they have said is, that there were those there, who, being more enlightened and stronger in the faith than the others, opposed themselves to the heresy of the Arians, and would not have any communion with them, suffering constantly banishments, and the most cruel punishments, for so just a cause. To justify this truth, I shall only here set down that which St. Augustine has wrote upon this subject in his Epistle to Vincent: but before I relate his words, we must note, that the Donatists precisely did that which the author of the Prejudices has done, when he has abused some hyperbolical expressions that Calvin made use of, and the words of our Confession of Faith, to lay it to our charge that we believe an entire extinction of the church. For the Donatists after the same manner abused some passages of St. Hilary, in which that saint had exaggerated the lamentable state of the church in his days, under the domination of the Arians; from whence they conclude, that St. Hilary had thought that the church had entirely failed. It is therefore to refute this objection that St. Augustine explains himself after this manner: “The church,” says he, “is sometimes obscured and covered as it were with clouds, by the great number of scandals, when the wicked take the advantage of the night to shoot against those who are true in heart. But even then, she is eminent in her most firm defenders: and if it be allowed to us to make some distinction in the words that God spake to Abraham, ‘Thy posterity shall be as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore:’ I mean,

that we must understand, by the stars, some few persons more firm and illustrious than the others; and by the sand, the multitude of the weak and carnal, which in the time of a calm appears quiet and free, but which is sometimes covered with the floods of tribulation and temptation. Such was the time whereof Hilary speaks in his writings, which you artificially make use of to elude so many divine testimonies which I have set before you, as if the church had perished throughout all the world. You may as well say, that there were no more churches in Galatia, when the Apostle said, ‘O foolish Galatians! who hath bewitched you, that after having begun in the spirit, you should end in the flesh!’ for thus it is well nigh that you calumniate the learned Hilary, under a pretence that he censured the negligent and the fearful, for whom he has as it were so many birth-pangs till Jesus Christ should be formed in them. Who is there that knows not that in the time of Arianism divers simple persons, deceived by obscure expressions, imagined that the Arians believed the same thing with themselves; that others yielded through fear and dissimulation, and consented in appearance to heresy, not walking in integrity in the way of the truth of the Gospel, you would see, you Donatists, that he had not pardoned those persons: for you are not ignorant of the doctrine of the Scripture upon this subject. Read what St. Paul has wrote concerning St. Peter: see afterwards, what St. Cyprian has thought was to be done on these occasions, and you will find, that it is to very ill purpose to blame the mildness of the church, which gathers together the members of Jesus Christ, when they are dispersed, instead of dispersing them when they are gathered together. Howsoever it be, there have been yet some firm ones, who were sufficiently enlightened to know the snares of the heretics. They were indeed very few in number, in comparison of others; but yet, nevertheless, some of them generously suffered banishment for the cause of the faith, and others

kept themselves concealed here and there throughout the earth. Thus it was that the church, which increased in all nations, preserved within herself the good wheat of our Lord, and thus it is that she will preserve herself unto the end, till she extend herself over all people, and even over the barbarians themselves. The church therefore consists in the good seed that the Son of man has sown, and of which it is said, that it should grow up, until the harvest, amidst the tares. The field is the world, and the harvest is the end of the world.*

See here after what manner St. Augustine declares his opinion concerning the state of the church and its subsistence under the Arians; since coming afterwards to speak of a passage of St. Hilary, which they had objected to him, he says that we must understand that which he had said, not in regard of the good wheat which was yet mingled with the tares, but only in regard of the tares: or if his words had any relation to the good wheat, we must take them as only designing to inflame the zeal of the fearful by such answers. And he adds, that the holy Scripture itself frequently makes use of this way of expressing itself in general terms, which at first seem to belong to the whole body, but which notwithstanding regard only a part. *Habent etiam scripturæ canonicæ, hunc arguendi morem, ut tanquam omnibus dicatur, & ad quosdam verbum perveniat.*

We may now see very clearly, that we are so far from being like to the Donatists, as the author of the Prejudices lays it to our charge, that we tread on the contrary in the footsteps of St. Augustine. For first of all, our hypothesis touching the subsistence and obscurity of the church is throughout conformable to his. We say, as he does, that God has always preserved his truly faithful in the very communion of the corrupted church. We say, with him, that in the most violent entering in of error and superstition,

* Aug. Ep. 48. pag. 290.

God has not left himself without witness, since he has raised up not only persons, but whole societies, that have openly and courageously maintained the truth, and withdrawn themselves from under the Roman domination. And as to the passages that the author of the *Prejudices* objects to us out of Calvin and our Confession of Faith, we give the same explication of them that St. Augustine gave to those of St. Hilary, which the Donatists objected to him: that is to say, that that defection of all the world, and that ruin and desolation whereinto the church had fallen, that eclipse of the truth and treasure of salvation, are expressions that regard properly only the tares that covered the field of the church, and not the good seed which was mingled with those tares. These expressions only regard the greater number of those who followed those superstitions and errors, and not those who in the midst of that confusion kept their religion pure; and much less those who had the courage to oppose themselves openly to error, and to resist it even unto persecutions and martyrdom.

I know that he has accustomed himself to form some difficulties and objections against our hypothesis; but we have this satisfaction, to know that he can make none that does not equally regard the hypothesis of St. Augustine and ours, and to which, by consequence, the author of the *Prejudices* himself would not be obliged to answer, if he would not act the Donatist. He confesses himself, that St. Augustine had acknowledged that there might have been some Catholics hid in heretical communions; and besides, he cannot deny that the passage which I have set down is express upon that subject. 1. If therefore he demands of us who those faithful were, who before the Reformation kept their faith pure, without infecting themselves with the public errors; and if he urges us to mark them out to him one after another, to tell him their names and their genealogy; I will demand of him likewise, who were the *good seed* of St. Augustine, who under the Arian ministry preserved

their faith without being infected with heresy; and I will entreat him to mark them out to me by name, and to give me their history. 2. If he demands of us how we understand those persons could with a good conscience live under a ministry where they taught transubstantiation, the adoration of the eucharist, the sacrifice of the mass, the religious worshipping of images, which we believe to be fundamental errors; I will also demand of him, how he understands that the *good seed* of St. Augustine could live under an Arian ministry, where they taught that the Son of God was not consubstantial with his Father, and that the Father was not the Father eternally; which are errors that the author of the *Prejudices* himself judges abominable. 3. If he tells us that our fathers ought not therefore to have undertaken a reformation, but that they ought to have left things in the estate wherein they were, since however corrupted the Latin Church was, according to us, we could yet be saved in her communion; I shall tell him that, by the same reason, the orthodox ought not to have taken care to have re-established the purity of the faith in the church, nor to have extirpated Arianism; since that however corrupted and infected the church was with that heresy, there was yet a way to work out their salvation in her communion, and under her ministry. 4. If he says to us that our fathers ought not, at least in reforming themselves, to have separated themselves from those who were not for a reformation, nor to have forsook their communion and assemblies, I will also say to him, that after this reckoning, the orthodox, in labouring to purge the church from Arianism, ought not at least to have separated itself from those who would retain Arianism, but that they ought to have remained with them in one and the same communion, and in the same assemblies, which nevertheless they did not. 5. If he says to us that the Berengarians, the Waldenses, and Albigenses, were schismatics, since they had withdrawn themselves from a communion and a ministry under which God yet preserves the truly

faithful, I will likewise say to him, that those courageous men of St. Augustine were in this reckoning schismatics, since they had not less withdrawn themselves from that communion and public ministry, when that ministry was in the hands of the Arians, as I have shown by express testimonies. 6. If he tells us, lastly, that since we acknowledge that they could have worked out their salvation under the ministry of the Roman Church before the Reformation, we ought to confess that we may yet at this day be saved in it, since things are in the same estate now in which they were before; I shall tell him, that the Arians could have raised the same objection against the orthodox after their separation: for the Arians did not pretend to have changed any thing in the state of the ministry under which St. Augustine acknowledged that God had preserved the truly faithful. So that all the objections which he shall make against our hypothesis, will be common to those against that of St. Augustine; and the author of the Prejudices will himself be as much concerned as we to answer them.

But not to refer ourselves wholly to him, let us see whether those difficulties are of such a weight, as that there is no way left rationally to satisfy us. It seems to me, therefore, that, as to the first, St. Augustine has said that it is great injustice to demand the names of those particular men who kept themselves pure under an impure ministry, since we do not keep a register of every particular man, nor of the state of their consciences; and that it is sufficient to know in the general, that the promises that Jesus Christ has made always to preserve to himself a church upon earth, are inviolable; that we must not therefore doubt, that there has always been good seed in the midst of the Arian tares. It is the same answer that we make; there needs nothing but to apply it.

To the second, he has answered, that the simplicity of many among the people, who went not so far as to understand the bad sense of the Arian expressions, sheltered them

under heresy; that many others of the more enlightened remained in silence, through the fear of persecutions, contenting themselves to keep their own faith pure, without partaking in the wickedness of the wicked, and without lifting themselves up against it. In effect, it is a maxim of Phœbadius, "That it is sufficient to an humble conscience to keep its own faith, without engaging itself to refute the belief of others:"* and it is one of St. Augustine himself, "That nobody can be culpable for the sins of another, nor by consequence for the heresies and superstitions that infect a ministry, provided he take no part in them, and no ways consent to them, either in effect or appearance." But this is yet the same answer that we make: for as I have already said, we do not doubt that there were among the people a very great number of persons, whose light went no further than the mere knowing of the chief articles of Christianity, contained in the Creed, in the Decalogue, and Lord's Prayer, and who by consequence were hid under those capital errors with which the public ministry was then loaded. In the midst of that darkness, there were doubtless a great many enlightened persons, who, through the fear of persecution, remained under the same corrupted ministry with the others, separating the good from the bad, discerning the errors and superstitions, taking no part in them, and living, as to other things, in that hope that they should not be culpable for the sins of others.

To the third, St. Augustine has answered, that it is an absurd objection. For it is not more absurd to say that we ought not to take care to heal a disease, under a pretence that as great as the disease is, life yet remains, than to say that we ought not to take care to purge the church and the ministry from a heresy that infects it, under a pretence that there is yet a way to be saved in her communion and under her ministry. That we must, on the

* Phœbad. contr. Arian. Aug. passim.

contrary, labour as much as possibly we can to re-establish Christianity in its whole frame, lest the evil should increase, and be made incurable through a too great negligence, and lest that good which remains in the church should be wholly corrupted by the contagion of the evil. But this is also the very same answer that we make. Our fathers ought to have employed all their endeavours to reform the Latin Church, by their exhortations, by their books, by their sermons, by their example, because that we ought always as much as possibly we can, and as the times and our knowledge call us to it, to labour to settle religion in a state of purity, lest in the end errors and superstitions render themselves universal, and the whole church should perish through our negligence. For although Jesus Christ has promised us that it shall never perish, yet notwithstanding this would be to tempt God, and to render ourselves unworthy of his grace, to neglect the means that he gives us for its preservation, and that so much the more, as according to human appearance there was no other than that of the Reformation.

To the fourth, St. Augustine has answered, that in labouring to purge the church from Arianism, it was necessary that they should separate themselves from the communion of those who obstinately persisted in that heresy; and the fixed resolution that they testified to remain in it, was a sufficient cause to make them withdraw themselves from their assemblies. But we answer, with greater advantage, that our fathers, in labouring for a reformation, ought to have forsaken the assemblies of those who not only were fixed in the opinion of having nothing reformed, and opposed themselves with all their might to hinder a reformation, but who went so far as to impose a new necessity on men's consciences to believe their opinions, and even to excommunicate all those who would not believe them.

As to the fifth, St. Augustine did not intend to say that those who had separated themselves from the Arians, when

the Arians were the masters of the ministry, were schismatics, since he himself calls them the *stars of heaven*, the *courageous and unshaken, firmissimi qui fortiter profide exulabant*: he never meant to condemn their assemblies which they made apart, to have nothing common with heresy, since it was nothing else but the effect of that heroic courage which he ascribes to them, and of that ardent zeal which they had for the glory of God. In effect, St. Hilary praises some bishops of France, Germany, and Flanders, of whom he writes that they had separated themselves from the communion of those who held the orthodox bishops in exile; and in particular, he extols those among them who, having appealed to a synod of Bithynia, remained firm and constant in the faith; and in gathering themselves into a communion among themselves, they separated from the communion of the others. St. Augustine has therefore answered, that they were no ways schismatics, for two reasons. The first is, because the causes for which they refused communion with the Arians, and withdrew themselves from their ministry, were just and lawful; not frivolous and capricious, as those of the Donatists, but weighty and fundamental; since they disputed about the eternal divinity of Jesus Christ, which the Arians would abolish. The second, because that although these courageous men of St. Augustine had renounced the communion of the Arians, and withdrawn themselves from their ministry, yet they did not believe, notwithstanding, that there was absolutely no more salvation to be had in the society which they had forsaken. For, besides that receiving, as they did, their baptism from it, they could not doubt that the children who died before they were infected with that heresy were saved. Neither did they condemn the simple and the weak, who remained unfeignedly in that communion without taking part in the impieties which were taught there; so that their separation did not absolutely respect that society, but only the heretics that corrupted it. But this is that which we

say concerning the Berengarians, the Waldenses, the Albigenes, &c.; we need only to apply the same answer to them.

Lastly, as to that which regards the sixth objection, St. Augustine has said, that there was a considerable difference between the time wherein the Arians made up almost the whole body of the Christian Church, and that wherein the true doctrine was re-established in a great part of the churches; that the first was a time of oppression, and the other a time of liberty: that in the former time, there being scarce any more a visible communion on the earth, under which the faithful might place themselves, they could remain under a corrupted ministry, from which each one in particular had a right to separate the pure from the impure, in waiting till God should deliver his church out of the hands of those bad pastors. But in the second time, where the orthodox and Arian communions were in a visible opposition, and such as was every where known, it was not possible for them to remain under the Arian ministry, without having an Arian heart; or at least, without falling into a detestable hypocrisy. For in the opposition of these two communions, this very thing, that they should remain in the Arian, was a manifest condemnation of the orthodox; which they could not do, without being either Arians, or hypocrites. Moreover, in the former time, those who remained out of necessity under the ministry of the Arians, remained there in grief, and ardently desiring that God would procure them some means to get out of it, and to return to an orthodox ministry. But in the latter, God having given them the power to join themselves to a pure communion, they could not remain in the Arian without loving and being pleased with it, through those worldly interests which they could never prefer before the confession of a pure faith without offending God, without wounding their own consciences, without having a debauched and profane spirit; and in a word, without binding themselves over to

eternal damnation. Behold here, what St. Augustine has answered; and it is no hard matter to judge, that we must answer them thus when they make the like objections to us. We must distinguish between two periods, to wit, that which went before the Reformation, and that which followed it; and by the same reasons which I have alleged, we will shew them, that although it was possible in the former time for some to work out their own salvation under the corrupted ministry of the Latin Church, yet it does not follow that we may do so at this day under that of the Church of Rome, since those two communions are now found to be set in opposition.

I shall not urge this matter further. We may now, methinks, conclude from all that which I have handled in the foregoing chapter and in this, that if there ever was a vain and ill-grounded objection, that which the author of the Prejudices has made against us, is certainly one of that nature. His argument is founded upon nothing else but false or ill-understood propositions. For it is not true that St. Augustine believed that there was any particular society, among all those which make a profession of Christianity, from whose assemblies one might not, in certain cases, depart, and withdraw one's self from its communion. It is not true, that the separation which is between the Church of Rome and us, is that which that father has absolutely condemned, and for which he accuses the Donatists to be schismatics. It is not true, that he would accuse them of schism without examining the foundation, by a mere passive separation, as that is wherein we are, from the Church of Rome. It is not true, that he has taken that visible extension throughout all nations, for a perpetual mark of the true church. It is not true, that he would have that mark to decide the question of the true church, when the doctrine of it is disputed. It is not true, that we hold that the church before the Reformation had perished throughout all the earth. It is not true, that we reduce all to the Berengarians, Waldenses, and Albigenses.

&c. only. Lastly, It is not true, that the doctrine of St. Augustine upon this subject is any way contrary to us; but it is true, that our principles have all the conformity with his that any man can reasonably require. This is, in my judgment, that which may be clearly collected from what I have said.

As the interest that we have in the clearing of this matter does not go much farther, I would here put an end to this Chapter and this Third Part, concerning our separation, if the interest of truth and charity did not bind me to make a reflection upon a proposition that the author of the Prejudices has set before us, which is, that schismatics are out of a state of salvation. For I hold, that this proposition cannot be maintained after the manner that the author of the Prejudices has proposed it, that is to say, absolutely, and without any distinction. I am not ignorant, that to establish this rigorous sentiment, they produce some passages of the fathers, who have in effect spoken of schism in terms extremely vehement, as if they had a design to exclude from the communion of God, and from the hope of salvation, all those in general who should be found engaged in it. But that very thing ought to be an example, to let us see, that we must not always take, according to the rigour of the letter, all that the fathers have said in the heat of their disputes. For unless we should be altogether unreasonable, we must place a difference between three sorts of persons who are to be found in a schismatical communion. 1. The authors of schism, who usually are the pastors and guides of the flock. 2. Understanding persons, who take part in the affairs, and who very well knowing what they do, give their consent to schism, and defend the authors of it. 3. The people, that is to say, the ignorant persons who scarce know any thing that passes, or who know but very confusedly. And for that which regards the authors and other intelligent persons, as it is most frequently passion, interest, pride, and ambition, that make them separate, and that all those passions turn them in the end into an implacable hatred against their brethren, they deserve our con-

demnation; for those crimes are incompatible with the spirit of Jesus Christ; and it is a manifest demonstration, that the world and its corruption reigns in the souls of those who are guilty of it: we must therefore say of such schismatics as these, that while they remain in this condition there is no hope of salvation for them, because that the true faith, the covenant of God, and the communion of Jesus Christ, cannot subsist under the reign of those brutal passions. But to imagine that the whole body of a people who are to be found engaged in a schism, either through the faction of the more powerful, or a conscience prepossessed by a zeal without knowledge, by a piety too scrupulous, should be deprived of all hope of salvation; this would be without doubt to fall into a very rash opinion.

To make this clear by examples, I have already mentioned elsewhere, that Victor Bishop of Rome excommunicated the churches of Asia upon the difference about the day of Easter, from whence there followed a schism between those churches and that of Rome. I do not now inquire to which of the two parties the crime of the separation ought to be imputed, whether to the Asiatics, who adhered too strictly to the custom of their ancestors and the authority of Polycarp, or to Victor, who without prudence and charity separated himself from divers great and flourishing churches, about a matter that was left free and indifferent in religion. I only say, that this would be a horrible injustice, to condemn those people to eternal flames, who should be found to be engaged in that ridiculous quarrel, only through the capricious humours of their bishops. In effect, we have seen, that notwithstanding this schism, they did not fail both the one and the other to sit together in the Council of Nice.

We must pass the same judgment of a schism that fell out in the Fourth Century, at Antioch, between the Meletians and the Eustathians, both the one and the other orthodox and separated from the Arians, but who nevertheless would not communicate together, because that although Meletius had

preached and defended the Council of Nice, and suffered persecution for it, yet he had been created bishop by the Arians, by reason of which the other orthodox would no more communicate with those of his party, which obliged them to hold their assemblies apart.* It was therefore a true schism on one side and on the other; but as it proceeded only from an excess of zeal on the side of the Eustathians, we ought not to pass a sentence of damnation so lightly against them.

I say the same thing of the schism that fell out about the end of the Fifth Century, between Acacius Bishop of Constantinople and Felix the Third Bishop of Rome, who mutually excommunicated one another, for the interests of John Talaia and Peter Mongus, competitors for the patriarchate of Alexandria. Acacius defended the side of Peter, whom Felix accused to be a heretic, and an enemy to the Council of Chalcedon; and Felix, on the contrary, upheld Talaia, whom Acacius had accused of perjury, and to be unworthy of a bishopric:† and this schism also lasted down to their successors, thirty and five years, between the East and West. But although Acacius, drawn in by intrigues to the side of an hypocrite, had wrong at the foundation, yet we ought not for all that to believe that all those great churches who kept communion with him, and defended his memory after his death, were absolutely cut off from the hope of Paradise.

In the Sixth Century, there was another schism, whereof I have already spoken, which was very contentious and embroiled, under the Emperor Justinian, Vigilius being Bishop of Rome, and Mennas Patriarch of Constantinople. The ground of the quarrel was taken from the writings that had been approved in the Council of Chalcedon, and which afterwards were condemned as heretical by the Emperor Justinian; and the condemnation was subscribed by Mennas and the other patriarchs, and their bishops. Vigilius, who was of another opinion, undertook the defence of those writings,

* Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. 2. cap. 34.

† Baron. ad ann. 484.

and excommunicated Mennas and the rest who had condemned them. But some months after, he took off his excommunication, at the solicitation of the Empress Theodora, to whom he owed his bishopric; and what was more, in the following year he himself pronounced an anathema against those three writings.* But the bishops of Africa, Illyria, and Dalmatia, persisted to defend them; and those in Africa, assembled in council, excommunicated Vigilius, as a dissembler. Some time after, Vigilius, repenting himself of that which he had done, undertook a second time the defence of those writings. Justinian, on the contrary, made an edict, by which he renewed their condemnation; and Vigilius, on his side, excommunicated all those who should consent to this edict. In fine, the Fifth General Council assembled at Constantinople, where, in spite of all the decrees of the Bishop of Rome, the three writings were condemned, and all those who should approve them were excommunicated. Vigilius, persisting in his opinion, was banished, and died some years after. But his successors, Pelagius and Gregory, approved the council, and subscribed to what had been done there; and it was, in fine, generally received by all, and reckoned for a Fifth General Council.† We must acknowledge, that if the people were to be saved or damned according to the good or bad conduct of their pastors, heaven and hell would have been very miserably dispensed, while the time of those disorders lasted. For our adversaries themselves are constrained to confess, that this quarrel that made so great a noise, that produced so many excommunications, so many separations, so many acts of violence, and so many banishments, and which ended by the dishonour of the Council of Chalcedon, was founded upon nothing but *a personal animosity*, says Baronius, or, as Sirmondi says, *upon an indifferent controversy, which concerned nothing the doctrine of the faith, on which side soever it had been decided.*‡ If we must therefore judge ac-

* Baron. in Vigil.

† Victor. Tunun. in Chron.

‡ Sirmond. præf. in facund.

according to the relation of these two authors, all that we can say is, that both the parties were equally schismatical, who violated the peace and unity of the church without any just reason; and who mutually excommunicated one another for nothing: and if we add that rigorous judgment against the schismatical societies, without any exception or distinction, we must say, that there was then no longer a true church upon the earth, nor any hope of salvation.

But to go yet further; If all those who live in the communion of schismatics are out of the church, in a state of damnation, I would fain have them satisfy me about some difficulties that I find in the history of the same Vigilius. For the two first years of his papacy, it was he that was called a false Pope, a schismatic, a usurper of the bishopric of Sylverius, whom the heretics had banished, to set up this man, who had promised them to communicate with them.* And in effect, Liberatus and Victor of Tunis relate, that after he was in possession of the papacy, he wrote to the heretics, as having the same faith with them;† and Bellarmine declares, that at this time Vigilius was an anti-pope and a schismatic, because that Sylverius the lawful pope was yet living, and there could not be two lawful popes at the same time.‡ Baronius and Petavius say the same thing. Notwithstanding, it is true, that during these two years of schism Vigilius was peaceably acknowledged to be the Bishop of Rome, both by the Church of Rome and by all Christendom. No church refused to live in his communion, no bishop withdrew himself from him as a schismatic. He performed without any opposition all the functions of his bishopric, he received the honours, and had the profits of it. All the earth was then schismatical with him, and by consequence there was no further either a church or salvation in the world, if it was only in the person of Sylverius and some bishops who had subscribed to the sentence of the deposition and anathema that

* Vide Baron. in Vigil.

† Liberat. Breviar. cap. 22. Victor. Tunun. in Chron.

‡ Bellar. de Rom. Pont. l. 4. c. 10.

Sylverius, being in exile, pronounced against Vigilius, and against all those who should adhere to him.* After this, I would fain have them tell me how Vigilius could pass from the state of a schismatic to that of a true Pope. It was, say Baronius and Bellarmine, by the consent of the clergy and people of Rome, who assembled together and chose him lawfully after the death of Sylverius.† But besides, this new ordination of Vigilius, and this assembly of the people and clergy, is an effect of the invention of Baronius, which is grounded upon nothing but one word of Anastasius the Pope's library-keeper, who lived above three hundred years after; besides this, I say, that the people of Rome and that clergy, had not they themselves lost, through schism, the form of the true church? How was it restored to them? How could they re-establish themselves? Who gave that right to a company of schismatics cut off from the communion and the covenant of Jesus Christ, to make a rebel, a schismatic, an excommunicated person, a man that by the sentence of Sylverius could not perform any sacerdotal function, to make such a one, I say, a lawful Pope?

See here already some inconveniencies considerable enough, that flow from that rigorous sentiment; but if we would go yet further, we may probably find others which are not less severe. For what will they say to the schisms that fell out so frequently in the Latin Church, through the competition of anti-popes? Will they dare roundly to pronounce all those people who have lived and died under the obedience of those false Popes, and who by consequence, having been engaged in a true schism, have been totally cut off from the Christian communion, and deprived of salvation? Let the author of the Prejudices, who has taken such pains to damn the world without any mercy, take the pains if he pleases to examine one matter of fact that I will set before him, and which should be enough, methinks, to decide this question,

* Baron. ad ann. 539.

† Baron. ad ann. 540. Bellar. de Rom. Pont. l. 4. c. 10.


at least in regard of him. It is this, that during the great schism of two anti-popes, which was ended at the Council of Constance, there were saints that the Church of Rome has canonized, and to whom it prays, who lived and died under two contrary obediences, and who by consequence, both the one sort and the other, died in a true schism. For in the year 1380, St. Catharine of Sienna died under the obedience of Urban the Sixth. In the year 1381, St. Catharine of Swedeland, the daughter of St. Bridget, died under the same obedience. In the year 1395, St. Margaret of Pisa died under the obedience of Boniface the Ninth. In the year 1399, St. Dorothy of Prussia died under the obedience of the same Pope; and in the year 1405, St. William the Hermit, of Sicily, died under the obedience of Innocent the Seventh. On the other side, in the year 1382, St. Peter of Luxemburg died under the obedience of Clement, who was the anti-pope of Urban; and some time after, St. Vincent of Ferrara lived, and wrought miracles in the party of Benedict the anti-pope of Gregory the Twelfth.* Behold here saints of both sides, and yet one or the other must of necessity have been schismatics. From whence it appears, that the Church of Rome herself is concerned to oblige the author of the Prejudices to moderate his style, and not to take, as it seems he has done, that which the fathers have said, in disputing against the schismatics, in its utmost latitude.

