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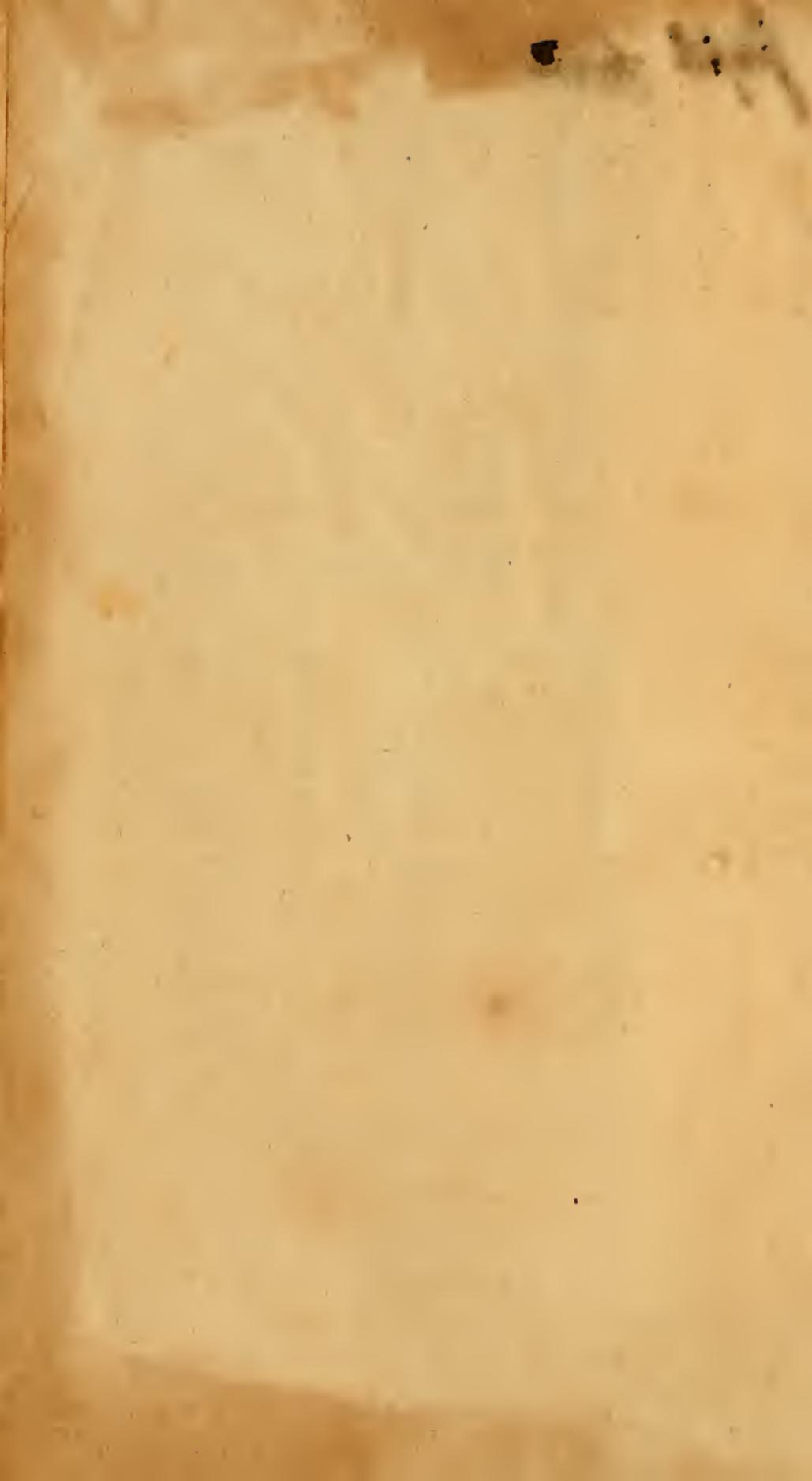
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# DISCOURSES

ON

## IMPORTANT SUBJECTS,

DELIVERED IN

MORNING LECTURES IN SOUTHWARK,

BY THE REVEREND

Mr Fowler,  
Dr Manton,  
Mr Poole,  
Mr Baxter,  
Mr Hurst,  
Dr Wilkinfon,  
Mr Vinck,  
Mr Lee,

Mr Mayo,  
Mr West,  
Mr Jenkyn,  
Mr Veal,  
Mr Clarkfon,  
Mr Needler,  
Mr N. Vincent,  
Dr Ainsley,

Mr Tho. Vincent,  
Mr Fairclough,  
Mr Sylvefter,  
Mr Lawrence,  
Mr Steel,  
Mr Wadsworth,  
Mr Doolittle,  
Dr Owen,

*Minifters in and near London.*

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOLUME I.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE BOOKSELLERS.

1779.



## To the R E A D E R.

THOSE famous ministers of Christ, Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, Zuinglius, Bucer, and the rest of them, who justly are stiled Reformers of religion; did say more against Popery, than any of the Papists have yet been able to give a solid answer to: And indeed it was by wise and uninterested men judged, above a hundred years ago, a desperate cause, being so much against both scripture and right reason. The church of Rome, therefore, that it might uphold and defend itself, hath had recourse unto *cruelty, policy, sophistry.*

As for their *cruelty*, What place almost is there that rings not of it? The *massacre at Paris*, the *Irish rebellion*, the *Gunpowder-treason*, those *flames* in which so many were burned in the *persecution under Q. Mary*; do plainly shew, That the Romish beast is the most cruel one that ever was, and is extremely eager to tear in pieces all that refuse to worship him. Those many thousands of men, women, and children, who have been most barbarously butchered by bloody Papists, in France, in Ireland, in Bohemia, in Piedmont, in England; may inform all, what arguments they use to promote their religion, when once they have any power in their hands; and what kind of dealing is to be expected where Popery shall prevail; unless there be a subjecting of bodies, estate, reason, sense, faith, and conscience also, unto their tyranny and usurpation.

And lest these instances of cruelty which I have mentioned, should be extenuated, as making nothing against Popery, because several of that religion have condemned them; it will not be amiss to add, That Thuanus an historian of their own \*, gives this information; That the pope when he heard of the massacre, from his legate at Paris, read the letter in the consistory of cardinals, and “solemnly gave thanks to almighty God for so great a blessing conferred upon the Roman see and the Christian world.” It was also decreed, That a jubilee should be published; the causes whereof, were to “return thanks to God for destroying in France, the enemies of the truth, and of the church,” &c. Soon after, the Pope sent Cardinal Ursin in his name to congratulate the king of France, who in his journey through the cities highly commended the faith of those citizens who had an hand in the massacre, and distributed his Holiness’s blessings among them.

\* Historiarum, lib. 53. p. 1604, 1605, &c.

them. And at Paris, being to persuade the reception of the council of Trent, endeavoured it with this argument, "That the memory of the late action, to be magnified in all ages, as conducing to the glory of God, and the dignity of the holy Roman church, might be, as it were, sealed by the approbation of the holy synod."

If this massacre be thus justified, commended, magnified, where there was also so much treachery (for the Protestants were invited to a marriage between the houses of Valois and Bourbon; and then in the dead of the night many thousands of them \*, without distinction of age or sex, were butchered, so that the channels ran down with blood into the river) sure we may conclude, That the most horrid murders will be defended, as long as that which they call the *Catholic Religion* is thereby promoted. I grant indeed, there are some good-natured Papists which say, They dislike such bloody doings, whatever may be pretended for their justification: But it is more than probable, that these very gentlemen, supposing the pope had power to wield both swords, if they should dare to talk against his cruelty, would presently be called in question, and feel the stroke of his swords, as heretics.

*Policy* is another prop of Popery. By policy I do not mean that prudence of managing state-affairs, which is joined with integrity, justice, honesty; but that craftiness and subtilty where no regard is had either to truth or conscience; but any thing is done, though never so much against the rules of righteousness, that carnal ends may be brought about. The pope having arrogated such a power to himself, that he can absolve subjects from their oaths of allegiance, can take off the obligation of covenants and promises, and give dispensations to transgress the laws of God; hereby a door is opened to all unrighteousness, and Papists may be allowed to dissemble, to lie, to be perjured, as long as it is for the catholic cause. The writings of Machiavel have been studied more thoroughly by many of the Romanists, than the scriptures of the apostles and prophets. And those who have conversed with the Jesuits, and understand the mystery of Jesuitism, find them such exact Achitophels, that they will counsel to any thing, though never so ungodly, if it tend to the upholding of their faction.

Lastly, For their *sophistry*: In this respect their schoolmen,

\* The number of persons slain in this massacre at Paris, and other places, amounted unto thirty thousand.

men, who have endeavoured to argue for Popery, are famous. But when what they say is duly weighed, it appears to be but sophistry, and no more. In the main points of controversy between the church of Rome and us, their arguments are answered in these ensuing sermons; the truth also is confirmed by scripture and reason, and then an improvement made in order to practice. This mixture of polemical and practical divinity together, it is hoped will be very useful.

The ministers who preached these lectures, endeavoured to accommodate themselves to the capacity even of ordinary hearers: For the common people, considering the industry of Romish emissaries, are in great danger of being seduced; and this book, through the blessing of God, may be an antidote. I could have wished that the sermons had been delivered to me altogether, that they might have been printed in better order, and sorted together according to the subject-matter of them. But if the reader please to consult the table at the beginning, he may read them in order, if he be so minded\*.

To conclude: Since England formerly was such a tributary to the see of Rome, and such vast sums of money were carried yearly from hence thither; we are not to doubt but the pope looks upon us with grief that he has lost us, and with an earnest desire to regain us. His instruments are more than ordinarily busy to this end, insomuch that both king and parliament have taken public notice of it. This lecture therefore against Popery is very seasonable; and if (which I earnestly beg) this labour be made successful to reduce any of them who have been seduced, or to arm and defend the people against one of the greatest visible enemies that Christ has in the world; I shall exceedingly rejoice that my pulpit was so much honoured by my fathers and brethren when they preached in it, and that ever such a project against Popery came into my mind.

NATHANAEL VINCENT.

\* The sermons are now arranged in the order here directed.



## ADVERTISEMENT to the READER.

These sermons are now reprinted in a neat and convenient size, and at a very moderate price. They contain all the chief articles of the Popish controversy, handled in a full and masterly manner, and are therefore very necessary to be read and understood by all sorts of persons at this time. A few alterations were thought proper in this edition; but those that are made, we hope, will be allowed, by the candid reader, to be for the advantage of the whole: As for instance, an obsolete word now and then is changed into a more modern; and a great part of the Latin sentences from authors are expunged, while the sentiment is expressed in English, and the authors cited at the foot of the page, not to interrupt the reading, and that those who chuse may have recourse unto the original: Besides, as the principal heads of the discourses are more properly arranged, and distinctly marked, they will be more easily perceived and understood by the readers. All which have a tendency to elucidate the whole.

# CONTENTS of VOL. I.

- Page
- S E R M. I. Mr. FOWLER. 9
- The scripture should be translated into known tongues, and read by the laity.
- 1 Theff. v. 27. *I charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.*
- S E R M. II. Dr. MANTON. 37
- The scripture a sufficient rule of faith and manners, and stands in no need of unwritten traditions.
- 2 Theff. ii. 15. *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle.*
- S E R M. III. Mr. E——. 53
- The testimony of the church is not the principal reason why we believe the scripture to be the word of God.
- Luke xvi. 29.—*They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.*
- S E R M. IV. Mr. POOLE. 86
- Popes and councils not infallible, and therefore Christians are not obliged to submit their faith and conscience unto them.
- Matth. xxiii. 8, 9, 10. *But be ye not called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ: And call no man father upon earth; for one is your Father who is in heaven: Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ.*
- S E R M. V. Mr. BAXTER. 104
- Christ, and not the Pope, universal head of the church.
- 1 Cor. xii. 27, 28. *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular, &c.*
- S E R M. VI. Mr. HURST. 124
- Kings and emperors not rightful subjects of the pope.
- Acts xxvi. 2. *I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, &c.*

S E R M. VII. Dr. WILKINSON. 152

The Pope of Rome is Antichrist.

2 Theff. ii. 3.—10. *Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, &c.*

S E R M. VIII. Mr. VINCK. 175

The Protestants did separate from the church of Rome upon just grounds.

Luke vi. 22. *Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.*

S E R M. IX. Mr. LEE. 201

The visibility of the true church preserved by Christ.

Matth. xvi. 18. *And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

S E R M. X. Mr. MAYO. 240

Invocation of saints and angels unlawful.

Rom. x. 14. *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?*

S E R M. XI. Mr. WEST. 268

Purgatory a groundless and dangerous doctrine.

1 Cor. iii. 15. *If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so, as by fire.*

S E R M. XII. Mr. JENKYN. 294

No sin venial, but every sin deadly.

Rom. vi. 23. *The wages of sin is death.*

S E R M. XIII. Mr. VEAL. 325

Good works of believers not meritorious of salvation.

Pfal. lxii. 12. *Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy; for thou renderest to every man according to his work.*

A Picture of Popery, from the Pastoral Letters of Mr. Peter Jurieu, to the Protestants of France, groaning under the Babylonish tyranny in the year 1687. 371

S E R -

# S E R M O N

Mr. F O W L E R.

The Scripture should be translated into known tongues, and read by the common people.

**T**HE controversy before us is, Whether the scriptures are to be translated into vulgar tongues, and read and heard by the laity? This the Papists deny, and we affirm.

I profess, I have been surprized how such a controversy should have arisen among Christians. Might not a man as well dispute, whether a carpenter should have his line and rule to work by? or a soldier wear his sword in the midst of enemies? Shall I question whether the air be necessary for breath, or bread for life, or the light of the sun for our secular affairs? Sure enough the word of God is all this; a rule most perfect, a sword most victorious, air most fragrant, food most wholesome, and light most clear. The word of an angel is no ground for faith, nor rule for life, duty, or worship: But the word of God read and heard, is so great a good, that the benefits arising therefrom are inexpressible and inconceivable. That pious and learned Bishop Hooper, in his epistle dedicatory to King Edward VI. saith, "God in heaven, and the king on earth hath not a greater friend than the Bible." The word is for the soul, and is not the soul more than life? this light is to give the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; and is not this infinitely beyond all our natural and civil concerns? All these things here below, are short-lived and vexation; but this makes a man wise to salvation. But after all, this question is determined by the council of Trent in the negative. Their words are, *Si quis legere, &c.* "If any shall presume to read or have a Bible, he cannot be absolved from his sins." It seems the reading of the Bible is a sin unpardonable. The people are taught to believe, that what the pope binds on earth is bound in heaven: Sure then, if a man that reads the scripture, or hath

a Bible in his house, comes to confession, and is absolved, that absolution is invalid. By this Trent conventicle, we be to the Bible, and all the friends thereof\*.

But you will say, the council's prohibition of the Bible is with a limitation, viz. If you have a Bible, without a license from the bishop.

I answer, It is true they speak to that purpose. But their pretence of a license is a mere sham, 'an abominable cheat, as I shall shew you in its place.

That this book may not spread abroad, the high-priest and elders in this council straitly charge and command all bookfellers and dealers in books, not to sell, or any other way part with, any one of these books to any person, upon the pain of the forfeiture of the price of the said books, and to undergo all other punishment according to the will of the bishop. I confess, this is drawn up very cunningly; for if you read the mandate of the archbishop of Toledo, by the authority of Paul V. there the punishment is, "For  
" the first time he shall be punished with suspension from  
" his office, loss of his trade for two years, banishment  
" twelve miles from the town for two years, and fined 1200  
" ducats. For the second time the punishment to be dou-  
" bled, and other punishments according to the will of the  
" inquisitor, if any have, buy, or sell a Bible. And though  
" they offend through neglect or ignorance, they shall not  
" be exempted from punishment." And Paul V. by his *Breve sub annulo Piscatoris*, dated at Rome 1612, forbids all persons to read or keep those books, under the punishment of the greater excommunication and other censures; but bring them by a certain day, to be named by the holy inquisitor-general, into the holy office of the inquisition. And accordingly, the said inquisitor, in his *pontificalibus*, specifies in his mandate, this to be done within ninety days. Now, amongst all the books in the index which are prohibited by pontifical authority, the Bible is the special book forbidden. And to make all sure, there are towards a hundred Latin versions of the Bible prohibited in this catalogue; and not only books prohibited in the index, but book or books comprehended in the general rules. Now, the fourth general rule is made solely against the Bible in any vulgar tongue; nay, against any

\* Bened. Turret, in his preface to the *Index, Lib. Prob. et Ex-purg.* tells us, "There is no place of mercy left to the book of God. Men fly from the gospel in the Italian or Spanish tongue, faster than they would run from the plague of pestilence."

any parts of it, as suppose some of David's Psalms, or some of Paul's epistles, whether they be printed or written; and all summaries or brief heads of the Bible, although it be a compendium of the historical parts of it.

As to the licences for reading the scripture, I told you before they were a mere blind. I will here give you the sum of Pope Paul V's brieve recalling all such licences: *Since as we understand the licences of reading the books of heretics, or books suspected of heresy, or books otherwise prohibited and condemned, obtained under certain pretences, do too much increase in the kingdom of Spain; and understanding, that there is more danger to the unlearned, than profit to the learned, by and from the said licences; we therefore, upon whom the burden of watching over the Lord's flock is incumbent, being willing to provide a seasonable remedy, and walking in the steps of our predecessors, Popes of Rome, do annul, cass, revoke, and utterly make void all such licences, faculties and grants: And by the tenor of these presents we do decise and declare the same to be cassate, void and null; granted by whomsoever, whether our predecessors, ourselves, our penitentiary, ordinaries, or bishops whomsoever; and granted to what persons soever, whether abbots, patriarchs, marquisses, dukes, or any other persons ecclesiastick or mundane; whether they have had their licence by letters apostolical, in form of a brieve under the seal, or any other peculiar way, to make the licence firm and lasting, we revoke and annul all to the utmost; any constitutions and ordinations apostolical to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding, under the pains and censures of the church to the highest; and under the penalty of the secular arm. And we command, all archbishops, &c. to take care that these our letters be forthwith published in all provinces, cities, diocesses, without demurring, disputing, or demanding why or wherefore.*

Here is sure work, not a crevice nor a chink left unstopped. And what is your licence now, I pray?

For other books I am not concerned: I shall only take notice of the *Index Expurg.* how these fathers of Rome blot out, and command to be blotted out, the sayings of the ancient fathers, as they are placed in the indexes made either by the interpreters or publishers of them: As for instance, in Athanasius, *Græco-latin*; in the index there was set down thus, *Scripturæ sacræ etiam plebi et magistratibus cognoscendæ*; i. e. The holy scriptures are to be known by the common people and the magistrates; blot that out, say they. Again, *Scriptura sacræ*, &c. The holy scripture is so plain that any one may understand; blot that out. Five more sayings there are about the sufficiency of the scriptures;

tures; blot them all out: These sentences will puzzle young students, and confirm the heretics: But the true reason is, they would discover their wickedness and heresies. So they deal with Austin's works, *Purgatorium non invenire in scriptura*; i. e. Purgatory not to be found in the scripture: Let it be expunged, say they. So they serve Chrysostom, who says, *The scriptures are plain to the willing: They are to be read by all. The scriptures contain all things necessary*, and the like. We have had two acts of the pope and his council, one to call in the Bibles that were abroad; the other to prevent their going abroad for the future; but all too late. As this would not do, they take two other courses: The holy synod decreeth, *That no man dare interpret or expound scripture in another sense, save that which holy mother-church hath holden, and doth hold; whose right it is to judge of the interpretation of the holy scripture*; and they that oppose this, are to be declared by the ordinaries, and punished according to the statutes; so that if the pope shall affirm, that the meaning of John xxi. 16. *Peter feed my sheep*, is, that by the words of our Lord Christ gave to Peter an universal headship over the church, and a sovereignty absolute over all kings, to plant and pluck up; and that all this power is given to the pope as Peter's successor, you are to believe it, and receive it.

The second council of Nice, quoted and approved by the council of Trent, proves images to be worshipped, thus, *No man lights a candle, and puts it under a bushel*; therefore, the holy images are to be placed upon the altars. But however ridiculous or irrational the interpretation be, you must not quarrel at it: If you do, they have two swords, and with one they will cut you off from the church, and with the other from the earth; for the church saith that is the meaning of *Behold, here are two swords*; the one shall unchristian you, and the other shall unman you.

The second course the council hath taken to help themselves, is this, They have added to the holy Bible the Apocrypha; and make Tobias and Judith, and the two Maccabees, with the rest of the stories of Bell and the Dragon, a rule for faith and life; and whosoever shall not take them for sacred and canonical, let him be *anathema*. They have also added to the Bible their traditions, under the name of *apostolical*, which are to be received with equal affection and reverence as we receive the word of God. O horrible!

The first of these courses, viz. to oblige men to understand the scriptures as the church, i. e. the pope expounds them, is a reproach to the reason of mankind. The second

goes higher, and is a reproach to the sovereignty, goodness, wisdom, and faithfulness of our Lord Jesus. It reproaches the apostles; for if the administration of the sacrament under one kind, invocation of saints, merit of works, worship in an unknown tongue, &c. be traditions, and if these be apostolical, what black reproach is here cast upon them? nay, what blasphemy against Christ, and his holy Spirit, is it to say, that the apostles should teach, practise, and write one thing to the churches, and after whisper the clean contrary to some others, who should convey it by word of mouth to posterity.

But perhaps you will demand, Upon what reason did the council thus decree? They tell you, *It is manifest by experience, that the sufferance of the Bible in the vulgar tongue, doth more harm than good, through mens rashness: Therefore, We forbid it.* This is such a reason, as if because some soldiers rashly abused their weapons, therefore the general should command, under grievous penalties, all the army to be disarmed, when ready to be attacked by their enemies. Should a Protestant decree against prayer, because the prayers of Papists are blasphemous? or against the use of the Lord's supper, because the mass is impious and idolatrous? What decrees were these? Must God's appointment be annulled, because of mens abuse? Why did they not decree, that men should be prohibited the use of the light of the sun by day and moon by night, because thieves and others abuse it? The truth is, the experience of the council was like that of Demetrius and the craftsmen; if Paul be suffered, down goes Diana, and our market is spoiled.

About the year 1516, Leo X. sent the friars abroad with pardons and indulgences, to raise money for his holiness. When they came into Germany, Luther, who had some years before quitted the study of the law, and applied himself to the scriptures, and had been blessed with some taste of the righteousness of Christ, unexpectedly began to stir against these pardon-mongers; at first very mildly, not simply against the thing, but against the impudence and covetousness of the friars: The friars scornfully and publickly traduce Luther; he takes heart, and begins to dispute, write, and preach against them. This spark thus blown suddenly becomes a great flame. The pope begins to storm, writes about this affair to Cardinal Cajetan; Cajetan disputes with Luther, and quotes against him the bull of Clement VI. which runs thus; *Whereas one drop of the blood of Christ had been sufficient for redemption, and streams of blood came*  
from

from his body, all that blood which was over and above, Christ had deposited as a precious treasure in the hand of Peter, key-keeper of heaven, and to his successor, to be dispensed (i. e. to be sold) to penitents; and so likewise the surplussage of the merits of the Virgin Mary, and all the saints, an inexhaustible storehouse of pardons. Luther refels the bull by scripture; Frederick duke of Saxony, shews him favour, sends him Cajetan's letter, and the university of Wittemberg defends him. Luther intreats the controversy may be decided in Germany. The emperor summoned him, upon safe conduct, to appear at Worms. He appears. There, in the imperial assembly, and after in the lodgings of an archbishop, before some other princes, he humbly, but vehemently, offers himself to be tried by the scriptures, or evident reason. He is banished Germany, and appeals to a general council. The pope fears a council as the shadow of death. All this, and much more, was done in five years. The gospel had dispelled the darkness of Popery, without any great noise or bustle. The council of Trent, who condemned the reading of the scriptures, convened not till the year 1546, about thirty years after Luther and others preached the gospel in a public manner. Origen said of old, that the reading of the scriptures was the torment of the devil: Sure it torments some body else of later years. The Bible burns the devil, and the pope burns the Bible. *They that do evil, hate the light.* The thief curseth the candle; the malefactor would dispatch his judge; and the design of these doctors is to make the most sound and fully perfect scripture to be as the people at the pool of Bethesda, halt, blind, lame, withered\*.

It

\* Alb. Pigh. gives this advice, They should often declaim against the scripture, and, with rhetorical artifices and flourishes, complain of their difficulty, darkness, lameness, imperfections, blemishes: On the other side, they should strenuously contend for the necessity, authority, certainty, perfection, clearness of unwritten traditions; and then, no doubt, they shall easily carry the day. Andradius, a great stickler in the council, takes the same course and confesseth, That many, and weighty points too, of their religion would reel and stagger, if they were not supported by traditions. *Orthodox Explic. lib. 2.*

Canus, a considerable man, bishop of the Canaries, tells his fellows, that there is more force and strength to confute heretics in traditions than in the scripture. And urges a nonsensical argument, viz. *I will put my laws in their hearts; therefore there is traditions.*

It were endless to repeat their blasphemies in abusing the scripture. About the year 1523, seven years after Luther began to preach, they were so mad against the scriptures, that they burned two Austin friars at Brussels, only for this, that they preferred the scriptures, above the pope's decrees †.

Doctor Coster the Jesuit, in his *Enchir. cap. 1.* divides God's word into three parts: The first part is that which he wrote himself in the two tables. The second, That which he commanded to be wrote by others. The third, That which he neither wrote himself, nor rehearsed to others, but left it to them to do themselves, as traditions, the pope's decrees, and decrees of councils. Many things of faith, saith he, are wanting in the two former; neither would Christ have his church depend upon them: The latter are the best scripture, the judge of controversies, the expositor of the Bible, and that whereupon we must wholly depend. That is, Blot out the sun, and set up a farthing candle. Here is a great deal of blasphemy, and some honesty. Blasphemy—That God hath not fully revealed his will.—That the Lord Christ would not have us trust to his word.—That musty traditions, and the pope's decrees, are the word of God.—That the decrees of men, of whom some have been necromancers, conversers with the devil, poisoners, murderers, adulterers, traitors, &c. are the rule of faith.—Honesty,—That he joins together traditions and the pope's decrees.—That he confesseth that traditions were not rehearsed or delivered from God by word of mouth; and therefore the council of Trent put a miserable cheat upon princes and people, while they say that traditions were either spoken by Christ, or dictated by the Holy Ghost.

Left any man should say, that these doctors were private men, which is their common and last shift, I will shut up all with their new creed, made by pope Pius IV. consisting of twelve new articles added to the twelve of the creed, called the apostles; out of which I shall select three, as proper to my business.

The

Bristow, teaching his scholar how to grapple with Protestants, saith, You must first get the proud heretics out of the weak and false castle of only scripture, and bring him into the plain field of traditions, and then the cowards will run: *i. e.* Set the pope in the throne, and Christ at his footstool, and then no doubt of the victory. *Bristow ult. Mot.*

† Sleidan. Comment. lib. iv.

The title of it is, *The public profession of the orthodox faith to be uniformly observed and professed.*

Art. I. *The apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, and other observances and constitutions of that church do I firmly admit and embrace.*

Art. II. *The sacred scriptures do I admit according to that sense which our mother the church hath holden, and doth hold, whose right it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the scriptures.*

Art. III. *I do vow and swear true obedience to the bishop of Rome, and all other things likewise do I undoubtingly receive and confess, which are delivered, defined and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, especially the holy council of Trent; and withal I condemn, reject and accurse all things that are contrary hereunto; and all heresies whatsoever condemned, rejected, and accursed by the church. And this true catholic faith I will maintain inviolate to the last gasp; and I will take care of those which shall be under me, or such as I shall have charge over in my calling, to be holden, taught or preached to the uttermost of my power. This I promise, vow and swear. So help me God, and his holy gospel.*

Thus the foundations of the prophets and apostles must be cast down, or else Babel will fall. Pass over to the isles of Chittim, go to Kedar, Did ever any nation do this to their oracles? Did the Pagans ever do such indignities to the dictates of their Druids or their Brachmans? or the Turks to their Alcoran?

I shall now enter upon and discuss this question, Whether the people of God should read and hear the word of God? It is truly matter of wonder, that ever such a controversy should have been moved, when the duty is so solemnly enjoined, the practice of it so necessary, and the fruit of it so profitable. It made David better than his enemies, wiser than his teachers, and was better to him than all treasures. This text is,

1 Theff. v. 27. *I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.*

THIS text is a constitution scriptural, one of the true canons of the apostles, directly opposite to the constitutions of the pope, and the canons of the council of Trent. It may be resolved into these parts.

1. An injunction to a duty, Reading; *that it be read.*  
 2. The subject or matter to be read, *this epistle*: And by the same reason all the rest.

3. The

3. The object or parties to whom, *the holy brethren.*

4. The extent, *to all.*

5. The solemnity of this injunction, *I charge you*; not I beseech, or intreat, or I exhort, but I charge; and that not simply a bare charge, but the highest that can be. He doth indeed charge Timothy solemnly, 1 Tim. iv. 13. *in the presence of God*; but in my text it is *by the Lord*: There it is, *I charge and command*; but here it is, *I charge, I adjure*. It hath the force of an oath, and that under the curse, *I adjure thee by the living God, tell us*, saith the high priest to our Lord Christ, Matth. xxvi. 23. implying an execration in case of speaking falsely. His charge, as Dr. Hammond renders it, hath the form of an oath, and is literally, *I bind you under the curse of God that this epistle be read*. The law concerning this we have, Numb. v. 21. where we have not simply an execration, but the oath of execration.

The text thus explained, should quickly decide the controversy: For whether we should obey the Lord Christ, or the council of Trent? Paul the apostle, speaking by the Holy Ghost; or Paul the pope? judge ye.

The words afford us three observations. 1. The state of the series of Popes or Antichrist. 2. His character. 3. His confutation.

1. His *state*. It is accursed. I offer my proof thus. They that do not read the scriptures to the people in the vulgar tongue, according to the duty of their office, nor suffer the people to read themselves; nay, that do prohibit them to have a Bible, and that under a grievous penalty, are bound under the curse of God: But Antichrist doth all this: Therefore the state of Antichrist is a cursed state. The proposition or major is the text, the truth of God: The assumption is notorious, the practice of Rome or Antichrist: The conclusion is regular and natural.

Add to this, the wo our Lord Jesus denounceth against the scribes and Pharisees, because they *shut up the kingdom of heaven*, Matth. xxiii. 13. *They took away the key of knowledge, and neither went in themselves, nor suffered these that were entering to go in*, Luke xi. 52. yet these never suppressed the Bible in their tongue, much less prohibited the reading of it by the common people; neither did the scribes omit the reading of it to the people. The argument holds from the less to the greater; in both these the scribes were saints in comparison to the popish doctors.

2. Here we have the *marks* of Antichrist, Dan. vii. 24. (for it cannot with truth and sense be understood of any

other) *he shall think to change times and laws, viz.* of the most High. Paul giveth this mark of him, he shall not only *exalt himself above all augustness*, above emperors and princes, but *shews himself as God*, 2 Theff. ii. 4. in changing laws divine, and making new laws, new creeds to bind the conscience: This mark is visible in many particulars. The Lord Christ *commands* the people to search the scripture; the Pope *commands* not. Christ *commands* them to search Moses and the prophets, the Old Testament; the Pope *forbids* them to search either old or new. Christ saith, *In them you think to have eternal life*; the Pope saith, *There is more danger of eternal death*. Christ gives this reason, *They testify of me*; the Pope saith, *No, they are very dark and obscure, very short and defective, therefore no competent witnesses*. Christ saith, *Let my word dwell in you richly*; the Pope saith, *No, not dwell, no not in your houses*. Christ saith, *Teaching and admonishing one another*; the Pope saith, *Brabbling and perverting one another*. Christ saith, *Whatever you do in word or deed, do it according to my word*; the Pope saith, *Do my word, observe our decrees, or else I will burn you*. Christ *commands* in my text that this epistle *be read*; the Pope *commands* the contrary. Christ saith, *To all the brethren*; the Pope saith, *No, not to any lord, or duke, or prince* \*. Christ saith, *I charge you to read*; the Pope saith, *I charge you not to read*. Christ saith, *I charge you under my curse*; the Pope saith, *I charge you not to do it, under the curse of the church*. Christ saith, *I charge you under the pain of hell-fire*; the Pope saith, *I charge you do not under the pain of hell, and the stake too*. Christ *commands* in the supper, *Drink ye all of it*; the Pope *prohibits* it.

3. We have the confutation of the popish doctrine and practice; and this ariseth out of the premisses thus: If the Lord Christ frequently *commands* the reading of the scriptures by the people, and solemnly *charged* the reading of them to the people, then the popish doctrine and practice is false and wicked: But Christ doth so: Therefore their doctrine is false, and their practice wicked. On the other side; if the premisses be true, that Christ hath *commanded* and *charged* this, then the doctrine and practice of the Protestants is holy, just and good: But Christ hath so done:

\* Franciscus Encarnas as learned a man as Spain afforded, was imprisoned fifteen months, expecting death every day, but marvelously delivered; only for presenting the New Testament in Spanish to the Emperor Charles V.

done: Therefore their practice is good. Observe from hence, That Popery is not only an addition to the doctrine of Christ, but a flat opposition to it; and in the great business of justification by the righteousness of Christ alone, there the addition is a destruction. The invocating of God, by the merits and intercession of saints, and the formal invocation of saints and angels, requesting their *opem et auxilium*, their help and assistance, is not a bare addition, but horrid blasphemy and palpable idolatry.

In opposition to the popish doctrine, I have three things to assert.

I. That the scripture is to be read by and to the people.

II. That the scripture was written for them and to them.

III. That it is to be translated into vulgar tongues.

The first is an express precept; the second is a reason to prove the first; the third is an inference from both.

I. The scriptures are to be read by and to the people. *When this epistle is read amongst you, cause it to be read in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye read also the epistle of Laodicea, Col. iv. 16. Whereby when you read you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, Eph. iii. 4.* This epistle, it is probable, was written to all the churches of Asia, as that of Corinth was to all the churches of Achaia; and it is likely the epistle to the Laodiceans, being one of these churches, was the same with this to Ephesus, and it might be inscribed to the several churches by name, one by one. These two texts throw Dagon upon the threshold; for, 1. The apostle takes it for granted they would read it; and commands to take care that they read his epistle written to others. 2. He takes them for men of understanding; who not only know more obvious truths, but even *the mystery of Christ*. He doth not tell them, these are hard, obscure, and not for the vulgar. 3. He yields or submits his own understanding of that mystery to the discerning of these Ephesians.

A third text is that of James in the council of Jerusalem, Acts xv. 20. *For Moses of old hath them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every sabbath-day.* This was the ancient practice, and still is, saith James. It was the custom of the Jewish doctors after reading, to expound some scripture for the instruction of the people, Acts xiii. 15. It was practised by our Lord Jesus, *He went into the synagogue, as his custom was on the sabbath-day, and stood up for to read, Luke iv. 16.* And in his answers to their questions, he appeals to their own reading, Mat. xix. 3, 4. *Have ye not read, &c.* So when the

the children cried Hosanna, Mat. xxi. 16. he does the same. And ver. 42. *Did ye never read in the scriptures, the stone, &c.* And have ye not read what *David did when he was hungry?* Luke vi. 3. And *have ye not read in the law?* Mat. xii. 5. Very frequently our Saviour quotes the scripture, but mentions neither prophet nor section, as by reading and hearing it read so often they knew very well the text. The Sadducees put a case out of the scripture, Mat. xxii. 31. he answers them out of it, appeals to their own reading, *Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, I am the God of Abraham, &c.* This was spoken to Moses sixteen hundred years before they were born; and Christ saith God spoke it to them: Then it did concern them to know it, and it was their duty to read it. When he speaks of the *abomination standing in the holy place*, he doth not tell them it is dark and difficult, but says, *Let him that readeth understand*, Mat. xxiv. 15. And so in the Revelation, *Blessed is he that readeth*, Rev. i. 3. yea, *Blessed are they that hear*: But why read and hear, *that they may understand and keep the sayings of this book*; and sure Daniel's prophecy and John's Revelation are the most difficult pieces in the holy Bible.

The Jesuits of Rhemes in their preface to their annotations, set themselves against the testimony of Jesus, and scurrilously scoff at the heretics (or Protestants) for reading the Revelation, &c. "They read, say they, out of pride of heart, the Cantica Canticorum, Romans, and Apocalypse; and we know what spirit they vaunt." O ye Jesuits! what makes you rage and revile?—The Canticles treats of the union of the church to Christ her head, and of her daily communion with him by faith, love, prayer, meditation, and obedience to him. Doth this offend you?—The epistle to the Romans heweth Popery all to pieces; their mincing original sin; their cursed distinction of sins into venial and mortal; their justification by works, their doctrine of apostasy, conditional election, &c. are all confuted by this epistle. And amongst Paul's numerous salutations to the saints at Rome, he never mentions Peter, as being over them, nor signifies their respect or duty to him: And it is not fit the people should know so much.—The Revelation describes the great whore as intoxicating princes and the inhabitants of the earth with the wine of her fornications: The city where she sits, is so plainly described to be Rome, that all the attempts of their learned men to apply it to Rome Pagan, are lighter than vanity. The Jesuits story of an Antichrist at Rome three years and an  
half

half before the end of the world, is most fabulous and ridiculous; yet in France, Spain, and Italy, this chimerical Antichrist goes for current.

There are other principal scriptures to prove this point, which is already clear as the sun to the unprejudiced: Yet it is matter of wonder, that the popes, councils, cardinals, doctors, should either be so blind as not to see it, or so daring as to deny it, or else so desperate as by flattery, fallacy, force, perverting scriptures, fathers, councils, to oppose, disparage, and blaspheme it; and all to rob the people of this treasure, and *make merchandise of their souls*, Rev. xviii. 13.

The first is that of Christ, John v. 39. *Search the scriptures.* Jesus had healed the cripple that lay at the pool; the Jews cavil at him for carrying his bed; he defends himself by the command of him that cured him. Upon this the Jews sought to kill Jesus; but he began to preach to them, and commands and exhorts them to *search the scriptures*; as if he had said, You will not believe me, though you see my works: *Search the scriptures; for Moses and the prophets wrote of me.*

The second is that of the Bereans, *They searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so*; and they are highly commended for it by the blessed Spirit, *they were more noble*, Acts xvii. 11. How are the Rhemists confounded and puzzled here! Something they would seem to say, but it is worse than nothing, not being to the purpose. This text avows three things, 1. That the scriptures were in the vulgar tongue. 2. That the laity had them in their own hands. 3. That they did read them and heard them read. There was no imperial or pontifical power to hinder them; no monks nor friars to discourage them from reading, nor impeach them for it.

The third and last is that of Moses in the year of release, Deut. xxxi. 11, 12. *When all Israel is gathered together, men, women, children, servants, all the strangers within the gates, thou shalt read this law before them in their hearing.* I say nothing of the king, who is commanded to have a copy of the law, and to read therein all the days of his life, Deut. xvii. 19. nor of Joshua the captain-general, out of whose mouth the book of the law was not to depart, but he was to meditate therein day and night, Josh. i. 8. nor the chamberlain of the queen who was reading in his chariot the book of Isaiah, Acts viii. nor Peter's exhorting the twelve tribes to take heed to walk according to the scriptures as a light, and a more sure word of prophecy, than any particular voice from  
 heaven,

heaven, 2 Pet. i. 19. nor Paul's bidding believers to *try all things*, 1 Theff. v. 19. which trial must be by a rule, which is the word of Christ, and with which they must be well acquainted. These, and many others, I must pass over. Tell our adversaries that Moses *read the book of the covenant in the audience of the people*, Exod. xxiv. 6, 7. What care they for Moses? If you argue from the apostles, What care they for the apostles? A learned Frenchman \*, affirms, That "the pope may dispense against the apostle, against the Old Testament, against the four evangelists, against the law of God." To what purpose should I stuff my discourse with quotations proving that the pope can dispense, when we see he doth it. In the affair of marriage, it is determined by the council with an anathema to the gainfayer, "If any man shall affirm the church cannot dispense in some things forbidden about marriage in Leviticus, let him be accursed †." If a man reply, that these marriages were abominable among the Heathen before Moses was born, and for these sins God cast them out, and therefore they were sins against the light of nature. The answer is easy, The pope can dispense against reason. If you reply, that Paul did deliver the Corinthian to Satan for one of these marriages prohibited: The answer is, Paul could not dispense, but Peter could. Thus you see there is no defending Popery, but by setting the pope above God.

II. The Bible had never been but for the use of the people of God. God commanded the doctrines, precepts, promises, providences, prophecies, to be written for them, and therefore they are to read and hear it read. *Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we all through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope*, Rom. xv. 4. for our learning, mine and yours, ye faints at Rome, tent-makers, artificers, men, women, old and young; for your faith, hope, patience, waiting upon God, keeping his ways, and comfort in so doing; for your strength and courage to do and suffer. *These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name*, John xx. 31. This gospel was the last written, upon the request of some Asian presbyters, for the good of the churches; and against the Ebionites and Cerinthians, and such like, who denied the diety and satisfaction of our Lord Jesus. 1 John v. is a most sublime and

\* Dr. Glasſiator.

† Can. 3. *de Matrimonio.*

and heavenly chapter, yet ver. 13. he tells us, that these things are written to believers, that *they might know that they have eternal life.* And in chap. i. when he had spoken of their fellowship with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, *These things,* saith he, *I write unto you that your joy may be full,* ver. 4. This epistle is enough to confound the Romish and Polish \* adversaries.

As the scriptures were written for them, so they were written to them; not to the clergy, but the people especially. *What thou seest write in a book, and send it to the seven churches in Asia,* Rev. i. 11. *Jude to them which are sanctified,* Jude 1. Peter writes his epistles to *stir up their minds by way of remembrance,* 2 Epist. iii. 1. Paul writes *to the saints at Rome, at Corinth, and at Ephesus.* Now, when God gives his truth by inspiration, and appoints it to be written, as profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that his people may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works; what audaciousness and wickedness is it for any sinful man to interpose and hinder it, and that by a law, under a curse? Search and look into history, whether such a thing was ever done under heaven. Ambrose saith, *The scripture is the epistle of God to the creature;* and behold here is one that openeth his mouth against heaven, and establisheth wickedness by a decree, expressly forbidding all men of all degrees to keep or read this letter. Is not this he to whom the dragon gave his power, his seat, and his great authority, and who opens his mouth in blasphemy against God? Rev. xiii. 4, 5, 6.

The next thing is to evidence our assertion by the judgment of the ancient fathers; but that seems needless, as their own writers do confess, that the fathers to a man were of our persuasion and practice †.

But

\* Socinianism, which denies the deity and satisfaction of Christ, sprung first up in Poland.

† Claud Espencæus, a learned bishop of their own, says of himself, "By the grace of God, I have been conversant in the orthodox fathers, and marvel very much that the custom of reading scriptures by the people should now be accounted capital and pestilent, which to the ancient orthodox fathers seemed so com- modious and profitable" *Espen. Com. in Tit. cap. 2. p. 266.*

If it be said, That this bishop was before the council of Trent, and if he had been in that convocation he would possibly have been of another mind. I answer, I will give you one instance for all, a little after that council, and it is worth your observation.

About

But you will say, Do not the learned Papists give some reply to the scriptures and doctors you quote?

I

About the year 1560. Bishop Jewel preaching at Paul's-cross, before a very great and venerable assembly makes this offer, That if any man alive of the Popish side, could prove by any one plain sentence out of scriptures, or fathers, ancient doctors, or general councils, for the first six hundred years, any one of the seven and twenty articles, which he there rehearsed, he would then yield and submit. Among these articles the fifteenth concerns our business: It runs thus, "If any one can prove by scriptures, fathers, doctors, councils, for the first six hundred years, that the lay-people were forbidden to read the word of God in their own tongue, I will yield and submit." Great discourse arose upon this among all sorts; for such a man (indeed incomparable) to make such an offer so seemingly daring, and in so public a place. Some few months after, he comes into the same place, and with a great deal of Christian humility remembers the audience of his proffer, telling them, it was not vain-glory or self-confidence, but the vindication of truth, the glory of Christ, and the salvation of souls, that had engaged him in this business. The bishop's apology for the church of England is printed, and translated into several languages. One of the many notable passages to our purpose is, If we be hereticks, and they Catholicks, why do they not convince and master us by the scriptures, as catholick fathers have always done? Why do they not shew how we have gone away from Christ, his prophets and apostles, and from the holy fathers? Why are they afraid of this? What manner of men must they be which fear the judgment of God's word, and do prefer before them their own dreams? who, to maintain their own traditions, have defaced and corrupted the ordinances of Christ and his apostles. This is somewhat close, but still there is silence. Dr Cole, late dean of Paul's, enters into a letter combat with him. The bishop begs of him to give one father, one scripture, one doctor. Good doctor, do not deceive the people, their souls be precious. The Doctor sends him back a taunt, a quibble, but never a word of scripture, council, or father. He pretends he was afraid of forfeiting his recognisance. No, no, replies the bishop, there is no fear of that: why should you fear the forfeit of your recognisance more for quoting Austin and Chrysostom, than for quoting Horace and Virgil? At last about five years after, out comes Dr. Harding and his fellows, and when he and they, the main strength of Rome, come to make their reply to this fifteenth article, the words are these, "That the lay-people were then forbidden to read scriptures in their own tongue, I find it not." This is honest however, but then the next clause is knavish, "Neither do I find they were com-  
manded

I answer; I shall speak to four questions, 1. What answer they give to these scriptures, &c. 2. What artifices they use to put people out of conceit with the scriptures. 3. What objections they offer. 4. What may be their design in all this?

*Quest. I. What have they to say to these scriptures?*

*Ans.* To John v. 39. *Search the scriptures*; they would fain have it to be in the indicative, not the imperative; to be a practice, not a precept. But they would gain little by this; for this practice was lawful and commendable. The fathers take the words in the imperative, "Would to God we would all do that which is written, *Search the scriptures* \*." "He commands us, *Search the scriptures* †." "Teaching them how they might have the word of God abiding in them, he saith, *Search the scriptures* ‡." "'Tis commonly taken for a command: He doth not say, Read, but search; not this or that, but all the scriptures, law and prophets ||." So that this text stands for a command from Christ, and the countermand stands for a brand of Antichrist. Stapleton and others say, Christ there speaks to the scribes and pharisees, who were to search the scriptures by their office; this they endeavour to prove by verse 33. *Ye sent unto John.* Now, say they, the scribes and pharisees sent unto John, therefore he speaks to them. *Ans.* The text is exprefs, and speaks not a word of the scribes and pharisees, but of the Jews, John i. 19.

Sixtus Senensis, and others, acknowledge, The fathers dispensed with or indulged the people in this liberty. But how could the fathers indulge that which was never forbidden? Indeed, Antiochus did burn the Bible, Julian scoffed at it, and Dioclesian did burn it also; but of Christians never any did so.

They plead the fathers say, as Jerom and Austin, That the scriptures are obscure and hard to be understood, and therefore the laity should not mæddle with them. It is true,

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"manded to read." *Ans.* The fathers did not take upon them to command, but they pressed the command of Christ. They exhorted the people to read, and rebuked them sharply for not reading. Is it not a fault amongst us, that we make no more use of so shining lights? I will name a few. Bishop Jewel in his Reply and Defence; Morton in his Appeal; Whitaker *de scriptura*; Dr. White in his Defence; Cartwright on Rhem. Pref.; the renowned Du Plessis; and the great Chamier.

\* Origen. in Isai. hom. 2. † Athanas. tom. ii. p. 248.

‡ Theoph. in loc. || Jansen. Conc. c. 36. in loc. So Maldonate, Theophylact, Auguttine, &c.

the fathers say, as we do, some scriptures, are dark and difficult; but they do not infer, as the Jesuits do, they ought not to be read at all; but that therefore Christians should read more attentively, and pray more fervently. Chrysofom is most earnest upon all sorts, artificers, men, women, old and young, to be much in reading and hearing; answers all their shifts; tells them they have more need than students, than monks, because they are in the midst of many temptations. The Rhemists \* would next insinuate, that Chrysofom was so earnest mainly to take people off from cards, dice, and stages-plays; whereas his great business is, to take them off from their excuses of their families, trades, callings. In short, the fathers speak of the scriptures as they are, as a light that shineth, as a lamp to enlighten and give understanding to the simple; and that if men speak not according to them, it is because there is no light in them.

Q. II. *What artifices do their learned men use to debase the scriptures, that the people may be brought to have a low opinion of them?*

I answer, many ways; by word and deed.

1. By word. They call them a dead letter, a dumb judge, inken divinity, a nose of wax without the pope, of no more authority than Æsop's fables. Here is a Rabshekeh † whom the Babylonish king hath perferred to a red hat, to blaspheme the living God. Dr White tells us, that Perefius said, he thought verily it was the devil's invention to permit the people to read the Bible ‡. And Thyrræus saith, that he knew certain husbandmen possessed of the devil. because being but husbandmen they were able to discourse of the scriptures ||.

2. By deeds and practice.

(1.) They cry up the good of ignorance. They tell us, it is more rewardable to be ignorant than knowing: That devote people may, and ought, in their ancient right, still to use their Latin prayers, beads, and primers as ever before, notwithstanding what Paul saith, 1 Cor. xiv. and that they doubt not but it is acceptable to God, and available in all their necessities; nay more, that they pray with great consolation of spirit, and with as great devotion and affection, nay oftentimes more, than they that pray in the vulgar tongue §. And what are these prayers? They are *Psalms*,  
*Pater*

\* Rhemist's preface to their Annotations, with Cartwright's answer.

† Cardinal Hosius. ‡ Martin Perefius de Trad. p. 44.

|| Thyrræus de Dæmoniac. c. 21. thes. 257.

§ Rhem. Annot. on 1 Cor. xiv.

*Pater noster, Ave Maria, the Creed, our Ladies Mattins, Litanies, and the like.*—If a Catholick called before the commissioners hath courage to say, I am a Catholick, and I will die a Catholick, he defendeth himself sufficiently, say they. But what if he be asked a reason of his faith? He answers enough, if he tell them the church can give them a reason of all their demands\*.

(2.) They cry up to the skies an *implicate faith*. This is the collier's faith, and doth wonders †.

(3.) They have one trick more to debase the scriptures, and dull the edge of peoples affections to them. Some doctors write most unworthy things of the Bible; these they applaud, that so they may instil slyly and insensibly into the minds of men by their authority; a very coarse esteem of the word of God: as for example, Catharinus testifieth of Cardinal Cajetan, that he denied the last chapter of St. Mark, some parcels of St. Luke, the epistle to the Hebrews, the epistle of James, the second epistle of Peter, the second and third epistles of John, and the epistle of Jude. This man they applaud very highly, call him the incomparable divine, publish these things in their books; and thus instil by drops an evil opinion of the scriptures: and if the Protestants object this to them, they put it off, saying, he was but a private doctor, what is that to their church. Their very priests are ignorant; many of them understand not their own mass-book.

A young man entered into discourse lately with some priests at Malaga in Spain; he saluted them, and proposed  
some

\* Rhemist's Annot. on Luke xii. 11.

† The Collier was sick; and being at the point of death, he was tempted of the devil what his faith was; the collier answered, "I believe and die in the faith of Christ's church." Being demanded by the devil, what the faith of the church was, "That faith that I believe in," quoth he; and thus he baffled and nonplused the devil, Staphylus and Cleardes both recite this story with approbation; Albertus Pighius, Hierarch. *lib. 1. cap. 5.* and Hofius cont. Proleg. Brentii, *lib. 3. p. 136. &c.*

I shall here relate what happened at the convocation at Westminster: A disputation is appointed by the council, nine popish Bishops and doctors on that side; eight Protestant doctors on the other side; Sir Nicholas Bacon Lord-keeper, moderator. The first question was about service in an unknown tongue. The first day passed with the Protestants; the second day the popish bishops and doctors fell to cavilling against the order agreed on, and the meeting is dissolved. Dr. Cole stands up and declares, "I tell you, that ignorance is the mother of devotion." *Fuller's history.*

some questions to them in Latin, but they understood not a word. Abp. Spottiswood tells us, That the cardinal persecuted men in Angus for reading the New Testament: And that the ignorance of these times was so great, that even the priests did think the New Testament was one of Martin Luther's books: He informs us also of a great contention among the churchmen, whether the *Pater noster*, or Lord's prayer, might be said to the saints: It was brought to the university; some of the doctors said, it might be said to God *formaliter*, to the saints *materialiter*; to God *principaliter*, to the saints *minus principaliter*; to God *capiendo strictè*, to saints *capiendo large*: The doctors did not agree; it was referred to a provincial synod, where the question was agitated again. At last it was resolved the *Pater noster* might be said to saints\*.

Dr. White informs us, from his own experience, how they said their prayers: The creed thus, *Creezum zuum Patrum onitentum creatorum ejus anicum Dominum nostrum, qui cum sens Virgini Mariæ crixus fixus Douche Pilati*, and so on, to *Eccli Catholi remisserue peccaturum communiorum, obliuorum iitam and turnam again*. He asked an ancient woman, what Jesus Christ was. She told him she could not tell; but sure it was some good thing, it would not have been with the Lady else in her creed †.

(4.) They destroy and burn the scriptures, and those that love them. I will adduce three or four instances:

King Henry VIII. wrote to the French king for licence to print the Bible at Paris in English, because there was store of paper and good workmen, as also to Bonner then leiger in France to further it. At great charge it is affected; but by means of Gardiner and his fellows, 2500 Bibles are seized and burnt openly in the Maulbert-place, Paris ‡.

Upon the Duke of Guise's persecution, all the Bibles, Testaments, Psalters, were sought for and openly burnt at Amiens. At Troyes the Bibles were all rent and torn in pieces. At Angees they were openly burnt: One fair gilt Bible was hung upon an halbard and carried in procession, the Papists crying, Behold truth hanged, the truth of the Huguenots, the truth of all the devils §. In Ireland, the Bible was dragged, kennelled, cut, torn, stamp't upon. A martyr in Q. Mary's time pled the scripture in his own defence: The bishop turning to a justice said, Nay, if he prates of the

\* Spottiswood's history of Scotland, *annis 1544, 1553*.

† Dr. White's way to the true church, preface.

‡ Fox's Martyrology. § Clark's Martyrology.

the Bible, we shall never have done. We have a law, and by our law he ought to die \*.

A bookseller in Avignon was tried for selling French Bibles: When the bishop of Aix, and the rest of the Prelates could not answer him, they gnashed upon him with their teeth, and cried, To the fire presently. He was led to his execution with two Bibles about his neck, one hanging before, and the other behind; and he and the Bibles were burned to ashes together †.

A woman of Sanfay in France, was accused by her servant for having a Bible in her house, in reading whereof was her whole delight. The maid servant complains of this to the Jesuits, the Jesuits to the judges; she was apprehended and imprisoned; the judges told her, if she would confess upon the scaffold that she had broken the law, and cast her Bible into the fire, she should have her life. We would have you, said they, imagine it to be but paper, and you may buy another, only throw this into the fire to give the Jesuits content. Thus they laboured to persuade her for the space of two hours. What a scandal shall I give, to the people, said she, to burn God's book? no certainly, I will never do it: I will rather burn my body than my Bible. Upon this she was committed close prisoner, fed with bread and water, at last condemned, her Bible burnt before her face; herself strangled, and her body dragged through the streets to a dunghil.

A woman in Ireland was required by Fitz-Patrick to burn her Bible. She said she would rather die. The sabbath-morning after, she and her husband were cruelly murdered. The murderer tormented in conscience, and haunted with apparitions of them, pined away with inward horror.

There is no end of these. Dr. Story said to a martyr, Thou pratest of the Bible: Bible babble, all is bible babble, thou shalt prat at a stake.

Quest. III. *What objections do they make against having and reading the scriptures?*

Object. 1. *Cast not holy things to dogs, nor pearls before swine;* therefore the people must not have the use of Bibles.

Ans. This argument is so horribly injurious to the wisdom and mercy of God, and so inhuman and barbarous to the rationality of man, that one would think it were rather slanderously imposed upon them, than proposed by them. But Harding and his fellows alledge it in their answer to

Bp

\* Bp Jewel's reply to Cole.

† Fox's Martyrology.

Bp Jewel; Hofius doth the same; and the Jesuits in their preface to the *Rhem. Annot.* but more slyly. Salmeron and Costerus give the same reason why the people are not to know the church-traditions. Canus saith, That the apostles did by word of mouth deliver the secrets of the gospel to some men, and did not write and preach the whole of faith and duty to the churches; for, if they had done so, they had gone against Christ's command, who saith, *Give not holy things to dogs, and cast not pearls before swine* \*. Harding and others tell us, that as the Hebrew letters had no vowels, the seventy elders only could read; the people being kept from it, as it is thought, by the special providence of God, that precious stones should not be cast before swine. A notorious daring untruth; for whether they had points or not, is not the question; but sure the people could read, for they were expressly commanded to write the words of the law, Deut. xi. 20. and they could write a bill of divorce. Paulus Fagius saith from the Rabbins, that through the whole country every town had a school, and that in Jerusalem there were some hundreds: And in so many schools was there no scholar did know his letters? Thus the poor people whose souls are precious; the people that are the church of God, whom Christ died to redeem with his blood, for whom and to whom the scriptures were written, must be deprived of them. What daring men are these!

*Object. 2. The people will pervert the scriptures, therefore they are justly prohibited the use of them.*

*Ans.* This objection is every where to be found amongst their bishops and Jesuits. One of the martyrs in Q. Mary's time broke its edge, and battered it all to pieces. Stephen Gratwitch, convened before Dr Watson bishop of Winchester, tells him of his cruelty in taking away the New Testament from him, which was for the health of his soul, and which all men ought to have for their soul's comfort; and so treating them more like beasts than Christians. No, said the bishop, we will use you as we would a child with a sharp knife; we will take it from him lest he hurt himself with it: So, because you will damn your soul with the Bible, you shall not have it. My Lord, quoth he, this is a simple argument to cover your sin: Are not you ashamed to make the word the cause of our damnation? But if your argument be good, you may take away from us our meat and drink, because some men do abuse them. My lords, said Winchester, we lose time, this fellow is per-

verse,

\* *Can. lib. iii. c. 3. com. not.*

verse, he speaks nothing but sophistry; we shall get no advantage against him. Have at ye now; Wilt thou recant? I will pronounce sentence.—There, there it is; who can stand before this argument?

If perverting scriptures be any reason for the non-reading of them; then, of all men in the world, the popes, cardinals, priests, Jesuits, should be prohibited. I will present you with a few instances: Dr. Harding argues thus; *The Son of man came not to destroy, but to seek and to save that which is lost: Ergo*, In the sacrament the accidents of bread and wine remain without their subjects. *The ax may not boast itself against him that listeth it up: Ergo*, No man may dare to judge the pope, if he leads thousands of souls to hell. *To the pure all things are pure: Ergo*, It is not lawful for priests to marry. *Give not holy things to dogs: Ergo*, Prayers must be in a strange tongue. *I will sprinkle clean water upon you: Ergo*, The priest must sprinkle the people with clean water. *Without me ye can do nothing: Ergo*, The bishop alone must consecrate the church. Paul saith, *The rock was Christ: Ergo*, The altar must be of stone. *The earth is the Lord's; the round world: Ergo*, The host or sacramental bread must be round. *God made the sun to rule the day, and the moon the night: Ergo*, The dignity of the pope is fifty-six times bigger than the emperor's dignity. *The thief upon the cross repented: Ergo*, The priest at mass must fetch a sigh, and knock his breast. *Judas kissed Christ: Ergo*, The priest must kiss the altar. *Take the money in the mouth of the fish, and pay for me and thee: Ergo*, The pope is the head of the church. *Babylon is a cup of gold in the hand of the Lord: Ergo*, The chalice must be of silver or gold.

Thus I have given you a full dozen of instances of their horrible abuse of scripture; and if it were necessary, I could furnish you with a dozen more.

They are the greatest perverters of scripture ever were. They apply that to sinful men, which is peculiar to the Lord Jesus; as, The pope is the light that cometh into the world. *Thou hast put all things under his feet, i. e.* the pope's feet, say they: *The beasts of the field, i. e.* men on earth: *The fish of the sea, i. e.* souls in purgatory: *The fowls of the air, i. e.* the souls in heaven canonized by the pope. The ambassadors of Sicily thus supplicate the pope, O thou, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us: O thou that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace. What nonsensical inferences and blasphemous applications are these!

Object.

*Object. 3. The reading of the scriptures, or hearing them read, breeds heresy.*

This objection is common amongst all their writers; the council of Trent saith, that the scriptures do more harm than good. What harm they do not tell. Why do not they speak out, and name the harm they did; by whom, in what country, to whom, and in what particulars? They say experience manifests it. But whose experience? None sure but their own. They found the scriptures had discovered their tyranny, heresy, idolatry, pride, covetousness, and innumerable villanies; and this is the rise of their rage and enmity against them.

“Wo be to our parish priests, wo be to our bishops, wo be to our prelates,” said a learned man of their own; yea, wo be to them indeed: They have not only *taken away the key of knowledge*, but they reproach it as the key of heresy. Would you know the reason, God’s book is full of truth, and their books are full of lies.

It is to little purpose to light up a candle where the sun shines. Why should I name the fathers? There were heresies in their times. Iræneus, Epiphaneus, Austin, and others reckon up about eighty: But did they forbid the people to read and search the scriptures? No. They chide them because they were not skilful in them. Chrysostom saith, “The Manichees and heretics deceive the simple, but if we had our senses exercised to discern good and evil, we might easily refute them; but how shall we have our senses but by the use of the scriptures?” “Nothing can deceive these that search the scriptures. for they are light, which shining the thief is discovered \*.” “Ignorance of the word of God is the cause of all these heresies †.”

*Object. 4. The scriptures are obscure and dark, therefore the laity should not read them.* For proof of this they adduce, 2 Pet. iii. 16.—*In which are some things hard to be understood, viz. in Paul’s epistles.*

*Answer.* Although there be some things dark and obscure in some of Paul’s epistles, and other parts of scripture; yet there are nothing dark in these that concern faith and holiness, but the same is abundantly plain in other texts. Instead of this being an argument for not reading, it is a strong one to read more frequently, and compare scripture with scripture, and also pray for the holy Spirit to teach us all things, and to enlighten the eyes of our understandings.

If

\* Theoph. de Lazaro.

† Iræneus.

If the scriptures be hid, they are so to the learned Papists. How do they write and determine contrary to one another? Aquinas, Pighius, Gropper, and the divines of Colen are clear in the point of justification, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness: But how dark and ignorant is the council of Trent in that great point? There is scarce an article in which they do agree among themselves, no not in the point of the pope's supremacy. The fault is not in the object, but in the faculty: The scripture is light, but we are dark. Men receive not the truth in the love of it, and God justly lets them wander in the dark, and believe a lye. The noble Morney shall conclude this, "The ancient fathers, says he, did chide the people for not reading; the Trent council doth curse them if they read. Then, before the art of printing, bibles were scarce and dear, now they are plenty and cheap. Those laboured to open the eyes of the people of God, but these endeavour to put them out, and keep them in ignorance."

*Quest. IV. What design hath the Papists in all this?*

*Ans. i.* They vilify and disparage the scriptures, that they may advance their own traditions. The Bible is their enemy, and therefore they are enemies to it. They hate it, for it never speaks good of them, nor their inventions. Hildebrand, a necromancer and murderer, who threw the host into the fire, because it would not answer his demands, was the man that trampled on the scripture, and advanced traditions.

2. They disparage the scripture, to maintain their pride, and support their authority. They keep the scriptures from the people, that they may depend upon them. "I fear, saith Erasmus, the reason of forbidding the reading of the scriptures, is not so much the danger that people may run into by knowledge, but rather that they may resort unto them as oracles."—"Whereas many things are taught to be observed, saith one of their own party\*, which are not expressly mentioned in scripture, will not the simple people observing this, murmur and complain?" Here is the nail upon the head, or the sow by the right ear, as the proverb runs.

Dr. Harding gives this as a reason why the people must not have the Bible, They will despise and mock the simplicity of the church, in those things which she useth as pap and milk to nourish her tender babes; that is, They will despise what God would have them to despise, *viz.* the an-

\* Petrus Sutor de Tralat. Bibliæ, cap. 22.

tick postures, gestures, &c. in their superstitious, idolatrous worship in an unknown tongue. Let us see what the pope himself saith. Dr. Stillingfleet and Dr. Moulin cite a remarkable passage to this purpose which I shall here relate:

The bishops meet at Bononia to consult with Pope Paul III. how the dignity of the Roman see might be upheld, as it began to totter. They propose different schemes; at last they agree, That as little of the gospel as possible might be read in the cities of his jurisdiction, especially in the vulgar tongue; and that what is in the mass would be sufficient. The reason they assign is, That the scriptures, above all others, had raised these tempests and whirlwinds with which we are almost carried away.