But although all that I have said should have no place, the holy Scripture distinctly decides this difficulty. For if he would but read the history of the ten tribes of Israel, after they were separated from that of Judah, at the instigation of Jeroboam, he will find that they were in a real schism, since they had forsaken the worship at Jerusalem, and had built new altars, against the express commandment of God; and yet nevertheless that did not hinder God from preserving his truly faithful and elect, even in the midst of them. For there were those seven thousand who in

* Vide Raynald. ad ann. citatos.

the time of Elijah had not bowed the knee to Baal, and whom St. Paul calls the remnant of the election of grace; were not these Israelites engaged in a bad party? Had not God his prophets and his altars yet among them? "Lord," said Elijah, "they have killed thy prophets, and thrown down thy altars." And the hundred prophets of God that Obadiah hid in two caves, to withdraw them from the persecution of the idolatress Jezebel; the altar of God that Elijah repaired in Carmel, to sacrifice there by the miraculous fire that fell down from heaven to consume the victim; the calling of Elisha and Micaiah; and, in a word, the whole history of those schismatical ten tribes, does it not evidently note that God looked on them as his true church, in which there was yet the means of salvation? We must not therefore abuse that which the fathers have wrote against schismatics, in intending to aggravate their crime, and to draw them from it; nor must we take their expressions in the whole rigour of the letter. Their meaning is not, that all those generally who are found engaged in a schismatical communion, even down to tradesmen and labourers, who remain there with an upright heart, and through the prejudice of their consciences, are out of the church, and eternally damned; but that the authors and defenders of schism, who run into it through their personal interests, or out of a spirit of fierceness, pride, and an hatred incompatible with the spirit of Jesus Christ, commit a horrible crime; and that while they are in that state, they remain deprived of all hopes of salvation. That if the fathers have said any thing more generally, and which cannot be thus restrained, it is just to understand it in a comparative sense; that is to say, that setting that schismatical party of the church in opposition to that which is not so, the hope of salvation appears evidently in this, which it does not in the other, where it is obscured by schism.

A DEFENCE
OF
THE REFORMATION,
ſc. ſc.



The Fourth Part :

OF THE RIGHT THAT OUR FATHERS HAD TO HOLD A
CHRISTIAN SOCIETY AMONG THEMSELVES, BY
PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES, AND THE EXER-
CISE OF THE MINISTRY.



A DEFENCE OF THE REFORMATION,

&c. &c.

THE FOURTH PART.

CHAP. I.

THAT OUR FATHERS HAD A RIGHT TO HAVE THEIR CHURCH-ASSEMBLIES SEPARATE FROM THOSE OF THE CHURCH OF ROME, ON THE SUPPOSITION THAT THEY WERE RIGHT IN THE FOUNDATION.

THE order of the matters of this treatise requires that we now go on to that separation which the author of the Prejudices calls *positive*; and that after having confirmed the right that our fathers had to examine the state of religion and the church in their days, after our having shewed the indispensable necessity that lay upon them to forsake the assemblies of the Church of Rome, and to live apart from her communion, that we also establish the right that they had to set up a Christian society among themselves, notwithstanding their going off from the other party, who were not for a reformation; and to make up alone, and apart, a body of the church, or an external and visible communion. This is what I design to establish in this Fourth and last Part, and to that end I shall here treat of two things: the first shall respect the right of those public assemblies, and the

second shall be concerning that of the Gospel ministry wherein our function lies. Although these two things have a dependence one upon another, it will yet be well to treat of them with some distinction.

To make the first clear, I shall lay it down as an indisputable truth, that the right of religious assemblies naturally follows that of societies; I mean, that as far as a religious society is just and lawful, so far the assemblies that are therein made are just and lawful; and that, on the contrary, as far as a society is unjust and wicked, so far its assemblies are so too. This principle is evident to common sense; and it is for this reason that we condemn the assemblies of the Heathens, Jews, and Mahometans, as unlawful and criminal, because their societies are impious and wicked; and that having no right to be united, to believe and practise those errors which they believe and practise, they have also no right to assemble themselves together in order to make a public profession. It is for the same reason that we hold, on the contrary, the Christian assemblies to be not only just and allowable, but to be necessary and commanded by divine authority, because the Christian society, that is to say, the church, is itself also of divine right. It is then true, that the right of assemblies follows that of societies.

But we must further suppose, as another evident and certain truth, that our fathers, before the Reformation, were Latin Christians, living in the communion of the Latin Church, in which they made as considerable a party as the rest of the Latins; and that from father to son, throughout a long succession, time out of mind, they enjoyed with the others the rights of that society: that they were equally in possession of it with the other common assemblies of that religion, having a part in the ministry, in the churches, in the sacraments, in the public prayers, in the reading and preaching of the word; and that as far as the communion of the Latin Church was lawful, so far the part that our fathers had in it was lawful also: that it was not a company of strangers,

or unknown persons come from the utmost parts of America or the southern lands, nor a sort of people dropped down from the clouds, who were newly joined together with them in the same society, but persons and whole families settled a long time ago, who were joined together with them in the profession of the Christian Religion many ages before, and who by consequence were in possession of the rights of that society. Although had they been strangers, Americans, and barbarians, on whom God should have suddenly bestowed the favour of calling them to the true faith and the true holiness of Christianity, yet we could believe that by that thing alone they would have been invested with all the rights of that society, as much as if they had had it by a long possession, time out of mind. But howsoever it be, they were Christians from father to son, and neither their blood nor their birth did distinguish them from the others.

We are now concerned only to search out whether that which happened to our fathers, that is to say, their reformation, their condemnation by the Popes and by their Council of Trent, and their separation from the Church of Rome, can be able to dispossess them of all their rights. For if it be true that they were fallen off, either by their own ill carriage or by the mere authority of the Church of Rome, we must yield that our assemblies are unlawful and criminal; but if, on the contrary, they were not so fallen off, if that which happened to them did nothing else but confirm their right, and render it more pure, more just, and more indisputable, they ought also to come to an agreement with us that our assemblies are holy and lawful, even in a far greater degree than they were before. To begin this disquisition with the condemnation of the Popes and their council: I confess, that if it were the Court of Rome that out of its pure liberality should communicate Christianity to those only whom it should please, and that none could either have or preserve it but by the continual influence of its favour, after the same manner as we have the day by the influence

of the sun, it would depend on her and her councils to take it from us whensoever she should see good, with all its rights and privileges. We might very well say that it would be too injurious to take it away from us, that we did not deserve so hard a treatment; yet we should be deprived for that very reason, when she should have taken it from us, whether it should have been with justice or against it, with or without any reason. But we do not believe that either the Court of Rome or its council, or that all that party who have followed them, though it should have a thousand times greater strength and authority than it has, would carry their pretensions so high as to imagine that it depends on their mere good pleasure to bestow or to take away Christianity and its rights, I do not say from an innumerable multitude of men, as that is which makes up the body of the Protestants, but even not so much as from two or three persons who should be assembled in the name of Jesus Christ. St. Paul has said indeed, Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Has not the potter of the earth power out of one and the same clay to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour? Rom. 9. 20, 21. And by these words he gives us to understand the absolute power that God has to make us whatsoever it shall seem good to him.

But he has taught us nothing of the like power concerning the Pope and his councils; he has not said, Who are you that contend against Rome? nor has he ascribed to him the power to make and destroy us as it shall please him. In effect, there is none but God alone on whom our Christianity depends; it is his favour that has given it to us, his Spirit and his word have formed it in us, and his apostle has taught us to say with a holy boldness, that there is no creature either in heaven or upon the earth that can be able to separate us from his love. Rom. 8. 39. We ought then to lay aside that sovereign and absolute authority, and to come to the

causes or reasons that could induce the Court of Rome and its council to condemn the Protestants, and to deprive them of their rights; for if those causes are not only vain and frivolous, but unjust, and contrary to the Christian faith and piety, as we maintain, a condemnation of that nature cannot but fall back upon those who have thrown it, since they themselves have broken the Christian unity; so that their ill carriage has made them justly lose that of which they would unjustly deprive others. And because in those kinds of contests that which one party loses by its injustice and its obstinacy in error, is recollected and restored in the other party, which does its duty, the condemnation of the Council of Trent being ill done as we suppose, cannot but have heightened and strengthened the rights of the Protestants.

As to the Reformation, it is not less true, that if that should be found to be indeed conformable to the word of God, and the inviolable laws of Christianity, as we suppose that it is; I mean, if the things that our fathers rejected were indeed errors and superstitions contrary to the true faith and piety, as we maintain, so holy an action would be so far from depriving our fathers of the right of that Christian society, that on the contrary it could not but fortify that right, and render it more lawful than it was before. For before the Reformation, that society was, as I may say, a composition of good and evil, of justice and injustice, by reason of those errors which were mixed with the true doctrine, and those superstitions which were to be found in conjunction with that religion; whereas the Reformation, having freed it of that which it had of impurity and dross, has without doubt put it into a far more holy state, and much more acceptable to God. How prejudiced soever they may be, they can never maintain it, that error and superstition should establish any right of society, nor deny, that, as they are in their own nature more worthy of the aversion of God and men, than their approbation, they render those societies unlawful and criminal. For although all the world by a universal consent

should be united in believing a heresy, or practising an idolatrous worship, that consent, how general soever it should be, would not change the nature of things; heresy would be always heresy, and idolatry idolatry, and in that respect the agreement of all mankind would make up a wicked and unjust society. Whence it follows, that a mixed communion is only lawful in proportion to that which it has of good, and that as its justice is lessened when its corruptions increase, so its justice also increases when its corruptions are lessened. We ought not then to imagine that the Reformation of the Protestants has deprived them of the right of that Christian society, but we ought to assert, on the contrary, that it has put them in that respect into a far more advantageous condition than they were before.

There is nothing further remaining but that separation, which was but by accident, as they say, the consequence of the Reformation: if the whole Latin Church had done her duty, she would have reformed herself as well as our fathers. But the Court of Rome and its clergy would not, and that refusal has caused that breach of communion which has fallen out between the two parties. It concerns us to inquire, whether even upon supposition that that reformation was just, and by consequence that that refusal of it which they made was unjust, that separation could lawfully hinder our fathers from holding a Christian society among themselves. But this is what they cannot maintain with the least colour of reason. For if the Reformation was just, and if the refusal which they made was unjust, how can the injustice of that party which should have forgot its duty, and which would have constrained the other party to have forgot it too, deprive the other party of those rights that faith, holiness, the fear of God, and the communion of Jesus Christ, have naturally given it? Must injustice needs triumph over justice, and error over truth? Is it that the rights of that society were so inseparably joined to those who opposed the Reformation, that that society could not subsist without them, and

that separating themselves out of the motives of an ill-grounded prejudice, or in giving a just ground to others to separate themselves from them, they should have carried away all that society with them? This cannot be said; for among all those persons who compose the body of the visible church, it is certain that there are none, however dignified, or however numerous, that are such essential parts, as without which the church cannot subsist, while there are two or three remaining who may assemble together in the name of Jesus Christ: for Jesus Christ restricted himself to that number, "When two or three of you are gathered together in my name, I will be in the midst of you." Matth. 18. 20. Jesus Christ himself alone, his truth, his gospel, his providence, and his spirit, are essential to the church, without which she can never subsist, but she may without the Pope, without the Court of Rome, without the Council of Trent, without the bishops, and without the people who follow Rome; and in a word, without the whole party which refused the Reformation. The Christian society does not depend on their capricious humours, nor on their temporal interests. They are not the soul of that body; they will be members of it while they make profession of the true faith, or at the furthest while they do not oppose it: but when they shall obstinately remain in errors incompatible with the communion of Jesus Christ, and when they shall break by unjust anathemas the bond of that society, we may very well say that the body of the visible church is lessened, but we can never say that their withdrawing leaves the faithful under a dispersion.

The better to understand this truth, we must know, that although that external society be common to the good and the bad, to the truly faithful, to heretics, and the men of the world, in a word, to all those who are found to be externally mingled in the body of the church, yet in effect the right of that society will not, to speak properly, belong to any but the truly faithful. For the wicked, the heretics, and those

worldly men who fill up their assemblies, are only associated here while they remain such, in dishonouring God, by the contempt they have of his word, and the indignities they offer in receiving his sacraments. Therefore God said to the wicked in Isaiah, "When you come to appear before me, who has required this at your hands to tread my courts?" Isa. 1. 12. And in Psalm 30. 16, 17. David assures us that God has said to the wicked, "What hast thou to do to read my laws, and to take my covenant into thy mouth? Since thou hast hated instruction, and hast cast my words behind thee." It is certain then that the right of the external society only resides in the faithful, who alone are the true church of Jesus Christ, his mystical body for which he died, the seed which he sowed with his own hand against his harvest. As to the rest, they are in that communion only by accident, and are the seed of tares which the enemy rising at night has thrown into the field of the Son of God, and which grows with the wheat until the time of the harvest, and it is also only by accident that they are suffered there, to wit, because most commonly their wickedness is not known, or if it be, their conversion may yet be charitably hoped for, or in fine, it may fall out that in going about to pull up the tares, one must also pluck up the wheat with it. But being what they are, they have not any part in the rights of that society and of those assemblies. Therefore Jesus Christ has promised his presence to none but such as shall be assembled together in his name; and St. Augustine expressly teaches that the power of the keys, and that of binding and loosing, was given to the church of the just and true believers, in opposition to the wicked, to heretics, and to the men of the world who are mixed with them.* And it is said of that church, only so considered in that same opposition, what Jesus Christ has said in the Gospel, "If thy brother sin against thee, tell it to the church; and if he refuse to hear the

* St. Augustine de Bapt. contra Don. lib. 7. cap. 51.

church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Matth. 18. 17. Which lets us see that he gave only the truly faithful the right to be in a society, for there those only have a right to be in a religious society, who have the power of binding and loosing, and of hearing those private complaints to judge concerning them. But according to him, the truly faithful have only that power, and it is only to those that Jesus Christ has given it. There are then none but those, to speak properly, in whom the right of being in an external society, and of making those assemblies, resides.

That being so laid down, who sees not, that when it falls out that the body of that mixed church is divided into divers parties, about those important matters that respect either faith, or worship, or the general rules of manners, all the rights of that Christian society remain in that party which retains true doctrine and piety, because it is on that side that the truly just and faithful place themselves. There it is that the true church of Jesus Christ is assembled in his name, to which he has promised his presence: for as I have before said, error, superstition, and injustice, give none a right to be in a society, nor by consequence any to make those assemblies.

But, they will say, if the body of the pastors be found in the other party, if external splendour, multitude, extent, succession, authority of councils, are found there, can any one forbear acknowledging it to be the body of the church? There are seen amongst them the pulpits, schools, churches, bishoprics, benefices, revenues, dignities, and, in a word, all those advantages that mark out the body of the visible church. A party which is in that condition, cannot suffer that any should put its rights in question; its assemblies pass for lawful throughout all the world, and the assemblies only of the other party are here treated of, who finding themselves deprived of those advantages, cannot be considered otherwise than as a sect divided from the body, as a branch separated from the tree, or as a ray divided from the sun, according to

the comparison of the fathers. I answer, that those divisions that fall out in a mixed church may be of two sorts, for sometimes they are founded only upon personal accusations, or points of discipline, or light and less important questions, the foundation of the orthodox doctrine, and true worship, remaining entire in both parties. Of this sort were the divisions of the Novatians, the Donatists, the Luciferians, as it has been noted in the Third Part. But sometimes the ground of those divisions is taken from doctrine, or worship, or the general rules of manners, and consists in those things that are acknowledged by both sides to be weighty and essential; and in this rank we may place those divisions which arose in the ancient church, by reason of the Samosatenians, the Arians, the Macedonians, Nestorians, and Eutychians. I acknowledge, that when the question is only about divisions of the former sort, we cannot rationally hinder ourselves from acknowledging that party to be the body of the church which has the advantages before spoken of, and looking by consequence on the other party as a sect separated from it. The one is the tree, and the other the cut-off branch; the one is the sun, and the other a separated ray. And the reason which makes that prejudice just, is not that the greater party cannot have done wrong at the bottom, or that it cannot err; for it frequently happens, that prejudice, passion, interest, and cabals, prevail among those who have the ecclesiastical authority in their hands, which makes them give unjust judgments; and it may be the author of the Prejudices would not maintain all the decisions and excommunications of the Church of Rome to be just: but the reason of that prejudice is, that though even the greater part should have done wrong in the foundation, yet the matter treated on is not of such importance, as that it can take away from a society the quality of the true church of Jesus Christ, while sound doctrine entirely subsists there, and worship remains pure. From whence it follows, that there being there no sufficient cause of separation, the lesser party cannot be looked

upon otherwise than as schismatical, because it is cut off from the greater without necessity; and supposing at the same time that it should have reason in the foundation, yet its separation would not cease to be criminal. It is in this case that St. Augustine would have those whom violence, or, as he says, *carnal sedition*, has driven from the Christian assemblies, to suffer patiently the injury done to them without throwing themselves either into heresy or schism, and without setting up of assemblies apart; but that they should maintain and defend, even to the death, the faith which they know preached in the church. *Sine ulla, says he, Conventiculorum segregatione usque ad mortem defendentes et Testimonio juvantes eam fidem quam in Ecclesia Catholica prædicari sciunt.** But it is otherwise when the division is about matters of the second sort; those, I mean, that are founded upon the weighty points of doctrine or worship. For there the true church ought alone to be sought for, where the true faith is; where it goes neither by extent of places, nor by number, nor by the body of pastors or prelates, nor by the walls of temples, nor by councils, that we ought to judge of it, but by the true doctrine, and where that is to be found, there without doubt is a right to be in a society and to gather assemblies. The reason is evident, because we cannot say, in that case, that although the more numerous party, more extended, and which has the body of pastors of its side, should be wrong in the foundation, yet that it would not always keep the quality of a true church, as it may be said in the former case. For a society that teaches error and practises a false worship, and that will receive none into its communion but those who believe all that it believes, and practise all that it practises, cannot be a true church, whatsoever advantages it have otherwise; so that finding it opposite to another pure society, there is no need to hesitate in one's choice.

* August. de vera. Relig. cap. 6.

In the first case, the lesser party cannot be other than schismatical, because whatsoever reason it may have at the bottom, it would be better to yield than to separate one's self; but it is not so in the second, for it would be better to separate one's self than to yield, since in yielding one should fall into fundamental errors and superstitions contrary to true piety. In a word, in the former case, the number, dignity, extent of place, the body of the pastors, multitude, ought to prevail over reason in a particular injustice, because a church may be in some respect unjust, without hazarding the salvation of its children: but in the second, reason drawn from injustice, error, false doctrine, false worship, is a thousand times more considerable than all those advantages which I have noted, because we cannot renounce the true doctrine, and the true worship of God in things of great moment, in which our salvation would not be absolutely concerned. It is this difference that causes us to take notice of two different ways in the fathers, which appear so opposite and contrary one to another, that at first sight trouble our minds. For when they wrote against the Novatians, or against the Donatists, or against the Luciferians, who separated themselves out of frivolous reasons, that is to say, upon points of discipline and personal accusations, but who otherwise acknowledged the church they had quitted to be orthodox, they set before the people, the multitude, the extension, the body of the pastors, succession, and other advantages of that nature, as things that shewed of what side the church was, and then they held that the lesser party cut off from the greater was as a member divided from the body, a branch cut off from the tree, or as a ray separated from the sun. But when they were engaged against the Arians, who taught false doctrine, they did not care to make use of those kind of arguments; on the contrary they restrained themselves to look for the church where the true doctrine and faith were, and they had no consideration either of the body of the pastors, or of the multitude, or pulpits, or councils, when the Arians made use of them to

the prejudice of the true doctrine, as I have shewn in the Third Part. But that very thing evidently discovers the ordinary cheat that their missionaries are guilty of, and the other petty writers of controversy of the Church of Rome, and into which the author of the Prejudices himself falls. Which is, that instead of following with respect to us the way of writing that the fathers took, when they wrote against the Arians, from whom they differed in points of doctrine, since the cause is similar, they follow on the contrary that which the same fathers took against the Novatians, the Donatists, and Luciferians, with whom they did not quarrel about matters of doctrine; which is a mere sophism, where they confound two altogether different questions, in referring to one case that which cannot have any place but in the other.

But they will say, Are not you yourself guilty of fallacy, in perpetually supposing, as you do in this dispute, that you have right at the bottom? For that is the thing that is most contested, and when we allege to you the body of the pastors, extension, multitude, and the other advantages of the Church of Rome, we do not pretend to own, that the doctrine of that church is false, or that its worship is corrupted, or to conclude that those advantages alone would give it the quality of a true church, though it should not be orthodox; but we pretend only, that setting aside the discussion of doctrines, we can convince you of schism by those prejudices alone, which, without any further examination, mark out which of the two communions is the true church, and by consequence which is false and schismatical. I have already answered divers times this objection; but that it may be revived here further in the minds of the readers, I shall not fail to shew yet further the vanity of it, and to discover more and more on which side the fallacy lies. I say then, that when I suppose in this dispute that we have right at the bottom, my supposition is just, and within the rules of sound reason; for I do not suppose it either as a thing that I have already proved, nor as a thing granted to me, but as a matter which ought to be

examined, and on the examination of which, that question of schism, and the true church, ought necessarily to depend. We would, say they, shew you, without entering into the discussion of the doctrine, by mere prejudices that you are guilty of schism, and that you have no right to be in a society, nor to gather assemblies. And as for me I design to shew, that that way is illusory and sophistical, and that one ought to examine the doctrines, in order to know which of the two communions is schismatical, and which is the true church. To this effect, I prove that though the Protestant party should be despoiled of all those advantages treated on, provided it have on its side the true doctrine and worship, and the Church of Rome have it not, it has all the rights of a Christian society, that its assemblies are lawful, and that its separation from the Church of Rome is just, from whence it evidently follows, that all those prejudices are to no purpose in the deciding of our question, and that all depends on the discussion of those points that are in controversy between us. See here the use of my supposition: the business at present is not to know whether we have right in the foundation or not; if that were all the business, I would not suppose it at all, I would prove it; but the business is to know whether they can by those mere prejudices prove that our separate assemblies from those of the Church of Rome are unlawful. But I shew that they cannot, because if we have reason on our side in the matters that are controverted, our assemblies are lawful, notwithstanding those prejudices. In a word, we pretend to maintain our assemblies no otherwise than by the right that the foundation gives us, but by that right alone we pretend to maintain them; so that when they contest it with us we run back to the foundation, and we shew them that the foundation is sufficient to render our assemblies lawful, from whence it necessarily follows that they cannot treat us as unjust and schismatics, otherwise than in coming to the discussion of the foundation itself. When therefore they tell us, that to convince us of schism they need but to set aside

the discussion of doctrines, it is as much as if they should say, that to shew us that we have no reason, they need but to lay aside that reason upon which we ground ourselves. The author of the Prejudices has found this shift to be so fine and ingenious, that he has judged it worthy to be consecrated to posterity by one of his books.

In fine, if we were to clear this truth by examples, we need but to repeat here two things which we have justified in the Third Part, and which are clear and certain out of the history of the ancient church. The one, That in the time of the Arians the body of the pastors followed heresy; and the other, That a small number of the orthodox, a small party separated from the body of its pastors, and deprived of all kind of advantages, did not fail to set up its assemblies apart, and to hold the best Christian society that it was possible for them to do. Those that were heretics filled the churches, and as for the orthodox they met as they could, sometimes in the fields, and sometimes even in the churches of the Novatians. As these matters of fact are indisputable and justified by history, we have nothing else to do but to demand of the author of the Prejudices, Whether he believes that those orthodox were schismatics for having so separated themselves from the body of their pastors, not only by a negative separation, but even by a positive one? Whether he believes that their assemblies were unlawful? Whether he believes that they had done better to have remained in the same communion with heretics, than in withdrawing from them? Whether he thinks that the Arians could have said to them with any reason, That without entering upon any examination of their doctrine they could convince them of schism by that separation alone? Whether he believes that those orthodox had given a very ill answer in saying, That since their separation was only founded on their doctrine, it was by that that they ought to judge, and not by those vain and deceitful advantages which sometimes follow the church, but which oftentimes abandon it also, and upon which no-

thing of certainty can be established? The author of the *Prejudices* may answer what he pleases, but we are at least assured that he can neither condemn the Arians without justifying us, nor justify the orthodox without condemning himself.

It is necessary then that we come to agree in this truth. That the right to be in an external society, and by consequence to raise assemblies, belongs to the truly faithful only; and that if it falls out that the body of the pastors teach false doctrine, and corrupt the ministry to that degree that it cannot be allowed to the faithful to live in communion with them, the truly faithful remain yet united among themselves by that external union out of which their assemblies proceed, and that by consequence they have a right to meet together and to make up a body in a visible communion. But they will say, If it falls out that generally all the pastors forsake those pretended truly faithful whereof you speak, who is there that shall assemble them? They are all but so many mere private men, and what right have those private men to gather assemblies? Besides, religious assemblies are chiefly instituted for the preaching of the word, and administration of the sacraments, and can any ascribe the right of preaching and administering the sacraments to mere private men separated from their pastors? When therefore it should be true that the right of being in an external society, that of making assemblies, that of preaching, that of administering the sacraments, that of binding and loosing, and the whole ministerial power, should reside in the faithful only, yet it must be confessed notwithstanding, that all those rights are to no purpose while they are separated from their pastors, because that each person among them being but a mere private man, they could not reduce those rights into act, as they say, that is, they could not tell how to make any actual function. They have none who could join them together into a visible body, none among them can lawfully assemble them, none can exercise the functions of the ministry among them, none

can either preach or administer the sacraments, or exercise the power of the keys. Whence it follows, that whatsoever right they have ascribed to them, yet they do not cease to be in that condition in a true dispersion, according to what is said in the Scripture, "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad." Mark 14. 27. And therefore St. Paul says, "That God has given some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others evangelists, and others pastors and teachers, for the assembling of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph. 4. 11, 12. The church, inasmuch as she is an external society, is as an organical body, which has its noble parts necessary for life, without which it could not subsist for a moment, and those parts are her pastors, who are not it may be absolutely necessary for the subsistence of faith and piety in the souls of particular men, but who are at least absolutely so for the subsistence of that external society, and the public exercise of religion. If they overthrow this order, they change the church into a rash assembly, made by chance, and licentiousness, and of whose convocation there can be no reason given. Even the very name alone of the church, which signifies a called assembly, denotes, that to assemble in a body there ought to be a lawful call, which can be in none but the pastors. The pastors are then necessary to bind an external society; but they are yet further so, for the setting it in any order, for otherwise it will depend on the capricious humour of each private man to usurp the public functions; each man will imagine himself to have a right to preach the word of the Gospel, to administer the sacraments, and to do the other functions of the ministry, which would turn the church into an anarchy. These are to me the most specious objections that they can make against what I have said concerning the right that the faithful have to be in a society, even then when they are separated from the body of their pastors, and they cannot complain that I have weakened them, for they will not find any thing, either in that book of

the Prejudices, or it may be in all their other controversial writings, that will appear to have as much force and likelihood of truth, as that which I have gathered together in these few words.

To answer in some order, I shall in the first place affirm, That that objection does not any way touch the body of the Protestants, since it is evident not only that all their pastors were not contrary to the Reformation, but also that in the greatest part of those places wherein it was made, those who were most ardently engaged in it were persons high in office and dignity in the Latin Church, who had as much a call as they can reasonably desire to preserve the bond of society entire, and to call assemblies together. It is as certain that in divers places the Reformation was made by the consent of the greatest part of their pastors, as in England, in Scotland, in Swedeland, in Denmark, in Saxony, in the Palatinate, in Hussia, in Switzerland, and in many more cities and countries in Germany. So that we may say with certainty, that the reformed people separated from the Roman communion did not assemble of themselves, but that they kept up an external society under the lawful ministry of a considerable number of their pastors, who called them together into a body, or to speak better, who hindered their dispersion and preserved the bond of their unity. They had in that number their monks, their preachers, priests, curates, canons, doctors, professors in divinity, whole universities, and abbies, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and if the light of the Gospel had not been then inaccessible to the See of Rome, they had had it may be Popes themselves, for some of them were sensible enough of the necessity of a reformation. Howsoever it be, we may say, that there was yet in the body of the pastors a remnant according to the election of grace, as there was in the time of the Arians, according to the remark of St. Gregory Nazianzen. I confess that in some places the people of themselves assembled to choose their pastors, but although they should have been guilty of any irregularity in that, besides that they

cannot impute it to all the body, it would have been rectified by the approbation that all the other pastors made of that election, and by the right hand of fellowship which they gave them, finding themselves to be in the same ecclesiastical assemblies with them, and acknowledging them for their brethren and companions in the work of Jesus Christ. And by so much the more as the times of persecution wherein the faithful were then, often forced them to pass over those formalities which it was impossible for them to observe, and as God himself seemed to have ratified the choice of those persons by the blessing which he spread upon their labours, as he did particularly upon the ministry of John le Mason la Riviere, whom the people chose at Paris in the year 1555.

But although we are very little concerned in the principles upon which that objection is grounded, yet we shall not fail notwithstanding to examine them, to know a little more distinctly of what necessity pastors are for the subsistence of the society or external communion of the church. I say then in the first place, it must not be thought that the bond of the external society of the faithful absolutely depends on their union, or, as Cardinal du Perron speaks, on their adherence to the body of their pastors. It may fall out sometimes that the body of the pastors, that is to say, the greater number of them, fall into heresy, and corrupt the ministry in such a manner that the faithful would be bound to separate themselves from them. If there yet remain some few pastors who maintain the true doctrine, and oppose error, in that case I say that the faithful may most lawfully hold a Christian society with them in the using of all their functions, assemble themselves under their ministry, hear the word of the Gospel from their mouths, and receive the sacraments from their hands. They cannot say that the church would then be dispersed, nor that the greater number of the pastors had carried away with them all the rights of the society, but they ought on the contrary to say that being obstinate in error, and abandoning the purity of the faith,

they themselves in that respect lost the right of being in the society, and making up a body of an external communion. For that principle remains always unshaken, that error, superstition, and falsehood, do not give the least right to any men to assemble, and that a society is just only in proportion to its measure of true doctrine and evangelical worship. So that the greater number of the pastors is not a party absolutely necessary to the body of the church for its subsistence, and this appears evidently from the example of the orthodox in the time of the Arians; for as I have said before, their external communion did not cease to subsist in divers places separated from the body of the pastors: they met together, they prayed to God in common, they heard his word, they received his sacraments; in a word, they performed all the actions of religion under the ministry of those few persons that remained. This is precisely the case wherein our forefathers found themselves in the time of the Reformation, as I have before shewn, and it will not signify any thing to say that that small number of pastors that our fathers followed had themselves according to us corrupted their ministry by the errors and superstitions of the other pastors, and that they received their call from their hands; for I affirm that their return to the true doctrine rectified their call, and freed it from all the impurity or evil it could have had, after the same manner that Felix Bishop of Rome, and Meletius Bishop of Antioch, who being ordained by the Arians, rectified their ministry by preaching the truth and opposing of heresy; and as Liberius and a great number of the other bishops, who had subscribed to Arianism, purified their call, in returning to the true faith, which they had forsaken. It is certain therefore that the greater number of the pastors is not a party of the body of the church absolutely necessary for the subsistence of the external communion, and that it is an error to imagine that the bond of the society depends on them, or that there can be no assemblies made of those who shall be separated from them, but such as are unlawful and schismatical.

But in the second place, I affirm that it is not even absolutely necessary, and in all respects, to the making that external society to subsist among the faithful, that it should have pastors. For as it is nature alone that makes man a sociable creature, that is to say, that renders him capable of civil society, and gives him also a right to it, so also it is grace which makes a Christian a sociable man, which renders him, I would say, capable of a religious society, and gives him a right to it. Ten men that should meet one another by chance in an uninhabited desert, would they not have a right to join themselves actually together, to assemble and to take all the joint deliberations in public, that they should judge necessary for their own preservation? And would it not be an extravagance to demand of them what magistrate had assembled them, what public authority had called them together, who had given them a right to speak among themselves, and to consult for their common interests? When there are lawful magistrates, their intervention is necessary for the calling and authorizing of civil assemblies; and if any undertake to assemble together without their authority, or without their consent, their assemblies are rash and unlawful, but it does not follow from thence that magistrates should be so absolutely necessary to a society, that when there should be none, men could not any more speak or act together, nor assemble themselves, nor take common consultations. It is the same thing in religion: if ten laymen of the faithful should meet together casually, or to speak better, if the sole providence of God should make them meet one another in a desert island, or in the farthest part of America, and engage them all their days in a strange land, and if they should come to acknowledge each other for true faithful Christians, can any believe that they ought to remain so dispersed that they could never lawfully commune together concerning the Christian faith and piety, nor meet together to provide for the preservation of their religion. This is that which I hold to be not only unable to be maintained, but

impious; for as nature alone assembles men, when they have no magistrates, and cannot have any, so grace alone assembles Christians when they have no pastors, and cannot have any. She will not suffer them to remain in an entire dispersion while there remains yet any means to assemble them; it is she alone that convokes or calls them together, and her instinct forms a unanimous consent in them: that consent alone renders their assembly as lawful as it can be made by the convocation of pastors. Thus also divers parties who divided the Latin Church in the time of the great schism of the anti-popes, protested, That they met together at the Council of Constance when they no more acknowledged the Pope, nor, by consequence, held any more a head that could lawfully call them together; for they declared that they called one another together, and that they assembled themselves *sub Capite Christo*, under Jesus Christ their common Head, that is to say, by his instinct, and under his authority, which supplied the want of a Pope. *Quatenus*, say they, *in illo qui est verus Ecclesie sponsus, congregati in unum simul, matrem Ecclesiam divisam uniamus*. In respect of an assembly in the body of a council, each bishop, each prelate, was but a mere private man, as much as every believer is in respect of an assembly in the body of the church; and yet notwithstanding they assembled, they reunited themselves, they deposed a false Pope who troubled them even then, and they created another. A mutual convocation then, which is nothing else but a unanimous consent, is sufficient to make an assembly lawful, when there is no public authority that can call them together.

This is that which justifies the conduct of our fathers in some places of this kingdom at the beginning of the Reformation, for they assembled sometimes without any pastors, to pray to God together, and to read the Holy Scriptures: their consciences could not any more allow them to be present at the assemblies of the Roman communion, and not having further any pastor who might assemble them after the

ordinary manner, the spirit of Christianity assembled them under the Sovereign Pastor and Bishop of souls, which is Jesus Christ, and their mutual consent without doubt made their society and their assemblies most lawful. For as to that which is said in the Scripture, "I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad," (Zech. 13. 7.) it would be manifestly to abuse that passage, if they would conclude from it an absolute necessity of the pastors for the subsistence of that society. For that is a prophecy which notes, not that which the faithful ought to do when they have no pastors, but that which should befall the disciples of Jesus Christ in the time of his passion, when the fury of the Jews, and the sad condition wherein they should behold their Divine Master, should force them to be scattered; which has nothing common to the question we are now treating of.

In the third place I say, that to understand well the true use and the necessity of the actions of the ministry, the church must be considered in two seasons, in her first formation and in her subsistence. For in her first formation it is certain that the actions of the ministry were necessary for the calling of men to the light of the Gospel, whereof as yet they had no knowledge, and by consequence they were necessary to the establishment of the Christian communion or society amongst them, which could not be without that knowledge. To this end Jesus Christ employed his apostles and evangelists; "Go," says he, "and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" (Matt. 28. 19.) and it is that to which St. Paul has a chief regard, when he says, that Christ has given "some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the gathering together of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Ephes. 4. 11, 12. Those glorious heralds, by the efficacy of their word, accompanied with the power of Jesus Christ, called together the church, if we must so say,

as the holy assembly of God; they established the Christian Religion in the world, and so united men among themselves in an external society by the profession of one and the same faith, of one and the same hope and charity, which inspired them, so that the acts of their ministry were absolutely necessary for that first establishment, because their preaching was the only means that God would make use of to draw men from the Pagan idolatry or the Jewish obstinacy, and to give them that faith without which they could never have had a Christian society. In this respect, there is reason to urge the force of the word *church*, which signifies not a rash and tumultuous assembly made by chance or sedition, but an assembly lawfully called; for it was God himself who called it, by the voice of his apostle, according to the prophecy of David: The mighty Lord, the eternal God, hath spoken, and called to all the earth, from the rising up of the sun to the going down of the same. He has called the heavens from on high, and the earth, to judge his people; saying, Gather ye my saints together. Psalm 50. 1, 4, 5.

In this first establishment, the apostles and evangelists did three things: on one hand, they spread abroad the faith every where, and by this means bound men in an external communion or society; on the other hand, they set together the Christian truths which are the objects of faith in the canon of the Scriptures; and, lastly, they established ordinary pastors for the upholding and government of the church. By the first of those things, in establishing the faith in men's hearts, they assembled, called them together, and put them into a society. By the second, they formed, as I may so speak, the fountain, or the external and perpetual magazine of the evangelical doctrine. By the third, they provided for the ordinary dispensation of that fountain, settling of ministers to distribute it by their preaching, the sacraments, and the exercise of discipline. Of these three things, there is none but the first only to which we ought to refer the convocation of the church, and establishment of the Christian society.

But we must say that all three serve for its preservation and increase, for they are so many ways and means which the apostles left for the preservation of the faith, and strengthening of it in those who had before received it, and to propagate it to their children, and among those who had not as yet received it, in which the preservation of a society consists. The first contributes much; for as lights or torches lighted all together preserve and mutually strengthen their fire, and are capable of lighting others, so many faithful Christians, united together, confirm one another in faith and piety, and are fit to communicate that faith and piety to those who have not yet received it. The second does not contribute less, for the faithful preserve and increase their light, their faith, piety, and sanctity, by the immediate reading of the Holy Scriptures; infidels themselves may be converted this way, and those that go astray be brought back to the purity of the Gospel. The third is also of exceeding great use, for the pastors, by their preaching, their direction, and their writings, by their examples, by the sacraments they administer, and in a word by all the actions of their ministry, confirm the faith where it is, and propagate it where it is not. The Divine Wisdom has so prepared its divers means for the preservation of that society, and the propagation of the church, that if the actions of the ministry do not produce that effect for which they are appointed, the other means shall, and supply that defect. In effect, when the public preaching and presence of the pastors fail, the reading of the Scripture, private exhortation of the simple Christians; the writings of their pastors, either dead or absent, may come to succour, and make the faith and charity and piety subsist, and by consequence the external society of the church and its assemblies.

How then are the actions of the ministry necessary? They are so, 1. *By necessity of precept*, as they speak; I mean as it is a means that Jesus Christ has ordained, the use whereof we cannot neglect without sin. Those who contemn it, resist the order that God himself has established, and

make themselves unworthy of his grace; and to this those passages in the Scripture refer, which recommend the pastors to the faithful. “He that heareth you heareth me, and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me.” Luke 10. 16. “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls.” Heb. 13. 17. 2. The actions of the ministry are necessary to the *well* being of the church, though not absolutely necessary to its *being*. It is not absolutely impossible for a church to *subsist*, without having actually any pastors; not only because sometimes faith and piety may subsist without their heavenly food, which is the word and sacraments, as a body may subsist sometimes without its nourishments, but also because one part of that food may come to us otherwise than from the mouth of the pastors, as I have shewn: but they are necessary to the *well being* of a church; because it is the hand of the pastors alone that dispenses the sacraments to us, and their preaching is a public instruction that more strongly sets before our eyes the truths of the Gospel, that powerfully applies its precepts, its promises, its threatenings, and its exhortations to us, and frequently forces us to make those reflections on ourselves which we should not do without their aid. Their authority restrains us, their light enlightens us, their direction guides us, their example excites us, and their labours ease ours. It is certain that a flock without a pastor cannot but be in a very bad condition; for howsoever each of the mystical sheep who compose it may defend themselves against the assaults of the wolves, yet it is not ordinarily done either with such force, or such success, as when the defending of them lies in the hands of faithful pastors, to whom God communicates a greater measure of his light and grace; and although the external society among the simple faithful may not cease to subsist though they have not actually any pastor, since they may be joined together in Jesus Christ by the profession of the same faith, and the same piety which assembles them, by virtue of the first convocation that the apostles made, yet that society, as

far as it is external, would be far better maintained by the actions of the ministry of the pastors, than it would be otherwise. 3. I shall not fear to say that even the actions of the ministry are necessary for the perpetual subsistence of that external society; for however the mere reading of the word of God, public prayers in common, the mutual exhortations of the faithful, and the writings of the doctors of the church, are without doubt sufficient to preserve the faith and piety in the souls of men, not only during some time, but even always, if they do not neglect their duty, yet notwithstanding it must be acknowledged, that according to the way that we are made, and to speak as they say after the manner of men, a flock cannot abide a long time without a shepherd, so as not to fall into negligence, and by that negligence into an oblivion of its duty, and, in fine, so as the sheep should not be in a great danger of dispersion. See here after what manner pastors are necessary to the church: but to imagine that it cannot absolutely have any more a Christian society or lawful assemblies among the faithful when their ordinary pastors forsake them, is that which they can never maintain with any reason; for the faithful are the sheep of Jesus Christ, and when their pastors scatter them, the grace and name of Jesus Christ calls them together. They are in a society by the right of the first convocation of the church, which is a perpetual right, which subsists every where, where the true faith and true Christian piety are found common among many persons; and it is from that perpetual and immovable right that that of the actual assemblies flows.

But what order can they hold in their assemblies, since they have none to direct them externally? I answer, That the same spirit of grace which inspired them with piety and charity, would itself suggest an order, and subject them one to another by a mutual consent; for God does not forsake his own children, though men and the church may always say, in the language of the prophet, “When my father and mother forsake me, the Lord shall take me up.” Ps. 27. 10.

If there be any magistrate to be found among the faithful, it belongs to him to settle an order among them; for the civil society comes in naturally to the succour of the religious, when the religious is cast into any extremity. If there be no magistrate, they ought to agree about an order in private conferences, before they come to assemble together in a body, to avoid confusion; and every one has a right to make those private conferences.

But what can they do in those assemblies? They may pray to God there, they may implore the succours of his providence, and put their trust in his promises. They must begin by that. Afterwards, they will search out all possible means to have pastors called to that office by the ordinary ways, to receive the sacraments and preaching of the Gospel from them; but if that is impossible, or if they see that that would be evidently to tempt God, and put the flock in danger of dispersion, it is necessary in that case that the flock should choose a pastor for itself, and consecrate him to God by ardent prayers, in committing to his trust the rights of the ministry that reside in the body of the faithful, to whom Jesus Christ, according to St. Augustine, has given the power of the keys. For we ought not to imagine that the body of the faithful should be stripped of the right of the ministry as often as they should be actually without pastors: that right is inviolable; it cannot be either lost or separated from the body of the faithful. We will in the close examine whether an election made after that manner gives a sufficient call; it is sufficient at present to know that neither the right of a Christian society, nor that of Christian assemblies, is so necessarily tied to the pastors, that when there should be none of them, the faithful could not remain united together externally in a body as a visible church, or make those assemblies lawful.

The author of the *Prejudices*, treating about this matter, distinguishes between two sorts of separations, the one negative, the other positive. "There is," says he, "a mere

negative separation, which consists more in the denial of certain acts of communion, than in positive actions against that society from which one separates. And there is another positive separation, which includes the erecting of a separate society, the establishment of a new ministry, and the positive condemnation of the former society to which he was united.* He says afterwards, "That we did not content ourselves with the first kind of separation, that we have gone further; that we have formed a new society, a new church, that we have set up new pastors; that it is that kind of separation whereof he accuses us, and that it is this also that we ought to justify ourselves about." He repeats the same things in the end, and concludes, That when the faithful should believe themselves obliged out of a good conscience to separate themselves negatively, they ought not to form a society, nor have any pastors; but "that they ought to remain in that state without any pastors, and without any external worship, in waiting until God extraordinarily raise up some with visible characters of their mission."

I acknowledge that that distinction of two kinds of separation is of some use, and I have myself made use of it for the putting of the matters of this treatise into a more natural order; but I deny that the consequences which the author of the Prejudices pretends to draw from them are true. We shall see, in the sequel, whether the society of the Protestants, separated from those of the Church of Rome, may with any reason be called a new church: we shall see also what right they had to a Gospel ministry, and whether they can say that their ministry is new. I consider only that principle which he proposes, which is, That when the faithful separate themselves negatively from those with whom they were before united, they ought not to set up a society apart. For he knows not how to say any thing that is more contrary to piety and the spirit of Christianity. I hold then that if

* Prejug. Chap. 7. Pag. 147.

that negative separation of the faithful be just, if it be necessary, if they made it out of a good conscience, not only they can, but they ought to hold a Christian society among themselves, to make a visible body, to assemble, to pray to God together, to read his word, to consult and deliberate for their common interests, even while they should be separated from the greater number of the ordinary pastors, or even when they should have no pastors among them. I mean that that is not only a right, but a duty, an obligation, and such an obligation that there is nothing can dispense with it but an absolute and invincible impossibility. The reason upon which I found this proposition is taken from the very nature of the Christian faith, piety, and charity. For when God has given us these virtues, he has by that very thing indispensably bound us to keep and strengthen them, and by consequence he has bound us to practise those means which he himself has established for that purpose. But among those means, that of external communion with our brethren to whom he has given the same grace, is one of the most considerable, as I have said before. Therefore St. Paul told the believing Hebrews, "Let us take heed to stir up one another to charity and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, but admonishing one another." Heb. 10. 24, 25. And to the Colossians, "Let the word of Jesus Christ dwell richly in you in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." Col. 3. 16. And to the Thessalonians, "We entreat that you would admonish the disorderly, that you comfort those that are in affliction, that you uphold the weak." 1 Thess. 5. 14. And to the Ephesians, "Speak ye one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing, and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Eph. 5. 19.

Moreover, according as our brethren labour on their part in the preservation and confirmation of our faith, piety, hope, and charity, by the society that we hold with them, so we

produce the same effect in respect of them, for we mutually edify one another. But it is further a duty to which Christianity engages us. God would not that we should only labour for our own preservation, he would have us also take care of that of our neighbours; and it would be a detestable word in the mouth of a Christian, if he should say, with Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Gen. 4. 9. We are further bound to propagate our faith and piety in the souls of our children, and to labour even to the utmost of our power to make it spring up in the souls of infidels, as one lighted candle may light another; which evidently notes that the instinct of Christianity is an instinct of society that carries us out not only to own our brethren, when they are so, but to gain more than we had before, and even those which we cannot have.

In fine, piety would have us give God the highest honour and worship that it is possible for us to give him. But it is certain that God is more honoured in a society, when all in one body offer up their prayers to him, their vows and their praises, than when each does it apart; more hearts united together pay God a homage more worthy of his majesty. They cannot then imagine a state more contrary to the nature of the true faith, of Christian piety and charity, than that of dispersion, nor by consequence any thing that the faithful ought to have more horror for; and when the misery of the age shall cast them into it by an unavoidable necessity, they ought always to preserve a spirit of society, and to pant after the company of their brethren. "My soul," said David, then when he was in that condition, "thirsteth after God, after the living and true God: O when shall I come and appear before the presence of God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they say unto me, Where is now thy God? I remember the time wherein I went with the multitude, and when I went sweetly in company with others, with the voice of triumph and praise, unto the house of God." Ps. 42. 2. .4.

It is so certain, that the actual dispersion of the faithful

does not break the natural bond of their society, for they are always brethren, children of the same family; it can only suspend the acts of it; and when that absolute necessity which forced them into dispersion is gone, they return of themselves naturally into an actual society, by the force of that unity of faith and religion that is among them, without any necessity of a new convocation. It will signify nothing to say that the duties which I have noted respect the faithful only then when they are already in an actual society, but that they are not bound to remain there, nor to enter into it, when they have no pastors to assemble them: for I say that those duties arise not from the nature of that society, but from that of faith, piety, and charity, and by consequence they bind them to preserve an actual society, wherever it is, and even to make one where it is not yet; that is to say, they oblige us to unite all those to us in whom we see the same faith, piety, and charity, shine forth, that we perceive in ourselves.

In a word, since faith, piety, charity, and the other Christian virtues, bind us to those duties, they bind us also to an external society, without which they cannot be performed; whence it comes to pass, that the faithful are called in the Scripture *sheep*, not in respect of their ordinary pastors, but in respect of their faith in Jesus Christ; to note, that it is the faith, and not the ministry, which makes the society, and which renders by consequence their assemblies lawful and necessary.

CHAP. II.

THAT THE SOCIETY OF THE PROTESTANTS IS NOT A
NEW CHURCH.

ONE of the most ordinary and powerful means that they make use of to render us odious to the people, and to drive them from our communion, is to represent us to them as innovators, and full of confusions, who have overthrown all, and made a new religion, and a new church; and it is very true that the greatest part of the world judge of things no otherwise than by what they tell them, and by some light appearances, without informing themselves any further. Nevertheless it is certain that there never was a more unjust accusation than that, nor the injustice of which could be more easily seen, if they would but open their eyes a little. For as to that which respects that pretended novelty of religion which they say that we have introduced, I would fain have them mark out some positive articles of our faith, that were not always believed in the Christian Church, and which they themselves to this day do not believe in the Church of Rome, without any ways scrupling them. I confess that they may have among them some questions of the school about which our positive doctrine is different from that of the Church of Rome, as the question of the nature of concupiscence, that of the torments of the soul of Jesus Christ, and that of the definition of the faith.

But besides that those questions are very few in number, and that they are scarce known by the people, we have the Holy Scriptures so clearly on our side upon all those points, that they cannot lay any novelty to our charge; and for the rest, all our great differences consist, in respect of us, in negative articles, that is to say, in those points which the Church of Rome believes, and which we do not believe, as

the sacrifice of the mass, transubstantiation, oral manducation, adoration of the host, purgatory, invocation of saints and angels, religious worship of images, that of relics, the divine service in an unknown tongue, the necessity of the celibacy of the clergy, the merit of good works, the authority of traditions, the monarchy of the Pope, the infallibility of the Church of Rome, her sovereign power over men's consciences, and other such like doctrines. It is true, that we have rejected those doctrines; but since it is also true that we have rejected them only because they are novelties that men have added to God's revelation, beyond which there can be nothing in religion that should not be new, what ground have any of them to accuse us as innovators? They would have far more ground to say that we are too rigid followers of antiquity; and that we urge our scruples and our aversions for these novelties further than we ought, or at least that we deceive ourselves, and take that for new, which indeed is not so. If they said no more but that, we should labour to justify ourselves; but to charge us under that pretence with a spirit of novelty, is the most unreasonable and groundless thing in the world. That which makes the fallacy is, that the people, whose sight is extremely short, and who judge of the novelty and antiquity of things only by that which appears open to them, imagine that all that which they received from their fathers, and which they found settled when they came into the world, is ancient throughout; so that a false antiquity which shall be only of two or three ages past, passes in their judgments for as good and true a one as if it had been always so. Notwithstanding which, it is certain, that in matters of religion, nothing can be truly ancient but that which was from the beginning, and nothing can be divine but that which is from Jesus Christ and his apostles; for it is a thing very evident, and acknowledged on both sides, that from the time of Jesus Christ and his apostles, there has been no immediate revelation; whence it follows, that all that which is sprung up since, is human, and by conse-

quence new. This is the true idea that we ought to form of old and new, and not that popular idea, which cannot but be false and deceitful; and yet notwithstanding, it is upon this latter that they ground themselves, when they accuse us to have been innovators, and to have made a new religion: as if Jesus Christ had been an innovator, then when he would correct the abuses that the Jews committed in their divorces, by telling them, "In the beginning it was not so."

It is after the same manner that they charge us with having made a new church, for they play upon the ambiguity of the word *new*. The people who imagine that all that which appears to them in another form than that which they have been wont to see, is new, believe that our society is new, because they see that we do not assemble ourselves any more with them as we did before, that we have other places than the usual, that we do not any more say mass in our assemblies, that we hold another order, and that we have other ministers.

But there needs here only a distinction: for a thing is called new, either with respect to its being and its essence, in respect of its external state, and its changeable accidents. When an infant comes into the world, they say a new man is born; when a new house or town is built where there was none before, they say it is a new town, or a new house: and the same may be said when one thing is essentially changed into another thing, as when God changed Moses's rod into a serpent; or when Jesus Christ changed the water of Cana into wine, it might be said that it was a new thing, because in effect it was not essentially the same thing that it was before. But when it is only changed in its state or external form, as when a man changes his countenance, his stature, or his inclination, manner of acting, or clothes, or when he repairs a house or a town, if then any should say this were a new thing, without doubt he would speak improperly. It is not less manifest, that it is no more than a figurative expression, which ought not to be taken literally, nor in a rigorous

sense. So when St. Paul calls a converted man a new man, a new creature, and the church a new heaven, a new earth, a new world, every one sees that these are ways of speaking that ought not to be taken literally, but figuratively; for a believer is essentially the same man, and the same creature of God that he was before his conversion; and heaven, earth, and the world, are not changed in their essence by the manifestation of the Gospel. Besides, a thing that is changed in its external form may be called new, either with respect to the state wherein it was immediately before its change, or with respect to the just and lawful state wherein it should be according to its first establishment; so when one repairs a ruined house, if it keeps its first proportion, we may say that it is made new in respect of what it was before its reparation, but if its first and natural fashion should be changed, it would be new, even in respect of what it should have been according to the model by which it was made at first.