A very honest, true and ingenious confession! Indeed, it would be no hard matter to show how that not only their practices, but their very doctrines are repugnant to the sacraments, Lord's prayer, the creed, and ten commandments. This is the true reason why they vilify the scriptures, which is acknowledged here by their own bishops.

III. The scriptures are to be translated into vulgar tongues. We have proved already they are to hear and read them; and that they were written by divine appointment for them; therefore they ought to be translated. What the better am I of an Indian or Welsh Bible, if I understand it not? Methinks the gift of tongues, whereby so many nations heard the wonderful things of God in their own language, Acts ii. should convince every one of the necessity of this. Gifts are for others, for the edification of the body, Eph. iv. 7.—14. This was, as to the way of attainment, extraordinary; but now skill in languages is attained by ordinary means: So that I may say of translating the Bible, what Kentigern, a bishop in Wales, about the year 500, was wont to say of preaching, *viz.* "They that are against preaching God's word, envy the salvation of mankind."

Uphilas translated the Bible into the Gothish tongue, about 1300 years ago, that the barbarous might learn the truth of God. Very many of the Goths were converted, and because they forsook the religion of their fathers, *viz.* Paganism, they were put to death by Athanaricus, and died martyrs for Christ\*.

Many translations have been of the Hebrew text into Greek; but those of it into Latin are numberless.

Translations were made into the Palestine, Theban, Phe-  
nician,

\* Socr. Eccl. hist. l. 4. c. 27.

nician, Arabic, and Lybian tongues \* : Yea, into all Christian tongues †.

It is very remarkable, that God gave to Jeremiah what the Jews should say when they were in Babylon, not in the Hebrew, but in the Chaldee tongue, which the Babylonians spoke, that they might understand what was spoke, Jer. x. 11. *Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, they shall perish.* And Daniel expounds Nebuchadnezzar's dream to him in the Chaldee tongue, which is here the original. Several chapters are in the Chaldee language. Why did Daniel write them in that language, and not in the Hebrew, unless it were God's design that men should know their own concerns in their own tongue? What an irrational and abominable thing then is it in the council of Trent, to forbid the translating of the scriptures? How destructive to the immortal souls of men is such a prohibition?

Eusebius inclines to judge that Moses was translated into Greek before the Persian monarchy. Numenius a Pythagorean philosopher asserts, that what Plato wrote of God and the world, he stole it from Moses. Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle were all but plagiaries from Moses.

Ptolemy Philadelphus caused the Hebrew to be translated into Greek, and received it with great veneration ‡. Other translations there were that went under the name of Septuagint. This the Eunuch was reading in his chariot; and Luke sets it down as in the Greek, and not in the Hebrew original. Philip expounds it to him; the Eunuch believes, is baptized, and goes on his way rejoicing, Acts viii. 26, &c. a good argument for translating the scripture into known tongues.

*Object.* *This island hath continued in the faith 1300 years without Bibles till of late.*

*Ans.* This is false. Constantine commanded the Bible to be written and sent abroad into all countries, and kingdoms of his dominions, whereof Britain was one. Adelftane King of England caused it to be translated into the English tongue. Beda a 1000-years since translated the gospel of John into English, and he saith, Five nations, Britons, English, Picts, Scots, Latins, did converse with one truth, one Bible §.

*Object.* *What, the scripture translated into barbarous tongues?*

*Ans.* Barbarous, vulgar tongues, makes a rancorous noise:

\* Basil. in epist. ad Neocæsar. † Isidor. de eccles. offic. c. 10.

‡ Josephus Antiq. lib. 12. c. 1, 3. § Bed. Eccl. hist. lib. 1.

noise: But the Bible is holy in any language; and that language is holy that knows how to worship God, and bless Jesus. Paul calls every tongue barbarous that is not understood, 1 Cor. xiv. 11. and so all the prayers of the Papists are barbarous, because not understood by the people.

The council allows no translation to be authentic but the old Latin, which they prefer above the original. This translation abounds with great faults, on purpose to defend their errors and idolatries. Take an example or two:

Gen. iii. 15. *He shall bruise the serpent's head*; so the Hebrew, and so the 70 translate it. In the last Latin edition set forth by Clement VIII. it is *she*, viz. the Virgin Mary, *shall break the serpent's head*. This translation is still followed by them, although a confessed corruption of the text, and no man in writing, preaching or disputing, dare use any other.

Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30. *The skin of his face shone*; they read, *They saw his face horned*: Hereupon they picture Moses with a pair of horns, for which the Jews curse the Christians, as if they thought Moses to be a devil.

Heb. xi. 21. *Jacob worshipped leaning on the top of his staff*; they read, *Jacob worshipped the top of his rod*.

Let us seriously reflect what a rich mercy and great privilege we enjoy in having the scriptures in our mother-tongue; they are able to make us wise unto salvation. Hierom, Austin, Luther, Calvin, and all our reformers, strain for expressions to set forth their excellency; let us not be dull and stupid, but improve the day of our merciful visitation.

Let us abhor Popery, which endeavours to maintain its kingdom of darkness, although it should be to the shutting up of souls in everlasting darkness.—Let us pray that God would blast it, and preserve us from ever falling under its yoke; for if that prevail we must lose our Bibles, and unless we submit to lose the truth and our own souls, we must lose our bodies also. They have waded through a sea of blood to destroy the word of God, and they will do so still.

*Lastly*, By hearing, reading, prayer, and meditation, let every one of us labour to be expert in the word: Apollos was mighty in the scriptures. To stir up your hearts, consider, 1. The author, the most holy and only wise God, Rom. xvi. 27. 1 Tim. i. 17. It is what the Spirit, the Spirit of glory, of holiness, of truth, faith to the churches, Rev. ii. and iii. chapters. 2. The matter, our Lord Jesus: Here are all treasures of wisdom and knowledge; here are the commands of God, full, plain, pure, everlasting; here are the

the promises exceeding great, free, precious, which are all yea and amen in Christ; here are the works of God's creation, providence and redemption, which the philosophers knew not. 3. The office of it, to instruct, to give understanding, to convince of sin, of wrath, of a Saviour, to begin and increase holiness, and produce peace of conscience. 4. The end, to make wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus.

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## S E R M O N II.

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Dr. M A N T O N.

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The Scripture is the alone rule of faith and manners, without any supplement of unwritten traditions.

2 Theff. ii. 15. *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.*

**T**HE apostle, after he had comforted the Thessalonians, exhorteth them to constancy in the truth, whatever temptations they had to the contrary. The comforts he propoundeth to them were taken, 1. From their election, ver. 13. 2. From their vocation, ver. 14. His exhortation is to perseverance: *Therefore, brethren, &c.*

In the words observe, 1. The illative particle *therefore*; because God hath *chosen* you and *called* you, and given you such advantages against error and seduction.

2. The duty inferred, *Stand fast*: It is a military word. You have the same in 1 Cor. xvi. 13. *Watch ye, stand fast, &c.* and Eph. vi. 14. *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth.* The word intimateth perseverance.

3. The means of perseverance, *Hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle.*

Where observe, 1. The *act*. 2. The *object*.

1. The *act*, *hold* with strong hand. The word implieth a forcible holding against assaults, whether of error or persecution,

secution. The Thessalonians were assaulted in both kinds; the heathens persecuted them, and some were gone abroad that began the *mystery of iniquity*, and were ready to pervert them.

2. The *object*; which is propounded, 1. By a common and general term, the *traditions which ye have been taught*. 2. By a distribution, *whether by word or our epistle*.

1<sup>st</sup>, The common and *general term*, the *traditions which ye have been taught*. There are two sorts of traditions, *human and divine*.

1. Human traditions are certain external observances instituted by men, and delivered from hand to hand, from progenitors to their posterity. These may be either besides or contrary to the word of God: 1. Beside the word; as the institutions of the family of the Rechabites, in the observance of which from father to son, they were so exact and punctual, that God produceth their example to shame the disobedience of his people, Jer. xxxv. 6, 7. 2. Contrary to the word of God; such as were those of the Pharisees, Matth. xv. 3. *Why do ye transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?* Human inventions in religion are contrary to, and destructive of divine laws.

2. Traditions divine, are either heavenly doctrines revealed by God, or institutions and ordinances appointed by him for the use of the church. These are the rule and ground of faith, worship and obedience. The whole doctrine of the gospel is a *tradition* delivered and conveyed to us by fit messengers, such as the apostles were, 1 Cor. xi. 2. *Now, I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, marg. Traditions, as I delivered them to you.* So that holding the traditions is nothing else but perseverance in apostolical doctrine.

2<sup>dly</sup>, The *distribution*: That no cheats might be put upon them under any pretence; therefore, he saith, *Whether by word, or our epistle*; that is, by *word of mouth* when present, or by *epistle* when absent. And he saith, not *epistles*, but *epistle*; as alluding to the former wrote unto them: They were bound to yield to both alike credence and obedience; for whether in speaking or writing, the apostolical authority was the same. To improve this verse for your benefit, I shall lay down several propositions.

*Prop. I.* That whatever assurance we have of God's preserving us in the truth, yet we are bound to use diligence and caution; for the apostle had said, That God had *chosen and called* them to the *belief of the truth*; and yet saith, *Therefore,*

fore, brethren, stand fast. Reason will tell us, That when we intend *an end* we must use *the means*, otherwise the *bare intention* and desire would suffice, and then the sluggard would be the wisest man in the world; but common experience sheweth that the end cannot be obtained without a diligent use of the means, Prov. xiii. 4.

Our business at this time is to enquire, Whether God's election, calling, or promise, doth so secure the end to us, as that we need not be careful in the diligent use of the means?

1. God's decree is of both ends and means; for all his purposes are executed by fit means. He that *hath chosen us to salvation*, bringeth it about by the *belief of the truth and sanctification of the Spirit*, 2 Thess. ii. 13. And *without faith and holiness no man shall see God*, and escape condemnation. God had assured by Paul, *That there should be no loss of any man's life among them, except of the ship*, Acts xxvii. 22. and yet afterward, ver. 31. Paul telleth them, *Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved*. How could that assurance given to Paul from God, and Paul's caution to the mariners stand together? Doth the purpose of God depend upon the uncertain will and actions of men? I answer not as a *cause*, from whence it receiveth its force and strength, but as a *means* appointed also by God to the execution of his decree; for by the same decree God appointeth the event what he will do, and the means by which he will have it to be done; and the Lord revealing by his word this conjunction of ends and means, there is a necessity of duty lying upon man to use these means, and not to expect the end without them. God intended to save all in the ship, and yet the mariners must abide in the ship; therefore what God hath joined together let no man separate: If we separate these things, God doth not change his counsel, but we pervert his order to our own destruction.

2. God who hath bid us believe his promises, hath forbidden us to tempt his providence, Matth. iv. 7. Now we tempt God, when we desire him to give an extraordinary proof of his care over us, when ordinary means will serve the turn, or be useful to us.

3. Though the means seem to have no connexion with the end; yet if God hath enjoined them for that end, we must use them. As in the instance of Naaman, God was resolved to cure him, but Naaman must take his prescribed way, though against his own fancy and conceit, 2 Kings v. 10. *Wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again*  
unto

unto thee, and thou shalt be clean. Compare ver. 13. If the prophet had bidden thee do some great thing, &c. So John ix. 6, 7. the blind man must submit to have his eyes anointed with clay, and wash in the pool of Siloam; though the clay seemed to put out his eyes, rather than cure them.

4. That when God's will is expressly declared concerning the event, yet he will have the means used; as for instance, 2 Kings xx. 5, 6, 7. God was absolutely resolved to add fifteen years more to Hezekiah's life, yet he must take a lump of figs, and lay it on the boil: Which plainly sheweth that no promise on God's part, nor assurance on ours, hindereth the use of means; God will work by them, not without them.

5. In spiritual things, assurance of the event is an encouragement to industry, not a pretence to sloth, 1 John ii. 27, 28. *Ye shall abide in him*; and now, *Little children abide in him*. The promise of perseverance doth encourage us to use endeavours that we may persevere, and quicken diligence rather than nourish security, or open a gap to carnal liberty.

*Prop. II.* Our duty is to stand fast in the faith of Christ, and profession of godliness, whatever temptations we have to the contrary. *Stand fast* being a military word, alludeth to a soldier's keeping his ground; and is opposed to two things, 1. A cowardly flight. 2. A treacherous revolt.

1. A cowardly flight, implieth our being overcome in the evil-day, by the many afflictions that befall us for the truth's sake, Eph. iv. 13. *Wherefore take to you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil-day, and having done all, to stand*. Their temptation was the many troubles and persecutions that befel them, called there *the evil day*. Their defence lay in the *whole armour of God*, which is of six pieces, the *girdle of truth or sincerity*; the *breast-plate of righteousness*; the *shield of faith*; the *helmet of hope*; the *shoe of the preparation of the gospel of peace*; and the *sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*. Now, if we take this armour and use it in our conflicts, what doth it serve for? to *withstand*, and *stand*; the first is the act of a soldier, the second is the posture of a conqueror.

2. A treacherous revolt, or yielding to the enemy by complying with those things which are against the interest of Christ and his kingdom for advantage sake, 2 Tim. iv. 10. *Demas hath forsaken us, and loved the present world*. Backsliders in heart are the worst sort of apostates. Such as lose their affection to God, delight in his ways, and esteem of his glorious recompence, for a little pleasure, profit, or pomp

pomp of living, *sell the birth-right for one morsel of meat*, Heb. xii. 15, 16. Some fail in their understandings, but most miscarry by the perverse inclination of their wills: They are carnal, worldly hypocrites that never thoroughly mortified the fleshly mind; but prize things as they are commodious to the flesh, and will save them from sufferings. The bias of such mens hearts doth easily prevail against the light of their understandings.

*Prop. III.* The means of standing fast is by holding the traditions which were taught by the holy apostles. Here I will prove, 1. That the doctrine of Christianity taught by the apostles is a tradition. 2. That holding this tradition by strong hand, when others would wrest it from us, is the means of our perseverance.

1<sup>st</sup>, That the doctrine of Christianity is a tradition. I prove it by two arguments.

(1.) Matters not evident by the light of nature, nor immediately revealed to us by God, must be either an invention or a tradition: An invention is something in religion not evident by natural light, nor agreeable to sound reason, but is some cunningly devised fable, invented by one or more, and obtruded by various artifices upon the belief of the world. Inventions in this kind were man's disease, not his remedy, Eccl. vii. 29. *God made man upright, but they sought out many inventions.* As when the philosophers sat a-brood upon religion, a goodly chymera it was they hatched and brought forth! Rom. i. 21, 22. *They became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; and professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.* These inventions little became the nature of God; nor were they profitable to man; for still the great sore of nature was unhealed, which is a fear of death, and the righteous wrath of God, Rom. i. 32. so that neither man's comfort nor duty was well provided for: Surely the gospel is none of this sort; not an invention of man, but a revelation of God; and a revelation not made to us in person, but brought out of the bosom of God by Jesus Christ, and by him manifested to chosen witnesses, who might publish this mystery and secret to others. Well then, since the gospel is not an invention, it is a tradition, or a delivery of the truth upon the testimony of one that came from God to instruct the word, or reduce it to him; not an invention of man, but a secret brought out of the bosom of God, by our Lord Jesus Christ: Therefore it is said, Heb. ii. 3, 4. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation; first spoken by the Lord himself;*

and then confirmed to us by them that heard him, the Lord bearing them witnesses, &c. Christ delivered it to the apostles, and the apostles delivered it to others, 2 Tim. ii. 2. *Those things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.* The apostles received the gospel from Christ, and the churches and ministers from the apostles, and then delivered it down to others until it came to us; which is the means of our believing the truth, and confessing the name of Christ. This testimony delivered and conveyed to us by the most credible means, and which we have no reason to doubt of, is as binding as if we had heard Christ and his apostles in person; for we have their *word* in *writing*, though we did not hear them preach and publish it with the lively voice. And that these are their writings, appeareth by the constant tradition of the church, and the acknowledgment of friends and enemies, who still appeal to them as a public authentic record: And as they have been attested by the church, they have been owned by God, and blessed by him to the converting and sanctifying of many souls, throughout all succession of ages. By this tradition Christianity hath held up the head against all encounters of time: The persecutions of adverse powers have not suppressed it, nor the disputes of enemies silenced the profession of it; but from age to age it hath been received and transmitted to future generations, though sometimes at a very dear rate. And this is binding on us, though we saw not the persons and miracles by which they confirmed their message, and heard not the first report. The universal tradition having handed it to us is a sufficient ground of faith; and so *we believe through their word*, and are concerned in Christ's prayers, John xvii. 20. for with them and their successors (as to these necessary things) Christ hath promised to be to the *end of the world*, Matth. xxviii. 20.

(2.) My next argument is, The Christian religion must needs be a tradition, partly because matter of fact is the foundation of it, and it is in itself matter of faith: 1. Because it is built upon matter of fact, that the Son of God came from God, to bring us to God; that is to say, appeared in human nature, instructed the world by his doctrine and example, and at length died for sinners, confirming both in life and death the truth of his mission, by such unquestionable miracles, as shewed him to be the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world. Now, a testimony, tradition, or report, is necessary in matters of fact, which

of necessity must be confined to some determinate time and place. It was not fit that Christ should always be working miracles, always dying, always rising and ascending, in every place, and in the view of every man; but these things were to be once done in one part of the world, in the sight of some particular and competent witnesses. But because the knowledge of them concerned all the rest of the world, they were by them to be attested to others. Matters of fact can only be proved by credible witnesses; and this was the great office put upon the apostles, Acts i. 21, 22. and Acts ii. 32. Acts iii. 15. Acts x. 39, 40, 41. 2. As it is matter of faith, or the doctrine built upon this matter of fact. We cannot properly be said to believe a thing but upon report and testimony. I may know a thing by sense or reason, but I cannot believe it, but as it is affirmed or brought to me by credible testimony. As we are said to see those things which we perceive by the eye, or the sense of seeing, and to know those things which we receive by reason, or sure demonstration; so we are said to believe those things which are brought to us by valuable testimony, tradition, or report. As for instance, if any one ask you, Do you believe the sun shineth at noon-day? You will answer, I do not believe it, but see it: So if any one ask you, Do you believe that twice two make four, and twice three make six? You will say, I do not believe it, but know it; because certain and evident reason telleth me, that two is the half of four, and three of six, and every whole consisteth of two halves: But if he should ask you, Do you believe that the sun is bigger than the earth? You will say, I believe it; for though your eye doth not discover it, nor doth an ignorant man know any certain demonstration of it; yet having the authority of learned men, who are competent judges in the case, you judge it a rash and foolish obstinacy not to believe it. Apply it now to *the mysteries of godliness* revealed in the gospel; they cannot be seen with the eye, for they are invisible, nor found out and comprehended by any human understanding, because they exceed the reach of man's reason, and depend upon the love and arbitrary will of God, John iii. 16. Yet you believe them, because God hath revealed them to the prophets and apostles; and God being truth and wisdom itself, cannot deceive, or be deceived; and therefore you believe them with the certainty of divine faith, and do no more doubt of them than you do of those things which you see with your eyes, and know and understand by a sure demonstration. The sense of seeing may be

deceived,

deceived, and human reason may err; but it is impossible God should deceive or be deceived. It oftentimes falleth out that men do prefer the authority and report of a man whom they judge to be wise and good before their own sense and reason; as for instance, That man who by his eye judgeth the sun to be less than the earth, yet doth not obstinately stand in his opinion, when he heareth a knowing and skilful philosopher assert the contrary: *Now if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater*, 1 John v. 9. And this testimony of God is brought to us by his authorised messengers as the ground of faith; and what is that but tradition. We believe in God by hearing of him, and we *hear by a preacher*, Rom. x. 14. Ordinary preachers declare his mind to us, but the extraordinary confirm it; the common preachers give us notice, but Christ and his apostles give us assurance; and by their testimony and tradition our faith is ultimately resolved into the veracity of God.

2dly, That holding this tradition is the great means of standing fast in the faith of Christ, and the confession of his name. For in the word of God delivered by Christ and his apostles, there is a sure direction to walk by; and sure promises to build upon. For whatever they made known of Christ was not a fable, but a certain truth; for they had the testimony of sense, 2 Pet. i. 16, 17. 1 John i. 1, 2, 3, 4. and so could plead both the authority of his command, and the certainty of his promise, and that with uncontrollable evidence; and without this revelation there can be neither faith nor obedience, nor sure expectation of happiness. For we cannot trust God for what he hath not promised, nor obey God in what he hath not commanded; nor in our difficulties and distresses expect happiness from him without his warrant and assurance. But by this doctrine delivered to us we have all that belongeth to faith, obedience and happiness; and beyond that the creature can desire no more. 1. There can be no faith till we have a sure testimony; for faith is a believing such things as God hath revealed, because he hath revealed them. It is not faith but fancy, to believe such things as God hath never revealed; nor is it trust in him to think, that he will give us what he hath never promised; this were to lay us open to all manner of delusion. 2. Nor obedience; for obedience is a doing what God hath commanded, because he hath commanded it. The fundamental reason of obedience is the sight of God's will, 1 Theff. iv. 3. 1 Theff. v. 18. 1 Pet. ii. 15. To do what God never commanded, or not to do it upon that

account, but for other reasons, is not obedience: in difficult cases we can never be held to our duty, till we are persuaded that such is God's will. Now to know his will concerning us, we are often required to *search the scriptures*; but never to consult the church what unwritten traditions she hath in her keeping to instruct us in our duty. 3. No certain expectation of happiness. We are never safe till we know by what rule Christ will judge, reward or punish us at the last day: Now he will judge us according to the gospel, Rom. ii. 16. 1 Theff. i. 18. Obey the gospel, and you have a perfect rule to guide you to happiness; but if you neglect *this great salvation*, or be unfaithful in the profession of it, this word condemneth you, and God will ratify its sentence.

*Prop. IV.* In the apostles time there were two ways of delivering the truth, by word of mouth and writing. So in the text, *Whether by word, or our epistle.* The apostles went up and down and preached Christ every-where; but they did not *preach* only, but *write*, and both by the instinct of the holy Spirit, who guided their journies, and moved them to write epistles: For being often absent from the churches newly planted, and heresies or contentions arising, which could not be avoided among weak Christians, God over-ruled these for the profit of the church in after ages. As in the Old Testament God himself delivered the law with great majesty and terror, and afterward caused the same to be written in tables of stone for the constant use of his people. And the prophets first uttered their prophesies, and then wrote them: So the apostles first preached evangelical doctrine, and then consigned it to writing for the use of all ages.

*Prop. V.* Now, when they are gone to God, and we cannot receive from them the doctrine of life by word of mouth, we must adhere to the scriptures or written word: 1. Because we are taught to do so by Christ and his apostles. Christ always appealeth to the writings of the Old Testament, both against human traditions, Mat. xv. 2. and against pretended revelations, Luke xvi. 31. *If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded to repent, if one should come from the dead.* And the apostles still have recourse to this proof, Acts xxvi. 22. *Witnessing no other things than the prophets and Moses did say should come to pass:* And when they pleaded they were eye and ear-witnesses, and so their testimony was valuable; yet they say, ye have a surer word of prophesy, whereunto ye shall do well to take heed, 2 Pet. i. 19. Now, can we do better than to imitate these great examples? 2. Because these things were written for our sakes, 1 John i. 4. *These things*  
write

*write we unto you, that your joy may be full.* The apostles being to leave the world, and knowing the slippriness of man's memory, and the danger of corrupting Christian doctrine, if there were not a sure authentic record left; therefore they wrote, and so fully, that nothing is wanting to compleat our joy and happiness. 3. Because the scriptures are perfect. The perfection of scripture is known by its end, and intended use, which is to give us a knowledge of those things which concern our faith, duty and happiness. (1.) Our faith in Christ. If there be enough written for that end, we need not unwritten traditions to compleat our rule: Now St. John telleth us he might have written more things, *But these things are written that ye might believe in the Son of God, and have life through his name,* John xx. 30, 31. Certainly nothing is wanting to beget a faith in Christ; the object is sufficiently propounded, the warrant or claim is laid down in the new covenant, and the encouragements to believe are clear and strong. What would men have more? so that here is a perfect rule, perfect in its kind, and for its proper use. (2.) For our duty; that is sufficiently provided for. The apostle telleth us, *That the grace of God,* take it objectively for the grace of the gospel, or subjectively for grace in our hearts, *teacheth us:* If you mean objective grace, it prescribeth, directeth; if of subjective grace, it persuadeth and exciteth what to do; *to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present world,* Tit. ii. 12. There all the branches of man's duty are enumerated: *Sobriety* relateth to self-government; *righteously* to our carriage towards our neighbour; *godly* to our communion with God. Now, in the word of God, what is there wanting, that belongeth either to worship, justice, or personal righteousness? therefore certainly we need no other rule; for it layeth down whatsoever men are bound to do in all ages and in all places of the world, and in whatsoever circumstances God shall put them: And so it is fit to be the law of the universal King and lawgiver; yea, it is so perfect, that whatever other way is set up, it presently dasheth against those notions that we have or should have of God, his service and worship; or it infringeth or perverteth the liberty and nature of man. (3.) For our happiness: That doctrine and institution, which is *able to make us wise unto salvation,* is enough for us, but so the holy scriptures are said to do, 2 Tim. iii. 17. *They make the man of God perfect, and thoroughly furnished to every good work.*

If the scriptures do thoroughly direct men to know God in Christ, and save their own souls, why should we look any further?

further? Now, they do not only furnish every private Christian with this knowledge; but the *man of God*, who is to instruct others, he needeth look no further, but is furnished out of the scripture with all things necessary to discharge his office. Therefore here we rest, having a sufficient rule, and a full record of all necessary Christian doctrines.

*Use 1.* Let us not seek another rule than the word of God. Papists cry up unwritten traditions to be received with equal respect and reverence, as we receive the holy scriptures; but you, brethren, stand fast, holding the apostolical tradition. You cannot have it by word of mouth from them now, therefore you must cleave to what is written, or else you cannot preserve yourselves from the frauds and impostures of Antichrist. These apostolical writings have been received in all ages and times of the church from the beginning; and all disputes among Christians have been tried by them: None were allowed good or sincere Christians who doubted of the truth of them. But because we have to do with a people that will sacrifice all to the honour and interest of their church; and knowing they are not able to stand before the light of scriptures, have, to the no little prejudice of the Christian cause, done all that they can to weaken the authority, sufficiency and perspicuity of them; therefore I shall resume the matter.

1. Mankind lying in darkness, and in the shadow of death, it was necessary that one way or another God should reveal his mind to them, that we may know what belongeth to our duty and happiness, for our chief good and last end. Being altered by sin, we strangely mistake things, and put light for darkness, and darkness for light, good for evil, and evil for good; weighing all things in the balance of the flesh, which we seek to please. We confound both the names and natures of things, and wander in a maze of a thousand perplexities; therefore God in his pity to mankind hath given us a sure direction in his word, *which is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths*, Psal. cxix. 105. Mark the words of *light* and *lamp*; the use of a *lamp* is by night, and in the day we have the *light* of the sun; whether it be day or night with us, here we are taught how to carry ourselves. Mark again the words of *path* and *feet*, the one signifieth our *way* and general course, the other all our *particular actions*; so far as religion is concerned in them, we have directions in the word about them. Besides, man's condition is such that he needeth a supernatural remedy by a Redeemer, which depending upon the mere love and free

grace of God cannot be found out by natural light left to us; for that only can judge of things necessary, but not of such things as depend upon the mere pleasure of God: Therefore a divine revelation there must be.

2. Since it is necessary that God should some way or another reveal his mind to his people; it must be done by oracles, visions, dreams, or by extraordinary messengers, who by word of mouth might convey it to us; or else by writing, and by ordinary teachers, whose lips may preserve knowledge in the church. The former ways might suffice, while God saw fit to reveal but a few truths, and such as did not burden the memory; and men were long-lived and of great simplicity, and the church was confined within a small compass of ground, and not liable to so many miseries and changes as now in the latter ages: But when once God had spoken to us by his Son, these extraordinary ways ceased, Heb. i. 1, 2. *God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last times spoken unto by his Son.* As formerly God did speak in divers manners, that is to say by visions, oracles, dreams, &c. so at sundry times, by several steps and degrees he acquainted the world with the truths necessary for man to know; delivering them by portions, not all together at once, till he came who had *the Spirit without measure*, John iii. 34. The prophets to whom God revealed himself before, by visions, oracles, dreams, or the coming of the Spirit upon them, had the Spirit by *measure*, to fit them for some particular errand or message on which God sent them; but when God sent his Son out of his bosom to reveal the whole doctrine of faith at once, and to declare his Father's will with full authority and power, he fixed and closed up the rule of faith. So it was not fit that after him there should come any extraordinary nuntios or embassadors from heaven, or any other should be owned as infallible messengers, but such as he immediately sent abroad to disciple the nations: Therefore all former extraordinary ways ceased, and we are left to the ordinary rule stated by Christ.

3. Being left to the ordinary rule, it was necessary it should be taught, not only by word of mouth, but committed to writing; for Christ is ascended into heaven, and the apostles do not live for ever: And we have no men now that are immediately and divinely inspired; and ordinary pastors and teachers cannot make new articles of faith, but do only build on the apostles foundation, 1 Cor. iii. 10. of that divinely inspired doctrine which they delivered to the church. Yea, that doctrine cannot well be preserved from oblivion

oblivion and corruption without writing, therefore God accounted this the safest way. Those things that are only delivered by word of mouth, or from hand to hand, may easily be changed, corrupted, or utterly lost. Certainly, if you consider man's sloth, treachery, levity, and the many vile affections which may easily induce him to extinguish or corrupt the truth that is contrary to them; you will see that it is necessary that there should be a sure authentic record, by which truth and error might be tried and distinguished: Yea, that the church which is dispersed throughout the world might have truth at hand, and particular believers have this doctrine ever by them for their comfort and use; it being the property of a blessed man *to delight in the law of God, and exercise himself therein day and night*, Psal. i. 2. In short, while the apostles were living, it was good to take the tradition from their mouth; but now they are dead, we take it from their writings. Surely, if God saw some writing necessary when those extraordinary ways were in use, and the church of the Old Testament was in a much quieter state than the church of the New; it is more necessary now: For the Christian church is more exposed to dreadful storms of persecution, the deceit of heretics of all sorts, especially to the frauds of Antichrist, which we are forewarned of in this chapter; and are detected and discovered by their contrariety to the written word.

4. This truth being written, it is both a safe and a full rule for us to walk by: It is a safe rule, because it is written by the apostles and evangelists, *holy men moved by the Holy Ghost*. The apostles did not lose their infallibility when they committed what they preached to writing; the same Spirit that assisted them in delivering the doctrine by word of mouth, assisted them also when they delivered it by writing: And it is a full and sufficient rule, because it containeth all things which are necessary for men to believe and do in order to eternal life. Let them name what is necessary beyond what is recommended there, or may be deduced from thence: Yea, it doth contain not only all the essential, but also the integral parts of the Christian religion; and therefore nothing can be any part of our religion which is not there. The direction of old was, Isa. viii. 20. *To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*. Every thing was then tried by *Moses and the prophets*, and every thing must be now tried by *the prophets and apostles*, which is our foundation of faith, worship and obedience, Eph. ii. 20.

5. That which we blame in the Papists is, That they cry up a private, unproved, unwritten tradition of their own, as of equal authority with this safe and full rule which is contained in the written word of God. Their crime and fault may considered partly with respect to the object and matter. That these traditions are not indifferent customs, but essential points, necessary to faith and Christian practice; and so, though a Christian be never so thorough and sound in his obedience to the word of God, and true to the baptismal covenant, yet if he submitteth not to these unwritten traditions, he wants some point necessary to faith and practice, and so to life eternal; which is contrary to Mark xvi. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.* And John xvii. 3. *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Partly as to the subject, as they make their own faction to be the only keepers of these things, and that nothing is to be owned as apostolical tradition, but what is delivered as such by their authority; which is to leave the church to the tyranny and usurpation of a corrupt faction; to declare for apostolical tradition any thing which serveth their ends and interests, and for which no true historical evidence is produced. Now, the unjust and fraudulent practices which they have used to promote this usurpation over the churches of Christ, render them of all men most unfit to be trusted in this kind. Partly with respect to the manner, they will have these things to be received, with the same reverence and pious affection with which we receive the holy scriptures; and so man's post is set by God's, and unproved traditions equalled with doctrines of divine faith: Their opinion is bad enough, but their practice is worse; for there they shew they value these things more than the scriptures; as superstition always aboundeth in its own things. Did ever any of their doctors say the same things of traditions which they take the boldness to say of scripture? Did they ever call them *pen and inkhorn, or parchment divinity, a nose of wax, a dumb rule, an obscure and ambiguous doctrine*: These blasphemies they vent boldly against the scripture; but did they ever speak this of traditions? And again their common people are a thousand times better instructed in their traditions than in the doctrine of salvation; they understand more of Lent and Ember-weeks, &c. than they truly understand the doctrine of man's misery and remedy: And call you this equal reverence and pious affection to the scriptures and traditions? Partly because they  
would

would never give us a perfect catalogue of unwritten traditions necessary to be observed among all Christians; it may be, lest they should amaze the people with the multitude of them, or else that the people may not know how many of their doctrines are destitute of scripture-proof, and so they should be discovered to be imposers on the belief of the Christian world.

6. Though we blame this in Papists, yet we reject not all tradition:

1. Because scripture itself is a tradition, as we proved before, and is conveyed to us by the most credible means, which we have no reason to doubt of. The scriptures of the Old Testament were preserved by the Jews, to whom were committed the oracles of God, Rom. iii. 2. and Protestants receive all the books which they admitted into their canon. And for the books of the New Testament the Christian church hath received them as the writings of those whose names they bear, and by the constant universal tradition of the church they are transmitted to us; and we have no more reason to doubt of them, than we do of statutes and laws made by kings and parliaments, who lived long before we had being: Yea, we may be much more confident, as the matter is of greater weight and consequence, and these writings have the signature and stamp of God's Spirit on them; and have been blessed by God to the converting and sanctifying of many souls; and have been delivered down to us by a succession of believers unto this very day. By them Christianity hath been preserved in the world notwithstanding the wickedness of it; and hath held up its head against all the encounters of time. The persecutions of adverse powers, have not suppressed it, nor the disputes of enemies silenced the profession of it; but still from age to age God's truth is received and transmitted to posterity.

2. Because the proof of Christianity depending upon matter of fact, chiefly Christ's rising from the dead, it can only be proved by a testimony, which in so extraordinary a case must be valuable and authorized to the world by the miracles accompanying it. Now the notice of these things is brought to us by tradition, which being unquestionable, giveth us as good ground of faith as it did to them that lived in the apostles time, and heard their doctrine, and saw their miracles. God's wonderful works were never intended for the benefit of that age only in which they were done, but for the benefit also of those that should hear of them by any credible means whatsoever, Psal. cxlv. 4. Joel. i. 3. Psal.

lxxviii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. These things were told them *that they might set their hope in God, &c.*

3. Because there are some doctrines drawn by just consequence from scripture, but are the more confirmed to us when they are backed with constant church usage and practice; as baptism of infants, Lord's day, singing of psalms in our public worship, &c.

4. Because there are certain words which are not found in scripture indeed, yet agreeable thereunto, and are very useful to discover the frauds of heretics, as Trinity, divine providence, consubstantial procession of the Holy Ghost, satisfaction, &c.

5. We reject not all church history, or the records of ancient writers concerning the providences of God in their days, in owning the gospel, which make much for our instruction in manners, and are helps to encourage us to put our trust in God.

6 There are certain usages and innocent customs, or circumstances common or sacred, and other actions, which we despise not, but acknowledge and receive, as far as their own variable nature and condition requireth; not rejecting them because anciently practised, nor regarding them when the general law of edification requireth the omission of them. But that which we detest is, That the traditions of men should be made equal in dignity and authority with the express revelation of God: Yea, that manifest corruptions and usurpations, as making Rome the mistress of other churches; and superinducing the Pope as the head of the universal visible church, and the vicar of Christ without his leave and appointment; and such like other points should be obtruded upon the world as apostolical traditions, and to be received with like religious reverence as we do articles of faith set down in scripture: This is that we cannot sufficiently abhor as apparently false and destructive to Christianity.

## S E R M O N III.

Mr. E——.

The testimony of the church is not the principal reason why we believe the scriptures to be the word of God

Luke xvi. 29. *They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.*

AS everlasting blessedness is that which God can only bestow, and the way to it that which he can only discover; so it is not only our interest to seek it, but to consider whether what pretends to be our rule of walking in order to obtain it, be indeed the right one. This it cannot be, unless it is such a one as is given us by him to whom alone it belongs to prescribe the way; who being infinitely good, as well as infinitely wise, will no more deceive us, than he himself can be deceived. The holy scripture of the Old and New Testament is what we profess to own as the rule of our faith and life, therefore every Christian should enquire upon what account he receives this rule; for if he receive it upon the authority of God, he may be secure of the truth and sufficiency of it; but if only on that of men, as he can never be sure that what he owns as his rule, is the right one, so he may be led into error; or admit it really was the rule prescribed by God, yet if it be not received on right grounds, he will be exposed to innumerable fears and fluctuations, and can never walk comfortably nor constantly in his way. The superstructure cannot be better than the foundation; and a well-ordered and comfortable conversation will never be the effect of an ill-grounded belief.

In this parable, whereof the words are a part, we have an account of the different estates of a wicked Dives, and a good man Lazarus, both in this life and the other. In this life, Dives had *his good things*, the whole of his happiness; and Lazarus *his evil things*, all the sorrow and misery he was ever to endure. In the other life, Lazarus is *in Abraham's bosom*, a place and state of rest; and Dives *in hell*, a state of misery, and place of torment; where, being deeply affected with his now woful condition, he is desirous, if not of release,

leave, as despairing of that, yet at least of a little ease; to dip but even *the tip of his finger in water and cool his tongue*, which is denied. He desires his torment might not be increased by his brethrens coming to him, who we may suppose to have been his fellow sinners: Or, if you allow so much charity among the damned, he requests that Lazarus might be sent to admonish them for their good, that they might be brought to a timely repentance. But he is told, that God hath made a sufficient provision for them in his written word, *They have Moses and the prophets*, by whose writings if they were not persuaded to repent, a miracle, such as Lazarus rising from the dead, would not persuade them. Hence I infer. That the holy scripture is sufficient in itself, and most effectually able to convince men of the truth of those things which are contained in it. It was so then, why not now? Moses and the prophets were so, why are not the apostles and evangelists? It had formerly more virtue to convince men than a miracle itself, and now, it seems, it hath less than a council. It could then do more than *a man from the dead*, now it can do less than a weak sinful pope. Whence hath it lost its life and power, its authority and efficacy?

Our great enquiry then in this discourse will be.

Upon what account we believe the scripture to be the word of God? Whether upon the authority of God, or the church?—*They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.*

If you allow the Papists to answer, they will tell you, Upon the sole authority of the church, or, because the church declares it to be the word of God; and that without the authority of the church it hath very little authority or weight in it. But that we may give the best account of the controversy before us, we shall,

I. Explain the terms.

II. Lay down the state of the question.

III. Confirm the truth asserted.

IV. Answer the popish objections.

V. Make application of the whole.

I. For explication of the terms, let us see,

1. What we mean by the *scripture*? By that we understand the word of God, declaring his mind concerning mens duty and happiness, or teaching us what we are to believe concerning God, and how we are to obey him. The word of God and the scripture are the same materially, and differ only in this, That the word of God doth not in itself imply its being written, nor exclude it; but the scripture signifies the same word committed to writing.

2. What

2. What is meant by *authority*? Authority is the power of commanding or persuading, arising from some excellency in the thing or person vested with it. When we speak of authority of scripture, and ask from whence it hath it? we enquire whence it is that the scripture persuades, convinces, or binds us to believe it as the word of God? Whether it hath this authority from some inherent excellency in itself, or from something foreign and extrinsecal to it?

3. What we mean by *faith*, when it is demanded, Why we believe the scripture to be the word of God? Faith so far as it concerns the understanding, is an assent yielded to something proposed under the appearance of truth, built upon the testimony of another. Our faith therefore is according as the testimony for the sake of which we believe it; if we receive any thing upon the testimony of men, it is a human faith; if upon the authority of God, it is divine. Now, when we speak of believing the scripture to be the word of God, we speak of such a faith as hath God for its author, the truth believed for its object, the testimony of God for its ground, and the efficiency of God producing it.

4. What is meant by the *church*. The church may be taken for the universality of believers in all places of the world, comprehending private saints, as well as public officers, and those of former ages, as well as the present: Or, it may be taken for that part of the Catholic church which lives together in the same age, in the several parts of the world: Or else, we may understand the church in the popish sense, only for the present church; and that too, for the church of Rome, which they call Catholic; and that again, only for the pastors of it, excluding the people; and they again may be considered either separately, or in conjunction, as meeting together in a general council; and that either by themselves without the Pope, or together with him: Or lastly, as represented by him, or virtually contained in him; for this great name *the church*, dwindles at last into one man only: But sure he is no small one that contains so many in him; for if we believe the Papists, especially the Jesuits, the pope, in this controversy, is nothing else but the church catholic compacted, and thrust into a single person, in whom all those several excellencies, which are scattered among all the members, do, as in the head, collectively reside. And so the catholickness they vaunt so much of, is crowded into a narrow compass; for those whether pastors or members of the church that lived formerly are first cut off, and the church is reduced to the present age; then the people, as excrescences, are pared away

away too, and the bulkiness of the church thereby lessened, the officers or pastors only remaining; and yet these too must be contracted into a council, and that at last epitomized into a pope, who is but the epitome of an epitome, and scarce so much as a *small synopsis* of that voluminous thing the church, they talk so largely of.

These things being premised, we come

II. To state the question, which is this, Whether we believe the scriptures to be the word of God upon his authority, or that of the church.

In some things we agree, and in some things we differ.

1<sup>st</sup>, In some things we agree.

1. We agree, That the scripture of the Old and New Testament is the word of God.

2. That therefore it is true and of divine authority, without the testimony of the church. The most wary amongst the Papists will grant, That the testimony of the church doth not make the scripture to be true or the word of God. It doth not make it to be so in itself, say they, but only in relation to us, as it binds us to receive and believe it.

3. That every Christian is bound by a divine faith to receive the scripture as the word of God.

4. That the holy Spirit works that faith in the hearts of men, whereby they own and receive the scripture as the word of God.

5. That the church, allow us our sense, may be an help and furtherance to our faith in receiving the scripture, we will grant. The universal concurrence of believers in all ages in receiving the scripture, and the testimony they have given to it, is a strong argument of its divine authority. It is also the duty of the church, to labour to preserve the scripture pure and intire. In a word, we acknowledge the usefulness of the churches testimony as an external help, at the beginning of mens faith; for it is the foundation of an human faith: And when a man hath so far yielded, as to receive the scripture as God's word, on the testimony of men, he may afterwards, by the perusal and study of it, come to see better and more solid grounds for his belief, and God working on his heart by the word, he may come to receive it with a divine faith. Thus the men of Samaria, who first believed Christ for the woman's word, did afterwards believe, because they heard himself, John iv.

2<sup>dly</sup>, In some things we differ.

1. They affirm the testimony of the present church, *viz.* of Rome, to be the only sufficient ground of mens believing the scripture to be the word of God; and tell us, That the Spirit

Spirit bears witness to the divinity of the scripture by the testimony of the church, and that antecedently to this testimony, men cannot know, nor are bound to believe the scripture so to be.

2. We affirm, on the contrary, That the Spirit witnesseth the scripture to be of God, by those marks of divinity which every where appear in it; and as this is the medium the Spirit useth in working faith, so it is the immediate and principal reason of our assent unto its divinity. The Spirit of God witnesseth to all the scripture to be of God, by its own intrinsical beauty, lustre, power and excellency; but the holy Spirit makes it effectual to believers only by an internal application.

But as this is denied, we shall endeavour to prove it, and then answer their exceptions against it.

*Arg. 1.* The Holy Ghost in scripture calls us to the scripture itself to settle us in the belief of its divinity. *To the law and to the testimony*, Isa. viii. 20. and therefore in the scripture we have a sufficient argument to persuade us that it comes from God. The prophets delivered the message in the name of the Lord, and on his authority, *This saith the Lord*: and *The word of the Lord* was their usual stile. They no where send us to the church. So in the text Abraham sends Dives's brethren to *Moses and the prophets*; and our Saviour sends the Jews to the scripture, John v. 39, 46, 47. The evangelist Luke commends the Bereans, not that they sent up to the church at Jerusalem, or waited for a general council to assure them of the divineness of what was preached to them, but that *they daily searched the scriptures, whether those things were so*, Acts xvii. 11.

*Arg. 2.* The properties which the Holy Ghost attributes to the scripture will prove the same. It is a *light* and a *lamp*, Prov. vi. 23. Psal. cxix. 105. *A light shining in a dark place*, 2 Pet. i. 19. and sure that which is light may discover itself. He that needs another to tell him what is light, wants eyes. *It is quick and powerful*, Heb. iv. 12. it enters into the soul, and therefore by its own power and efficacy discovers itself to us, as well as it makes known what is in man. *It is like as a fire, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces*, Jer. xxiii. 29. That word which *convinceth men, judgeth them, makes manifest the secrets of their hearts*, 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. which *converts the soul, makes wise the simple, rejoiceth the heart, enlighteneth the eyes*, Psal. xix. 7, 8. is sufficiently able to discover itself to be of God, though the church should not give in her testimony; but such a word is the scripture: Therefore, &c. And further, Why

may not God's word discover its author, as well as his works do? If *the heavens declare the glory of God*; if even the smallest creatures preach him to us, and have some footsteps of him, how much more do these his greater and more noble works, and man the most excellent of his creatures? And why should it be thought incredible, that God should leave the like notices of himself upon his word, so as plainly to discover it to be his? If men do commonly make themselves known by their work, writers by their skill, artists by their curious pieces; if Apelles could have drawn such a picture, Phidias have cut such a statue, Cicero have penned such an oration, that any who had judgment in such things might have said, Such a man and no other, was the author of such a work; surely then much more may God in so lively a manner express himself in his word, as clearly to notify to us, that it is his. And if any should say, God could have done it, but would not; I desire to know a good reason, Why God who hath left us so plain and conspicuous evidences of his wisdom, power and goodness on his creatures, would not leave the print of himself in the like manner upon his word?

*Arg. 3.* God's revealing himself to us in the scripture is the first and highest revelation upon which our faith is built; and therefore that revelation is sufficient to manifest itself to us, even without the church's testimony. The reason of the consequence is, Because a divine faith being always built upon revelation, whatever it be which is the first revelation whereon our faith is built must be sufficient to notify itself to us; otherwise our faith is not founded upon any revelation at all, if that revelation needs something else which is not revelation to give credit to it: Or, if that which is the first revelation, yet needs another to make it manifest to us, it is not itself the first, which is a palpable contradiction. And for the antecedent, I thus make it appear: In the business of faith, either we must come to some first revelation, or we must go on from one to another without any end: For either the faith whereby I believe this revelation, *That the scripture is the word of God*, is founded upon this very revelation itself, *viz. the scripture*, or upon some other revelation; if upon this itself, then this is the first revelation whereon my faith is built: But if on another, I ask again, Must I believe that for itself, or for some other? If for itself, then that must be the first; if for some other, I shall ask again, Am I to believe that for itself, or for another? And so there will be no end, no first revelation

tion on which my faith is founded, but I must go higher, and higher, even *in infinitum*.

III. That the testimony of the church is not a sufficient ground of our believing the divinity of the scripture, I shall prove by several arguments.

*Arg. 1.* I argue from Eph. ii. 20. *And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.* And scripture is the foundation of the church, and therefore hath not its authority, even in respect of us, from the church; but on the contrary the church hath its authority from the scripture. If ever we would find out the nature and definition of the church, we must seek it in the scripture, where alone it is that we see it to be God's will to have a church upon earth, and by what means it is called, of whom it is constituted, and with what power and privileges it is endowed. He that will question, Whether the scripture be the word of God, will as easily question, Whether the church be the church of God? Or, Whether God hath any church or not? Now, if the church hath all its authority from the scripture, by which alone it is a church, and known to be so; how can it with any reason be said, that the scripture hath its authority, even as to us, from the church? For can the scripture both give authority to the church, and yet receive its own authority from it? Can it authorize the church before it be itself authorized by it? Can it give the church a power to communicate authority to it, and yet hath no authority hitherto itself? Nay, Is it consistent with common sense, that the scripture should give the church a power to bind men to the belief of it, and yet have no power in itself to bind the church to the belief of it? Again, when they say the scripture hath its authority from the church, I ask, How shall I know there is a church? for if I be one that own no such thing as the scripture, I own no such society as the church; and how will they prove there is such a one, but by the scripture? For I who am supposed to acknowledge no church, do acknowledge no authority it hath, and shall not take its own word: And yet if I grant there be a church, How shall I know that such a company of men as pretend to be the church, are really so? I shall not take their own testimony; I am not satisfied in their being witnesses to themselves: And if they will prove themselves to be the church by the scripture, then either the scripture must have authority as to me before the church, or else they prove one obscure thing by another. If they say, there be certain signs and marks of the church inherent in it, by which it may be known: Alas! I know

not those marks but by the scripture which describes the church. If they say, the Spirit witnesseth by these marks that this is the church, why may I not say the same of the scripture, and so that be known without the testimony of the church to be the word of God, as well as the church to be the church of God? And yet after all this, granting this society of men to be the church, yet how shall I know that this church is infallible? And if I know it not to be so, I am not so mad as to build my faith upon its authority. If they say, because it is governed by the Holy Ghost; how shall I know that? for it is not obvious to me that it is. If they say, because Christ hath promised that it should: I ask, Where? where can it be but in the scripture? sure then the scripture must be owned, and have its authority as to me, or their proof is invalid, and they do but trifle instead of arguing.

Let us examine what is excepted against this. To Eph. ii. 20. it is replied by some of the Papists.

Excep. 1. *That by foundation is not meant the scripture written by the apostles and prophets, but their preaching.*

*Ans. 1.* But, If that were granted, it would not prejudice our cause: What they writ and preached is the same truth, and differs not essentially, but only in the way of delivery; one being delivered to their present hearers *vivâ voce*, and the other by writing transmitted likewise to their posterity. Acts xxvi. 27. *Witnessing, both to small and great, and saying no other things, than what the prophets and Moses did say should come.* So Acts xvii.

2. The preaching of the apostles and prophets did last but a while, whereas Paul speaks of the lasting, perpetual foundation of the church.

3. If he speaks only of the preaching of the apostles and prophets, how comes he to join these together? for the prophets were long since dead, and their preaching could be the foundation of that church only which lived with them, and heard them.

Excep. 2. *He meant therefore, say some of our adversaries, the New Testament prophets, which preached at the same time with the apostles.*

*Ans.* But that is not so easily proved, as said; for though such prophets are mentioned in some places of the New Testament, it doth not follow, that they must needs be understood here; for why doth the apostle mention them only, and not evangelists too; nay, pastors and teachers likewise, whom he joins altogether, Eph. iv. and who did at the same time preach the same truth which the apostles did?

Besides,

Besides, we find by the doctrine of the prophets mentioned in the New Testament, the truth preached and written by the prophets under the Old, commonly understood. So 2 Pet. i. 19. *A more sure word of prophecy.* Heb. i. 1. *God spake to the fathers by the prophets.* So also, Rom. i. 2. and Luke i. 70. The apostles under the New Testament, were the chief that taught, though New Testament prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers did preach the same doctrine; as formerly under the Old Testament, the prophets that then lived were the chief, though others, as the Levites, did *teach the good knowledge of the Lord,* 2 Chron. xxx. 22.

Excep. 3. *But, say they again, The Ephesians were not built upon Paul's writings, which were not then extant, but on his preaching; and therefore these other kind of prophets must be understood, on whose preaching, together with the apostles they were built.*

*Answ.* The preaching the truth or writing of it makes no difference; but still it is the same truth, which is the foundation of the church, whether it be written or preached. And though the Ephesians were built on the word as preached by Paul, yet what hinders but they might likewise be built on the word as *written* by former prophets, whom though they could not now hear, yet they might read? And Paul himself proves what he preached by what the prophets had writ, that so both the word preached and written might be propounded to the Ephesians as one and the same foundation of their faith.

Excep. 4. They say, *That by the church, in this place, is understood not the pastors, but the people; because the pastors were they that preached; and therefore if they were meant, it would follow, that they should be built upon themselves.*

*Answ.* 1. It is most absurd to say, That the pastors and doctors of the church are not built upon the doctrine of the apostles and prophets. Who ever heard of one foundation for the faith of the teachers, and another for the faith of the people? It seems then, by their own confession, the pope and his clergy are not built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets; and if they have not this foundation, I am sure they have no better. The faith of pastors and people is the same; and why is not the foundation the same too? Are they fit to build up others in the faith of the scriptures, who are not themselves built upon the scriptures? And it is idle to say, they are built on the holy Spirit; for will they separate the Spirit from the scripture? What doth the Spirit teach but out of, and according to the scripture? To be *led by the Spirit,* and yet *built on the scriptures,* are very well consistent.

*Arg. 2.* It is not absurd to say, That the teachers of the church are built on the doctrine they teach, though not as they teach it, yet as they have before received and believed it. Indeed they ought to offer nothing to others as the foundation of their faith, but what is the foundation of their own; nor to hazard the souls of their hearers upon any worse bottom than they would venture their own souls: But it doth not follow from hence, That they are taught by themselves, or are a foundation to themselves; but only that the doctrine they have themselves believed and are built upon, they deliver it to others, that they too may believe it, and be built upon it.

*Arg. 3.* The doctrine delivered in the scripture doth not, as to our receiving it, depend upon the church, and therefore neither doth the scripture itself. The same doctrines we have in the scripture were published, and known before they were written, and they did not then depend upon the authority of the church, and why should they now? Doth the writing of them make them of less authority, or less credible, or less able to convince mens minds than they formerly were? Upon the authority of what church did Adam, Seth, Enoch, Abraham, &c. receive the word of God, when it was yet unwritten? What council was there, what pope to persuade them of it? And how come the same truths to have less power and efficacy to persuade us, than them? Will our adversaries say, the patriarchs received the word immediately from God himself? True: Some of them did; but what is that to the church, and her authority? Or will they say, those patriarchs from whom others received the word were infallible? They will hardly be able to prove it. How came Abraham to persuade his wife to tell a lie, and expose her chastity thereby for the saving of his life, if he were infallible? And how came other patriarchs to allow polygamy if they were infallible? And do not the Papists themselves tell us that the church of the Jews was not infallible, and that infallibility is the peculiar privilege of the gospel church, the promise of it being made only to that? And to come down lower, Moses received many things of the Lord, which were immediately received by the people, as the law of the passover, *Exod. xii. and xxiv. 3.* where the people presently answered, *That all the words which the Lord hath said, they would do.* Did the people themselves, the church in the wilderness, give authority to these laws, or did the council of the elders do it? Or, did they receive it on the authority of any other church? If so, Which and where was it? Or lastly, Was Moses an Old Testament pope, and

and the virtual church of Israel? Then it seems that church was infallible as well as the gospel church, contrary to their own doctrine. And what shall we say of the law written in mens hearts? On whose authority is that received? If it be acknowledged for its own light and power whereby it manifests itself to be of God, why may not the law written in the word be acknowledged too? On whose authority were the sermons of the prophets received? They spake to the people in the name of the Lord, and sought no other testimony, but *Thus saith the Lord*. When our Saviour Christ himself preached, he spake the word of God, but neither did he refer himself as to the divinity of his doctrine, to the authority of the church, nor did any believe it on that account.—He did not refer it to the church, for he received not testimony from man, John v. 34. no not from John the Baptist, though of no small authority in the Jewish church, and generally acknowledged to be a prophet. He tells the Jews he had *greater witness than that of John*, first his works, then his Father himself, then the written word, John v. 36, 37, 39. If the church and its testimony be the only means whereby men can be assured of the divineness of the word, how comes Christ to overlook it?—And that they who believed Christ's doctrine, did it not on the authority of the church, is clear; for the church of the Jews was corrupt, and was, especially as to its guides, against Christ, and therefore unwilling to give testimony to him. If the Papists shall say, they received his doctrine on account of Christ's own divine authority; I would inquire, How came they to know he had such authority? for that Christ was the Messiah, and consequently had this divine authority, were some of the truths he preached, If they say, That Christ's doctrine was received either upon account of his miracles, or of its agreement with the scriptures of the Old Testament, they say more for us than for themselves, and either way desert the cause. If we look to the apostles who followed Christ, and preached the same doctrine, we shall see it was not received on the account of the church, no more than commanded to the hearers thereon. Upon Peter's preaching three thousand *believed, and gladly received the word*, Acts ii. 41. Five thousand more believed, or as many as made up the whole five thousand, Acts iv. 4. The Samaritans receive the gospel on Philip's preaching, and afterwards the Eunuch: The Bereans *received the word with all readiness of mind*, Acts xvii. 11. and the Thessalonians *received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God*, 1 Theff. ii. 13. All this while here is no church interposing

reposing its authority, or asserting the divineness of what Peter, Philip or Paul preached. On what account then did these people believe the word preached by the apostles? On the authority of the church, say the Papists: But what church? "Why, says a great one \* among them, *The voice of Paul was the voice of the church*, when he preached to the Theſſalonians, and so they in receiving the word on Paul's authority received it on the authority of the church." Paul it seems was the church, or else how could Paul's preaching be the voice of the church? What kind of church then was Paul? was he the church virtual? was he a Pope, and was Peter and Philip, and the rest of the apostles and evangelists so too? A blessed church sure that had so many popes; or rather a miserable one, that either had no visible head, or had so many. If they say, Paul's voice was the voice of the church, because he was an officer of it, by whom the church published the doctrine she believed and was to propagate. Paul was indeed an officer of the church, but yet made so by *Jesus Christ himself*, not an apostle of men, nor by man, Gal. i. 1. And the doctrine he preached was no otherwise the doctrine of the church, than as it was the same which the church believed, but never taught it him; for he *received it not of men, neither was taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*, Gal. i. 12. and therefore they might more reasonably have said, That the voice of Paul was the voice of Christ; the word he preached being more properly the word of Christ, the author of it, than of the church who only received it of Christ. But what will become of this fine invention of our Jesuit, if the Theſſalonians did not receive the word on the authority of Paul himself, whether in his single or representative capacity? And sure they did not: For then his authority must be owned, ere on the account of that, his preaching could be believed; but both Paul and his authority was unknown to the Theſſalonians when he first preached among them, and therefore could not induce them to believe what he taught. The same we may say of the other apostles in their first planting the gospel.

*Arg. 4.* The scripture hath its authority in relation to us before the church pass its judgment concerning it; and therefore it hath not that authority from the church. This will appear.

1. By the concession of the Papists themselves, who acknowledge, That the church only declares the scripture to be authentic, but doth not make it so: And if it be in itself authentic

\* Staplet,

authentic, it is so to us too, that is, it hath in itself a power of binding us to the belief of it, so soon as we come to hear of it, whether the church hath declared its authenticity or not.

2. If the scripture hath not its authority as to us before the judgment of the church, then either it must be a private or public judgment of the church which gives it that authority: A private one it cannot be; for when we speak of the authority of the scripture as to us, it is understood of all Christians every where; and it is not fit that a private judgment of the church, or the judgment of a private church, should give laws to all the rest: Nor can it be the public testimony, or that of the catholic church, for none such can be produced by the Papists, from whence the scripture hath its authority. The council of Jerusalem, Acts xv. if it were a general one, is the first we read of, and that toucheth not the point in hand, doth not declare the scripture to be authentic, but takes it for granted. They cite the scripture of the Old Testament, and thereby own its authority, but do not then first establish it; and Peter and the rest do the like in their preaching, Acts ii. 3. And dare the Papists then say, That the Old Testament was not authentic before this council? Had the church hitherto no certain canon, nor authentic rule of its faith? After this council we find no general one till that of Nice; and was the church of God all this while too, for three hundred years, without the canon of the scripture? To say nothing that the council of Nice itself did never define which it was, but acknowledged it as already received.

3. If a council meets to declare the divine authority of the scripture, we would know by what authority it meets? If the several pastors of the church come together on the authority and by the command of the scripture itself, then it hath its authority before they meet, else it could not make it their duty so to do: If by some revelation or impulse of the Spirit without the scripture, what kind of spirit is that which acts in separation from the scripture? And if the Papists will affirm this, let them no more call themselves good Catholics, but the worst of Fanatics.

*Arg. 4.* The authority of the church is not more certain or clear as to us, than that of the scripture, and therefore the scripture cannot have its authority from it. That which proves another thing, must itself be more clear and better known: But that the authority of the church is not better known to us than that of the scripture, will appear; for whatever authority the church hath, she must prove it either

from herself, or from something else: If from any thing else, it must either be from the testimony of those that are out of the church; but they know not the church, nor its authority; or from the scripture, which must be more known than that of the church; or from the Spirit: But how will they make it out that they have the testimony of the Spirit for them, otherwise than by the scripture? If they say, the Spirit witnesseth to the authority of the church inwardly, so as to persuade the minds of dissenters, that the church is the church of God; this is merely begged and not proved, and yet will not satisfy neither; for we ask not, What is the efficient cause of mens believing the authority of the church; but what is the argument whereon that belief is grounded, and whereby the church persuades men of its own authority? Or else on the other side, if the church proves its authority from itself, then the same thing shall be proved by itself: But yet I ask, What judgment of the church is it, whereby its authority is proved? They say both the testimony of the ancient and of the present church. But how can the testimony of the ancient church be known, but by the writings of those that formerly lived, the books of fathers, and decrees of councils? But we would know how we shall have greater assurance that those books were written by those fathers whose names they bear, and those decrees made by those councils to which they are ascribed, than that the scripture is the word of God? How came we to be more certain that Cyprian's or Austin's works were writ by them, than that the four gospels were written by the four evangelists, or Paul's epistles by him? And if the present church prove its authority by the ancient church, it must prove it but to very few; for they are but few that ever saw, and yet fewer that ever read the writings of the ancients, and many perhaps never heard of them. And besides, the antient church was sometime the present church; and when it was so, from whence might it prove its authority? From some more ancient, no doubt, according to our adversaries discourse. But from whence did the first church prove its authority, for we must come to a first, when there was none before it to prove it by? Lastly, the authority of the present church cannot be proved by the testimony of the present church. For then it must be either by a part of it, but that cannot be; for a part of the present church is inferior to the whole of it; and he that questions the authority of the whole, will no less question that of a part: Or else, by the whole church, and then the authority of the whole church must be proved by the authority of the whole

whole church ; and so we must believe she is the church, because she says she is the church.

*Arg. 5.* If we are to believe the divinity of the scripture, merely on the church's authority, then that faith can be but an human faith, because founded on no better than the authority of men ; for a divine faith cannot be built upon a human testimony.

*Excep.* To this they say, *That the faith whereby we believe the scripture to be the word of God is a divine faith, and built on the testimony of God, and that this testimony is no other than the testimony of the church.*

*Answ. 1.* That the church's testimony is no otherwise the testimony of God, than as it agrees with the word of God ; and when it doth so, we are to believe what the church says, nor merely because the church says it, but because God says it : And if the church holds forth to me any divine truth, and I yield my assent to it merely because the church declares it to me ; though what I believe be a divine truth, yet the faith with which I receive it will be but an human faith : The truth is of God, but my faith is in man : Whereas, if I believe any truth because God speaks it, though not by the church, nor any officer of it, but some private person, yet my faith is a divine faith, and the testimony of a private person speaking what the scripture speaks, is as really the voice of God as the testimony of the church.

2. Some of the most learned of the Papists themselves make a great difference between the testimony of God, and of the church ; the former they grant to be altogether divine, the latter after a sort divine ; the former they reckon to be the primary foundation of faith, the latter but secondary ; nay, some of them acknowledge that faith which rests only on the authority of the church, not to be divine ; and own the church's testimony to be but the condition without which we cannot believe the divinity of the scriptures, which sure they would scarce do, if they thought the testimony of the church to be the testimony of God : And if the testimony of the church be but in some sort a divine testimony, the faith which is built upon it can be but in some sort a divine faith : And if the testimony of the church be but the secondary foundation of faith, how comes it to be the testimony of God himself, which sure they will allow to be the primary foundation of faith ?

3. Before they can evince the testimony of the church to be the testimony of God, they must first prove the church to be absolutely infallible ; and see they agree among themselves

felves about it, lest we be still at a loss how to know what is that church whose testimony is the voice of God himself.