These distinctions clear this whole dispute, and it is not difficult to apply them to the subject we are upon. For if they mean, That the society or church of the Protestants is new in respect of the state wherein it was, or of that external form which it had, immediately before the Reformation, we shall voluntarily agree that it is made new in that sense, after the same manner that the Scripture calls the regenerate a new man, or as God promises to give us a new heart, or as they call a house repaired, and put into its natural state, a new house. That would speak the favour God shewed to our fathers, in re-establishing the Christian Society in that just and lawful state wherein it ought to be according to its first establishment, and that that state is very much altered from that wherein it was immediately before the Reformation: this is that which we do not deny, and are so far from it, that on the contrary we praise and glorify God for it. But if they mean that we have made a new church, that is to say, one essentially differing from that which Jesus Christ and his apostles would establish in the world, and which has

always subsisted even to our days, or that, in all that which depends on us, we have not re-established it in its first and lawful state, this is what we deny; and in this sense, which is the only one that can render the accusations of our adversaries just, we maintain that we have not in the least made a new church. In a word, we say that the church of Jesus Christ has subsisted down from the apostles to us inclusively, in all that which it has essentially, and that she yet subsists at this day among us; but that having changed her state or external form in the ages that preceded the Reformation, she was re-established in her just and lawful state by the Reformation of our fathers, which no ways hinders but that she was, and might always be, the same church.

To make this truth to be the better understood, we need only to clear on the one side what that essence of the church is, that ought always to remain immovable, to shew that it may be but one and the same church by descent and uninterrupted succession; and on the other side, what state it is that she has suffered change in, and how it could be altered and repaired. The essence of the church consists in this, that it is a body of divers persons united together in the communion of one only true God, under one only Jesus Christ their Head and Mediator; and it is Jesus Christ himself that has given us this idea of it, when he says, that "This is life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent." John 17. 3. That definition which we give of the church supposes, 1. The subject or matter whereof the church is composed, which are divers men, divers persons united among themselves, and with God. 2. It supposes the necessary means, without which that communion cannot be, which are the word of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit. 3. It contains not only the true faith, charity, hope, which are the natural bonds of that communion, but all the other Christian virtues also, as worship, adoration, truth, obedience, thanksgiving, justice, temperance, &c. which are the duties to which that communion engages us. 4. It comprehends

in it further, all the fruits that we gather from that communion, as remission of sins, peace and tranquillity of soul, consolation in afflictions, succours in temptations, &c. 5. In fine, it includes all the rights that necessarily follow that communion, as that of being joined together in an external society, that of public assemblies, that of the ministry, that of the sacraments, and that of external government and discipline. See here that which is essential to the church, for I call that essential, without which the church cannot subsist, and which yet is sufficient to make it subsist; that which cannot subsist if that church fail to subsist, and that which cannot be wanting if there be a church.

As to the state in respect of which it suffers changes, it consists in all that that depends on the different disposition of times, places, and persons. For example, To have the bodily presence of Jesus Christ, to have apostles and evangelists for its pastors, to have the miraculous gifts of healing, that of tongues, that of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the faithful by visible symbols, that of prophecy, and that of an external and infallible direction and instruction, is a state wherein the church was in the time of its birth, but which was changed in the other times that followed. To have pastors illustrious for zeal, learning, and piety, as a St. Augustine, a St. Basil, a St. Chrysostom, is a state wherein it was not always, nor every where, but in some times and places only. To be flourishing and in peace, without persecution, without schism, without error, is a state wherein it has neither been always, nor in all places, nor in respect of all those persons who have composed it, but which it has been in, in some times and places only, and with respect to some persons. We ought then to set down in their proper order those things which belong to the state of the church, and to its essence, and which by consequence are liable to change; as to be extended every where, or in the greatest part of the world; to have a multitude, or the greatest number; temporal splendour or outward glory and peace, whether

in regard of those without, or in respect of those within; liberty in external profession, visibility of assemblies, purity of the ministry, holiness of external worship, form of government, that of discipline, and that of liturgies, an actual bond of the parts of the church in one body of external communion, and the actual exercise of the ministry, or if you will, the actual presence of the pastors. All those are things that do not absolutely belong to the essence of the church, but only to its state or condition, and of which it may be sometimes spoiled either wholly or in part, without being absolutely destroyed. It may be restrained to a few places, and a few persons, and therefore it is called in some places of Scripture "a little flock," (Luke 12. 32.) she may be so, in her low state. "We are," says St. Paul, "not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, but God has chosen the weak things of this world to confound the strong." 1 Cor. 1. 26. She may be in trouble and in affliction through the persecution of infidels, as she was under the heathen emperors, or in fighting against heretics, as she has been almost always; she may lose the visibility of her assemblies, as she did in most places in the time of Decius and Dioclesian; she may find her ministry corrupted, as it happened in the time of the Arians; she may see her external worship sullied by actions of superstition and idolatry, as it fell out in Judah and Israel in the days of the prophets. As to the form of her government, we cannot deny that in that respect she has not undergone divers changes; I do not mention the introduction of the episcopal order, for that is a question, but I speak of those changes that have befallen her, through the usurpations and contests of the first sees, and chiefly by the usurpations of that of Rome, which the greatest part of the world will own to have been very considerable.

Her discipline and her liturgies have also undergone many changes, and they cannot in that regard ascribe any uniformity to the church, either in respect of times or places. In fine, she has sometimes beheld the body of her ordinary

pastors turned against herself, she has seen a great part of her true children scattered and dispersed here and there, without being able to perform any acts of an external society; and she has seen some of her flocks deprived of their pastors, and forced to set up some among themselves, in the room of those who had abandoned them. For all that fell out in the days of the Arians, the councils determined heresy; the greatest part of the orthodox, who opposed themselves to their impiety, were either banished or forced to fly into the deserts, and according to the testimony of St. Epiphanius, divers people who saw that their bishops were turned Arians in the Council of Seleucia, looked on them as the miserable deserters of their ministry, and set up themselves other bishops.*

The greatest part of those changes that fall out in the church come from two sources; the one, that she is mixed with the worldly and profane in the bond of the same external profession; and the other, that the truly faithful themselves, who only are the church of Jesus Christ, as truly faithful as they are, fail not to have a great many other imperfections; their knowledge is obscure, their righteousness is accompanied with faults, their inclinations are not all right, and even their most just inclinations do not fail to have something of irregularity. These two fountains produce many evils and disorders, the worldly on their part bring thither covetousness, ambition, pride, opinionativeness, contempt of God, his mysteries and worship, politic designs, worldly interests, a spirit of grandeur, luxury, superstitions, heresies, love of dominion, presumption, opinion of infallibility, forgeries, and all other perversities of the heart of man. The faithful, they bring thither on their side, their ignorance, their negligence, their fearfulness, their simplicity, and sometimes their passions, their personal interests and vices. From all which is made up a chaos of darkness and con-

* Epiphanius. *Hæc.* 78. *comm.* 28.

fusion, a mystery of iniquity, a spiritual Babylon, that perpetually makes war against the church, which reduces her sometimes into very strange extremities, and which would without doubt destroy her, if her eternal Head from on high did not keep her. I acknowledge that the Spirit of God fights against that Babylon on the church's side, and that he presides over that chaos, to expel those confusions, and to hinder the church's perishing. But it must not be imagined, under a pretence of that presence of the Spirit of God, that there never happens any disorder in it. He indeed always preserves the essence of the church, but he frequently permits her state to be altered. This is the effect which the heap of crimes, vices, and imperfections, may produce, which I have mentioned as well on the side of the truly faithful, as on that of the worldly. They never go so far as to destroy her entirely, but they go so far sometimes as to spoil her of her ornaments, of her external advantages, and even of her very health, if I may so speak; and therefore Jesus Christ told his disciples, "In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." John 16. 33. God has always preserved, and he will preserve to the end of all ages, a body of many persons united together in the communion of his Son Jesus Christ. This body can never perish, it can never cease to be, nor lose any thing that is absolutely necessary to its subsistence; but it may be deprived of its large extent, temporal splendour, worldly glory, peace, rest, and visibility. It may see its ministry corrupted, inasmuch as it is in the hands of men; it may see its external worship dishonoured, and error and superstition fill its pulpits, possess its schools, and diffuse itself over its councils; its true members may be hindered from making external assemblies, and a body of a visible communion, and it may be abandoned by its pastors, and reduced to a necessity of creating others. See here what the state of the church is.

Upon all these illustrations, it will be no difficult matter to decide the question concerning the novelty and antiquity of

our church. For if we have made a society essentially different from that which Jesus Christ and his apostles formed at the first, and which has all along subsisted down from his birth to this present; if we cannot justly say that we are a body of many persons united together in the communion of one only true God, under one only Jesus Christ our Head and Mediator; if they can with any ground contest with us the unity of the true Christian faith, piety, and holiness; in one word, if we want any thing that is necessary to the constitution of the church and its subsistence, or if there be any thing in us which hinders so that that good which we have does not produce its effect, to give us the form and nature of a true church, it is certain that we have made a new church, and by consequence a false and an adulterous church. But if we can truly and justly glorify God for all that which makes up the essence of a true church, if our faith is sound, if our piety is pure, if our charity is sincere, if we can upon good grounds maintain that God preserves and upholds in the external communion of that body which we compose, the truly faithful and just persons, who only, as I have said often, are the church, it is certain also that there is nothing more unjust than that accusation of a new church with which they charge us. There never was in the world any other church of God than that of his truly just and faithful ones; that body only is in the communion of the Father and of his Son Jesus Christ, that alone is entrusted with the truth, that alone is animated by the Holy Spirit, that alone is God's inheritance, his people, his vine, his enclosed garden, his house and mystical family, as the Scripture calls it, that alone in fine has all the rights of the ecclesiastical society, the right of external assemblies, that of the ministry, the sacraments, the government, and the discipline. Let the author of the *Prejudices* and his brethren stir themselves as much as they please, let them animate one another, let them cry out, write *Prejudices* and invectives never so much against us, let them do all that they please, we are firm and fixed upon two principles, against which we are sure they cannot do any thing.

The one, That if our communion teaches the true doctrine, if it has the true worship, and the true rules of Christian sanctity, to a degree sufficient for salvation, and if the causes for which we separated ourselves from the Church of Rome were just, God nourishes and preserves his truly faithful ones in our communion, whatsoever mixture there may be of worldlings, and hypocrites in it. The other, That if God nourishes and preserves his truly faithful in our communion, we are the true church of God, that which has a right to be in a society, and to which all the other rights that follow that of a society belong, of assemblies, ministry, sacraments, government, discipline, and by consequence we are the church which succeeds not only *de jure*, but *de facto*, the church of the apostles, that of the ages following, and even that which was immediately before the Reformation.

These two propositions are framed in clear and distinct terms, they have neither ambiguity nor equivocation; but I hold also that they are of a certain and indisputable truth. For there neither is, nor ever was there, any other true church than that of the truly faithful, and there never will be any other. The Holy Scripture sets down no other, reason will not suffer us to acknowledge any other, the fathers never owned any other. This is the constant and evident principle of St. Augustine, as may be seen in the Fourth Chapter of the Third Part, and it is also the principle of the other fathers, as may be justified by almost an infinite number of passages. “The ancient Catholic Church,” says Clemens of Alexandria, “is but one only church, which assembles in the unity of one only faith, by the will of one only God, and the ministry of one only Lord; all those who are before ordained, that is to say, whom God has predestinated to be just, having known them before the foundation of the world.”* “Where is the place where Jesus Christ should dwell?” says Origen; “it is the mountain of Ephraim, which signifies a *fruitful*

* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 7.

mountain; but where are those fruitful mountains among us where Jesus Christ dwells? They are those on whom the fruits of the Spirit, joy, peace, patience, charity, and other virtues, may be found. They are those fruitful mountains which bring forth fruit to Jesus Christ, and which are eminent for knowledge and hope." And a little after, "The grace of the Holy Spirit has gone over to the people of the Gentiles, and their ancient solemnities are come to us, because we have with us the true High-Priest after the order of Melchizedec. True sacrifices are offered up amongst us, that is to say, the spiritual sacrifices; and it is among us that he builds with living stones the temple of God, which is the church of the living God."* And elsewhere, "The church desires to be united to Jesus Christ; but note, that the church is a society of the saints."†

And further elsewhere, explaining those words, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church*; "The church," says he, "that God builds, consists in all those who are perfect, and are full of those words, thoughts, and actions, that lead to blessedness; and a little lower, "How ought we to understand those words, *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it?* for that expression is ambiguous: is it the Rock that he speaks of, or if it be of the church, is it that the Rock and the church are but one and the same thing? This latter I believe to be true; for the gates of hell prevail neither against the rock upon which Jesus Christ has built his church, nor against the church, according to that which is said in the Proverbs, That the way of the serpent is not found upon the rock. If the gates of hell do prevail against any, there is neither that rock upon which Jesus Christ builds the church, nor the church that Jesus Christ builds upon the rock: for that rock is inaccessible to the serpent, and stronger than the gates of hell. And as to the church, as it is the building of Jesus Christ, she can never

* Origen in Jos. Hom. 26.

† Orig. in Cant. Hom. 1.

let in the gates of hell against her; those gates may very well prevail against every man that is without the church, and separated from that rock, but never against the church.”* “Jesus Christ,” says St. Ambrose, “knows those that are his; and as to those who do not belong to him, he does not vouchsafe even to know them.”† And elsewhere, “God called his tabernacle *Bethlehem*, because the church of the righteous is his tabernacle; and there is a mystery in it, for Bethlehem is situate upon the sea of Galilee, on the east side, which signifies to us that every soul that is worthy to be called the temple of God, or the church, may be built upon the waves of this world, but can never be drowned; it may be encountered, but can never be overthrown, because it represses and calms the wild impetuosity of sufferings. It looks upon the shipwrecks of others, while itself is safe from danger, always ready to receive the illumination of Jesus Christ, and to rejoice under his rays.”‡ And further elsewhere, he says expressly, “That as the saints are the members of Jesus Christ, so the wicked are the members of the devil.”§ St. Jerom teaches the same thing. “The church,” says he, “which is the assembly of all the saints, is called in the Scripture, ‘The pillar and ground of truth,’ because she has in Jesus Christ an eternal firmness.”||

And in the Exposition of the Song of Songs, he lays down this maxim, “That the church is the assembly of all the saints, and that she is brought in speaking in the Canticles, as if all the saints were but one person.”¶ And even the author of the Commentary on the Psalms, ascribed to St. Jerom, explaining these words of the Prophet, *I will drive away from the city of the Lord all the workers of ini-*

* Orig. in Mat. 16. 18.

† Ambros. de Abrah. patr. lib. 1. cap. 2.

‡ Ibid. 1, 2. cap. 3.

§ In Psal. 35.

|| Hieron. in Job. cap. 26.

¶ Idem. Cant. Hom. 1.

quity; “The city of the Lord,” says he, “is the church of the saints, the congregation of the just.”* I do not deny, that the fathers sometimes give a very large extent to the church, when they consider it as mingled with almost an infinite number of the wicked and the worldly, as we have frequently explained it already, and it is to this idea that they refer their comparisons of a field, of the air, and the rest, which we have often mentioned. But it is certain, that when the question is to be decided, which of the two parties that make up that mixed body, is the church, that they unanimously agree to give that title to the truly faithful and to the righteous only, and that they deprive the wicked and the worldly of it; and it is for this reason that St. Augustine always distinguishes in that extent of the mixed church, two people, or two nations, Jerusalem and Babylon, which although they be mixed together, do not fail to be really separated; and he would have the head of the one to be Jesus Christ, but the devil the head of the other.† It is for the same reason that he distinguishes between being *in* the church, and being *of* the church; for he would, that although the wicked might be *in* the church, yet that nevertheless they were not *of* the church; that they do not *belong* to its body, but that they are *in* its body, as ill humours that oppressed and disturbed it; and it is to the faithful alone, to the exclusion of all others, that he ascribes all the rights of the church, although the wicked may sometimes have the dispensing them in quality of ministers and pastors; for he would, in that case, that those might be inhabitants of Babylon, who distributed that good which did not belong to them, but to the truly faithful only, the only inhabitants of Jerusalem.‡

It is then a certain and manifest truth, that the truly faithful only are the church, and that to them alone belong all the rights of the church; but if we would here add another to it,

* Hieron. in Ps. 101. † Aug. de Bapt. cont. Don. l. 7. cap. 51.

‡ Aug. in Psal. 61.

which is not less certain, since it is founded upon the promise of Jesus Christ, to wit, That there always has been a church in the world; it would evidently follow, that if our communion has the advantage of the true faith and worship over the Roman communion, in a word, if we have reason at the foundation, we are not only the true church, but that we are so by a just succession *de jure* and *de facio* to that church which preceded us, and which even preceded us immediately before the Reformation. It is no more to be inquired after where it was, or which it was, for the promise of Jesus Christ assures us that he had one; Scripture, reason, the fathers, declare to us that it consisted wholly in the truly faithful. Put then these truly faithful where you please, in France, in Spain, in Italy, in the West, in the East, or in the Indies if you will, it is nothing to our question. If we are truly faithful as they, we are their lawful successors in all the rights of the Christian society. Whether we received the faith from their hands, or whether we received it elsewhere, it matters not, we do not fail to be their true heirs; for God, as St. John Baptist said, “may even of these stones raise up children unto Abraham.” Matt. 3. 9. They are our fathers by the right of age, but they are our brethren also by the unity of the same faith, and one and the same Spirit that animates us, and makes us to be one body with them. When they were in the world, in what condition soever they were, the ministry was theirs, the sacraments were theirs, the right of assemblies belonged to them, since those things can only belong to the faithful; and when God has sent them to their rest, that mystical heritage could be raised by none but other true believers, for such is the law of the family of God, that it is neither flesh, nor blood, nor transmission of pulpits and benefices, that make a succession, but the Spirit of Jesus Christ; or, as Tertullian speaks, “the consanguinity of the faith and doctrine.”* If then we have that spiritual consan-

* Tertul. de præscript. advers. Hæret. cap. 32.

guinity, we are their true successors, and we make but one only body, one church with them.

But they will say, How can it be that you should make but one only body with the church which was before the Reformation, since that church lived then in communion with those from whom you are now separated? She had an external worship quite differing from yours, she was under a ministry that professed to invoke saints, religiously to worship their images and their relics, to sacrifice really the body of Jesus Christ, to believe transubstantiation, the real presence, and all the other articles that you at this day profess to reject. How can you be the same church? How can your ministers be successors to those who were at that time bishops, archbishops, cardinals, patriarchs, and popes? Your liturgies are different, your discipline is not less so, you have neither feasts, nor processions, nor any of the solemnities practised openly among us; how can it be otherwise than that you should be a new church?

I answer, *First*, That if that reasoning were just, it would conclude that the church before the Reformation was not the same church with that which the apostles established at first, for according to the idea that the Holy Scripture gives us of the Apostolic Church, we cannot see there any thing like to that which was done immediately before the Reformation. We find there neither the same tenets, nor the same worship, nor the same solemnities, nor the same form of ministry, nor the same government, nor the same discipline, nor the same sacraments, nor the same liturgies, nor in fine any thing of that which our fathers reformed: let them tell us then after what manner they mean that the church before the Reformation was not the one and the same church with that of the apostles. For if they were in effect two different churches, and that we were obliged to choose one to have communion with, or an identity with, as they speak, we should not hesitate upon the choice. We should have a thousand times more consolation and assurance to find ourselves

conformed to the Apostolic Church, than to be in nothing different from that which immediately preceded the Reformation; since the Apostolic ought to be looked on as the *mother* church, the original, exemplar, or pattern, to all the ages following, from which it is not allowable to recede. Let the author of the Prejudices then if he pleases do one of these two things, either shew us in the church of the apostles all those things which we have not in conformity with the church that was immediately before the Reformation, and upon which ground he would have us be a new church; let him shew us that there was transubstantiation there, the real presence, the sacrifice of the mass, the adoration of the eucharist, the worshipping of images, the invocation of saints, the worshipping of relics, the orders and vows of their religious, the celibacy of churchmen; worship in an unknown tongue, their feasts, processions, and in general all that, which according to him made us a new church, differing from that which preceded the Reformation; or if he will not engage himself so far, let him at least tell us after what manner he understands that the church before the Reformation was not itself a new church, differing from that which the apostles established. He cannot tell how to do the first of those things, because it is absolutely impossible; and he can never do the second, because his principles wholly oppose it; and in effect it is true, that those who believed and practised all that which I have noted, were not one and the same church with that of the apostles. If then he can do neither the one nor the other, he ought to look to it, how he means that his church should be the true church of Jesus Christ; for it is enough as to us, to find ourselves conformable to the church of the apostles, since that being, as we are certain that it is, the same body that God has established upon earth, to which Jesus Christ has promised a perpetual subsistence, and without which we should find great difficulty to know precisely how he has executed his promise, we should no ways doubt that we were the same church which has subsisted even down

to the time of the Reformation. For when we should be ignorant of the manner how it has subsisted, when we should not be able to understand that, we should be notwithstanding certain that it has subsisted, since the word of Jesus Christ is inviolable, and none can call it in question without impiety; whence it follows, that we are not a new church, but the same which has always been, and which was immediately before the Reformation.

That way which we hold to assure ourselves of this truth is not only good, solid, and certain, but it is yet further the only one that any communion can or ought to hold, if it would be certain with a good conscience that it was the true church of Jesus Christ which has always subsisted, and which will always subsist. I would say, it ought to compare itself with the church of the apostles, to know whether it be conformable to that; and as to what respects the following ages, it ought to rest assured upon the word of Jesus Christ, who has said that he will be with his people until the end of the world; for that certainty arises from thence, that being one with the church of the apostles, it is also one with that of all the ages following. But if he will take another way, and say—That communion is the same with the church of the fifteenth or sixteenth age, therefore it is the same with that of the apostles, because that Jesus Christ has promised that his church shall always subsist,—it is evidently to expose himself to error and illusion, and to follow a very false and deceitful way of reasoning; the reason is evident, because by this means one is liable to take that for the church in the fifteenth or sixteenth age which it may be is not so. For in that visible body which they call the church mixed, there are two parties, the one which is properly the church, and the other which is not; the one which is the wheat that the Son of God has sown, and the other which is the tares sown by the hand of the enemy; the one which is the good seed, and the other which is the chaff. But it may so fall out that the tares should exceed the wheat, and that a heap of chaff should co-

ver the good seed, and by consequence the conformity which they pretend to have with that church, might be nothing else but a conformity with the chaff and the tares, and not with the wheat, which would be the greatest of all illusions. But if they took the former way, they would be in no danger of falling into that error, because we know that in the church of the apostles the wheat exceeded the tares, the good grain the chaff, and that which appeared to their eyes was of Jesus Christ, and not of the wicked one, whence it follows that they could not be deceived in taking one unity for another. This then is the way that we hold, and which by the grace of God gives us great peace of conscience; those who follow the other, ought to take heed that they go not from it.

See here my *First* answer, the *Second* is, That that which regards the essence of the church, never ought to be confounded with that which regards only its condition. The church, as I have already so often said, consists only in the truly just and faithful, and not in that confused heap of the worldly who assemble with them under the same ministry, and who partake of the same sacraments. That therefore which makes the essence of the church, is the true faith, piety, and charity, and it is most true that those virtues cannot be without the true doctrine, disentangled from all those errors which separate us from the communion of one only God, and the mediation of one only Jesus Christ. Whence it follows, that the true and pure doctrine is the essence of the church. But it is also true, that while the foundation of the true doctrine remains in a communion, and there is yet left there some liberty to the minds and consciences of men, for the choice of the objects of the faith, and practice of the actions of religion, how impure soever that communion may be, whatsoever errors may be taught there, whatsoever false worship they may practise there, how corrupted soever the public ministry may be, there is always a means there to separate the good from the bad, and to secure one's self from this in holding to the other, without falling into hypocrisy, or

acting against the dictates of one's conscience by false shows. But I affirm this to be the condition of that visible communion that we call the Latin Church immediately before the Reformation. I acknowledge that transubstantiation was believed there, the real presence, the sacrifice of the mass, the merit of good works, purgatory, human satisfactions, indulgences, the monarchy of the Pope; that they religiously worshipped the images of God there, and those of the saints; that in those days they gave a religious worship to relics; that they adored the eucharist there as being the very person of Jesus Christ; that they then invoked the saints; and, in a word, that they then believed and practised all that which they now believe and practise in the Church of Rome. But the foundation of Christianity was as yet there, and we may truly say, that in that good which there was there, they had light enough to reject that which was bad. That commandment alone, Thou shalt worship one only God, was enough to let a good soul know that he ought not to adore either saints or angels, or to call upon them, or render any religious worship to their images and relics, nor to take any creature for the object of this devotion. The doctrine of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the cross, and that of his sitting on the right hand of God, was sufficient to make them reject those of the sacrifice of the mass, the real presence, transubstantiation, the adoration of the host, human satisfactions, indulgences, and purgatory. For it is true that the religion then was composed of two contradictory parties that overthrew one another; those who took things on the wrong side destroyed the good by the bad; for in adoring, for example, the saints and angels, they overthrew that good doctrine, Thou shalt worship one only God: in believing the sacrifice of the mass, and transubstantiation, they annihilated, in effect, the sacrifice of the cross, and they removed as much as in them lay Jesus Christ from the right hand of his Father. But those who took things in a good sense destroyed on the contrary the evil by the good; for in adoring one only God, they

taught others not to pay any religious worship to creatures; in placing their confidence in the death of Jesus Christ for their sakes, they learned to reject the sacrifice of the mass, all human satisfactions; and in seriously believing that Jesus Christ was in heaven, they were disabused about his corporal presence on the altars. In fine, they could each in particular very well do what our fathers did altogether when they reformed themselves, for their reformation wrought nothing but what the same doctrine, which they had, taught them: one only God, and one only Jesus Christ, made them reject all that they rejected. Besides, it is certain that the greatest part of those things which we believe contrary to the true faith, were then taught and received and practised in the Latin Church more by force of custom, than any public authority that could impose any necessity on men's consciences, even according to the principles of the Church of Rome at this day, which leaves private men liberty enough to reject them. And when they should come to be even publicly determined with all the necessary formalities, which they have not been yet, there would always remain to every private man a natural right to examine and reject them, since the authority of men, how great soever it be, can never bind the consciences of the faithful. We do not therefore question but that God has always preserved under that ministry, a great number of persons who have made that separation of the good from the ill, and it is in those that the church may subsist. But besides those, how many simple people were there, whose own simplicity and ignorance hid them from those errors that then reigned in the ministry. They knew enough to believe in one only God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, their Creator and Father, and in one only Jesus Christ their Redeemer, born, crucified, and raised again for them, and to practise without superstition all the actions of Christian piety that those doctrines inspired into them; but they did not know enough to believe the sacrifice of the mass, transubstantiation, the real presence, human satisfactions,

the merit of good works, and a multitude of other things that did not enter into them. Their knowledge was bounded with the articles of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, which they received with all the submission of their hearts, and which they laboured to practise the best that they could, and we ought not to doubt that that knowledge alone, plain and disentangled from all error, which they had, furnished them with a sufficient direction for their salvation, without their being bound to make a more express rejecting of those doctrines they did not understand. But supposing that they had a knowledge of them, I say that we ought carefully to distinguish two sorts of times; the one, in which the falseness of a doctrine or worship is not so clearly discovered, and open to men's eyes, that there should be only a voluntary blindness or an ill prejudice that should hinder us from acknowledging and understanding how that doctrine and that worship are contrary to the true faith and piety; and the other, in which that falseness and contrariety are so openly or publicly manifested, that one cannot be ignorant of them, or not see them without voluntarily shutting one's eyes. For in the second of those times, every one is bound, for the integrity of his faith and religion, and the preservation of his soul, earnestly and publicly to reject those errors, to avoid them with an aversion, to withdraw from those assemblies where they are either taught or practised, and not to take part, how little soever; or if any do, they have no excuse for their crime, and this is the time wherein we are at this day. But as to the former, it is enough not to be corrupted with them, without any absolute necessity of testifying publicly that strong aversion. In the second time, they ought to look on those kind of things as they are in effect, because they are fully discovered, and they may be seen in all that have them to be opposite to the glory of God and the salvation of men. But that obligation can never be so strong in the first time, because there one has neither the same light, nor the same helps, nor the same liberty to own them to be such as they

are: not only mere natural light dictates this distinction, but Jesus Christ himself has very well established it in the Gospel; "If I had not come," says he, "and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin:" (John 15. 22.) which evidently establishes those two seasons I spoke of; the one, wherein the manifestation of good and evil is not yet so thoroughly made, that one can acknowledge them in their greatest latitude; and the other, wherein it is so that one cannot without a crime know it confusedly. But I say that before the Reformation they were in that first time in regard of that which we call the errors and superstitions of the Church of Rome; they were neither so well examined, nor so clearly discovered, as they have been since; the faithful then could not openly believe and practise them, for that could not be done according to us in any time without destroying the true faith and piety; but they could look upon them with a greater indifference, bear them with far less pain, nor cease for all that from frequenting their assemblies, from holding their peace, and contenting themselves with keeping their own righteousness.