And 4. If I do but deny the testimony of the church to be the testimony of God, how will they prove it? By the testimony of the church: I shall not take its word. Or, will they say it hath such notes of it being the voice of God in it, as thereby to manifest itself to be his voice? They will get nothing by that, for I am ready to say the same of the scripture. Or, lastly, Will they prove it by the scripture? Then they plainly give away their cause, and own the authority of the scripture to be before the testimony of the church.

*Arg. 6.* If we must believe the scripture to be the word of God, only because the church determines it to be so, then we must believe all things in it to be of God for the same reason only; and so all the promises of the gospel must be believed to be made to us by God, only because the church tells us they were, and the truth of them as to us, depends merely on the church's authority; and so all the comfort of our hearts, and the hopes we have of heaven, must be primarily derived from her authority. We must account her a good-natured mother for not cutting off these breasts of consolation, the promises; for, it seems, it depends wholly upon her what books, or parts of them, shall be canonical. According to this doctrine, the best promises can afford but cold comfort: For if I be asked, What ground I have for the hopes of my salvation? I answer the promises of God. If I be again asked, Are these promises true? I answer, Yes. But how doth that appear? Why, because God made them. But how do I know God made them? Well enough; for the church says he did. Here the authority of the church is the first foundation of all my hopes: And poor ones, God knows, they are, if no better grounded, and little enough comfort I am like to have in them.

*Arg. 7.* If the testimony of the church is necessary, and the only sufficient reason of our believing the divinity of the scripture, then it will certainly follow, That no man who is out of the church, can be called into it by the scripture. Whatever convinceth or persuades a man, must certainly have some authority with him; and if therefore the church persuades men by the scripture, that scripture must needs be received and owned before they be joined to the church; the scripture being the very reason and argument whereby they are persuaded. Thus it was in the beginning of the gospel church, Acts ii. where Peter disproves the conceit  
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some of the Jews had, that the apostles were *full of new wine*, by the prophecy concerning the pouring out of the Holy Ghost in the latter days, Joel ii. 28. then he proves the resurrection of Christ, by Psal. xvi. 8. &c. his ascension into heaven, by Psal. cx. 1. his being the Christ promised to David to be of the fruit of his loins, by Psal. cxxxii. 11. and hereupon follows the bringing into the church three thousand, Acts ii. 32. And in chap. iii. how often doth Peter cite the prophets, particularly Moses? Thus Philip preached to the Eunuch out of Isaiah, and Peter to Cornelius out of the prophets. And was it the authority of these apostles, that is, in the Papist's stile, the church, that persuaded so many? Alas! they that heard them did not once dream of their being the church, and therefore did not believe on that account.

*Arg.* 8. The scripture hath not its authority from the church, because the church is subject to it as a law, and is not the author of it. The whole church, pastors and people are so: And if the pope himself be not under the scripture, as a law by which he is to be ruled, he must pass for that *wicked or lawless* one spoke of, 2 Theff. ii. 8. True indeed, a law may be made known by an herald that proclaims it, but who can say it receives its authority of binding the subjects from him, when he himself is one of them, and as much bound to it as any else? Suppose a man should come to the knowledge of the scripture, by the help of private persons, as it is storied the Indians and Iberians did, is he not bound to submit to it? or, Must he suspend his belief till he have the testimony of the church to assure him that the scripture is of God? If it be said, "A law doth not bind till it be promulged, and the promulgation of it is the church's business." I answer: God hath published his law sufficiently in the scripture, and to it all must be subject to whom the scripture comes. Stapleton tell us, Paul's preaching to the Thessalonians was the voice of the church. Was the poor captive woman who proclaimed the law of God to the Iberians, the church also? But further, If the church publish this law, and it doth not bind until published by her; upon what account did she herself first believe it? Doth the church believe the scripture to be the word of God antecedently to her own publishing and propounding it to others, or not? Is her faith wrought in her by the testimony she herself gives to the scripture, or by something before? I suppose the Papists will scarce be so mad as to say the former; for what kind of faith must that be, when a man believes merely upon his own testimony?

mony? And how can the church be the church before she believes?

*Arg. 9.* They that believe not the scripture to be the word of God, when propounded to them as such, though they have not the testimony of the church, yet sin in not believing it: therefore the scripture hath its authority in itself, and before, and not from, the testimony of the church. That men sin in not believing the scripture, even without the church's testimony, is proved from Acts xiii. 46, 51. where Paul shakes off the dust of his feet against the unbelieving Jews, and tells them, that they *judge themselves unworthy of eternal life*. And Acts xxviii. 29. he declares their actual unbelief to be the effect of their hardness of heart, which though judicial was contracted by themselves. And will any man say, that these Jews did not sin in refusing the gospel? If they say, Paul's testimony was the testimony of the church. I answer, Those Jews owned no such thing as a gospel church, and could not own Paul as an officer of it. If they say, They might know him to be an apostle by the miracles he wrought. I answer, That when he preached at Antioch in Pisidia, and both Jews and Gentiles believed, we have no mention of any miracle he wrought there; and therefore, they neither received him and his preaching upon the account of his miracles. If it be said, He was known by the fame of his miracles wrought elsewhere; then it will follow, That Paul was to be believed for his miracles sake; and so the gospel was not to be believed merely for Paul's authority, but principally for his miracles: And if so, Either Paul's authority was not the authority of the church, or the authority of Paul as the church was not supreme, for that of miracles was above it. Upon the whole, it seems by this reply of the Papists, that miracles were the great thing which procured credit to Paul's preaching; and if they did, the authority of the church did not; unless, as before, they made Paul and the church the same, so here, they will make miracles and the church the same.

IV. I shall speak to the chief of their arguments, or answer their principal objections.

*Obj. 1.* *Either, say they, the authority of the scripture must be known by the church, or by the scripture itself, or by the testimony of the Spirit; but it cannot be known by the scripture, because neither the whole scripture can be proved by the whole, nor one part of it by another: For if a man deny the whole scripture, it will be in vain to attempt the proof of one part by another: And the whole cannot be proved by the whole; for then the same thing should be proved by itself, In this case one obscure thing should prove another,*

another, or rather an obscure thing prove itself; whereas that which is brought to prove another thing should itself be more clear than that which it is to prove. Before I propound the other part of their proof, I shall answer this.

*Ans.* The divine authority of the scripture may be known by itself. For,

1<sup>st</sup>, One part of it may be proved by another. Some there have been, and still are, who have received some part of the scriptures, and not other parts; to such we may prove that part which they deny by that which they own. The Sadducees acknowledged the five books of Moses, but not the prophets; our Saviour therefore did not cite the prophecy of Daniel to them to prove the resurrection of the dead, but Moses's writings, Matt. xxii. but when he dealt with other Jews who received the whole Old Testament, he proved what he spake out of other parts of it.

1. The Old Testament is proved by the New, Luke xxiv. 44. Christ divides the Old Testament into Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, and thereby declares them all to be canonical. This was the way the Jews usually divided them. In the text, Abraham sends Dives's brethren to Moses and the Prophets; and Christ mentioning a place out of the Psalms, bears witness to the whole Old Testament under the name of scripture, *The scripture cannot be broken*, John x. 34. 35. Christ confirms the law of Moses, Mat. v. as to its divine authority, when he explains it; and the historical part of the scripture is confirmed, Matt. xii. 42. Luke iv. 26. Heb. xi. How many testimonies have we out of the Psalms and Prophets which do the same? The twelve lesser Prophets are at once proved by Stephen's alledging them, Acts vii 42 where the testimony cited is out of Amos; but Stephen mentions the *book of the prophets*, i. e. that volume of the smaller prophets which among the Jews was reckoned as one book.

2. The New Testament is confirmed by the Old. For how often doth Christ and his apostles prove their doctrine out of the Old Testament? When they quote the Old Testament, it is a good proof of its authority to any that own the New; and when by those quotations they prove their own doctrine, it is a good argument for the proof of the New Testament, to them that believe the Old, as the case was of the Jews at that time; and therefore our Saviour Christ refers them to the Old Testament, particularly Moses, John v. 45, 46. for the proof of the great doctrine he held forth to them, *that he was the Messiah* that should come into the world. So Peter, Acts iii. refers to Deut. xviii. to prove  
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what he was preaching, *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, &c.* The same we may say of the types of the Old Testament, that they confirm the New, in which we find them fulfilled. If any say, We find no particular confirmation of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther in the New Testament: I answer, They are confirmed by our Saviour Christ in his general division of the Old Testament, according to the Jewish account, in the law, the prophets, and the psalms, under which these books were contained; the whole volume of the Hagiographa going under the name of the Psalms.

But now, what if we have to do with those that deny the whole scripture: How shall we convince them that it is the word of God? I answer,

1<sup>st</sup>, Not by the church; for if they have no reverence for the scripture, they will have as little for the church, which hath no being as a church but from the scripture.

2<sup>dly</sup>, We may prove the whole scripture by the whole, as well as one part of it by another. For as the whole system of God's works in the creation proves itself to be of God, and to have him for its author, Psal. xix. 1, &c. by all those eminent signs and effects of God's goodness, power and wisdom which are to be seen in the whole: So likewise doth the whole scripture prove God to be the author of it, by all those signs and evidences of his wisdom, goodness, power and holiness which appear in the whole, and manifest it to be of God. Nor doth it follow, That if the whole scripture prove itself, it is, as the Papists say, more known than itself: For how do we come to the knowledge of the nature of things in the world, but by considering their properties, qualities, effects, &c. which plainly declare what their nature is; seeing such properties, &c. could not be but where such a nature is? So likewise here, there are those properties in the scripture, those excellencies which could be from none but God; and therefore make it appear that that writing which hath those excellencies in it, is of God. To speak of these distinctly is not my present business, not having to do with them that deny the scripture.

Object. 2. *We cannot, say the Papists, know the scripture to be the word of God, by the testimony of the Spirit; for either it is by the public testimony, which is that of the church, or its private testimony; but then (say they) it will follow; 1. That our faith in the scripture is enthusiasm. 2. That if the private testimony of the Spirit be questioned, it cannot be proved but by the scripture; and so the scripture being proved by the Spirit, and the Spirit again by the scripture, we shall run in a round, which is no lawful way of arguing.*

*Answer.*

*Ans.* To this I answer: That we know the scripture to be of God by the public testimony of the Spirit, but I deny his public testimony to be his witnessing by the church: The Spirit witnesseth the scripture to be of God, by those excellencies of it which evidence it so to be; and this he witnesseth to all that have their eyes open to see it, and in that respect it may be called public; and he witnesseth the same thing, by the same means, in the hearts of particular believers, enlightening and enabling men to believe upon his public testimony. This clearly cuts off all that the adversaries object, and no such things will follow, as they pretend, upon what we maintain. We know no other private testimony of the Spirit, but this particular application of his public one; and where is the danger of enthusiasm? For that is enthusiasm which is revealed to mens minds immediately, in an extraordinary way, and without the intervention of the usual means; or when men pretend to supernatural revelation, who have it not. But when God makes his will known in an ordinary way, by the use of instruments and means, for the conveying of spiritual knowledge to them, this is not enthusiasm; as when *faith comes by hearing*, Rom. x. 17. So when the Spirit witnesseth to the hearts of private believers that the scripture is the word of God, he doth it in an ordinary way, working in them a faith of the scripture, by those arguments of divinity, which are in the scripture itself, and makes use of them as means to induce them to believe. And I would ask our adversaries, Can a private man believe the divinity of the scripture merely on the authority of the church, without the Spirit's witnessing it to him by that authority? If they say, Yes; then they must acknowledge that faith to be merely human, because not wrought by God: If they say, No; then when the Spirit witnesseth to the conscience of a private believer by the church, why is not that enthusiasm too? For when he witnesseth to a private conscience by this application of his public testimony, here is as much a private spirit, and a private testimony, as any we speak of: The only difference is in the medium which the Spirit useth in this private work, which they say, is the *testimony of the church*; and we say, is the *scripture itself*: Both of us agree that it is the Spirit's public testimony, but they call one thing so, and we another. If they say, That yet this is not enthusiasm, because here is no immediate revelation, but means are made use of; I say the same of the Spirit's witnessing to the divinity of the scripture in the heart of a private believer, by the

scripture itself, or those notes of divinity which are apparent in the word.

And for the other consequent they would infer from the private testimony of the Spirit, that then *we shall run in a round, and prove the scripture to be the word of God by the testimony of the Spirit, and prove the Spirit again by the scripture*; there is as little fear of this as of the other. The Spirit indeed is the efficient of our faith, or the agent which causeth us to believe, enlightening our minds, and drawing our hearts to consent to the truth; but the evidences of divinity we see in the scripture, through the Spirit's enlightening us, is the reason or motive of our believing. It moves us to believe objectively, but the Spirit effectively. Here is no danger of a circle in our discourse, or proving *idem per idem*: For, if I be asked, How I know the scripture to be the word of God? This question may have a double sense: Either it is meant of the power and virtue whereby I believe; and then I answer, By the efficiency of the Spirit of God opening the eyes of my understanding, and enabling me to believe. Or, it is meant of the medium by which, as a motive, I am drawn to believe; and then I answer, Those impressions of divinity the Spirit hath left on the word, and by which he witnesseth it to be of God, are the argument or motive persuading me to believe. Now, when they ask how I know the Spirit who witnesseth in my conscience to the divinity of the scripture, to be the Spirit of God? the question is plainly, By what means or argument I am persuaded that it is the Spirit of God? Then I answer, By those properties of the Spirit which the scripture mentions. And so the question, How I know the scripture to be the word of God? is either concerning the efficient of my belief of the scripture, or else it is not to the purpose. The mistake is this, They would fasten upon us, that we make the Spirit in his inward work upon our hearts to be the *motive* to our faith, whereas we only make it to be the *efficient* of our faith.

This argument may be retorted upon themselves; for if the church's testimony give authority to the scripture, then, if a man deny the authority of the church, how will they prove it? For neither one part of the church can give credit to the other, when the whole is questioned; nor can the whole church give credit to itself, for then the whole church will be more known than itself. Or, If we ask, How comes the church to believe the scripture? Is it by its own testimony? but sure it must believe it ere it can give testimony to it: Or, is it by the testimony of the Spirit?

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If so; is it by the public testimony of the Spirit? That cannot be; for, according to them, that is no other than the testimony of the church itself, the absurdity of which hath already been shewn: Or, if it be the private testimony of the Spirit, then they, by their own arguing, will run into Enthusiasm. And indeed, they do plainly run into a circle in their proving the scripture by the authority of the church, and the authority of the church again by the scripture: And so both the church and the scripture are more known than each other, and yet less too; more known because they prove each other, and less known because they are proved by each other. Here they are in a nooze, but it is no matter, the pope's omnipotency can easily break it.

Obj. 3. *It is necessary for us in religion to have the canon of scripture certain, but this we cannot have otherwise than by the church; because its authority is most certain. She is Christ's bride, and therefore bests knows the voice of the Bridegroom; she hath the Spirit of Christ, and therefore can best judge of his word, and the stile of it.*

Ans. We deny that the canon of scripture cannot be known but by the church. The scripture hath been owned and received where no such judgment of the church hath been. And it is as false that the authority of the church is the greatest and most certain; for that of the scripture upon which the church and her authority depends, is above it. God speaks in the scripture, and by it teacheth the church herself; and therefore the authority of him that teacheth, is greater than of those whom he teacheth. As the authority of a king in his laws, is greater than that of an officer that proclaims them. And for what they say of the church's ability to judge of the scripture: We answer, That she cannot judge of the stile of the scripture, otherwise than by the help of the Spirit; and private Christians judge by the same too.

Excep. *But, say they, we do not know the voice of Christ in the scripture, but by the church; therefore her authority is greater.*

Ans. This is both false and inconsequent.—False, for it hath been sufficiently evinced that the voice of Christ may be otherwise known, and hath been too:—Inconsequent, in that it follows not that the authority of the church is greater than that of the scripture: John the Baptist directed many to Christ, and suppose without his direction of them, and witnessing to Christ, they had never come to him, will it thence follow that John's authority was greater than Christ's?

Object. 4. *We can no otherwise know the scripture to be the word of God, than as we know what books are canonical, and what*

not, what were written by inspired pen-men, and what were not; but this we can know only by the authority of the church.

*Ans.* We say that it may be known which books are canonical and which are not, otherwise than by the church, for the church herself knows them otherwise than by herself, or her own authority. When she declares them to be canonical, she believes them to be so, before she declares them to be such; she must learn herself before she can teach others; and she believes them to be canonical, because she sees the stamp of God upon them; the same way believers may know them. And when the church sees this stamp of God upon a book, she thence concludes it to be divine, and then declares it be so.

*Excep.* But how then comes it to pass, that some books of canonical scripture were not so soon received as others, if all have such an impress of divinity upon them.

*Ans.* I answer: That these notes of divinity, which are sufficient in all the several books of scripture to demonstrate them to be of God, yet may be more clear and illustrious in some than in others, as God's power and wisdom may be more apparent and conspicuous in some of his works than in others of them: Or else it may be from the different degrees of illumination afforded to different persons, and in different ages: When some doubted of some books of scripture, all did not; and they that did not, had a greater measure of the Spirit, as to that at least, than others had.

Now to their particular proofs of the minor proposition in their arguments, we answer particularly.

1. That those books annexed by the Papists to the Old Testament, and called by them *deuterocanonical*, and by us no better still than *apocryphal*; such as the books of Maccabees, Esdras, Tobit, &c. never were received into the canon by the ancient church; nor can they produce the decree of any one ancient council wherein they were owned. They say that these books were doubted of at first, and afterward received. Then the church at first did not know them to be the word of God; and if she be the bride of Christ, who best of all knows the Bridegroom's voice, how came she for so long time not to know it? Here certainly, in spite of infallibility, the church must be in an error; for if she doubted of the divinity of these books, when yet they were really divine, she erred in so doubting; and if she did know them to be of God, and yet did not receive them, she was more than erroneous, that is, she was plainly rebellious. As for the epistle to the Hebrews, the second of Peter, and those others which we all own as canonical, though some particular

particular persons or churches might doubt of their authentickness, yet it doth not appear that all ever did. Some of the Papiſts themselves confefs that the epistle to the Hebrews was generally acknowledged, unless by two or three of the Latin fathers; and Hierom reckons both that, and the Revelation as generally acknowledged for canonical.

*Object. 5. We cannot confute heretics who deny the scripture, or part of it, but by the authority of the catholic church, which receives it.*

*Anſw.* Those heretics that will acknowledge the church, may be confuted by its authority, but not have faith wrought in them; they may have their mouths stopped, but not their minds enlightened by it. And though we may make use of the authority of the church with such, yet not as the chief, and much less only argument to persuade them of the divinity of the scripture; but even by the same way, whereby believers are persuaded of it, may heretics be persuaded too. And if we meet with such heretics as pay no more reverence to the church, than to the scripture, we are in a fine case, if we have no other way of dealing with them, but by arguing the authority of the church: Surely they that deny the divinity of the one, will not stick to deride the testimony of the other.

*Object. 6. To pass by other testimonies of the ancients, one they mainly triumph in, is that saying of Austin, That he had not believed the gospel, had not the authority of the church moved him to it.*

*Anſw.* Austin speaks when converted and orthodox, of himself as formerly a Manichee, and shews that he had then been moved by the authority of the church to receive the gospel. When he was a Manichee, he was an heretic, not an heathen, and so might have some esteem for the church; or if he had no respect to the church, yet he might be moved to this, so far as he saw the consent of so many nations, and the prescription of so long time, and other like arguments in the church to induce him to reverence it.

V. We shall make application of the whole.

*Use 1.* From what hath been said, we may conclude, How dishonourable and injurious to God, and how destructive to religion, is this doctrine of the Papiſts.

1<sup>st</sup>, How injurious to God.

1. It is a dishonour unto his *wisdom*, as if he could not otherwise assure men of the divine original of the scripture, than by men bearing witness to it. Can God make the heavens declare his glory, and cannot he make the scripture do

it?

it? Can he make himself known by the judgments he executes, and not by the statutes he establisheth? Can he shew forth his wisdom, power, and goodness by the things he doth, and not by the things he speaks? How came the Spirit of the Lord to be thus straitened? Mic. ii. 7.

2. If God can make known the divineness of his word, otherwise than by the testimony of the church, and yet will not; it looks like a reflection upon his *goodness*, to leave men a more uncertain way of coming to the knowledge of his will, and their duty, when he could give them a more sure one. And if God did formerly give his people a better and more sure foundation for their faith, than the authority of mere, weak, fallible men, how comes his goodness to fail now, and be less unto the saints under the gospel, than to those under the law, or the patriarchs before it?

3. It greatly derogates from God's *sovereignty*. It degrades the authority of God, and ascribes what is his prerogative unto the church. Paul says, he needeth no letters of commendation to or from the churches, 2 Cor. iii. 1. but it seems the Holy Ghost must conveys for the votes of men, or seek their testimonials. What, cannot God establish his laws without the church's leave, nor Jesus Christ be King of saints, nor sway his sceptre, nor rule his house, without the good liking of the Pope and council? What can be more injurious to God's supremacy than this doctrine, which subjects the authority of God in his word to the pleasure of his creatures? What sovereign prince upon earth will endure to be so dealt with? I dare say the pope scorns to have it said, that his decretals have their force from him that divulgeth them, or his bulls from him that posts them up. If the pope sends his orders to a church or council, he expects they should be received and submitted unto, because of his stamp upon them, and seal annexed unto them, and not that they should sit and deliberate upon them. And why should not the scripture which hath God's stamp so fairly impressed upon it, and the seal of so many miracles to confirm it, be received?

2dly, This doctrine is prejudicial, yea, destructive unto the Christian religion. It leaves us only the name of Christianity, and no more. What is all religion, if God be not the author of it? And if the Papists say true, we can never be sure that God is its author. It is contrary to, and destructive of a Christian faith, comfort, and obedience, all at once.

It is destructive to our *faith*. It leaves us no firm footing for it, when it must be first founded upon, and lastly resolved

solved into the authority of men. It takes away the very foundation of it, and instead of the infallible veracity of the God of truth, puts us off with the uncertain testimony of a company of fallible men, who may every one of them be deceived, and therefore so may we too, if we rely on their authority. Indeed it leaves us little more certainty for our religion than the Turks have for theirs; for why may not they as well require us to believe that God speaks to us in the Alcoran, because they say he doth, as the Papists require us to believe he speaks to us in the scripture, merely because the pope, or council, say so? Nay, how little difference doth this cursed doctrine make between the great mysteries of the gospel, the articles of our faith, and the ridiculous fables of the Rabbins, or abominations of Mahomet? For if some writings are not canonical scripture, merely because the church hath not canonized them, and some are because it hath; the Acts and the Revelation are not the word of God, because the church would not so far dignify them, and the epistles of Peter and Paul are therefore of divine authority, because it so seemed good to the church to determine so. Why might not the church, if she had been so pleased, have added the Talmud and the Alcoran to the scripture?

2. It is destructive to our *comfort*. When our great comfort proceeds from our faith, such as the one is, so will the other be. An ill-grounded faith can never produce a well-grounded comfort. What will become of that *comfort of the scripture*, that *joy and peace in believing*, the apostle speaks of, Rom. xv. 4. 13. that *hope in God's word* David mentions, Psal. cxix. 81. cxxx. 5. if we can no otherwise be sure that it is God's word, but only because men tell us it is so? If the testimony of man is the ground of our faith and comfort, how will we stand when our foundation sinks under us? Should *the rains descend, the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat upon us, how great would our fall be?* If temptations should arise and shake our faith, how would we maintain our comfort? Would it not be sad for us to say within ourselves, "I have ventured my soul and its eternal welfare upon the scripture, and the promises therein, but how do I know this scripture is the word of God? Am I as sure I am not deceived, as I am certain of being miserable if I be? Here is indeed a company of men that call themselves the church; but that is a hard word I never meet any where but in their mouths, and in this book which they have put into my hands; and yet these are the only men that tell me it is the word of God. But what reason

son have I to believe them? They say indeed they are infallible, and cannot be deceived, but how shall I know that? They say the scripture says so: Suppose it doth, what know I but they make it say so; and the scripture, and they are agreed together to gratify one another, and speak for one another? I see not that they are the church unless the scripture makes them so; and yet they tell me, that the scripture is not the word of God to me unless they make it so. I know no authority they have to bind me to believe them, but what this book gives them; and they know none it hath to bind me to believe it, but what they give it. And thus I am quite at a loss, if either this thing called the church be not honest, but will cheat me; or be not infallible, but may deceive me: How vain then, and flattering have all my hopes been hitherto; how uncertain my faith! Farewel glory, and honour, and peace, Rom. ii. 10. farewel life and immortality, 2 Tim. i. 10. farewel the inheritance of the saints, Col. i. 12. and the crown of righteousness, 2 Tim. iv. 8. fine things if I knew where to have them." How would you like this, Christians? Do ye not even tremble at the thoughts of such dismal temptations? What think you then of the religion of the Papists, which exposeth all that embrace it to such uncertainties. It is no wonder they allow no certainty of salvation to believers, when they leave them at so great uncertainties for the very foundation of their faith.

3. It is as destructive to our *obedience* as to either of the other. Gospel-evidence is the fruit of faith; and therefore such as is the faith we have, such will be the obedience we yield. If our faith be not right, our obedience can be no better: A human faith is not sufficient to found our duty to God upon; and that obedience which proceeds only from such a faith, will neither be acceptable to God, nor available to us. But if we believe the scripture to be of God, only because men say it is, that faith cannot be divine; nor the obedience which flows from it acceptable. In this case, the same testimony of the church which would be the foundation of our faith, would likewise be the cause of our obedience: We should believe duty to be duty, with the same kind of faith with which we believed the command of it to be of God; and that would be no other than mens telling us that it is: And so the result of all would be, that we must obey God, because they tell us he commands us to obey him; and so we first shew a respect to men in believing, before we shew any to God in obeying him: And then, not only we must be beholden to the church for the  
knowledge

knowledge we have of our duty, but God must be beholden to her too for our performing of it.

*Use 2.* How much better a religion is ours than that of the Papists?

1. We have more certainty in our way than they have, or ever can have. Our faith is built upon no worse a bottom than the infinite veracity of him who is truth itself, revealing himself to us in the scriptures of truth, and not on the sandy foundation of any human testimony. It leans upon God, not upon men; upon *thus saith the Lord*, not *thus saith the church*. Tho' we despise not the true church, but pay reverence to all that authority wherewith God hath vested it; yet we dare not set it up in God's place. We are willing it should be an help to our faith, but not the foundation of it. If we are beholden to men, parents, ministers, &c. for putting the bible into our hands, and directing us to the scripture; yet when we read it, hear it opened, and are enlightened by it, Psal. cxix. 105. we see its excellency, are ravished with its beauty, taste its sweetness, feel its power, admire its majesty. When we find it to be such a word as searcheth our hearts, judges our thoughts, tells us *all that ever we did*, John iv. 29. awakens our consciences, commands the most inward spiritual obedience, sets before us the noblest ends, and exhibits the most glorious reward; then we come to acknowledge that *of a truth God is in it*. And so we believe it, not because men have ministerially led us to the knowledge of it, or have persuaded or commanded us to receive it, or told us it is of God, but because we ourselves have heard and felt him speaking in it. You may as well persuade a Christian whose faith is thus bottomed, that he hath no eyes, taste, feeling, understanding, affections; no knowledge of what is done in his own soul, as persuade him that the scripture is not the word of God: Whereas, on the other side, the Papist's religion is built merely on men, and their faith hath no more certainty than those men have infallibility. There is nothing certain nor solid among them, nothing able to bear the weight of an immortal soul, or to venture everlasting salvation upon. I see no such thing as a truly divine faith among them, unless it be therefore divine, because built upon the authority of their *Lord God the Pope*. In the mass at the election of him, they apply that to him which is said of the Holy Ghost, *I will pray the Father, and he will send you another Comforter*, John xiv. 16.

2. Our religion is more *comfortable*, as well as more certain. Our faith being built upon the truth of God him-

self, and our comfort upon our faith. If our faith hath good footing, our hopes and comforts will keep their standing. Faith in the promises is that whence all the comfort of our hearts, and our *rejoicing in hope of the glory of God* doth proceed. A Christian's joy is *joy in believing*, his peace the *peace of God*, and his comforts the comforts of the Holy Ghost; but this can never be if our faith be founded immediately on the testimony of men, and not of God, or if we believe the promises of the word to be made by God, because men tell us he made them. So long as we hold to the *sure word*, we have sure hopes, and sure comforts, and no longer; and therefore a Papist can never have any strong consolation by his faith, when his faith itself hath so weak a foundation. How can they ever rejoice in hopes of heaven, when they believe there is a heaven with no better a faith than they believe a pope or council to be infallible? It is to little purpose to say they believe there is a heaven, because God in the scripture tells them so, when they would not have believed one title of that very scripture, if a pope or council had not bid them believe it; and so their hopes and comforts depend not on the real infallibility of the God of truth, but on the pretended infallibility of one single prelate at Rome, or a convention of them at Trent. From such a foundation for our faith, and such comforters of our consciences, *The Lord deliver us!*

By this you must gather what you must do, if you would be Papists; you must renounce your reason and faith too, and enslave your consciences to the authority of men: You must hazard your eternal peace and welfare on the credit of one, who may be himself a murderer, an adulterer, a Sodomite, a necromancer, a blasphemer, an heretic, and may be so far from being saved himself, that he may, as some Papists acknowledge, carry whole cart-loads of souls to hell with him; yet still he is infallible, and you must tamely submit to his, or the church's tyrannical dictates. And if it should ever come to this, would not Smithfield be as hot a place as the plain of Dura, if every one that would not fall down and worship this great golden idol, *Holy Church*, should be cast into the burning fiery furnace.

*Use 3.* And therefore to prevent this, and that your faith may be firm and immoveable; not standing in the authority or wisdom of men, but in the power and truth of God; that your hearts may be full of comfort, your lives full of holiness, your deaths full of sweetness, and that you may be more than conquerors over all those temptations whereby the wicked one may at any time assault your faith; be sure

sure that you believe the scripture upon solid and lasting grounds; trust the authority of no mere man nor company of men in the world, in a business on which the everlasting blessedness, or misery of your souls doth depend. *Hear Moses and the prophets*; hear the apostles and evangelists: We are sure God spake by them, and they never err; as popes and councils, we are sure they have erred, and may do so again; and so may your parents that first instructed you. If you come in a Papist's way, and hear talk of Peter's successor, Christ's vicars, catholic churches, general councils, infallibilities, long successions, apostolical traditions, you do not know what kind of spirit such conjuring words may raise up in you: You may be apt to think, the major part, as you will be told, must carry it, and so determine your faith by the votes of men: And whereas before your faith was built upon the credit of a parent, or a pastor, now build it upon the credit of a great many, or a great one in the name of all the rest. For my part, I shall never wonder to see ill-grounded Protestants, easily turn Papists: They are semi-Papists already, and they may soon be wholly such; they have a Pope at home, and if they do not like him, they may easily exchange him for another abroad: He that pins his faith upon one man's sleeve may soon do it upon anothers; he is already a church-Papist, and may soon be a mass-one. And therefore, to conclude, Whoever thou art, if thou have not formerly done it, search thyself now, ere Satan sift thee: Try thy faith in the scripture, that it may be approved; see whose image and superscription it bears, what foundation it hath, what answer thou canst give to any one that *asks thee a reason of it*; nay, what answer thou canst give thyself. Ask thyself, Why do I believe the Bible to be the word of God? "How do I know it was not the invention of men? By what arguments, by what authority was I induced to give my assent to it? Do I take it merely on the credit of those of whom I was born, among whom I was bred, with whom I have conversed? Is this a sufficient foundation for my faith? Dare I venture my soul upon such a bottom? Is this to build my house upon a rock? How near the Papists am I come ere I was aware of it? I spit at them, and defy them, and yet act like them, if not below them; and can scarce say as much for my faith, as they can for theirs." If this be thy condition, begin quickly and try to get thy faith well settled, and upon its right basis, or I dare say thou wilt never keep thy faith at the expence of thy life, but rather turn ten times, than burn once. If thou hast therefore any regard to thy  
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constancy of thy faith, to the comfort of thy life, the honour of God, or the salvation of thy own soul, labour immediately to get thy belief of the word better founded. Read the scripture constantly, study it seriously, search it diligently; hear it explained, and applied by others; meditate on it thyself, and beg of God an understanding of it, and a right faith in it; that he would give thee *an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear*, Deut. xxix. 4. that he would *open thine eyes to behold wondrous things out of his law*, Psal. cxix. 18. that he would give thee his Spirit, that thou mayst *search the deep things of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 10. that he would cause thee to hear his voice in that word which thou hast hitherto taken to be his, and direct thy heart into the surest grounds of believing it. And hold on in such a way of painful endeavours for getting thy faith settled, till it be done; and be sure what thou hast hitherto received on the account of man, thou now believest for the sake of God himself. I deny thee not the testimony of the universal church of Christ in all ages, so far as thou art capable of knowing it, as well as of the present church, or any particular one to which thou art any way related, as an help to thee; make the best thou canst of it, only rest not on it: But especially observe, if thou seest the stamp of God, characters of divinity imprinted on the word; consider its antiquity, the continuance of it, the miracles that confirmed it, the condition of the men that penned it, their aims, their carriage and conversation, God's providence in keeping it, and handing it down to thee through so many successive generations, when so many in all ages would have bereaved the world of it: And further, consider the majesty and gravity, yet plainness and simplicity of its stile, the depth of the mysteries it discovers, the truth and divineness of the doctrine it teacheth, the spirituality of the duties it enjoins, the power and force of the arguments with which it persuades, the eternity of the rewards it promises, and the punishment it threatens; the end and scope of the whole, to reform the world, to discountenance and extirpate wickedness, and promote holiness and righteousness, and thereby advance God's glory, and lead man to everlasting blessedness, &c. And be sure leave not off, till thou find thy faith raised from so low a bottom as the authority of men, and fixed on God's own testimony; till thou canst safely and boldly say, "I believe the scripture now to be the word of God, not because I have heard men say so, but because I hear God himself in this very scripture bearing witness to it; his Spirit has given me new eyes, and enabled me to see  
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the divineness of it. I know and am sure that this is the word of God; never mere man spake at such a rate; never did the word of man work such effects. *The entrance of it hath given light to my soul, which was before in darkness, not knowing whither I went.* How many glorious mysteries do I see in it; what purity, what spirituality, what holiness, &c. all which speak the wisdom, power, goodness, holiness, and truth of the author of it? What sweetness have I tasted in it? it hath been as *the honey, and honey-comb to me*: What life and power have I experienced in it! What a change hath it wrought in me! what lusts hath it discovered and mortified! what duties hath it convinced me of, and engaged me in! How hath it quickned me when I was dead in sin; revived my comforts when they were dying, actuated my graces when they were languishing, roused me up when I was sluggish, awaked me when I was dreaming, refreshed me when I was sorrowful, supported me when I was sinking; answered my doubts, conquered my temptations, scattered my fears, enlarged my desires, and filled me with *joy unspeakable!* And what word could have wrought such effects, but that of the eternal, all-wise, all-powerful God? And therefore upon his alone authority I receive it. Him alone I adore in it, whose power I have found so often working by it. I durst venture an hundred souls if I had them, and an hundred heavens if there were so many, upon the truth and divine authority of this word; and should not hesitate, not only to give the lie to the most *profound, most invincible, irrefragable, angelical, and seraphical* doctors \*, nay, and *infallible* popes and councils too, but even to say anathema to angels and seraphims themselves, if they should tell me the scripture were not the word of God."

Christian, get but such a faith of the word as this into thy heart, and then thou mayest defy scoffers, atheists, Papists. Tho' they deride thee, thou wilt not easily be laughed out of thy senses, nor overcome by mens jeers, to disbelieve what thou hast seen and felt. If they will not believe as thou dost, thou shalt never be brought to play the infidel as they do. Thou wilt not deny what thou plainly seest, because others who have no eyes do not perceive it, no more than thou wilt cease to admire the glory of the sun, because birds of the night care not for looking on it. Sure I am, such persons either shut their eyes against the light, or God hath not yet in mercy opened them, or hath in judgment closed them up; for *if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*, 2 Cor. iv. 3.

SER.

\* Such titles the Papists give their schoolmen.

# S E R M O N IV.

Mr. P O O L E.

## Pope and Councils not infallible

Matth. xxiii. 8, 9, 10. *But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.*

*And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father which is in heaven.*

*Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ.*

**T**HE *but* in the beginning of these words hath a manifest respect unto the foregoing verses, wherein our blessed Saviour describes and censures the ambition and usurpation of the scribes and Pharisees. He tells you, ver. 5. *All their works they do to be seen of men; not for the pleasing of God, but for gaining of reputation amongst men; not for the satisfaction of their own consciences, but for vain glory and ostentation. They made broad their phylacteries; the phylacteries were little scrolls of parchment which the Jews did wear upon their arms, or upon their foreheads, wherein they writ some parcels of the law of God. How solidly grounded that practice was, I shall not now examine: But the scribes and Pharisees made these phylacteries larger and broader than the rest of the Jews, that they might gain that respect from the people by their outward garb, which they could not gain by any true and solid worth. It follows, ver. 6. They love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues; and in ver. 7. greetings in the market, and to be called of men, Rabbi, i. e. Master or Doctor; for so the word signifies; and the word is doubled for the greater honour and respect. They affected titles of honour: The Jewish sanhedrim did solemnly confer these upon learned men, and obliged the people to give them; and they had a saying, that "He that saluteth his teacher as he doth another man, and doth not call him Rabbi, provokes God to depart from Israel."*

But indeed, there was a deeper and worse design than this in it: They did not only aim at splendid and glorious titles, but they did usurp authority and dominion over the consciences

consciences of the people, whereof this was but a sign. Against this leaven of the scribes and Pharisees, our Saviour cautions them in the words read, *Be ye not called Rabbi; call no man your father upon earth; neither be ye called masters.* The same thing thrice repeated in various expressions, to shew the great importance and necessity of this precept. But how is this to be understood? I answer, It is not a prohibition concerning the *use* of the name, but concerning the *practice* of the thing. You are not to understand it thus, as if it were unlawful to call any man *father*, or *master*, as the Quakers understand it. Certainly the apostles best understood the meaning of their Lord and Master; and for as much as we find that they themselves did give men these titles, we have warrant enough to use them, Eph. vi. 4. *Fathers provoke not your children to wrath;* and lest any man should have such an allegorical humour as to understand it of spiritual fathers, they are called *fathers of the flesh*, Heb. xii. 9. *We have had fathers of our flesh.* And so servants must *obey in all things their masters according to the flesh*, Col. iii. 22. nay more, it is not unlawful to call teachers by these names; it is not unlawful to call teachers, *Masters, Doctors, Rabbies*, 1 Cor. iv. 15. *For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have you not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel: I am your father, your spiritual father;* and the title of Master answers to Rabbi in the Hebrew, as the learned know, and plainly appears from John xx: 16. *Jesus said unto her, Mary; she turned herself about and said, Rabboni!* a word of the same signification with Rabbi, which is as much as to say, Master. This name, I say, is commonly given to teachers and ministers of the gospel; *he sent some apostles and some teachers or masters;* and so St. Paul calls himself *a teacher, a master, a doctor of the Gentiles.*

What then is here forbidden?

*Ans.* Two things. (1.) A vain and ambitious affectation of such titles of honour as these. (2.) That authority and dominion over the consciences of men which these titles do import. I shall say nothing to the former, the latter is that I must discourse of at this time.

The doctrine of the scribes and Pharisees was, That the people were obliged to believe all their doctrines, and to practise all their injunctions. The very words of the Jewish Talmud, which is as it were their Bible, are, "All the words of our Rabbins are to be believed, and received, as the very words of the living God." And in another place, "We owe the same faith to all which the Rabbins teach in  
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“ their homilies, which we give to the law of Moses.” Nay, Rabbi Solomon, an eminent doctor of theirs saith upon Deut. xvii. 11. “ Thou shalt not depart from the words of “ the wise,” i. e. *their teachers*, “ though they tell thee that “ thy right hand is thy left, and thy left hand thy right;” and in another place, “ He that dissents from his teachers, “ is as bad as he that dissents from the divine Majesty; and “ he that believes the words of the wise, it is as if he did believe God himself.” Nay, they went higher, “ My son, “ attend rather to the words of the scribes than to the words “ of the law.”

By this you may clearly understand why our Saviour presseth this point with so much vehemency. He saith, *Call no man Rabbi, call no man your father upon earth; i. e. let none of my disciples or apostles ever usurp this authority, nor acknowledge this authority to be in them.*

From the words thus explained, I gather this doctrine.

*Doct.* There is no external, supreme and infallible judge in the church of God, to whom all Christians are obliged to submit their faith and consciences, in all matters of religion.

This was the point that I was desired to discourse of at this time; and I do it the more willingly, because Popery will either stand or fall by the truth or falsehood of this assertion. It is usual with Papists confidently to invite us to the debate of this doctrine, concerning the supreme and infallible judge of controversies; this they all acknowledge, strikes at the root; and we do but nibble at the branches, unless we strike at this.

Now, that you may the better understand this discourse, I must acquaint you with the doctrine of the Papists in this particular. They are not content with Christ the Judge in heaven, and the holy scripture the judge upon earth; but they must have another judge, a visible judge: Like the Israelites they must have a visible God to go before them, though it be but a calf. They say, (1.) That an external and visible judge of all matters of religion upon earth is absolutely necessary; and this judge they say is the church, by which they understand the governors of the church, either the pope, as some of them say, or as others, a general council, or the pope and a council together, as those that would seem wiser than the rest. (2.) They say, this supreme judge is infallible; he can neither be deceived himself, nor deceive them that adhere to him, and are taught by him. (3.) They say, it is the duty of every particular Christian, intirely and unreservedly to submit his faith and conscience

conscience to the conduct and guidance of this judge; to believe whatever he teacheth, and to practise whatever he commands, according to that known and never to be forgotten assertion of Bellarmine \*. “ If, saith he, the pope  
 “ could or should so far err, as to command the practice of  
 “ vice, and to forbid virtuous actions, the church were  
 “ bound to believe vices to be good, and virtues to be bad.”  
 This is plain dealing.

And they further add, That this doctrine of the church’s supreme and infallible authority, as it is of more weight and importance, so it is, and in all reason ought to be more evident and demonstrable than any other Christian doctrine whatsoever. Against this bold and wicked assertion I have laid down this proposition, *There is no external supreme, infallible judge in the church of God, to whom all Christians are obliged to submit their faith and consciences in all matters of religion.* That which I am now pleading for is, That you may preserve the greatest treasure you have in the world, even your consciences, against the horrible usurpations of wicked and unreasonable men.

I shall not use many arguments to confute this popish assertion, but such as may convince the conscience of any person who will not shut his eyes against the light.

*Arg. 1.* This authority which they pretend to is a greater authority than the apostles themselves did ever claim, or exercise in the church of God; as plainly appears from 2 Cor. i. 24. *Net that we have dominion over your faith.* I do not understand what dominion over a man’s faith can be, if this that they pretend be not so. God himself can scarce be imagined to have a greater dominion over any man’s faith than this, that a man be obliged to believe every thing God saith without examination, and practise whatsoever he commands. This was our blessed Saviour’s sole prerogative, Acts iii. 22. *Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall you hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.* And the truth is, it might well be said of Christ; we may safely rely upon, and hear Christ in all things whatsoever he shall say to us: But that this should be said of a weak and wicked man, such as themselves confess many of their popes to have been, is such a stupendous usurpation, that I can never think of it with horror enough. The holy apostles thought it good manners to keep a distance from their Lord and Master; they never durst arrogate such an absolute and unlimited authority to themselves: Witness  
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\* De Pontifice, Rom. l. 4. cap. 5. in fine.

that evident place, Gal. i. 8, 9. *Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* And as I said before, so say I now again, *If any man, be what he will, pope or council, or any company of men, preach any other gospel unto you,—let him be accursed.* And do you not think that if any man should say, that vices were virtues, and sins duties, and consequently that unbelief and impenitency were gospel-duties, that this would be another gospel? Yet if the Pope teach so, you are bound to believe it.

*Arg. 2.* Such an authority as they pretend to, is contrary to that command of the trial of doctrines, which is laid upon all Christians; for if there be an infallible judge to whom I ought to submit my faith and conscience in all matters of religion, what need I try doctrines? Bellarmine says, “A Christian should receive all the doctrines of the church without any examination.” Now, let us see whether this be the mind of God or no; if it be, then they are in the right; if not, then it is an abominable usurpation. If we consult the holy scriptures, we shall find that no Christian is to offer to God a blind sacrifice, but a reasonable service. 1 Pet. iii. 15. *Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.* 1 John iv. 1. *Beloved, believe not every spirit, that is every teacher that pretends to be led by the Spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.* God hath given us sufficient warning, that there should be a great and a general defection amongst professors, yea amongst the preachers of the gospel, 1 Tim. iv. 1. *Now, the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.* Acts xx 30. *Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them, &c.* 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2. *But there were false prophets also amongst the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and many shall follow their pernicious ways.* Well, what is the remedy against this doleful disease? Be not surprized when you see various and contrary opinions in the church; it is no more than was foretold by the apostles. But what shall Christians do in this distressed condition and contradiction of opinions? What was the remedy prescribed in case of false prophets of old? And what is the remedy in case of false teachers now? Why, it is trial. Christians are commanded to try them. There were two ways proposed to try the prophets of old; the one was by the

the event, Deut. xviii. 21, 22. *And if thou say in thine heart, how shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken; when the prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken presumptuously.* The other way of trial was by the scripture, *To the law and to the testimony, &c.* Isa. viii. 20. This is the way to discover these delusions. And this is the remedy prescribed in the New Testament: I need only instance 1 Thess. v. 21. *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.* Prove all things: Who is required to do this? Is it the Pope? Is it a general council? No: Read the first verse of the first chapter, *Paul and Sylvanus, and Timotheus unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father;* the members of the church are here commanded to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. The same persons are obliged to *prove all things*, who are obliged to *hold fast that which is good*; and since it is confessed the latter clause belongs to the people, so must the former also.

Consider three things. (1.) Christians have ability to try things with. (2.) They have a rule to try things by. And (3.) They have a promise of discovery; and I think more is not necessary.

1<sup>st</sup>, Christians have *ability* to try things with; they have reasonable faculties capable of judging between things that differ. The apostle speaks to the church of the Corinthians, 1 Cor. x. 15. *I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say.* Christians, as well as ministers, have the Spirit of God which enables them to judge of spiritual things. 2 Cor. ii. 15. *He that is spiritual, that is, he that hath the Spirit of God, judgeth all things.* He is capable of judging between doctrine and doctrine, between precept and precept, between practice and practice; and upon the warrant of this text, and many others, I dare affirm, that a serious, godly, discreet Christian, is a more competent judge of many divine truths, than the greatest scholar in the world, that wants the direction of the Spirit of God: Add to this what our Saviour saith, John x. 4, 5. and remember he speaks not of the shepherds but of the sheep; *My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me; a stranger will they not follow, but will fly from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.* The sheep are indued by God with faculties; they can distinguish between Christ and a stranger, between Christ and Antichrist.

2<sup>dly</sup>, Christians have a *certain rule* to try things by, and that is the holy scriptures, to which Christ commanded the Jews to bring all his doctrines, John v. 39. *Search the scriptures.* Acts xvii. 11. *These were more noble than those of Thessalonica,*

*salonica*, in that they received the word with all readines of mind, and searched the scripture daily whether those things were so. 2 Pet. i. 19. *We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.* Pray observe, 1. Who writes this: It is Peter, he from whom the pope claims all the power he hath; and yet Peter saith, you do well to take heed to the scriptures. I know the popes are grown wiser since; they have corrected Peter; they say, It is the fountain of all heresy for people to study the scripture. Our Saviour said, *You err, because you know not the scriptures*, Matth xxii. 29. The Pope saith, Men err because they will know and read the scriptures. 2. To whom he writes. Look upon the endorsement of his epistle; peradventure he writes thus to his successors: No; but to *them that hath obtained like precious faith with us*, 2 Pet i. 1.

3dly, Christians have a promise of discovery upon trial, Prov. ii. 4, 5. *If thou seekest her, that is, wisdom, as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.* John vii. 17. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.*

Arg. 3. People may sin in following their guides and teachers. This the Papists deny, and I shall endeavour to confirm. When Aaron taught the people to worship the golden calf; and proclaimed, *To-morrow is a feast to the Lord*, Exod. xxxii. 5. did not the people sin in obeying Aaron? Yes: Not only did Aaron sin, but the people. Moses acknowledges it. *Oh! this people have sinned a great sin, ver. 31. And the Lord plagued the people because they made the calf which Aaron made, ver. 35.* or, as the words may be interpreted, *because they worshipped, or sacrificed to the calf which Aaron made.* And in Isai. iii. 2. God says by the prophet, *O my people, they which lead thee, cause thee to err, viz. by their corrupt doctrines and sinful practices.* This did not excuse them, nor free them from punishment, that they followed their leaders; for, *Behold, the Lord maketh the earth, i. e. the land, empty, and maketh it waste, &c. and it shall be as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master: Leader and follower shall both be punished.* The priest and rulers in our Saviour's time are called *blind guides*, Matt. xxiii. 16. they accounted Christ an impostor, saying, *That deceiver said.* Matt. xxviii. 63. *They persuaded the multitude to ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus, ver. 20.* Now, whether did the people well in believing and obeying these rulers? The Papists affirm, "That the whole people of the Jews in mat-

“ters of religion, where bound to follow what the high-priest said\* : And Bellarmine expressly says, “That the people were bound to stand to the high-priest’s judgment, whatever sentence he should deliver.” We say they did sin in believing their teachers ; and Christ says, *They be blind leaders of the blind ; and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*, Matt. xv. 14. Peter says, *Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain*. Neither God’s decree, nor the high-priest’s misguidance did in the least excuse them from that wicked act ; and as they said, *His blood be on us and our children, so wrath is come upon them to the uttermost*, 1 Theff. ii. 16. which would not have been had they been innocent in following their leaders. When Christ commands the Jews to believe in him, they asked him, *What shall we do, that we may work the works of God*. Jesus answered, *This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent*, John vi. 28, 29. and the great doctrine, you know, preached by Christ was, *Repent and believe the gospel* ; and he testifies, *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life ; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*, John iii. 36. The arguments our Saviour useth to prove his being Messias are principally, the works he did, John v. 36. and the testimony of the scripture concerning him, ver. 39. But on the other hand, if we rest on the authority of the church, we see *the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death*, Matt. xxvi. 59. and the high-priest pronounceth, *He hath spoken blasphemy, &c.* ver. 65. and the rest consent to his sentence, saying, *He is guilty of death*, ver. 66. Now, the question is, whether the Jews were obliged to believe Christ, or the high-priest and Sanhedrim ? Methinks, the very mentioning of it should presently determine it in all your thoughts. Can any man think that the authority of the church made void the command of God ; or that the Jews did not sin in believing Christ to be a deceiver ? Can it be thought the apostles and disciples of Christ sinned in believing in him ? and yet these prodigious assertions must be digested, or else they must part with their fundamental doctrine. As the case was then with the Jews, so is it our case now : God commands, *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, &c.* Our Saviour says, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, Matt. iv. 10. The church of Rome says, *Thou shalt worship graven images, saints, and angels also* : Whether

\* Becanus in Manuali Contravers.

ther must I believe the word of God, or the word of man? Let 1 John v. 9. determine this, *If we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater.* Christ says, *Ye have made void the commandment of God by your traditions,* Matt. xv. 6. and *if teaching for doctrines the commandments of men,* be not a making void the commandments of God by their traditions, I know not what can be called so.

*Arg. 4.* If there be such a sovereign and infallible judge as the Papists pretend, and if the pope be he, let him produce his commission, and shew his letters patent for it; for *no man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron,* Heb. v. 4. It is confessed on all hands that man is of himself a vain and foolish creature, full of ignorance, and apt to err, that he *loves darkness rather than light.* The minds of all men do need renovation, else they are not capable of discerning divine things. Now, if any man pretend to an exemption from the common infirmities and corruptions of human nature, he ought to produce his writ of privilege or exemption. If any pretend to be infallibly guided by God in all things, he can claim it only from the grace of God, and by virtue of his promise, but there is no such promise. The Papists pretend they have such a promise, which I shall next examine. And here there are two things to be enquired into.

1. To whom this commission and promise is given.

2. Where this grant and promise is.

1. To whom this promise is made. The Papists say, it is made to the church: But what do they mean by the church? The governors of it, say they. But some of them say it belongs to the pope, others to a general council; and in this there is universality against universality, city against city, kingdom against kingdom; so that until they be agreed to whom this promise is made, they can make no benefit of the claim.

2. Where this grant and promise is? The Papists answer, it is contained in the holy scriptures; and here they muster up some promises, which I shall briefly examine. Only in general observe three things.

(i.) More clear and express promises than any they pretend to, did not secure the church of God formerly from error, and therefore it is vain to expect it now, suppose there were such a text as this, *In the church of Rome shall be my name for ever,* yet that would not be sufficient to prove it infallible, or to secure the church from error; which I will prove by a plain instance: God speaks concerning the temple of Jerusalem, *I have chosen and sanctified this house,—*

to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually, 2 Chron vii. 16. but this did not secure the church of Jerusalem, the high-priests and their brethren; from error and apostasy, which doth sufficiently appear from the frequent and grievous complaints of the prophets concerning the universal depravation of that church, and particularly, by their fatal and damnable error in the condemnation of Christ.

2. God's promise of leading them into all truth, is suspended upon certain conditions. The Spirit of truth is only promised to them that ask him, Luke xi. 13. and they must ask aright, James iv. 3. And the knowing of the doctrine of Christ is suspended upon the doing of God's will, John vii. 17. Now, as the church of Rome hath apparently broken the condition God requires, as no man who reads their own historians can doubt, no wonder if God, according to his commination in that case, *make them to know his breach of promise.*

3. The promises they pretend to are so dark and obscure, that they do not convince many of their own brethren, and it is ridiculous to think they should convince Protestants. This being premised, I come particularly but briefly to the promises pretended for this usurped authority, *1st*, For the pope. *2dly*, For the council.

*1st*, For the pope, they tell us, That St Peter was made by Christ the supreme and infallible judge of all matters and controversies of religion, and that Peter's successors, the popes and bishops of Rome, are invested with the same authority and privilege; and this, they say, is evident from scripture, and hath been constantly owned by the church till Luther's days. For proof of this they alledge,

(1.) Matt. xvi. 18. *And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* From this they conclude that Peter, and consequently all his successors the popes, are the rock upon which the church is built.

*Ans.* 1. It is not Peter's person, but his doctrine, or the glorious confession he had made of Christ, ver. 16. acknowledging him as *the Son of the living God*, that our Saviour here speaks of.—Although it were Peter's person that were called a rock and a foundation of the church, this would not prove him to be infallible, much less his successors. That Peter was not the proper and primary foundation of the church is evident, 1 Cor. iii. 2. *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* In a secondary and ministerial sense Peter was a foundation,

and so were all the rest of the apostles, Eph. ii. 20. *You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, i. e. upon the doctrine delivered by them. The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, Rev. xxi. 14.* Here is no prerogative of Peter, but all are equally foundations.

2. The promise of infallibility doth not belong to Peter, but to the church. *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it: Against what or whom? Not the rock upon which the church is built, but the church built on that rock. He doth not say, The gates of hell shall not prevail against thee, nor against thy successors, but it shall not prevail against the church; so that although Peter dies, and his successors should prove apostates from the faith, yet still the church remains built upon the rock.*

3. This promise is made to the true invisible and sincere professors of the gospel church; for it is manifest the gates of hell did and do prevail against all other persons, except the sincere professors of the gospel, therefore those persons that are said to be infallible and secure against all danger, are only the true and invisible members of the church.

(2.) They alledge, Luke xxii. 31, 32. *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not: Therefore, say they, Peter did not err in the faith, and consequently, the popes, his successors, cannot err. But alas! what vain and ridiculous arguments are these? Nothing is more evident, than that this promise or prayer of Christ, doth not concern any infallibility in the doctrine of faith, but his establishment in grace. For the more abundant confutation of this absurd doctrine, I shall shew, That as they cannot prove it from scripture, we can disprove it from it: For this I shall offer two arguments:*

1. That Peter no where challengeth this power.

2. The apostles no where give it him; therefore it is an intolerable arrogance that his successors should claim it.

1. Peter did not challenge it. It is observable, that in the gospel of Mark, which the learned believe was indited by Peter's direction, there is not so much as a repetition of that famous text, *Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church.* Peter durst not have omitted it, if it had been so fundamental a doctrine as the Papists would have it. And afterward Peter writes two epistles, and there is not one syllable in either of them concerning this authority. But some may possibly say, this was Peter's modesty. But certainly Peter durst not exercise his modesty to the impeach-

ment of his fidelity, and the concealment of so necessary and important a truth; but ought to have done as Paul did, who when his authority was opposed by false teachers, asserts, vindicates, and as himself expresseth it, *magnifieth his office*, Rom. xi. 13. and so no doubt Peter would and should have done, if he really had that supreme power which the Papists would fasten upon him.

2. The other apostles no where give this honour to Peter, but rather by their practices shew themselves to be of a contrary opinion. This will sufficiently appear from two places of scripture, which may suffice for the determination of this controversy.

The one is, Act. xv. At this time St. Peter by the doctrine of the Papists, is supposed to be in the actual exercise of his headship over the church, to be the supreme and infallible judge of all controversies; and was believed and known to be so by all the rest of the apostles, and all the Christians of that age; whether it were so or no we shall see by this chapter. A controversy ariseth in the church; what do they do for the resolution of it? Acts xv. 1, 2. *They go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders about this question.* Why did they not go to Peter if he were the infallible judge? It was vain to call them all together, if Peter alone might determine it. But it may be these were the Christians at Antioch, and they did not well understand Peter's supremacy and infallibility, but the church of Jerusalem understood it better; well, let us examine that too, in verse 6. *The apostles and elders came together to consider of this matter*; Peter was no more consulted with than the rest: in verse 7. Peter spake in the assembly, and delivers his opinion, vers. 10. *Now therefore, why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?* After him James comes and delivers another opinion, different from Peter's, verses 19, 20. *My sentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God, but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood*; as if he had said, I am not altogether of Peter's mind, I would not have all these things wholly and on a sudden discharged. It is but meet that some respect and tenderness should be shewn to the believing Jews, and that we should become all things to all men that we may save some; and therefore it is fit we should a little comply with the Jews, not to impose circumcision, but to *abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.* And the manner of his expression

here is very observable; *Wherefore I thus determine.* He doth not say, according to the present stile of the Romaniſts, “ I do in all humility preſent my opinion to the vicar “ of Chriſt, the prince of the apoſtles, the ſupreme and in- “ fallible judge of this and all other controverſies, to whom “ I freely and fully ſubmit my thoughts and judgment;” but barely relates part of Peter’s diſcourſe, and then concludes with a kind of definitive ſentence. And which is further conſiderable, this great council prefers James his opinion before Peter’s, and the decree runs in James his words, verſe 29. *That ye abſtain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things ſtrangled, and from fornication, from which if ye keep yourſelves, ye ſhall do well.* Can any man, in his right ſenſes, imagine that things would have been thus managed, if Peter had been the ſupreme and infallible judge of all controverſies? Further, the decree runs not in Peter’s name, as now it doth in the pope’s, but in all their names; verſe 23. *The apoſtles and elders, and brethren, ſend greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles.* It is ridiculous and incredible to think that there ſhould not in all this ſtory be one word of Peter’s pre-eminence, if he were at that time what they vainly pretend him to be, the ſupreme head of the whole church, and the infallible judge of all controverſies.

Another place of ſcripture no leſs evident, is Gal. ii. 7. *The goſpel of the uncircumciſion was committed to me, ſaith St. Paul, as the goſpel of the circumciſion was committed to Peter.* How ſtrange is this? I thought all the goſpel of Chriſt, whether circumciſion or uncircumciſion had been committed to Peter, and not any to Paul, but in ſubordination to Peter; ſo ſays the pope, ſo ſay the Papiſts at this day: ‘This is a new diſcovery! Paul though rapt up into the third heaven, knew nothing of this: Peradventure whiſt he was in heaven, the decree for Peter’s ſupremacy and infallibility was enacted upon earth, and ſo he loſt the knowledge of that myſtery: Howſoever, he found nothing of it in heaven, and we can find nothing of it upon earth, and therefore it muſt come from a third place, and what that is, I leave to you to judge. He adds further, verſe 11. *When Peter came to Antioch, I withſtood him to the face, becauſe he was to be blamed.* What? the infallible judge to be blamed? the infallible judge to ſeducer and miſlead them that followed him? Obſerve further, how ſlightly he ſpeaks of all the apoſtles, and that promiſcuouſly, without any reſervation for Peter, ver. 6. *Thoſe who ſeemed to be ſomewhat, whatſoever they were, it maketh no matter to me (God accepteth*

no man's person) for they who seemed to be somewhat, in conference added nothing to me. Peter is no more to me than another man, than James, John, or any of the apostles. I received the gospel immediately from Christ; and he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles, ver. 8. Can any man think the apostle would have spoke thus, if he had known and believed that Peter had been at this instant the supreme infallible judge, to whom all were obliged to submit. But further, if all that is said concerning Peter had been true, yet what is that to the pope, a person of a quite different character? Platina confesseth concerning divers of them, that they were *monsters* of men, that there were *eighteen popes* successively one after another that were *magicians*, and in *covenant with the devil*. Can any man think that such persons were infallibly guided by the Spirit of God who had made a league with the devil? Genebrard, a virulent Papist, confesseth, that the popes for an hundred and fifty years together were *apostates*; and our countryman Stapleton, an eminent Papist, saith, "I must acknowledge, there were scarce any sins, except heresy, of which the popes and bishops of Rome were not guilty." How can such a person be the foundation of the church, that is not so much as a member of it? How can any infamous, wicked wretch make claim to those promises which Christ made to the holy and blessed apostles? Or, How can it be imagined that that man's faith is secured, all whose other graces are ruined? Faith and a good conscience go together, 1 Tim. i. 19. And St James saith, chap. ii. verse 20. *Faith without works is dead*. How can that man pretend to be infallibly guided by the Spirit of God, that hath not the Spirit of God in him. It is expressly said of such sensual and brutish men, as many of the popes are acknowledged to have been, that they *have not the Spirit of God*, Jude, verse 19. Which also appears (and it is very remarkable that it doth so) from that very text which they bring to prove the infallibility of councils; John xiv. 16, 17. *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world, that is, the wicked men of the world, cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him*. Now, who those men are that have not seen nor known God, you may learn from 1 John iii. 6. *Whosoever abideth in him, that is, in God, or in Christ, sinneth not; whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him; that is, whosoever doth sell himself to sin, whosoever alloweth himself in the customary practice of sin, for of such only*

that

that phrase is meant, hath not seen God, nor known him, and cannot have the Spirit of God.

2dly, For the second particular, viz. the supremacy and infallibility of councils, separate from the pope; it is so little owned by our English Papists, that I shall not need to spend many words about it. The places of scripture which they alledge for it, are principally these three.

The first, Matt. xviii. 20. *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* A most ridiculous proof! for all that this text proves, is the special and gracious presence of Christ: But Christ's gracious presence is one thing, infallible guidance is another thing: If that presence of Christ's makes all those infallible which have it, it is not only the pope, or a general council, but all councils, and all assemblies of Christians that are infallible. Further, this promise is suspended upon that condition of being gathered together in Christ's name, that is, by Christ's command and commission, seeking his honour and glory, being guided by his rule, and acting according to his will; all which is included in that phrase of being *gathered in Christ's name*: It is true, he that doth all this is infallible, but the question is, whether they do this; nay, it is abundantly evident they do it not.

Anther place is, John xvi. 13. *When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.* To that I shall need only to say this, that this promise is made to the apostles alone, and it is made to every apostle. It was not only made to Peter, but to all the apostles; whereas one apostle went one way, and another another way; one preached to the Jews, another to the Gentiles, God did promise that they should be led into all necessary truths. But what is this to the pope or general council? He doth not say, that the apostles shall be infallible only when they are gathered together, otherwise all those churches which were converted by the preaching of any single apostle, which was the case of most churches in the world, had no certain and infallible foundation for their faith. And consequently, if this privilege be extended to the successors of the apostles, then not only the pope is infallible, but all and every other successor of any one of the apostles is infallible; so that either it proves the infallibility of divers particular persons, or else it doth not prove the infallibility of councils. Another place is, Acts xv. 28. *For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay no other burden upon you.* A most impertinent allegation; this is only a declaration of the present case, and no promise for the future. It is true, he says,

this

this council was guided by the Holy Ghost, and so they were, but doth not say all other councils shall. Many councils were Arrians, and others were erroneous in other points; and the Papists themselves confess that many councils have erred, especially those that condemned the popes, and set up their own authority above them.