See here after what manner we believe that the essence of the church was preserved before the Reformation. How corrupted soever the ministry was, the foundation of Christianity remained there, and God yet had his remnant there according to the election of grace, that is to say, his truly faithful. It was those alone in all that great mixed body, who were the church, for they only were in communion with God and his Son, they alone enjoyed the benefits of the Gospel covenant; to them only, how small a number soever they were, pertained all the rights and advantages of the church, of the external society, of assemblies, of the ministry, of the Holy Scriptures, of the sacraments, government and discipline, according to the inviolable maxim of St. Paul, "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

I Cor. 3. 21...23. All the rest then which were without in that mixed body which they call the Latin Church, and which had any relation to that religion, was not of the essence of the church, but its state, the mixture of errors and abuses with the sound doctrine, the corruptions of worship, the vices of the ministry, the superstitious ceremonies, the form of government, the religious as they speak, that is to say, the divers orders of monks, the different degrees of the hierarchy, feasts, processions, fasts; and, in a word, all that which has been noted in the objection, and in which that church was then different from the Protestant. All that I say belonged to the condition of the church then, and could by consequence be changed without making either the one or the other a new church. That the faithful found themselves insensibly overpowered by almost an infinite number of worldlings who mingled themselves with them, as tares with the wheat; that those worldlings made themselves masters of the pulpits, the ministry, the councils, that they brought in errors, superstitions, and abuses, that they changed the form of the government of the church, and that of the public worship, all that does not respect the essence of the church, which consists only in the true faith, but its condition; so that when our fathers reformed those things, we may well say they changed the state of the church in their days, but not that they changed the church, nor that they made a new one; and their church will not cease notwithstanding that change to be joined by a true succession of times and persons to that which was before. A town, full of strangers who make themselves more powerful there, left desolate by those popular diseases which those strangers brought thither, and filled with those disorders which they caused, does not cease to be the same town by a true succession of times and persons, when those strangers should quit it, and its good citizens be established in their just and lawful state: as heretofore Rome, sacked by the Goths, did not cease to be the same Rome, when it was freed from them; and a river swelling

with the waters of the neighbouring brooks, that make it overflow the fields and break over its banks, is yet the same river when those waters go back, and retire into their ordinary channel.

CHAP. III.

THAT THE MINISTRY EXERCISED IN THE COMMUNION OF THE PROTESTANTS IS LAWFUL, AND THAT THE CALL OF THEIR MINISTERS IS SO ALSO.

WE come now to justify the right that we have to the Gospel ministry, and to defend our call not only against the ordinary objections of those of the Church of Rome, but also against the accusations of the author of the *Prejudices* in particular. For that author, who thinks it meritorious to go beyond others, especially in his passions, is not contented merely to say, that we are “pastors without mission, and ministers without a call,” but by a heat of zeal obstinately adhering to him, he calls us “thieves and robbers, tyrants, rebels, false pastors, and sacrilegious usurpers of the authority of Jesus Christ.”* Nevertheless, as those reproaches are nothing else but the effect of his ill humour, it will be no hard matter to shew him, that all the conditions that we can rationally require to make a ministry just and lawful, are to be found in that of the Protestant ministers, and that, thanks be to God, they can reproach them with nothing on that occasion. This is that which I design to shew in this Chapter, and to this effect I shall first propose some observations which I judge necessary for the unfolding of that question.

I say then in the first place, That we do not here dispute about the call that our fathers had for a reformation, but only of that which they had, and which we have after them, for the

* *Prejug.* ch. 4. p. 84, 83.

ordinary ministry of the Gospel. For we ought to take great heed lest we confound, as the author of the *Prejudices* has done, those two sorts of calls that we acknowledge our fathers to have had, and which the Church of Rome disputes with them. For, that which they had to reform themselves, that is to say, to reject that which we call their errors and superstitions which were brought into the Latian Church, and that which regards the ordinary preaching of the word of the Gospel, the administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of discipline—these two calls are wholly different. The one, which is that of the Reformation, is of right common to all Christians, there being no one who is not lawfully called, by his baptism, to destroy errors contrary to the nature or purity of the true faith, and to exhort his neighbours to do the same thing, for the interest of his own salvation, and that of the glory of God, as I have already shewn in my *Second Part*. From whence it follows, that in that respect they can have nothing to say against our fathers, and much less against those whom they call the first Reformers, since being, as they were, in public offices, they had more of a call for that than was necessary. The other, which is that which respects the ordinary preaching of the word of the Gospel, the administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of discipline, is not common to every private man. On the contrary, no one ought on his own head to thrust himself in without being lawfully called. The reason of this difference is, that the Reformation consisted in the mere acts of faith and charity, which are those particular acts that none can dispense with, because no one can say that it does not belong to him to be of the true faith, or to be charitable; but the preaching of the word, the administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of discipline, are those acts of authority that no one can do in his own name, but in the name of another, that is to say, in the name of God, or in the name of the whole church, so that he ought to be lawfully authorized to do them. It is then this latter call that we are concerned about in this question.

2. In the second place, we must note, That we do not here

any more dispute about that extraordinary ministry which Jesus Christ himself immediately communicated to his apostles, to give men the first call to the Christian faith, and to assemble them in a society. For our fathers did not make any new convocation, nor any new society, nor any new church, as I have shewn in the two foregoing Chapters: they did not preach a new testament or a new covenant differing from that which the apostles preached: they were not qualified either as new apostles, or new prophets, or new evangelists: they did not bring with them any new revelation to the world; but they purged and reformed the corrupted state of religion and the church by the same Scriptures that the apostles left us; they laboured to reduce things into their ancient and natural state; and for the rest, they preached the same Gospel, and administered the same sacraments, that the apostles left, and which had always subsisted, notwithstanding the corruptions wherein they were plunged. In a word, they did not set up any thing new, for which they can with any colour of reason require an immediate mission either from God, or Jesus Christ his Son. We speak therefore here only of the same ordinary ministry that the apostles established in the Christian Church, as they called or formed it, and which was there appointed, to help its preservation and purgation. This is that ministry which we do not pretend to have anew, but that ancient and perpetual one which Jesus Christ and his apostles left to the church when they had converted it to the Christian faith.

3. In the third place, We must know, that to judge well of the validity or invalidity of a ministry, we ought to consider it in three respects: 1. In respect of the things themselves that are taught and practised in it. 2. In respect of the body, that is to say, the society, where it is exercised. 3. In respect of the persons who exercise it in that society. In regard of the first, the ministry of the Jews, the Pagans, and the Mahometans, is wicked and sacrilegious, because the things that are taught there are impious. In the second, the

ministry of the Donatists and Luciferians, which was good and Christian in itself, because there was nothing ill taught and practised in it, yet it was notwithstanding vicious, because it was exercised in schismatical societies, which had no right to have a ministry apart, and to live in a state of separation. For the third, the ministry of an intruder, a usurper, a simoniac, howsoever good it be in itself, however it be set up in a lawful society, that is to say, in the true church, yet it is notwithstanding bad and unlawful, through the defect of his personal call.

4. In the fourth place, We must here, before we go any further, make use of the same distinction, upon this subject of the ministry, that we have used in the preceding Chapter upon the subject of the church; I mean, that we ought to place a great difference between that which makes the essence of the ministry, and that which belongs only to its state. For that which is essential to the Gospel ministry cannot be changed so as to make another ministry, and by consequence a false, sacrilegious, and criminal ministry, since there can be but one alone, good and lawful; and on the contrary, the essence of a ministry remaining the same and entire, it must needs be said that it is the same ministry, though as to what respects its state it should have received a change. The essence of the Gospel ministry consists in the teaching the saving Christian truth, without excluding any article that is necessary to the subsistence of the true faith, piety, and holiness, in dispensing the true sacraments that Jesus Christ has established in his church, and in guiding the people in such a manner as helps to preserve the religious society, or which at least does not absolutely destroy it. Its state is either good or bad; the good state is then when there is such a purity in the ministry that only Christian truths are taught there, and wherein those are taught in all their force and natural beauty, with all the diligence and care that men assisted by the grace of God are capable of; and when the sacraments also are purely administered according to the institu-

tion of Jesus Christ, without addition or diminution, and with all the decency, modesty, simplicity, gravity, and circumspection, that those mysteries of the Christian religion require, so that God may be glorified, and his kingdom more and more established in the hearts of men, and when further the church is governed by just, wise, prudent, charitable and well-executed laws, after a way that does not destroy, but edify. In fine, that good consists also in this, that those who exercise this ministry receive it by just and lawful ways, which are proper to draw the blessing of God upon them and their labours, and that they behave themselves worthily, quitting themselves with a good conscience in the charge committed to them. The bad estate of the church, on the contrary, is then when that ministry is found to be mingled with errors and superstitions, when the sacraments are altered and corrupted, when the government of it is worldly, or unjust, or tyrannical, or confused, when those who fill up that ministry, take it by evil, or wicked, scandalous, and unlawful ways, and behave themselves unworthily in it. The good state of the ministry is a thing that is the most to be wished for in the world, and most proper to preserve the faith, piety, holiness, peace, comfort, and public rejoicing in the church; and the bad state is the most to be feared of any thing in the world, and that which we ought to labour the most to remedy. Nevertheless we are not to think that the ministry may not yet subsist in that bad state, as our bodily life does not cease to subsist in the midst of languishing, and heaps of diseases.

5. In the fifth place, We ought carefully to distinguish the ministry considered precisely in itself, and the same ministry inasmuch as it is occupied or possessed by persons who are invested in it; or if you will, we ought to distinguish the ministry and the ministers, for there is a very great difference between the one and the other, as in a civil society there is a great difference between the magistracy and the magistrate; the magistracy is an office, the magistrate is a person who possesses that office; the office remains always,

the persons are changed by death or otherwise. This distinction is not hard to be conceived, but it is nevertheless of very great use in the matter we are upon: for the ministry considered in itself is immediately of divine establishment; whereas the persons that are raised to it, are raised thither by means of men, and if their call be divine, as it is in effect, it is no otherwise than mediately so; for they are men who call them to it, although they do it by the authority of God. It is then certain that when God has established the ministry, he has not only established all that which it ought to have essential to it, but he has also established it *de jure* and *de facto* in a good state; I mean, he has not only laid an obligation upon ministers faithfully to discharge all the functions of so great a charge, but that he has even chosen persons who have most faithfully acquitted themselves of it. But it has not been always the same in those who have been called by men; for as human judgments are so short-sighted, that they cannot pierce through the hearts of men, and as they are mixed with a great many imperfections, the ministry may be committed to persons who are insensibly corrupted, either through their ignorance or through other inclinations yet more criminal than ignorance; and it is from that human intervention that the bad state of the ministry proceeds. If God would always send them immediately, as he did his apostles and evangelists, there would be some ground to believe, that it would never be remote from its first institution; but since they are men who send them, no one can deny that it cannot be corrupted through that channel, for God has never promised any thing to the contrary in that matter. God has not promised that he would accompany those elections and human calls with an infallible spirit, that should give them all a happy success; and besides that the experience of all past ages contradicts it, Jesus Christ himself seems purposely to have forbidden such a rash imagination; for although he knew the heart, and the thoughts of it, yet nevertheless he would have a Judas added to the number of his

first disciples, and he permitted that a Nicholas, who was afterwards the head of the sect of the Nicolaitans, should have a part in the election that the church made of her first deacons, to give us to understand that it was not his intention actually to hinder the ministry from ever falling into very bad hands.

6. We must note, in the sixth place, That although the church and the ordinary ministry which we speak of are two things naturally joined together, yet it is not the church that depends upon the ministry, but it is the ministry, on the contrary, that depends upon the church. For the ordinary pastors were not established but when the church was first formed, and when care was taken for its preservation and propagation, so that naturally it preceded pastors. The church was produced at first by the extraordinary ministry of the apostles; the first thing which they proposed was not to make ordinary pastors, but true believers. They called men to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, they assembled them together, they united them in a society, before they provided for the upholding of that society in setting up an ordinary ministry in the midst of it. They first took care for the birth of the new creature, and after they procured it breasts to nourish it: therefore it is, that the ordinary ministers were called *pastors*, in reference to shepherds who fed and led their flocks; they were called *presbyters* or *elders*, with reference to the senators among the Jews; they were called *bishops*, that is, overseers or superintendants, by an allusion to the superintendants of victuals among the Greeks, who were called bishops also. But the shepherds suppose their flocks, the chosen senators among the people suppose the people, the superintendants or overseers suppose those over whom they gave a right of superintendance and inspection. The ordinary ministers therefore suppose the church, and not the church the ministers; she is not, because they are, but they are on the contrary because she is; she does not owe her being to them, but they theirs to her. This truth will yet appear more

clearly, if we set before their eyes what I have already said in the First Chapter of this Fourth Part, That the ordinary ministry is not absolutely necessary to the *being* of a church, but that it is only necessary to its *well being*, and to hinder it from falling into ruin. For when the faithful should have no pastors, they would yet be joined together in a society, since it is grace and faith that unite them, and not the ministry. And as in the civil society it is the nature and not the magistrate that unites men, and that after men are united in a society, the magistrate is made for the sake of order, and by the necessity of the preservation of that society; so that it is the society that makes the magistrate, and not the magistrate the society: so here it is the same; the faith and grace assemble men into a religious society, they are those things that make the church, and afterward the ministry arises for the sake of order, and to help the preservation of the church, and so naturally it is the church that produces the ordinary ministry, and not the ordinary ministry that produces the church. The church was the fruit of the extraordinary ministry of the apostles and evangelists, that ministry produced it at first, and not only produced it, but it has always since made use of that means or that source for its subsistence; and we may truly say that it yet produces it, and that it will produce it unto the end of the world, for it is the faith that makes and always will make the church; and it is the ministry of the apostles which makes and will always make the faith. It is their voice that calls Christians together at this day, it is their word that assembles them, and their teaching that unites them. It is certain that the ministry of the apostles was singular, that is to say, exclusively their own, without succession, without communication, without propagation; but it ought not to be thought that it was also as transitory a ministry as that of other men, for it is perpetual in the church; death has not shut their mouths as it has the others, they speak, they instruct, they incessantly spread abroad the faith, piety, and holiness, among the souls of Christians; and there

is not another fountain from whence those virtues can descend, but from them. If any demand of us, What is that perpetual voice that we ascribe to them? we answer, That it is the doctrine of the New Testament, where they have set down all the efficacy of their ministry, and the whole virtue of that word which gave a being to the church. There it is that their true chair and their apostolic see is, there is the centre of the Christian unity, there it is that they incessantly call men, and join them into a society; every other voice besides theirs is false and supposititious, it is from theirs alone that the church proceeds; and because to assemble with those is to assemble with Jesus Christ, we may very well say, that not to assemble with them, is to disperse instead of assembling. But as to the ordinary ministry of the pastors, we cannot say the same thing, it is not their voice, as it is distinct from that of the apostles, that begets the faith, that assembles Christians into a society, or that produces the church; they are no more but mere dispensers of the word of the apostles, or if you will, external instruments to make us the better understand their voice. Not only they are not the ordinary pastors who gave a being to the church at first, but yet further at this day, to speak properly, it is not their word that produces the faith in those who had it not before; for that which confirms it in those who have it, and that which produces it in those who have it not, is the word of the apostles themselves, to whom we must go for direction, if we would have good success. They are then, to speak properly, no more than those external guides that God has established in the church to lead men to the Scripture, and even such guides as cannot hinder us from going thither of ourselves if we will; and it is the Scripture, the voice of the apostles, or, to say better, the voice of Jesus Christ which speaks by the apostles, that does all. There is therefore a great difference between those two sorts of ministers; the one preceded the church, the other follows it; the one is immediately communicated by God, and the other is communicated by means of men; the one has an indepen-

dent and sovereign authority and infallibility on its side, and the other is exposed to vices, disorders, errors, and human weaknesses; inferior, and depending on the church; the one is every way divine, and the other is partly divine and partly human.

7. From the sixth observation there arises another not less important, and that which I have already touched upon in divers places of this Treatise; that is, That the ordinary ministry is a right that belongs to the true church, and of which it can never be spoiled. The reason of this truth is taken from the very nature of the church. For the church being a society that God has called together by the ministry of his apostles, and which he yet every day calls together and upholds by his written word, and the use of his sacraments, we must necessarily say that in forming it, he has given it, in that very thing that he has formed it, a sufficient, full, and entire right, to make use of all the means that may help its preservation and upholding, amongst which that of the ministry is without doubt most considerable. That same Providence that gives men a natural life, and appoints them to preserve their life by that food it furnishes them with, gives them by that very thing a right to employ persons to gather that food together and to prepare it, to the end they may make use of it according to what it is designed for; and it would be a great extravagance to demand of a man what right he has to prepare himself to eat and drink, for he could have nothing more to say but that the nature that gave him life, gave him at the same time all the right that was necessary, to provide for the upholding of that life. And, to make use of another example, the same nature, or, to say better, the same Providence, that assembles men together in a civil society, and ordains them in their so uniting together to uphold that society by a rational order, does it not give them at the very same time, and by the same right that assembles them, a right to have magistrates to govern them by, and to make the laws of that society to be executed, to have judges to de-

side their differences, to have remedies for the healing of diseases, and tradesmen for the public good: and would it not be an absurdity to demand of a people what right they had to have magistrates, judges, physicians, tradesmen, teachers of commerce, lawyers, since they could not have a fuller and juster right than that which is founded upon the reason of order and the society itself? We need but to apply these examples to the subject we are upon. The church is a body to which God has given a spiritual life, and he has ordained it to be preserved and upheld in the use of mystical aliments, of which he himself has made a public magazine in the Holy Scriptures; it is therefore evident that he has given it, by that very thing, a right to have ministers or pastors who should prepare those sacred aliments, and season them for its spiritual nourishment. The church is a religious society, composed of divers persons that God himself has assembled to live together, not in confusion, but in order; he would have that society subsist, he has appointed it to uphold and preserve itself, he himself has suggested the means; he has then without doubt by that very thing given a right to have guides to govern her, pastors to lead them forth into the heavenly pastures of the Scriptures, ministers to dispense the divine sacraments that he has instituted for her, watchmen and guides to be careful of her, and to go before her. In a word; he who has given faith, piety, and Christian holiness to the church, has at the same time indispensably obliged them to these four duties: one is, to persevere in the exercise of those virtues unto the end; another is, to defend themselves against the assaults and wiles of the enemy of their salvation; the third is, to increase and strengthen themselves more and more; and lastly, to propagate them as much as in us lies down to our children, and even amongst strangers, that is to say, among those who are not as yet in that relation. It follows therefore necessarily that he has given to the church a sufficient, full, and entire right for the

ministry, since the ministry is but a fit and lawful means for all these duties.

It could not have a right more lawful than that which is founded upon those indispensable duties, for in that case it is not only a right that makes the thing just, but it is an obligation which necessity imposes; as in the state, the right that every one has to learn the will of the prince is indisputable, because it is built upon the obligation that lies upon every one to conform himself to it. It is clear then that there could not have been a right to have ministers more lawful than that of a faithful people, a true church, since it is founded upon those four duties which I have noted, that are indispensable, and that give not only a right, but an obligation, to have a ministry. But we ought here to take notice of the fallacy that their missionaries are wont to make, and that the author of the *Prejudices*, who has adopted their method, would have us make with them. For see after what manner they argue. Where there is no lawful ministry, there is no true church; but among the Protestants, there is no true church. I set aside the question, Whether we have or whether we have not a lawful ministry, in the same sense that he intends; I will only at present consider his way of reasoning, that makes the true church depend upon a lawful ministry: admitting that to be a true church where the ministry is, and denying that to be a true church where the ministry is not. I say that this is a vain, deceitful, and illusory way of reasoning, to which I oppose this other argument; Where there is the true church, there is a right to a lawful ministry: but the true church is among the Protestants; therefore the right to a lawful ministry is among the Protestants. Of those two, it is certain that this latter is the most just, and almost the only just, right, and natural way of arguing. For the true church naturally goes before the ministry; it does not depend upon the ministry, but the ministry on the contrary depends upon it: as, in the civil society, the

magistracy depends upon the society, and not the society upon the magistracy. In the civil society, the first thing that must be thought on, is, that nature made men; afterwards, we conceive that she assembled and united them together; and lastly, that from that union, that could not subsist without order, magistracy proceeded. It is the same thing in a religious society; the first thing that grace did, was to produce faith in the hearts of men; after having made them believe, she united them, and formed a mutual communion between them; and because their communion ought not to be without order and without government, from thence the ministry arose. So that a lawful ministry is after the true church, and depending upon it. It is not a lawful ministry that makes it to be the true church, for it is so by the truth of its faith, and it would yet be so, when it actually had not any ministers; but it is the true church that makes the ministry to be lawful, since it is from the truth of a church, that the justice of its ministry proceeds. The argument therefore of the author of the *Prejudices* involves the dispute in a ridiculous circle; for when he would prove that we are not the true church because we have not a lawful ministry, we maintain, on the contrary, that we have a lawful ministry, because we are the true church. And he cannot say that we are the cause of the ridiculous circle, because our way of reasoning follows the order of nature, and his does not follow it. I admit that his first proposition, which is, Where there is no lawful ministry there is no true church,—is equivocal. For either he understands by that lawful ministry, ministers actually established, or else he means a right to establish them. If the former, his proposition is false, for the true church may be without having actually any ministers; that is no ways impossible, as I have already shewn. And if he means the latter, his proposition is not to his purpose, for it would maintain that the society of the Protestants has a full and entire right to set up ministers for its government, supposing that it had the true faith, as it may appear by what I

have said, and as it will appear yet more clearly by the following observation.

8. I say then, in the eighth place, That the body of the church, that is to say, properly and chiefly the society of the truly faithful, not only has the right of the ministry, but that it is also that body that makes a call of persons to that office lawful. This truth will be confirmed by what I have already shewn, without any further need of new proofs. But as the question concerning the true fountain whence that call proceeds, is itself alone almost all the difference that is between the Church of Rome and us, about this matter, and that moreover it is extremely important to the subject we are upon, it is necessary for us to examine it with a little more care. They cannot then take it ill, that I insist a little more largely upon this observation than I have done upon the rest. To make it as clear as I possibly can, I propose to treat of three questions; the first shall be, To know whether naturally a call belongs to the pastors only, excluding the laity, or whether it belongs to the whole body of the church. The second, Whether in case it belongs to the whole body of the church, it can be said that the church can of itself spoil itself of its right, or whether it has lost it any way that it could be supposed to have. And the third, Whether the body of the church may confer calls immediately by itself, or whether the church is always bound to confer them by means of its pastors.

As to the first of these questions, all the difficulty it can have, comes only from the false idea of a call that is ordinarily formed in the Church of Rome. For first, they make it a sacrament properly so called, and they name it the *sacrament of orders*. From whence the thought readily arises, that the body of the people cannot confer a sacrament. They imagine, next, that that sacrament impresses a certain character, which they call an *indelible character*, and which they conceive of as a physical quality, or an absolute accident, as they speak in the school, and as an inherent accident, in the soul

of the minister. They persuade themselves further, that Jesus Christ and his apostles left that sacrament and that physical quality in trust in the hands of the bishops, to be communicated by none but them. Will that they mix a great many ceremonies and external marks, as unction, and the shaving which they call the *priestly crown*. They add to all that, priestly habits, the stole, the alb, the cope, the cross, the mitre, the rochet, hood, pall, &c. They make mysterious allegories upon those ceremonies and these ornaments, they distinguish those dignities into divers orders, they frame a hierarchy set out by the pompous titles of prelates, primates, archbishops, patriarchs, cardinals, &c. They write great books upon all these things, and the half of their divinity is taken up in explaining their rights, authority, privileges, immunities, apostolic grants, exceptions, &c. What ground is here that all good men should not believe that the churchmen are at least men of another kind from all others, and that they are no ways made of the same blood, of which St. Paul says that God has made all mankind? Notwithstanding, when we examine well what that call is, to form a just idea of it, we shall find that properly it is but a relation that results from the agreement of three wills, to wit, that of God, that of the church, and that of the person called: for the consent of these three make all the essence of that call; and the other things that may be added to it, as examination, election, ordination, are preambulatory conditions, or signs and external ceremonies, which more respect the manner of that call than the call itself. In effect, in a call we can remark but three interests that can engage one to it; that of God, since he that is called ought to speak and act in his name; that of the church, that ought to be instructed, served, and governed; and that of him who is called, who ought to fulfil the functions of his charge, and to consecrate his watchful diligence, cares, and labours to it: from whence it follows, that that call is sufficiently formed, when God, the church, and the person called, come to agree; and we cannot

rationally conceive any thing else in it. But as to the will of the called, it does not fall into the question, for we all acknowledge that no one can be forced to receive the office of the ministry; and therefore St. Paul, describing the qualities of a bishop, begins with the desire to be a bishop; "If any man," says he, "desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." 1 Tim. 3. 1. We are only then concerned about the two others, to wit, that of God, and that of the church. As for the will of the church, they cannot methinks deny, but that naturally it should be that of the whole body, and not merely that of the pastors that ought to be required to it. For they are not the pastors alone who have an interest in the call of a man, it is generally the whole body of the church; it is that which ought to be, as I have said, instructed, served, and governed, it is that which ought to receive the sacraments from his hands who is called, and that ought to be comforted and edified by his word. Its consent therefore is necessary there, and it is of the essence of the call that it should intervene. As to the will of God, we both agree that it is not any more made known to men immediately and expressly; for howsoever we may without doubt refer it to a particular dispensation of his providence, the qualities, or, as they speak, the extraordinary talents, that some persons have for the exercise of that office, and especially when those talents are joined with internal dispositions, secret motions or desires to employ them in God's work, and the advancement of his glory, we affirm that that cannot be enough absolutely to conclude a divine revelation. God has therefore on this occasion put his will as a trust into men's hands, and that very thing, that he has instituted the ordinary ministry in the church, contains a promise to authorize those lawful calls that they shall give to persons for that office. We are agreed upon that point; it concerns us only to know who are left in trust with that will, the pastors alone, or the whole body of the church. Those of the Roman communion pretend the former, and we pretend the latter.