There is one thing they further pretend, that though it be true, the pope is not infallible of himself, nor the council alone, yet both together are infallible; the decrees of the pope confirmed by a general council are infallible. Two things only I shall say to this.

1. This is but a shuffling evasion against their own consciences; because it is notoriously known, and the popish doctors unanimously confess it, that this supposed infallibility is lodged either in the pope, or in the council; they will not allow of a mixt infallibility, that the pope should constitute one part, and the council another. Bellarmine says, That "infallibility does not lie partly in the pope, and partly in the council, but it is wholly in the pope, and in the council, so far and no further than they cleave to the pope:" and says Stapleton, "The council adds no infallibility to the pope; it is he alone that is infallible." And on the other side, those that place the infallibility in the council do as expressly affirm, "It is not partly in the pope, and partly in the council, but wholly in the council, and in the pope no further than he sticks to the council." By which it is evident enough, that this is only an artifice to deceive the ignorant and injudicious people, but is not satisfactory to their own consciences.

2. If this were true, it would do them no service, because there is now no general council in the church; the pope is now the only head of the church amongst them; so that either the pope alone is the infallible judge, or there is none at this day. And therefore I conclude, that no particular person or company of men now is, or can be, the supreme judge of the church, to whom all Christians are bound to submit their faith and consciences.

I shall conclude all with two practical inferences.

*Inf.* 1. Learn from hence what infinite cause you have to bless God that hath delivered and preserved you from Popery, and what need you have continually to pray, and to use all lawful endeavours that this iron-yoke may never be put upon you. The popish teachers do by their people, as the Philistines did by Samson, put out their eyes, and make them grind in their mill. Papists must see by their teachers eyes, and are obliged to believe whatever they teach them.

I have been informed by an English merchant, sometimes residing in Spain, that being in some conference concerning religion, with a Spaniard of note there, and his intimate acquaintance, he used these expressions with tears in his eyes: "You people of England are happy; you have liberty to see with your own eyes, and to examine the doctrine delivered to you, upon which your everlasting life depends; but, says he, We dare not say our souls are our own; but we are bound to believe whatever our teachers tell us, though it be never so unreasonable or ridiculous." It is doubtless a dreadful thing for a man to see the inquisition on the one hand, and damnation on the other hand. Therefore, let us bless God that hitherto hath delivered us, and hath prevented in some good measure the hopes and expectations of Papists. Understand, I beseech you, and consider your privilege; we ministers do not impose upon you, and tell you, you must believe all we say, though it would be for our interest to do so; but we say with the apostle, *We speak unto wise men, judge ye what we say.* We commend you as St. Paul did the Bereans, for searching the scriptures, whether these doctrines we teach be true or no. It is a great evidence of the truth of the Protestant doctrine, that it is not afraid of the light, it desires nothing more than to be tried: And it is no less an evidence of the falshood of Popery, that they dread nothing more than the light. God hath given you talents; we command you to use them; they command you to wrap them in a napkin. God hath given you light, *The Spirit of a man is the candle of the Lord*; we command you to see by that light, they command you to hide it under a bushel. Pity blind Papists, pray for them, and rejoice in the goodness of God towards you, and see what cause you have to be fervent in prayer, that God may never suffer Popery to recover its standing in these kingdoms.

*Inf.* 2. For as much as there is no person upon earth that can infallibly guide you to salvation, it concerns you to have the greater care of your own salvation. You will say, what shall we do? I shall only give you these three directions, and so conclude.

*Direct.* 1. Study the holy scriptures: Although the pope forbid (it is no matter,) it is sufficient for us, that Christ commands us. The word is written, and blessed be God you have it before your eyes; it is not hid nor locked up from you, as amongst the miserable Papists. The book is open, and you may read it, and may, by God's blessing upon your own industry, and the use of those helps which his gracious

gracious providence affords you, in competent measure, understand it. I shall only mention that one place, and methinks the very reading of it should put this dispute quite out of doors, 2 Tim. iii. 14. &c. *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

*Direct.* 2. Pray fervently for the guidance of God's Spirit; and for your encouragement know that God hath not left you without promises, much more clear than those which the Papists produce for their Diana of infallibility. In general this, John xvi. 23. *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* And lest any should think this promise is confined to the apostles, our Saviour adds, John xvii. 20, 21. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one, &c.* Another clear and comfortable promise to this purpose you have Luke xi. 13. *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to those that ask him?* And therefore let no Christian perplex himself with such anxious thoughts as these, What shall I do under the various and contradictory opinions that are amongst us? I want wisdom to discern. St James tells you, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men (mark that) liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.* James i. 5. And therefore, in this case, beg counsel from God. There is not the weakest, nor the most ignorant creature amongst you, but if you faithfully and diligently seek direction from God, you may confidently expect it. Pray to God as David did, *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation,* Psal. xxv. 5. *O send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me, and bring me unto thy holy hill,* Psal. xliiii. 3. And as David begged this of God, so he promiseth it to himself, and so may every sincere Christian; *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory,* Psal. lxxiii. 24. God is the same God still, as able and as willing to direct as ever he was, as faithful in keeping his promise as ever, as ready to hear as you are willing to ask; *Ask, and you shall receive,* Luke xi. 10. What need more be said to encourage the faith and hope of all that fear God?

*Direct.* 3. If you would discern and hold fast the truth, love and practise it. The best way to be certainly guided into the way of truth, is to live up to it. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God,*

or whether I speak of myself. Certainly a good conscience is the best preservative of a man's faith; and therefore when once men put away a good conscience, the next news is, they make *shipwreck of their faith*, 1 Tim. i. 19. An eminent instance you have 2 Theff. ii. 10, 11, 12. *Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.* A text that needs no other comment but the examples of this generation. Papists brag much of the many profelytes they have gained amongst us. For my part I am not at all surprized with it. When I consider such texts as this, and the righteous and tremendous judgments of God; I rather wonder they do not flow in to them in far greater numbers. Nor can I believe that any wise man will think they have any great cause of triumph in their profelytes, if he will but make a little enquiry, and get a true character of the generality of them. He that knows their morals, will never wonder at the change of their religion. It is no strange thing if a dissolute Protestant turn a zealous Papist; or if the righteous God shake those out of his lap, and out of the Protestant church, who were but rotten members of it.

I conclude all, with that excellent advice, *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away by the error of wicked, fall from your own stedfastness; but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. iii. 17, 18.

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## S E R M O N V.

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Mr. B A X T E R.

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Christ, and not the Pope, universal head  
of the church.

1 Cor. xii. 27, 28. *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*

*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, &c.*

**O**UR appointed work at this time is to determine, Whether there be such a church of Christ's institution,

as consisteth of all Christians united or subjected to any one mere human head, personal or collective? Or, Whether there be any universal head or governor of the whole church on earth, besides, and under Jesus Christ? And when I have fully opened the question, I shall prove the negative, both from this text, and several other texts and arguments.

Of all the controversies between us and the Papists, this is the first and greatest: We first deny that there is any such head: And secondly, That the pope is such a head.

The Papists, as knowing the impossibility of finding any fair pretence of ascribing the internal acts of Christ's office to the pope, are forced to distinguish, a mediatorial head of vital influx to the church-regenerate; from a political governing head of the church-visible: And they confess that Christ only is the first; but say, that under Christ, the pope is, as his vicegerent, the second: But we maintain the negative as to both. Two things in this word are meant in our denial. 1. There is no such constitutive head, who is to the universal church a constitutive, essential part; as is a king in a kingdom, a master in a family, and the *pars imperans*, in every political society. 2. There is no such governing head, having power and obligation to make universal laws, and to judge and execute universally.

There are three ways of divine institution which we here exclude. 1. God hath instituted no such head or church neither by the law of nature: 2. Nor by Christ himself, immediately determining it in his human nature on earth: 3. Nor by the revelation or determination of his Spirit in his apostles, or any other authorized and infallibly inspired persons: And besides these three, we know no other sort of institution of God, to come into question.

Our question meddles not with the heads or governors of kingdoms, nor of particular churches; but only of the universal church.

*Arg. I.* From nature, common reason and experience, no mortal man, or collective body of men, is capable of being a constitutive and a governing-head of all the church on earth: Therefore there is no such head.

*First*, No single person is capable of it. To prove which, consider but, 1. What a man is. 2. What such a man would have to do.

*1<sup>st</sup>*, A man is a poor finite creature, confined to one place at once, not able to compass the earth, nor know all its countries, much less inhabitants: Not able to take notice of all the actions of the sons of men throughout the

world; nor to receive such satisfactory information concerning them, as may enable him to judge them justly: Nor is he capable of taking cognisance of one of many millions of causes that would belong to such a judge. And man is a poor worm, unable to procure any due execution of universal laws, and to repress the rebellion of resisters; and to defend the church against its enemies. And a man is so bad a creature, that he that is tried in so great a work as the government of all the world, and tried by so great temptations, as must needs arise in such an undertaking, will but become, according to the course of ordinary changes, the worst, and so the most odious of men: So that it is a wonder that man should become so ignorant, as to think that any one mortal man is capable of ruling all the world, or all the Christians in the world.

*2dly,* But consider what such a head must have to do, and there will remain no difficulty in the case. 1. He that undertaketh the universal government, undertaketh to make universal laws, and to exercise supreme power in judging and executing according to those laws. And he that maketh universal laws in things unchangeable, must suppose that Christ hath not done it himself already, which is false: And in things changeable, he must be sufficiently acquainted with the state of all the nations in the world, and in the different cases which require diversification both as to time and place; which a man of many thousand miles distance is incapable of.

And as to judgment and execution. 1. As to persons, it is to be exercised upon individuals. 2. As to causes; it is, (i.) Either judging who is fit or unfit for Christian communion: And that in respect, 1. To knowledge and faith, or ignorance, unbelief or heresy; Or, 2. To a pious and honest, or a criminal conversation.

*First,* Kingdoms or cities are not either to be taken into, or cast out of the church of Christ, for the faith or the faults of any part of them. Baptism belongeth to individuals; and to cities and kingdoms no otherwise than as consisting of such individuals. It is the faithful and their seed that are to be baptized; God never authorized any to baptize kingdoms or cities because the king or magistrates believed. And the same must be said of excommunications; kingdoms or cities are not to be unchurched, or interdicted God's worship, because of the sin of kings and magistrates; though such inhuman and unchristian kind of discipline hath been exercised by the pope upon the Venetians, and many other countries. God saith, the soul that sinneth

neth shall die, and not the son for the father's sin, which he is not guilty of.

*Secondly*, And if this be so, it is easy to discern whether one man can so govern all the world. 1. He that ordaineth ministers, must try them, that he may truly judge of their sufficiency. 2. He that baptizeth the adult, must try their knowledge and faith, that he may truly judge of their capacity. 3. He that will justly judge any accused of heresy, or wicked living, must hear the witnesses, and hear the person, and understand the circumstances of the cause: And before he excommunicate any, he must not only know him to be criminal, but also impenitent; and therefore must with evidence, love and patience, endeavour first to bring him to repentance. The like knowledge is necessary to a just absolution. And what can one man do in any of this, for all the world.

*Object.* He can do it *per alios*, though not *per se*: He can send forth men to do it. The king cannot govern his kingdom by himself only, without officers; but by them he can.

*Answer.* 1. What other men do, he doth not: To say he doth it *per alios*, is but a deceitful phrase, and maketh not their work to be his. That which he doth, is not to preach, and baptize, and excommunicate, and absolve by them, but to bid them do it, or license them; yet if he sent them all to do it as his servants, authorized by him to do it in his name and stead, it might be called morally his act; but it is not so. The office of a bishop or presbyter is of divine institution, and their work described by the word of God; and the office and work is their own; and they themselves are accountable for it to their chief Pastor, Jesus Christ.

*Answer.* 2. The work of an ecclesiastic pastor is personal, and not the commanding of another to do it. If setting others on the work were all that is necessary, there needed no bishop or pastor to be such a head; a prince were fitter: David and Solomon could command the priests and Levites to do their office, and could place and displace them; and so may Christian kings: But as it is not the proper office of a physician, surgeon, printer, architect, &c. to licence physicians, surgeons, printers, &c. or to set them on work; so neither of a bishop or pastor to licence or command such: And for ordination, it may be done without a pope; or else how is the pope ordained or consecrated himself.

*Answer.* 3. The office of the apostles was not only to send other men to convert the world, and settle the churches, and govern them; but first to labour in all this themselves, and

and then to ordain others to go along with them as their helpers, and to govern the particular churches; which is not the same thing, as only to set other men on work.

*Ans. 4.* A king's office consisteth so much in power, to appoint officers under him to their several provinces and works, as that therein it greatly differeth from a pastor's, which is like to a physician's, or a philosopher's, and consisteth more in the exercise of personal skill and oversight.

*Ans. 5.* But if all this hitherto said were nothing, it is most certain that no king is capable of governing all the world; And if the pastoral office required no more personal skill and exercise thereof than the regal; yet all that would follow were but this, That as a king by himself and his officers, can govern a kingdom, but not all the world, so it is to be said of any pastor; though indeed the latter is much less possible.

The impossibilities are notorious at this day. 1. The pope doth not so much as know a very great part of the world, what inhabitants it hath, or of what religion. 2. Much of the world is so remote from him that his messengers must be many years in going, and all informations as long in being sent to him. 3. The passage is so hazardous and difficult that they are not likely by sea and land to escape all the dangers in the way. 4. Many princes countries must be past through that are enemies to Christians, and in frequent wars with us, and one another, and therefore will not suffer such passage and intercourse as the government of the remotest parts require. 5. There are many countries that understand no language which the pope's emissaries can speak. 6. There are many Christian countries at this day which the pope lately was not known to, nor ever so much as required their subjection to him, by reason of their incapacity of converse. When Oviedo would have made the Abassins believe that subjection to the pope was necessary to their salvation, the emperor's mother posed him by that question, *Why God nor the pope ever told them so till now, and why they never before heard of the pope's claim?* To which the poor man had no better an answer to give, than that inaccessibleness and distance hindered it, as Godignus himself reciteth the discourse. Which is no less than a plain confession of what I am proving, that no one man is capable of governing all the world; When so great an empire as that of Abassia (especially in its former grandeur) was so far out of the papal reach, as that for so many hundred years he could never so much as know them, and send a governor to them, nor any messengers to claim their obedience; no wonder

wonder if much more of the world be further out of the reach of his notice and jurisdiction.

*Arg. I.* And as no single natural person, so much more no collective person or company is capable to be an universal governor. For all the foresaid difficulties will be yet greater to them, than to one. There is none but an universal council that can be supposed to make such a claim; which council must be one civil person, or collective, and therefore be in one place, and manage this government by consent: But, 1. That place where they meet will be as distant from the antipodes as Rome is, and they will have as far to send and receive information. 2. The collecting of a true universal church, as I shall shew anon, is not only difficult, but never to be done. 3. One man may do more in a day, than a parliament, much more a council of all the Christian world, can do in many days or weeks; there are so many to speak, debate, and to receive satisfaction. 4. And feuds and disagreements will be yet a greater hinderance: So that where there is a natural incapacity, there can be no universal governor: But both pope and council have a natural incapacity: Therefore, neither of them can be universal governor.

*Arg. II.* From the silence of the creed and scripture concerning such an universal head. If Christ had instituted any vicarious, universal governor, and consequently a church so constituted, it would have been plainly revealed in the creed, or sacred scriptures: But there is no such thing revealed in the creed or sacred scriptures: Therefore, there was none such instituted by Christ. The major is proved, in that they commonly confess that all the fundamentals or points of common necessity are plainly revealed in the creed, or sacred scriptures; and they assert that an universal governor, and a church so constituted, is a fundamental, and a point of common necessity to be believed: Therefore, if Christ had instituted any such, it must needs have been in the creed or scriptures. No man can imagine that if the rest of the matters of divine faith must themselves be received from the believed authority of such a head or church, Christ would not plainly make known the authority of such a head and church: But this is the foundation of the Papist's faith.

And that there is no such thing contained in the creed or sacred scriptures, the impartial reading of them is enough to prove: The creed mentioneth the holy catholic and apostolic church as one; but saith not a word of Rome, or the pope, or a council, or any universal governor of this church, besides Jesus Christ.

The sacred scriptures mention no such neither; it is only Peter that is pretended by the Papists to be there endued with such a power. But, 1. There is no word that speaks such a thing; the confutation of their vain collections, from *Tu es Petrus*, &c. and *Pasce oves meas*, &c. I have made elsewhere, and in this short exercitation neither need nor may recite it.

2. It belongeth to the universal governor to make universal laws for the church; but no scripture tells us of any more that Peter did in this legislation, than James or Paul, or other apostles.

3. It belongeth to the universal governor to give authority to all the rest, and to settle all inferior orders and officers; but no scripture mentioneth any such thing of Peter, but the contrary, *viz.* deacons were instituted by the apostles jointly; none of the rest of the twelve received his power from Peter; Paul took Silas, and Barnabas took Mark with him, and Paul made Timothy, Titus, and others evangelists without Peter, or any authority received from him; and *the apostles ordained elders in every church* which they planted without Peter, Acts xiv. 23. Tit. i. 5, &c.

Object. *They had their power from Christ before he ascended, and so needed not receive it from Peter.*

Answer. Either Peter was made the universal governor before Christ's ascension, or not: If not, then Christ personally settled no such monarchy; yea, then he settled contrarily an aristocracy, or equality of power in many, that is, in all the apostles: And, is it credible, that he settled one form of government at first, and changed it so quickly after? And then the churches were after Christ's ascension planted and settled by such as had no power from Peter, and so the succession is not from him as the head. And then all the texts pretended by them, are by them forsaken. But if Peter was made monarch before Christ's ascension, then the other apostles must before, be under Christ and him; and as the church had two heads at once, a prime and a vicarious, so the rest must have their power from both: At least after Christ's ascension all the apostles would fall under the government of Peter, and so from thence must hold their power from him, which they never did.

4. It belongeth to the universal governor to be the known declared center of the churches common unity; to whom accordingly in case of divisions they should have recourse throughout all the world. But it was not so concerning Peter: We read of many sad contentions in the churches of Corinth, Galatia, Colosse, &c. yea of Rome itself, Rom.

xiv. and xv. and many sad heresies, crimes and breaches in the seven Asian churches, Rev. ii. and iii. and yet not a word to refer them to Peter for their healing; nor one reproof for their rebellion against him as an universal governor, nor one persuasion to unite all in him! Nay, he himself, who 2 Pet. ii. doth write sharply against heresies, never mentioneth any such remedy.

5. And it belongeth to the universal head and governor to rebuke all culpable inferiors, and to receive appeals in cases of difficulty. But none of all this is said of Peter, but contrarily that Paul *withstood him to the face, because he walked not uprightly, and was to be blamed*, Gal. ii. 11. so that the case in scripture is plain against them.

*Arg. III.* The scriptures are not only silent as to the institution of any such universal governor or church, but they speak against it: Therefore there was no such institution of Christ.

And here I must from my text and others, bring in several scripture-arguments.

1. The unity of the church, and the nature and reasons of it, are most largely and expressly handled in this chapter. 2. That this church is called the *body of Christ*, but not of Peter or the pope; and that its unity is placed in *one Spirit, one Lord, and one God*, ver. 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13. and not in one vicarious head. 3. That all believers are numbered with the members, even apostles themselves expressly, as contradistinct from the head in whom they are united. Apostles are called here, *members in particular*, set by God in the church, even the first rank of members, and prophets next. If Peter then was the universal head, it was not as an apostle; for the apostles were but the noblest members in particular.

*Arg. 1.* If Christ be here described as the only head, and apostles as but particular members, then no apostle was an universal governor or head: But the antecedent is plain in the text, &c.

And indeed Bellarmine is forced to maintain, that the Pope succeedeth not Peter as an apostle, but as the vicarious head of the church; by which he confesseth that Peter was not such a head as an apostle. But Paul here describing the whole body, mentioneth no part but Christ the head, and apostles and others, variously gifted and placed, as particular members: So that here is no office above apostolical in which the pope can succeed Peter.

*Arg. 2.* The same evidence is visible in Eph. iv. where Paul vehemently endeavouring the Ephesians unity, reckoneth up only these seven necessaries in which it must be founded

founded: 1. *One body*, of Christ. 2. *One Spirit*. 3. *One hope of our calling*, grace and glory. 4. *One Lord*, Jesus Christ. 5. *One faith*, the belief of the gospel. 6. *One baptism*. 7. *One God and Father of all, above all, through all, and in all*, ver. 3, 4, 5, 6. And in all the members who must in these seven be united, he placeth diversity, and numbereth apostles, prophets, and pastors; with the rest, as being but particular members of the body. And then he describeth the body that is thus to be united; the ends and benefits of their concord, and the subordinate means, to ver. 16. in which he calleth them the body of Christ (only, and not of the pope), which must *come to a perfect man, in the unity of the faith and knowledge of Christ*, and not be tossed with every wind of doctrine, but grow up in him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: *From whom the whole body fully conjoined and compacted* (not by another head, but) *by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of itself in love*. There could never have been a more open door, for Paul to have brought in the mention of an universal vicarious government at, if he had known of any such; than the occasions and subject here in hand. But here is still but Christ the head, and apostles and others as particular members.

*Arg. 3.* When the Corinthians were inclined to factions, 1 Cor. i. 3. some would have united in Paul, and some in Apollos, and some in Cephas or Peter; and some would have appropriated Christ to themselves. How doth Paul seek to heal this schism? Not by telling them that indeed they must all unite in Peter as the universal head or monarch; but that *Christ is not divided*, and therefore he must be their common centre, and that the rest were but his ministers by whom they believed, and were not crucified for them, nor were they baptized into their name; and that they shewed themselves carnal by these contentions, in setting up one above another, when Paul, Apollos and Cephas were all alike theirs; and ministers of Christ, and stewards of his mysteries, chap. iii. 3, 22. and iv. 1. So that here Peter is not only not mentioned as the head and centre of church-unity, when his name was in question, and the case required it, had it been true, but also expressly and by his name excluded from any such office, and those sharply taxed that would so have thought of him, nay, that thought yet lower of him; for indeed there is no probability that any of the Corinthians dreamt of his universal government, but only some preferred him as a more excellent teacher before all others, in a siding way.

*Arg. 4.* When Peter himself instructeth the pastors of the church in their duty, he taketh no higher title to himself than an apostle and servant of Jesus Christ, and an elder, and a witness of his sufferings, and a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: And he tells them that they must not oversee the flock as lords, but as examples; which is inconsistent with their opinion, who take his universal government, to be essential to the church, and necessary to salvation to be believed.

*Arg. 5.* In Matth. xx. we find it put by way of petition to Christ, to determine who should be the greatest; viz. that James and John might be next him in his kingdom; and Peter with the rest of the ten were offended at it: Yet Christ is so far from telling them that either they, or Peter, shall have such honour, that he contrarily concludeth, ver. 25. &c. *Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you: But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.*

*Arg. IV.* The fourth chief argument is fetched from the non-consistence of such an universal head with the office and prerogative of Christ. To have instituted an universal head and governor, would have been the making of another Christ, or at least the communicating of part of the essence of Christ's office and prerogative: But Christ did never make another Christ, nor communicate any part of the essence of his office or prerogative: Therefore Christ did never institute an universal head and governor.

The first proposition is proved by the true definition or description of Christ's office, which containeth his universal kingdom, as well as his universal propriety and priesthood. That Christ is the owner and the ruler of all, is believed by all that believe him to be the Christ: *For this end, he both died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living*, Rom. xiv. 9. - And the universality of some parts of his priestly office are acknowledged; and of the rest, as to those who are capable of the benefits. He is the owner of all the world: And he is the ruler of all, *de jure, et de facto*, in divers manners and degrees, though only the faithful obey him to salvation: And his sacrifice had not only a sufficiency for all, but also effectually procured the common grace and benefits which are actually given to all. And, 1. It is confessed by all sober persons, that Christ hath not given to any under him an universal propriety. If any parasite of the pope so talk, the rest dare not own it:

To be the Lord or owner of all things and persons is proper to Christ: If the pope be his vicarious proprietary, kings and princes are at his will and mercy, and he need not be beholden to any prince for tribute; for all lands and monies in the world are his: But this is the proper prerogative of Christ. And there is no mediator that offereth himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world, or meriteth for all men, or all believers, but Jesus Christ.

The minor is undeniable: Christ by virtue of his universal power, hath communicated a ministerial limited subordinate power to men, over several parts of his church or kingdom, but not universal over all; which needeth no other proof, than to know that authority and obligation concur in constituting every such office: And if any one apostle had been obliged to rule, yea, or to teach all the world, he had been obliged to an impossibility. Therefore even the apostles all together had but an indefinite obligation, and not an universal as to all the world; no, nor to all the churches: For if *e. g.* Philip their deacon, or his converted eunuch, or Joseph, or Nathaniel, or any other preacher did convert any country, or gather any churches far off from the reach of any apostle, no apostle was bound to teach or rule that church; much less any one of them to teach and rule all the world.

And 1. If Christ hath not made an universal sub-proprietor, it is not like that he hath made an universal rector. 2. If Christ hath not made an universal teacher, nor an universal priest; by the same reason we may conclude, that the universal kingdom is incommunicable. 3. And as to the kingdom itself, 1. The universal legislature is already performed by Christ, and therefore not left to man. 2. Universal, forcible government is committed to no man: All power in heaven and earth is given to Christ; and he committeth the sword to kings and magistrates, and the word to ministers with the keys of the church: But Christ never made an universal king or magistrate under him, to govern all the world by the sword: Therefore, we as well may conclude, that he never made an universal pastor, or church-monarch; one part of his proper kingdom being no more communicable than the other. 3. And universal protection, which is another kind of kingly office, is not communicated to any. The pope cannot protect all the world, or all the church; so that all the rest of Christ's office, being as to the universality confessed incommunicable, it will follow, that government must be so also: I say, As to the universality, as foreseeing that they will object, that it is incommunicable

municable as to the primacy of power, but not as to universality; which therefore I have proved.

And here you may perceive, why Protestants say that the pope is Antichrist, even because he traiterously usurpeth, and arrogateth that which is essential to Christ's own office, by making himself an universal head to Christ's body, and governor of his kingdom, on a false pretence of Christ's delegation.

*Object.* A king may make a vice-king, or lieutenant, without parting with any of his royalty or prerogatives.

*Ans.* 1. It is not the name of a viceroy, but the thing that is in question. A king may call his subject his viceroy, and may make him his chief magistrate over some part of his empire that is distant from him, yea, or over the whole: But if he give him the absolute legislative, and judicial power over all his kingdom, he parteth with his royalty, and maketh that man king. 2. But suppose it were otherwise, the reason of the difference in that case is evident. A king is but a man, and so is his viceroy; and one is as capable of ruling as the other. But universal government is somewhat above the capacity of any mere man, and none but God and our Redeemer is capable of it: Therefore if Christ will make an universal head and governor of the world or church, he must make him another Christ, or a God; or else he doth not make him capable.

*Arg. V.* A negatione effectus ad negationem effectiois. There was never such an universal vicarious head of Christ's body; Therefore he never instituted such. Nothing but the antecedent here needs proof.

I shall consider (for the proof of the antecedent) 1. Of the church in the time when the scripture was written: 2. And of the church till the days of Constantine: 3. And of the church till the usurpation of the title of universal head: 4. And of the church since then till this day.

1. In scripture-times I have proved already, that neither Peter nor any other did govern the universal church, in ordination, legislation, judgment, appeals, &c.

2. Till Constantine's time there is not the least probability of any such thing in church-history; which I will not be beholden to any man to grant me, who is acquainted with the records of antiquity; nor do I fear a denial from any thing but faction, or blind partiality, such as Baronius, and other flatterers of the pope were biassed by. For whereas the chief claim of the pope is from his precedency in councils, till Constantine's days, there never was such a thing as a general council in the world, unless you will call

Christ's family and apostles such. And he that can prove the pope to have been till then the governor of all the world, or all the Christians in the world, will fetch his proofs neither from scripture nor true history, but from somewhat unknown to other mortals.

3. And were men but impartial in the studying of church-history, I would not be beholden to any man readily to acknowledge all that follows: 1. That Constantine and his successors were far from being rulers of all the world; having but one empire, which though great, the maps tell you was small in comparison of all the earth. 2. That the bishop of Rome was to the empire but as the archbishop of Canterbury is to England; a bishop who by that emperor had a primacy given him in his empire: For what power had he to settle a head to the rest of the world? 3. That whereas his presidency in general councils was his chief pretence for his universal power; even that presidency was unconstant, and varied as the emperor pleased. 4. That those general councils were called general but in reference to one principality or empire, (as the Scots called their assemblies general) and were no universal councils representing all the churches in the world. For 1. They were called long by the emperor; and what power had the Roman emperor to call together the bishops of all the world? 2. The subscriptions of the bishops as recorded even in Binius, Surius, Nicolinus, Crab, will satisfy any man that doth not by faction hinder his own satisfaction: And though the name of one Johannes Persidis in the council of Nice, and some such instances in others, seem great objections to some men, I let them go, as knowing that there is no end of disputing with those men that can make a mountain of an atom. There was a city called Persis; and it was then usual to place a bishop at the borders of Persia, Scythia, &c. and to call him by the title of the neighbour country which he was desired to take care of. I have oft enough in other writings proved, that the councils were but imperial, (supposing that some few under Pagans, that affected the countenance of the Roman greatness, who were neighbours, did rarely join themselves:) And that Reynerius confesseth, that the Armenians and other churches converted by the apostles, were not under the bishop of Rome: And Theodoret giveth the reason why the bishop of Nisibis was at the council of Nice, because Nisibis was then under the Roman empire: And that the Abassines, the Persians, Indians, outer Armenians, and many other countries of Christians without the empire,

were

were not represented in the councils, nor ever subjected themselves to the pope of Rome.

4. And even since the days of Boniface who obtained of Phocas the name of universal bishop, the Christian world was never under him. For 1. The Greek church hath ever since resisted the claim. 2. The said Abassines, Armenians, Indians, and many others never subjected themselves to him. 3. He hath captivated his professed subjects by so much cruel force, as that he is incapable of knowing who are his real subjects by consent. And we have, by experience, reason to think, that in all popish countries, it is not one of many that is a Papist understandingly, and at the heart; but most either know not what Popery is, or silently go on with their neighbours to avoid the obloquy and suffering, which else they must undergo. 4. Dr. Field, of the church, and Bishop Morton in his apology, have fully proved; That till Luther's time, abundance of the doctors of each age, though they renounced not the Romrn communion, were against their opinions; and that there is scarce any doctrine of the Protestants, which men of their own communion held not. All which fully shew, that the universal church did never acknowledge or receive this pretended universal head. 5. To all which I may add, that all the Greek church, when far larger than the Latin, did ever hold the primacy in the empire to be *jure divino* only; which is notorious in the express words of the council at Chalcedon, and in that the patriarch of Constantinople contended for the primacy, which he could never have done had he taken it to be of God's institution: For Constantinople being comparatively a novel church, had no pretence to a primacy as *jure divino*.

Of all the arguments brought for the pope's universal government, I know but two, that, to a considering man, are worthy a confutation.

The first is from pretended possession. Christ ruleth his church not only preceptively but eventually *de facto*. according to the great design of his office, else he should be but a nominal king himself; but Christ hath eventually, or *de facto* ruled his church by the pope and his prelates these thousand years at least, if not from the beginning: Therefore he instituted this sort of government, or else his own regiment and design is frustrated.

*Ans. 1.* As to the major; the church of Christ hath obedient and disobedient professors; good and bad, Piety and sin are in the church-visible. The goodness, piety, and obedience is according to his decree and purpose; but so

is not the sin. And Christ's own government obtaineth its ends, in the salvation of his elect, and in so much restraint and order as he keepeth up among the rest. 2. Else this argument would prove as much that idolatry and Heathenism were better than the Jews religion, before Christ's incarnation: For Judea was a very little spot of the world; and *de facto* Heathenism did possess most of the rest. 3. Yea it would prove all sin to be of God's appointment, if we might argue a *facto ad jus*.

2. But the minor is not true: It is accounted by the best geographers to be but about a third or fourth part of the Christian world that are Papists at this day, when the decay of the eastern churches, and the loss of Nubia, and a great part of the Abassine empire, &c. hath much diminished it. I may therefore turn this argument better against them, and say that Christ never did *de facto* rule his church, or the greatest part of it by an universal governor, nor permit it so to be ruled: Therefore this never was his design. Though indeed his will *de debito* must be known by his laws, and not by events.

The second argument is: Though an universal head be not of divine institution, why may not the bishops of the churches set up such a one over them all by consent, or princes at least? And why may not an universal church be instituted by man, as well as a national or provincial church?

*Answer.* 1. Is the government of Christ's church a matter of so small moment; and is the sovereign head no more concerned in it, but to leave it to men to set up what government they will? Undoubtedly it is; the prerogative of the sovereign to appoint his own officers: And he that doth it usurpeth his prerogative. 2. What men are they that pretend to such power? were they themselves the officers of Christ, in any state of instituted government? If not, then (1.) Christ hath made no subordinate government; (2.) Then he made no apostles, &c. (3.) Then he did not the part of a sovereign; (4.) Then these men that made the new government were no ministers of his, nor had any power from him to do it. But if they themselves be Christ's instituted officers; then 1. Christ did institute certain officers, and consequently a state of government. 2. Then let these ministers of his prove if they can, that ever he commissioned them to alter that state of government which he first instituted: 3. If they cannot, let them confess that it is a traiterous usurpation: 4. Either it is a government universally needful to the church, or not: If not, why talk

talk you of it? If yea, who made you either greater or wiser, or better than Christ? that you can find out and settle an universal government, which he had not the power, the wisdom or the goodness to institute? 5. By his instituting particular churches, and their overseers or elders, and worship and discipline, he shewed us that he took such a church-settlement for his own work: And if so, what made him do it imperfectly? And how come you to be able to do it better? 6. The world hath had lamentable experience these thirteen hundred years and more, to how ill effects men have altered Christ's institutions, and to what proud contentions, schisms, persecutions, and other calamities, their alterations have tended. 7. But to speak fully to the case, we grant that as Christ's ordinances, doctrine, worship and discipline, are distinguished from the mere circumstances of them; so when Christ hath instituted officers for his own work, men may for edification make officers for their works; that is, these circumstances (such as are church-wardens, sextons, door-keepers, and many the like.) But will any man of brains and Christianity hence conclude, that men may set up an officer for Christ, above all the officers of his own institution, and empowered to over-rule them all, yea and to silence them, suspend them, excommunicate them, and be a monarch over them all? If Christ would have had such a one, he was as wise and able to do it himself as any of his ministers are. 8. It is God that must bless the labours of his officers: And he hath nowhere promised to bless any but his own. 9. If men may make the Papacy, men may pull it down again when reason requireth it. 10. But if it be but by mens consent that we must have a pope; let those have none that do not consent; and then most of the Christian world will be without him.

This controversy about un universal vicarious head and governour, being the true sum of the difference between the Papists and Protestants, were we not now restrained, should be much more largely handled, and fuller proofs of all that we assert annexed. But our necessitated brevity shall make us conclude with these few uses.

I. Learn hence to hate the devilish sin of pride, and fear it in yourselves, lest there should be more of it than you have yet observed: For the pope and his prelates, are naturally sons of Adam as ourselves: And if pride in them may rise to such a height, as to make them in this so mad, as to think poor man hath capacity, and right, and obligation to govern all the world, or all the Christians in the world, and thereby to become the plagues of the earth,

and

and the troublers of all Christian states and churches, have not we all cause to fear it in ourselves? Though it have not temptation or advantage to work so publickly and mischievously as theirs, alas, it is the same sin which causeth men to overvalue their own understandings, their goodness, or their greatness: It is the same sin which setteth some preachers on contriving, and hunting for preferment, and others for popular applause, and which maketh men write, and preach, and talk against things which they understand not, and against men better than themselves, and to destroy love and concord, and tear the churches, and harden the ungodly in the contempt of all religion; yea, and to proceed impenitently in all this, while some think that their zeal for order and obedience, and others, that their zeal for truth and godliness, will warrant them in all this. It is an old proverb, That all men are born with a pope in their bellies: And he is a conqueror, and a saint indeed, that hath truly overcome his pride, which conquereth many that can preach and talk against it: And many that cry out of Popery, and papal pride, do too little detest, and fear, and mortify, the same pernicious evil in themselves.

II. Learn hence to understand the grand difference between the Protestants and the Papists: It is not, Whether the pope be the man that Christ hath made his universal vicar, and governour of all the world? But, Whether there be any such instituted by Christ or not? For if they once prove that there is any such, we will confess that no other can put in so fair a claim for it as the pope. The question is not, Whether the church of Rome be the true Catholick church? Whether there be any such thing of Christ's institution, as an universal church, headed by a vicarious head, under Christ? We deny the being of such a head, and such a church.

III. Therefore take heed of those disputers that cry up the Catholick church, as supposing it to have an universal head besides Christ, either pope or council, as if this must be a granted thing; and then all that we have to do with the pope, is but to bound and moderate him in his government: These men say, We are against the abuses of the court of Rome, but not against the church of Rome. But that which a Protestant justly denieth is, that there is any such universal head and church at all, as the Papists do assert.

IV. And hence observe in what sense it is, that divines say, that Rome is not a true church, nor Papists, as such, members of the church of Christ. We all confess that those called Papists, who practically hold the essentials of Christianity,

tianity, and truly believe in Christ the true head, are all parts of the true Catholick church, which hath no head indeed but Christ. But we maintain, that the pope was never made by Christ the governor of the universal church; and that their pretended Catholick church, consisting of the pope as such a head, and of his subjects as such, is a traiterous combination, and no true church of Jesus Christ.

V. And hence you may perceive why they take the pope to be Antichrist: Because he usurpeth part of the prerogative and kingdom of Christ, without his institution; and against his laws; by making himself the governour of all the world or church, he maketh him as another Christ: As he would be a traitor to the king, who would usurp the universal government of his kingdoms, as to legislation, judgment, and executions, though he should falsely pretend the king's commission for it.

VI. *Take heed of a fleshly, and worldly religion.* A fleshly and worldly heart, and life, lieth under shame, and remorse of conscience, till the devil bring in the defensive of a fleshly and worldly religion: For nature, reason and experience tell men, that all things below are vanity, in comparison of everlasting things; and therefore the devil hath no such way, to keep his possession of such souls in peace, as by making them a religion suitable to their worldly minds and interests: And then they will sin against God as by his own authority, and vilify his servants, yea, and burn them as by his own command, and fight against Christ as by his own commission, *et in nomine domini incipit omne malum*, as the old proverb is, taken from the Papal style. Religion is so excellent, and necessary, that nothing can so successfully prevail in the minds of men against it, as that which cometh in its own garb and name. What men on earth do Satan more service than men of a fleshly and worldly religion? Who by the power of carnality; first make themselves, and next would make others believe, that their own worldly interest is the true interest of Christ, and the Catholick church; and when they have made their own carnal wills and interest, the means of the churches peace and concord, such as they please, then cry up the great names, of government, obedience, order, unity, concord and peace, and cry down all that is against them, as confusion, rebellion, or schism; when all signifieth no more, but that they are proud and worldly, and have got the upper ground, and so may name things to their own advantage. When sin becometh a religion, it conquereth the light, and quieteth conscience, in the most odious actions,

and most malignant oppositions of the truth. I cannot more significantly speak my sense, than in the words of our serious poet, Mr. George Herbert, in his *Church militant*, p. 188, 189, 190.

*Sin being not able to extirpate quite,  
The churches here, bravely resolv'd, one night  
To be a church-man too, and wear a miter, &c.*

But it is too long to be transcribed.

If the Archbishop of Canterbury should tell all the world, that no man can be a true Christian, or be saved, that believeth not in him, and becometh not his obedient subject, and should send out men to preach this on the pretence of unity, obedience, and peace; would not all the world deride this as a worldly presumptuous kind of religion? Just such is Popery, which saith the same of one that the Roman Emperor made the chief bishop in his own principality; and now when that empire is dissolved, claimeth the government of all Christian kings and people in the whole world. Is it not a wonder of stupidity, that such a religion, is not derided and despised by all mankind that have the use of reason?

VII. Lastly, Take heed of hasty trusting fair pretences, when so absurd a thing, and great a mischief, as the Papal universal government, may have such good words to promote it, as unity, concord, obedience, &c. and so many deceived persons to entertain it.

Quest. *What is the mischief of this pretended headship?*

Ans. 1. It constituteth a human universal church: Whose name deceiveth men, and keepeth the divine catholick church to many unknown.

2. This human church is set up above and against the true universal church of Christ; and arrogateth power to depress, abuse, and persecute the churches that Christ hath instituted.

3. Hereupon it introduceth a human religion, which is injurious to the religion instituted by Christ.

4. It cheateth millions of souls, by making them believe they are good Christians, because they are subjects to the bishop of Rome, which they call being of the right church.

5. It becometh the grand engine of dividing Christians, destroying love, and raising bloody persecutions. For when Christ hath made the terms of Christian concord few and easy, and such as all Christians are agreed in, concord is easily attained: But when an usurper will come and add his forgeries, and impossible terms, which Christians neither do, nor ever did agree in, what more effectual and pernicious art could have been used, to divide the churches? If

nothing

nothing but allegiance to the king be required to the concord of his kingdoms, all loyal subjects would be as one: But if a subject will step up and say, you shall also swear to me, as the universal viceroy, or have no peace, when he proveth no such power, and the subjects take it to be treason to be sworn to him without the king's command; Would not this set all the kingdom together by the ears?

6. And then, when men are possessed with this false opinion, that all Christians must be united in subjection to the pope, it will pervert the minds of the very lovers of unity and peace, and harden them in the guilt of wicked persecution, as if it were their duty as the friends of unity, to root out all those as enemies to it, who refuse their false and traitorous means.

7. And I may add, that the poor pope himself is hereby made the most miserable of mortal men, while he undertaketh the pastoral charge of millions and myriads, even of many kingdoms and empires, which he never can nor will perform, and so must answer for betraying and deceiving all these souls.

*Quest.* *But if there be no such thing as an universal church, headed and governed by a vicarious head under Christ, what is the true universal church, and what is its true government?*

*Ans.* 1. The universal church on earth, is all Christians headed only by Christ, as having the sole power and capacity of universal legislation, judgment, execution, and protection.

2. The true government is this; 1. All forcible government by the sword, even about matters in religion, belongeth to kings and magistrates only, in their several dominions.

3. The power of the word, and church-keys, to judge who shall be in the communion of the church, belongeth to the bishops or pastors of the particular churches respectively.

4. These bishops or pastors being obliged to as much concord as they can attain, are bound to hold correspondence with one another by delegates, letters, or synods, as far as the end, church-concord, doth make necessary.

5. If they offend and abuse their office, they are under the government of the magistrate, who may chastise them.

6. If the pastor be an infidel, or enemy, and will not do his duty, Cyprian long ago told us, that the people must obey God before a wicked pastor; and as he hath no power to force them, so they are not bound to consent to sin against God, or betray the church and their own souls, for the will or interest of unfaithful pastors.

## S E R M O N VI.

Mr. H U R S T.

Kings and Emperors not rightful subjects  
to the Pope.

*Acts xxvi. 2. I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, &c.*

**T**HOUGH I cannot this day assume to myself that happiness the apostle did, that he did apologize before a king who was expert in all the customs of the Jews, ver. 3. yet I may account myself happy, that I am to apologize for kings and emperors, who do know, and have assumed to themselves their royal prerogatives granted to them from the King of kings by whom they reign, confirmed to them by him who is set upon the holy hill of Zion; and infringed, eluded, or usurped by a pretended vicegerent, whose right and reason in his pretences are no greater than his humility or modesty in the claim or exercise of his power. Whilst I treat of this important affair, I hope you that are my auditors will hear me patiently; and I humbly submit the discourse to those sacred persons whose cause needeth no more, or greater advocates than have already appeared in it. If there be any thing less becoming the greatness of the cause, and the excellency of the persons, and not worthy the favourable acceptance of the meanest prince; yet I humbly pray the favourable interpretation, and gracious pardon of all that my own weakness hath rendered defective; and a condescending acceptance of what the strength of reason, the resentment of duty, the obligation of oaths, the dictates of nature, the command of God, and a vowed loyalty to my great and gracious sovereign, have in this cause better performed. With this desired candour and hoped favour I return to my work, which lieth in the text I have read, because in that either directly or consequentially lieth this thesis.

Kings and emperors as such are not rightful subjects to the pope, neither hath he power for pretended or real heresy to excommunicate and depose them, nor to absolve  
their

their subjects from their oaths of allegiance; but even the clergy are subject to secular princes, and their bodies and estates under their government.

In which thesis, I observe, two different sorts of propositions, the first negative, the other positive; and these kind of propositions in the schools are differently treated; for the positives are to be proved by the opponent, the negative to be defended by the respondent; so should Rome if the pope would carry his cause, prove his own right, which he can as easily now as ever, and with just such arguments as formerly, make good; whilst immodest claims, forcible usurpations, enslaved councils, citations of treasonable decretals, appellations to seditious canon law, blasphemous appropriation of omnipotency, self-designing flatteries, and vowed obedience to the pope, against nature, reason and religion; whilst these are accounted good proofs, what Romanists will think the pope an usurper? or his wars against the emperor rebellion? May all Christian kings enjoy their undoubted rights, and keep in the undisturbed possession of them, until such weak and senseless arguments become strong and reasonable, his Roman Holiness will scarce think the reversion worth his thanks, if it be bequeathed him, or worthy of his hope, if it be promised him on such terms, and on better, I trust, he will never have it. This negative part of the position, for reasons kept to myself, I do cast into the latter part of my discourse. The positive position, *viz.* The clergy are subject to secular princes, and their bodies and estates under their government, I put in the first place, and shall first handle it; whence the negative positions will, as consequences, follow, and take their own place. Now, here it is necessary,

I. To explain the terms which are here used, and state the thesis.

II. Confirm the thesis so stated.

III. Discover the doctrine and doctors who avow the contrary.

IV. Give you their reasons, and an answer to them.

V. Present you with some corollaries from the discourse.

*Sect. I.* The first term to be explained is *clergy*, which admits both of a scriptural and an ecclesiastic sense. The scripture sense is large and extensive, comprehending all the people that are in the congregation of the Lord, Deut. iv. 20. ix. 29. 1 Pet. v. 3. thus the laity are κληρος, the *inheritance of the Lord*. In the ecclesiastic sense, as it hath been taken for some hundreds of years, in all sorts of writers, in acts of councils, in the controversies of disputants, in the narratives

narratives of historians, and now in the common language both of Protestants and Papists, it is restrained to men in ecclesiastical office by ordination and dedication to divine ministrations, called priests; to whom Rome vindicates a freedom from the government of the secular power. In brief, I understand by clergy here, these last mentioned, and all religious persons, such as abbots, priors, monks, friars, Jesuits, &c. together with their feminine votaries, abbeesses, nuns, &c. These are subject to the secular power. God, nature, gratitude, oaths, religion, and necessary constitution of human laws have subjected them. They *must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but for conscience sake*, Rom. xiii. 5. that is, as Grotius paraphraseth it, Not only out of fear of punishment, which the law threateneth, but of conscience, because Christ hath commanded it. This subjection then ought to be voluntary, chearful and dutiful, and not enforced. It is our duty, and the magistrate's due. It is the result of law, conscience, and love, and not of fear and compulsion.

*Sect. II.* The next term to be explained is *secular princes*. Their dignity, power and government is as to its origin divine; *The powers that be, are of God*: But as to the things they take cognizance of, they are primarily, though not solely secular; and as to the manner of pomp and state, which may render the government more awful, it is justly ordered and determined as seemeth good to the wisdom of the prince, and so is secular. But what through the royal favour of some good princes, and more through ambition and usurpations of popish ecclesiastics, who have invested themselves with principalities, and a power equal to the princes of this world, it is become necessary to distinguish princes into secular and ecclesiastical. The secular are those princes which we call temporal or civil; the ecclesiastic, such as the pope, cardinals, and some bishops who are electors in the empire. That persons ecclesiastic owe subjection and obedience to the temporal or secular prince, I shall endeavour to prove.

In order to prevent mistakes, we observe, the term *prince* may be taken either in respect to the *person*; or in respect to the *office*. In the first sense it referreth to governments in a single person, as kingdoms; in the latter it referreth to government managed by a state or council, as in the old Roman commonwealth, or now in the commonwealths of Venice, Genoa, or the Dutch. Where the clergy are subjects to a king, as in France, or Spain, they are his rightful subjects; where they are under a commonwealth, they

are subjects to the secular power, or owe subjection to the supreme civil magistrate. The illustrious republic of Venice made both the proud Pope Paul V. and the stubborn clergy of the state to learn and acknowledge out of fear, when they would not out of a sense of their duty. Again,

A prince may be considered, either with respect to those who are *born subjects*; these owe to their native prince fealty and allegiance, whether they have sworn it or not:—Or, with respect to such as are subjects occasionally and *pro tempore*, as when either necessary occasions call men into a foreign country, or when choice or curiosity bringeth them into it; such are in conscience bound by the just known laws of that land; and if they transgress those laws are subjected to the forfeiture of estate, limb, or life.

*Sect. III.* How far are the persons of ecclesiastics under government of the civil or secular prince?

1. Their persons are liable to arrests, restraints, imprisonments and coercion, as there shall be a just cause, or suspicion thereof.

2. They are obnoxious to the sentence of the law, according to the nature of their offence; so as either to suffer by stripes, exile, loss of liberty, life, &c.

3. Whatever personal services the community of the lay-subjects are bound to do for their country and their prince, the clergy are bound to, and may on urgent necessity be obliged to afford their assistance, though usually exempt from it through the favour of their prince. That clergyman who in a storm would not obey the pilot's order, and take his turn at the pump, to save the vessel and goods, with his own life and the life of others, were as unworthy of a room in the ship, as other lading that is cast over-board to prevent the danger from its weight.

*Sect. IV.* The *estates of the clergy* are next to be considered, and that in divers respects.

1. Their inheritances from their fathers, do not, by the sons being a clergyman, become free from the common burdens, which authority layeth on the public or generality of the subjects for defraying public charges.

2. The lands and estates of their preferments of what sort soever, are in like manner chargeable, if the magistrate judgeth it necessary and equal: And in such case they ought to obey as readily as other men, when their prince, with advice and consent of such counsel as can duly impose it on others, have imposed it on them.

3. The estates of ecclesiastical societies are under the government of the secular authority, as well as the estates of

lay-societies and corporations, to limit their increase by gifts, as by our statute of Mortmain: To enquire and compel them, to employ them for the uses for which they were given, as by commission of charitable uses.

4. The estates of clergymen, which are given as an encouragement to them, and reward of their labour, and duties discharged; are so under the civil magistrate's government, that he may eject and remove the negligent, and incorrigible mal-administrators in that office, as in other cases of mal-administration. Though it may be most convenient to do this by clergymen, as co-adjutors in the process; yet the authoritative determination deriveth itself from the supreme magistrate, who as he judgeth the offender unworthy of the trust of such an office, so may he dispossess him of the benefit and estate belonging to it.

5. The estates so taken from one, may, by the power which justly took them away, be adjudged to another, who may better discharge the office, and deserve the benefice. And in this case the clergyman must be subject, though possibly an error may be in the judgment passed, and no legal way be left for his relief; as fell out in the deprivation of the Protestant ministers by Queen Mary.

6. The estates of clergymen are forfeitable on crimes of high nature, as well as other mens estates. Treason, of which a clergyman may be guilty, will forfeit his estate, and the prince may, on conviction, seize it.

*Sect. V.* I come to the last term to be opened, *Are under their government*; where I do remind you, that we speak now of matter of right, not of matter of fact separate from right: Their persons, and estates, ought to be under the government of the secular prince, as their rightful lord and governor. Now government,

1<sup>st</sup>, Is for *protection* and defence: Governors are shields of the earth, and heirs of restraint, *a praise to them that do well*, and they watch over their people as shepherds.

2<sup>dly</sup>, Is *directive*; and this, some of them will indeed allow the secular magistrate over the clergy; but ere the magistrate can get clear of them with this small allowance of his right, it fares with him, as they say it doth with those who receive money of witches, or the devil, when they come to use it, it is vanished or turned into withered leaves. For,

3<sup>dly</sup>, The *coercive* power of the civil magistrate in governing them, they with more wit than good manners, or dutifulness, endeavour to wrest from the magistrate; and when he hath parted with the power of punishing the ill-natured disobedience of the clergy, he must content himself with

with such a measure of observance, as may no whit infringe the clergy's immunities, and rights of holy mother, which, you may be assured, their discretion will make less, than their good nature would seem to allow. Indeed a directive power without coercive, is an engine to pull down the honour of a prince, and to exalt the stubborn humour of ever mal-contented subject; a fit project for Rome, and some brain-sick Millenarian, who, in hot fit, dreameth of a crown for himself on earth. But our thesis intends to subject the clergy of Rome, in a subjection to the directive government of the Christian magistrate, as the rule of their duty, and to the coercive government as the just rule of punishment for the neglect of their duties.

4thly, Where the government secular is not Christian, yet in all just and lawful commands, the clergy is subject to the *directive* power of it; and in commands unjust and unlawful, their persons and estates are under the *coercive* power, though it should be exercised to the highest degree of persecution: And I do not remember, besides prayers, supplications, patience, and tears, any remedy left them for the last relief, but an honest, peaceable and justifiable flight from their rage, and cruelty. Summarily then the clergy, who by the pope and his law, are exempt from the jurisdiction of the secular prince in all cases, are so far from a due and rightful claim to such exemption, that in all cases civil, criminal, and ecclesiastical, they are both as to their persons and estates, subject to the directive and coercive power of the secular prince, be he a Christian, or heathen magistrate; in so much, that the clergy owe him an active obedience in the due and lawful exercise of his directive power: And in the undue exercise thereof, the clergy, as well as others, owe him a passive obedience; and neither may resist by force, or appeal from him to a foreigner, to evade or null his coercive power.

The state of the question thus laid down, I come,

II. To prove that the clergy are subject to the secular prince, &c. And,

*First*, I argue from the text, *a majore ad minus*; Paul was a clergyman, fitter to be trusted with such an exemption from obedience to the secular prince, than any of our present clergy: And if any such privilege had been given by Christ, or had been inherent in the office, he would have known it, claimed it, and stood on it: But Paul knew none such, stood not upon any such privilege: Therefore, surely there is none such inherent in the clergy, or annexed to the clergy. I think there is not much doubt to be made,

whether, 1. He were a clergyman, who had his commission from God and Christ, without the ceremonies with which men do ordain to that office, Rom. i. 1. Gal. i. 1, Or, 2. Whether he were concerned to plead his privilege if he had any; for it was a case that touched his life, wherein he now was engaged: Or, 3. Whether he might be bold on account of his innocency to claim his privilege, since his judges determined he had done nothing worthy of death or of bonds, Acts xxvi. 31. Had one of our Roman priests been thus seized, imprisoned, impleaded, and endangered; we should soon have heard him excepting to the jurisdiction of the court, appealing from an incompetent judge, and shuffling off the process with importunate clamours, that he was a spiritual man, and not to be called to account by a temporal power. But here you find nothing of such an appeal, which cannot be imputed to the nescience of the apostle who was inspired by the infallible Spirit. He would have known it if there had been any such exemption, nor may it with colour of reason be said, he would not make use of his privilege, and that he did relax of his right. 4. It seemeth little short of a culpable dissimulation, that he should profess to count himself happy that he was to answer before a secular prince. Nothing can be imagined more unbeseeming him who was set for the defence of the gospel, than such tame and soft cowardise as he was guilty of, on the supposition of these pretended exemptions. No, Paul would never have betrayed the preachers of the gospel, and the religious in all succeeding ages; but have at least owned his right to the privilege, if there had been any such, before Festus, who was under Cæsar, governor of Judea; and so judge in Paul's case, though Agrippa was but an honourable auditor.

I conclude therefore, that the clergy of this present age, in their persons and estates, and of ages past, are as much under the secular government as Paul was: But he was so much under it, that he accounted himself happy, that he might have a candid hearing before the secular power, and could find no privilege to exempt himself: Therefore, neither have our present clergy any such privilege of exemption, and so should acknowledge it a happiness to defend a just cause before an impartial judge, and no wrong to be adjudged to a deserved correction for any crime condemned by the righteous laws of their sovereign prince.

*Secondly*, What was just and right, and ought to be owned by Paul in the point of subjection to the secular power, that is just, right, and ought to be owned in the point of sub-

subjection to the secular authority now by the clergy. This proposition I think will need no proof; and if it should, we shall meet with due place for it. But Paul owned this subjection as what was just, right, and which ought to be. Now this proposition is almost in express terms in Acts xxv. 10. *I stand before Cæsar's judgment-seat; where I ought to be judged.* I know some say that Paul did not this as what was of right to be done, but what was then most safe to be done, and because he could not otherwise escape the hands of the Jews; to which I answer.

(1.) That the word (*δῆ*) may in some places be so taken to denote what must in a case be done, without respect to dueness and right; but from this it *may* to it *must* be so taken is too weak an inference.

(2.) The Greek *δῆ* in the New Testament doth in most places, Mat. xvii. 10. xviii. 33. and xxiii. 23. &c. denote that which ought *ex debito, justoque ordine*, to be done; and so the *must* is a moral *must* resulting from the dueness of the thing.

(3.) Since Paul is the most competent judge of his own meaning, we will view how he doth ordinarily take this *δῆ*, Rom. i. 27. *Receiving—that recompense of their error, in δῆ, which was meet, i. e. just and due to them.* And Rom. viii. 26. *We know not what to pray for as we ought, καὶ ὁ δῆ.* And Rom. xii. 3. *I say to every man—not to think—καρ' ὁ δῆ above what he ought, &c.* And so in his other epistles τὸ δῆον, or his *must* is what is right and ought, *ex debito et justo rerum ordine*, not what *must* of necessity be done. And this had so passed in the text if it had not been so much against the privilege of these Roman clergy, who cannot now bear the plain and literal meaning of this word of God, because they will not keep in the place which the word of God assigns them.

(4.) The apostle could not, without sin of a high nature, according to the doctrine of the church of Rome, thus appeal to a secular judge\*; and now, think with yourselves whether to gratify the Jesuits and clergy of Rome, we shall make

\* So Paschal charged King Henry I. of England, that he gave not honour to St. Peter, nor to the Lord, because no appeals came to Rome, *i. e.* the Pope. Tho. Becket, by way of penance, suspended himself from priestly function for consenting once that priests should be tried by secular power for robberies, murders, &c. And he calls the royal decrees of the king and parliament at Clarendon, for trying such crimes of the clergy, wicked devices, *Baron. ad. Ann. 1167. sect. 26.*

make the apostle guilty in so high a nature, and so transgress his own rule, by doing evil that good may come of it, for which sin judgment slumbers not.

*Lastly*, Whatever weakness or obscurity may be in my arguing, yet I am sure the text doth more plainly and more irrefragably assert Cæsar's jurisdiction over this eminent ecclesiastic, than all the texts produced to that end do prove the exemption of the clergy from the civil magistrate's judgment, or their subjection to the pope. I cannot renounce common sense at so easy a rate as to say, because Christ said thrice to Peter, *Feed, &c.* therefore the pope is the supreme judge of ecclesiastic persons and causes in the whole church; or if I were so easy an arguer, I should through the frailty of clear sense more readily make this heretical conclusion, All clergymen inferior to Paul ought to own their subjection to the civil authority, without appeal from the supreme power of their prince; because Paul owned it his duty, and Cæsar's right by that confession, *I stand before Cæsar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged.* If the Romanists be of his opinion, who when he was told that it was the doctrine of Paul, which was asserted in opposition to his tenet, made a quick reply, I am not of Paul's mind; I shall not take myself bound to reconcile them to his opinion: If we cannot have their company herein, we shall not much want it whilst we have such good company as Paul and Cæsar. In next place,

*Thirdly*, That clergymen in their bodies and estates, are, as other subjects, under the government of the secular prince, I argue thus: They who are included in the community, on whom the word of God chargeth subjection to princes as a duty, are under the government of the prince. None can doubt this who believe that is duty which the divine law chargeth on us in our places. That the clergy are included in the community, is apparent by that universal proposition of the apostle, Rom. xiii. 1. *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.* That this is meant of the animal, not spiritual man, *i. e.* clergyman, is now exploded; for it is clear, that the apostle retaineth the Hebrew dialect, *every soul*, *i. e.* every man: So that our papal clergy must either disclaim their kindred with mankind, or else be subject to the prince.

The persons of the clergy are comprised in verse 1. *Let every soul*: their estates in verse 6. *Render—tribute to whom tribute is due.* And the apostle informs you to whom tribute is due, verse 4. to him that *beareth the sword.* Here is no

room for Boniface with his two swords\* ; the place is designed for one who hath but one sword, and who came honestly by it, and can give a good account thereof as the *minister of God*, a terror to those that do evil, a revenger to execute wrath, not to excommunicate.

*Fourthly*, The apostle Paul dicteth Titus to preach obedience and due subjection to principalities, without any exception of persons, Tit. iii. 1. It cannot be referred to other persons than those committed to his care and teaching, among whom you will find the clergy-elders, and bishops, verse 5. 7. These Titus are to put in mind to be subject and to obey magistrates. How much doth the papal clergy need such a monitor, to cool their fervours to their ecclesiastical immunities, and to kindle their decayed zeal for obedience to the civil powers. This is the *theopoliteia* of Paul: But, lest you should doubt he had not good will enough to the successors and clients of Peter, out of an old quarrel that fell out between him and Peter, when the doctor of the Gentiles was so bold with the prince of apostles, as to charge him with dissimulation; observe,

*Fifthly*, Peter doth very unluckily for his successors fall into the same strain of subjecting the clergy, as well as others, for he doth, without exception, require of all Christians that they *submit themselves*, i. e. their persons, and by consequence their estates, *to every ordinance of man, whether to the king, &c.* How unhappily forgetful was he of Christ's vicar, and his supremacy!

But in those days Christians were under persecution, and it would not have been prudence to have published their privileges, and to have exempted the clergy. Then it seems, Peter directed thus prudentially, and in a temporising way: But not so; his reasons assure us he did own it as a perpetual doctrine and rule; for, 1. *It is for the Lord's sake.* 2. *For so is the will of the Lord.* 3. *That by so doing they may*

\* This refers to the famous canon or decree of Pope Boniface VIII. about the end of the 13th century. — “Boniface VIII. (says *Albert. Crantzius, hist. Saxanorum*, 8. 36.) affirmed, that the power of both swords, the temporal and spiritual, was reposed in himself. This he is said to have displayed with a pompous solemnity at the Jubilee: On the first solemn day shewing himself to the people in his pontifical robes, he gave them the apostolical benediction; the next day appearing in an imperial habit, he caused a naked sword to be carried before him, and sitting down, cried aloud, *Behold here are two swords.*”

may put to silence the mouth of the foolish and ignorant, who among the Heathens were ready to charge the Christians, That their faith is fiction, and their religion rebellion.

Sixthly, Now, to all these add this scripture argument, That the clergy, whether ordinary priests, high-priests, or prophets, once were, and that of right, subject to the government of the secular power, and were bound to appear and give account of themselves to the civil power. Thus when Abimelech and the priests that dwelt at Nob were accused, and summoned to give account of themselves, and what they had done for David, they obey and appear before Saul their king, 1 Sam. xxii. 11. who indeed did as cruelly and tyrannically adjudge them to death, as they had dutifully and readily obeyed his summons. But now, sure if there had been any privilege of exemption, some one or other among those fourscore and five priests would have known it, and pled it, before they had been so unmercifully butchered; but here is not one word of all this, no exception to the judge as incompetent, no deprivation, and degradation from the priesthood, in order to reduce them to the secular and lay state: No delivering them by the ecclesiastic state into the hands of the secular power; in which, and such like formalities the Romish priest, if at any time he be so unbefriended and unhappy, is stript of his clerical immunities, and delivered over to the civil sword. It is a riddle Rome will hardly unfold with dexterity, that eighty-five priests should have neither knowledge of such a privilege, nor courage to plead it for saving their life. I need not advise a seminary priest apprehended and in danger of condemnation, to seek a precedent at Nob, he knows he shall lose his labour; it is Rome only that shaves the head, and then as sacred forbids kings to meddle with it. Yet lest the tyranny of Saul, whom the scripture notes for this, or the meanness of the sufferers should any whit invalidate the instance, let us look a little lower where we find Abiathar deprived of the priestly office by Solomon, 1 Kings ii. 26, 27. *Who commanded that he should get him to Anathoth, verse 26. And thrust him from being priest before the Lord, verse 27.* "The chief priests among the Hebrews as they were put in by the kings, so for grievous faults they might be put out, or punished with death by the kings, for they were subjects, and while the king sat, the high-priest stood." *Grotius* on the place.

By these instances it appears, that both ordinary priests, nay the high-priest himself, among the Jews, were under  
the

the coercive government of the kings of Israel, whose authority the prophets, though by extraordinary call they may with reason be thought in some respect above the high-priest, submitted unto, without appeal to a superior, or exception to the incompetency of their judgment. So did the prophet submit to Aſa, 2 Chron. xvi. 10. and patiently did bear the haſty judgment of his angry ſovereign; no noiſe here of an appeal, no mention made of immunities, of his office, or privilege of the clergy. The ſer doth not, what once the ſervant of Philip the Macedonian king did, appeal from Aſa a good king in a bad humour, to Aſa a better judge in a good humour. How would an Anſelm, a Becker, a Brandelino Valdemarino, or Scipio Saraceno have huſt and hector'd his prince for ſuch uſage as Hanani from Aſa, or Jeremiah from Zedekiah and his princes, found, Jer. xxxviii. 5, 6. But thoſe great clerks (ſo let me call the prophets) pretended to no ſuch exemption in thoſe days, and yet Jeremiah had ſo ample commiſſion, that the pope deſireth no more to be granted him of kings and princes, and thinks this enough to ſet him above them all, whiſt he offers a violence to that text, Jer. i. 10. *I have ſet thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms of the earth.*—A violence as great as that which he offers to the emperor's crown and dignity. Thus it appears that the ſecular authority did once govern the clergy in the church of the Jews; and ordinary prieſts, high-prieſt and prophets themſelves ſubmitted unto it; whence our obedient and learned clergy have example to their dutifulneſs, and the papal clergy a reproof to their diſloyalty; and our theſis hath a good evidence of its truth.

III. I ſhall now endeavour to prove our theſis by ſome farther reaſons; perhaps reaſon may convince ſome who are not willing to ſee the truth in ſcripture-precedents.

*Reaſ. 1.* The clergy are ſubject to the government ſecular, or elſe one of theſe two things will follow, *viz.*

*1ſt,* Either each clergyman is a ſovereign, and under no law and government, which no ſober man ever dreamed of, for this were to make every one of them a God, or a king: Or elſe,

*2dly,* That they are by a ſubordination of perſons of their own profeſſion, ſubjects and vaſſals to a ſupreme eccleſiaſtical independent, or abſolute power without, or above, or againſt the civil power; which as no loyal heart would wiſh, ſo no royal crowned head ſhould endure; for ſuch conſiderations as I ſhall now offer to the reader's peruſal.

1. This were to make either a native ſubject equal to his ſovereign

sovereign prince, or to render a considerable body of his people subjects to a foreigner; which appears thus: If the body of the clergy, and the orders of the professed religious, be only subject and under the sole government of one of their own profession; this person being a native, is, and his successors will be, when advanced to the supremacy and ecclesiastical sovereignty, set up in a power independent on, and uncontrolable by his prince, and so of a subject be made a sovereign over the clergy, whose obedience will be withdrawn from the prince to the ecclesiastical head; or, If this person, who is supposed ecclesiastical sovereign, and who ought to govern the religious and the clergy, be a foreigner, then he that by birth and blood is a stranger to the prince becomes, by this means, the lord and sovereign over the whole body of the clergy and religious, which in many countries is no small part of the people\*.

2. This would lessen all the princes and sovereigns of the world in three things essential to the very being and stability, as well as to the glory and grandeur of their kingly thrones and majesty: It would lessen their freedom and liberty in making laws for their whole kingdom, and ere they can resolve on that ordinance which they do apprehend will be for universal good of their kingdom, they must enquire of the ecclesiastical exempts, whether such a law would not violate the ecclesiastical liberty, and ask them leave to make it; or else they shall be taught as Anselm and Becket would teach their sovereigns, or as Paul V. taught the Duke of Savoy, and state of Genoa, and would fain have taught the state of Venice, but they proved stubborn scholars, and enforced that presuming tutor to forego the lecture.

Next it would lessen their authority in commanding obedience to laws made: The exempt clergy would undoubtedly first consider, whether the obedience required were not an infraction of their immunities, and how far it intrenched on the liberty of the church; and when this is brought to an issue who does not see that the general privilege pretended, untieth the bond of a necessary obedience which is due of right to the magistrate, and leaves the exempt to the free determination, whether of good nature and voluntary

\* In England I believe it was well nigh one third priests and religious; King James observes it in his apology. *Unum Gallia regnum habet ultra 300000 hominum millia, quæ sub obtentu clericatus, monachatus, functionisque ecclesiasticæ jugum regis excusserunt.* P. Molin. de Monach. Temp. Poptif. Roman. c. 18.

tary choice he will comply with his prince, or whether prudence will not rather determine to secure their pretended privilege, and deny that to their prince, which they pretend he hath no right to command. At most, by this means, obedience, which by God, and nature is made the prince his due, and the clergyman's debt, is, by a fraudulent pretext, reduced to an uncertain and arbitrary benevolence. Hence will ensue, the lessening of the power which should execute laws made, and which should support the power in executing them. How feeble is a precarious power? It is next to none, which is but so much as the good nature of one like to suffer or be restrained by it will allow it to be. All this I have said is evident from an undeniable instance of Paul V. who better informed, or bolder resolved, told the Venetians, "He would not endure them to judge ecclesiastical persons who are not subject unto princes, and whom they cannot chastise though they be rebellious." By this princes may see how little power that indulgent father the pope would leave in their hands, who in criminal cases of the highest nature will so boldly deny them all power to judge ecclesiastics. Certainly, by the same justice he taketh away the power of judging by laws civil, he will also (when time serveth, and with equal right) deny them a power to make laws to regulate the obedience of the ecclesiastics; or if there be some daring prince will venture to make the law, the pope, or whoever will be supposed the absolute sovereign over the clergy, shall by the injured clergy have timely notice to interpose a prohibition, that the obedience be not exacted, nor a non-obedience to such laws punished. And what will remain to such a prince but a title and name, lessened to such a degree, that he must owe the peace of his kingdom, the reverence of his royal dignity, the safety of his person, and the succession of his posterity, to the arbitrary will of every clergyman, or at least of the ecclesiastical prince.

*Reas. 2.* They that are by the word of God bound to pray for the secular prince, as for a sovereign under whose power and authority they do live and enjoy the quiet and prosperity of their life, are certainly under the government of the secular prince, both as to their persons and bodies, and as to their estates or goods, which have no small share in the peace and quiet that they should desire to enjoy. I think little doubt can be made of this proposition, or any thing contained in it; for it speaketh not of prayers, which out of Christian charity we ought to make for all men, and specially for men in great power, who through a just favour may

much advantage the church of God: But we speak of prayers that are to be made for particular rulers, under whom we either were born, or by God's over-ruling providence are for present determined. Now the scripture doth thus direct, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. *I exhort therefore, that first of all supplications, &c. be made for all men, for kings, &c.* In which words you have a canon of the apostle directing and commanding Timothy, and in him obliging bishops to pray for all, for kings, and all in authority over us, that under their government our life may be quiet and peaceable to ourselves, whilst our persons are defended from violence of the cruel, and our estates are defended from the injuries of oppressors\*: Which certainly is a benefit as we enjoy in the place of our abode, so by the government of the place where we abide: And this seems to be comprised in that of Dionysius (quoted by Eusebius) "Without ceasing we pray for your kingdom, that it may abide unshaken, in the stability whereof our affairs will abide stable and safe." Now, who sees not that this must needs be in that state or kingdom where those live who are bound thus to pray?

*Reas. 3.* The clergy are bound to give an exemplary obedience and fidelity to their king, that by their example the people who are committed to them for instruction may be induced to, and settled in their obedience and allegiance; but such an example is not given, but rather a contrary example of disobedience, disrespect, and contumacy, by a pretended exemption of the clergy; they are not then exempt, but ought to be in body and estate, or goods under the civil government.

Obedience to the civil government is every where, but at Rome, and in her appendant schools, a moral virtue, and a necessary ingredient to make an honest and virtuous man. And therefore the loyal moralists, the wise law-givers, with best warrant of reason and religion always required it in all subjects; only Rome (where it matters not how much blind obedience to the pope, or how little religion toward God they find in the clergy) taketh care that their clergy be not mancipated to the strict rules of political virtues, lest of good citizens and obedient subjects, they should insensibly lapse into a disserviceableness to the papal tyranny. But we must, guided by reason and scripture, acknowledge allegiance a very great virtue, wherein, as in other virtues, the reformed clergy are bound to be ensamples to their flocks.

*Reas. 4.*

\* In Jer. xxvii. 17, 18. the priests are commanded to submit to the government of the king of Babylon; and he enjoins them to pray for the government and governors, chap. xxix. 1, 7.

*Reaf.* 4. They who do defend their persons and their goods by the authority and power of the civil government, ought in all equity and reason to bear and profess true allegiance to the governors and government. The right which is done for them in such cases obligeth them to this duty, and the benefit from governors to the governed is a most just reason for obedience from the subject to the prince. The apostle Peter intimates this as one ground of obedience, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. *Be ye subject, &c. Why? because governors are appointed to restrain the injurious and oppressive, by judging, condemning and punishing their injustice. They are also for the praise of those that do well; protecting, rewarding, and praising them. The benefit we enjoy should in reason bind us to the obedience and submission we owe our governors.*

By this argument Paul prest the Christians at Rome to obedience, Rom. xiii. 3. *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil, &c. Do good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; so ver. 4. The ruler is the minister of God for good, &c. therefore be ye subject.* And this is the prophet's reason, *Pray for the peace of the city, &c. But it is Babylon: True, But in the peace thereof you shall enjoy peace,* Jer. xxix. 1, 7. So then the argument holds good in the prophet's and apostle's logic: They who enjoy the benefits of a government must be obedient to the government. And I would fain know what will become of all the pleas which the Romanists make for the pre-eminence of clergymen, if this foundation be not solid and good; the great benefits the laity reap from the counsel and labours of the clergy, they judge reason enough for the laity's subjection to them. In a word, to speak with impartiality in the case, Let those that are benefited, be submissive to and observant of those by whom they are benefited; then the common people and all the laity will duly observe in spiritual cases the counsel and authority of their spiritual guides, and the clergy in civil and secular cases will be left where Christ and Peter did leave them, under the civil and secular prince to be governed by him. There is indeed a dispute whether the right of governing be originally in the benefactor, because of the benefit he bestows, or on some other account; but there is no dispute, nor will it admit any, whether the beneficiary be bound to his benefactor, and ought for that very cause to observe and obey him

*Reaf.* 5. What privileges and exemptions for their persons or estates, from common or public burdens and services the clergy do enjoy, they do enjoy through the favour of their prince or governor, who pleaseth to remit to them:

Who

Who as at first he saw reason to grant that favour, so will continue it until he see a sufficient cause to recal his own grant. And therefore, hence I shall briefly argue. They who owe their exemption of body and goods from personal services and tribute to the power of their secular prince; though by such favour they are actually free, yet originally they were subject to him, and of right they still are: And if the prince see cause to require it of them, they are bound to serve him with their bodies and estates, which is certainly to be under their government. What the favour of the prince granted once to any of his subjects is an encouragement to their obedience, not a security to their disobedience, and it must be for common good: But when once it proveth an universal, public inconvenience or mischief, it ought to be reversed. Now, ecclesiastic persons do owe their immunities from personal services and tributes to the favour of their secular prince: Therefore their persons and goods are under their government. If this doth not appear evident, I would have a Papist tell me, what had been the case of the clergy, if such immunities had never been granted? Had they not been under the civil magistrate? What if necessity awaken the civil magistrate, and he seeth in point of prudence and safety, that these exemptions and immunities may not be continued, and so by a law revokes them, doth not the clergy thereby return to their pristine subjection? Ecclesiastical immunities for the bodies and goods of the ecclesiastics are introduced by the law of man: If no such law had been made, or on just cause hereafter shall be repealed, no such exemption had ever been, or else had been nulled though once granted: If no such exemption had been granted, then had these ecclesiastics been equally subject with the non-exempt, and as much bound to obey the civil government as the laity.

*Reas. 6.* The clergy as such are in the essential constitution of their office, and as to the immunities that are necessarily appendant to it, or flowing from it, wholly of a different nature, *viz.* spiritual; and therefore cannot in reason claim immunities which are in their nature secular and civil: Such are these we have been discoursing of. Now, every one may soon know, that the privileges of every rank of men, are suitable to the nature of that office or relation wherein they stand; so civil offices have the immunities which are civil, and spiritual offices are invested with spiritual immunities; as it is not a privilege due to a Christian as Christian, to be exempt from the coercive power of the civil magistrate; so neither is the privilege of the clergy by  
virtue

virtue of their office so great as to advance them above the power of the prince: God who knew what privileges were fittest for each order of men, would surely have told us that the clergy should be free from the government of the civil magistrate, if he had either made or intended an exemption in all civil cases should be a privilege to them. But Bellarmine himself confesseth, that there is not one word of God proving such immunities due to the clergy\*. It were a great disorder, and would bring in a confusion upon the universe to allow such a mixture; for why is not the irrational creature raised to the privileges of the human nature? Or, why is the human nature determined to a satisfaction, with privileges below the angelical? Is it not because their natures are different? Well, why is this a satisfactory account of different privileges in different ranks of natural beings, and may not be alike satisfactory in the different kinds of moral and political beings and orders? These are as different as the other.

*Reas.* 7. They who were born native subjects, and by priesthood or orders, enter not on any relation that doth necessarily and justifiably abolish that former relation; these though so ordained, remain subjects to their natural prince, and owe him obedience still. This proposition surely none in their wits will deny; for the native subject is both as to person and estate under the government of his native prince, and continues so, until somewhat, not only by consequence, but by right, abolish that primeval bond, which with his swaddling bands, nature and God put upon him. Now then, one of these two must be asserted by the exempt clergy:

1. Either that they were never born subjects, and so were in different sense from the apostle born free. If they like not this; or else say,

2. Though born subjects, their holy orders have nulled that natural allegiance, and defeated the prince of so many subjects as have been made clerks. If this be the case, I would enquire whence is this corroding quality in the indelible character, to eat out what is engraven so deep in our natures by the God of order and nature? Certainly Christ and his apostles never so tempered it: But Rome who found the bonds of allegiance were fetters on them, restraining them from their resolved usurpations, and hindering their growing ambition, resolve, whatever comes on it, these bonds must be broken, and these cords must be cast off; and it must be done by some curious engine too, for else the  
noise

\* *De Clericis, cap. 28.* Nullum potest proferri verbum Dei quo ista exemptio confirmatur.

noise of it would give an alarm. In one word, The grace of God in Christ to his church, hath been so far from abolishing any, that it hath mightily fortified on all, the bonds of natural and just necessary relations, in all sorts of men, civil and sacred, and commands ecclesiastical persons as well as civil to observe the just laws of those princes, to whom nature had before made them subjects. It is not Christ's canon, but the canon of Antichrist, which to make good clerks spoil good citizens.

*Reas.* 8. Were this a truth, that the clergy were both as to bodies and estates not under the government of the civil magistrate, how could the primitive Christians, the martyred bishops, the persecuted clergy, avow it to the world, that Christianity did not teach any thing destructive or dangerous to commonwealths and civil governments? How great an impudence would it be in itself to deny? Or how greatly would it have been to the shame of the suffering Christians, if their adversaries could charge on them, that they professed a religion which directly spoiled the magistrate of his coercive power over their priests, and indirectly, *i. e.* in relation to spirituals, spoiled him of his coercive power over the rest of his subjects. Julian's sarcasm had been but a retaliation to them, if they had been so principled and persuaded\*. Might he not with some colour of reason plead, You have spoiled me of supreme authority over sacred persons, their bodies and estates, as too holy to be commanded by the polluted hands of secular princes: And I judge the persons of priests and Christians too holy to meddle with the polluting things of this world, and will free them from those cares and businesses? Had there been a proof made before any one tribunal of the Roman emperors, that the Christian religion had published, maintained, and practised such a proposition; the impartial world would soon have pulled off the mask, and shewed undeniably that those pretended martyrs were not condemned for the profession of their speculative opinions, or the owning of the truth of the history of Christ: But that these pretended martyrs were real and avowed traitors, enemies to Cæsar, to the civil government, and dangerous usurpers on the supreme authority of the prince. Such martyrs indeed may now be talked of in Rome; but what impartial judge will not condemn the treasonableness of the crime which deserved, and the impudence of the plea which defends the sufferers, who died for disloyal rejection of their native prince,

\* He derided the Christians he robbed, with this scoff, that he would make their journey to heaven more expedite and easy.

prince, and traiterous subjecting themselves to the power of a foreigner, enemy to him in whose kingdom they do or might flourish?

Now, after so much reason pleaded for the subjection of the clergy in civil causes to the civil magistrate, it may perhaps seem to some incredible, that any doctrine, by any doctor, should be avowed contrary hereunto: Can such an unreasonable opinion be entertained, or maintained by any?

Wherefore, I shall next briefly shew,

III. Who are the teachers, and what they teach in this point. The church of Rome hath strongly contested, That neither the goods, nor the persons of their clergy, or religious, were under any coactive power of the civil magistratè. Indeed, some learned persons of the Roman communion, have disclaimed such exemptions and immunities; nay, whole churches, such as the French, and Venetians, though popish, do accord with the Protestant churches in maintaining the sovereign authority of the prince over the persons and estates of the ecclesiastics. This is the case now, but the time was when the pope and clergy would not so easily have forgone their usurpations. That this is still their aim, and their declared doctrine, and that if ever they attain to power, they will use it to this purpose, will appear,

1. From the treatises of some modern Jesuits, who avow, That the clergy, by divine right are free from the authority of secular princes \*: And that a clergyman cannot be guilty of treason, because he is not the prince's subject †.

2. From the constitutions of some councils, and the decretals of popes. The bull of Pope V. against the duke and republic of Venice, backed with nine or ten precedents of other popes, may suffice on this head. "Where-  
" as of late it came to our ear, that the duke and council  
" of Venice have enacted divers decrees contrary to the li-  
" berty and immunity ecclesiastic, and repugnant to the sa-  
" cred canons and general councils, and to the constitu-  
" tions of the Roman popes.— And the said duke and coun-  
" cil have detained and imprisoned Scipio Sarracenus and  
" Brandelino Valdemarino, persons in ecclesiastic dignity,  
" for certain pretended crimes by them committed: All  
" which is done with pretence, that it was lawful for them  
" to do these things; We, who by no means ought to endure  
" that the ecclesiastical liberty and immunity, or our au-  
" thority, and the authority of the apostolic see, should be  
" violated"

\* Bellarm. de clericis. † Emmanuel Sa. aphorism. confessa-  
riorum, in voce Clericus, edit. Colon. et Antwerp.

“ violated and contemned, following the examples of most  
 “ general councils, and of fresh memory the examples of  
 “ ———, and other popes our predecessors, who have  
 “ revoked the like statutes published against the ecclesiastic  
 “ liberty, as statutes which in justice were null, invalid,  
 “ and not ratified, and who have decreed and declared that  
 “ they were null, invalid, and of no force; on mature de-  
 “ liberation with our venerable brethren the cardinals of  
 “ the holy church of Rome, with their consent and coun-  
 “ sel, (though the foresaid decrees, edicts and commands  
 “ were in law itself null and void) by these presents we do  
 “ decree and declare notwithstanding anew, that they were  
 “ and are null, invalid and void, and of no force or mo-  
 “ ment; and that none are bound to the observing of them.”

Here you have the act of the illustrious Duke and State secretly traduced as an unjustifiable act. The crimes of the persons were notoriously foul, especially the abbot, *viz.* forcery, rapes, incest, and many murders, which the papal softness calls *certain pretended crimes*. It seems a sovereign prince may not punish rapes and murders in a person dignified with the orders of the church: Or, if he doth, his deed shall be declared null, because the pope, his predecessors, and general councils, have, in like cases, asserted the ecclesiastical immunities. By this you see, Jesuits, cardinals, the consistory, the popes successively, and general councils, exempt the clergy from the coercive power of a civil magistrate, against nature, reason, and religion. How far they would allow the directive power, if times favoured them, you may guess from the late instance of Pope Urban, 1632, and Pope Innocent X. Pope Urban refused to admit the ambassador of Ferdinand II. who was Cardinal Pafman, because, says he, a cardinal honoured with the purple, and a holy character, could not be employed in the service of secular princes\*. And when the French king required Cardinal de Retz to renounce his title to the archbishopric of Paris, Pope Innocent X. interposed, saying, That princes ought not to be suffered to meddle in ecclesiastic affairs; this being to put their sickle too boldly in another man's harvest †.

Let us next enquire what reason may be supposed for this; for certainly so great a privilege cannot be pretended, by wise and honest men, to be warranted by light and trivial arguments.

## IV.

\* Bapt. Nani's history of Venice, lib. ix. p. 368.

† Hist. of the management of Cardinal Mazarine, tom. I. part iii. p. 267.

IV. The reasons for exempting the clergy from the secular power, are chiefly two.—From the unseemliness or indecency of it.—From the divine right they have to be exempted.

*1st*, From the indecency of it; it being very unseemly, say they, that clergymen should be so subjected.

1. It is unseemly that the shepherd should be under the government of the sheep.—The mischief here is, similitudes are no demonstrations. The scripture calls kings shepherds; and perhaps oftner than the priest is called so; and the argument is retorted, Clergymen are in secular, and in civil matters, sheep; the prince is their shepherd: It is indecent they should be exempted from the shepherd's government.

2. It is indecent, say they, that he who to-day governeth as the clergyman from the pulpit in confession, or giving ghostly counsel to the prince, should to-morrow be cited before his tribunal, and be there judged.—It is indecent, I confess, that a clergyman should by any misdemeanour deserve it. All we heretical Protestants, and a great many of the good Catholics of all countries, fancy to ourselves, That it is very meet to see a clergyman preaching from the word of God, whilst he is dutiful and loyal, and to see him imprisoned and executed for his treasons, when he is guilty. If this be an unseemly custom among us, let the clergy be loyal, or keep out of places where such unhandsome customs and laws are practised, as to hang murdering and felonious priests in the common fashion of other rogues, without leave asked of the pope.

3. It is indecent, that the clergy, who are servants of God, and sacred persons, should be judged by the vassals of the world, and the impure hands of laymen.

I never knew the full weight of this argument, before I met with the information that Stanislaus Orichorius gave me; "That every common priest does as much excel a king as a beast does excel a man." Now, by this rule, it were as much pity to see a king judge, condemn, and cause to be hanged or headed, a priest, as it would be to see a horse or an ass, by an usurped power; turn upon and execute his master and driver. In a word, when I see the usurping beast so use a man, I will endeavour to prevent the absurdity; but if ever it be my lot to see or hear a sovereign prince judge, condemn, and put to death, one of Rome's consecrated priests, or one of a more reformed profession, under the guilt of capital crimes, I should desire the father to excuse me, until I saw as clearly as Stanislaus did, that the priest was the man, and the king the beast. I wonder

kings endure such absurdities, when they might prevent it. I humbly submit the resolution, Whether it were not fitter such a priesthood should be abolished, than all kings thus be made asses?

This is the sum of Bellarmine's three arguments from the indecency of the thing. From these we pass to the second sort of arguments, which are,

2dly, *A juro divino*, by divine right, saith the canonist; but he hath the wit to let us seek the text. Others of the fraternity dissent, and pretend the immunities to be *jure humano*; and until they agree how the clergy among them came by these immunities, we shall not think it breach of charity or good manners to tell them, we wish they came honestly by so rich a commodity: Certainly, Christ never gave it them, nor do the more modest pretend his gift; they are content with the collation by popes decretals, or by favour of general councils. These two will prove their right to these immunities in any place, and at any time, where power and injustice are too great to be called to account. And indeed, they have as good right to these immunities as the pope and councils could give them: And you may believe the pope and his councils would not fail to invest their sworn vassals with power enough to disturb and lessen the civil power, that the monarchy of the papal church might more speedily and safely be aggrandized.

But a third plea is, That they enjoy these immunities from the favour of princes. True; the more is their ingratitude and shame that they abuse that favour to the lessening of their prince. What the prince giveth, they enjoy without our envy or complaint: Let them keep within these bounds, and I will not disturb them. Now, the clergy in all places of the world where the prince is Christian, enjoy many considerable immunities *jure humano*, which they never had right to claim, till the prince had will to give; and which they may not expect to enjoy, when either abuse of them provokes the prince to revoke them, or emergent inconveniences persuade him to diminish or null them. What is so granted, is neither immutable in its constitution, nor ever intended to the public prejudice of the prince and state, nor can it exalt the clergy into a state of absoluteness and non-subjection to the prince; or, if you would imagine a soft prince should so inadvertently, and in a transport of zeal to the clergy and church, grant them such a privilege, yet good statists, and sound reason, will tell them, that the grant being made to the prejudice of the crown, it is neither good manners nor justice to require it of their prince,

prince, whose honour and dignity they are bound to conserve.

After so prolix a discourse on the positive part of our position, I come,

V. To a more brief handling of the negative parts of it, which was the last thing proposed.

Confect. 1. *The highest power and authority ecclesiastical, as such, is lower than the sovereign and supreme in all matters civil and secular, in what man or body of men so ever it be pretended de jure to be, or vi et fraude it be found by usurpation to be.*

This follows from the former suppositions, which have been proved, and is evident enough in itself. If the clergy as to bodies and estates be under the civil government, then it follows they are not as clergymen sovereign; for he is no sovereign in the same respect wherein he is under another's authority: But ecclesiastical dignity, or the holy character, leaves the person on whom it is impressed, under the subjection he was in before.

It is possible, though it hath seldom happened, that a sovereign prince may be a clergyman, or that he who hath right to sovereignty may succeed in his right after he hath entered holy orders; yet the powers are distinct, and the civil usually most esteemed, and retained while the other is laid aside. This sometimes happens among the princes of the Red Hat, when of a cardinal they are well pleased to become a duke or prince in hereditary principalities, descending on them by the death of the former heirs. A sovereignty, I know, is annexed to some ecclesiastical titles and persons, as in Germany, to some bishops, and to the archbishops, electors. But they that know their constitutions can readily tell us how much they owe to *jus humanum* for it, and how little they owe to their holy orders. And notwithstanding any such intervenient occurrence, it still holds a truth, No clergyman as such, and in virtue of his holy orders, is or can be of right a sovereign and supreme, but is still under the secular prince and his government, in matters civil.

Confect. 2. *Were the pope, what his flatterers say he is, the supreme ecclesiastical person, and head to that stupendous body of ecclesiastics, and his right proved by a better title than ever it was or will be, yet still this cannot raise him to the dignity of sovereign over secular princes or kings.*

Whatever the power be for its eminency, still it is an ecclesiastical power, and the person in whom it is invested, derives it to himself not immediately and *virtute personæ*, but mediately and *virtute officii*, or indeed by a right grant-

ed to the church, and by the church to be conveyed on a fit person; and so the person chosen by the church receives not what power his boundless ambition can grasp, but what power the church can bestow, which hath been proved to be a power still inferior to the secular power in all civil affairs. In brief, the pope is now a free prince as he is pope, and hath a secular power annexed to his ecclesiastical office: but if Constantine's grant, and some other princes bounty, be a forgery, it is easy to say how their holinesses came by, and how they continue the possession of such power. And if prescription of time and possession will not bar a sovereign prince of his claim, there may arise some brisk prince in the empire who may start a better title to those dominions, and reduce the pope to the primitive *decorum* of bishop of the first see, requiring him to be content with what immunities the imperial council shall judge fit to allow him, which in all likelihood will be more than were ever given by Christ to Peter, and his real or pretended successors. Let him, whilst he can, retain his temporal sovereignty, and within his own dominions be above all persons, in all causes; yet this doth not flow out of his ecclesiastic office immediately, directly, and *per se*, as he is bishop, which is an order wholly of a different nature to secular power and matters; and therefore, were he universal bishop, yet his power would be but the power of a bishop, that is in spirituals; and the engine of their own making, cannot draw in temporals *in ordine ad spiritualia*.

Confect. 3. *The clergy being proved under the government of the secular prince, no clergyman, of what degree soever he be, nor any body of clergymen combined together, can absolve the subjects of any prince or free state from their oaths of allegiance: And, if it be pretended he or they may do so, the pretence is wicked; and if the pretended power be executed, the subject notwithstanding is as much bound as ever, nay somewhat more bound on this occasion, because the prince is in an apparent danger, out of which to rescue him every good subject ought to contribute his assistance for his prince's safety.*

The excommunication, or the menace thereof, from such a proud pretender, may be just reason why princes should require renewed assurance of their subjects allegiance, and why subjects should give new instances of their constant duty; but it can be no reason why subjects should think themselves free from their obedience and oaths. The condition of princes, through the multitude and weight of their affairs, is of all mens the most uneasy; but how miserable would it be on supposition that their kingdoms were at the  
disposal

disposal of a foreigner? All authority appointed of God, is by him entrusted with power sufficient to conserve itself, and effect its proper ends: But if a bishop, who is a subject, may depose the prince, and free the subject from allegiance, the power of the prince is not sufficient to preserve itself among subjects. If the bishop be a foreigner, as the pope is to all princes, who doth excommunicate, depose, and release subjects, then the prince's power is not sufficiently qualified to preserve itself against strangers and usurping enemies.

In brief, Those that are papal bishops, and were born subjects, are equally with others subjects, natural liegemen to their prince; for we have proved that the dignity of bishops doth not exalt them above the condition of subjects: Now, it is certain, subjects cannot absolve their fellow subjects; none can loose the bond which doth as much tie himself as another, nor can rebellion acquit rebellion in a subject. Those bishops who being foreigners to a prince, are always to be watched as suspicious, and mostly to be opposed as enemies, though bishops (as popes are accounted) can never be thought persons to be intrusted with a power over kings and princes, whom they treat with no other kindness than a man doth one whom he resolveth to overthrow, or humble with the first opportunity.

Confect. 4. *Although the pope were universal bishop, and had rightful power to excommunicate, yet could he not deprive the prince or king so excommunicated. of his dominions, in part or whole.*

In excommunicating a prince, the pope must act as a bishop; and this office, as it is a spiritual office, and the rules of it are spiritual, so the effects and ends of it are also spiritual, and ought to keep within these limits and bounds; but now, when (after admonition and intreaties prove vain) the universal bishop should excommunicate, he hath gone to the utmost that his rule directs, or his authority can enable him to: The deposing of a king, the giving his kingdom to any that have the hardiness to attempt, and the success to gain it; as it is wholly of a secular nature, so it is wholly foreign to the office of any bishop; and it hath brought the greatest confusion, wars, bloodshed, and desolation into the Christian world. By this we may guess from whom this usurped power comes, since we know there have been such direful effects of it, and these the natural and proper effects of such unjust pretences. The censure of the church is an execution of a spiritual power, and was never appointed to leap so prodigiously high as with its foot to kick down the crowns of kings and free princes. Skipping from a just execution

cution of ecclesiastical power, into the usurpation of a boundless power in affairs secular over princes and kings, is the most insolent and intolerable presumption; and gives God's vicegerents in civils, a justifiable plea to hate and oppose the pride and designs of the papal clergy, who by this means have, with a kind hand, given their inferior clergy so happy a lift, that the meanest person in holy orders among them, is by virtue of his office a better man than his prince, whom he exceeds as much as a man exceeds a beast, or God exceeds the priest, if you'll believe their flatterers. The learned Cardinal Bellarmine (misemployed in the office of master of the ceremonies) set kings below bishops, priests, and deacons too. So glorious is this Roman church, that kings, sons of the earth, fall short of the churchmen as much as the body falls short of the soul. What pity is it that every ecclesiastical sacred head hath not an estate and revenues to maintain his grandeur above kings! If such transcendent honour be the effect of papal ordination, our king and parliament have reason to continue the prohibition against the subjects of this kingdom going beyond seas to take orders. It is not safe to have subjects thus advanced. Alas, good men and precious! The world unkindly owneth not their excellency, while they, by natural propensities, flowing from their constitutive principles, do innocently aspire to a state equal to their orders, which blind Heretics nickname *Rebellion*, and jealous princes brand as *Treason*; and so the innocent clergy, when taken in it, are condemned and executed for traitors. But the comfort is, the enlightened consistory at Rome can see and distinguish the clergyman *quoad substantiam*, innocent, nay meritorious: It is the prince or state which mistook him, and under the separate accidents and form of a traitor bloodily cut off the man's head. Dull souls, that will not be informed in the mystery of transubstantiating rebels, as well as bread! Well, but though a Garnet may be executed at Tyburn, he shall be St. Henry at Rome. Thus these that set the world on fire, and threatned prodigious calamities to it, are made stars of great light and glory in the Roman heaven. Such unintelligible doctrines, and such intolerable practices have attended the licentious frisk of the bishop of Rome, when he excommunicates and makes kings and princes his prey; and seizeth and *devoureth the prey*; and is thus become a *real chimera*. Let not this be too severely imputed to levity in me, since really I could not tell what to make of him; for in his fore parts I find the mouth of a man, and hear the words of a father in admonitions; but when I have looked down

to the feet, I see the paws of a lion, and his talons always bloody with the prey.

Their own glossary represents him thus :

*Papa stupor mundi* — — —

*Nec deus es, nec homo, quasi neuter es inter utrumque\**.

So, of a well constituted officer, as Christ and Peter left him, (if you credit them) he is made a mishapen monster, and the wonder of the world; and draws deceived profelytes to worship him, shewing them *the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them*, with promise that as they merit by their good service to the apostolic chair, he will give them a right, and when they can they may take possession of his gift, for *unto him pertain all these things, and to whomsoever he will he giveth them*: And I assure you, it is neither *jure divino*, nor *jure humano*, but *quasi neutro*, i. e. *jure inferno*. Hence it follows,

Confect. 5. *That emperors, kings, princes, and free states, are not rightful subjects to the pope, or to any other single ecclesiastical person, nor to any body of the clergymen, neither in synods with Presbyterians, or in convocations with Episcopal, nor in pretended general councils with Papists, nor in the consistory or conclave with the cardinals and pope collected together.*

He that designed offices in his church, hath left the officers under the obedience of the civil magistrate, in all matters which concern the government of their estates and persons. But so many writers have appeared, not only among Protestants, but Papists themselves, vindicating the royal prerogatives and sovereign authority of kings, that it is become in most countries a ridiculous claim which the pope doth make, and his vassals flatter him with. How ill-natured soever the children of that church have proved, abridging their father of his power, I will not now enquire: But might a stranger to the father and his children speak a few words indifferently to both, I would adventure to say, it had been justice and honesty in the ghostly father to have left his children the power and authority which he gave them, who said to magistrates, *Ye are gods*; and then the primitive kindness of kings, like Constantine the Great, would have ensured the favours and observances of princes to the clergy. But since the papal infallibility hath almost reduced this affair to this hard choice, Either that we must have no pope and exempt clergy, or no free and sovereign monarchs, I am easily inclined to believe, the secular princes will rather chuse that the ecclesiastics should part with their immunities, than that princes should part with their

sove-

\* Clement. Proem. Gloss. v. Papa.

sovereignty. Free states and kingdoms do know that supreme sovereignty is not essential to Christ's vicar, Peter's successor, or universal bishop; that exemptions of the clergy are favours of the prince, and not natural and necessary properties of the office; and have well considered the distinction between being of communion with the church catholic, and being in subjection to the pope as to a sovereign. And though I know not what may come to pass among men, and what king may make himself, against all right, a subject to the pope; yet, I am sure, no king or emperor can ever be rightfully the subject of the pope, who at most is but bishop of the first see.

## S E R M O N VII.

Dr. WILKINSON.

### The Pope of Rome is Antichrist.

- 2 Theff. ii. 3. *Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition:*
4. *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*
5. *Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things.*
6. *And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time.*
7. *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way.*
8. *And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*
9. *Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders,*
10. *And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

**W**E will first give you an account of the apostle's writing here so fully concerning Antichrist, and so proceed

ceed to handling the words. The reason of his falling on this subject here, was upon the preaching of some among them, who told them, that the coming of the Lord to judgment would be very suddenly, in that age and time in which they lived, upon which report they were in a very great fear and dread, ver. 2. They were shaken in mind, and this terror and consternation of spirit is there expressed under a double metaphor. 1. From a sea-storm that tears the vessel from the anchor and harbour; so much the word *σαλευθῆναι* here used doth import, which comes from *σάλλω* which signifies a tempest at sea. 2. By *δραρός*, taken from soldiers, who by a panic fear arising among them, are put into disorder and confusion, so that they have neither head, heart nor hand to act in a due manner: So it was with the Thessalonians, by reason of false teachers, who by their storms of false doctrines, Eph. iv. 14. shook men from their steadfastness. They were at present under great distraction and fear, from the false teachers who did delude them; 1. By a pretence to an extraordinary spirit, or visions, and revelations. 2. By word and preaching. 3. By letter as from Paul, by which works they did exceedingly deceive them; and persuaded them to believe that the end of the world was at hand.

Whence we observe, 1. That false teachers do use all possible means and diligence, to prevail with persons to believe their false doctrines.

2. False teachers do so far prevail with many, that they rent and tear them as with a tempestuous wind, and put them into a consternation of spirit as by a panic fear, that they can neither keep to the truth, nor act according to it.

In the words you have, 1. The revelation of the greatest enemy that ever was against Christ and his church, in ver. 3, 8. 2. You have a full and large description of that enemy, by several circumstances of time, place, &c. As also, by several characters and names, by which this enemy may be known from all other enemies of Christ that ever were, or should be in the world. I shall wholly waive their opinion, who contrary to the whole stream of interpreters, do take the meaning of this place to be concerning Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem, and them that crucified Christ; and the apostasy to be the Christians breaking off compliance with the impenitent Jews, and departing from them to the Gentiles: And the Man of sin here described they take to be Simon Magus, together with the Gnosticks. But that this cannot be so meant, is plain, from the season of entering of the Man of sin, &c. who was to be revealed, and upon his revelation there would follow an apostasy from the

faith before Christ's coming to judgment. That which did so terrify the Thessalonians was this, that Christ's second coming was at hand; then the apostle tells them, that there was to be a great apostasy upon the revelation of the Man of sin, which was to be many years, some hundreds of years after this. As for Simon Magus and the Gnostics, they were revealed before the writing of this epistle \*. This enemy is set forth as if he were a single person, but it is not so to be taken in this place; for it is frequent in scripture to set forth a body politic, or a kingdom, or state, by a particular person or individual. In Dan. vii. 1, 2, 3, &c. there be four kingdoms or monarchies, which were in a succession one after another in the world, deciphered by four great beasts, which are interpreted to be four kingdoms, ver. 17. or four kings; and the fourth beast is called the fourth kingdom, ver. 23. and the vulgar translation renders ver. 17. four kingdoms: So that each beast signifieth a multitude of men in a succession, under one government for several ages; and so consequently the head and horns signify the power and sovereignty of such a kingdom for a long time in a succession.

So we find, Rev. xii. 1. the state of the primitive apostolical church set forth by a woman in travel; and ver. 6, 14. by a woman in the wilderness. So Rev. xiii. 11. the two horned beast, which is the same with the false prophet, Rev. xvi. 13. and xix. 20. and xx. 10. doth not signify a single person, or a succession of single persons, but a body of deceivers under one head or government. It is generally agreed on by Protestant writers, That the pope, as head of that antichristian state which is here described, is pointed at in this place; or that the Papacy, head and members, in a succession, making up one body politic, is that monster which they call Antichrist. It is on all hands agreed on, That where-ever we find all these characters, together with the circumstances set down in the text, to concenter, that must be *The Antichrist*, who was to be brought forth into the world before the second coming of Christ. He tells us of *one* to come, a *strange one*, a *monstrous one*, such a one as never was before; and that you may not be mistaken, he give us the lively portrait of him.

Let us now descend to the particulars as they lie in the text.

1. Antichrist is described by the *apostasy* which should arise in the church upon the coming of this monster: He is an apostate, and the cause of an apostasy: There was to be  
 \* Ἀποστασία, a very great apostasy before his full revelation,

ver.

\* Vide Hugo Grot. Dr. Hammo d, &c.

ver. 3. Apostasy is taken 1. Politically, for a falling from the Roman empire. 2. Ecclesiastically, to fall from the church or true religion. 3. Figuratively, the subject for the adjunct, meaning the chief in place and power, that causeth others to fall away, 1 Tim. iv. 1. There shall be an apostasy; there shall be such as shall fall away, and cause others to do.

In the two latter senses it is taken here; for the ecclesiastical hierarchy, set out by the lamb with two horns, Rev. xiii. 11. is the grand apostate, and a cause of the great apostasy of many, by causing them by force and fraud to worship the beast and his image, ver. 12, 13. &c. The time of this apostasy is a special mark of Antichrist's rising, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3. This apostasy was to be in the latter times of the fourth monarchy, set out by forty two months, and one thousand two hundred and sixty days, Rev. xi. 2, 3. and chap. xiii. 15. The apostasy of the church from the rule of faith and worship, by spiritual fornication is a signal note of Antichrist, or the antichristian state, of which the pope is the head; and his proper see is Babylon the metropolis: And the body, which was to be ordered by this false prophet as its supreme head, was, and is, the beast of Rome, with seven heads and ten horns, and ten crowns on his horns, Rev. xiii. 1. This apostasy as to the time, is upon the rising of the antichristian papal state, when those doctrines of demons, and forbidding marriage and meats, which are peculiar to the church of Rome, came into the church; the old Pagan Roman empire was broken to pieces, and had its deadly wound, which afterwards was healed by the two-horned beast, Rev. xiii. 12. framed into a likely image of the former Pagan beast, by reason of which, the visible worship of Christ in the church gradually was cast out, and the spiritual fornication of saint and angel-worship, relicks, images, and such like, which is renewed Gentilism and refined Paganism, came up gradually into the church of Rome.

The revelation of the Man of sin doth appear by his rising gradually, and the time of his rising will appear by the apostasy from the rule of faith, worship, and manners; so that if we can find the defection of the church, we know one chief character of Antichrist. Some begin the apostasy from the primitive purity about 396, when many popish errors came into the church. Jerom, *anno* 390 complains of the avarice and corruption of the clergy, and of the prohibition of marriage and meats. And Augustine 399 complains how the church was fallen from her purity. Wolfpius in his epistle, and in his book, *anno* 390 and 400, brings in a large catalogue of errors crept into the church,

by

by which the times of the grand apostasy may be known: And it pleased God to speak in a wonderful way from heaven in those times, by prodigious comets, anno 383, and 389\*. Thus was the man of sin gradually revealed, and the apostasy did gradually proceed. Indeed the pope could not yet shew himself in the full exercise of his power in the Roman empire, for the civil power of the Roman empire would not bear such a competition as the hierarchy of Rome; and therefore the Roman empire which is a civil state, was to be taken out of the way, ver. 6, 7, 8. It was to be removed from the seventh head, the old Roman beast, as it was a civil government, and placed somewhere else, *i. e.* on the pope or ecclesiastical hierarchy, which usurps the power of both swords. This could not be done before the deadly wound was given to the Cæsarian family, which the idolatrous blasphemous beast was to succeed: This is the beast which carrieth the whore, Rev. xvii. 3. which could not be done till the imperial sovereign power of Rome was broken, and translated to the pope; then the Man of sin was more fully revealed.

Some state the beginning of the apostasy, and the revelation of the Man of sin higher, some lower; but they agree in the main, That this apostasy was by the pope, and upon the fall of the Roman empire: Some will have his revelation to be about the time of King Pepin, and Charlemain. It is true the Papacy then came to a great height, but the church was very corrupt in doctrine, worship, discipline, and manners, and polluted with spiritual fornication long before that time. So that we may infer, that if the apostasy came in with the pope or Papacy, as this did rise to a height, so did the apostasy from the truth; then this character doth agree to the pope, by which he may be known to be the Antichrist.

2. The second character, by which the pope is set forth, so as to be known to be Antichrist; 1. He is, *ὁ ἀνθρώπος τῆς ἀμαρτίας; ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπολείας*, ver. 3. *The Man of sin*: By an Hebrew phrase expressing one that is a superlative supereminent sinner; as we say, A man of blood, for a man thirsting after blood, or a cruel bloody man. *The son of perdition, perditissimus*, one set upon the destruction of others, the most flagitious profligate sinner, the most inhuman cruel destroyer, to whom the titles of Apollyon, and Abaddon do most properly belong; he is actively and passively the son of perdition, Rev. xvii. 18. and xix. 20. He is the great destroyer of souls, ver. 12. He is the *ὁ ἀντικείμενος*, ver. 4. the  
great

\* Alsted. Chron. cometarum.

great enemy of Christ, though he is not called by the name of the Antichrist; yet here is a word with the article prefixed to it, which carrieth the like importance with it. He is the worst and greatest enemy of Christ, who under a pretence of friendship and love to Christ, doth usurp and undermine his offices; he appears like a lamb in his deportment, and speaks like a dragon, Rev. xiii. 11. 2. The papacy is of all other bodies politic the worst, being set out with such expressions as have the greatest emphasis in them: It would be too great a business for a sermon to give you an account of their tyranny, cruelty, luxury, rapaciousness, avarice, blasphemy, whoredom, spiritual and corporal; all the abominations of the three former monarchies do meet in this fourth, of which the Papacy is the last edition, Rev. xiii. 2. That beast set out there is the Roman empire, as Papal not Pagan, as appears by the crowns on the horns: But the Pagan empire had the crowns on the heads, Rev. xii. 3. Now that wickedness in which those former empires did excel did meet in the papal, Rev. xiii. 2. and therefore it is set out by the lion's mouth, the feet of the bear, and the leopard. He is set out in his type, Dan. xi. 28, 30, 31, 32. Or, he himself is set forth (as some think) wholly against the covenant, expressing an indignation against it with all his might, setting himself against the sanctuary and daily sacrifice. Graferus and others understand it of Antichrist, and not of Antiochus. The scripture when it expresseth a person or thing in a single way, doth it by an affixed article as here, or by an abstract: Here the article sheweth an eminence of wickedness; so the abstract, Cant. i. 4. Heb. *uprightnesses*, by which righteous persons are set forth; so a proud person is set out by pride, Jer. l. 31. we render it, *O ye most proud!* So *sin* for a *great sinner*, Prov. xiii. 6. So *the Man of sin*, signifies the most sinful man. He is called the  $\delta \alpha \nu \eta \mu \alpha \varsigma$ , ver. 8. *That wicked one*, the most lawless one, breaking all bounds and bands, and casting away the cords of Christ, as they, Psal. ii. 3. that will not come under the yoke of Christ, nor stoop to his sceptre; that will not that Christ should reign over them, Luke xix. 14. This boundless lawless one is therefore set out by a most unruly beast, Rev. xiii. 1, 2, &c. and by the *whore of Babylon*, Rev. xvii. 1, 2, 3, &c. riding the beast and making the kings to commit fornication with her, and *the inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornication*: This is *the mother of harlots and abominations, drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs*, ver. 5, 6. This *lawless one* is the antichristian state, the *Man of sin* under another notion. Lawless as to scripture,

ture, so in point of doctrine, worship, government, and manners; as to human laws and powers, being above them all; as to oaths of allegiance, &c. as to exemption of his clergy, and such like.

If these epithets which the Holy Ghost gives to Antichrist, do all belong to the pope or Papacy, then he may be justly thought to be described in this place.

3. The third particular by which Antichrist is set out is the *place*, ver. 4. he *sitteth in the temple of God*, there he exerciseth his jurisdiction and tyranny, and shews himself God, *i. e.* in the church, the place of the visible external worship of God, which is called the *outward court*, Rev. xi. 2. which is trode under foot by the draconizing beast, or Papacy, profaning the whole worship of God, and bringing in a new Gentilism; therefore the outward court is cast out, and forbid to be measured, in regard that lawless monster hath broke all bands, and will not come under any laws and rules of Christ, therefore they and their worship are cast out. The place where he sits is called, *the temple*, or house of God's worship. As 'it is said of the king of Babylon, That he will sit on *the mount of the congregation*, Isa. xiv. 13. *i. e.* Mount Sion, the place of God's residence and worship: So here the pope takes upon him to sit in the temple, or church of God, Eph. ii. 21. 1 Cor. iii. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Some will have it for the temple of Jerusalem, that must be the seat of Antichrist, which is in the power of the Turk; but this cannot be, in regard the other characters will not suit with the Turks, but do fall in suitably with the pope, and with the papal church which pretends to be the holy catholic, and the only true church. So then the pope sits in the midst of his holy catholic church of Rome, exercising his tyrannical power over the people of God. Mahometans cannot be the church, they wholly renounce the name of the church of Christ.

*But how can the antichristian synagogue where Satan's throne is, be called the temple of God?*

*Answer.* The scripture speaketh of things as they once were, though they do not continue so to be; and of persons as they are in pretence and outward profession, though they be not such as they pretend to be. Abigail is called the wife of Nabal when he was dead, 1 Sam. xxx. 50. And Simon the leper, though he was healed, Matth. xxvi. 6. so the city that was a harlot is called the *faithful city*, Isa. i. 21. the *holy city*, John iv. 21. where they worshiped; the *holy place*, Matth. xxiv. 15. till the desolation by Vaspasian; and Matth. xxvii. 53. the *holy city*, though they had turned the house

house of God into a den of thieves, Matth. xxi. 15. and it was a bloody city that *killed the prophets*, Matth. xxiii. 37. Besides, sometimes the scripture speaks of things as they are reputed by men, 2 Chron. xxviii. 23. *They sacrificed to the gods of Damascus that they would help them*; they are called gods on that account; so Judg. x. 13, 14. This character doth very well agree to the pope, or Papacy, and prove it to be the antichristian state here set forth.

4. He is set forth by self-exaltation, *who exalteth himself above all that is called God*;—and not only above all that have the title of gods, as the civil magistrates, Psal. lxxxii. 1, 6. who have that title by virtue of the authority God hath invested them with, John x. 34, 35. but also above the true God, by taking on him to do more than God himself. *He as God*, takes on him the honour due to God himself, and will be adored by the highest power upon earth. He that does all this must needs be the Antichrist; but such things doth the pope; let him look to the conclusion.

Molin. shews how the pope is called God by the Romish doctors, and they plead that he ought so to be\*. So also they attribute the offices and excellencies of Christ to the pope. They say, He is the father of all Christians, which belongs to Christ, Isa. ix. 7. That he is the teacher of the church, the spouse of the church, the foundation of faith, the Lord of lords, the chief corner-stone, universal judge and infallible, who is to judge all others, but to be judged of none. These all belong to Christ alone, and he that thus exalts himself, and arrogates these things to himself must needs be Antichrist.

Some go further in this argument, and shew how the pope takes upon him to do more than God. It is frequent among their divines and canonists to say, *Papam posse*, &c. “The pope can dispense against the apostles, and against the Old Testament. He can make new symbols. He can dispense with things forbidden of God.” Bellarmine saith, *Indulgentiæ faciunt*, &c. “That as to those penalties from which we are freed by indulgences, we are not bound to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance †.” Nay, he goes further, *Si papa*, &c. “If the pope should so err as to command vices, and forbid virtues, the church would be bound to believe vices to be good and virtues to be evil, unless she will sin against conscience ‡.”

Thus

\* *Crede Dominum Deum nostrum Papam, &c.* “It is heretical not to believe our Lord God the Pope to have power to decree as he hath decreed.” *Gloss. extravagant. cum interpret.*

† *De Pœnitent. lib. 4. c. 13.*

‡ *De summo Pont. lib. 4. c. 5.*

Thus blasphemously do they speak of the supereminence of the pope above God himself; and as for all civil powers he is absolutely free from them, and much above them all. "Since the pope is God, say they, he cannot either be bound or loosed by men \*." It is common amongst them at least to equalize the pope's decrees to the holy scripture; and to affirm that the pope's decrees are canonical, and his determinations to be preferred above the scripture, with many such like blasphemies: And which is worst of all, they assert, "That the scriptures have no authority, so as to procure belief of them, unless they be first canonized by the pope †." It is no wonder that the pope utters such blasphemies, since he is the head of that idolatrous beast which is full of blasphemies, Rev. xiii. 5, 6.

Since they will have the pope to be such a supreme head to the church militant, as Christ.—Since they will have him not only to be equal with Christ, but above him; he being able, as is affirmed by them, to redeem souls out of purgatory, which Christ never did.—Since, I say, they will have their pope, their Lord God the pope, thus lifting up his head above Lucifer, let them have him, and believe his lies and impostures.—Since they reject the truth whereby they might be saved, let them believe his lies that they may be damned, ver. 10, 11.

5. Antichrist is set forth by the taking that which hindred out of the way, ver. 7. There was something that hindred the revelation of the Man of sin, which was to be removed. He could not be brought into the world till the Roman empire was taken out of the way, then that wicked one did rise up to that height; then Antichrist did appear in his colours. There is a great consent among the ancients as to this: Jerome was so clear and confident in it, that as soon as he heard of the taking of Rome by Alarick, he presently expected the coming of Antichrist ‡. The ancients were so confident of this thing, that the church did pray in her liturgy, That the Roman empire might stand long, that so Antichrist's coming might be long ||. The Roman empire being broken into ten kingdoms brought in Antichrist. It is certain the Roman emperors did keep the bishop of Rome from growing to that height, as he did upon their being removed out of the way.

Others

\* Vide text. Decret. dist. 96. c. 7.

† Decret. lib. 2. c. 23. De presumptionibus.

‡ Tertul. de Resurrect. lib. 4. c. 24.

|| Tertul. Apolog. c. 39.

Others take it to be meant of the Roman emperor himself, and not of the empire at all; for the Roman empire is not taken out of the way; but stands on two legs, *viz.* the empire of Turks, and the empire of Germany. It was the emperor himself, which was Constantine the Great, who removed to Constantinople, then that which hindered was taken away. The grandeur of the emperor and of Antichrist could not stand together. As soon as the emperor departed from Rome, Antichrist began to be revealed. For when all the bishops in the Christian world did meet at the council of Nice, the bishop of Rome, though requested by a letter, came not. He pretended old age, and the weakness of his body; but Bellarmine telleth us the true reason, It was not meet the head should follow the members; but rather that the members should follow the head: And if the emperor were present, it is likely he would sit above the pope, which was not meet, he being the spiritual head; therefore he did absent himself. (Cotton on 1 John ii. 18.) Though they differ as to the emperor and empire, to be that which hindered; yet they agree as to the pope, that he rose to his height upon the removal of the one or the other out of the way.

6. By the notion of a *mystery*, as it stands in opposition to the *mystery of godliness*, v. 7. the apostle following the Hebrew way of expression, *μυστήριον τῆς ἀνομιᾶς*, i. e. a *wicked doctrine or mystery*. *Mystery* is said to be wrote in the forehead of the whore, Rev. xvii. 5. as a principal part of her name. The whole religion of Popery as to faith and worship is so contrived by them as may most conduce to the sustaining and advancement of the pope's power, and the gain and profit of the clergy. Satan never shewed himself so notorious an impostor, as in the hellish contrivance of the whole body of the religion of Papacy, which has gained upon the world exceedingly by the pope, Satan's vicar, set forth by *the lamb with two horns*, Rev. xiii. 11. who hath prevailed with all sorts of men to receive *the mark of the beast*, and bow to his *image*, ver. 12, 13, 14. The religion of Antichrist is carried on in a subtle cunning way, else it could not be called a *mystery*, and a *mystery of iniquity* under the pretence of godliness. The great factors in this mystery are said to be *seducers that speak lies in hypocrisy*, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. *who have a form of piety*, which is the mantle to cover the blackest abominations, 2 Tim. iii. 1, 5. And Peter speaking of such mystical villanies, 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2, 3 tells us how *privily* they should *bring in damnable heresies* under the colour of truth. The religion of Popery, which is merely to advance the honour, and promote the interest of the pope and his hierarchy,

rarchy, has, under a pretence of advancing the honour of Christ, undermined and overthrown the religion of Christ up and down the world.

7. *By the manner of his coming*, ver. 9, 10. After that which hindred is taken out of the way, 1. *He cometh after the working of Satan*, i. e. Satan will put forth his utmost skill in working miracles by Antichrist. 2. *With all power and signs*, i. e. his power to work variously, or after a wonderful manner, which God is pleased sometimes to grant even to the worst of men. He shall work signs or miracles. 3. *Lying wonders*, or wonderful lies. 4. *With all deceivableness of unrighteousness*. Under the name of unrighteousness is covered all manner of falshood and lies, by which they do deceive many, and would deceive the very elect if they could, Mat. xxiv. 24. This advent or coming of Antichrist here mentioned, is not to be referred to his first revelation only, but to his full revelation, when his kingdom and government shall be set up in its splendour and power.

*He shall come with the power of Satan*. Satan is most famous for two things, *lying and murder*, John viii. 44. He is an adversary to divine authority, and man's salvation; and both these are eminently seen in the pope, for he hath brought in false doctrines, false worship, and a false religion into the church; and by this means he is the great murderer of souls. Satan shews himself a liar, when he puts men on a false idolatrous worship, instead of a true; so all idolaters are liars, Rom. i. 25. *They changed the truth of God into a lie*, &c. therefore idols are called *lies*, Amos ii. 4. and idolaters are said to *make lies their refuge*, or under falshood to hide themselves: But Satan never did impose such a lie upon the world as in the idolatrous worship of Rome. Idolaters and liars are put together, Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15. and *whosoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie*, Rev. xxi. 27.

*With all power*. Some take it for the power of both swords, ecclesiastical and secular, which the pope claims; but it rather respecteth that faculty and power which he doth pretend to, and whereby he worketh wonders. The signs and wonders here spoken of, are the ways, means, and weapons which Satan useth by Antichrist to deceive persons to their destruction. This was the way which Satan took by Jannes and Jambres, to deceive Pharaoh and the Egyptians, 2 Tim. iii. 8. These were a kind of types of seducers which were to come in these last times.

That miracles were at the first promulgation of the gospel, for the confirmation of its divine authority, and increasing

creasing a belief of the doctrine of Christ, is most true; but after the gospel is promulgated, there is no further use of them; and therefore when the scripture speaks of miracles and miracle-mongers, Mark xiii. 22. Rev. xiii. 13. Mat. vii. 22. it is to be understood of *false Christs and false prophets, who shall come in the name of Christ, and shall pretend to marvellous things in his name, and shall deceive many.*

That this mark is fulfilled in the Papacy, doth appear from themselves, who boast very much of their miracles, and the advancement and confirmation of it by them. Such miracles are called lying miracles: 1. Because they are for the confirmation of false doctrines, of transubstantiation, purgatory, invocation of saints, adoration of images, and relicks, &c. prayers of the dead, the pope's supremacy, &c. 2. Because many of them are things merely feigned to be done, which were never done, or if they were done, they have been brought about by the mere artifice of Satan, who is able to do things beyond the reach of men. 3. From the end of these miracles, which is to deceive men, Mark xiii. 22. They are framed by seducers, and embraced by such as will not receive the truth with the love of it, v. 10.

Their own authors have set down multitudes of these miracles, such as, The conformities of St. Francis, the golden legend of Jacobus de Voragine, the miracles of St. Dominick, St. Benedict, and the images of the Virgin Mary.

8. He is set out by *his fatal ruin and utter destruction*, ver. 8. This verse hath two parts, the first part looks back to his revelation; and the latter part points out his ruin, and how he shall be destroyed.

1. The efficient cause of his ruin is the coming of Christ. When Christ comes to set up his kingdom, and to *take to him his great power, and reign*, then he will destroy Antichrist, Dan. ii. 44. and vii. 14, 28. especially under the fifth, sixth, and seventh vials, Rev. xvi. from verse 10. to the end. You have the destruction of the whore, chap. xviii. the overthrow of the beast and the false prophet, chap. xix. and the binding of Satan, and the reign of the saints on the earth, chap. xx.

2. You have the instrumental cause, *the spirit of his mouth*. Here two words are to be considered, 1. *Ἀναλώσαι*, *consumere*, which notes his gradual consumption by the preaching of the gospel, Isai. xi. 4. this is the sword of his mouth, Rev. xix. 15. by which Christ doth smite the nations. His consumption is gradual, as was his rising, which was under the trumpets, and his fall is under the vials. The ministers of the gospel, since the Reformation began, have discovered  
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the whoredoms, impostures, and false doctrines of Rome, and the danger of having communion with Rome, and the desperate condition of such as will not separate from her, ver. 9, 10. Many a deadly wound have they given to Antichrist; so that he hath been wasting like a snail, Psal. lviii. 8. till he shall come to nothing; not by might, nor by power, Rev. iv. 6, 7. but by the word. (2.) Here is *καταργήσας*, which notes his utter destruction by the brightness of Christ's coming, when he takes to him his great power, at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, Rev. xi. 15. The text must be considered under a double capacity,—As to his ecclesiastical state, and in his spiritual capacity, as he is set forth under the notion of a whore, and so shall be consumed by the preaching of the word.—In his secular capacity, consisting of several kingdoms under one supreme head, which is the pope; so he is set out by the notion of the beast, Rev. xi. 7. xiii. 1, 2, 3. which beast, the whore, *i. e.* the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Rome rideth, Rev. xvii. 3. yet they both together make up but one Antichrist. As to his secular capacity, he shall be destroyed with another sword; *He that killeth with the sword, shall be killed with the sword*, Rev. xiii. 10. so that the utter consumption of the beast and whore shall be upon the little stone's rising into a great mountain, which shall smite the image on his feet, and shall break it into pieces, Dan. ii. 34, 35.

Perhaps it will be said, That the destruction of Antichrist, as hath been shewed, can be no mark of Antichrist, by which he may be known, for all enemies shall be destroyed by Christ and by his word.

It is true, that Christ will destroy all his enemies by his sword which cometh out of his mouth, Rev. xix. 15. Sin and the devil are continually destroying by the sword; but since Antichrist is set forth as the greatest enemy that ever was, and since the antichristian state of it, as it is in the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Rome, together with the beast, Rev. xiii. 1, 2, &c. are the last edition of the fourth monarchy, and it is on its last legs in this state, and it hath opposed the kingdom of Christ beyond any other; therefore the destruction of this state, as to the remarkableness of it, shall go beyond all other states and kingdoms in the world. And therefore it is that the vials are prepared for this enemy in a more especial manner than all others, Rev. xv. 1, 2, &c. and ch. xvi. the seven angels, with the seven vials, pour them forth upon the beast, or something of the beast. This has been made good in the Papacy in a great measure already,

already, as will appear by the confession of Bellarmine \*, who telleth us, That the Lutheran heresy possessed almost all Germany, Denmark, Norway, Suevia, Gothia, Hungaria, Pannonia, France, England, Scotland, Polonia, Bohemia, and Helvetia, and is got over the Alps into Italy.

9. Antichrist may be known by his *followers*, and the *livery* they wear, ver. 10, 11, 12. The retinue and followers of Antichrist have this special mark on them. that they be such as shall perish. Their properties are, 1. Negative, *They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.* 2. Affirmative, *They have pleasure in unrighteousness.* 3. They are set forth by some passive properties, which are penalties; (1.) Internal, ver. 11. *Strong delusions to believe a lye.* (2.) Eternal, ver. 12. *Dannation:* Here be the black marks of reprobation, by which Antichrist's retinue and followers are set forth. We do not find that any party of men are under more dreadful marks of God's hatred than Antichrist's followers. In Rev. xiii. 8. they are set out by the stigma of reprobation, as persons left out of the book of life. And chap. xiv. 9, 10, 11. *They that worship the beast, and receive his mark in their forehead, or in their hand, they shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, and be tormented with fire and brimstone, &c.* 4. They are set forth by a special act of God in a way of just judgment, *sending them strong delusions to believe lies*, or giving them up to a spirit of falshood to their eternal perdition. They are such as wilfully reject the true doctrine and worship of Christ, pertinaciously adhere to false doctrine and idolatrous worship, and please themselves much in those false ways of unrighteousness which are most destructive to souls, and most displeasing to God.

From all this it appears that the pope is Antichrist. Indeed, if but some one or few particulars did meet on the pope or Papacy, we could not argue from them; but when they all meet in the Papacy, and by the common consent of orthodox writers these marks are fastened upon the pope, he will never be able, by all the skill he hath, to escape the vengeance of God which will follow him on that account.

From what hath been said, there may be several things drawn by way of inference, for our practice and instruction.