To decide this difference, I say, that we cannot rationally own any other to be left in trust with the will of God in that respect, than the body to which he himself has naturally given the right of the ministry, for whose sake he has instituted the ministry, and which he has even bound by an indispensable duty to have ministers: this body, I say, which has as great an interest in it as that of the preservation of its faith, piety, and justice, and whose consent ought moreover necessarily to intervene. But that body is that of the whole church, and not of the pastors only; it is to that, as I have shewn before, that the ministry belongs, it is for the sake of that that God has established it, it is indispensably bound to have ministers, it has the greatest interest in it, and it ought even naturally to concur. It is that therefore with which God has left his will in trust as to those calls, and by consequence it is from thence that those calls ought to proceed, and it would be absurd to make them flow from any thing else.

We have already frequently said, that the body of the visible church, as it is upon earth, is always mingled with the good and bad, with the true believers and the wicked, and that when these two orders of persons are set in opposition, they are the truly faithful only, that are properly the church of Jesus Christ; that church, I say, which he has appointed to assemble in his name, to which he has promised his presence, to which he has given the keys of his kingdom, the power of binding and loosing, and, in a word, to which he has given the ministry and all the rights that follow upon it, or go before it: so that to be of that church, it is necessary to be a true believer; and nobody without true faith can have that advantage, the profane and the wicked, as such, being all naturally excluded. But it is evident that the pastors may not be of the number of those true believers; experience justifies that the greatest number may forsake the true faith; and there is no promise of God that that shall never happen in respect of all of them. It would then be a great rashness to make those pastors alone depositaries of that will of God

whereof we speak, and which is essentially necessary to the call of persons, since not having any revelation which promises that he will always preserve the faithful in their body, none can be assured that since the first rise of the Gospel till this present time they have always been, none can be assured that it never happened, or that it will never fall out, that that order may not be wholly filled up with, and possessed by, worldlings and hypocrites. It would be to deposit the will of God in a body that might sometimes not be the true church, and not have the least part in its interests; it would be to derive that call from a source that might be wholly cut off from the church; it would be to make the validity of the sacraments, which are the chief means of the preservation and propagation of the city of God, to depend on the inhabitants of Babylon, which St. Augustine says is always mixed with the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which would be manifestly contrary to the order of God's wisdom. It is therefore without doubt more conformable to that wisdom, to make his will known, and by consequence the lawful call of a man, throughout the whole body of the church, since that howsoever mixed the wicked may be there with the righteous in the same external profession, we are notwithstanding assured by the promises of God that there will be always some true believers in that external profession, even until the end of the world, and by consequence there will be always the true church, that very same that Jesus Christ has assembled, and to which he has properly given as well the right of the ministry as all the other rights of a religious society. It is far more just, that since God has not more immediately by himself declared his will, upon the occasion of those personal calls, that we should regard that body which we are certain God loves and looks upon as his family, and as the spouse of Jesus Christ his Son, that we look upon it, I say, as his interpreter in that regard, than to go to seek for his voice, and as I may so say his oracle, in a body whereof we cannot have the same certainty that it cannot be, or that it has not

even sometimes been wholly made up of the unjust and worldly.

They will say, it may be, that it would not be better if those calls should proceed from the body of the church, although they might be certain that God always preserves the truly faithful there, since the wicked most frequently prevail there over the good, that they would make themselves masters of those calls, and that they could neither more nor less communicate them to the wicked and the worldly, than if there were no believers in the church. I answer, that it is true, that whether those calls come from the pastors only, or whether they proceed from the body of the church, we could have no certainty that they should be well made as to the choice of persons, for God has not promised his faithful ones, even when they shall be a greater number than the worldlings, that they shall always make good elections; they may without doubt be deceived in that respect, although there may be a greater likelihood that those elections should be more just, when they should be made by a body in which one is assured that there are always true believers, than when they should be made by a more particular body whereof one cannot have the same assurance. But not to stay upon that, I say that my argument respects not the goodness of that election, but the validity of the call in itself, whether it be conferred upon a good man, or whether on a wicked one, for the call of a wicked man ought not to cease to be good, although the choice should be ill made. My meaning then is, that if the call proceed only from the body of the pastors, without the consent of the whole church intervening, after whatsoever manner, it may be so brought about, as that it may proceed from a body of impious and profane persons, who should all be really separated from the church, and who would have no part in its interests: so that it would be to make the divine authority that ought to accompany that call, and the validity of the actions of the ministry, to depend on a body of wicked men, and to make the enemies of God the fit

depositories of his will; which to me seems no ways conformable to the order of his wisdom, especially when there is another body where we know that he always preserves and upholds his faithful.

But they will say yet further, If your arguing took place, it would take away from the pastors all the functions of their ministry, to give them to the body of the church. The pastors would no more have any right, either to preach, or to administer the sacraments, or to govern the church, or to censure, or to suspend, or to excommunicate. For if we say that that call would not depend upon them, under a pretence that we have not any certainty that God preserves and will always preserve true believers amongst them, we must say the same, that the government of the church, preaching, the administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of discipline, could not be committed to them, since we have not any more certainty for those things, that there should be any truly faithful among them, than we have upon the matter of that call; so that all must be overthrown if that reason take place. I answer, That the Donatists heretofore fell into that extravagance to imagine that the preaching of the Gospel, the sacraments, and the other actual functions of the ministry, ought to be performed by holy pastors, to become good and valid, and not by the wicked; so that being moreover prejudiced with this thought, that the whole body of those pastors who retained communion with Cæcilianus were fallen off from their righteousness and become wicked, they held that there was not any church in the world besides the party of Donatus. But St. Augustine shewed them that their principle was false; and it is worthy of notice by what way he made them see the falseness of their opinion; for it was neither by telling them that the body of the pastors, when they all became wicked, failed not to be the church of Jesus Christ, nor in holding that Jesus Christ having at first put the ministry into the hands of the pastors, it must necessarily follow by that very thing, that he was bound to pre-

serve their righteousness, or at least always to preserve the truly just and faithful persons in their body, and those who should distribute the blessed sacraments to all the rest. He says nothing of all that, but he had recourse to the body of the church, and he says, that the sacraments are not the pastors, nor the power of the keys, nor that of binding and loosing, nor any of the functions of their ministry, but that all that belongs to the church; that it is that which baptizes when the pastors baptize, that it is that which binds when the pastors bind, and which looses when they loose; and that it is to her that Jesus Christ has given all those rights. But what will you say he understands by that church? The truly faithful, whatsoever they be, the wheat of God, the good seed, the good fish, as they are called; in a word, the just, the children of God, in exclusion of worldlings. It is from that fountain that the validity of the sacraments is drawn, and the other functions of the ministry, and not from the body of the pastors. I say then, the same thing. All that which the body of the pastors does, it does in the name of the church, and by consequence in the name of Jesus Christ, for the name of Jesus Christ is in the name of the church, it is the church that preaches by them, that administers the sacraments by them, that governs by them, that censures, that suspends, that absolves, that excommunicates by them, they are only its ministers and the dispensers of its rights. Whether then they be wicked, whether they be profane or impious, that hurts their own persons, but it does not hurt their functions, because their functions are not their own, but the church's.

Furthermore, that hypothesis of St. Augustine concerning the source from whence the validity of the action of the ministry proceeds, furnishes us with another argument which to me seems demonstrative, not only from the authority of that father, but from the nature of the thing itself. For it is evident that we ought to refer that call to the same body to which God originally gave the power of the keys, and which

is exercised by the pastors, so that the pastors are no more but the dispensers of its rights: as that which makes baptism, the communion, the government, and the acts of discipline, good and valid, is not because they proceed from the pastors only, but because they proceed from the body of the church. So the same must be said, that that which makes a call good, valid, and lawful, is, because it comes from the church, that is to say, from the truly faithful. But it is certain that it is properly the body of the faithful that has received originally the power of the keys, that is exercised by the pastors, and upon which the validity of all the actions of the ministry depends, as being done in the name and authority of the whole body, and by consequence it is to that we must refer that call.

If I had a mind here to set down all the passages of St. Augustine where he establishes this truth, I should engage myself in an excessive tediousness. It shall suffice to set down some few that may let us see clearly what his doctrine was upon this matter. “Judas,” says he, “represented the body of the wicked, and St. Peter represented the body of the good, the body of the church; I say the body of the church, but the church which consists in the good: for if St. Peter had not represented that church, our Lord would not have said to him, ‘I give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’ For if that had been said but to St. Peter only, the church does not do it. But if it be done in the church, to wit, that the things that are bound on earth are bound in heaven, and that those which are loosed on earth are loosed in heaven, inasmuch as he which the church excommunicates is excommunicated in heaven, and he to whom the church is reconciled is reconciled in heaven, since that I say is done in the church, it follows that St. Peter receiving the keys represented the holy church: and as the good who are in the church were represented in the person of St. Peter, so the wicked who are in the church were repre-

sented in the person of Judas, and it is to those that Jesus Christ said, Me you have not always.* And further, after having described the church of the truly faithful in these terms, "God has sent his Son into the world, to the end that those who believe in him should by the laver of regeneration be loosed from their sins, as well original as actual, and that being delivered from everlasting damnation they should live in faith, hope, and charity, as pilgrims in this world, amidst temptations and labours, and amidst the corporal and spiritual consolations of God, walking in Christ Jesus, who is their way. But because in that very way in which they walk they are not free from those sins that arise through the infirmity of this life, he has appointed them the saving remedy of alms, to help their prayers which he has commanded them to make; Forgive our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." After, I say, having described the church of the just in that manner, he adds, "This is that which makes the church blessed in hope in this miserable life, and it is this church that St. Peter represented by the primacy of his apostleship, *Nam Ecclesiæ gerebat figurata generalitate personam*. If you look upon St. Peter in himself, he was but a man by nature, a Christian by grace, and the first of the apostles by the superabundance of grace. But when Jesus Christ said to him, 'I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,' he represented the whole body of the church, that church I say which in that age was moved with divers temptations, as by so many storms, torrents, and tempests, and which yet does not fall into ruin, because it is founded upon the rock from which St. Peter took his name. I say that St. Peter took his name from it; for as the name of Christian is derived from Christ, and not that of Christ from that of Christian, so that of St.

* Aug. Tract 50. in Joan.

Peter is derived from the rock, and not that of the rock from the name of St. Peter; and therefore Jesus Christ said to him, ‘Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.’ For St. Peter having made this confession, ‘Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God,’ our Lord told him that he would build his church upon that rock which he had confessed. For that rock was Jesus Christ, upon which St. Peter himself is built, according to what is said, ‘No man can lay other foundation than what is already laid, which is Jesus Christ.’ It is that church therefore that was founded upon Jesus Christ, which received from him, in the person of St. Peter, the keys of that kingdom, that is to say, the power of binding and loosing.”* In the same sense he says elsewhere, “That there are some things said to St. Peter that plainly seem properly to belong to him, and which nevertheless cannot be so well understood if they are not referred to the church that St. Peter represented, and of which he was the figure by that primacy which he had among the disciples; as are,” adds he, “these words, I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven;”† Yet elsewhere, “Jesus Christ has given the keys to his church, to the end that that which it should bind on earth should be bound in heaven, and that whatsoever it should loose should be loosed; that is to say, to the end that he that should not believe that his sins are pardoned in the church, to him they should not be pardoned, and that on the contrary he who being in the bosom of the church should believe that his sins were pardoned, and who should be reduced by a holy correction, should obtain pardon.”‡ “It is not rashly,” says he in another place, “that I make two orders of men. One sort are so much in the house of God, that they are themselves that house that is built upon

* Aug. Tract 124. in Joan.

† Aug. in Psal. 108. Nec Tamen habent Illustrem Intellectum nisi cum referuntur ad Ecclesiam.

‡ Aug. de Doctr. Chr. lib. 1. cap. 48.

a rock, and that which is called the only dove, the spouse without spot and wrinkle, the enclosed garden, the hidden fountain, the wells of living water, the paradise where is the fruit of apples. It is this house which has received the keys and the power to bind and loose, and it is this to which he said, That if any would not hearken to it when it reprov'd and corrected, that he should be esteem'd as a heathen man and a publican.—That house consists in vessels of gold and silver, in precious stones and incorruptible wood, and it is to that that St. Paul says, 'Bear with one another in love, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;' and again, 'The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.' It consists in the good, in the faithful, in the holy servants of God spread abroad every where, joined together in a spiritual unity by the communion of the same sacraments, whether they know one another by sight, or whether they do not. But as for the others, they are so in the house as not at all to belong to the structure of the house, and they are not in that society that is fruitful in peace and righteousness. They are the chaff amidst the good corn, and we cannot deny that they are in the house, since the apostle says that there are in the house not only vessels of gold and silver, but vessels also of wood and earth, the one to honour and the others to dishonour.* They must wilfully shut their eyes that will not acknowledge by these passages that it is only to the church of the faithful, and not to the body of the prelates, that that father refers all the efficacy and force of the actions of the ministry, and all the power of the keys. But further if you will, he explains himself yet more expressly in the same book out of which I have taken these last words. "Hitherto," says he, "I have methinks clearly enough demonstrated by the Holy Scriptures and by the testimony of St. Cyprian, that the wicked who have undergone no change in their actual estate, may both give and receive baptism. Not-

* August. de Baptis. contra Donat. lib. 7. cap. 51.

withstanding it is manifest that those men do not belong to the church of God, since they are covetous, extortioners, usurers, envious, malicious, and enslaved by such like vices, for the church is the only dove that is modest and chaste: the spouse without spot and wrinkle, the enclosed garden, the sealed fountain, the paradise full of fruits, and such other titles that are given it, can be understood of none but the good, the saints and the righteous; that is to say, those in whom not only the operations of the gifts of God are found, that are common to the good and bad, but who have also the inward and supernatural grace of the Holy Spirit. It is to those that it is said, ‘Whose soever sins you remit, they shall be remitted; and whose soever sins you retain, they shall be retained.’ I do not then see why we may not say that a wicked man may administer baptism, since he may have it, and as he has it to his ruin, he may give it to others also to their ruin, not because that that which he gives may be a pernicious thing, but because that he himself who receives it is a wicked man. For when a wicked man gives baptism to a good man, who dwelling in the bond of unity is truly converted, the wickedness of him who gives it is overcome by the goodness of the sacrament and the faith of him who receives it; and when his sins are pardoned who is truly converted to God, they are pardoned to him by those with whom he is joined by a true conversion. For the same Holy Spirit which was given to the saints with whom he is united by the bond of love, is he who pardons them, whether he knows that body, or whether he knows it not. And so when the sins of any are retained, they are retained by those from whom they are separated by the difference of their lives and the malice of their hearts, whether they know that body or whether they do not.^{22*}

It could not methinks be said either with greater strength or clearness, that all the efficacy of the actions of the minis-

* Aug. de Bap. contr. Donat. lib. 6. cap. 3 & 4.

try that the pastors exercise, depends not on the body of the pastors, but on the body of the truly faithful, and that in effect they are those who pardon and retain sins when the ministers pardon or retain them. From whence it necessarily follows, that if the same actions of the ministry belong to the society of the faithful, the call of the ministry does so also with a far greater reason; for if the power of the keys, the right of remitting and retaining sins, belong only to the body of the faithful, it must be every way necessary that the pastors should hold the exercise of that power from the body of the faithful: for if they should not hold it from thence, they would have no right to exercise it, nor could have it elsewhere. And if they should have it elsewhere, or that it should belong properly to the body of the pastors exclusively from the simple faithful, it would be not only not true, but it would be further absurd, to say that the body of the faithful exercised that power by the pastors, or that they pardoned and retained sins, as St. Augustine teaches.

I cannot avoid taking notice here, by the way, of that ordinary error whereinto those of the Church of Rome fall, who do not believe that immediate, absolute, and independent authority, that the Pope ascribes to himself over the whole church, but who would that the power of the keys is given to the whole body of the hierarchy, that is to say, to those pastors who are priests and bishops. For to prove their opinion, they do not fail to set the sentiment of St. Augustine before us, which plainly, as we have seen, shews us that the keys were given to the whole church; from whence they draw two conclusions, the one against that great authority that the Pope pretends to, and the other for the authority of the bishops, which they would have to flow immediately from Jesus Christ. But of these two conclusions it is certain that the first is just and entirely conformable with the thoughts of that father, but it is not less certain that the second is not; and that, at least without going about to deceive ourselves willingly, or to cheat the world, we could not say, that that

church represented by St. Peter, to which God gave the power of the keys, which is exercised by the ministry of the pastors, should be any other, according to St. Augustine, than the body of the truly faithful and righteous, in opposition to the worldly and the wicked who are mixed with them in the same external profession; and this is in my judgment so clear and evident in the doctrine of that father, that they must needs be ignorant of it who deny it. It is therefore a manifest illusion to go about to make use of those passages in favour of the bishops, for that church is not the body of the hierarchy, but that of the truly faithful, whether they be laymen or pastors, and it is to those only that St. Augustine ascribes all the rights and all the actions of the ministry, as it may appear by what I have related, and by consequence it is to those that the lawful call of the pastors belongs, and not to the body or order of the hierarchy. For it would be absurd to derive that call from any thing else, than from that very church which has received the power of the keys, and which is exercised in her name and her authority by her ministers. Tostatus, bishop of Avila, seems to have acknowledged this truth conformably to the principles of St. Augustine, for see after what manner he explains himself in his Commentaries upon Numbers, upon the story of the man who was brought before the whole assembly of Israel, because some had found him gathering of sticks upon the sabbath-day and put him in prison for it. First of all he says, "That although the acts of jurisdiction cannot be exercised by the whole community, yet that jurisdiction belongs to the whole community in regard of its origin and efficacy, because the magistrates receive their jurisdiction from it." He adds afterwards, "That it is the same in the keys of the church, that Jesus Christ gave them to the whole church in the person of St. Peter. And that it is the church that communicates them to the prelates, but which notwithstanding communicates them without depriving itself of them; so that," says he, "the church has them and the prelates have them,

but in a different manner; for the church has them in respect of origin and virtue, and the prelates have them only in respect of use; the church has them virtually, because she can give them to a prelate by election, and she has them originally also. For the power of a prelate does not take its origin from itself, but from the church, by means of the election that it makes of him. The church that chose him gives him that jurisdiction, but as for the church it receives it from nobody after its having once received it from Jesus Christ. The church therefore has the keys originally and virtually, and whenever she gives them to a prelate, she does not give them to him after the manner that she has them, to wit, originally and virtually, but she gives them to him only as to use."*

To this we may add, that some councils of these latter ages, as those of Constance and Basil, seem to have acted themselves upon this principle when they gave themselves the title of representing the whole universal church. *Universalem Ecclesiam Representans*. For to what end did they take that specious title, if they would not acknowledge that the origin of the authority of the prelates or the pastors, is in the body of the whole society, and that it is from thence that it is transmitted to them to exercise it in the name of the whole body?

But that which is most considerable is, that it appears from the testimony of the Holy Scripture, that the body of the church, that is to say, the faithful people, in opposition to the pastors, has taken part from the beginning in the acts of its own government, and particularly in the calls of ministers; which evidently notes, that it is a natural right that belongs to it. Thus when after the apostasy and tragical death of Judas, they were to substitute another apostle in his place, Jesus Christ not having done it immediately by himself before his ascension, the history of the Acts relates, (Acts I.

* Tostat. Abulens in Numer. cap. 15. quest. 48 & 49.

15.) that the whole church, which then only consisted in a hundred and twenty persons, was assembled, and that upon the proposal that St. Peter made to them, they appointed two, upon whom the lot having been cast, and falling upon Matthias, with a common consent he was put into the number of the apostles. They were there about the call of an apostle, that is to say, of a minister who ought to come immediately from God, and therefore it was that they cast the lot; but because the church was then already formed, and that Jesus Christ being no more corporally present upon earth, those calls could not be made wholly and immediately by him, men took some part in them, for by their election they limited the lot to two persons, and in the end declared by their acquiescence that they looked upon the declaration of the lot, as if it had been the very voice of Jesus Christ. This is all the part that men could take there, but it was not only the apostles who did those two things, it was the whole body of the church. The history notes that the assembly was about a hundred and twenty persons; that St. Peter made a proposal to them; that upon that proposal of St. Peter, they presented two, Joseph and Matthias, and that the lot falling upon Matthias, he was numbered with the eleven apostles by common agreement, that is to say, by the common consent of all. Acts 1. 23. That evidently shews us, that the body of the faithful, and not merely the body of the pastors, is the right source of calls. The same things appear in the call of the seven deacons, for the story expressly notes, that the murmuring of the Greeks against the Hebrews, falling out, and giving occasion to the apostles to think of that call, they called the multitude of the disciples, and that when they had made a proposal to them, the assembly approved of it, and that in the end they chose seven persons, whom they presented to the apostles, who after having prayed to God, laid their hands on them. Acts 6. 1. .6. But that further lets us see from whence a lawful call proceeds, to wit, from the body of the faithful, and not merely from the body of the pastors; for it was the whole

assembly that approved of the proposal of the apostles, and that chose, and not the apostles alone, who did nothing else but propose and lay their hands on them. This is further justified by the practice of the apostles, which would readily admit the people in the most weighty affairs that respected the government of the church into their deliberations and acts, when that might be done without confusion. So in the first council of Jerusalem, the question being agitated whether the observation of the ceremonies of the law was necessary to the Gentiles, it is said that it pleased the apostles and elders, or presbyters, (for it is the same thing,) with the whole church, to send to Antioch and write to the church there. That letter was in effect written in the name of all, and sent to all indifferently, "The apostles and elders and brethren unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia;" (Acts 15. 22.) and it is expressly noted, that when Jude and Silas, who were the bearers of that letter, were arrived at Antioch, they assembled the multitude, that is to say, the people, and there acquitted themselves of their commission; which distinctly shews that the people then took cognizance of the matters of religion, and that they intervened in public deliberations. So when St. Paul would excommunicate the incestuous person of Corinth, he calls the church to that action; "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my Spirit, let such a man be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the body may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus," (1 Cor. 5. 4, 5.) which notes the same thing.

Those who have read the writings of St. Cyprian bishop of Carthage, cannot be ignorant that that great saint governed his church by the common suffrages not only of his whole clergy, but also of all his people, and that he consulted with them in the most weighty affairs, since he has declared it himself in divers places of his writings. "I could not," says he, in one of his epistles to his clergy, "answer to that which our brethren Donatus, Fortunatus, Novatus, and Gor-

dus, have written to me, because I am alone: for from the first entrance into my bishopric, I purposed to do nothing of myself, without your counsel, and the consent of my people. So that when the favour of God shall have joined me again to you, we shall treat of all things in common, according to what our mutual honour requires of us.”* In his tenth epistle, he complains of some priests, who without ever consulting others had received those into communion who in time of persecution had abjured Christianity, and he ordered that they should be deprived of their functions; “For,” says he, “they must give an account of their actions before us and before the confessors, and before all the people, when God shall grant us the favour of meeting together again.” In the twelfth, he writes to the people of his church, *Fratribus in plebe consistentibus*; he notes concerning those who had fallen in time of persecution, and who desired to be restored to the peace of the church, “That when God should have sent peace again to his flock, and that they should again recover their assemblies, that affair should be examined in the presence of the people, and that they should judge of it among themselves; *Tunc*,” says he, “*examinabuntur singula presentibus et judicantibus vobis.*” In the 28th epistle, answering his clergy, who had consulted together concerning some priests who had abandoned their flocks, “I could not,” says he, “make myself the sole judge of business; which ought to be exactly managed, not only with my colleagues, but with the whole body of the people also, *Non tantum cum collegis meis, sed et cum plebe universa.*” In the 68th epistle, answering as well in his own name, as in the name of divers other bishops of Africa assembled in council, to the churches of Leon and Astorga, on the matter of Basilides and Martial, bishops who had been deposed for their crimes; “The people,” says he, “who obey the commandments of the Lord, and who fear God, ought to separate

* Epist. 6.

themselves from a wicked pastor, and not to take any part in the sacrifices of a sacrilegious priest: since it is the people who have chiefly the power to elect those who are worthy, and to reject those who are unworthy. The divine authority itself has established this law, that the priest should be chosen in the presence of the people, before the eyes of all, to the end he should be approved as worthy of the ministry by a public judgment and testimony. Therefore it is that God said to Moses in the Book of Numbers, 'Thou shalt take Aaron thy brother, and his son Eleazar, and thou shalt make them come upon the mountain in the presence of all the assembly; thou shalt take off Aaron's vestment and put it upon Eleazar, for Aaron shall die there.' He ordained that the priest should be established in the presence of the whole assembly, to teach us that the ordination of priests ought not to be performed without the knowledge of the people assisting, to the end that in their presence the crimes of the wicked and the deserts of the good should be discovered, and that so the ordination should be good and lawful when it should be examined by the suffrages and judgment of all. We find in the Book of the Acts that the same thing was practised when they were to ordain another bishop in the place of Judas. Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and all the multitude assembled together into one place. And that was observed not only in the ordination of the bishops and priests, but it was observed also in that of the deacons, as it appears from the same Book of the Acts, where it is said that the twelve apostles called together the whole multitude of the disciples. Therefore according to divine tradition, and the observation of the apostles, that order ought to be diligently preserved and held, which is also observed among us, and almost in all provinces, that in order to the making of lawful ordinations, the nearest bishops of a province should assemble with the people, who ought to ordain a prelate, and the bishop should be chosen in the presence of the people, who may perfectly know the life and conversation of every one.