*Infer.* 1. From what hath been said we may see a reason of the mistakes of some in their proving the Man of sin to be the Antichrist, and the pope to be the Man of sin, from some places which do not so properly belong to it. They have thought the same Antichrist to be pointed at in John's epistles, 1 John ii. 18, 22. and 1 John iv. 3. and 2 John vii.

as here in Paul's epistles to the Theſſalonians. Some think the ſame Antichriſt to be ſet forth by John, as by Daniel, and Paul, and by John in the Revelations, who decipher's Antichriſt under the notion of a beaſt, and a whore, and a falſe prophet. The Antichriſt pointed at by John in his epiſtles hath relation rather to the prediction of Chriſt, Mat. xxiv. 11, 23, 24. Mark xiii. 21, 22. *There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, &c.* We have not the name Antichriſt but only in John, indeed we have *ὁ ἀντιχρίστος*, ver. 4. a word equivalent. John ſpeaks of an Antichriſt who was then in the world, and one prophesied of by Chriſt to come ſpeedily into the world; but Paul writes of one who was wholly to come into the world, and for whoſe coming there was great obſtacles to be removed firſt. The Antichriſt's coming in John is immediately upon a time which is called *the laſt time*, 1 John ii. 18. And we know that ſince he has come, it is the laſt hour, or laſt time. This cannot refer to the laſt time which reſpecteth the coming of Chriſt to judge the world: This laſt hour doth refer to the Jewiſh ſtate, of which the laſt glaſs or hour was now running, and their final deſolation was at hand. There were ſeveral who did then pretend to be Chriſt, and to come in his name; there was Simon Magus, and Carpocrates, and the Gnoſtics, of whom they were the heads, which did pretend to miracles, and entuſiaſms, and did ſeducer many. Theſe be the Antichriſts John ſpeaks of in his epiſtles, which were to appear at the coming of the Lord to judgment; I do not mean his laſt coming to the judgment of the world, but of his coming to the final deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and the Jewiſh polity and nation by Veſpaſian; of which coming Paul ſpeaks, Heb. x. 25. That was the day approaching in which Chriſt came to deſtroy that people: It is mentioned by James as drawing nigh, for then the Lord Jeſus was coming againſt Jeruſalem, James v. 7. From the miſunderſtanding of theſe places, and miſapplying them to wrong purpoſes, hath ariſen the miſapprehenſions of the pope's being Antichriſt; for though ſeveral things in thoſe places in John's epiſtles do agree to the Papacy, yet the proper deſcription of Antichriſt is to be looked for in Paul's epiſtle to the Theſſalonians, &c. and in the Revelation, and in Daniel.

*Infer.* 2. If the pope be the Antichriſt ſet forth by thoſe bloody characters; if this body politic, head and members, be the antichriſtian ſtate, and this ſtate is the Papacy, then it cannot be the true church, but the counterfeit of the true church, and of Chriſt the head. The ſcripture ſtill ſets out the antichriſtian ſtate in a flat oppoſition to the true,  
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yet still under a pretence and colour of faith in, and love to Christ: For Antichristianism is, *a mystical impiety, under the cloke of piety.* The false church whereof the pope is the head, is set forth by a double beast, Rev. xiii. 1, 2.—11, 12. Both which together make up one catholic Roman papal church, the number of whose name is 666, ver. 18. And the true church, whereof Christ is the head, is set forth by 144,000, chap. xiv. 1. the square-root being 12 built on 12 apostles: But 25 is the square-root of 666, and there is a fraction in the root, and one more too, there in the square-root; to let us know, that though the antichristian church may seem as fair to such as look on it with human eyes, and 666 runs as handsomly as 144; yet the former is *the number of a man*, the whole church and her religion, being made up of additions and inventions of men. The number of 666, denotes the apostasy of the church from the standard of truth. The square-root of the apostolic church being 12, and so the apostasy lies generally in additions to the root and foundation of the Christian religion; they do not rest satisfied in fundamentals of the Christian religion delivered by the 12 apostles. The false church is set forth by the whore, who pretends to be the spouse of Christ, but is opposite to the virgin-company, that follow the Lamb, Rev. xiv. 4. The ecclesiastical state of Rome, or hierarchy, is set forth by the false prophet, Rev. xvi. 13, &c. xix. 20. and xx. 10. in a flat opposition to the two prophets, Rev. xi. 10. which are the same with the two witnesses, and two olive trees, and two candlesticks, ver. 3, 4. These represent the true ministry of Christ which did prophesy, ver. 6. till they finished their testimony, ver. 7. Now, whereas it is said that they are the true church, *veritate entitatis*, but not *moris*; they yield the cause, because the question is not whether they be true and real men and women which are members of the church of Rome; but whether they be members rightly qualified, as to their moral, and supernatural principles which makes them a true church? How can that be a true church, whose head is the Man of sin, &c. who hath all those black and hellish characters belonging to him? Such a church cannot be founded on the 12 apostles; therefore that cannot be a true church, which hath Abaddon and Apollyon for the heads. How can that be a true church, which is so opposite to the true church both head and members?

*Infer.* 3. If the papal antichristian state, be such a body, head and members, as hath been shewed, then we may hence learn, 1. Our danger. 2. Our duty.

1. Our danger if we continue in that church. It must needs be a very dangerous thing for any to continue a member of that church, or to have communion with her: Such are under the energetical influence and seduction of Satan, and the judicial rejection of God, that since they reject the truth in the love of it, they are given up to believe a lie, that they may be damned. They are under the most dreadful commination, Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11. They are a people marked out for utter destruction, as being rejected by him, Rev. xiii. 8. and xvii. 8.

2. We may learn our duty to make haste out of that church. All such as keep up communion with Rome, let them hearken to that call, Rev. xviii. 4. *Come out of her, &c.* The argument is taken from the danger. This separation is no schism, it being a separation from that church, which has apostatized from the faith, and truth of Christ. As soon as ever the people of God came to be awakened, and the light of the gospel began to spring forth, they presently saw their danger if they continued in that church, and immediately performed their duty, and departed from her.

*Infer.* 4. If the papal antichristian state be such a body as hath been shewed, then it should seriously be considered, how any living and dying in the faith and religion of that church can be saved, Rev. xvi. 3. Every living soul died in that sea of ordinances (as some take it) of that church, which is *as the blood of a dead man*; as it was, Exod. vii. 17, 18. when the rivers were turned into blood, all the fish died. The whole religion of the antichristian church is made up of false doctrines, idolatrous worship, superstitious ceremonies, traditions and inventions of men, by which they make void the law of God, Matth. xv. 6. and subvert the truth of the gospel. How any (holding their religion as it is formed by the Man of sin) can be saved in it, I cannot see. In all the descriptions of the Man of sin, the son of perdition, there is nothing that hath any tendency to salvation: Look on the church of Rome and her hierarchy as she is set forth by the Spirit of God, and it is still set forth in the most black and odious colours of a beast with seven heads and ten horns, and by a beast with two horns like a lamb, but speaks like a dragon, Rev. xiii. 1, 2. and 11, 12, &c. and by the great whore that rideth the beast, Rev. xvii. 1, 2. and 6, 7. Here is nothing but mischief and ruin to souls from this church, as set out by those types, as also under the notion of a false prophet, and seducer of the souls of the people to their perdition. Some of the church of Rome have much doubted, whether the pope,  
and

and cardinals, which are the heads and pillars of their church, shall any of them be saved. I shall propound but an argument or two confirm this inference.

1. They which lay the main firefs of their religion, on the rotten foundation of the universal headship of the pope, to whom they give what peculiarly belongs to Christ, supremacy, sovereignty, universality, and infallibility. They who rob Christ of his crown and jewels, and put them on the pope's triple crown for him to wear, and lay the greatest weight on this business, cannot be saved, while they rest there: But so do the Papists: Therefore, &c. The pope *sits in the temple of God, as God*, 2 Theff. ii. 4. and he is believed to have those excellencies which belong to Christ. Bellarmine saith, "The pope is the universal spouse of the church." And August. Beronius saith, "He is the foundation of faith, the cause of causes, and lord of lords." And Baldus saith, "He is the living fountain of all righteousness," &c.

2. They which believe as an article of their religion, that their church, or the pope, the head of it, is above the scripture, cannot be saved in that way; because no man can know certainly where his salvation is to be had, since it is, by their tenets, in the power of the pope, to alter or add, as he shall think fit. The pope takes to himself the authority of Christ, and more than Christ doth exercise,—to make new articles of faith; to set up a new worship in the church, and to impose it upon all upon pain of death, banishment, excommunication, Rev. xiii. 11, 12, 13, &c. This beast, which represents the hierarchy of Rome, exerciseth all the power of the first beast, ver. 12. which was given him by the dragon, ver 4. so that he is Satan's lieutenant and vicar-general, especially in taking such a power and authority above the scripture; and this must be believed as an article of their faith. Let such consider, how they can be saved in that religion.

3. That church which is cast off by God, and must not be measured, as refusing to come under the rule of the word, is such which none can be saved in; but such is the church of Rome, Rev. xi. 2, 3. There that church, head and members, and all the officers, and ordinances, institutions, doctrine, worship and government, are cast out, as false, as having no authority, or stamp of Christ upon them. Though they will plead an interest in Christ, as Matth. vii. 22. yet Christ will utterly disown them; though they will cry *the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, &c.* yet they are cast out, and given to be troden under foot by the Gentiles. In regard

that Rome having apostatized from the religion and pure worship of Christ, hath brought into the church and public worship thereof, Pagan idolatry, under new names, of worshipping of angels, and saints, or dæmons, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. How is salvation to be had in that church which is thus cast off of God, and his pure worship cast off by them. Therefore it is that the churches of Christ hath cast her off; and as Bishop White in his answer to the Jesuit faith, We have cast off the pope, and his teaching, for no other cause, but that we are assured he is Antichrist, and his faith is heresy. If their whole church and worship be cast out by God, as being under no scripture-rule; then the true religion, true faith, true worship, are not to be looked for in them; and by consequence, the salvation of souls is not to be expected from them.

*Infer.* 5. If the pope or the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Rome, be that antichristian state which you have heard set forth, and there is a mystery of iniquity in their religion and worship, and they are under such black marks of reprobation, that do join in communion with them, then it is fit that all Christians should be acquainted with the mystery of iniquity in some measure, and should study, as the grounds of the true Christian religion, so the seeming pretences, and false principles, and abominable practices of the antichristian religion.

1. We should be acquainted with them, lest we be deceived through ignorance, and overtaken with the devices of Satan; which Paul mentioneth, 2 Cor. ii. 11. and that we may be delivered from being plunged in the deeps of Satan, spoken of Rev. ii. 24. Are not the nations deceived by them? Rev. xx. 3. Doth not the world worship the dragon, and bow to the image of the beast, or receive his mark, or have the name of the beast, or the number of his name? Rev. xiii. 3, 4, 15, 16, 17. Do not the kings of the earth commit fornication with the whore? And are not the inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornication? Rev. xvii. 2. And all this because they do not know the impostures of that church in their religion. Surely the Spirit of God would not have set out this church under the notion of the Man of sin, and those several beasts in the Revelation and elsewhere; but that it was intended we should know them to avoid them. How express and punctual is Paul, in setting forth the apostasy of the latter times? 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. He sets out both the way of their deceits and the instruments. 1. He tells of seducing spirits. 2. The doctrine of devils. 3. They speak lies in hypocrisy. 4. They are

are under a seared conscience, and care not what they say or do, to promote the holy catholic church of Rome, as they call her.

2. We should study their mysteries, else (if we should be called to suffer) we shall not be able to suffer on a clear, and comfortable account, as they Rev. xi. 7. and chap. xiii. 7. They suffered because they would not comply with the Man of sin, in his religion and worship, nor conform to them, nor have communion with them, as they did, Rev. xiii. 3, 4, 14, 15.

3. We must know those things, else we shall not be able to join in the triumphant song of Moses and the Lamb, upon the pouring forth the vials on this antichristian state. They *only stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and sing the song of Moses, who have gotten the victory, over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name*, Rev. xv. 2. They are persons well seen in the deceits and impostures of that church.

4. The saints and martyrs could not have born so noble a testimony against the Man of sin, in following the Lamb wherever he went, Rev. xiv. 3, 4. And were and are at open defiance against them, declaring their detestation of their religion and worship, ver. 8, 9, 10. unless they did well know what they did. Indeed, the Papists tell us we need not search into those things. The Rhemists in their annotations, on Acts i. 7. say, it is not needful to search into the times of Antichrist, &c. But Dr Fulk answereth them, That it is necessary for us to know the coming of Antichrist as God hath revealed him. But the ministers of Antichrist would have no enquiry made of him, lest he should be found in their see of Rome, the western Babylon; they would have us be ignorant of this point, and keep us in the dark, lest we should see their frauds. They count it a point not worthy to be studied, but they would keep the world in darkness and ignorance; lest if their impostures should be detected, they would be abhorred, and their whole religion being found to be a mere delusion, it would be an execration. And that will come to pass, by the further discovery of the light of the gospel, by which the prodigious enormities of that church will be manifest to all the world, which is prophesied of, Rev. xvii. 16. *The ten horns—shall hate the whore, and make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.*

5. If the Papacy, the hierarchy of Rome, of which the pope is the head, be such as hath been described by Paul, then there can be no peace with Rome, no communion with

Rome:

Rome: How can there be peace said Jehu to Joram, 2 Kings ix. 22. as long as the whoredoms of Jezebel are so many? What peace can there be with that church which is *the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth?* Rev. xvii. 5. What peace can there be with that body politic, which is the greatest enemy of Jesus Christ upon earth? What peace can there be between the followers of the beast, Rev. xiii. 3, 4, 15, 16, &c. and us adorers, admirers, and the followers of the Lamb? Rev. xiv. 1, 2, 3, 4. They are flatly opposite the one to the other, the one having the mark of the beast in their right hands and foreheads; the other the name of the Father, and of the Lamb (so some copies have it) written in their foreheads, who did own and bid public and open defiance to each other: So that we may say as it is, 2 Cor. vi. 16. *What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* And ver. 14, 15. *What communion hath light with darkness, Christ and Belial,* Christians and Antichristians, truth and falsehood, the church of Rome with the Protestant churches together? Bishop Hall in his book, *No Peace with Rome*, saith, Sooner may God create a new Rome, than reform the old. There was a reconciliation attempted by the emperors, Ferdinand and Maximilian; and Cassander by their appointment drew a project, in which he shewed his judgment, but without success\*.

6. If these things be so concerning the Papacy, as hath been said, then there is matter of admiration and gratitude to all such whom God hath delivered from compliance with, or conformity to, or communion with that church, of which the Pope, which is the Man of sin, the son of perdition, is the head, *whose coming is after the working of Satan,* &c. ver. 9 whose members are under his powerful seduction, and the judicial tradition of God to believe a lie to their own *eternal damnation*, ver. 10, 11, 12. Their condition must needs be most dangerous who are members of that church; and therefore it is the greater mercy to be saved from that seduction which thousands are under, whose names are not written in the *Lamb's book of life*, Rev. xiii. 8. and xvii. 8. They are under the black notes of reprobation:

\* The chief factors of the church of Rome, are bitterly set against all reconciliation. See *Bellarmin. de Grat. et lib. arbit.* He saith, That we embrace this opinion so much the more willingly, by how much it displeaseth our adversaries, and especially Calvin. And *Maldonat.* in *John* vi. was so much abhorring from the religion of the Protestants maintained by Calvin, that he saith, That though what he held was the same opinion with Austin, and others of the fathers, yet he rejected it because it was held by Calvin.

tion: To be saved from being of their communion who worship the beatt, or his image, and to be of that company of the hundred forty-four thousand who are virgins, and follow the Lamb where-ever he goes, is worthy of eternal praises. When we find such as are under the seduction of the Man of sin, the false prophet, and the whore, to be under the most fearful comminations from God, Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11. how they drink of the wrath of God, and that in the presence of the Lord and his holy angels for ever and ever: Is it not matter of very great admiration and praises, that we should be saved from their sin, and so delivered from their plagues.

7. If the church of Rome, of which the pope is the head, be such a body, so corrupt and abominable, as hath been shewed, then it is dangerous and pernicious, to retain any relick of the Man of sin, that false, erroneous, idolatrous church, in doctrine, worship, or government, which they have pretended to be according to the word of God, but have wrested the scriptures to their own destruction, as 2 Pet iii. 16. It is dangerous to retain such customs and usages in the church, whereby we may symbolize with Rome; how fatal several things have been to the public peace of the church, which have been derived from Antichrist is too well known, from the divisions, contentions, and persecutions which have continued to this day. By these very means, the Papacy, together with their religion, have had a party, and kept up an interest among the Protestant churches, and also a favourable respect among many, who have had a secret affection for the pope and his religion. Such will not have the pope to be Antichrist; and they will needs have the church of Rome to be a true church: And that she is the mother-church, and that we ought to return to our mother, with such like. What was the cause that the book of articles of the church of Ireland was called in, but because they declare the pope to be Antichrist, and the church of Rome to be no true church, and that the Lord's day was wholly to be sanctified. So Montague in his *Apello ad Casarem*, said, The pope or bishop of Rome, personally is not the Antichrist, nor yet the bishops of Rome successively. Dr Heylen in his answer to Burton, maintains the same. Christopher Dove, and Robert Shelford were of the like opinion.

8. Hence it follows that the Protestant churches are unjustly charged with schism in departing from Rome. The Papists charge us with schism because we depart from them, and will not hold communion with them; though there

was the most just cause of this departure from them. 1. In regard they are heretical in their doctrine, and obstinately persist in it, against all convictions to the contrary, for there have been attempts made to have healed Babylon, but she would not be healed, Jer. li. 8, 9. therefore forsake her. *Him that is an heretic reject*, &c. Tit. iii. 10. 2. When a church becomes idolatrous in her worship, as 2 Cor. xi. 16. then it is a duty to depart from them that depart from the truth: Upon Jeroboam's defection and the peoples with him from the true worship of God, there was a departure from them, by such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel. The church of Rome became most corrupt and abominable in her worship, else she had not been set out by the whore riding the beast, Rev. xvii. 3. 3. When a church becomes bloody, and tyrannical, and persecuting her members to the death, then there is a just cause of departing from them. Look on the church of Rome set forth by the first and second beast, Rev. xiii. 1, 2,—11, &c. both which make up one Antichrist; see how cruel and bloody that church is: So where it is set out by the whore, Rev. xvii. 5, 6. drunk with the blood of saints, there is signified a just cause of departure from her. 4. When a church groweth wholly corrupt and debauched in her morals, very vicious and scandalous in the lives of governors and members, then depart, 2 Tim. iii. 1,—5. there are about nineteen abominations spoken of, of which many should be guilty, *from such turn away*; though they had a form of godliness, since they did deny the power of it. I will make no apology that I have put your patience so much to it, but this, That the Man of sin, with whom I have had to do, is the most unruly beast that ever was, and hath put the world into a disorder and confusion. And though I have exercised your patience while I have been preaching on this beast; yet I wish and pray that your patience may not be put to it by this beast, as Rev. xiii. 7. But if it shall please God to let loose this beast upon you, my prayer is, that it may be said of you, as it was said of them, ver. 10. *Behold the faith and patience of the saints.*

# S E R M O N VIII.

Mr. V I N C K.

The Protestants did upon just grounds separate from the Church of Rome.

Luke vi. 22. *Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake.*

ONE of the main designs of the doctrine of the gospel is, to unite men one to another, and to tie them together with the strongest bonds and ligaments imaginable. To this purpose, it does not only forbid the doing of any wrong unto others, but it prescribes rules for the curbing of our passions when provoked by them; nay, it peremptorily enjoins, under the severest penalties, that we should forgive the offences done against us, and love the persons of them that do them. And that we might think it our greatest concern thus to do, it combines and gathers all *who have any hope toward God*, into *one body*, which is called *the church*, who are jointly to profess *one faith*, to perform *one worship*, and to serve *one Lord*; the ligaments whereby this body is united and tied together, being the *sacraments*, for this end appointed by Christ, who being the *Lord of all*, is yet pleased more especially to relate to this body as its head, for direction and government, and to influence it by his Spirit for life and motion. Now, it being full as monstrous for one head to have two bodies, as for one body to have two heads; so far forth as any have hoped for salvation by Christ, they have also pretended to belong to that one body, of which he is the head and Saviour.

In these pretensions the church of Rome comes not behind any, but with as much passion, and as little reason as they of old, whom the prophet speaks of, who cried out, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these*, Jer. vii. 4. Nay, so unreasonable are they in arrogating to themselves the privilege of this body, that they challenge, as the Donatists did, to be the whole, and not a part; confounding, for to serve their purpose, things so discrepant as the  
Catholic

Catholic and Romish church, that is, the universal and a particular church. And this I account none of the least reasons to suspect that they have no part nor share in what they so much pretend unto; for it is too apparent that they have not that *mind and spirit that was in Christ*. Now, it is not continuity, but animation that makes the several parts to become one body. And as the same soul that acts in the head, acts in every individual member belonging to it; so the same spirit which was in Christ, is also in all that as living members belong unto him. But alas! where is that meekness and gentleness, that love and charity, which our blessed Saviour so much expressed himself, and so earnestly recommended unto his disciples; nay, which he himself made the test of their really being his, John xiii. 35. Though the church of Rome calls Christ, *Lord, Lord*, yet it is evident they do not his will. They still cry Hosanna to him, and yet really crucify him, at least in his members. They are not the followers of the humble Jesus, but of the proud pharisees, from whom our Saviour foretels that his disciples should suffer; but such sufferings were as little to be declined, as they were hardly to be avoided, being the highway, though a rough one, to bliss and happiness: *Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, &c.*

In which words are remarkable,

1. *Suffering foretold*; in which the *sufferers* are also described.
2. Their *state or condition* declared, or encouragement proposed unto such, *Blessed are ye, &c.*

In the former are three things considerable:

I. What it is that Christ's disciples and followers shall suffer: They shall be *hated, separated, reproached*, and have *their names cast out*.

II. For what cause they shall thus suffer; for *the Son of man's sake*.

III. From whom they shall suffer; from *men*: *When men shall hate you*.

I shall begin with the latter, as being first in the words of the text, and intend to pass it over with some little reflection at present.—*Men* are not here considered as in honour, by reason of the image of God and conformity to him, for so they continued not; but *men* is a term synonymous with *world*, in contradistinction unto them that are chosen out of the world. Nay, those whom God's people frequently suffer most by, are such as make profession of fearing and serving God too. Light is indeed come unto them, but they love darkness, and so become bruised with a double fall. They are, as Jude speaks, *twice dead, dead*

by nature, and by choice and practice. There is no enmity like that of brothers. Our Saviour himself suffered from none so much as from his friend and disciple Judas; and his followers, in all ages since, have endured most from such as profess his name.

But I shall pass this at present, as also the second part, or the state and condition of the sufferers spoken of.

I. What is it which the disciples of Christ suffer. There are four remarkable things foretold which they were to suffer; 1. Hatred. 2. Separation, as not worthy of human society. 3. Reproach. 4. The casting out of their names.

1. *Hatred.* This is the bitter root of the following bitter fruits. There would be no separating; no reproaching them, no casting out of their names, were it not for the hatred they bear unto them. Now, hatred is a dispendency at, and aversion from things or persons as evil; and nothing doth make men seem more hateful to one another, as when they act by a contrary principle; for so far as this principle prevails, they judge not, the affect not any thing alike; but what one calls good, the other calls evil, and the contrary. This must needs be acknowledged to be true in the case of the text. Christ's disciples and the pharisees, his church and their persecutors, are acted by a contrary principle: In the one is the seed of the woman, in the other the seed of the serpent; and where these meet, they will strive and struggle together. Our Saviour assigns this as the true reason why the world hated him, and should hate his disciples after him, because neither he nor they were of the world, John xvii. 14.

Now this hatred, though its seat be inward, and it be many times hidden; yet its effects are outward and obvious, none of all the passions being more active than love or hatred are; and therefore our Saviour had no sooner spoken of the Pharisees hating his disciples, but he presently adds, they will *separate and reproach* you.

2. *Reproaches.* Because I intend not to insist upon them, I shall speak but a word of the reproaches which Christ's followers must bear from the men in my text. Hatred being in their heart, it is no wonder that reviling be in their lips; for *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*; and they must say something to justify the persecutions and mischiefs they heap upon others. Thus they taxed our Saviour himself as a *wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners*, Luke vii. 34. nay, they would not crucify him, till they had charged him with blasphemy. Thus they calum-

niated the apostles as being filled with new wine. Acts ii. 13. for turning the world upside down, and for destroying the law. Neither was it better in the immediately succeeding ages: What did not the Pagan world reproach and upbraid the primitive Christians with? What secret and abominable wickedness did they not charge upon their private meetings to serve God? No epidemical disease, or public calamity beset the empire, or any nation in it, but it was attributed to some wickedness of the Christians. And it had been well if they had suffered from Pagans only; but alas! they suffered no less from brethren, if I may call them so; for a Heathen could observe, That no beasts were so cruel one to another as Christians were. But in this last age of the world we have the dregs of all; the Papists act over again upon the Protestants all the outrages which were ever heaped upon any in the forementioned instances: Their calumnies against their doctrine, their revilings of their worship, their reproaches of their persons, living and dead, I could fill volumes with. *What shall be given unto thee, or what shall be done unto thee, O thou false tongue?* Psal. cxx. 3. But they do not only shoot out their sharp arrows, but discharge their murdering pieces at us; nay, their malice is not confined to, nor satisfied with, the ruin of the body; but as if it were too mean a sacrifice to their fury, they do what in them lies, to destroy the soul too: *They shall separate you, and cast out your names.*

Another fruit of their hatred to the disciples of Christ is, 3. *Separation.* They shall separate you from their company. These last words are added by the translators to complete the sense; but it being as clear without them, I shall take no further notice of them.

Some make the separation here spoken of, to be meant only of a political or civil separation, and their gloss is, They shall banish you, and cast you into prison; as if the imprisoning or banishing of them, or at least declining to trade or converse with them, were all that was intended here.

This must be acknowledged an evil and a mischief which they that obey the commandments of God, and hold the faith of Jesus, have met with, and which was foretold Rev. xiii. 16. that they who would not receive the mark or the name of beast, should not buy and sell. But the word here used, *they shall separate*, hath a further import, and implies a separation from their synagogues and public worship, and is the same with *They shall cast you out of their synagogues*, John xvi. 2. which I rather incline to think is the meaning of this place. The same word is used in the antient canons, when they would

would by their censure suspend any from church-communion; and then they who were thus censured, were afterwards called *abstenti*, denoting their being kept back from church-fellowship; and the censure itself came at length to be called *The lesser excommunication*.

4. *Casting out their names.* Our evangelist explains this best, when he adds, *They shall cast out your names*; as it is said of the blind man who so constantly profest Christ, that *they cast him out*, John ix. 34. And it is to be observed, that *ἐκβάλωσι* or *they shall cast out*, here in the prediction, is *ἐξέβαλον* there, *they did cast him out*; the same word being made use of by either evangelist.

As for casting out their names, it refers to a known custom amongst the Jews, of keeping an exact account of all the names of those who descended from them: Not only were their tribes and families enrolled, but every individual person was enrolled, as by evident places in scripture could be readily made to appear. Now, to have *their names cast out*, or cut off from this catalogue, was to be accounted no longer Jews, or amongst the then people or church of God, but to be reputed thenceforth as uncircumcised, or as one of the Gentiles, that is, out of the pale of the church, and out of the bond of the covenant with God. We might illustrate this from a custom of the Romans; When any among them were to be disfranchized for their misdemeanours, the censor expunged, blotted out, or cut off their names out of the city-rolls; and after that they were not accounted citizens, nor did enjoy their city-privileges. The sum is this, They who would embrace and hold fast the faith delivered by our Saviour, should be so far from meeting with that love and respect which they ought to be entertained with, that they should, on the contrary, be separated and excommunicated, put out and accursed, and that by them who shall take upon them to be the governors of the church. This was fulfilled in the dawning of the gospel day; and it was certainly a great engine whereby men were kept from attending unto the means of their conversion, and caused to shut their eyes against the light that did shine so powerfully around them: And in case it had broken in at any times unawares upon them, it was a most cogent argument to keep them from owning and cherishing of it; for as the apostle observes, John xii. 42. *Many believed on him, yet because of the Pharisees, who swayed most in their sanhedrim, they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of their church; and for this very reason Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night.*

Now,

Now, it is a known rule, That one and the same prophesy may respect divers ages, and be fulfilled in divers times. It is evident, that this prediction intimated here in my text, is no more to be restrained to the apostles themselves, or the church at that time, or immediately after, than any foretelling of suffering persecution in this world is to be, or than any promise of assistance and deliverance whatsoever. It hath been realized indeed, with a witness, in our forefathers days, and in our own. The church of Rome, who pretend to be the only church of God, and spouse of Christ, hath separated us from them, and hath cast out our names; so that this day these words are fulfilled, *They shall separate you, and cast out your names.*

But by reason that as it is not the punishment, but the cause which makes a martyr; so it is not the suffering barely of these things which speaks any to be the true disciples of Christ. Let us therefore enquire,

II. Into the *cause* of the suffering of Christ's disciples. The causes assigned by our Saviour in my text, are either pretended or real;

*First*, The pretended cause is, *They shall cast out your name as evil.* They shall fasten, as much as in them lies, all manner of calumnies upon you; and report of you, not as indeed you are, but as they who hate you would have you thought to be. They will pretend that their separating of you, and not conversing with you, especially in the worship of God, is not what they would willingly have done, but what they were necessitated unto by you, who, as they alledge, have broached new doctrines, and withal receded from ancient customs, &c.

That this is true in either instance, is too apparent; the Pharisees charged the apostles, and the church of Rome do charge the Protestants with whatsoever they think likely to make them odious.

Some of them doubtless do this out of a kind of integrity of their hearts, separating, excommunicating, nay, killing of them, as a deserved punishment for the evil they conceive in them, or to have been committed by them: This proceeds from that blindness and ignorance which is so common unto all in the things of God, but especially as it is further contracted or increased by them, or inflicted by God upon them, for their not embracing *the truth in the love of it, or holding it in unrighteousness.* These may be thought indeed to have believed lies, and that they were persuaded they did God good service in thus despitefully using those that did *worship him in spirit and in truth*, John xvi. 2. iv. 23.

But

But as to others, the supposed evil that Christ's followers are charged with, is but a pretended cause of their being so badly dealt with; not only as they did not deserve it, but also because many of those who so severely inflict these censures, are not so zealous against any opinion or practice as it is evil, or against the truth or revealed will of God, or as it is dishonourable to God, and destructive to the souls of men: For, if their opposition was against any thing as evil, they would oppose all evil, and that in proportion to its evil tendency. He does not truly hate one sin, who does not hate all sins. Hatred, as the philosopher says, is against all of a kind, or against none of that kind. So that I cannot think that the Pharisees who were so notoriously guilty of rapine and extortion, and could *devoir widows houses*, Matth xxiii 14. should strain at the imagined falsity of the apostles doctrine, or the surmised corruption in the gospel-worship, there being such fair footsteps for either; in those very writings which they acknowledged the rule of both: Neither can I believe, that the church of Rome, who can license, without any scruple, stews and whore-houses, and can dispense with rebellion and incest, should set themselves so much against the doctrine of the Protestants, or the way of their worship, because they are false and impious; for then they would be against all impiety, especially amongst themselves. But the true cause of the aversion of the generality of them to our opinions and practices is, because they agree not with their interests and lusts; nor are consistent with their profit and grandeur: Or, if you will,

*Secondly*, The *real* cause is for the *Son of man's sake*. They oppose and persecute the Protestants for Christ's sake, for their respect unto him and his institutions, for their cleaving unto his truths and ordinances. Did they not so much consider what Christ hath enjoined and commanded, but follow their pretended guides with blind obedience, they should be in peace, as when the strong armed man kept the house.

I will not here enlarge on the description of our blessed Saviour, *Son of man*. It is known to be one of the names or titles which he was pleased to describe himself by, who, though he was *God blessed for ever*, vouchsafed to take upon him our nature, and to become man for us; thus condescending to us both in name and thing, that we might know that it was he in whom that prophecy was fulfilled, *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given*, Isai. ix. 6. And by this means he did in the highest manner recommend himself,

self, his truths, his will and worship unto us. It is for his sake, *i. e.* for their love and faithfulness, their respect and obedience unto him, that they who in all ages truly believe in him, do suffer. If the apostles had forbore to preach in his name; if they had observed the ancient but the antiquated rites of the Jewish church, they would not have been persecuted by them: And if the Protestants would not regard the mind and will of God, nor the doctrines and institutions of Christ, but let the church of Rome add or take away at its pleasure, they would not have been in former ages, nor need they now, be cast out by them.

This is that which I shall more strictly confine myself unto;—The church of Rome charge the Protestants with schism, as rending and dividing themselves from the true church, which they say they are.

As to the charge of schism, we may well aver, that of all men they have least reason to charge us with it: They have separated us, and cast out our names; and it is hard to be accused for going from them who put us away, and cast us from them by force. But they serve us as they did the Waldenses, whom they plundered, robbed, and stripped of all they had, and then, by way of derision and contempt called them, The poor men of Lyons, about which city those famous professors of the truth were formerly most numerous.

The matter of fact cannot be doubted; for all the martyrs who have suffered any ways under them, are, in their ordinary course of proceedings, cast out and excommunicated by that church, before they are delivered over to the civil magistrate to be condemned and executed. And where by the favour of laws, or tenderness of princes, the inquisition cannot get them into their hands, the council of Trent anathematizes and curses however; and the bull *de Cæna Domini* goes farther; for in that the pope not only excommunicates all who, in the way which they call heresy, worship the God of their fathers, but he accurses all them too, who do any ways favour them, though it be but by giving civil respect, or a necessary alms unto them; so extensive is their charity!

How different is the spirit of Popery from that of Christ. The meek Jesus, though desired by his disciples to destroy the heretical and schismatical Samaritans by fire, who had treated him inhumanly, would not do it, but rebuked his disciples; but they put Protestants to the most exquisite tortures, and exercise barbarous cruelties upon their bodies, as well as subject them to death by burning.

There

There might be something pleaded for their church censures, were they but the cutting off gangrened and dead members, for the preserving of the rest of the body; and if this were done in obedience unto the apostolical precept of *delivering such unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, &c.* and that they might *put away evil from amongst them*, 1 Cor. v. 5, 13. But what can be said for their interdicting of whole kingdoms, wherein there cannot be supposed fewer thousands, as innocent as any in Nineveh, not knowing their right hand from their left. By which interdicts all divine offices and services are forbidden. None might preach or pray, or administer the sacraments amongst them, while the interdict lasted; the whole region being by it put out of the communion of the church, and all that died therein, during the space, believed by them to be damned for ever. This in England, as Matthew Paris records, lasted six years and a half, in which space, it is thought, there died above six hundred thousand men, women, and children: And must all these perish, because that the king and the pope were at variance with one another? And the poor people, as they had little concern in it, so neither could they intermeddle without rebelling against their sovereign. And what does the casting out of the incestuous person, or the holding of an obstinate sinner as an Heathen or Publican, make for their secluding so many millions of Protestants from their church, and by that means, as they say, putting them into a state of inevitable perdition? Especially when the Protestants, with one consent, do *believe all things which are written in the law and the prophets*, Acts xxiv. 14. which Paul thought a sufficient apology for himself, when he could not receive the traditions of the elders. They believe all that the apostles and evangelists have declared: They willingly embrace the three ancient creeds, accounted by the primitive church sufficient tests of approved Christianity: They desire to live in all good conscience towards God and men; and to give to every one their due in the place which God hath put them.—Neither can we reasonably be charged with obstinacy, as we are very desirous to be informed better in any thing, in which through mistake as men we might have erred. We pray to God daily that he would enlighten us, and give us to see marvellous things in his word. We desire to be thankful unto those whom God is pleased at any time to make instrumental for our further information in any of his truths, or our duties. Now, it is obstinacy only, which is the dead flesh of heresy or schism, and makes that gangrene incurable, and the part affected

affected with it to be sawn off.—Neither are we sceptics; we know whom, and what we believe; and we resolve by the grace of God to continue in it: And if they call our constancy, obstinacy, may they call it so still, rather than we should depart from it. We are loath to pin our faith upon any man's sleeve: This we have a sufficient caveat against, Gal. i. 8. *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached, let him be accursed;* and therefore we cannot receive any thing upon the bare topic of authority, without enquiring into the merit of the cause, and examining whether the thing propounded be right or wrong.

I shall now more particularly consider our suffering for the Son of man's sake. And if we have Christ's cause and honour on our side in those very things for which they separate us, and cast out our names, we may be still reckoned amongst his disciples; and the church of Rome as well as the Jewish church, may be justly reputed among the persecutors here foretold of.

And this we may deduce from the following scheme:

1. It is for the truth of Christ; the doctrine owned, preached, and recommended by him.
2. It is for the purity of his worship; because we would serve God according to his will, and not according to their will-worship.
3. It is for his authorities sake; because we dare not take the government from off his shoulders, nor pay that respect unto any frail man, which is only due unto him who is God blessed for ever: Or, if you will, it is because we dare not worship the beast.

To sum up all in one; it is for the vindication of Christ in all his offices, that we endure these indignities at their hands.

1<sup>st</sup>, It is for the *truths of Christ*. The difference between us and the church of Rome, in matters of faith is most important: It is indeed so great, that we acknowledge, as they separate us, so we are most willing to be separated; for *what fellowship can light have with darkness? and what concord or communion hath Christ with Belial?* 2 Cor. vi. 14. It is true, we would not for every mispersuasion in the things of religion part with any ones communion. Through frailty, and different measures and means of knowledge, men may frequently differ from others in their opinions; and although every truth is worth the embracing, yet every truth is not of like importance. There are, by the confession of all, some fundamental truths, and by consequence there  
must

must be some fundamental errors. It is a metaphorical epithet taken from buildings; for as a building cannot stand, if the foundation be removed, so the church, which is called the house of God, cannot stand, if it be removed from those saving truths upon which, as a rock Christ hath founded it; and therefore the apostle, who so frequently blames the judging and condemning one another in lesser matters, yet would have us to *reject an heretic, after the first or second admonition*, Tit. iii. 10.

Now we cannot be justly charged by the church of Rome with any positive error that can so much as strike at the foundation: Nay, she believes what we believe concerning God; one in essence, three in persons: She acknowledges with us the person, natures, suffering, resurrection and ascension of Christ, and all the other articles of the creed. She charges us only with negatives, because we cannot admit all such doctrines as she injuriously obtrudes upon us as matter of faith: This is indeed the apple of contention betwixt us; and because we dare not allow and approve of every dictate of the pope, or definition of the Roman church, as an article of God, we stand accursed by them.

I shall point out some few instances instead of many:

1. Concerning *the scripture*. Do we believe the scriptures are a rule for life and manners? So do they: But what they give with the one hand, they take away with the other, in that they make traditions, and the determinations of their church, necessary to be received with the reverence that scripture is to be received: So that the scripture, which in word they dare not deny to be the rule; in deed they make it nothing less, defaming it what they can, as short, imperfect, and obscure; nay, forbidding the reading, or having of it in a vulgar tongue, where they may. Whereas we may well aver, that no art or science whatsoever was so fully and plainly taught by any book in the whole world, as our Christian-calling, and the true art of living and dying in the faith of Christ, and in the favour of God, is taught us in his word; the things in it that are *hard to be understood*, being matters of less import to the welfare of our souls. As for those truths whereby life and immortality is brought to light, there need not so much glosses and commentaries to understand them by, as to bring an humble and teachable mind unto them.

2. Concerning *the mediatorship of Christ*. We believe that our Saviour Christ is the *Mediator betwixt God and man*: They say that they believe the same too; and because scripture is so express concerning it, they dare not deny but that

he is the only Mediator: For the apostle says, as well that there is but one Mediator, 1 Tim. ii. 5. as he says, that there is but one God, and Jesus. And yet for all this the church of Rome can give away Christ the Mediator's place with a nice distinction at one blow, assigning new advocates unto us, as often as they please to canonize any. And lest it should be too much for our blessed Saviour to be our Mediator by his redemption, they have set up another *propitiatory sacrifice* besides that at his passion, which their *priests do offer every day for the living and for the dead*: Nay, they will not let *his blood purify us from our sins*, but have found out a purgatory, in which our souls must be purged by their own sufferings after death.

3. Concerning *grace*. We say with the apostle, that we are *saved by grace*, Eph. ii. 8. which the Papists will not deny in downright terms, but they will add something to it, which shall make this grace to be no grace before they have done; either interposing the prævision of our good works without grace in the purpose of God before the world began, or some good disposition in us, exciting God to bestow his grace upon us. Which grace being well improved by us, meriteth glory, as they say, at his hands for us. Whosoever pleases to search this, will find, that there was never a prouder opinion held by any of the children of men than this is; hence flow not their satisfactory works only, by which they pay sufficiently unto God whatsoever is owing unto his justice by them; but they hold also works of supererogation, whereby they deserve more than they need for themselves, or know well what to do with, and therefore they put it into the treasury of the church, for the avail of those who by money and masses can take it out. The Pharisee was modest who said in the height of his boasting, *Lord, I thank thee*, Luke xviii 11. If any of them would speak this opinion out, he would say, Lord, thou mayest thank me.

I will pass by multitudes of instances of the like nature, and will content myself only with these, as being such as I judged most material, and such as respect the very foundation; and therefore their errors concerning them must of necessity be of very bad consequence. For,

1. Scripture is the foundation of the doctrine of salvation, and the church is said in this respect to be *built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles*, Eph. ii. 20. that is, the church is built upon the doctrine which was delivered by the apostles and prophets; a good parallel to understand that so much controverted saying of our Saviour by, *Upon this*

*this Rock I will build my church*, Matth. xvi. 18. to be meant of Christ's building his church upon the doctrine, and not upon the person or succession of St Peter.

2. Our Saviour Christ is the foundation of our salvation itself, in that he purchased it by his death, and prepares and preserves it by his life; in which respect the apostle tell us, that none can lay any other *foundation than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. iii. 11.

3. Grace is the foundation of the application of this salvation, in that all the benefits which Christ hath purchased for us, and all the works which answerably thereunto he works by his Spirit within us, are all founded upon grace, upon which only they depend, the hearts of believers being hence said to be *established by grace*, Heb. xiii. 9.

Now, if they undermine or take away these foundation-truths from us, let them take all: It is however observable that the Protestants opinions in these cases must needs be safe: For surely neither the word of God, nor the Son of God, nor the grace of God, can be reasonably challenged with any insufficiency, so as to need the additions and inventions of men to make them successful, in that especially which they are chosen, and appointed unto by God. If God thought his word to be sufficient to enlighten us, his Son to redeem and intercede for us, his grace sufficient to sanctify and keep us unto salvation we are content with his choice and allotment, and do not envy others who pretend to have more: But it is to be feared that they who grasp at more, do lose all. And we would rather have our names cast out by them, for not adding to the word of God, than that for our additions unto it *God should add unto us the plagues that are written in it*, Rev. xxii. 19.

Nor may we be taken so much with the truths, which, in these and other particulars, the church of Rome do retain, as that for their sake we should swallow the errors which they mix with those verities; and that rather than to be separated from their communion, we might subscribe or assent to all the other articles that are proposed by them; that were *to do evil that good might come of it*. Besides, the retaining of some truths, stands them in good stead to put off many errors the better by. Few could vend defective wares, if they did not shew some that were true made together with them. We know that false or counterfeit money will hardly go off alone; neither is poison ordinarily taken singly, or by itself, but mixed with wholesome food; by which means it deceives the sooner, and spreads the farther.

Were there then nothing but this, that we must believe all that is determined, or that shall be determined by the church of Rome, for they have lately made, and may still make new articles of faith, or else we must be accursed by them; we are rather to undergo all their separations and excommunications, than to assent to untruths, or seem to believe lies. Whosoever they be that propose any thing to be believed by us, we may justly expect that they should prove one of these two things unto us. Either,

1. That the article proposed by them to be believed is part of the faith once delivered unto the saints: Or,
2. That there may be now a new faith.

The former of these, as to the points in controversy, they will never be able to prove; and therefore they speak so slightly of the scripture, and have recourse to their traditions, fathers, and councils.

As for the latter, *viz.* the making of a new faith; whosoever makes a new faith, must make a new hope for us too; and from those who propound another way unto us, we may expect another heaven; for God's heaven must be attained in God's way. This new faith was attempted and propounded by some of them, witness the *Evangelium aeternum* which the friars made, and the pope favoured: In which new gospel they affirmed, that the gospel of Christ was not the gospel of the kingdom, and that the Old and New Testament had lost their force, or would soon lose it. The time they set is now expired above four hundred years since. But this device not succeeding, they have since been more reserved and cunning, on the one hand decrying scripture and revealed truths as much as they can, and on the other hand magnifying those things whose truths and goodness, if they have any, are only derived from their churches recommendation. Cardinal Hosius affirmed, That were it not for the church's authority, the scriptures were no better than Æsop's fables. *O my soul, come not thou into their secret; and unto their assembly mine honour be not thou united,* Gen. xlix. 6.

2dly, We are separated for Christ's *instituted worship's sake.* They separate us and cast out our names, because we desire to keep to the purity and simplicity of worship, so often commanded by God, and so highly recommended by Christ; and they, on the other side, do add in matters of divine worship according to the invention of their own hearts, and the humours of every fanciful pope. Now, this we are the more careful about, because that they who worship any thing besides the true God, or who worship him  
in

in any other way than according to his own appointment, are, in the second commandment, declared by God to be haters of him, in a more eminent manner than any other sinners whatever. We find also will-worship to be such a leaven as leaveneth the whole lump, and makes the whole of our devotion but one continued provocation in God's account. Those that *swear by the Lord, and by Malcham*, Zeph. iii. 5. are esteemed as if they had not sworn by God at all, but only by Malcham. As wicked as Ahaz was, he is not charged for not retaining the altar of the Lord, but for bringing in another altar from Damascus, and placing it beside God's altar, 2 Kings xvi. 18.

One would think that the washing of hands, and the wearing of broad phylacteries, were matters so indifferent as that they could not be displeasing unto God, especially when commanded by the church, and recommended too by tradition; yet our Saviour assures us it made all the rest of the Pharisees worship *vain* and unacceptable, Mat. xv. 9.

Worship is indeed the marriage-duty which the church of God is to pay to none but him who is married unto her, and he hath declared himself to be a jealous God, who will not give his glory unto another; hence idolatry is often called adultery, and a going a whoring from God. As amongst men adultery is a sufficient cause of divorce, so God gives not up with any church or people for any sin, so much as for idolatry. This is the sin for which God says unto his professing people, *Lo-ammi, Ye are not my people*, Hos. i. 9. If we must then either worship what, and as the church of Rome pleases, or depart from her; or God depart from us because we worship him not according to his prescribed will, it is easy to determine which we should most dread. Their censure of excommunication is lighter than the small dust in the balance, if compared with his sentence of condemnation.—I know that this harlot, like the adulterous woman, Prov. xxx. 20. *wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness*: But, if she gives or requires religious or divine worship to be given unto any creature, she is guilty of idolatry, else there is no such thing as idolatry in the world; for this is confessedly the worst kind of false worship, and that for which God gave the Heathens over to such *strong delusions, and vile affections*, Rom. i. 25, 26.

I shall not insist upon the particulars of divine worship, which is either internal, the worship of the heart; or external, the worship of the body. Faith and hope are the homage which the heart pays unto God: It believes in him,

as true and faithful; and hopes in him, as good and gracious in the highest degree. Adoration and service are the tribute which the body owes unto God. Now, I could easily evince, that the church of Rome gives any or all of these to creatures; for whilst they pray to saints, they must hope and believe in them; for *how can they call upon them in whom they have not believed?* Rom. x. 14. And whilst they prostrate themselves before their very images, whilst they build altars and churches, and keep festivals, or observe days unto them, they give them whatsoever the outward man is able to perform to God himself; yet all this worship they think they can justify by calling it by another name *δουλεία*. Not to insist upon that which hath been often proved, that *δουλεία* and *λατρεία* are promiscuously used, and if there be any difference *δουλεία* imports the more servile offices of the two. Alas! the common people break the cobweb thread of such nice distinctions, which they understand not, and fall into downright idolatry. But that worship which they acknowledge to be divine, and due to God himself, they give to the *cross*—to the *host*—to the *Virgin Mary*.

1. To the *cross*. Aquinas says, that the cross may be adored with divine adoration, because we put the hope of our salvation in it; and to that purpose he cites an hymn of their church, which calls the cross *Our only hope* \*.

Not to speak of crosses as they are painted or carved, unto which they give the same honour, though, it is more than probable, that they do not so much as resemble the cross upon which Christ suffered. But although we were to grant, that the true cross upon which Christ suffered may be worshipped, which we abhor, yet they may be mistaken in the wood of the cross; and when they worship a piece of ordinary wood, themselves must grant they are idolaters. But supposing they should not be mistaken, it is a wonder they should have such a veneration for the cross, spear and nails by which Christ suffered, whilst all other Christians have the other instruments of his suffering, as Judas and Pilate, deservedly in so great an execration.

2. To the *host*. They adore the host, that is, the consecrated bread in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and that with such a worship as they would give to God or Christ himself. And the council of Trent do accurse all that think this ought not to be done †. It is strange what they say, that a priest should make his Maker; and stranger still, that as soon as he is made, he should fall down and  
worship

\* Aquin. quest. 25. art. 4. Bonavent. 3 sent. dist. 9. quest. 4.

† Concil. Trident. sess. 13. cap. 5.

worship the workmanship of his own hands. This made Averroes say, that he never saw so foolish a sect of religion as the Christians were, who with their own teeth devoured the God they had adored. The best plea they use to excuse themselves from being idolaters, proves them worse than Cannibals; for these devour men like themselves, but the Papists do devour the flesh of the Son of God.

It is not my intention to speak unto that monstrous and truly senseless opinion of *transubstantiation*; but supposing it to be true, yet the church of Rome, holding the *intention* of the minister to be necessary towards the efficacy of every sacrament \*; what a miserable danger of idolatry must all the people be in? for unless the priest whilst he speaks these five transubstantiating words, *Hoc enim est corpus meum*, do intend by them to change the bread into the body of Christ, then there is no change wrought. They certainly cannot tell the mind of the priest; and if he be not intent upon that business, all that worship that host must be gross idolaters.

3. To the *Virgin Mary*. They call the worship they give unto her *ὑπερδουλεία*, making it a middle sort betwixt the other two formerly mentioned; but they might call it, if they pleased, *ὑπερλατρεία*; for they attribute more unto her than unto Christ himself: Nay, they petition her to *command* her Son by her motherly authority, little considering that she herself called him *God her Saviour*, Luke i. 47.

Now, though this, and much more which might be said, do very plainly prove that their worship hath got the plague-spot of idolatry upon it, and therefore that it ought not to be meddled with; yet they are so devoted unto it, that they have commanded all such passages as speak for adoration to be due or given only to God, to be expunged; nay, the very second commandment hath not escaped them, but they have put it out of the number of the commandments, that they of their communion might not be self-condemned when they reflect upon it. I know that some amongst them do sew other fig-leaves together to hide this their nakedness, but in vain; for how can there be a subordinate religious worship, unless there be a subordinate Deity too? There are, and ought to be, degrees of civil respect, given unto men, according to the various degrees of worth or authority in the objects unto which it is paid; but the honour or worship of God, which is due unto him, can no more be shared by the creature, than his infinite essence and majesty from which it flows. Neither will it serve their

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\* Concil. Trident. sess. 7.

turn, that they say they do not worship his image with the same mind and affection wherewith they worship himself; no more than if an adulterers should plead, that though she prostitutes her body unto others, yet she does it not with the same degree of affection wherewith she embraces her husband only. Gregory de Valens, to excuse this sin, says, There is a lawful as well as an unlawful idolatry, and acknowledges that they do use the former. We shall take his confession that they are idolaters; but neither he nor any other can ever prove such a contradiction as a lawful idolatry. Well may they hold concupiscence to be no sin, who hold any idolatry to be lawful.

We can meet with no such distinctions, nor perceive any ground for them, in all the word of God; but this we find, that there is *no agreement betwixt the temple of God and idols*, 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. and that where idolatry is, we are bidden to depart and be separate. Whatsoever then we do or suffer in this cause, it is for *the Son of man's sake*, who himself hath taught us to answer all objections, and to repel all temptations unto this sin, by alledging, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, Matth. iv. 10. and by his beloved disciple hath bidden us *to keep ourselves from idols*, 1 John v. 21.

3dly, It is for *Christ's authority and sovereignty's sake* that we are separated, and have our names cast out by the church of Rome. Would we but magnify their usurped power, we might swear, curse and blaspheme, commit whoredom and incest, and what not? and yet be accounted true sons of their church. Had St. Paul but cried up their great Diana, the Ephesians had not been offended with him; had he been otherwise as vicious as he was virtuous, or as profane as he was holy. We are willing for to obey them that *have the rule over us in the Lord*: But still so as that we may keep and maintain our fealty intire unto him who is over all. We are ready to submit to governors under him in church and state: But we must remember that we and they too are under him. The legislative and sovereign power is incommunicably in Christ, and cannot be parted with by him. Who should give laws to bind our inward man, but he that can search and try it, and can take cognizance of the performance or breach of his law by it, and can punish or reward as he finds cause?

Neither does the infallibility which the church of Rome assumes, less derogate from the honour which is due unto Christ, it being a jewel of his crown. I shall not enquire where the now Roman church do make the subject of this infallibility

infallibility (for they are not agreed upon it amongst themselves) whether it resides in the pope, or in a general council; or if the pope be infallible, whether he be so in matters of faith, or in matters of right only. We deny either, to one, or to all of them. Fallibility cannot be removed out of the mind, no more than mortality from the body. They go *æquis passibus*, and are both fixed to that state which all men are born in, and they cannot put either of them off, no more than humanity itself. Nay, could there be an universal, or truly œcumenical council, which there never was since the apostles times; yet every member of that council being but fallible, the council itself could not be infallible. Not to mention any particulars, which might be instanced in, which though determined by councils and popes, yet are antiquated, and rejected by the Papists themselves.

In obedience then unto Christ, it is that we dare not thus become servants unto men. We may not believe and disbelieve as they please. Nay, we cannot do it if we would: For the will hath no such power over the understanding, as to make it think or believe what it lists to be true or false. The will can set the understanding upon acting on what object it pleases, but it cannot make the understanding think what it pleaseth concerning any object. Now this makes the government of the Romish church to be the most insupportable tyranny that the world hath ever known. Other tyrants have been content with their dominion over their vassals bodies and estates: Nothing will satisfy these, but to domineer over the souls of men too; the *souls of men are reckoned amongst their merchandise*, Rev. xviii. 13. And well may they be so: For the greatest traffick amongst them is for mens souls.

And whereas God declares that he gives us *his commandments for our good always*, Deut. vi. 24. though he hath an indisputable and uncontrollable right over us, yet he commands us nothing barely that he might exercise his dominion and absolute power; but all his institutions and appointments are such, as in their own nature are advantageous to us. There is nothing that accomplishes and perfects man more than holiness and the image of God; which his injunctions, in every instance, do tend only to promote.

But alas! what are men the better for multitudes of observations enjoined amongst the Romanists? They themselves cannot say that there is any goodness in them, but only what they derive from the authority that enjoins them: And if that authority should forbid them, or command

other things contrary unto, or at least divers from them, they would then be reputed of another nature by such who contend so eagerly for them: Though we have reason to believe that they call good, evil; and evil, good; yet that they can make evil to be good, or good to be evil, is incredible unto us. Yet these pitiful little things, which they can make for good or bad at their pleasure, they are more earnest in, than for all the great things in the law. Transgressions against the law of God written in our very hearts and natures, and transcribed thence into our bibles, meet with little or no censure among them: But to doubt of any of their churches definitions, or to disobey any of her commands, in those things which never came into God's heart to enjoin, is amongst them an unpardonable sin. So that as men have been observed to love their books, the issue of their brain and studies, more than their children, the fruit of their bodies: These men dote upon their own inventions and imaginations, more than upon any thing, though by God himself recommended unto them.

And as it ordinarily happens, the misery of the people is attended by the iniquity of their leaders: For is this to become *all things unto all men*, 1 Cor. ix. 22. to make their flock become whatsoever they please unto them? Is this to exercise their power *for edification*? 2 Cor. x. 8. Does it not impeach the wisdom of God, and the faithfulness of Christ, to make more things necessary to be believed and practised than were commanded us in the word, or told us by the Son of God? Is it not against the rule of charity to lay such heavy yokes upon others, as they would not have, were they dissenters, imposed upon themselves? Does it not occasion dissimulation and hypocrisy in men to require of those in communion with them, to affirm or deny, to practise or forbear in the things of God, every thing according to the humour of their present rulers, and especially upon such severe penalties? Formerly *whosoever confessed with their mouth the Lord Jesus, and believed in their hearts that God had raised him from the dead, might be saved*, Rom. x. 9. And though this was somewhat enlarged in the creed (commonly called the Apostles Creed) what is that to so many volumes of decrees and councils, which the church of Rome enforces a submission unto?

Paul, who had *the care of all the churches upon him*, especially he had *the gospel of the uncircumcision committed unto him*, having undoubted apostolic authority, would not prescribe to the church of Rome, whether all should observe a day or no, or whether they should all eat flesh or no, though

no pretensions of uniformity would be wanting on the one side or on the other. Nay, he was so far from imposing any unnecessary burden, that he commands his Galatians to *stand fast in their liberty*, Gal. v. 1. Were there more of his spirit in the world, we might have less shew, but more substance in religion.

It is a sorry comfort that is left us, that notwithstanding the churches commands, we may think the things commanded us as indifferent in themselves as we will, provided we do but observe them on the account of their church's injunction. For whilst we are pinched, and perplexed with fears of the unlawfulness of their additions, we are apt the more to suspect that church to be but a step-mother unto us, who will cast us out of her care and family for such things about which, being indifferent, she might without prejudice relax her commands: But we finding that our Father hath determined or commanded otherwise, cannot yield her our obedience in them. Is not this, as much as lies in that church, *to destroy them for whom Christ died?*

It is our unspeakable comfort in the mean while, that he whom we serve, and who is our Prince and Saviour, hath a goodness towards us, answerable to his power over us: The one without the other would but speak us as miserable as now we may be happy. Christ in his commands did not enjoin us all, which as God he might have done; but he commanded us such things only which we, as men, could bear, and might be benefited by.

As for the power which the pope assumes unto himself, to dispense with the laws of God; it is far above what our blessed Redeemer assumed, who professed that *he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it*, Matth. v. 17. But thus the pope fulfils what was prophesied concerning him, that he *should oppose and exalt himself above all that was called God*, 2 Thess. ii. 4.

Yet this opinion of the pope's or church's authority, is such a darling opinion amongst them, that could we believe and practise all that the church propounds, or commands at present, unless we will become such voluntary slaves as to let our ears be bored, and hencetorth never to question their dictates, nor disobey their future commands, it would not avail us towards any communion with them: "For, "saith Bellarmine, whosoever will not be fed by Peter, that "is, learn of him and his successors (the popes) as judges "and determiners what he is to take for matter of faith, and "what is the sense of the scripture, is none of Christ's sheep \*."

And

\* De verbo Dei, lib. 3. cap. 5. sect. 4.

And the very form of their church (which makes it Antichristian as much as any thing) consists in this manner of government. This is the center of unity; from the pope as ordinary pastor of the universal church, as from the head, all life and motion is conveyed unto every individual member.

But suppose this authority or power to be more diffused, and to be subjected not in the pope alone, but with his consistory, or council; yet we cannot think that they will ever yield ought unto us, had we truth or right never so much on our side: For whilst they hold their church to be infallible, and that she cannot decree amiss in any matters of faith, or practice, we can never rationally hope for any redress. For so long as they maintain their churches infallibility, they will not alter nor rescind any one thing, were it to save the whole world; for if they do, their churches infallibility is gone for ever; and it is by that craft they have their wealth.

This then being the case between us, and the church of Rome, that she hath separated us, and cast out our names, not for any opinion or practice that she can charge us with contrary to the word of God, or the duty of Christians; but rather for keeping *the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus*; we may rejoice and be exceeding glad, Matth. v. 11, 12. that we are thus reviled and persecuted *for the Son of man's sake*: For not only our reward shall be great in heaven, but here on earth too. For as our Saviour found the blind man after he had been cast out for confessing him, John ix. 35. and imparted unto him a more full knowledge concerning himself; so Christ hath found the Protestant churches, and afforded them his presence and care, communicating his light and love unto them; and nothing is more to be bewailed than that they have not been answerable unto such mercy towards them. We may truly say, that God hath turned their curse into a blessing unto us: That *brutum fulmen*, their thunderbolt of excommunication, hath not hurt one hair of our heads, much less hath it entered into our souls. And as the excommunication of the Jewish sanhedrim, denounced against Christ's disciples, brought them so much nearer unto their Lord and Master, and alienated the Jews themselves, removing them so much farther from the kingdom of heaven: So do all unjust censures unite us to the apostles, &c. by this conformity with, and participation of their sufferings.

As for what the church of Rome doth so frequently triumph

triumph in, and thinks to scare us with, viz. *That out of the church there is no salvation*: It is to be considered,

1. This is true indeed of the catholic church. Taking it not as they do, for all them, and only them that are under the pastorship of the pope, but for all the real and living members of Christ: For they only are truly his body, that are enlivened by his Spirit. Thus the apostle joins them together, Eph. iv. 4. *There is one body, and one Spirit*; and elsewhere he says, that unless the *Spirit of Christ be in you, you are none of his*, Rom. viii. 9. As every member of the body, and only the members of that body are acted by the same soul; so is it in the mystical body of Christ too. And it is the concern of all to obtain *the Spirit of Christ*, and to live *the life of Christ*, without which they cannot obtain salvation by Christ, who is the Saviour only of his body.

2. We acknowledge, that it is every ones duty to join himself unto, and not causelessly to depart from a visible church that professeth the faith, and keepeth the institutions of Christ: Every one ought to enquire where it is *that this great Shepherd feedeth, and maketh his flock to rest*; and every needless departing from such a church, does endanger salvation, in that it makes a man truly guilty of schism, which is a great sin against charity, so highly recommended unto us: As also, in that such an one withdraws himself from those societies and meetings unto which Christ hath promised his presence, Matth. xviii. 20. and God bestows his blessing.

3. But where this cannot be obtained, or is not sinfully neglected or refused, one may be saved without being joined to any visible church whatsoever. If a Pagan, or a Jew, that is imprisoned in a country where the Christian religion is not professed, being by reading or conference, through the goodness of God, brought to the knowledge of the truth, and to profess it, living answerably unto it, though he should die before he come to enjoy church-communion, we have no reason to doubt of his salvation; our Saviour having told us, *That whosoever believeth in him hath eternal life*, John vi. 40.

But more particularly as to the church of Rome, (that is such as are united in subjection and obedience unto that see, and do acknowledge the Pope their universal pastor;) when we call them a church, we mean no more than that they are a society or company of men who make profession that they are Christians. Thus the Laodiceans are called a church, Rev. iii. 14. though they were *wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked*; and we do not read of a sound part  
amongst

amongst them. Thus God himself calls the ten tribes his people, after their defection, by reason of circumcision which they yet retained, and their being the offspring of Jacob. In this sense soundness of faith is no more essential to a church, than health is to a man: And as a man that hath the plague or leprosy is still a man, though to be shunned; so they may be thus a church, though by all means to be forsaken. But as they themselves take a church for a company of true believers joined together in communion, so they are no church, their faith being far from *the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

As for the *succession* they so much stand upon, and a lawful ministry only to be found amongst them; no church in the Christian world hath ever had so many interruptions, sufficient to destroy, according to their own principles, the lawfulness of their ministry. How many schisms hath there been in that church? one of which lasted about fifty years; in which space there was not one person in all their communion but was excommunicated by one pope or other; not to mention the simony and heresy which some of them were so notoriously guilty of; and any of these are sufficient to break the chain of succession amongst them: For I hope they will not allow an excommunicated person to have a power of ordination.

Besides this, they who are ordained by any amongst them, not being ordained to the work of a minister, to preach, or feed the flock of Christ, or to serve him in the holy things of his own institution, but to sacrifice the body of Christ for the living and for the dead; how can they be gospel-ministers? This certainly is not a gospel-ministration, nor hath so much as a shew of it, but is rather a repetition of the Jews cruelty.

But to prevent further objections and mistakes, we grant,

1. That the church of Rome was a very famous church, whose *faith was spoken of throughout the whole world*, Rom. i. 8. Thus the seven churches of Asia, at least some of them, were eminent and praise-worthy: But they can challenge no privilege from what they have been, lest the Jews themselves, who were once the only church and people of God, come in with their pretensions too. There is no greater stench than that which comes from a human body, when the soul is once withdrawn; nor is there any thing more abominable in God's account, than that church or society from whom the Spirit of truth is departed.

2. We grant that the church of Rome had precedence before all other churches: But I would not be mistaken;

it had precedence before them, but for many centuries no superiority over them; and this precedence which they had, was only because Rome was the imperial city, and seat of the empire. And it is most likely that for this cause the epistle to the Romans was put before all the other epistles; the place in which that church was gathered, and the persons probably of which it did consist, being more eminent and conspicuous than others: But when Constantinople became the seat of the emperor, and was called New-Rome, it contested for that very precedency; and to this purpose it is remarkable, that the patriarchates and dioceses into which the church-government was then divided, did answer to the partitions and divisions under the civil governors in that empire; which indeed did make the ladder for the bishop of Rome to climb unto this height by.

As for their pretensions to the *pope's universal pastorship*, and superiority over all churches, they had need to produce an authentic patent for it: What they have already shewn, makes nothing for their purpose. But I shall wave any further discourse upon that subject, because it is out of my sphere at present; as also, although we should grant the church of Rome all her pretensions, &c. yet upon supposition,

1<sup>st</sup>, That she is corrupted in her doctrine and worship.

2<sup>dly</sup>, That she excludes and anathematizes all that do not join in those corruptions with her; we may satisfy ourselves in being parted from them, and answer all that they can say, with these two conclusions;

1. God never did require of us to join with any person or church in their sins; much less that we should sin in order to the obtaining of salvation at his hands. God's rule is, that we should *not do evil that good may come of it*. And were the communion with their church never so useful, yet if it cannot be had without sinning, it must not be had at all. If the terms or conditions of communion with them have any thing of sin in them, they had as good tell us that we should fly in the air, or count the sands on the sea-shore, and in case we did not, they would not receive us into their communion; or that being in, they would cast us out. For such things as are morally impossible, as an assent to any error, or a consent to any false worship, must needs be, are as unreasonably required of us, as any thing that is naturally impossible could ever be. And if on this account there be a rent from them, the fault is in them that require such things at our hands, as, being contrary to the mind and will of God, cannot be done by us.

2. It is sometimes necessary to forsake a visible church; yea, it may be necessary to believe and act directly contrary to the authority of the present church. Thus the Jews were bound to believe our Saviour to be the Messias, and to hear and obey him in all things, though they were forbidden so to do by the high-priests and rulers, who determined concerning Christ that he was a seducer and a blasphemer: Yet what would not the church of Rome give to have so clear and full a testimony for her definitive power in all controversies, as that Jewish church had derived unto it from God himself? Deut. xvii. 8, 9.

But God never parted with his sovereignty which he hath over all men; and where his mind and will is evident, that must be a law paramount unto us, though it should be never so much gainsaid by any other. All other superiors are subordinate unto him, who is the only Lord in chief; nay, *King of kings, and Lord of lords*, Rev. xix. 16. And as those soldiers do but their duty, who out of a sense of their sworn allegiance to their prince, will not join with their commander in the betraying of a fort or town; so, if we dare not betray the truths of God, nor the souls of men unto the will of any whomsoever, we doubt not but that God does approve of our fidelity unto him, and will say unto us at the last, *Well done, good and faithful servants.*

And thus I have gone through some of those many things which we have to plead for our separated condition from the church of Rome, whom we have so long, so undeservedly suffered under. But though they have nothing for us but execrations and curses, fire and faggot, yet let us return our bitterest lamentations over them, and heartiest prayers for them. It is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, that so many millions of precious souls are walking *in paths which lead to the chambers of death*. Oh, that we could pluck them as *brands out of everlasting burnings*. One means only I would caution against, *viz.* Our becoming theirs in hope to make them ours. I might observe how God hath blasted all such endeavours, and that they have more strengthened theirs hands, and weakned ours, than all the weapons or arguments that ever were used by them: and above all, God hath expressly commanded us *to come out of her, and not to partake of her sins*, Rev. xviii. 4. But if by our faithful instructing, our meek, charitable, and holy living, we can gain any of them, we shall *hide a multitude of sins*, James v. 20. and *our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.*

*Application.* In the mean time, if we should suffer still by them for well-doing, the text affords us considerations enough to sweeten such a suffering condition unto us.

1. In that it is but from men: *When men shall hate you.* Now we know there is an *utmost* that men can do. It is but to the body, and it is but in this world.

2. It is for *the Son of man's sake* that we thus suffer; and if he had required greater matters of us, would we not have done them? I am sure that he hath deserved them at our hands: Besides, these *do turn for a testimony* unto us of the truth of his doctrine, whose words we find so exactly fulfilled amongst us unto this day: Not to speak of *the consolation which shall abound by Christ in all them in whom the sufferings of Christ do abound*, 1 Cor. i. 5.

3. Christ hath pronounced such sufferers blessed; *Blessed are ye.*

(1.) It is Christ's judgment on our case and condition. And he, we may truly say then, sees not as man sees. What blessedness in the opinion of men can there be to be *hated, separated, reproached?* &c. But,

(2.) It is not a bare opinion, that we are blessed, but it is Christ's effective sentence. Christ doth make them blessed whom he pronounces to be so; and he can make a blessed persecution. *If he bless, who can curse?* or if they do, he can turn their curfings into blessings. Well may we then conclude with the prayer of the Psalmist, *Lord, let them curse, but bless thou*, Psal. cix. 28.

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## S E R M O N IX.

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Mr. L E E.

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The visibility of the true Church preserved  
by CHRIST.

Mat. xvi. 18. *And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

**O**UR blessed Lord being within the territories of Cæsarea Philippi, near Lebanon and the fountains of Jordan,  
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dan, where Philip the tetrarch of Ituræa and Trachonitis had his royal seat, was pleased to put two questions to his disciples: 1. *Whom do men suppose me to be?* 2. *Whom, more especially, do ye say that I am?* To this demand Peter, in the name of the rest, replies, and confesses him to be the true Messiah, *the Son of the living God.*

Upon this glorious confession, our Lord and Saviour,

1. Pronounces a heavenly blessing to Peter, ver. 17.

2. Acquaints him and the rest present, that upon himself whom he had confessed to be the Son of the living God, not only Peter, but his whole church should be firmly built, ver. 18.

3. He makes a promise to him and the rest, of ministerial power, ver. 19. which he performed unto all, when he breathed on them the Holy Ghost, John xx. 22, 23.

In the 18th verse, besides the preface, *And I say also unto thee*, we have three principal parts.

*First*, A laudatory testimony bestowed upon Peter, and in him, upon all, of whom he had demanded answer: *Thou art Peter*, &c. In which our Lord does not now first give him that name, for that was done before, John i. 42. where our Lord told him, that thenceforth he should be called Cephias or Peter, which is by interpretation *a stone*, as God of old had declared concerning the names of Abraham and Israel, and as Elizabeth about the name of her son John. In this denomination of Peter, there is a manifest allusion to the following words, by an elegant *paranomasia*: *Thou art Peter*, whom I have formerly called by the name of a stone, to note thy being built on that foundation-stone, the Rock of ages whom the Father hath laid in Zion.

*Secondly*, A declaration of our Lord concerning his church, which he compares to a house, palace, or city, wherein observe,

1. The foundation of this building, *On this rock*, representing him whom thou hast confessed.

2. The Architect, *I will build.*

3. The edifice, *My church*. Not any particular church exclusive of others; but the whole church catholick. This text assigns no diploma or privilege to the church of Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople, Carthage, or ancient Rome, or any other particular church, otherwise than as parts or parcels of the whole church; or as there may have been found in them such as by lively faith and sound doctrine were built upon Christ, the only true and living rock, the sure and precious foundation of his church. As to the timing of the verb, *I will build*, that no way excludes the  
ancient

ancient fathers before our Lord's incarnation, who *all died in faith*, Heb. xi. 13. and *without whom we are not made perfect*, ver. 40. but notes the continuation of this divine work in building up the church, till the top-stone be laid in the end of the world, with acclamations of grace. It pre-figures the enlargement of the church among the Gentiles, by the ministerial edification of the apostles, according to that famous prophecy of the latter times, Zech. vi. 12, 15. *when they that are afar off, shall come and build in the temple of the Lord*, consonant to the tenor of the whole New Testament.

*Thirdly*, The perpetuity of the church. Our Lord adds a promise as strong as the foundation itself, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, That his church shall be more durable than heaven and earth; for *they shall pass away with great noise, the elements melt, the earth, and the works therein shall be burnt up*, 2 Pet. iii. 10. The foundations of the earthly mountains may be set on fire; *Ætna, Vesuvius, and Hecla may vomit out their burning bowels*. The channel of the sea may appear, and the inmost caverns of the world be discovered; nay, the foundations of heaven may be moved and shake, and its pillars tremble, when God is wroth: But the church of God shall endure against all assaults, against all oppositions imaginable; for it is his church, against whom all created power is but weakness, their machinations a thousand times more frail than the most delicate and tender web of a spider. The waves that foam against this rock, dash themselves in pieces; *They are cut off as foam upon the water*, as the prophet elegantly expresses it, Hof. x. 7. The glorious building of the church may and shall be assaulted, but prevailed upon or demolished it shall never be. *Like mount Zion she shall never be moved*; nay, she cannot be moved, for *the Highest himself hath established her*. The church shall never be extirpated out of the world. The rain may descend, the floods rush, and the winds roar and beat upon this house; but it stands inviolable against all weathers and storms, for it is founded upon the Rock. Enemies may fret and fume in the brine of their anger, and, like bodies molested with sharp and corrosive humours, become self-tormentors, till at last they are emacrated, wasted and dissolved.

The farther explication of the words may be referred to the handling of this main point deducible from the text;

*Observ.* That the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the living God, is the only foundation of his church, and the preserver of its duration in some measure visibly throughout all ages.

Here three things are to be discussed, in such a method as a sermon may admit.

I We are to treat of the church of Christ, what it is, and whereof it consists.

II. Of the *foundation* of the church, that it is Christ, and Christ only.

III. Of the *duration* of the church upon this glorious and strong foundation, in some state of visibility through all ages; though sometimes it may appear more conspicuous, and sometimes less: As the sun may be sometimes eclipsed, and that totally to some places in the terrestrial globe, tho' in itself never extinguished, nor its radiant beams wholly withdrawn from all parts of the hemisphere at the precise time of the complete interposure of the moon's body: Sometimes he may be mantled in a sable cloud, and that for many days together; sometimes he may have driven his chariot to visit our antipodes; sometimes his visible diameter is larger, and sometimes lesser; sometimes he warms our zenith, and sometimes comforts the antarctic pole. Neither is the queen of the night a less fit resemblance, being much more variable in her phases and appearances. Such hath been the fate of the church of God: Now direfully eclipsed by bloody persecutions; then shining out the more illustriously: Now clouded with thick veils of error and heresy; then vigorously conquering, by the bright rays of truth: Now dim and dusky by the thig fogs and mists of superstitious ceremonies; then more beautiful and orient in her naked simplicity and apostolical lustre; being *clothed with the sun, and a crown of twelve stars upon her head*, Rev. xii. 1.

I. What is the *church of Christ*? It is compared to a house, to a stately palace, a prince's mansion, or castle of defence, built upon an impregnable rock; nay, it is *the house of the living God*, 1 Tim. iii. 15. typified by the temple of Solomon, 1 Kings vi. 1. Sometimes it is resembled to a city, to the city of David, founded and built upon mount Zion, Psa. xlviij. 1, 2. which shadows forth both its duration and visibility. But the metaphor, as a veil, being laid aside; as under the notion of a quick rock we contemplate the only begotten Son of the living God; so by the regular and well-disposed materials of the building, we are to understand the *lively stones* mentioned 1 Pet. ii. 5. which coming to him by faith, are built up into a spiritual house: Such as compose the structure of the church are the adopted children of God. The learned of the reformed churches, agree in substance, That the church of God is a company of

of holy persons, chosen of God from eternity, in Christ, unto eternal life. The churches consist of men, and not of angels, and therefore must be visible: They are holy ones, not hypocrites or profane persons, who may sometimes thrust themselves into the communion of the external visible church: They are such as are called out of the world by the ministry of the word, and the inward efficacious grace of his Spirit.

“ The true church is an universal congregation or fellowship of God’s faithful and elect people, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner-stone. And it hath always three notes or marks whereby it is known; pure and sound doctrine; the sacraments ministred according to Christ’s holy institution; and the right use of ecclesiastical discipline\*.”

Upon the particular branches of this description I must not enlarge, only acquaint you at present, that I shall treat of some peculiar points referring to that true real church of Christ whereof our Lord speaks in this text; such as being founded upon him by faith, cemented to him by love, worshipping him in spirit and in truth; against which all the powers of darkness shall never prevail; but it shall continue successively throughout all ages, sometimes shining more bright, at other times more obscure, yet always in some measure visible and discernible by the marks of true doctrine, worship and discipline; and at length shall be wholly translated to eternal communion with Christ their most glorious head in the highest heavens.

II. As to the *foundation* of this church, we assert that Jesus Christ is the rock, the solid and only foundation whereupon it is built; which may be demonstrated, 1. Negatively or exclusively as to all others. 2. Positively as to Christ himself.

1. Exclusively. No other is, or can be admitted for the rock or foundation of the church. *Ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ Πέτρᾳ.* On this single, individual rock will I build my church. No other can communicate in this high and supereminent honour.

*Object.* But some may say, *Does not the pronoun in the text relate most properly to the next antecedent, Peter; and not to Christ. Is it not more genuine?*

*Answer.* This grammaticism will not conclude. For, 1. It is commonly otherwise in many other places of scripture, as Gen x. 12. John viii. 4. Heb. xii. 17. Acts xix. 5. and particularly,

\* Homilies of the church of England, in the second part of the sermon for Whitsunday.

particularly, Matth. xxvi. 26. If in that enunciation, *This is my body*, *This* should be referred to *bread*, the immediate antecedent, then, as the learned observe, there is an end of their doctrine of transubstantiation: If they will press such a grammatical nicety upon that as upon this text. But, 2. Though the name of Peter be found nearest in words, yet it is observed, that the person of Christ in the most proper sense and relation stands nighest to the rock upon whom Peter was built, and who had received that denomination from his confession of the true and living rock, the Son of God, the Christ, ver. 20.

*Answ.* 2. But laying aside that grammatical contest, let us shew, That Peter was not, nor could be the rock whereon the church is built.

For, 1. Peter was but a man. Now no mere man can sustain the wrath of an infinite God, or redeem the church by his blood. The apostle determines him to be God, who hath purchased the church by his own blood, Acts xx. 28. and the author to the Hebrews declares, that the same person who *had by himself purged our sins, is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*, Heb. i. 3. the same to whom the Father speaks, *Thy throne O God is for ever and ever*, ver. 8. that *High-priest who is entered within the vail*; that *Son of God, who is passed into the heavens*. Such a one *became us, who is made higher than the heavens*. Christ the head of the church, who is also *the Saviour of his body*, and gave himself for it, Eph. v. 23, 25. *who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood*, Rev. i. 5.

2. Peter was a frail mortal man. But God had his church, and that built upon this rock, before ever Peter was born, and continued after his death and funeral. God the Father had laid this strong foundation, long before Isaiiah's time. The prophets of old, as well as the apostles, built upon this foundation, Eph. ii. 20. Besides, when Peter came upon the stage, he goes off again; and when Peter dies, must the church perish? The foundation being gone, the building must needs tumble, neither does our Lord any where speak of, or promise to any successors so great a privilege as to step into his room, to lie in the foundation, and to be the supposed atlas of his church; and were it so, then Peter personal must be dismissed.

3. Peter was a sinful man, and that by his own confession, Luke v. 8. Nay more, Peter erred in faith about the death and resurrection of Christ, and our Lord rebuked him sharply, as being under a temptation of Satan, Matth. xvi. 22, 23. nay, he thrice denied our Lord, Matth. xxvi. 75.

But

But because some would apply the promise in the text, to a performance after the resurrection, the holy scripture, as if on purpose to obviate these futile objections, testifies that even then he did not walk uprightly, Gal. ii. 14. and Paul *withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.* Shall we then think, that the church was founded upon a sinful man? since such a high-priest becomes the church, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; a Lamb without blemish and spot.*

4. Peter determines the point himself, and expounds the prophecy in Isaiah of Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5, 6, 7. and he himself doctrinally lays down Christ for the true and only foundation in the Zion of the church; disallowed indeed by Pharisees, and the proud builders of Babel, but approved of God, and solemnly preached by Peter at Jerusalem, Acts ii. 22. and unanimously attested by all the apostles, and recognized for the only true foundation of the church. Will any then, that so admire and adore Peter for their own ends, yet dare gainsay him to the face, and force him into the foundation, so flatly against himself?

5. Peter could never victoriously grapple with the assaults of Satan; he had been finally and fatally foiled, had not Christ prayed, had not this Rock sustained him. The church must have a foundation against which all the gates of hell can never prevail, and which infuses virtue and invincible consistency into the building itself; as if a quick and living rock should inspire and breathe into the stones of a palace fixed upon it, some of those mineral radiations wherewith itself is endued, to preserve it from mouldering and turning into dust. The church must have a vital and quickening foundation, that it may not only stand against impetuous winds, but be a growing temple, and increase *with the increase of God,* Col. ii. 19. The church hath such potent, subtle, and furious enemies, that she needs strength from *the mighty God of Jacob, the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel,* Gen. xlix. 24. one that is stronger than that infernal *strong man armed,* Luke xi. 21, 22. a *Lion of the tribe of Judah,* Rev. v. 5. that can tear that lion of hell in pieces.

Since then Peter was but a mere man, a frail, mortal man, a sinful man, weak and impotent to resist the powers of darkness, and one that absolutely rejects any such honour from himself or any other, as abhorring such derogation from the glory of his and our most blessed Saviour; let us infer that THIS ROCK in the text, can in no wise be meant of Peter, or any other of the apostles. And that this was the sense of the ancient church, I might abundant-

ly prove; let it suffice to recite but two or three testimonies.

Chrysoſtom on this text expounds it, *ταῖς τῆ πίστεως τῆς ὁμολογίας*: on the faith of confession, *i. e.* upon Christ, in whom thou believest, and whom thou hast confessed \*. And let Chrysoſtom explain himself: *ὅτι ἔπεν ἐπὶ τῷ Πέτρῳ, &c.* “He said not “upon Peter, for he did not build his church upon a man, “but upon the faith of himself †”.

In like manner Ambrose, or his contemporary, upon the second of the Ephesians, citing this text, *Super istam Petram, &c.* “Upon this rock, that is, upon this confession of the catholic faith, do I fix, settle or build believers unto salvation ‡.” But of all, none more clear than Austin, in his sermons upon Matthew; *Super hanc Petram, &c.* “Upon this rock whom thou hast confessed, “*i. e.* upon myself, the Son of the living God, &c. I will “build thee upon me, not me upon thee ||.” Again, in his 124th treatise on John, “Upon this rock which thou hast “confessed, &c. the rock was Christ, upon which foundation even Peter himself was built.”—So that when Austin, or other of the fathers, explain this rock, by this faith, or this confession, we see they understood it objectively of our blessed Lord, the Son of God. Many more might be cited, but I hasten,

*Obj.* Some have replied *Though Peter be not the principal and essential foundation of the church, yet he may be admitted as a secondary one, without detriment to the honour of Christ.*

*Ans.* 1. This secondary foundation is an absurd distinction, and contrary to the very nature of a foundation. Whatever is laid upon the foundation, is a superstructure or part of the building. If any should urge from Eph. ii. 20. that the Ephesians were built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets; it must be understood of a doctrinal foundation, not an essential; for Christ himself is there expressly termed the *corner-stone*, that fills up the whole area, and reaches to all four corners, on whom solely the *whole* building is fitly framed together, ver. 11. The apostles indeed did lay this foundation, and no other, 1 Cor. iii. 11. and the Ephesian saints were built upon this foundation which the apostles did lay, and so it is called their foundation by a metonymy. They preaching the doctrine of faith in Christ, did lay down for the sole rock this great  
and

\* Chrysoſtom, tom. iv. p. 344. edit. Eton.

† In Homil. 1. in Pentecost, tom. viii. p. 979.

‡ Ambros. in c. ii. Eph. p. 1998, edit. Par. 1569.

|| Augustin in Matth. Sermon. xiii. tom. x. p. 58. edit. Bas. 1569.

and fundamental point, though rejected of the Jewish builders, that there is no *other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved*, Acts iv. 12.

2. Again, this their secondary foundation must be co-extended to all the apostles and prophets, by the plumb-line of the same text; and therefore their laying of Peter for the only foundation, though but secondary, will sink as in the moorish ground by Tyber, and will prove no single foundation at all; for all the other apostles are joint-heirs of the same pre-eminence. Holy Paul, speaking of such a doctrinal foundation, says, that he preached the gospel where Christ was not named, lest he should build on another man's foundation, Rom. xv. 20.

3. Hence it appears, that the preaching of the gospel of Christ, is all the foundation that the apostle pretends to, *viz.* to a doctrinal laying of Christ, as the true foundation of his church. Paul was but a working man, a labourer dexterously handling his evangelical instruments, and Peter was no other: Nay, Paul testifies, that he laboured abundantly, more than they all, in laying this foundation, and building upon it, 1 Cor. xv. 10, 11. For *so*, says he, *we preached, and so ye believed. No other foundation can any man lay*, 1 Cor. iii. 11. he speaks it both expressly and exclusively. No other besides it. "None between us and Christ," as Chrysostom glosses it; and adds, "If any thing interpose between us and Christ, though in the least, we perish presently."

4. Again, If Peter had been any such secondary foundation, surely Paul, who received the gospel by the revelation of Jesus Christ, would, nay, must have excepted him from the rest of the apostles, or at least have conjoined him with Christ, and have laid Peter next and immediately upon him. But this is Vatican doctrine, and to be found nowhere but in the feigned acts or revelation of Paul, which Gelasius condemned for apocryphal.

To conclude then, since our blessed Lord and Head of the church hath declared no vicegerent; being a spiritual King, the Son of the living God, who searches the hearts and reins, Rev. ii. 23. and is omnipresent by his divinity, and promised to be with his church in all ages, by virtue of his Spirit, Matth. xxviii. 20. he needs no vice-roy, has instituted or appointed none; and Peter exercised and performed no such office, but calls himself *συμ-πρεσβυτερος*, a *fil-low-presbyter*, 1 Pet. v. 1. with such as feed the flock of Christ. Since Paul and John make all the apostles equal in preaching and laying this foundation, the doctrine of

faith in Christ, the Son of the living God: Let us then fairly lay Peter aside, without any diminution to his apostolical honour, which we greatly reverence, and look upon him as perfectly equal with the rest of the holy apostles; and let us with admiration and joy, behold him, whose shoe-latchet Peter was not worthy to loose, as laid by the Father in Zion, and firmly believe in him as the Son of the living God, whom Peter confessed to be the Rock, and preached him in the face of the elders of Israel, for the only foundation of the church.

If Peter then be not the essential and personal foundation of the church, which were blasphemy to assert; if the secondary foundation be a nullity, then down falls all the pretended successors of Peter, whether at Cæsaria in Palestine, or Antioch in Syria, or any of the cities of Pontus and Lesser Asia; much more their wooden seat at Rome, as the furthest, so the weakest pretenders to succeed the apostle of the circumcision. Since Peter had no more power than any other of the apostles, he therefore could transmit no more to his supposed successors. For it is a stated rule in their own canon, *Nemo plus juris, &c.* "None can transfer that to another, which he hath not himself\*." And *Is qui in jus succedit alterius, &c.* "He that succeeds in another's right, must content himself with the right of his predecessor †."

2. Positively. Christ our holy and blessed Redeemer, is the only true and real foundation and rock of the church. Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 11. He is that *elect* and *precious corner-stone*, on which all true builders do erect the church of God. Being *rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith*, Col. ii. 7. To this, the apostle Peter brings in his clear evidence, *To whom, as the foundation laid of God, coming as living stones, ye are built up a spiritual house*, 1 Pet. ii. 4. Parallel to this of a foundation, is that other metaphor of a head, taken from the natural body; in which respect Christ is every where declared to be this glorious head of the church. *He is the head of the church, and Saviour of the body*, Eph. i. 23. As the head is strictly conjoined to the living body; so between Christ and the church there is a sacred and intimate union. As the head by the several conjugations of the nerves, derives those vital influences, for the actuating of the several senses, and for the rule and government of the whole body, in all its motions; so doth Christ vivify and quicken, instruct, guide and govern every member

\* Reg. juris 79. in 6. decretal. l. 5.

† Reg. 46.

member of his spiritual body the church. I shall confirm this a little, and pass to the third branch of the text

1. God the Father gave Christ *to be head over all to the church*, and *exalted him far above all principalities*, and *hath put all things under his feet*, Eph. i. 21, 22. God laid him in Zion for a foundation, and no other, Isa. xxviii. 16. The church is the city of God, and he hath established it for ever. It is built upon *his foundation in the holy mountains*, and *the Highest will establish her*, Psal. lxxxvii. 1, 5. The head-stone of the corner fixed in Zion is of the Lord's doing, Psal. cxviii. 22, 23. And as the foundation, so the whole edifice of the church is the *building of God*, 1 Cor. iii. 9.

2. Christ in the text builds his church upon no other than himself; *On this rock will I build my church*; and Christ being the Son of God, is more honourable than Moses, because he builds this house of the church.

3. The Spirit of God fits no other for a habitation of God, but this church built upon this foundation; he increases no other with divine and heavenly growth but this.

4. Such a foundation must be laid, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail; but Christ only is such a foundation. Because he lives, the church lives also, John xiv. 19. No mere man can perform this function. Peter falls not finally, because Christ prays prevalently; Paul stands stoutly against the buffets of Satan in the sufficiency of Christ's grace and power, 2 Cor. xii. 9. And all the saints are victorious and triumphant, and *more than conquerors through him who loveth them*, Rom. viii. 37. and they sing the song of triumph in the sacred words of Paul, *Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. xv. 27. Since then God the Father hath laid no other foundation, and Christ builds upon no other, and the Spirit influences and quickens no other; since no other can support and defend the church, let us pronounce them blessed whom God hath joined, and let none dare to impose or conjoin another, at their eternal peril. It is an idol-foundation of their foolish brains; our glorious Lord will not give his glory to another.

III. We are now in view of the third and last branch of the text; *The duration* of the church of Christ, in some state of visibility throughout all ages; fortified by the promise of Christ, that the gates of hell shall be unsuccessful in their attempts against it.

The church as it is built on Christ, as far as it coheres and sticks close to this foundation, by that virtue communicated to it from the intimate connexion with, and union

to Christ, can never be dissolved and perish. Neither can external adverse power demolish it, or secret subtlety undermine it, so as to render it altogether invisible; and therefore it must, and shall so perish, throughout all ages.

We have here three parts considerable,

1. The *churches opposites*; *The gates of hell*, or of death and hell. These terms signify the infernal powers of darkness, and all that are animated or inspired by them with subtle counsels, and irritated into cruel machinations, and warlike agitations against the church. Not only open persecutors, but cunning heretics do build the gates of hell, and discharge their artillery against the city of God. As Origen said of Marcion, Basilides, and Valentinus, those ancient heretics, "That they build several gates in the city of Babylon \*:" So we say of Nero, Trajan, and Dioclesian, the ancient persecutors, they mounted their battering rams, and shot their arrows against the church of God, and their followers have been no less sedulous, though as unsuccessful to this very day.

2. Their *great undertakings*. They shall put forth all their strength and policy. Whatever the lion and serpent can entwine together; what a cunning Julian could contrive, or a fierce Maximinus execute against the church. Whatever the wit, malice and power of earth and hell, could with most inflamed rage either enterprize or achieve, hath been carried on to the utmost, but all in vain. They *imagine a vain thing against the Lord and his anointed*, Psal. ii. 1, 2. The church, like her glorious head, shall never see corruption, though all the puissance of the adverse city march into the field against her. The Egyptian *city of destruction*, Isa. xix. 18. shall attempt, but all shall prove ineffectual, for the name of this city is *Jehovah-Schammah, the Lord is there*, Ezek. xlvi. 35. The church hath been assaulted by open force and secret fraud; but *no weapon formed against Zion shall finally prosper*, Isa. liv. 17.

3. The *churches duration*; she must and shall continue till all the enemies arrows are spent, their courage daunted, and their city ruined and laid in ashes. *The Lord will miserably destroy those wicked men*, and our blessed Saviour proves it out of the cxviii. Psalm. *For the stone which the builders refused is become the head of the corner. Whosoever falls upon this stone shall be broken; and on whomsoever it falls, it shall grind him to powder*, Matth. xxi. 44. This is that *burdensome stone*, Zech. xii. 3. This is *the stone with seven eyes engraven upon it*,

iii.

\* Origen in Matth. Gr. Lat. edit. 1668. p. 277.

iii. 9. The *stone cut out of the mountain, that shall fill the whole earth*, Dan. ii. 34, 35.

For the handling this third part of the position, *viz.* the *churches duration* in all ages, it is necessary to know this church by those notes that have appeared as characters of the true church in all ages, against which the gates of hell have set their principal batteries, and thereby evidence and prove its continual duration and visibility.

Since then, the church is built upon Christ, the rock of ages; since Christ is the only head and bridegroom of the church; the only chief Shepherd; and since that which makes the intimate union between Christ and the church, is faith wrought in all the hearts of the true members by the Spirit of Christ: This may be one note;

*Char. 1.* That wherever this doctrine of justification by faith in Christ has been maintained and sincerely defended, there hath been visibly the true church of Christ. And it might be amply evinced, that this heavenly doctrine hath been conserved in all ages, against all the furious assaults of its enemies.

*Char. 2.* Since Jesus Christ, the only head of the church, is her glorious Lord, the Son of the living God, he ought to be worshipped by her. *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him*, Psal. xlv. 11. this worship must be performed *in spirit and in truth*, John iv. 23. But here, because all the three persons in the divine essence, are one God, I shall consider this worship, as terminated objectively in God essential; and since this most holy and glorious God, abhors idolatry, and worshipping him by idols, images, pictures, or any other symbol to represent him, or by which, as helps to devotion, to inflame the heart in worship; this may be set down as another note of the true church, which *keeps the commandments of God* in point of worship, Rev. xiv. 12. And indeed, herein consists the very essence and formality of the second commandment. The first herein concerns the object of religious worship: The second, the manner and means of worship, announcing, That God who is exceeding jealous of his own glory, detests and abhors to be worshipped by the intervention of idols, and to present any adoration before them, though men may excuse it, and profess that God is the ultimate term of their worship. But these things I must leave to be more amply insisted upon by such whose peculiar province it is to handle them more distinctly. Here use and improve them only as marks and notes of the church; the one in point of doctrine, the other in point of worship. The true church of Christ hath in all times,  
according

according to holy scriptures, born a testimony to these two grand points, and I shall endeavour to prove it as to both.

There be other points, I confess, and very material, whereby this truth might be exemplified, but I choose these as cardinal.

I. For the point of justification by faith.

This particular is best worded in scripture language, to which all must adhere. Though men in the explication may vary in their sentiments, yet I think it most fit to lay it down in the words of holy Paul, indited by the Spirit of God; *That a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law*, Rom. iii. 28. They have no ingrediency into our justification before God. If they had, it were not *by grace*; and *if by grace, then it is no more of works*, Rom. xi. 6. And this work of free grace proceeds on to salvation itself; *for by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast*, Eph. ii. 8, 9. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done*, Tit. iii. 5, 7. Now, whereas the popish doctors would have Paul to exclude the works of the ceremonial law only, not the works of the moral law, or the gospel, that cannot stand; for then we should still be justified by works: But the apostle puts works and faith in a diametrical opposition. After he himself was in a regenerate estate, he desired *to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*, Phil. iii. 9. And declares, that though he were conscious of nothing by himself, yet herein he was not justified, 1 Cor. iv. 4. yea, that works done with faith do not justify; no, nor faith itself as a work, but as it apprehends the Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. iv. 3, 22. and yet the apostle charges Titus, *to affirm constantly, that they which believe in God, must be careful to maintain good works, for these things are good and profitable to men*, Tit. iii. 8. They are necessary to salvation, though they have not a formal ingrediency into our justification. The holy apostle professes, that by this faith in the Son of God he did live, and in this faith he would die; desiring to be found in no other at the appearing of Christ. This was the ancient faith of the primitive church of Christ, and the good old way of the ancient Roman church. This is the grand article, which being maintained, the church flourishes; being rejected, she perishes.

I might here, out of every age of the church since our Lord, produce clear evidences for this doctrine of Paul, dictated by the Spirit of God. I might shew its preservation

tion, by the ancient fathers, and how attested by some of the councils; by whom it may appear in what countries this apostolical doctrine was taught and embraced: By Hillary in France, Ambrose in Lombardy, Chrysostom in Syria and Thrace, Jerom in Palestine, Austin in Africa, Basil in Lesser Asia, and many more. But not to swell the discourse too largely, I shall only exhibit two or three testimonies in distant ages, *viz.* of Clement, Ambrose or his contemporary, and Bernard. After them this truth shone forth in the confessions of the Waldenses, and in the doctrine of Wickliff, till the great reformation appeared\*.

Let us begin with Clement, who was contemporary with Peter and Paul. He, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, speaks directly to this point. "We are not justified by our-  
 " selves, nor by our wisdom, understanding, piety, or  
 " works which we have wrought in holiness of heart, but  
 " by faith, by which God omnipotent hath justified all  
 " from the beginning, unto whom be glory for ever and  
 " ever. Amen†."

Let Ambrose succeed, who flourished at Milan: On Rom. iii. 24. *Being justified freely by grace*, he expressly declares, "They are said to be freely justified, because working no-  
 " thing, nor rendering any duty or service, are justified by  
 " faith alone, which is the gift of God ‡." And this he four times repeats in his exposition upon the fourth chapter.

The next shall be the testimony of Bernard of France, who died in the year 1153, who expresses himself thus: "He is as powerful to justify, as to multiply pardons.  
 " Wherefore, whoever being under compunction for his  
 " sins, hungers and thirsts after righteousness, let him be-  
 " lieve in thee who justifiest the ungodly, and being justi-  
 " fied by faith alone, he shall have peace with God §." And then he proceeds to exhort to holiness by eyeing and following of Christ.

I might shew, that this doctrine hath been held by the faithful, in all ages, consonant to the holy scriptures: Un-  
 to which the church of England hath given a full and ample attestation, both in her articles and homilies. "Who-  
 " ever preaches contrary to these articles is to be excom-  
 " municated §. These are the test and touchstone of the  
 soundness of the members of this church. *Of the justifi-*  
*cation*

\* Sculteti annal. p. 11.

† Clem. ad Corinth. edit. Oxon. 1633.

‡ Ambrose, edit. Par. 1569. col. 1819.

§ Bern. in Cantic. sect. 22. f. 130 b.

§ Canon. 36. 46. 51. an. 1604. and an. 1571. p. 20.

*cation of man*, the 11th article: "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort; as more largely is expressed in the homily of justification." If we look then into the homilies, we find, that after this doctrine is asserted, and proved by scriptures, and several of the fathers; it is added, "This saying, that we be justified by faith only, freely and without works, as being unable to deserve our justification at God's hands, &c. and therefore, wholly to ascribe the merit and desert of our justification unto Christ only, and his most precious blood-shedding. This faith, the holy scripture teacheth: This is the strong rock and foundation of Christian religion. This doctrine all old and ancient authors of Christ's church do approve: This doctrine advanceth and setteth forth the true glory of Christ, and beateth down the vain glory of man. This, whosoever denieth, is not to be counted for a Christian man, nor for a setter-forth of Christ's glory; but for an adversary to Christ and his gospel, and for a setter forth of man's vain glory." Blessed be God for this excellent sermon of the church of England, which all good Christians do reverence and embrace.

Now, to conclude, What says the convention at Trent to this scriptural and apostolical doctrine of the reformed churches. Truly they proceed no higher, than to curse such as say, Men are formally justified by the righteousness of Christ, *i. e.* essentially, purely and exclusively; which they explain in the very next canon, and curse them again who shall say that men are justified by the sole imputation of Christ's righteousness, &c.\* And they curse them again, *Canon 12.* that shall say, that justifying faith is nothing else than a trusting of the divine mercy, forgiving sins for Christ's sake. Nay, they tell us, "It becomes the divine clemency not to forgive us our sins, without any satisfaction of ours," *sess. 14. c. 8.* To which they annex a cursing canon against such as affirm, "That the whole penalty is always remitted of God, together with the sin, and that there is no other satisfaction required of penitents than faith, by which they apprehend Christ to have satisfied for them." *Ib. can. 12.* By these, and the foregoing testimonies, all may see what is the doctrine of holy scripture, of the primitive times, and succeeding ages of the

\* Hist. conc. Trid. l. 4. p. 369,

the church; what is the doctrine of the reformed churches, and of ours in particular; and how opposite and contradictory the doctrine of the Romanists is.

But let us descend to a second enquiry :

II. Concerning *the worship of God by images.*

Let us now shew, that the church of God, consonant to scripture, hath in all ages given notable testimonies against idolatry, and the worship of images, or of God by images; as being flatly against the second commandment. As faith is that bond and ligament which unites the true church, and every living member thereof, to Christ their head; so pure worship is the honour, reverence, and obedience which the spouse of Christ renders to her Lord and Husband, who will not communicate his glory to graven images. Idolatry is compared to whoredom in scripture, that dissolves the knot of marriage, Isa. l. 1. God sent a bill of divorce for this cause to the ancient external church of the Jews, and expressly upon this account denounces against her, that she was not his wife, Hos. ii. 2. and will God, think you, spare any particular Gentile church, guilty of so fearful a crime; having annexed that high argument of his jealousy, against such as violate the second commandment, and reputing them as haters of him, and whom he will judicially visit with great detestation?

For the exhibition of this point, how the true church of God hath in all ages held close to the institutions of chaste and holy worship, in spirit and in truth: I might transcribe testimonies out of all the ancients, that were the luminaries and columns of the primitive church, down along till Gregory the Great, and after his time also many notable and pregnant instances through the very depth of Popery, both of emperors and church-men, that did stoutly resist that growing abomination in the world. I shall, to avoid prolixity, mention some of the councils that have determined against this point, and draw to an issue.

That of Elvira, near Granada in Spain, *an.* 305. is peremptory in the case: *Ab orthodoxis patribus definitum est, &c.* "It is enjoined by the orthodox fathers, that pictures ought not to be in a church, nor let that be painted out the walls, which is to be worshipped and adored\*.

Nay further, so strict were the good fathers of that synod aforesaid, that they would not suffer any idols in their houses. The authenticity of this synod must not be questioned, since several of its decrees are recited by Gratian, whose whole work is confirmed by Eugenius the III.

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and

\* Concil. Elibertinum, can. 36. and 41.

and by others succeeding, canonized for church-law, and the government of ecclesiastical courts.

But let their confirmation be how it will, it is a notable testimony against them, even in that age; and however Sixtus Senensis and Albaspinæus would evade, as if it were decreed against the Heathens images and pictures, as in the 11th canon of the 12th council of Toledo, that is but a weak shift: For, was it ever known, that the Christians brought the pictures or statues of the Heathen gods into their churches? No, no; the fear was of a new kind of imagery, and of worshipping of God, and our Lord, and saints and angels, by representations and pictures; which at length obtained dreadfully, to the high dishonour of God, contempt of his commandments, the ruin of the Eastern empire, and fearful judgments on the Western.

It were too long to trace, what direful stirs and commotions were in the East, about the time of the second council of Nice, and what excellent testimony was given against it by the council of Frankford, and the four books of the emperor Charles the Great, and by the church of England, in an epistle written to Charles by Alcuinus, in the name of the princes and bishops of our land, execrating that idolatry\*. But to shew how notwithstanding all opposition, it prevailed in every age, till at last it was finally ratified at Trent, and what eminent witness hath been all along raised up by God against it, would rise to a treatise. Now, let us hasten to some inferences or conclusions flowing from this text, and doctrine of Christ being the only foundation of his church, enduring throughout all ages, and of the union of the church to him by their most holy faith, and adherence to him by holy and pure worship.

*Corol. 1.* From what has been hitherto treated of, we may learn which is the true church of Christ, and where it hath subsisted and been preserved in all ages, and how to discern and know it, and the true members thereto belonging, *viz.* By its being built upon Christ alone, the firm rock and basis of its constitution. Such are to be owned for living members, who acknowledge Christ, the Son of the living God, to be the true and only head of the church; such as are built upon Christ, and the doctrine of the holy apostles and prophets: Such as adhere to the scriptures, and receive and refuse things as they are proved or rejected by scripture: Such to whom both Peter, and Paul, and James, and all the apostles writings are equally precious.

Such

\* Vide Hoveden annal. p. 232. edit. Lond. 1596, and Sim. Dunelm. Lond. 1652.

Such as dare not advance human traditions, into a parity of honour with the divine writings of scripture, dictated by the Spirit of God; which only teaches by what notes and characters to discern the true church of God. That tremble at such devices, and dare not try the church by glorious and pompous visibility, universality, and continual succession of bishops in one place; looking upon them as false and counterfeit notes: But by pure scripture doctrine, by sacraments rightly administered, by adherence to Christ alone for righteousness and justification in the sight of God; by spiritual and scriptural worship, and such like. We deny not, but firmly hold, that the true church of Christ hath been always in some measure visible; capable of being seen and known by such whose eyes are anointed by scripture eye-salve. When we consider the sharp persecutions raised against the apostles and the primitive church by the Jews, and against their successors by the Gentile Pagan empire, so fierce and terrible, that Dioclesian doubted not to erect columns of triumph with these inscriptions, *Nomine Christianorum deleto: Superstitione Christi ubique deleta.* “The name of Christ being extinct; and the superstition of Christ being every where abolished.” Or, when we reflect upon the *ariomania*, the madness of the Arians against the sincere embracers of the holy doctrine of Peter, That Christ was the eternal Son of the living God, and which was so notably determined by the first council of Nice: Or, when we call to mind the astonishing tragedies, acted by the papal power for about 1200 years, against such as have kept close to the same apostolical faith and purity of worship; we may well take up the lamentations of the apostle, concerning the church under the Syrian princes: *They wandred about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, &c. of whom the world was not worthy; they wandred in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth,* Heb. xi. 37. True is that of Hilary; “That the church did meet with the apostles, in chambers and secret places\*.” Afterwards signing out his complaints against the Arians †. “You do ill to reverence the church of God, says he, in stately buildings, &c. the mountains, woods and marshes are to me more safe.”

But not to heap up witnesses; the testimony of the church of England, in that notable homily against the peril of idolatry, may suffice once for all, out of Eusebius and Austin. “That when the Christian religion was most pure, and indeed golden, Christians had but low and poor conventicles, and simple oratories, and caves un-

“der

\* Hilarius contr. Auxentium, p. 282.

† P. 236.

“ der ground called *cryptæ*; where they, for fear of persecution, assembled secretly together.” And so it hath continued more or less during the papal dominion, according to the prophecy, That *the woman*, i. e. the church. should recede into a wilderness state for 1260 years from the taking up of Constantine into heaven, Rev. xii. 14.

The true church of Christ, consisting of all its members, (the greater part whereof is triumphant in heaven, and the rest militant upon earth, on which account only is it to be genuinely called Catholic,) cannot properly be stiled visible to the eye of sense, but to the eye of faith. We believe there is such a church, all whose true members are certainly and only known to God. For what eagle-sighted angel can search the heart, and positively determine the truth of faith in that sealed fountain, whereby the heart flows out in streams of love unto Christ? Against such a soul, against a society composed of such heavenly members, against such a church, the gates of hell shall never prevail. But against a catholic, external, visibly glorious church, the gates of hell have so far prevailed in many ages, that she hath been reduced into a very low and gloomy estate; as she was in the vision of Zechariah, when *the man riding upon a red horse, stood still among the myrtle-trees that were in the bottom*, by night, Zech. i. 8. Our Lord promises the church's existence, and its perennial duration, throughout all ages, and his own presence among his myrtle-trees, in a dark bottom, and his walking among his golden candlesticks in the deep night of adversity; but not its glory and perspicuity; not triple crowns, and eminencies. Peter never came forth shining with precious stones, glistening in silks, and overlaid with gold, and prancing on a white palfrey guarded with Switzers, and hemmed in with a crowd and noise of servants; Bernard accosts Eugenius the IV. telling him, in these he succeeded the imperial Constantine, and not Peter.

The true church hath usually been as indigent of silver and gold as the true Peter; yet hath been preserved in all ages from extremity and ruin. Some particular churches, some members of the true and invisible Catholic church, whereof Christ is the head, have been always marching along the howling wilderness of this world toward Canaan. The church hath been mostly in a troublous and desert estate, few Elims of palm-trees to sit under, or fountains in which to wash her sacred eyes; yet as to purity of worship, and the food of heavenly manna, she hath always enjoyed some Moses's, some pastors to feed her in the wilderness,  
such

such as have prophesied to her all along. Her faith in Christ, and chaste love to him, hath been clearly discerned by none but his holy eye; especially in times of general defection from the truths of God, when as to her secret communion in ordinances, none but such whose eyes are clarified in the chrystal streams of holy scripture, have been able to discern her. But there have been some few times, when very Balaams having climbed up into the mountain of contemplation, and stood upon a propheticall rock, and looking toward this wildrnets, have cried out in an extasy, upon a sight of the glorious beauty of the church, *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign-aloes, which the Lord hath planted, as cedar-trees besides the waters,* Numb. xxiv. 1. 5, 6. The church hath been always visible in itself; God hath left no age without a witness of the pure word dispensed, of the two sacraments duely administred, and of spiritual worship and order managed in a comely apostolicall manner, without the garish drestes of human fancies and institutions; which are the only proper notes, marks and characters, where the true church hath been and is, and where the faithful pastors are to be found, who stand in the counsel of God, Jer. xxiii. 22. But who can help, if blind men cry out, or such as want the optick-glass of scripture, they see her not, and call for a gay, splendid, sensual appearance of glittering and costly ceremonies?

Was not Nebuchadnezzar's image dedicated with great glory, set off with concerts of music, and attended with numerous worshippers? Alas, this universal consent, grand acclamations, copious assemblies, uninterrupted successions in mitred habits, splendour, and pomp, and grandeur, are not the tokens of that kingdom which cometh not with observation, Luke xvii. 20. Heathenism and Turkism may plead for a suffrage in such cases. Christ's flock is a little flock, Luke xii. 32. *In this world ye shall have tribulation,* John xvi. 33. says our Lord; and through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God, Acts xiv. 22.

Now here I might, out of several ancient records and monuments, shew the succession of some parts of the true church of Christ in France, in the Alpine valleys, and in Britain, and elsewhere in the East; where true doctrine, and for the main, true discipline and worship hath been preserved all along, though secretly for the most part, and not with external glory and splendour: But that would infringe upon the dispatch of the remaining corollaries.

*Corcl. II.* This text and doctrine, discovers all false churches

churches from the true. Such as lay any other foundation than Christ the Son of God; such as *hold not the head*, Col. ii. 19. such as build not upon the doctrinal foundation of the holy apostles and prophets cannot be the true churches of Christ. Let good Hilary be judge, *Quisquis Christum, &c.* "He is Antichrist who denies Christ to be such as he is preached by the apostles \*." To him we may adjoin holy Austin, *Mendax est Antichristus, &c.* "Antichrist is a liar, who professes Jesus to be the Christ with his mouth, and denies him in deeds.—The works speak, and we do require words? for what evil man will not speak well †?" And again, "Ask of Arians, Eunomians, Macedonians; they confess Jesus Christ to be come in the flesh, &c. what shall we do then? how shall we discern him?—We find they deny him in deeds: As the apostle saith of such, *They profess to know God, but in works they deny him*: Let us seek it in their works, and not in their tongues ‡." And this being true, their own rule in the canon law condemns them, "It is certain that he trespasses against the law, who embracing the words of the law, practises against the mind of the law §." Thus, *by their traditions they make the commandments of God of none effect*, Mat. xv. 6. The question in hand should not be determined by particular doctors of this or that communion, such as an Erasmus, a Cassander, an Espencæus, a Bellarmine, &c. for then the answer is, These are but personal opinions; they will stand to none of their doctors: But let us see what councils and authorized assemblies have determined; what their confessions and catechisms do teach. I shall touch upon no authorities but such as are found in the canon-law, the council and catechism of Trent, their missals, bulls, and determinations from the chair, &c. Let us then proceed to some enquiries in this affair.

*Enq. 1.* Is that a true church of Christ which determines fundamental doctrines contrary to Christ and his apostles, that builds upon another foundation than Christ? That they have assumed Peter for the only head of the militant church, might be abundantly proved. When Charles V. took to himself some spiritual jurisdiction, how does Baronius exclaim, as if he set up another head of the church, as a portentous monster. Let but Peter be imprisoned by Agrippa, how does the same Baronius cry out, "The  
" church

\* Hilar. contra Auxent. p. 282.

† Aug. in ep. Joh. tract. iii. tom. ix. p. 598.

‡ Id. tract. vi. p. 623.

§ Reg. Jur. 88. decret. 6.

“ church of Christ then seemed to be shaken with a great  
 “ earthquake, when the very rock placed in the foundation  
 “ of the church was seen to be so sorely shaken.” The  
 forged epistle of Clemens to James the brother of our Lord,  
 written to him after he was dead, as is proven by Crakan-  
 throp, and is extant in the first tome of the councils, and  
 ratified by the canon-law, saith, *Simon Petrus*, &c. “ Simon  
 “ Peter by the merit of his true faith, and having obtained  
 “ it by his sincere preaching, is defined to be the founda-  
 “ tion of the church ;” which is consonant to after popes,  
 asserting, “ That he committed to Peter the blessed key-  
 “ keeper of eternal life, the laws both of the earthly and  
 “ heavenly empire \*.” And again, treating of Peter, “ This  
 “ person being taken into fellowship of individual unity,  
 “ he would have him called that which he was, saying,  
 “ *Thou art Peter*, &c. that the building of the eternal tem-  
 “ ple might consist in the solidity of Peter, by the wonder-  
 “ ful gift of the grace of God †.” The learned Glassators  
 upon the common extravagants, after they have expound-  
 ed Cephas to signify a head, they proceed, *Sicut in corpore*,  
 &c. “ As in a material body there is but one head, in which  
 “ are all the senses, or a fulness of sensation ; so, in the  
 “ church militant, lest it should be like a monstrous body,  
 “ if it have two heads, there is but one head placed, *viz.*  
 “ the Roman bishop, in whom is the fulness of power and  
 “ authority ‡.” By these doctrines we are now clearly il-  
 luminated, that as to the influence and government of the  
 militant church, Christ hath excluded himself from head-  
 ship, lest the body should be monstrous, with two heads.  
 Such is the fearful and monstrous doctrine taught by the  
 Roman clergy ! But the truth is, they speak of themselves,  
 and seek their own glory, and not Christ’s, whose com-  
 mandments they have annulled and evacuated by their many  
 additions to, and subtractions from his. They would seem  
 indeed to retain all, and only add some ; but whoever adds,  
 as well as detracts, is liable to the curse of God ; for here-  
 by they stain the glory of the divine law, as insufficient and  
 imperfect ; and more especially when they add fundamental  
 points upon peril of damnation. Articles of faith are prin-  
 ciples ; now when new ones are added, extraneous, nay,  
 repugnant to the holy scriptures, can any person that is  
 not deep in the golden cup, sedately believe the true church  
 of Christ to be there ? especially when, 1. They require  
 firm

\* Councils, tom. 1. dist. 20. c. 1. p. 130.

† Dist. 19. c. 7. p. 110. edit. Rom. 1582.

‡ Extrav. l. 5. c. 1. p. 245. Rom. edit.

firm faith in the traditions, and constitutions of the church of Rome: 2. Bind all churches to their sense of the scriptures: 3. Hold seven sacraments: 4. Justification by works: 5. The propitiatory sacrifice of the mass: 6. Transubstantiation: 7. Purgatory: 8. Invocation of saints: 9. Adoration of images: 10. Indulgences: 11. The Roman church to be the mistress of all churches: 12. And all things in the canons and councils, especially of Trent: And all this you must profess truly to hold to be the true catholic faith, without which none can be saved.

But for easing of mens minds in these and the like particulars, they cry up the immensity of their power, and privilege to dispense with scripture and apostolical doctrine. Indeed, there is great need that should be well proved; and the canon-law asserts it in the strongest manner.—It is pronounced from the chair by Boniface VIII. “We declare, affirm, determine, and pronounce, that it is altogether necessary to salvation, that every human creature be subject to the pope of Rome.” Is not this doctrine wonderful clear from holy scripture? But lest we should mistake the places, we shall be furnished with some dispensations as to scripture.

The gloss upon Pope Nicholas rescript to the bishops of France, says, “He may dispense against the apostles, and against natural right \*” And again, “We can of right dispense above or beyond right, against the canons of the apostles, and against the Old Testament in tithes †.” Our Lord determines marriage not to be dissolved, but in case of adultery, Mat. v. 32. but Gregory III. orders, “If a wife be infirm, then let her husband marry.” Our Lord teaches not to resist evil, Mat. v. 39. but Innocent IV. teaches, “To resist force with force, and help out one sword with another ‡.” I might shew in the case of oaths and vows, and several others, as, If a priest commit fornication, though by the canons of the apostles he ought to be disposed, yet by the authority of Sylvester, let him do penance for ten years. But enough of this.

Let us proceed to shew their power in point of subtractions, in some particulars.

1<sup>st</sup>, As to the holy scriptures.

1. They substitute, instead of the original Hebrew and Greek, the vulgar Latin translation; this an author of theirs attests, That the Roman church permits not the scriptures

\* Cauf. 15. 9. q. 6. c. 2. Rom. col. 1442.

† Decret. l. iii. tit. 8. c. 4. col. 1072.

‡ Sext. decret. tit. 11. c. 6. p. 717.

tures but in Latin ¶. And the council of Trent sess. 4. appoints and declares, That the old vulgar edition, &c. should be used for authentical, in public lectures, disputes, preachings and expositions, and that none dare or presume to reject it upon any pretense.

2. The common people are not to read them. Pius IV. granted to read them, if translated by catholic authors, and leave obtained from the priest or confessor, else not: But Clement VIII \*. took this license of reading or retaining vulgar bibles wholly away, and determines this order to be kept inviolably.

3. They must be received and understood according to the sense of the Roman church, who have power to judge of the sense and interpretation thereof †. But since the Lateran decree of the pope's superiority to a council, we are in the dark what their church is: Paul II. expounds it to Palatina, as he relates it ‡, "Know ye not, that I am infal-  
"lible, and carry all their judgments and reasons in my  
"breast. I consider no man's person; I am pope, and it  
"is in my power to null or confirm their acts, as I think  
"good myself."

4. They equal their canons and traditions to the scriptures, and receive and reverence them with the like pious affection. It is not lawful for any to *will*, much less to be *able* to transgress the precepts of the apostolic chair. The pope's decretals are expressly reckoned among canonical scriptures §. The violation of canons they call a sin against the Holy Ghost: And with such reverence do all look up to the pinnacle of the apostolical state, that they rather receive from the mouth of his predecessors, than from the holy scriptures.

2dly, They take away the cup in the Lord's supper from the Christian people. Although Christ did ordain and administer this sacrament to his disciples in both the elements of bread and wine, yet nevertheless they ordain and pass it into a law, to communicate in one kind only, and pronounce such to be dealt with as heretics that oppose this new law made in defiance of Christ ¶. What a blessed and obedient spouse is this?

3dly, Though our blessed Lord and his apostles, commanded marriage as the institution of God, and honour-

F f

able

¶ Hist. of Cardinals, p. 4.

\* Obser. in reg. 4. Rotand. 1640, ad calcem. Cencil. Trident.

† Cencil. Trident. sess. 4.

‡ Plat. in Paul II. col. 336. Par. 1505.

§ Cencil. Trid. dist. 19. c. 6.

¶ Cencil. Const. sess. 13.

able among all, and call the forbidding thereof *the doctrine of devils*, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. yet there is sounder advice given in the canon law. “Although, say they, the marriage of “priests is not forbid by the authority of the law or gospel, “or of the apostles, yet by ecclesiastical law it is utterly “forbidden\*.” The priests may commit fornication, and not be deposed, because, say they, our bodies are now more frail than they were of old. Adultery is counted among the lesser crimes, for which a bishop may dispense with his clergy; and if a clergyman embrace a woman, it is to be expounded to bless her †.—But for these and the like cases, the tax of the apostolical chancery, where any thing is dispensed for money, gives the richest reasons. Well might the abbot of Ursberg cry out, *Gaude mater nostra Roma*, &c. “Rejoice, O Rome, our mother, for the cataracts of trea- “sures are opened in the earth, that rivers of money may “flow in to thee: Rejoice over the iniquity of the sons of “men, for thou receivest the price for a recompence of “such great wickedness.”

4thly, For prohibition of meats. Whereas the apostle tells us, *Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake*, 1 Cor. x. 25. And let no man judge you in meat or drink, Col. ii. 16. for God hath created them to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth, and nothing to be refused, 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4. Such as believe in God, and are acquainted with the truth of his holy word, make no scruple as those do who *speake lies in hypocrisy*, and are seducing spirits, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. But the canon-law commands fastings, as a tenth part of time consecrated to God out of the whole year ‡, and against our eating of flesh, assigns a pregnant citation of the apostle: *It is good not to drink wine, nor to eat flesh*. But the words are left out, which refer to the offence in primitive times. I shall not further touch this point: Their precepts and practices stand opposite to the holy scriptures; and how wholesome to the body to appoint their grand fasts, and abstinence from flesh, in the spring, let Fuchsius a learned physician be judge, out of Soranus and Hippocrates. “We ought, says he, least “of all to fast in the spring §.” And after he hath urged his argument, he concludes, “That the Roman bishop is “not only Antichrist, in stating a doctrine contrary to “Christ, but Antiatrum, contrary to physicians; to ap-  
“ point

\* *Caus. 26. q. 2. c. 1.*

† *Caus. 11. q. 3. c. 14. col. 1223.*

‡ *Decr. 3. part. de Consecr. dist 5. c. 16. col. 2671.*

§ *Fuchf. Instit. Medicin. lib. 2. sect. 2. cap. 9.*

“ point a fast then, and forbid flesh : when they have un-  
 “ animously taught, we ought to eat more largely and ab-  
 “ stain from fish.”—But it became the man of perdition,  
 not only to destroy our souls, but our bodies also, by his  
 decrees, and our purses too. We must buy at him leave at  
 that time to eat milk, and the like viands.

To finish this paragraph : What should all the sober and  
 pious judge of such a society as add to, subtract from, dis-  
 pense with, and over-rule the laws of God, but what the  
 scripture hath prophetically deciphered them to be, and  
 what the church of England hath determined concerning  
 them?—Since they have forsaken, and daily do forsake  
 the commandments of God, to erect and set up their own  
 constitutions, we may well conclude, according to the rule  
 of Augustine, that the bishops of Rome, and their adher-  
 ents, are not the true church of Christ, much less then to  
 be taken as chief heads and rulers of the same. “ Whoso-  
 “ ever, saith he, do dissent from the scriptures concerning  
 “ the head, although they be found in all places, where the  
 “ church is appointed, yet are they not in the church.” A  
 plain place, concluding directly against the church of Rome.

*Eng. 2.* Is that the true church of Christ, that pollutes  
 the worship of God by idolatry? Why is this sin so often  
 called whoredom in scripture? Does not whoredom dissolve  
 the bonds of marriage, by our Lord’s own determination?  
 Did not the Lord give up ancient Israel and Judah, and dis-  
 avow them from being his spouse, under the name of two  
 notable whores, Aholah and Aholibah, Ezek. xxiii. 4. And  
 if we rightly consider the Revelation, we find also this to be  
 the very cause, why the name of *whore* is branded upon the  
 forehead of a certain congregation that was to appear in the  
 world after the dissolution of Rome imperial. Therefore  
 God sent the Maracens and Turks against them, with stings  
 both in head and tail, Rev. ix. 20, 21. both in the East and  
 West, but yet they repented not of their idols, &c. This  
 is that generation which lays stumbling-blocks, both be-  
 fore Turks, Jews and Heathens. For haste, I will instance  
 but a few. Among the four great offences and scandals,  
 which the grand Seignior told the German ambassador he  
 took at the Roman religion, one was, that they *made their  
 God*, and another that they *eat him* \*. What would he have  
 said, had he heard the emperor Henry VII. his being poi-  
 soned out of the sacramental cup, by a Guelph of the pope’s  
 faction, or as Dr. Donne expresses it more earnestly, “ To  
 “ poison their God, that they might poison their emperor?”

How

\* Count Serini’s character, p. 107.

How greatly the Turks are incensed against idols, the Alcoran almost every where discovers. The Jews are also greatly scandalized. At the first solemn and judicial publication of image-doctrine, they were greatly provoked and offended, being so exact in the abhorrence of images, that they counted it unlawful to look up to an image in civil use; and forbid the very art of painters and statuaries \*. Nay, so nice and curious, that they scruple to pluck out a thorn out of their feet, or gather up money casually fallen, lest they should seem to stoop down in respect to any image in such a place. They call popish churches, because of the worship of images, *The houses of reproach or filthinesses.*

As to the Pagans or Heathens, I might enlarge, but I shall only refer to a story of the Americans, who being vexed at the burning their wooden God, by Mr. Gage; replied, "That they knew it was a piece of wood, and of itself could not speak; but seeing it had spoken, as they were all witnesses, this was a miracle whereby they ought to be guided, and they did verily believe that God was in that piece of wood, which, since the speech made by it, was more than ordinary wood, having God himself in it, and therefore deserved more offerings and adorations than those saints (*i. e.* of the Spaniards) in the church; who did never speak unto people."

To conclude, Since God hath so severely forbidden the worshipping of his divine Majesty, by statues, pictures, sculptures or images, and in all ages given ample evidences of his wrath against such worshippers: Since the true Christian religion by means of such titular and nominal pretenders to it, is greatly vilified and obstructed in its progress, as to the sincere conversion both of Turks, Jews and Heathens; we may easily discern where that dangerous society resides, that commits fornications with stocks and stones, termed by the church of England, in her excellent and zealous homilies against idolatry, "A foul, filthy, old withered harlot, &c. that understanding her lack of natural and true beauty, and great loathsomeness (which of herself she hath) doth after the custom of such harlots, paint herself, and deck and tire herself with gold, pearl, stone, and all kind of precious jewels †."

*Enq. 3.* Is that the true church of Christ, that out of her own invention, intermixed with Jewish and Heathenish customs, hath patched up a pompous worship, and bottomed

\* Hottinger. jur. Hebr. p. 336.

† Homily of the church of Engl. in the 3d part of the sermon against the peril of idolatry, fol. 75. b.

ed now upon that grand fundamental of the pope's authority, which (as it is said of Jeroboam's) is *devised of their own hearts*, 1 Kings xii. 33. and in comparison to the institutions of Christ, and apostolical, primitive practice, is as it were but a novelty, and of yesterday? The history of the church, as to most of them, gives us a precise account of their particular rise and genealogy; as to the rest, we may evidently prove by the primitive administrations, that then they were not, and afterward find, when they were in use and practice. Let us but instance in a few: The use of fine linen, prayers in odd numbers, sanctuaries, wax candles, worship towards the East, ember days, consecrations, and the Bacchanalia, and other feasts, turned into the present festivities; their origin, and multitudes of others, may be observed out of Polydore \*, Innocent III. †, Durandus his Rationale, and Durantus de Ritibus, Blondus, and many others. Give me leave a little to enlarge upon one constitution of the greatest moment, because it is a fundamental one amongst them, *viz.* The decree of the Lateran council under Leo X. whereby the pope's authority was fully settled, and whence he became exalted above a council, and infallible, and to be adored; as it is in the *Ceremoniale Romanum*, l. 1. p. 51. and l. 3. p. 286. *Solum Romanum pontificem*, &c. "It clearly appears that the Roman bishop solely hath authority over all councils." And p. 121. "It is necessary to salvation, that all Christ's faithful ones should be subject to the Roman bishop." This was determined the 14 kal. Jan. 1516. within the compass of the same year wherein Luther began to assault ‡. Whence we may note, what a profound question that is, when they demand of us, Where our religion was before Luther? When themselves do date the commencement of the greatest point and pillar of their religion, *viz.* the doctrine of infallibility, within the same year wherein Luther arose; putting the hay and stubble of their infallible judge into the foundation of the church. When they ask, Where was our religion? We answer, It was where theirs is not; *viz.* in the institutions of our blessed Lord, preached by the holy apostles, set forth in the sacred scriptures, practised by the primitive churches, and preserved all along by some notable confessors of the truth in every age, to our present times. But theirs indeed, as it now stands, built upon the Lateran and Trent councils, is but a mere novelty, started up in the very days of Luther; and

\* Poyld. Virgil. Bas. 1532.

† Innocent III. de Altari, Lips. 1534.