And this is what was done amongst you in the ordination of Sabinus our colleague, for by the suffrages of all the brethren, and by the judgment of the bishops who came themselves to you, after you had wrote, they conferred the order of episcopacy on him and laid their hands on him in the room of Basilides.”

See here the first question decided. The second consists in knowing whether we can say with any reason, that although those calls ought naturally to proceed from the whole body of the church, as we have just before shewn, yet that the church has lost that right, and that it is now lawfully deprived of it. That which gives ground for this difficulty is, that although in the civil society the right of creating of magistrates seems naturally to belong to the whole body of the society; yet it fell out that the order of nature has been interrupted, for in monarchical states it is not the people, but the prince only that confers offices, and that right is so lawful in him, that there is no office that does not depend upon his nomination. They may therefore pretend that the same thing falls out in the religious society; from whence it will follow, that it is no more the whole body of the church that ought to confer those calls, but the body of the prelates, or if you will the sovereign monarch of the church, who is as they pretend the Pope. But I maintain that that cannot be any ways said. It is not so in respect of the religious society, as it is in that of the civil. In the civil, the people may be lawfully deprived of the right that nature has given them to create their magistrates, and to provide for its government, whether they be done by a voluntary transmission which they themselves have made to a certain family, or to a certain person to whose rule they submit themselves, or whether it come to pass by a just conquest. But these ways have no place in the church; she can neither create nor acknowledge a sovereign monarch, in whose favour she should deprive herself of her rights in that respect, to make him an absolute master. For being concerned for her own salva-

tion, which she finds interested in the functions of the ministry, and moreover having no assurance, as I have already noted, that he or those in whose favour she should strip herself of her rights, should themselves be faithful, it would be visibly to expose herself, to give herself over into the hands of the palpably profane, the unbelievers, or hypocrites, to make her enemies her lords, and it would be palpably to hazard her faith and conscience, which she could never do without a criminal negligence, of which she never ought to incur the guilt. In the civil society, where the matter is only about interests, and not about those that concern one's salvation, nothing hinders but that a people may wholly resign themselves to the care of a sovereign power to govern them, and it may be most frequently advantageous for them to do so also, to avoid the evils that arise from the thwarting of divers private interests, which may be prejudicial to the public. But in the church, or where one's salvation is concerned, the faithful can never without a crime deprive themselves, to give it into the hands of another, of that care that God has commanded them to have over all the external means they may make use of for the procuring of that salvation, for although their faith and piety do not absolutely depend upon their pastors, yet the functions of the ministry, when they are pure and holy, are a great help to them for that, and the preservation of their faith becomes most difficult when the ministry is corrupted. The church therefore in that respect can never be lawfully spoiled of its rights, and He who has given them to it, has not given it the power to quit them, nor to transport them to another. As to the way of conquest, every one may see that has less place in the church than that of transmission. For that which in the civil society makes the dominion of a conqueror to be just, is, that when he enters into a society with the people which he has conquered, he is not bound to repent that he made war with them, nor to seek their favour, or ask their pardon; so that the fruit of his

conquest remains with him, and without renouncing it he may become the friend of that people, that is to say, be their lord and their friend together. But it is otherwise in the church; he who makes war against it, cannot enter into its society to govern it, unless he repent of his having treated it as an enemy, unless he humble himself before it, unless he beg pardon of God for what he has done, and by consequence unless he renounce all the advantages which he could pretend to by the right of arms. If he does not do that, he can never enter into the church, nor by consequence have any part in its government; and if he does, he has no more ground to say that the church should belong to him by conquest. It is evident therefore that the body of the faithful can never lawfully either deprive itself, or be deprived by another, of the right that naturally belongs to it to provide for its support, and its own government, in calling persons to the ministry: from whence it follows, that that call, in order to its being just, ought to proceed from the body of the church, and that it ought not to proceed from any besides.

There remains therefore, now, nothing but the third question, which is this, viz. Whether the body of the church be always bound to confer calls by means of its pastors, or whether in some case the body of the faithful laity may not confer them immediately? To clear this point, we must plainly distinguish that call in itself, I would say, into that which it has of essential, and the way of its being conferred, that is to say, the formalities practised in it. That which is essential to it consists in the agreement of these three which I have noted, that of God, that of the church, and that of the person called. The way or manner of conferring consists on one side in some preambulatory acts, without which that call would be very confused and rash; and these acts are, instruction, examination, proof of doctrine, the testimony of a good life and a good conversation in regard of manners; and on the other side, in some solemnities or external cere-

monies that serve to render that call more public, more majestic, and more authentic, as fasting, prayer, exhortation, benediction, and imposition of hands.

As to the essence of a call, since as I have shewn that in supposing the consent of the person called, the will of God is found included in that of the whole body of the church, and that moreover it appears that the simple faithful, whom they term laymen, do not cease to be joined in a lawful society, and to make a body of the church, although they should have no pastors, it is evident that those faithful people are alone sufficient to make calls lawful. When they have pastors, they ought immediately to concur with them, and to make elections in common, if it may be done without confusion; and if it cannot, they ought at least to ratify by their approbation the elections that the pastors shall have made; and when they cannot have any without a visible danger of dispersion, it is certain that they may alone and immediately by themselves confer that call. For the call proceeds from the society, not inasmuch as it has pastors, but inasmuch as it is a society; I would say, inasmuch as it is a body of the faithful united together in the communion of faith, piety, and righteousness. It is that society which naturally makes its order; it is natural inasmuch as it is a society put in trust with the will of God in that respect, and the mistress of its own consent. When therefore it shall have no pastors, the call it shall communicate will not fail to be full, lawful, and sufficient, and to have all that which is essential to it. It is as certain also that the pastors in the true church have not naturally any right to concur to calls, if they are not faithful, since that if they are not faithful they are really without that society, and that the right of calls in the true church can belong only to the truly faithful, and not to others. It ought not then to be doubted that a faithful people alone, and abandoned of all its ministers, may make a call.

But they will say, How can it be that laymen should make ecclesiastical persons, and confer a power and an authority

which they have not themselves? I answer, that this difficulty is null, for it is true that no one can lawfully give away that which does not belong to him, either *de jure*, or *de facto*; and it is further true, that the office of the ministry belongs neither *de facto*, nor *de jure*, to any private man, nor even to divers private men taken out from the body: and therefore it is, that not only no private man can thrust himself into the ministry of his own head, but even that a part of the society itself cannot lawfully confer a call, without the consent of the other, if it have not the greatest number of its side. So that we may say with reason that there is the body, in comparison of the other party. But I say that the ministry belongs to the whole society; not that all the whole body can exercise immediately all the acts of it, of itself, since a whole body can neither preach nor administer the sacraments; but only because it is its authority and its consent which render those acts valid, in virtue of the institution that Jesus Christ has made of that religious society with all its rights. From whence it follows, that the body of the faithful, although it be composed all of laymen, does not cease to have the power lawfully to confer the ministry on a man, without its being liable to be said, that it confers that on others which it has not itself; for it is certain that the ministry belongs to it, and that a call consists but in depositing the public right into the hands of him who is called, to the end it may be reduced into act in the name of the whole society. But I say, that the faithful people themselves have a just and lawful call to give up that trust: for as I have noted already, there is no call more lawful than that which is founded not only upon a sufficient right, but upon a duty also, and an indispensable obligation. When the matter is about societies, there is nothing more absurd than to imagine that a whole body cannot communicate that which all the parts that compose it have not. For if it were so, a people could never make a king, which is yet notwithstanding done in all elective kingdoms. and the Church of Rome herself cau-

not give a reason why she makes her Popes, since there is not any Pope present who can make his successor. They are all created by the college of Cardinals, who are not Popes themselves, so that they give that which they have not. They must therefore needs say, that the papacy is virtually in the college of the Cardinals, and that that which each one among them has not, they have all together in a body, otherwise they could not create a Pope with that fulness of power, and that extent of jurisdiction, which is not in mere bishops.

As to what regards the manner of conferring those calls, they will agree with me that there are some things which the body of the people may and ought immediately to do by themselves, as proof of the purity of doctrine, information of manners, fasting and prayer; and I will acknowledge that there are others there that ought not to be done but by the pastors only, when they have them, as examination in respect of knowledge, exhortation, public prayer, benediction, and laying on of hands. But in cases extraordinary and of absolute necessity, the church not having any pastors, and not being able to have any without a visible danger of dispersion, I say that they may and ought to appoint some persons to do those things in their name. And those of the Church of Rome ought not to think that which I propose strange, seeing that they would readily, in a case of absolute necessity, have only a layman, or even a woman, have the power of administering of baptism. Baptism is a sacrament, it is the public introduction of a man into the church of God; if therefore, according to them, a sacrament so great and august does not fail of being good and valid, though administered by a layman, who has no particular commission from the church, if the church is esteemed to baptize by that layman, how much more good and available would be the prayer, the benediction, and the laying on of hands, conferred in a case of absolute necessity by a layman, since that not only it is not a sacrament properly so called, but that further, that layman does not act in that solemnity in the quality of a mere

private man, but as having received the office and commission from the whole body of the faithful, the whole body doing it by him, and authorizing it by its presence.

Tertullian has gone much further than we go upon this matter, for he would, that where there are no pastors, every layman should have the power, not only to baptize, but also to consecrate the eucharist, and to administer it; and his words seem to be grounded upon the common practice of his time. "Where," says he, "there is no company of churchmen, you offer and baptize," (he speaks to the laymen,) "and you are yourselves alone priests to yourselves. Where there are three persons, if they should be laymen, there is a church there, for each man lives by his faith, and God has no respect of persons." I do not pretend to approve of that which he says concerning the eucharist, that he would have a mere layman have the power of celebrating when there should be no minister, and I acknowledge there is an excess in that proposition. But it may appear from thence, at least that the right of consecrating a pastor, in a case of absolute necessity, was not then denied to the whole body of the church.

These are the general observations that I had to make upon this matter. It will be now no hard thing to apply them to the ministry of the Protestants, and the personal call of their ministers, to make a solid judgment of it. First, then, I say, that our ministry considered in itself, that is to say, with respect to the things which we teach and practise, cannot but be most lawful. For we suppose here that our doctrine is the very same that Jesus Christ and his apostles taught, we add nothing to it, we diminish nothing from it; the sacraments that we dispense, are the very same that Jesus Christ has instituted; and the government which is set up in the midst of us, is not remote from that of the primitive church, according as it is represented to us in the Scripture. If the author of the Prejudices has any thing to say to us upon that subject, he ought to come to it by way of *discus-*

sion, and not by that of *prescription*. But before he forces us to give a reason of our ministry, he would do justly if he would give us satisfaction concerning his own, which he well knows we desire; I would say, he would do justly if he would shew us what call he himself had at first, by the justification of the things that he teaches: what right he had to teach transubstantiation, the real presence, the adoration of the host, the worshipping of creatures, human satisfactions, &c. and really to sacrifice the body of Jesus Christ. If he cannot make it appear that all those things that are in dispute between the Church of Rome, and us, are Gospel-truths, he can neither prove his call, nor hinder us from holding it null and unlawful. For he cannot have any lawful call to teach errors, nor to perform those actions of religion that Jesus Christ never instituted; and by consequence it is from that that he ought to begin, when he would inform us of the truth of a call. In effect, all other inquiries will signify nothing, if that does not go before; since piety, truth, and sound doctrine, are the necessary foundations to every lawful call; and that, on the contrary, no person can have any right either to teach a lie, or make the people practise, or to practise himself, a worship contrary to the true service of God, or to celebrate the sacraments that Jesus Christ has not instituted. It belongs therefore to the author of the *Prejudices* to tell us how he pretends to avoid that discussion, for it is certain that the first question that must be decided to make the validity of a call clear, is that of the justice of the ministry in itself, that is to say, in regard of those things that are taught and practised in it, when that justice is in dispute, as it is between the Church of Rome and us; after which, when that point is once decided, we must pass over to two other questions; the one, whether the body, that is to say, the society wherein one is, has itself the right to have ministers, and the other, whether the persons who exercise the ministry therein are well and duly called. as I have shewn in my third observation.

That first point then being supposed, to wit, that the things that are taught and practised among the Protestants are good and Christian, I say, that they cannot dispute with them the right of their ministry but by accusing them of a schism like that of the Luciferians or the Donatists. But we have so clearly shewn that, if we have reason at the bottom, our separation from the Church of Rome is just, and that she herself is guilty of schism, that there is no further ground for that unjust accusation. They cannot therefore any further contest our ministry with us; and in effect, if we are true believers, and if we are justly separated from the Church of Rome, it is evident that we are lawfully united among ourselves in a religious society, as I have shewn in the First Chapter of the Fourth Part. And if we are lawfully united in a religious society, it is not less evident that all the rights of the Christian society belong to us, and that in all those rights that of the ministry is comprised, as it appears from my sixth and seventh observation. So that our right to a ministry is indisputable, supposing that we have reason in the foundation, and all that which they object against us will remain null and fallacious. If we have reason at the bottom, we are the true church of Jesus Christ; but the true church of Jesus Christ can never lose its rights, she is never deprived of them, and she cannot so much as deprive herself of them, none can ravish them from her: they are rights that cannot be alienated; they can neither be lost by the inundations or concussions of the world, with and by interruption of possession, or invasion of enemies, as the inheritances of the world are; and in one word, there where the true faith and charity are, there is the true church, and where there is a true church, there is the right to a ministry.

But say they, Is the ministry which you have that ancient and perpetual ministry that Jesus Christ has established in his church, or is it a new one? For if it be a new one, it is a false and unlawful ministry, and if it be the ancient and perpetual ministry of the church, whence comes it to pass

that we do not see among you any of the degrees of that hierarchy which was established in the church before your reformation? I answer, that our ministry is that ancient and perpetual one that Jesus Christ and his apostles have set up in the church, and if it were a new one we must needs have set up a new gospel, which is a thing so remote from the truth, that our most passionate adversaries, except the author of the Prejudices, would never in my judgment have charged us with it. But I say that we must distinguish of the essence of a ministry from its state, as I have shewn in my fourth observation. Before the Reformation, we grant that the ministry was preserved in the Latin Church in regard of all that which was essential to it, and it is in that that our church has succeeded it; so that in that respect they are not two ministries, but only one and the same, which we have retained. We preach the same truth that they teach yet, we adore one and the same God, the Father Son and Holy Ghost. There is among us a baptism, a eucharist, a government, a discipline, as there was then, but we have not succeeded it in that bad and corrupted state whereinto the ministry was then fallen, we have no more either any sacrificers of the body of Jesus Christ, or a sovereign monarch of the church, or patriarchs, or cardinals, or preachers of indulgences, or framers of legends, all that was not any thing of the essence of the ministry, and in having retrenched those kind of things we have no more abolished it than a town is destroyed when its excesses are retrenched, or than a house is destroyed when it is cleansed, and its ruins repaired.

As to a personal call, I say that we have that body of the church which upon earth alone has a lawful right to confer it on us. That which our Reformers had, they had from the church in their days, which did not consist in that multitude of profane, worldly, and superstitious persons which swelled their assemblies then, but in those truly faithful persons who as yet preserved themselves pure in the midst of that corruption, in that good corn which as yet grew amidst the tares,

although it was almost swallowed up by them. It was in those that the right of the ministry properly and truly resided, they still made that society any ways lawful, and it was from them that the justice of a call proceeded. I confess, that they then communicated it in a very corrupted state, and after a very impure manner; but God gave our first Reformers the grace to purify theirs by sound doctrine, and to rectify it by a holy and lawful use. It is therefore with and by those, that the body of that society which is reformed has conferred that call upon others, and that the propagation of the ministry has come down even to us, after the most evangelical manner in the world, on one side with instruction, examination, proof, inquiry, and testimony of good manners, as exact as could possibly be made, and on the other with public prayers, exhortation, benediction, laying on of hands, mission, and a particular tie to a flock. Behold here what our call is in regard of the body of the Protestants. I do not deny, but that in some places of this kingdom at the beginning of the Reformation there were some calls which were conferred by the people without a pastor, as that of La Riviere was at Paris in the year 1555; which the author of the Prejudices has not been wanting to reproach us with. But besides that these are particular cases and very few in number, which have not been followed, nor produced any settled custom, and by consequence cannot be imputed to the whole body of the Protestants, which has all along elsewhere had pastors called by the ordinary ways, besides all that, I say, I have shewn that in a case of absolute necessity, such as those flocks were in then, the people may lawfully make use of that right which God and the nature of a Christian society have put into their hands.

CHAP. IV.

AN ANSWER TO THE OBJECTIONS OF THE AUTHOR OF THE PREJUDICES ABOUT THE CALL OF THE FIRST REFORMERS, AND THE VALIDITY OF OUR BAPTISM.

THERE remains nothing at present but to give a satisfactory answer to some objections that the author of the *Prejudices* has made against the call of the first Reformers, which may all be reduced to this, to wit, Whether it was ordinary or extraordinary, or whether it was neither the one nor the other. "Their ministers," says he, "are divided upon this point into two different opinions, which some have united together, to make up a third composed of those two. Some distinctly say that the mission of their ministers is extraordinary, others that it is ordinary, and others that it is extraordinary and ordinary both together. But as this last opinion includes the two others, so it destroys itself in destroying them. So that properly it will be only necessary to examine in particular the two first opinions."*

It is in the first place very remarkable, that the author of the *Prejudices*, after having raised the question, as he has done, whether the first Reformers were "thieves and robbers, tyrants, rebels, false pastors and sacrilegious usurpers of the authority of Jesus Christ;" he has reduced all his proof of it to wrangling about those qualities, of ordinary or extraordinary, that may be given to their call. From those high words it seemed to have lain upon him to have shewn us that that call was destroyed and annihilated without any remedy, and that he should at least have brought us what would have wholly overthrown the first and natural foundations upon which we establish it. But, thanks be to God, that is not done, and the

* *Prejug.* Chap. 4. pag. 87.

choler of the author of the Prejudices is turned upon those titles that we give to the call of the first Reformers: he does not further concern himself to know directly whether it is good and lawful, but merely to know whether it is ordinary or extraordinary, or whether it be neither the one nor the other. Moreover it is certain that to decide even this last question, it is very ill done to begin with the setting aside the sentiment of those who hold that it is ordinary and extraordinary both together: for as those terms of ordinary and extraordinary are ambiguous, and that by reason of their ambiguity, it may be so that a call that is ordinary in one respect shall be extraordinary in another, so to set aside those who would have that of the first Reformers to be ordinary and extraordinary both together, is to set aside those who would clear that ambiguity; it is designedly to shut up the dispute in equivocal propositions, to give way to the making a long discourse to no purpose; it is in a word to imitate those who propose nothing else to themselves but how to cast dust in the eyes, and to suspend the judgments of their readers, in removing far from them the clear knowledge of things. It is therefore necessary for the author of the Prejudices to redress that, and because that those two sentiments, one of which carries this with it, that that call was extraordinary, and the other that it was ordinary, do not oppose one another at the bottom, it is necessary to shew in what respects the one and the other may be said. To this effect, I shall first say a word of the ministry of the first Reformers, and then afterwards I shall speak of their call.

As to their ministry, it is true that it is not extraordinary nor newly instituted, but the same that the apostles established at first for the preservation and propagation of the church, which was preserved in the Latin Church down to the age of our fathers in respect of all that was absolutely essential to it, and which shall also subsist unto the end of the world, as I have explained in the foregoing chapter. We may say notwithstanding, that the Reformation in which they were

employed was an extraordinary function of their office. For however they did not need either a new right or a new ministry for that, since every pastor is bound to labour to reform that which regards his flock, when it is necessary that he should do it, yet such a reformation as they made, is not a thing that should be done always. So that in that respect their ministry had something extraordinary, to wit, inasmuch as their flocks had an extraordinary need of their help to recover them out of those errors and superstitions which had overwhelmed them, as a vessel that is in danger of being wrecked has an extraordinary need of the assistance of those who steer it, to avoid that entire destruction wherewith it is threatened. But besides this we may say also that it had in it this which was extraordinary, that though it was still the same Gospel ministry which had till then subsisted in the Latin Church, in respect of all its essentials, yet they put it into another state than that wherein it was for many ages before, having purged and freed it from all the corruptions that disgraced it; and as those things are called extraordinary that are not usually to be seen, and which are not so often done, that change of the form or state that happened to the ministry, after its having for so long a time appeared to the eyes of the people quite otherwise than they saw it then, may very well be called extraordinary.

As for that which regards their call, it was not extraordinary, if by that term they mean that it should have come immediately from God, as that of Moses and the ancient prophets, or immediately from Jesus Christ, as that of the apostles; but it was ordinary, that is to say, they received it from God mediately by means of men. It is also certain that the manner of receiving their call, as to the greater part, was the very same with that which is most common and usual in the church, which is, that they received their ordination from the hand of those pastors who were themselves in that office. All that therefore which there was of extraordi-

nary in their call, in that respect, was, that they rectified it by freeing it from all the impurity it had, and which came from the corruption of the men of that age, and in referring it to its true end, which should be the purity of God's worship, and the salvation of souls. I acknowledge that in their administration they went beyond the intention of those who had conferred their offices on them, but they did no more in that than they ought; for the ministry which they had received being of God, and of the churches, and not of those private men who communicated it, they were bound to refer theirs to the greatest glory of God and the edification of his church, and not to the will and interests of the Court of Rome and its prelates, although it was through their channel that they had received it. They did well therefore to make use of that which they had of good in their call, to purify that which was bad in it, and they also did well to make use of it against the ill intention of those who had given it them for an ill end, even as those who have received baptism from an heretical or schismatical society, are bound by that same baptism which they have received from them, to oppose themselves as much as possibly they can to that heresy or schism, and to make use of their very baptism for it, although it should be against the intention of those who gave it to them. I acknowledge also that there were some few who received their call immediately from the church's hand, I would say, the body of the faithful people; and we may say of those, that their call was extraordinary, in the sense that we call unusual things extraordinary, which happen very rarely, and which are done against custom and ordinary practice. For although those calls were not unlawfully made, and without right, as I have proved in the foregoing chapter, it is notwithstanding true that it is not, nor ought to be, the common practice, and that it has no place but in a case of absolute necessity. So also in the Church of Rome the call of Martin V. may be said to be extraordinary, who was called to the papacy immediately by

the whole body of the Latin prelates assembled in the Council of Constance, and not by the College of Cardinals, as it is ordinarily done.

As to those ministers who succeeded them, and who received their ordination from the hands of the first Reformers, their call was without doubt ordinary, and conformable to the practice of the ancient church, according to the idea that the Scripture gives us of it; and all that it can have of extraordinary consists in this, that in the distinction of bishops and presbyters they have not followed them, and it is the presbytery and not the bishop that gives the ordination: but in that very thing they did nothing remote from that which was practised in the apostolic church, according to the idea of it that the Scripture furnishes us with, since St. Paul saith in express terms concerning Timothy, "That he had received it by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." 1 Tim. 4. 14. I do not here enter upon the question, Whether that distinction is of divine or only of human right; I will say something to that in the close. I do not so much as blame those who observe it as a thing very ancient, and I would not have it made a matter of difference in those places wherein it is established; but I say, where that distinction is not observed, as it is not nor can be amongst the Protestants of this kingdom, their call will not cease to be lawful, since besides the ease of absolute necessity, which sufficiently dispenses with that form, besides that neither the bishop nor the presbyter are of themselves any more than executors of the will of the church in that respect, and not the masters of that call, besides that, I say, there is a formal text of the apostle that justifies the right that the church has to give the imposition of hands by the presbytery, which alone is sufficient to stop the mouth of all contradiction whatever.

That being so explained, we may easily see what we ought to answer to all those petty objections of which the author of the Prejudices has composed his Fourth and Fifth Chapters. "Some," says he, "were called to the ministry and made

pastors only by laymen, others were ordained by priests only, and those who had been ordained by bishops lifted themselves up against their ordainers, and that church which had given them their mission.”* I have shewn in the foregoing chapter, that those who were called by laymen, that is to say, by the whole body of the church, had a sufficient call: that which I have also said concerning those who received their ordination from the presbytery, does not leave any more difficulty: and as to those who resisted their own ordainers, I have shewn that they did nothing in all that whereunto their very office did not bind them.

“We may see,” saith he, “yet further, by the Thirty-first Article of their Confession of Faith, that it was upon this supposition of a power given immediately by God to these men extraordinarily sent to order the church anew, that all their pretended reformation is founded.”† That Article of our Confession of Faith says not, that the church had absolutely perished, nor that the ministry was entirely extinguished, but that the church was fallen into ruin and desolation, and that its state was interrupted; which only shews that she, as well as the ministry under which she was, were both in the greatest corruption, and this is that which we also hold. It says not that God had given an immediate mission to the Reformers, but that God had raised them up after an extraordinary manner to order the church anew. That signifies that God by his providence gave them extraordinary gifts to undertake so great a work as that of the Reformation, and that he accompanied them with his blessing. All that, includes neither a new revelation, nor a new immediate mission; and hinders not, that the right which they had to employ themselves in it should not be annexed to their charge, and that it should not be common not only to all the pastors, but even to all Christians, as I have shewn in my Second Part.

“Their discipline,” adds he, “ordains, that the priests of

* Prejug. chap. 4. pag. 73.

† Ibid. chap. 5. pag. 91.

the Roman Church who upon turning Calvinists should be elected to the office of ministers, should receive a new imposition of hands, which shews that they suppose their preceding mission to be null, and so that that which Luther and Zuin-
glius received from the Church of Rome signified nothing; whence it follows, that that which they ascribe to them can be no other than extraordinary.* There is a great difference between the call which was given before the Reformation, and that which is at this day given in the Roman Church since those two communions are separated. The first was indeed very much corrupted, but yet nevertheless it supposes the consent of the whole Latin Church, and it was not given by a party so confirmed in error; whereas the second supposes no other than the consent of a party so confirmed in those errors which we believe to be most contrary to the purity of the Gospel, which makes the matter so that our society can no more look upon it as a lawful call, in respect of it and its service. Besides that when we see the conditions that are necessary to a lawful call, as examination, information of manners, and the like, so ill observed in the Church of Rome, that Christian prudence will not suffer us to trust to her and her elections, which for the most part would be null, if they were examined according to their own canons.

“ Calvin has written that God set up apostles in his time, or at least, evangelists, to draw men from the party of Antichrist.”† I answer, that Calvin only called the Reformers apostles and evangelists, by some kind of resemblance which they had with the first evangelists, in some respect; not that they brought a new revelation with them into the world, as the apostles and evangelists did, but because God made use of them, to make the light of his Gospel, which was much darkened, strike upon the eyes of men with splendour; and they honour those to this day with the title of apostles, who now employ themselves in making Christianity known to the

* Prejug. chap. 5. pag. 92.

† Ibid.

nations that are strangers to it, although they are not immediately sent from God, and though they have not any new revelation.

He alleges, in the end, the dispute that was between a Protestant named Adrian Saravia, and Beza, where Beza seems to admit of only an extraordinary call in the Reformers.* I answer, that as well Saravia as Beza are particular authors, who may have both had thoughts a little too excessive about this matter, and it may be, may have even disputed the one against the other, without well understanding one another. This is that which falls out every day between persons otherwise very learned. Beza rejected the ordinations of the Church of Rome; not that he thought the ministry was absolutely extinct there, nor that they had not there any right to a call, but because the calls of persons there were made after a very confused and corrupted manner, without examination either of doctrine or manners, by reason of which they were most frequently given to unworthy persons, and that instead of ordaining them to preach the Gospel, they ordain them only to sacrifice. That concludes that the ordinary call which the first Reformers received was not purer than that of others, if God had not given them the grace to rectify it as they did by a just and lawful use of it; but that does not conclude that such as it was it did not put them into a right and obligation to cleanse it from that ill which it had, by that good which remained in it.

The author of the *Prejudices* opposes further an article of a national synod held at Gap, anno 1603, which he sets down in these words: "Upon the 31st Article of the Confession of Faith, it having been put to the question whether when they came to treat of the call of our pastors, they should found the authority which they had to reform the church, and to teach, upon the call which they had received from the Roman Church; the assembly determined that they ought merely to

* *Prejug.* chap. 5. pag. 94.

refer it to the article of the extraordinary call, by which God extraordinarily and inwardly stirred them up to their ministry, and not in the least to any thing that remained of that ordinary corrupted call.”* But since he would give himself the trouble to look into our national synods, he ought not to stop there, he ought to go on even to that of Rochelle, which was held immediately after that of Gap, in the year 1607, and there he would have found that that article having been set down differently in several copies, and having been altered by the negligence of the copiers, it was re-established in that synod, which was drawn into an act in these words: “In the 31st Article of the Confession of Faith of the Synod of Gap, wherein mention is made of the first pastors of the reformed churches, these words *and to [teach]* which are found in some copies, should be erased, and in the place of *merely*, there should be put, *chiefly*; and that last clause, [*And not in the least to any thing that remained of that ordinary corrupted call,*] should be also mended, *Rather than to that little which remained of their ordinary call.*” To have made use of that article seriously, he ought to have done it not in the state wherein the ignorance of the copiers had put it, but in that wherein a whole synod had re-established it. At the bottom it will appear that they there treated only about a call for the Reformation, and not for the exercise of the ordinary ministry; and the synod does not, but in some respects only, deny that that call for a Reformation was not founded upon that which the first Reformers had received from the Church of Rome, however corrupted it was, but it would that it should be chiefly referred to a particular providence of God, which by extraordinary gifts and talents had raised men up for so great a work. In effect, although we should acknowledge that in the church the rejecting or reformation of errors should be the common right of all Christians, and that that right would yet more espe-

* Prejug. chap. 5. pag. 100.

cially belong to the ordinary pastors than to others, by the obligation of their charge joined to that of their baptism, yet we do not fail to acknowledge also, that there was something extraordinary in the persons of the Reformers, to wit, the gifts, or the admirable talents, which made them fit for that work, and capable of reducing their right into act, without which their right would have been to no purpose, as it did remain in divers others unprofitable, who had not the same gifts. But that very thing might gain them the greatest authority, and this is that which the synod would say, and which we say also with it. For we distinguish three things in the Reformers, from whence there results as full and entire a call to reform the church as they can desire: the one is, the general and common right that all Christians have to combat errors, since they are all called to defend the truth; the other is, a more peculiar right which they had for the same thing in quality of pastors, for how impure soever their call was, it would always bind them to have a care of their flocks, and to procure God's glory; and the third is, the extraordinary light and grace which God had communicated to them, and rendered them thereby fit for that work. But it is this last that reduced the two others into act, and therefore they looked on it there principally when they treated of the Reformation, because if they had never met with this, the two others would have been useless rights, and ineffectual obligations.

After that, it is easy to comprehend how the author of the Prejudices was mistaken, when, under a pretence of that extraordinary call that we attribute to the first Reformers, in respect of their gifts or talents, he imagines that he can lay it to our charge that we believe that the ordinary ministry was entirely lost, and that it was renewed by an extraordinary and immediate call of God. For it is upon that, that with great heat, to very ill purpose, he spends his reasonings throughout his whole Fifth Chapter, in allegations of fathers, and observations to no purpose upon the rights of that pre-

tended immediate ministry. We answer him, in a word, that he only combats his own shadow, for we do not hold that the ordinary ministry established by the apostles was absolutely extinct. It is a good that belongs to the church, and as the church has always submitted to the special providence of God, though in a different state, that same providence has also made that good always to subsist. It is true that it was very ill dispensed while it was in the hands of bad stewards, and that where the inheritance should have been cultivated, and without doubt have brought forth much fruit, it produced on the contrary abundance of thorns and briars. But notwithstanding, the inheritance was not lost. The ministry was always preserved, not only *de jure*, inasmuch as the church is never lost, but *de facto* also, for it always had ministers, ill chosen indeed, ill called, destined to bad uses, called by very confused calls, but called notwithstanding, and having a right sufficient to make them do their duty if they would, and if they had been capable. So that the good state of the ministry might very well be altered, interrupted, or overthrown, but the ministry was not absolutely lost.

I will not be afraid even to go further, and to say that if ever the ministry should be wholly annihilated, that which notwithstanding has never happened, and may it please God that it never shall, it would not be necessary that God should renew it by an immediate and every way supernatural mission, while there should be two or three of the faithful in the world, who would be able to assemble together in the name of Jesus Christ. For the right of the ministry would always remain in those two or three, and they might confer a lawful call upon one of themselves. If it could even happen that there should not be absolutely any more faith upon the earth, and that heresy, or Paganism, or Judaism, or Mahometanism, should generally overspread the whole world, without leaving any truly faithful in it, which certainly will never come to pass, since we have the promise of Jesus Christ to the contrary, I say in that case, provided that the

book of the Holy Scripture remained, the seed of the church, and that of the ministry, would subsist even there. The apostles who left it to the world, would yet further call men from thence a second time to the true faith, and by that true faith to the re-establishing of a Christian society, and by the re-establishing of that Christian society to that of the ministry, without any absolute necessity of God's immediately sending new apostles. One man only who should learn the heavenly truths contained in that book, might teach them to others and reduce Christianity to its first state, if God would accompany the word of that man with his ordinary blessing. Those who are acquainted with history are not ignorant, that in the Fourth Century, two young men, named the one *Ædesius*, and the other *Frumenius*, having been taken on the sea and carried captive to the king of the Indies, converted many persons to the Christian faith in that country, and that they made assemblies there, where they celebrated the worship of God.*

This is that which manifestly discovers the injustice of the author of the *Prejudices*, and other writers of controversy of the Church of Rome, when they demanded miracles to prove the call of the first Reformers. For while the Scriptures remain in the midst of men, it is not necessary to make new miracles to authorize ministers; that Scripture sufficiently authorizes the church immediately by itself to confer a call, when its pastors forsake it. It would sufficiently authorize one man alone, whoever he should be, a layman or clergyman, to communicate the light of his faith to others, if he were the only faithful person in the world: it would authorize two or three faithful, who should find themselves alone, to assemble together and to provide for the preservation and propagation of their society; and miracles would not be necessary for all that, because in all that there would be nothing new, nothing that might not be in-

* *Theodoret. hist. lib. 1. cap. 23.*

cluded in the revelation of the Scripture, or drawn from thence by a just consequence, as it may appear from what I have handled in the foregoing chapter. Miracles are necessary to those who preach new doctrines, and those which are not of ancient revelation, and which besides have not in themselves any character of truth; such as the sacrifice of the mass, the corporal presence of Christ in the sacrament, transubstantiation, purgatory, invocation of saints, the merit of good works, the adoration of the host, &c. It belongs to those who teach those things to tell us whence they hold them, and since they give us them as holding them from the hand of God, it belongs to them to prove them by miracles, for they cannot prove them otherwise; and when they should even have wrought miracles, or things that should pass for such, it would belong to us to examine them, since Jesus Christ has given us warning upon that point, which we ought not to neglect.

See here what I had to say upon the Fifth Chapter of the author of the Prejudices. The Sixth, wherein he treats further of the same matter, contains nothing which I have not already satisfied. It pretends that the call of our first Reformers was not ordinary, under a pretence that some few received their ministry from the people, that others were ordained by mere priests, and that those who had been ordained by bishops, have, says he, anathematized that church from which they received their ordination. But as to the first, we have shewn him that the calls that are made by a faithful people, are just and lawful in a case of absolute necessity, that naturally dispenses with formalities. Besides that those calls were very few in number, that they were not followed, that they do not infer any consequence against the body of the pastors, and that even when it should have had any irregularity, that irregularity would have been sufficiently repaired by the hand of fellowship which the other pastors have given those who were so called, and by the consent that the whole body of that society gave to their calls:

we ought not for that to leave off holding them for ordinary, although in that respect they should be remote from the common practice, neither more nor less than they in the Church of Rome to leave off holding the call of Pope Martin V. and that of divers other popes for ordinary, although they were not made according to the accustomed forms. "I demand of their ministers," says the author of the Prejudices, "some passages of Scripture that clearly give laymen a right to ordain ministers in any case."* That demand is but a vain wrangling, for when the Scripture recommends to the faithful the taking diligent heed to the preservation and confirmation of their faith, and to propagate it to their children, it gives them clearly enough by that very thing a sufficient right to make use of all the means that are proper for that, and which are naturally appointed to it. But every one knows that the ministry is one of those means, whence it follows that the obligation that the Scripture lays upon the faithful people in that respect, includes that of itself creating its own pastors, when it is not possible that they should have them otherwise; for that he that ordains the end, ordains also by consequence the means that are naturally appointed for that end. When the Scripture commands that all things be done with order in the church, by that very thing it gives clearly enough a sufficient right to the church to make its pastors, when it has none, and when it can have none but by that way, since it is clear that pastors belong to that order. In fine, when the Scripture teaches that the faithful people have a right to choose their pastors, it teaches clearly enough by that very thing, that they have also a right themselves to instal them in their office in a case of necessity, for that call consisting much more essentially in election than in installation, which is but a formality, there is no reason to believe that God would have given the people a right to have chosen their pastors, and to have made them be installed by other

* Prejug. chap. 6. pag. 129.

pastors, and that he has not given them at the same time that of installing them themselves, when it cannot be done otherwise, since naturally that which we have a right to do by another, we have a right to do by ourselves.

As to those who were ordained by mere priests, can the author of the Prejudices be ignorant that the distinction of a bishop and a priest or minister, as if they had two different offices, is not only a thing that they cannot prove out of the Scripture, but that even contradicts the express words of the Scripture, where bishops and priests are the names of one and the same office, from whence it follows that the priests having by their first institution a right to confer ordination, that right cannot be taken from them by merely human rules. Can the author of the Prejudices be ignorant that St. Jerom, Hilary the Deacon, and after them Hincmar, wrote expressly touching the unity, or as they speak the identity, of a priest and a bishop, in the beginning of the church, and about the first rise of that distinction which was afterwards made of them into two different offices? Can he be ignorant that St. Augustine himself, writing to St. Jerom, refers that difference not to the first institution of the ministry, but merely to an ecclesiastical use? "Although," says he, "that by different terms of honour the custom of the church has now brought in the episcopacy to be above the priesthood, yet Augustine is in many things beneath Jerom." Can he be ignorant that some fathers teach us that the ordination of a priest and a bishop are but one and the same ordination, and not two, which distinctly shews that they are but one and the same office? And as to the right of making ordinations, can the author of the Prejudices deny that St. Paul speaks of the laying on of the hands of the presbytery? Can he deny that the priests did not heretofore ordain, as well as the bishops? Does not Eutychius, patriarch of Alexandria, relate that St. Mark, setting up Ananias to be patriarch of that same church of Alexandria, established also twelve priests with him, to the end, says he, that when the see should be vacant, it should

be filled by one of them, and that the eleven that remained should lay their hands on him and bless and create the patriarch; and that afterwards they should choose another man and make him a priest in the place of him who should be chosen patriarch, and that by that means the number of twelve might remain always complete? And does not St. Jerom, more ancient than Euty chius, say to the same sense, that at Alexandria, down from St. Mark the Evangelist unto Heraclius and Dionysius bishops, the priests always took out one from among themselves, whom they set in the highest seat and called him bishop, after the same manner, says he, as an army makes an emperor, or as if the deacons should choose one out of themselves and call him their arch-deacon? Does not Cassian relate the story of a certain young man named Daniel, who lived among the monks of Egypt about the year 420, and who was first made deacon, and in the end priest, by his abbot called Paphnutius, who was himself but a priest? Does not Baronius himself say after Anastasius, that after the death of Pope Vigilius, in the year 555, Pelagius his successor received his ordination at the hands of two bishops and a priest of Ostia named Andrew? Which shews that even then the priests were not wholly excluded the right of ordination. They were not yet absolutely so in the Seventh Century, since we learn from Bede's History, that the monks and priests of the Isle of Jovan in Scotland not only ordained priests among them, but even bishops also, and that they sent them into England, and that those bishops were under their abbot, who was himself but a mere priest.

It is therefore a right that is naturally belonging to the priests, and of which they cannot be deprived by human constitution and orders, which cannot hinder that right from always remaining annexed to their office, and that they may not reduce it into act when the necessity of the church requires it. In effect, William, Bishop of Paris, has made no scruple to say, according to his hypothesis, that if there were no more but three mere priests in the world, one of them

must needs consecrate the other to be a bishop, and the other to be an archbishop. And to speak my own thoughts freely, it seems to me, that that firm opinion of the absolute necessity of episcopacy, that goes so high as to own no church, or call, or ministry, or sacraments, or salvation in the world, where there are no episcopal ordinations, although there should be the true faith, the true doctrine and piety there, and which would that all religion should depend on a formality, and even on a formality that we have shewn to be of no other than human institution, that opinion I say cannot be looked on otherwise than as the very worst character and mark of the highest hypocrisy, a piece of Pharisaism throughout, that strains at a gnat when it swallows a camel; and I cannot avoid having at least a contempt of those kind of thoughts, and a compassion for those who fill their heads with them.

I come now to that which the author of the *Prejudices* suggests, That if the Church of Rome were so corrupted as we hold, its calls could not be lawful; from whence it follows, that our first Reformers, who had received their ordination from the hands of the bishops of that church, had received no other call than what was null and unlawful. But we have answered him already, that although the Latin Church before the Reformation was very much corrupted, the essence of the ministry did not fail to be preserved in it, and that though its calls were very informal and confused, yet they did not cease to be calls and to be lawful ones, in proportion to that good which remained in that society wherein God still kept the truly faithful. The foundation of the Christian doctrine yet remaining there with its efficacy, which was found in some persons, the ministry, and by consequence their calls, were yet lawful in that respect, and the first Reformers, who referred those which they received to their right and lawful use, in freeing them from that impurity which they had, they were by that means rectified, purified, and freed from that ill which they had. It is to no purpose that he alleges the authority of some ancients who seem to have held ordinations

made by heretics null, for he cannot deny that the common opinion of the church was not contrary to it, that all that ought to be held for good and lawful, that was good and lawful in itself, which the heretical or schismatical society held, and to be approved rather than denied. This is what St. Augustine expressly teaches: "Not only," says he, "our fathers who lived before Cyprian and Agrippine, but those also who lived since, have observed that wholesome custom of approving and not denying all that which they have found to be divine and lawful that heretics and schismatics preserved entire, and of rejecting that which they beheld to be foreign and erroneous among them."* Let the author of the *Prejudices* read what that father has wrote not only in his own name, but in the name of the whole church, against Parmenio and the other Donatists, who said that baptism truly remained among heretics, but not the right to administer baptism, and he will find that St. Augustine strongly maintains that the right of ordination, upon which that of administering baptism depends, remains even among heretics and schismatics, in respect of all that good that remains there. I have said elsewhere, that in the confusions of Arianism divers ordinations made by Arian bishops were not held to be null. In effect, that of Meletius, ordained by the Eudoxians, who had it disputed for some time, by some few, was at last generally acknowledged to be lawful, and that of Fælix, Bishop of Rome, which was also made by the Arians, was never called in question, both the one and the other purifying their ministry by returning to the orthodox faith.

I should have shut up this chapter, and with it this work, if I did not further think myself bound to answer that great and solemn defiance of the author of the *Prejudices* about the validity of my baptism; not that I pretend to vie with him in his manner of disputing, but merely because I believe that I have been very well baptized. "I do not fear," says he,

* August. de Bapt. contr. Donat. lib. 3. sub finem.

“openly to maintain to Monsieur Claude, that remaining in the principles of his sect, he neither has nor can have any rational assurance of the validity of the baptism which is administered and approved in their communion. That by consequence he does not know whether he is baptized, or whether any Calvinist ever was. That all the certainty he can pretend to have is rash and ill grounded: that it can be no other than a certainty of fancy and humour, and not of knowledge and truth; and that he can never have a rational one but in sincerely acknowledging the falseness of the principles of his religion, and in rendering that deference and submission to the Catholic Church which he owes it. I speak to him purposely after this manner, to engage him the more to clear out this matter to us.”* It was not necessary for that to speak to me after this manner, for he very well knows that I have all the readiness in the world to content him. A word is enough, without any heat and elevation of voice to make me obey. What does he then desire I should do? “To shew him,” he adds, “what he has to do, and what that proof ought necessarily to include, I beseech him to note that the validity of the baptism of the Calvinists depends upon four principles.”† Let him blot out the word *beseech*, which agrees neither with the manner in which he speaks to me, nor with that wherewith I desire to obey him. “First, as they were all baptized in their infancy, they must, to the end they may be certain that their baptism was good, be assured that the baptism of infants be good, and that the Anabaptists who deny it are in an error. Secondly, as they were all baptized by sprinkling, and not by immersion, they cannot further be assured of the validity of their baptism, unless they know certainly that baptism by sprinkling is good, and that immersion is not necessary. In the third place, as they all proceeded either mediately or immediately from the Catholic Church, which they so loudly accuse of heresy and idolatry,

* Prejug. chap. 17. pag. 422.

† Ibid. pag. 404.

it necessarily follows, that they were all baptized either mediately or immediately by heretics. They cannot therefore have rational certainty of their being baptized, unless at least they are assured that the baptism which they received in an heretical communion is good, or that that which is administered by a man not baptized, does not fail to be good. In fine, the Calvinists being persuaded on one side that baptism administered by laymen is null and of no effect, and on the other, that the Catholic priests and bishops are false priests and false bishops, yet notwithstanding as they derive their baptism from those false priests and false bishops, they must needs shew us by the Scripture the agreement of these opinions, and that they can prove by clear and express passages out of it, that although the call of the Catholic priests should be null and unlawful, they have yet nevertheless that power of baptizing which the laity have not."

See here therefore what I have to do; but I need to say but a word to each point. I say then as to the first, that when the Scripture has said, "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," (Acts 2. 38, 39.) it has clearly established infant baptism. For since baptism ought to be given to them to whom the promise is made, and as it is made to our children as well as to us, it ought to be given not only to us, but to our children. So that without going any further, I have in that respect all the certainty that I can reasonably desire.

As to the second, I say that the word *baptize* equally signifying in the original tongue to *plunge* and to *wash*, and being used divers times in this latter sense, as it may appear in the translation of Mons in the 7th of St. Mark, and 11th of St. Luke, and there being moreover nothing in the Scripture that precisely enjoins immersion or forbids sprinkling, it is my part to believe that in the thoughts of Jesus Christ those two ways of baptizing are indifferent, and that so much the more

as I know the spirit of the Gospel is not so nice and punctual about forms, or the manner of external actions, which is proper to superstition. So that I have further for that all the assurance that I ought to have.

For the third, being certain as I am by the promises of Jesus Christ, that God has always preserved a true church in the world, that is to say, the truly faithful, howsoever mixed they may have been with the worldly, I am assured also that the baptism which was administered not only before the Reformation, but since, in the Latin Church, and in other Christian societies where the essence of baptism remains, is good, because that being made in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, it is the baptism of the true church, although it be administered by persons filled with errors and superstitions. Baptism is not theirs, they are only the ministers of it. That sacrament belongs to God and his truly faithful ones, in what quarter of the world soever they be. That same Scripture that says, "That the promise is made to us and to our children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord shall call," says by a necessary consequence, that the seal of that promise, which is baptism, and all the other rights of the covenant of Jesus Christ, belong to us and to our children, that is to say, to the truly faithful. The heretics who administer it, do not do it as a good that belong to them under that quality, for in that respect nothing belongs to them, but as a good that belongs to the true church, the dispensation whereof they have, by the part which they have yet with her. For they baptize not by that which divides them from the truly faithful, but by that which after some manner associates and unites them with them. It is therefore the baptism of the true church which they give, and not that of heresy; it is the church that baptizes by them, and in that respect they are yet, as I have said, the dispensers of its goods. If the author of the Prejudices desires yet further to see a greater number of proofs drawn from the same Scripture that should establish this

truth, he needs but to read what St. Augustine has written in his treatise against the Epistle of Parmenio, and that of baptism against the Donatists, and he will learn there not to make any more questions of this nature.

I know not, for the rest, whether he, as well as the others of his communion who shall take the pains to read this work, will be satisfied. But I dare say at least that I have done all that was possible for me to do, to set before them, without offence, the truths that are most important for them to know. It belongs to them to make a serious reflection upon that which I have represented to them, and upon the present state of Christianity, which the profaneness, impiety, and debauchery of men's minds do every day reduce into an evident danger of ruin, if we do not bring a remedy, both on the one and the other side. Nevertheless, instead of having in view that grand interest upon which the glory of God wholly depends, and the salvation of men, they apply themselves only to destroy us, and their passion prevails to that height, that they do not take heed of making irreparable breaches in religion, as is that of bringing to nothing the use and authority of the Holy Scripture, provided they can but do us any mischief. But although they should do whatsoever they pleased, God would always be a witness on our side that in the foundation of the cause, that upon which we have separated from them, is the love which we have for the truth, and the desire that we have to work out our own salvation. And to let them see that it is not a false prejudice that corrupts us, let them go through all the Christian communions that are in the world: let them judge in cold blood, and I am assured that they will come to a serious agreement that ours is the purest church, and approaches the nearest to the primitive one. Our doctrines are the fundamental doctrines of religion, which are great, solid, and convincing; our worship has nothing that is not evangelical, for it consists in prayers to God, in thanksgivings, in singing of

psalms, in celebration of fasts, in humiliation, in acts of repentance, in tears and groans when we are pressed with the thoughts of our sins and the wrath of God; our morals consist more in exhortations, in censures, in corrections, in threatenings on God's side, in representations of the motives that bind us to do good works, than in unprofitable decisions of cases of conscience. Our government is plain, remote from the formalities of the courts, founded as much as can be upon good reason, justice, and charity, but very opposite to the maxims of human policy, and especially to ambition, covetousness, and vanity, which we believe to be the mortal enemies of religion. Every one in the world knows that, and yet notwithstanding, the author of the Prejudices, and all those who with him follow false lights, have not failed to cry out against us, not only after a very uncharitable but an unchristian manner. As for us, we will always pray to God for those who will not love us, we will bless them that curse us, but we shall also with Gamaliel give them this advice, Take heed that in tormenting us, you do not fight against God, instead of fighting with him. Let us pray on both sides that he would give us his blessing and his peace, and that he would make us to do his will.

THE END.

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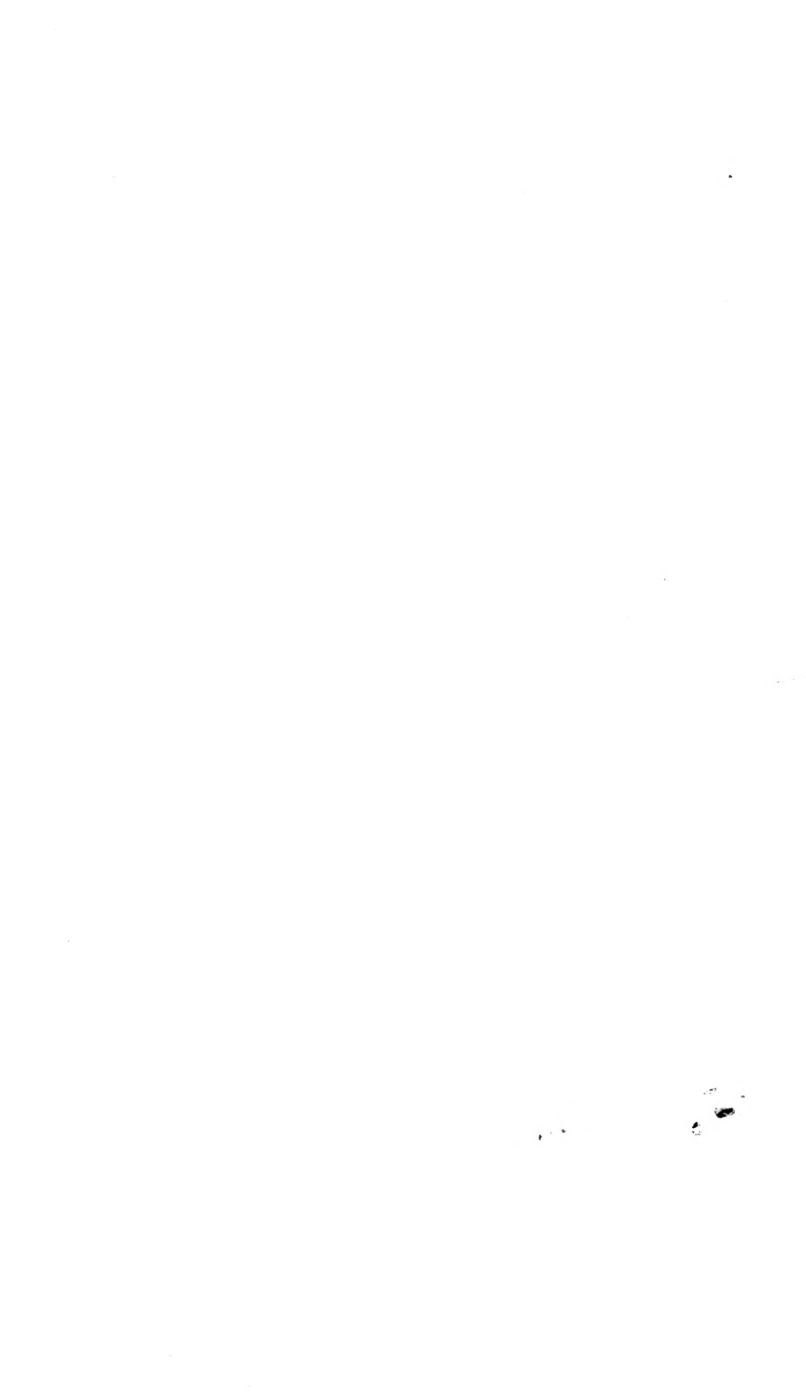
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