‡ Scultet. Annal. ad ann. 1516.

and in other things wherein they dissent from us, is of latter invention. And in how many grand and weighty particulars (besides their accessory and gaudy ceremonies) they dissent from the scriptures, forsake the apostles, run contrary to the sanctions of ancient councils, might be at large educed out of authentic records, and demonstrated to be but a novelty.

*Object.* *But are there not several things found in the reformed churches that are of the same standing, and favour of equal novelty, of which it may be said, It was not so from the beginning?*

*Answer.* To which it may be replied, That it is the duty of all reformations, to come up exactly to scripture, and what is not done at one time in some smaller matters, may be performed at another. There is no church under heaven perfectly beautiful; that will not be till Christ presents her to himself *without spot or wrinkle*, Eph. v. 26. If but pretended watchmen take away her spotted vail she will be glad of a purer. It is wisdom to learn by the reproof of an adversary. But as to the grand fundamental points, we unanimously agree; we lay no other foundation than the Rock Christ Jesus, and seriously profess the scriptures to be our perfect rule; and if any will teach us wherein we swerve, we are ready to yield obedience to the laws of Christ. So that (as the learned Crakanthorp determines) “Although  
“Irenæus, Justin Martyr, and Cyprian, &c. in some things  
“might err, yet because they thought those things to be  
“taught in the scripture, which they made their guide, and  
“were ready to reform upon eviſtion out of the holy scrip-  
“tures, they no doubt died in the faith \*.” But he teaches the contrary of those that hold the pope’s infallible judgment in causes of faith; for that is none of God’s foundation whereupon to ground our belief and practice.

*Enq. 4.* Can that be deemed a true church of Christ successively in all ages, that varies from and contradicts itself; makes decrees in matters of faith quite contrary to those of precedent times, and that in matters of faith? And if the philosopher said right, that there is no medium in a perfect contradiction; if the one be true, the other is false: What shall be deemed of such a society, that, in the great matters of faith, besides in many other things of great importance, have determined quite contrary? Truth is always consistent and invariable. But here is pope against pope, council against council, one society, order and fraternity against another; where shall a poor Christian fix his resolution? If the former be true, the latter are undeniably false: And

if

\* Crakanth. of councils, p. 191.

if the latter be true, in what a sad state were the ancients? How might this amaze the drusy and enchanted world did they seriously reflect upon it? Sylverius and Vigilius clashed and conflicted in that grand point of the three chapters agitated in the fifth general council\*. Pope Agatho determined quite contrary to Vigilius in the same case. Stephen VI. abrogates the decrees of Formosus, digs up his body, and cuts off the two fingers of his right hand which are used in consecrations. It was customary for the following bishops either to invalidate or utterly take away the acts of their predecessors, as Romanus, Theodotus, John X. and Sergius did. Gregory I. declares him to be antichristian, and to blaspheme, that should arrogate that profane name of supreme over all other; and calls him *The king over all the children of pride*: But Greg. IV. deposes every one, who does not obey the apostolical seat; Nicolas II. pronounces him without doubt a heretick; and Gregory VII. or Hildebrand, stigmatizes with the brands of idolatry, witchcraft, and Paganism, such who call themselves Christians, and obey not the apostolical chair. Celestine III. determines against a divorce between Christians and infidels, but Innocent III. determines the contrary. Multitudes of cases might be added, wherein they made no scruple to rescind, abrogate, and decree contrary to their predecessors.

The council of Constance determines thus: "It is of necessity to salvation to believe that a general council hath supreme authority in the church; yea, over the pope himself †." And this is ratified by pope Martin V. and yet you have seen before, that the Lateran council hath determined the quite contrary. The council of Orange, and that of Milevis in Numidia, determine against free-will; and the council of Gangra, now Congria, by the river Halys, determines anathema to such as refuse to communicate with a married priest; but these things are contradicted by Trent. The like might be shewn about Rome's jurisdiction, communicating the cup to the people, the conception of the Blessed Virgin, and several other points, which would swell too large.

I shall conclude this section with an observation about the holy Bible itself: Former editions not satisfying Sixtus V. he set forth a new one, ratified by his edict, 1589. Clement VIII. 1592, commands another new edition to be received with equal veneration, and the contemners of it exposed to new imprecations and curses; and yet these two editions

\* Crakanth. Councils, p. 471. et alibi.

† Concil. Basil. in epistola Synodali ad universos Christi fideles.

editions of the holy Bible, differ in two thousand places, and some so material, that they arise to flat contradictions. So that if their popes decretory sentences in matters of faith, their councils in points necessary to salvation, their doctors in great and important concerns of the church, their very Bibles, differ so egregiously from one another, where shall a Christian in such a society fix his mind?

*Enq. 5.* Can such claim the honour of being a true church of Christ, who impiously derogate from the essential honour of God and of Jesus Christ? that exalt a sinful man unto the dignities and incommunicable excellencies of the divine Majesty? But such there are, who highly pretend to Christ and his holy church, and yet dare to open their mouths in strange and fearful expressions, in their canon-law, when they magnify their Roman president: He is said to "have a heavenly arbitrament, to change the nature of things. He can make any thing out of nothing. In what he wills, his will stands for reason; neither may any say, *Why dost thou so?* He can make justice out of injustice, by correcting and changing of laws, and hath a fulness of power\*." They say, Not man but God separates them whom the Roman bishop does, who bears the viceroyship of the true God in the earth. And to name no more, the gloss upon Pope Boniface, set out by Gregory XIII. adds this, *Non videretur Dominus discretus fuisse, &c.* "The Lord would not seem to have been discreet, that I may speak with reverence of him, unless he had left such an only vicar behind him, who might do all these things †."

*Enq. 6.* Whether can that be a true church which persecutes to the utmost them who teach, profess and maintain the holy doctrine and pure worship which was left by our blessed Lord and his apostles in the holy scriptures? And this is not an accidental thing, falling out now and then when cruel ones sit in power, for it is by principle. To go no higher than Trent, what great points of primitive Christianity are smitten with terrible anathemas ‡? nay, what smaller differences are made obnoxious to the same indignation? As to say, Marriage is no sacrament, and that it does not confer grace; or to say the church cannot dispense with the degrees of consanguinity in Leviticus; or to say that matrimonial causes belong not to ecclesiastical judges, &c. To deny the supremacy of Rome is

\* Decret. Greg. IX. l. i. tit. 7. c. 3. Gloss. Dist. 96. c. 7.

† See Ranchinus, an author of their own, his review of the council of Trent, p. 114.

‡ Concil. Trident. sess. 24. can. 1, 2, 12.

is absolute heresy; and Pius II. has detestus, *the apostle and son* and heresy to appeal to a future council. *only* commission stands the Gallican church? Now, in these points they are judges in their own cause; though sometimes they have asserted, and Nicolas I. and Celestine confessed that even reason itself teaches, that our enemies must not be our judges; and the canon-law expressly says, "The pope must not judge in his own cause!" Yet they proceeded at Trent, though the clergy of several provinces were absent, and some Christian princes disavowed it. Now, what becomes of persons thus determined against and excommunicated? why the canon-law dispatches the matter speedily: *Non arbitramur, &c.* "We do not esteem them for murderers, who burning with zeal for the holy catholic mother-church should happen to kill any that are excommunicated:" And besides, heretics are reckoned in so black a catalogue, that faith is not to be kept with them. *Absolutos se noverint, &c.* "Let them know that they are absolved from the obligation of fealty, homage, and all duty, whoever were held bound by any covenant, strengthened by whatever band, to such as are manifestly lapsed into heresy\*." And the council of Constance hath defined, That the safe conduct of princes granted to such, ought to be no bar to ecclesiastical procedure †. Now, since all the reformed churches lie prostrate under the thunderbolts of the Roman capitol; what will become of Christian or of human society, if any church differ from their sentiments? What sad havoc has been made in the earth, even for such things as are consonant to the holy scriptures, the red lines in the annals and martyrologies of most churches, do abundantly testify. How unmanly to use blows instead of reasons; yea, how devilish to persecute men for keeping the commandments of God! Good Bernard said once to Eugenius, What do you use a sword for? You are commanded to sheath it, as Peter was. Do the work of an evangelist, and feed the sheep. Our Lord did not bid Peter feed his sheep with iron and steel! Polydore Virgil could observe, that the churches troubles under Pagan emperors so increased the numbers of believers, that they were at length more suspected for their multitudes, than their religion. The more Israel was afflicted in Egypt, the more they multiplied and grew, *Exod. i. 12.* Rome never lost ground so fast, as since they used the silly engine of persecution to gain it. Mankind is not devoid

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\* Decret. l. 5. tit. 7. c. 16. col. 1 86.

† Concil. Constant. sess. 19. f. 52 b.

of humanity, and Christianity has nobler maxims than Phalaris; even such as flow from that Prince of might, who bids the world learn of him, *for he is meek and lowly*; and so his blessed church is compared to a flight of doves, and flock of sheep, who by the generous power of the Spirit of God in conversion, do lay down the brutish tyger at the foot of the Prince of peace, and become mild, meek and peaceable, *forgiving and forbearing one another, because God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them*, Eph. iv. 32. But how unhappy are they that leave the posts of wisdom, and take sanctuary at the gates of hell!

Besides purity of doctrine, worship and discipline, whereby the church may be known, this of its perilous and troublesome state is another mark; *In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace*, saith our Lord, John xvi. 33. Where hawks and wolves do haunt, there is doves-cotes or flocks of sheep near. So that if any ask, Where our church was of old? I reply, Where persecutions tried their faith. It is but reading their own records, their scarlet registers, and they will easily discern, by the scriptural points for which holy men suffered, a sufficient mark and evidence of the true church.

Let us then briefly recapitulate and conclude, That since the church of Rome doth err in fundamental doctrines; by idolatry hath broken covenant with God; blasphemously derogate from the glory and honour of Christ; contradict themselves in important matters of salvation; and persecute such as profess and endeavour to follow only the apostolical rules, and the consonant practice of the primitive churches; therefore she is not the spouse nor true church of Christ.

The late abbot Gualdi may be acquitted from rashness in concluding, That "amongst all the churches since the beginning of the world; there has not been found such inconstancy and confusion as in the church of Rome; so many antipopes, schisms, heresies, controversies, suspensions, persecutions, false opinions, scandals, tyrannies, and intestine quarrels as there \*." But we will rather turn these complaints into unfeigned prayer for their salvation, and pray that the great God would give them *repentance to the acknowledging of the truth*, 2 Tim. ii. 25.

Corol. III. Since those are true marks of the church of God, we may conclude, that the people of God in Britain are, blest be his name, in the happy possession of the true apostolical doctrine and worship, according to the holy scriptures, and consonant to what the true church of God hath

\* Hist. of Cardinals, p. 39.

hath held in all ages, since the Lord Jesus, *the apostle and high-priest of our profession*, hath left this heavenly commission of the Father with his church.

It were no difficult task, to shew out of our own monuments and antiquities, and from the writings and records of several ancients and moderns, that Britain was not converted by such as came from Rome, but by others that came hither in the reign of Tiberius, and such as attended Joseph of Arimathea sent out of Gaul by Philip \*. 1. That Philip preached the gospel in Gaul, Isidorus, and our ancient Nennius, and Freulfus, do attest. That Joseph of Arimathea came into Britain to preach the gospel, is exceeding probable; unless to such whom no ancient testimonies, records or traditions do favour or relish, but such as gratify their own private fancies and designs; yea, several agree, that he came at the instance and by the direction of Philip. But we may ascend higher, and shew, That the seeds of the Christian religion were first sown in this island twenty-six years earlier, *viz.* in the latter end of the reign of Tiberius: For thus writes our ancient Gildas, *Tempore, ut scimus, &c.* "Christ first indulged his rays, *i. e.* his "precepts, in the latter end of Tiberius Cesar, as we know." The last year of Tiberius fell in *anno Christi* 37. as Petavius one of their exactest chronologers states it; who brings Peter first to Rome *anno* 42, and sets him in the chair *anno* 43. But the Britons received the gospel five years before his coming to Rome, and that while Peter was yet at Joppa. Baronius brings Peter to Rome *anno* 44, but settles his episcopal chair *anno* 45. In this case, the Britons receiving the gospel in the year 37, must anticipate Peter's pretended coming to Rome, no less than seven years.

If then the British church was planted before ever Peter came to Rome, let us call to mind that ancient rule, "All "churches remain subject to him, (*i. e.* in his successors) "by whom they were instituted." And this was a public sanction of the general council of Ephesus, in the case of the Cypriots; who having received the faith from Barnabas, were much molested by the bishops of Antioch; concerning whom the Ephesine fathers made a decree, and extended it to all churches: *Nullus episcoporum, &c.* "Let no "bishop bring under his power another province, which "was not his before, and from the beginning." Since Britain therefore received the first glorious light of true faith from other disciples of our Lord, and not from Peter, and was converted some years before the common tradi-

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\* Isidorus de sanctis, l. 1. Orthodox pat. vol. I. p. 593.

tion of Peter's coming to Rome can be cleared: This rule totally exempts us from all jurisdiction pretended by them, since we are, upon these grounds, evidently reducible to some of the Asian or Greek churches, in respect to the ancient rites of worship, concurring with theirs in many things, but especially in the celebration of Easter and ministration of baptism. This troubled the North British churches; about which very thing the synod at Whitby was called *anno* 664, and there Hilda and her associates averred their customs from John, Philip, Polycarp, &c. of the eastern communion: Neither were these matters wholly silenced as to the Welsh Britons till the year 762.

But suppose, 1. We received our light first from Rome, which yet is false; and grant, 2. The dominion of Peter to be universal; and yield, 3. The bishop of Rome to be his undoubted successor; and that, 4. There are no flaws in the old chair; and that, 5. The bishop is invested by Christ with all the privileges of an apostle; which are all precarious and begged: Yet, if they apostatize from the doctrine and faith of Peter, must all other churches be censured for separating from them who separate from Christ, from Peter and from Paul? We profess to hold unfeignedly with old Rome, whatever it held according to Paul's epistle to the Romans; nay, and with the church of Babylon, 1 Pet. v. 13. in whatever they retain of Peter's doctrine: When they are returned to Peter and Paul's doctrine, &c. then let them treat with us; but else, if any depart, that old maxim should be refreshed, *Causa, non separatio schismaticum facit*: "It is not separation, but the cause that determines schism." They are schismatics that depart from Peter, *Constit. Apostol.* l. 6. c. 4. And another not to be forgotten: *Dum ecclesia habet, &c.* "While a church hath a heretic or schismatic for its pastor, it is to be counted vacant." In which case, what shall be said to their own Genebrard, who affirms, That fifty popes in succession, for almost one hundred and fifty years together, were either, "Irregular or apostates, rather than apostolical\*." When these points are duly weighed, what cause the reformed have had for a secession and departure from them, to the glory of God, to the reverence of Peter's doctrine, to the comfort and peace of our consciences; let the Greek churches, or any other that maintain scripture doctrine and worship, nay, let all in other parts of the world that own the true God, be judges.

But to draw to an end: How greatly ought we to rebound his praises, who hath in all ages, through the depth of the darkest

\* Genebrard Chron. l. 4. ann. 904. p. 807.

darkest times, conserved the true faith and doctrine all along, and of his great mercy conveyed to us authentic testimonies and evidences, notwithstanding the barbarism and violence of several ages against the truth. Nay, it might be shewn that God hath not left us without a lamp of testimony to the most material points, even here in Britain, even till the time of Wickliff, when the truth broke out more gloriously, and still shineth in great lustre, blessed be his most holy name.

*Corol. IV.* Hath almighty God, of his infinite goodness, so graciously hitherto preserved his church, and bestowed upon the reformed countries his most holy Bible, translated with great care and diligence out of the sacred originals into our mother tongues, and poured out that grace to endeavour to reform, according to his heavenly directions therein recorded; *Let us then give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip,* Heb. ii. 1. and *hold fast* that which we have received from heaven, that *no man take away our crown,* Rev. iii. 11. Let us take heed of wantonness, of resisting or abusing the blessed gospel, or any way walking unworthy of it, lest God provoked by our unholiness, should remove the golden candlestick into corners, or to other nations. Let us take great heed of creeping corruptions, and of those communions that err in faith, departing from the head, from the scriptures, from the doctrine of the apostles, from purity of worship, lest if we partake of their sins, we be involved also in their plagues. *Come out of her, my people,* says the Lord; and having been obedient to the heavenly vision, let us keep our garments unspotted, that men see not our shame, Rev. xviii. 4. As we love the salvation of our souls, and the glory of the Son of the living God, the only true basis and rock of his church; let us heartily pity, and earnestly pray for such as are yet judicially hardened to believe a lie.

*Corol. V.* Since our blessed Lord hath built his church upon himself, who is a rock flowing with milk and honey, then all true believers being fixed upon this amiable and lovely *foundation laid in Zion*, should sweetly unite in holy love together, *being rooted and built up together in him,* Col. ii. 7. Let not these living marbles, polished for Solomon's palace, dash against one another. Let not the sheep of Christ push each other. These unnatural buttings (as shepherds observe) presage very stormy days. Shall roses that grow in Sharon, gash each others tender sides, and the church's vines turn brambles? When some troops in an army

army fight not against the enemy, but give fire at their own regiments, is it not a notorious sign of infatuation, or conspiracy against their native prince? Shall a few externals engage spirits in mutual heats and conflicts, to the laughter, scorn, and hope of the adversary; who will join with one part for a while, that they may devour both at last, and blow up those intestine heats into a flame, at which they will joyfully warm their hands? Mildness and meekness is the glory of a Christian; and the way to gain brethren to our opinions, is by ponderous arguments and sweet affections. It is utterly impossible in our lapsed estate, to make all of a mind, and a most improper means to propagate opinions by violence. We agree in the main, *and whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, and mind the same things*; and if any be otherwise minded, God may in time reveal even that unto them. There will never be peace in the Christian world, so long as scrupulous externals are by proud and foolish persons pressed with equal rigour to many substantials and fundamentals.

So far are some pious spirits from this fiery temper, that they are not without hope of several in far different communions: But if any among ours speak or write more mildly, favourably and softly, of some of theirs, it is not to be understood of such as finally persist in the high and fundamental points of difference; but of such as sincerely cry out with the cardinal, *Tutissimum est, &c.* "It is safest to cast all our confidence on the mercy and benignity of God only.\*" To adhere to the precious blood of Christ alone, without works. There be some even in Babylon of his people, to be called out in the day of vengeance, Rev. xviii. 4. Such as are in heart ours, and as to the cardinal point of justification, die in the reformed religion; such as Pighius (though otherwise bitter) Vergerius, Gerson, Ferrus, Jansenius, and Father Paul the Venetian, and others.

*Corol. VI.* In the last place. All the true living members of the holy church of Christ, may be greatly comforted from this text and doctrine; for though the church will never be fully quiet and at rest, while the gates of hell stand undemolished, but will be still exposed to furious assaults, to boisterous waves, tempestuous storms, direful persecutions, and secret undermining heresies; to fierce oppositions and flattering inticements, and sometimes to both together, yet herein stands the faith and patience of the saints, Rev. xiii. 10. Therefore all gracious Christians must be content, and resolved to exercise themselves in this spiritual warfare,

\* Bell. de justif. tom. iv. l. 5. c. 7. p. 276. col. Ag. 1628.

warfare, and by fervent prayer call down help from heaven, whereby the invincible and omnipotent God is humbly implored, and legions of holy angels sent for assistance. Yet,

1. Let holy souls be comforted in this, that *no weapon formed against mount Zion shall finally prosper*, Isa. liv. 17. *The virgin daughter of Zion hath despised them, and laughed them to scorn, the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at them*, xxxvii. 22. By how much the more the enemies rage against her, by so much the more the true professors of piety and faith increase. Not unlike the vine that grows the more fertile by pruning, or as the palm, that rises the more erect after weights and pressures. The church of God, though she be not always so openly visible, as that all the world shall cry Hosanna to her splendor and glory, yet she grows more numerous, holy and stable, by her troubles. Her enemies may seem for a time to be strong, but shall not prevail, as it is promised in the text; shall never subdue and vanquish her. They might believe Christ, and spare their trouble. They may put forth their utmost power, but the gates of hell, of death and the grave, shall never attain to, or compass so deadly a stroke, as shall extirpate the church in any age. Nay, the wisdom of God hath ever turned their policies into folly, and their puissance into cowardice. They have often been forced to suck up the cockatrice eggs that they have laid, and felt the keenness of their own recoiling arrows. They may open, but shall never be able to swallow the church: They may cast out floods, but shall never drown her; as was said of ancient Rome, *Mersa profundo, pulchrior evenit*: "Cast her in the sea, she dives, and rises again with her face washed from spots, and looks more beautiful." The church may be pressed for a while, but suppressed never. The archers may shoot sorely at her, but her bow shall abide in strength. God will have a church to endure to the world's end, in spite of all the privy leagues and confederacies that are contrived in, or all the forces and powers that issue from the gates of hell. *Her place of defence shall be the munition of rocks*, Isa. xxxiii. 16 and *all the nations that fight against Ariel shall be as the dream of a night vision*, Isa. xxix. 7.

2. The church after all assaults and conflicts, in fine, shall be completely victorious and triumphant; she will joyfully survive her enemies, and behold their funerals. Let holy souls rely upon this promise in the text, and improve it in prayer for their comfort and sustentation; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. *The nations shall see it, and be confounded at all their might, &c. They shall lick the dust like*

*like a serpent, and move out of their holes like worms of the earth: They shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and fear because of him,* Mic. vii. 16. There is a time, and it hastens, that this Rock shall dash them in pieces, and they shall become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind shall carry them away, and no place be found for them, Dan. ii. 35. There is a glorious time coming, when the stones of this temple shall be laid with fair colours, and her foundations with sapphires, her windows with agates, her gates with carbuncles, and all her borders with pleasant stones, Isa. liv. 11. when the false rock of the pretended Peter shall like a millstone be flung into the depth of the sea, and her gaudy edifice shall melt into foam, and be dissipated among the waters. Then shall be fulfilled that of Obadiah: *Saviours shall come upon mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's,* ver. 21.

3. In the mean time, let the church of God be comforted also in this, that the bread of support shall be given her, and the water of consolation shall be sure, Isa. xxxiii. 16. Out of this rock of ages flows a river of living waters, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, Psal. xlv. 4. Nay, with honey out of the rock shall they be satisfied, lxxx. 16. while wandering in the wilderness toward Canaan, and at last transported to the city of the New Jerusalem, which is a *love*, where there is *fulnes of joy, and pleasures for evermore,* Psal. xvi. 11. where they shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of that heavenly temple, and shall drink in the rivers of the celestial Eden.

## S E R M O N X.

Mr. M A Y O.

### Invocation of Saints and Angels unlawful,

Rom. x. 14. *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed.*

**M**Y business being to shew the sin and folly of Papists in praying to angels and saints departed, I thought this scripture a fit introduction to it. This text alone, in the

the learned Usher's opinion \*, will put an end to this controversy amongst those that list not to be contentious. I shall not dilate upon the context; let it suffice to tell you, that the scope of the apostle is to prove, that there was a necessity of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, as well as the Jews. He had shewed before that there was no difference betwixt them, that *the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him*; that the Gentiles calling upon him should be saved by him: Hence therefore he infers; that the gospel must needs be preached to them; for as it follows in the text; *How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

His way of arguing is very forcible and demonstrative. So also is his manner of speaking, which is by way of interrogation, which is the more convincing because it carries with it a kind of an appeal to the persons spoken to: The interrogation here is equivalent to a negation: *How shall they call upon him, i. e. they cannot call upon him, in whom they have not believed?* The original is, *Ἐἰς ὅν, on whom*, there must be a believing *on*, as well as *in* him, whom we invoke; viz. a fiducial trusting and relying upon him. All supplication is founded on faith; none implore his favour on whom they have not some reliance. Whoever is the object of our prayers, must likewise be the object of our trust. Now it is God alone, Father, Son, and Spirit, in, or on whom we must believe; it is to him therefore, and him only, that we must pray. He is accurst in scripture that trusteth in any other, and so is he that religiously worships, or invokes any other but God alone. If Christ himself were a mere creature, and not God as well as man, we should sin by believing in him, or by worshipping or calling upon him. It is one argument whereby we prove the Deity of our blessed Redeemer, that the scripture doth every where represent him as the object of faith and religious invocation.

This foundation being laid, I come (without farther pre-facing) to raise or build upon it this ensuing proposition.

The practice of Papists in praying to angels, and saints departed, is very blame-worthy and abominable in the sight of God.

In the handling hereof, I shall first shew you, that this is the practice of the Papists to pray unto angels and saints: Secondly, That their so doing is very blame-worthy in the sight of God.

*First*, This is the Papists practice. To the end I may not

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\* Answer to a challenge made by a Jesuit in Ireland, p. 377.

falsly charge or accuse them, I shall, in the first place, set down the doctrine of their church about this matter, and that as it stands recorded in the council of Trent. Thus then that council hath determined, *Sanctis una cum Christo regnantibus*, &c. “That the saints reigning with Christ, and  
 “offering up their prayers for men, it is good and profitable humbly to invoke them, and that we may obtain  
 “benefits of God, through his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is our only Redeemer and Saviour, to have recourse  
 “to their prayers, aid and assistance.” It is true, here is nothing decreed about the invocation of angels (though that be also their common practice) but here is a positive prescription about the invocation of saints. It is good and profitable, says the council, humbly to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers; who, besides their praying for us, are supposed to afford some other aid and assistance to us: And what should that be? Why, to confer grace and glory, and every good thing. That this is intended, will appear, if you consider, in the next place, those forms of prayer that are in common use amongst them. And here I shall not instance in those pieces of devotion which are muttered in private corners or closets, but in such as are read or sung in their public churches or assemblies. In the Breviary, or Hours of Sarum (which was in great request in England before the Reformation) I find many pretty strains of devotion; sometimes to all the quire of angels in general, sometimes to this and the other angel in particular; to Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, whom they dignify with the title of archangel. But in that and other Breviaries, they are far more liberal of their prayers to the saints; though they are made a little lower, yet the devotion of the Papists is carried a little higher to them than to the angels: To these, and to their prayers, aid and assistance, they are more particularly directed (as you heard) and accordingly they practise. Of these they do not only desire that they would pray for them (as some of their latter writers, mincing the matter, do pretend) that indeed would be less culpable, though altogether, as we shall see, unwarrantable: But these they formally invoke, and pray unto, and that with the same shew of devotion which they use to God himself. To these they build temples, erect altars, burn incense, make vows and promises, &c. These they dignify with the same names, titles and attributes as they do our Saviour himself; and of these they ask the same blessings and favours as they do of God, and which are beyond the power of any mere creature in heaven or earth to give.

In particular they pray unto them, to enlighten their eyes, to increase their virtues, to pacify their consciences, to pardon their sins, to comfort and save their souls, &c. It is a poor plea of Bellarmine's, whereby he attempts to defend such prayers, "That though the words themselves may seem to imply more than a mere praying to the saints to pray for us, yet that is all which they intend \* " To this purpose also a latter writer delivereth himself: " It is the sense that makes the words to be prayer, and not the bare characters or letters; and that the church's sense is no other but to desire the saints to obtain for us the blessings expressed in those forms, is manifest from her frequent intermixing that usual form of *Pray for us*, and from her public doctrine as declared in the council of Trent, and inculcated to all the faithful in their catechisms †." To all which it may be replied, That many use these prayers who never were instructed concerning any such interpretations of them. And from whence should men learn the sense of their prayers, but from the known signification of the words used in them? If their leaders did mean as some of them speak and write for the better colouring and gilding over this abomination, why do not they all this while reform their Breviaries, and forms of devotion, and so frame the petitions or prayers therein, that they may be a little accommodated to this sense that they would seem to put upon them?

Before I pass this head, let me shew you one thing in their practice that deserves a particular remark; and that is the *hyperdulia*, as they call it, or the transcendent service and worship which they bestow upon the Virgin Mary. Her they salute and call upon under the terms of the *Queen of heaven*, the *gate of glory*, and *fountain of mercy*, and *mother of all grace*: She is a *goddess*, *saviouress*, *advocate*, *mediatrix*, *empress*, and what not? For her they have many particular offices; and to her they direct more prayers than unto God himself. To one *Pater Noster* they are taught to say ten *Ave Marias*; which being five times said, makes one *Rosary*, or *chaplet of prayers*: And to the end they might not be deceived in their tale, they say that St. Dominick did invent the use of beads. Of her their approved and renowned doctors affirm many incredible things; as that " She being the mother of the Son of God, who doth produce the Holy Ghost, therefore all the gifts, virtues and graces of the Holy Ghost, are by her hand administered to whom  
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\* De Sanct. Beat. l. i. c. 17.

† Cath. no Idolaters, p. 402, 404.

“ she pleaseth, when she pleaseth, how she pleaseth, and  
 “ as much as she pleaseth \*.” They teach that she is “ con-  
 “ stituted over every creature, and whosoever doth bow his  
 “ knee unto Jesus, doth fall down also and supplicate his  
 “ mother ; so that the glory of the Son may be judged not  
 “ so much to be common with the mother, as to be the  
 “ same †.” That “ she assumes to herself of the omnipo-  
 “ tency of her Son, as much as she pleaseth, and that she  
 “ comes before the golden altar of human reconciliation,  
 “ not interceding only, but commanding, being a mistress,  
 “ not a servant ‡.”

They tell us, “ That the history of Ahasuerus in Esther,  
 “ was a figure of God’s bestowing half his kingdom upon  
 “ the blessed Virgin ; that having justice and mercy as the  
 “ chiefest goods of his kingdom, he retained justice to him-  
 “ self, and granted mercy to her. Hence if a man find  
 “ himself aggrieved in the court of God’s justice, he may  
 “ appeal to the court of mercy of his mother, she being  
 “ that throne of grace whereof the apostle speaketh, Heb.  
 “ iv. 16. *Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, &c. §.*”  
 “ In respect of her, Bernard says, God, after a sort, is more  
 “ bound to us than we are to him. She, in some respect  
 “ did greater things to God, than God himself did to us  
 “ and all mankind She only said, *He that is mighty hath*  
 “ *done great things to me ;* but of her we may say, *She hath*  
 “ *done greater things to him that is mighty.* Though she  
 “ be subject to God in as much as she is a creature, yet is she  
 “ said to be superior and preferred before him, in as much  
 “ as she is his mother ¶.” They call upon her, “ in a mo-  
 “ ther’s right to command her Son §.” And in our Lady’s  
 Pfalter, made in imitation of David’s Psalms, the name of  
 God is every where expunged, and the name of the Virgin  
 Mary put in its place. Instead of *In thee, O Lord,* it is, *In*  
*thee, O Lady, I put my trust.* Instead of *Let the Lord arise,*  
 it is, *Let our Lady arise, and let her enemies be scattered.* In-  
 stead of *O come, let us sing unto the Lord,* it is, *O come, let us*  
*sing unto our Lady, and make a joyful noise to the queen of our*  
*salvation.* The very rehearsal of these things is enough to  
 make your ears tingle, and your hair to stand. O how  
 patient

\* Bernard in Senens. serm. 61.

† Arnold Carn. tract. de laud Virgin.

‡ Bult. Marial. part xii. serm. 2.

§ Bern. de Bultis Mar. part iii. serm. 3. et part. v. serm. 7.

¶ Bern. Sen. serm. 61. art. 1. c. 11. In Bultis Mar. part vi. et  
 serm. 2. part xii.

¶ Bonav. Cor. B. M. Virg. tom. vi. Rom. edit. anno 1588.

patient is God in bearing with the provocations of the Papacy!

*Secondly*, This practice of the Papists is very blame-worthy and abominable in the sight of God. A little reflection upon what hath been already declared might serve for confirmation hereof, and be instead of a thousand arguments with all those who have the least zeal of God's honour remaining in them. However, I shall attempt the proof of what I have propounded, by shewing you, that this practice of the Romanists is,

*1st. Unscriptural.* It hath not any warrant from the word of God. This is acknowledged by the most ingenious amongst themselves. Bannesi<sup>s</sup> confesseth, that it is not taught in the holy scriptures, neither expressly nor covertly, that prayers are to be made to saints. Bellarmine tells us, "It was not the manner under the Old Testament to say, "Holy Abraham, pray for us," &c. for which he gives several reasons, as, "That the fathers were then shut up "in prison, and did not see God \*," &c. Salmeran says the same, and adds, "That there is nothing exprest in the "gospels, or the epistles of the apostles touching this mat- "ter. It would have been hard, says he, to enjoin such a "thing on the Jews, and the Gentiles would have thought "that many gods were put upon them instead of the many "gods they had forsaken †." And indeed, in all the book of God there is not one precept for praying to saints, nor any example of any one of God's people that ever made such a prayer, nor any promise that such a way of praying should be accepted, nor any punishment threatened in case it be neglected. The scripture every where makes God to be the object of prayer and invocation. How many hundred petitions are upon record there, and not one of them put up to any other? When the Lord taught his disciples, and us in them, to pray, he directs them to say, *Our Father which art in heaven.* The scripture expresseth this duty often by the term of praying only, without any mention of the object; *When ye pray, use not vain repetitions: When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, &c.* whereby it is intimated, that prayer in the matter of religion can signify nothing else but praying unto God; and that it is not prayer if it be directed to any other.

This being the case, the popish practice must needs be an abomination. God will allow of nothing in his service and worship but what he hath instituted. It is the saying of

Bishop

\* Bellar. de Beat. sanctit. c. 19.

† Salmer. in 1 Tim. ii. 2. disput. 7, 8.

Bishop Davenant, "That all the necessary parts of religious worship do so depend upon the will of God revealed in his word, that whatsoever is not found in his word, is contrary to his will." To this purpose also is that of Augustine, *Deum sic colere*, &c. "We ought so to worship God as he hath appointed himself to be worshipped \*." The Israelites are dehorted from using the religious rites and customs of the Heathens in worshipping of God; but *what thing soever I command you, says God, observe to do it: Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish therefrom*, Deut. xii 32. To which may be added that of our Saviour, Matth. xv. 9. *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*, that is, pressing mens traditions in the room of Christ's institutions.

One thing more may be considered under this head, that the worshipping of saints and angels is not only unscriptural, but antiscritural, being positively forbidden. It is written, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him ONLY shalt thou serve*. I am not ignorant of the popish distinction betwixt *latria* and *dulia*; the former, they say, belongs to God, the latter may be applied to the creature. But how often have they been told, that these are used reciprocally both in sacred and profane write? Yea, some of themselves have been so convinced of this, that they have acknowledged it. He who first coined this distinction did never intend it in the popish sense, for he confesseth that both the one and the other belong only to God: The one being due to him as he is our Lord, the other as he is our God. Nor when our Saviour uttered these words, was he desired of the devil to refer that service to him which they call the superior and highest worship; nor did he pretend to be God himself, but only his minister, and a little religious prostration would have served his turn. But what says Christ to him? *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*: The word ONLY is not in the Old Testament text, Deut. vi. 13. but our Saviour puts it in to shew that God, and none but him, is the object of religious worship. Hence we find an angel chides the apostle John for offering religious service unto him: *See thou do it not*, Rev. xix. 10. *I am thy fellow-servant*; the word is *syndulos*, I am thy servant in *dulia*, and so he rejects that kind of worship which the Papists say belong to saints and angels: And then it follows, *Worship God*; he is the only object of religious worship.

2dly, This practice is *irrational*. There is nothing more absurd. The absurdity of it will appear in these two particulars.

1. It

\* Aug. de consens. evangel.

1. It is owned on all hands to be ridiculous and irrational to pray to them that cannot hear our prayers. The text says, *How shall we call on them on whom we do not believe?* And I may add, *How shall we call on them who cannot hear us?* That this is the case of the glorified spirits is evident, because—they are not *omnipresent*; they are circumscribed and finite creatures, and can be but in one place at once. I dare affirm this of the Virgin Mary herself; and how then shall she hear the prayers of a hundred thousand persons, who, it may be, are praying to her at one and the same time; some of them in this hemisphere, and some of them in the other? And if she cannot hear, surely she cannot help those who are so much devoted to her service.—Neither are they *omnipercipient*: If they should hear what men say with their mouths, they cannot perceive or understand what they say in their hearts. Now, the most of our prayers, especially in our private devotions, are merely mental, conceived only in our hearts and minds; yea, the most acceptable prayers consist many times in those sighs and groans which are never uttered. To say the saints and angels are privy to these, is to deify them. There is not a mere creature in heaven, but will confess, as David in another case, that *such knowledge is too painful and too wonderful for him*, Psal. cxxxix. 6. This is an incommunicable property and perfection of God; so Solomon affirmeth, *Thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men*, 2 Chron. vi. 30.

It is disputed, whether the saints in heaven have any knowledge at all of human affairs on earth. Many wise and learned men are of the contrary opinion, and so the scripture itself seems to be, Job xiv. 21. 2 Kings xxi. 20. Eccl. ix. 5. Isa. lxiii. 16. We may affirm with the greatest confidence, that they have no such knowledge as is necessary in this case; they can neither hear nor understand the prayers that men offer up unto them, nor with what mind they offer them, whether in sincerity or hypocrisy.

The Papists themselves are greatly divided to this day about this matter, and can neither satisfy themselves nor one another, how the glorified saints come to have notice of our supplications. Many nice and curious questions they have; as, Whether the souls of those they pray to be present or absent? If they be present, then whether it be really or virtually? If they be absent, and have information from others, then whether it be from angels, or from God himself? Or, if it be from God, then whether it be by particular revelation from him, or by the beatifical vision of him? Thus these Babel-builders are confounded.

They

They agree, that the saints must be made acquainted with our prayers, or else in vain are they invocated; but how they come at it, they are not at all agreed. Some of them are much taken with a conceit of a looking-glass in the face of God, wherein those blessed spirits have a full view of all things past, present, and to come; but alas! this speculum in God's face or essence, was broken in pieces long ago. Cajeton, Gabriel, Durundus, Scotus, Occam, &c. acknowledged the folly and rashness of these that invented it: Nor will that text, *In thy light we shall see light*; nor that saying, He sees all things that sees him who sees all things, establish the belief of it. If it were so, then he that seeth God, seeth whatever is in God, and whatever God seeth; then the angels that always behold his face, would never have stooped down to pry, as they did, into the mysteries of the gospel; and needed not have been informed by the church about the manifold wisdom of God; then they would know future events, and could not be ignorant of the day of judgment.

2. These saints whom the Papists invoke are such whose saintship is not only questionable, but their very existence. Cassander, one of their own party, makes this complaint, "That the people do now almost despise the old saints, and serve with more affection the new, whose holiness is less certain; yea, there are some of them of whom we may justly doubt whether ever they lived in the world."

(1.) They call upon some of doubtful saintship or holiness, who instead of reigning in heaven, are frying in hell. He must be of an easy belief, that can be certainly persuaded that every one whom the pope canonizeth, is a saint indeed. The Romanists themselves acknowledge, that in a matter of fact his holiness himself may be mistaken, and that there may be an error in the very business of canonization: And some are strongly of opinion the pope was so when he canonized Thomas Becket archbishop of Canterbury, and commanded the people of England annually to celebrate the day of his passion, and that by prayers to him they should endeavour to merit the remission of their sins. Now this Thomas, for ought that appears in his history, and that as related by their own writers, was a proud prelate, and a rebel to his prince: One that had set the whole nation in a flame to defend the pope's quarrel against the king; and when he died was rather the pope's, than God's martyr, seeing he died not for the faith of Christ, but for the defence of the popish tyranny and usurpation. It is a good diversion to read his history as it is set together by doctor Patrick

Patrick in his reflections upon the devotion of the Roman church, there you may find what a kind of saint he was, and what devotions the people by thousands paid to his shrine. Yea, the people were so devoutly affected to this new saint, that in respect of him, they seemed to have but little consideration of the blessed Virgin, or of Christ himself: For there being three altars in the church of Canterbury, one to Christ, another to the Virgin Mary, and a third to this St. Thomas, the offerings at his shrine came to about a thousand pounds, when those to the Virgin Mary came not to five pounds, and to Christ nothing at all. The people were the more encouraged in their devotion; because of the lying legends and fabulous miracles that were reported to be wrought upon those that did invoke and pray unto him. One pleasant story may not be omitted, and it is of a bird that was taught to speak, and could say St. Thomas. It happened that this bird sitting out of his cage, was seized by a spar-hawk, who being ready to devour it, the bird cried St. Thomas, St. Thomas: Whereupon the spar-hawk fell down dead, and the pretty bird was saved alive. Now, says a devout author (and doubtless his inference is strong and concluding) “ If St. Thomas of his great grace heard and helped this poor bird, much more will he hear a Christian man or woman that cries to him for help and succour.”

Let me instance but in one more of their saints, St. Francis the founder of the Franciscan order. He is no ordinary person with them: His admirers parallel him with Christ, in the propheties that were before of him, in his birth, life, temptations, doctrine, miracles, and what not? This, and a great deal more of him may be read in his book of Conformities, which was published with allowance 1590. Of him one sings, *Qui Franciscus erat nunc tibi Christus erit.*

*Francis he was wont to be,*

*Now he shall be Christ to thee.*

Another great person, Bonaventure, swore at Paris, that St. John, by the angel that had the seal of the living God in the Revelation, meant no other than St. Francis\*; yea, such is their esteem of his intercession, that they prefer it to Christ's, and say, *Christus oravit, et Franciscus exoravit,* Christ hath prayed, Francis hath obtained.

Whoso reads the aforesaid book of Conformities, and Bonaventure of his life, and other chronicles and records of him under the Papists own hands, will soon find that he was strange kind of a saint, nay, that he did à multi-

\* Bonaventure, thence as a motto it is placed under his picture

tude of things that argued him destitute of common sense. What will you say of a man that shall preach to birds and beasts, and salute them kindly, saying, *Brother bird*, and *Brother beast*? What if you should see a man taking up the lice that fell from his garments, and putting them on again, for fear of wronging or dislodging these poor innocent creatures? What can be said for cutting his garments in pieces, and then giving them away? unless it were that he might give to the more. What will you say to his tumbling in the mire? unless it were a significant ceremony. And to his making crucifixes of mortar, as children do babies of dirt, with his own hands? Once more, what shall one think of his making a wife of snow, and of his embracing her to allay his amorous and lustful heat? These, with many more such ridiculous actions, shew him to be a bedlam brain-sick creature; and though by me he shall be no farther censured, yet I see no reason why he should be fainted, much less why he should be so blasphemously magnified and adored.

(2.) They invoke some that are of dubious existence, as well as holiness. As they have many suspected, so they have many feigned or fabulous saints in the church of Rome. What Christ said of the Samaritans, may as truly be said of the Romanists, *They worship they know not what, yea, they know not who*. Who would imagine this people should be so blinded and besotted as to worship and invoke imaginary saints? In the aforesaid Breviary or hours of Sarum, I find St. Christopher prayed unto whom they supposed to have been a giant of a prodigious stature; Mantuan says, he was many ells high. Ludovicus Vives says, he saw a tooth of his bigger than his fist. Of him it is reported that he carried Christ over an arm of the sea, and at last became his martyr, as well as his bearer. Another office you may there find to the three kings of Collen, who are invoked by the names of King Jaspar, King Melchior, and King Balthazar, and are intreated by the King of kings, whom they merited to see crying in his cradle, to compassionate their suppliants in their miseries\*. A farther office may be there seen for the most holy Ursula, and *the eleven thousand virgins*, her companions, who were all martyrs. The history of these virgin-martyrs is variously reported by their own authors; the most agree that they were killed at Collen by the barbarous Hunns, where they were all interred, and many of their

\* Hor. sec. usum Sarum, &c. sec. usum Roman. 1570.

their precious reliques are reserved to this day ; and it did not a little encourage them in their martyrdom, that Christ had sent his vicar amongst them, Pope Ciriacus, to absolve them from their sins, and to die a martyr with them. Others indeed report otherwise concerning them, and we Heretics, in such uncertainties, must be excused if we doubt whether ever there were any such number of virgin \* martyrs or no, and do think the church of Rome ridiculous, to say no more at present, in conferring on such imaginary saints religious worship and invocation. I could instance in many more such like Popish saints, as the *seven sleepers*, who slept in a time of grievous persecution 362 years, and afterwards in the reign of Theodosius awaked, and are deservedly worshipped, it seems in the church of Rome. And St. Longinus the soldier, that with his lance pierced our Lord Jesus upon the cross, and being almost blind with the sparkling of that blood, immediately received his sight, and believed ; and being instructed by the apostles, forsook his military profession, and lived thirty eight years a monastic life in Cappadocia ; and was at last martyred for the Christian faith.

Who so consults the Roman Breviaries, will meet with many more of this sort ; yea, with some that their own authors call symbolical saints, which yet are worshipped and invoked with greatest formality : But enough of this second particular, that it is an absurd and irrational service.

3. This practice is *idolatrours*. The Romanists are much offended at this charge : “ Any man, says a late writer, of common reason would think it were as easy to prove snow to be black, as so innocent a practice to be idolatry.” But it may be he is mistaken. It is agreed on all hands, that idolatry, in the proper notion of it, is a giving that worship and service to the creature, which is due only to God : yea, though men worship God, yet if they worship a creature also, they are idolaters. The apostle, Rom. i. 25. reproves those *that worshipped the creature besides the Creator*. And this was the idolatry of those that Shalmaneser sent to inhabit Samaria, 2 Kings xvii. 33. *They feared the Lord, and served other, or their own gods*. Now, that the Papists give religious worship to saints and angels as well as unto God, is evident by their own profession and practice.

Let it be farther considered, that the adoration and invocation of saints and angels in the church of Rome, is not only

\* In the Golden Legend printed at London, anno 1512. the company is made 26000.

only idolatrous, but it is in imitation of the old Pagan idolatry, and a manifest reviving of their doctrines of dæmons, which is foretold in scripture as that which should fall out in the last days amongst the degenerate and apottatizing Christians. So the apostle tells us in 1 Tim. iv. 12. *That in the latter times some shall revolt from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, or dæmons; that is, doctrines which they are objects, rather than authors of* Doctrines concerning dæmons; as *doctrines of baptism and of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment,* Heb. vi. 2. are doctrines about and concerning all these. Now, what these dæmons were, and what the Heathens doctrine about them was, may be read at large in Mede's apostasy of the latter times, a book which the Papists never cared to meddle with; there the author hath made it manifest, that the Gentiles idolatry, and theology of demons, is revived and re-inforced in the church of Rome. They fancied that their dæmons were an inferior sort of deified powers, that stood in the midst between the sovereign gods and them. The sovereign gods they supposed so sublime and pure, that mortals could not, might not approach to them: Therefore they introduced this middle sort of divine powers to be as mediators and agents between them. These dæmons or mediators were supposed to be of two sorts; some were the souls of men, who were deified after their death; the canonising of heroes and deceased worthies is an ancient indeed, it is older than the Papacy: Rome when it was Heathen had a custom to canonize their deceased emperors, and call them Divi or saints too. We read of St. Augustus the emperor, as well as of St. Augustine. "Another sort of dæmons they had, which were more sublime, which never dwelt in mortal bodies, but were from the beginning always the same." This second sort of dæmons doth fitly answer to those spiritual powers we call angels, as the former sort doth to those which with us are called saints. To these dæmons they built temples; their images, shrines and reliques, they religiously adored: So that in many respects the Pagan idolatry was a pattern of the Popish idolatry; the one is exactly parallel with the other, it hath a great affinity to it, and its very foundation from it. I know that it will be objected that those dæmons or inferior deities of the Heathens were the souls of wicked men and devils, whereas those who are invocated and adored by the Romanists are the spirits of just men and angels. To which I answer, That though in that respect there be a disparity,

yet the objection hath no force, because the idolatry of the Heathen did not lie in making an ill choice of the demons they worshipped, but in giving that religious worship to a creature which was due only to the Creator. Let him be a good or a bad angei, a just or a wicked person, so long as he is a creature, it is idolatry to offer religious worship or invocation to him

Before I conclude this point, let me give you the opinion of one of their own way upon this matter: His words are these; "Many Christians do for the most part transgress in a good thing, that they worship the male saints and female saints no otherwise than they worship God; nor do I see in many things wherein their opinion of the saints doth differ from that which the Heathen had of their gods \*. What Protestant heretic could have spoken more plainly? To carry on the allusion, consider how the Heathen had their tutelar gods for countries and cities; in like manner the Papists have their saint-patrons for particular places and nations; as St. George for England, St. Patrick for Ireland, St. David for Wales, St. James for Spain, St. Dennis for France, &c. The Heathen did appropriate particular employments and offices to their demons or deities; so do the Papists to their male and female saints: Only, as one observes, the superstition and folly of New Rome in this exceeds that of the Old; they could content themselves, with Æsculapius, only, in all matters that related to physic and diseases; but these have almost as many saints to invoke, as there are maladies to be cured: St. Agatha is good for fore breasts, St. Apollonia for the tooth-ach, St. Sigismund for fevers, St. Anthony for inflammations, and so on. Nay, in some cases they will not trust themselves in the hands of one saint alone; as for instance, in case of the pestilence they join St. Roch with St. Sebastian for surer aid. The Heathen were wont to invoke Lucina in the pains of child-birth, but the Papists think St. Margaret to be the better midwife; and St. Nicholas now in their esteem hath as much, or more power in the seas than ever Neptune had.

4. This practice is *injurious unto Christ*. It intrencheth upon his mediatory office, and doth manifestly rob him of his royal prerogative, which is to be the one, and only Mediator between God and man. Hear what the apostle says, *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*, 1 Tim. ii. 5. One exclusively, one, and but one. In this office Christ hath no sharers or partners.

As

\* Lud. Vir. notis in Aug. Civ. Dei, b. viii. c. 27.

As God is but one, and there is no other; so the Mediator is but one, and there is no other. The Papists may as well fancy many subordinate gods, as subordinate mediators between him and us. I am not ignorant of their distinction, that there is but one *Mediator of redemption*, but there are and may be many *mediators of intercession*. To which I answer, That the scripture knows no such difference or distinction of mediators; and in Christ they are one and the same thing; in this he interceeds that he hath satisfied for us, and it is in consideration of his death that God receives us into his favour. And if the distinction be admitted, the word between, in the text forecited, doth evidently shew that he rather speaks of a Mediator of intercession: For it is improper to say that Christ is a Redeemer between God and man; and yet that we may know that he doth not interceed for us only by his prayers, but by his passion and merits also, it is added, That *he gave himself a ransom for us*: And in 1 John ii. 1. when Jesus Christ the righteous is spoken of as our *Advocate*, it is presently added, That *he is the propitiation for our sins*; which shews that his intercession consists in his being a propitiation for sin. The high-priest under the law was a figure or type of Christ in this respect, for he was typically a mediator both of intercession and redemption. There was no other ordinary mediator of intercession but he; and hence it is that he went alone into the holy of holies to offer up incense unto God; he had no partners with him in his office. So Jesus Christ is *entered alone into the holy place not made with hands*, to wit, heaven itself, *to appear in the presence of God for us*. There is but one Advocate admitted into that court to appear for you, and plead your cause. It is necessary for the constituting of an advocate or intercessor for us in heaven, that he be commissioned and deputed by God unto that office; he must not arrogate or take it upon himself, unless he be called thereunto. Now this qualification doth suit with Christ and no other; no saint or angel had ever any commission or deputation from God for this service; to which of the angels or saints did he ever say, *Sit thou at my right hand; receive the devotions and petitions of sinners on earth, and present them to me in heaven?* I have read indeed that angels are deputed to be their guardians and ministers, but not to be their advocates and mediators.

One thing I would add, which deserves our consideration, that these Popish distinguishers do make the saints in heaven to be their mediators of redemption, as well as intercession:

sion : For no petition is more frequent in their offices to the saints, than that by their merits, as well as prayers, they might obtain such and such blessings here, and eternal life hereafter. If it would not tire you, I could treat you with many scores of instances : For a taste, let me give you a piece of a prayer to one Etheldred an English saint, and it is in these words : “ Look, O most gracious Virgin, upon our troubles which we deservedly sustain, and by the merits and intercession of thy holiness, both appease the anger of the Judge whom we have offended, and obtain that pardon which we have not deserved.” But above all, commend me to one of our country-folk, even St. Thomas Becket, whose blood they supposed of old to be as sovereign as Christ’s himself. It is not enough to pray, as they do, “ That by his merits and prayers they may be translated from vice to virtues, and from the prison to the kingdom ;” this they hope for from more ordinary saints : But as for St. Thomas, they pray, “ That by his blood they may climb to heaven, as he has done before them.” Now, judge by what hath been said, if the saints be not made mediators of redemption, as well as intercession.

I shall have done with this head, when I have observed one thing more, for the sake of which I shall never be reconciled to Rome, That is, they do not only degrade our Lord Jesus Christ, and bring in partners upon him in his office of intercession, but they disparage him too, and report that he being a judge as well as an advocate, is more inclined to severity ; that we may expect more pity and compassion from his mother, and the other saints, who are more disposed to mercy than he is. Yea, in some of their churches they have pictured Christ frowning and casting darts at sinners, whom they make to flee from him as if they were afraid of him ; and then the Virgin Mary is brought in as shrowding them, and interposing betwixt him and them. O unparalleled wickedness ! O ye vile and wretched Papists ! Have you never read what is reported of Christ in the scriptures of truth ? That *he is a merciful and faithful High-priest, one that hath compassion on poor sinners, as having himself been touched with the feeling of their infirmities.* Is this your dealing with him, to disgrace as well as to displace him ? What mean your great doctors by telling the world, “ That the intercession of the saints is more available than his ? That as he wrought greater miracles by the saints than by himself ; so often-times he sheweth the force of their intercession more than his own.”

“own.” What was his meaning who upon this question, Whether it be better to pray to God by Christ alone, or by the saints? determined it thus, *Oratio fusa per sanctos melior est*, It is better to do it by the saints? But it is time to conclude this part of my discourse, which was to prove the practice of the church of Rome in praying to saints and angels to be blame-worthy and abominable in the sight of God.

It remains now that I examine the pleas which the Papists have for this practice. You have seen already that the wisest among them do not pretend the warrant of God's word for it. Those who have attempted it, have failed so far in it, as that others of their own party have been ashamed of them. Who can forbear smiling to hear it inferred, that because the rich man prayed Father Abraham to send Lazarus to his aid, therefore it is lawful to invoke the saints. There is one text, however, which is strongly urged by them as seeming to patronize the invocation of angels, *The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads*, Gen. xlviii. 16. These words, says the learned Montague, are not spoken to, but of or concerning an angel, and the speech is by way of wish, not by way of prayer or supplication. But the true answer is, That by the angel there we are to understand not *an angel of the Lord*, but *the angel that is the Lord*. The Lord himself is called *the Angel of the covenant*, Mal. iii. 1. and *the angel of his presence*, or *the counsel of God*, Isa. lxiii. 9. The Lord was the angel with whom Jacob wrestled, and the angel whom Jacob invocated. He prayed him to bless his nephews, to whom he had said a little before, *I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me*; and that was not a created angel, but Jesus Christ the Creator of angels. The same Jesus is the angel who is said to *stand at the altar with a golden censer, having much incense given him that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne*, Rev. viii. 3. It is he only who is our great high-priest, that offereth or presenteth our prayers with the incense of his merits upon the golden altar, that is, upon himself, unto God, for a *sweet smelling savour*, Eph. v. 2.

But what they want in scripture, they say, they have in the writings of the ancient fathers. Bellarmine says, “All the fathers, Greek and Latin, teach that the saints are to be invocated\*.” Salmeron, Stapleton, and others, speak the same language. “These kind of men, says Bishop Usher, have so inured their tongues to talk of the fathers,

“and

\* Bellarm. de eccl. triumph. l. i. c. 6.

“ and all the fathers, that they can hardly use any other  
 “ form of speech; and having told such tales as those so  
 “ often over, at last persuade themselves they are true in-  
 “ deed.” The same learned person in his answer to a chal-  
 “ ledge made by a Jesuit in Ireland, hath this passage: “ How-  
 “ ever our challenger, says he, gives it out that prayer to  
 “ saints was of great account amongst the fathers of the  
 “ primitive church for the first four hundred years after  
 “ Christ, yet for nine parts of that time, I dare be bold to  
 “ say, that he is not able to produce as much as one single  
 “ testimony out of any father, whereby it may appear that  
 “ any account at all was made of it.” Nay, he makes it evi-  
 dent they were all against it. They who desire further in-  
 formation, may consult his quotations out of the ancient fa-  
 thers. I could fill many pages with apposite testimonies  
 and citations, but these would swell this discourse too much.  
 Take two or three of the Greek and Latin fathers for a  
 taste.

1. Of the Greek fathers. Ignatius, epist. 6. who flour-  
 ished about the 140th year of our Lord, in his epistle to  
 the Philadelphians, writes thus, “ You virgins, have none  
 “ but Jesus Christ alone before your eyes in your prayers,  
 “ and the Father of Jesus Christ.” It seems that Christians,  
 in his time, did not so much as look to, or call upon, the  
 Virgin Mary. Origen says, “ We must pray to him alone  
 “ who is God above all things. To him also we must pray  
 “ who is the Word, the only Son of God, and the first-  
 “ born of all creatures.”—“ We ought not to worship our  
 “ fellow-worshippers, to pray to those that pray them-  
 “ selves\*.” Athanasius wrote much about this matter;  
 and his contending with the Arians gave him occasion for  
 it: They maintained that Christ was a mere creature, and  
 yet they prayed to him; and, on the contrary, he asserted,  
 that if he were created, he must not be invocated. “ To  
 “ God alone, saith he, it belongeth to be worshipped, and  
 “ the angels themselves are not ignorant hereof; for al-  
 “ though they excel in glory, yet they are creatures, and  
 “ are none of those that are to be worshipped, but worship  
 “ the Lord.” And again, “ Because Jesus Christ is not a  
 “ creature, but is begotten of the very substance of the Fa-  
 “ ther, and is by nature the Son of God, therefore he is  
 “ worshipped †.”

2. The Latin fathers. Tertullian who lived about the  
 beginning of the third century, tells us, “ That such and such  
 things

K k

\* Contra Celsum, l. viii. in epist. ad Rom. c. 10.

† Athanas. in Grat. cont. Arrian.

“ things he might not pray for from any other but from him  
 “ of whom he knew he should obtain them, because it is he a-  
 “ lone that is able to give, and I am he for whom they must  
 “ be obtained, being his servant who observe him alone †.”  
 Novatianus, whose book of the Trinity is added to Tertullian’s works, saith, “ If Christ be only a man, why is a man  
 “ called upon in our prayers as a mediator, seeing that the  
 “ invocation of a man is judged of no efficacy to salvation ?  
 “ Why also is hope reposed in him, seeing hope in man is  
 “ accursed ?” And again, “ If Christ be only a man, how is  
 “ he present being called upon every where ? seeing this is  
 “ not the nature of man, but of God, that can be present  
 “ at every place ‡.” Ambrose in his funeral oration upon  
 Theodosius the emperor, hath this passage, “ Thou alone,  
 “ O Lord, art to be invocated. Thou art to be intreated  
 “ to make up the want of him in his sons.” Augustine in  
 his Confession, *l. 1. c. 5.* prays thus, “ I confess and know  
 “ my soul is defiled, but who shall cleanse it ? or to whom  
 “ else should I cry besides thee ? And again, *l. 10. c. 42.*  
 “ Whom should I find that might reconcile me unto thee ?  
 “ Should I have gone to the angels ? with what prayer ?  
 “ with what sacraments ?”—“ In the catholic church it is  
 “ divinely and singularly delivered, That no creature is to  
 “ be worshipped, but he only who is the Creator of all  
 “ things §.”—“ Jesus Christ is the priest, who being now  
 “ entered within the veil, alone there, of them that have  
 “ been partakers of flesh, doth make intercession for us ;  
 “ in figure of which thing, amongst that first people, and  
 “ in that first temple, the priest only did enter into the holy  
 “ of holies, and all the people stood without ||.” Once  
 “ more, says he, the worshipping of men that are dead,  
 “ should be no part of our religion ; because, if they lived  
 “ piously, they will not seek that kind of honour : They  
 “ are to be honoured therefore for imitation, not to be a-  
 “ dored for religion \*.”

These are a few of the many testimonies which are found  
 in the writings of the ancients. If any shall say, that there  
 are some passages in Ambrose, Austin, and other writers  
 near that age, that favour this opinion or practice of invo-  
 cating saints, I answer. Mere human writings are no founda-  
 tion of our faith : Besides, their writings are corrupted  
 by

† Tertul. Apolog. c. 30.

‡ Novat. de Trinitate, c. 14.

§ Ambros. de quant. animæ, c. 34.

|| Aug. in Psal. lxiv.

\* Aug. de vera relig. c. 55.

by the Romanists, as Dr. Mede testifies in his *Apostasy of the latter times*. Towards the end of the fourth century, this leaven diffused itself in the church. The occasion chiefly was, The Christians of those times did greatly reverence the memory of the martyrs, and did often resort unto their sepulchres, and there offered up prayers unto that God for whose cause they had laid down their lives: And because God was pleased to give gracious answers to those prayers, and to do many wonderful things for the honouring of that Christian profession, which those worthies maintained unto the death, therefore some began to imagine that all this was done at their suit and mediation; yea, some affirmed that the martyrs themselves appeared to divers who were relieved at the places of their memorials: And the doctors of these times asserted that many cures were effected by the power and prayers of the glorified martyrs, and the notice they took of their devotions; so that, through process of time, these devotions which were at first directed only to God, were afterwards directed to saints.

He that would see more of the rise of this practice, let him consult Chemnitius in his judicious examination of the council of Trent. The progress of it, together with the opposition it met with in the church of God, is not unknown to those who have looked into the history of those times. Although therefore the popish invocation of saints be ancient in respect of some other of their innovations, yet it is novel in itself.

I shall conclude this head, by shewing you, that not only particular fathers, but whole councils have condemned this practice. The council of Carthage *anno* 397, was against the invocation of saints, and the council of Laodicea did censure the invocation of angels. The 35th canon of the council of Laodicea, *anno* 370, determines, “That Christians ought  
 “ not to leave the church of God, and go and call upon  
 “ angels, and make meetings, which are things forbidden.  
 “ If any man therefore be found giving himself to this se-  
 “ cret idolatry, let him be accursed; because he hath for-  
 “ saken the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and hath  
 “ applied himself to idolatry.” Theodoret upon Col. iii. 17. doth twice mention this canon, and declares the sense of it.  
 “ The apostle, saith he, commandeth to adorn our words  
 “ and deeds with the commemoration of our Lord Christ,  
 “ and to send up thanksgiving to God and the Father by  
 “ him, and not by the angels. The synod of Laodicea fol-  
 “ lowing also this rule, and desiring to heal that old disease,  
 “ (*viz.* angel-worship) made a law, that they should not  
 “ pray

“ pray unto angels, nor forsake our Lord Jesus Christ.” And on Col. ii. he adds, “ This vice continued long in Phrygia and Pisidia, for which cause the synod assembled in Laodicea, the chief city of Phrygia, forbade them by a law to pray unto angels.” Oecumenius after him, hath much the same words upon the same place. So that both the scripture and the ancient fathers are no friends to this popish invocation now in question.

I shall however consider some of their most considerable arguments urged in behalf of it.

*Arg. 1.* In our daily practice nothing is more ordinary than to intreat the prayers one of another. The apostle writes to the Romans, Ephesians, Colossians, and desires to be assisted by their prayers: Now, if we may intreat the prayers and intercessions of just men on earth, much more of just men made perfect in heaven.

*Ans. 1.* There is not the same reason for both. The former is warranted and required by the word of God, and not the latter. Again, the living may be made acquainted with our desires and wants, but not the dead: We have no way of informing them or communicating our minds unto them. Other reasons may be assigned why living Christians should pray one for another, which will not hold in this case. Hereby they are made sensible of each others wants, sufferings and infirmities; as also there is an increase of mutual and brotherly love, which is a necessary bond among Christians. But this is not all;

2. There is a vast disparity betwixt the Papists praying to saints in heaven, and the Protestants desiring the prayers of just men here on earth. This may be easily discerned by any that have not a mind to deceive, or to be deceived. When we desire others to pray with, or for us, we do not make them the object of prayer or religious invocation; nor do we reckon them as our mediators, but as our fellow-suiters. As for instance, One man goes to his minister, or godly neighbour, and tells him his condition, and then desires him that he would strive together with him earnestly in prayer to God, that he may be supplied in the things that he stands in need of. Another applies himself to one that is in heaven, or supposed to be there, and prostrates himself before him, or his image, with great devotion, and then prays, “ O blessed St. Francis, or St. Dominick, look down upon thy poor supplicant, take pity on me a miserable sinner: I commend my body and soul to thee; assist me by thy merits, fill me with thy graces, bring me to everlasting happiness. Save me now, and in  
“ the

“the hour of death,” &c. I would fain know whether the practice of these two be one and the same; nay, whether there be any proportion or likeness betwixt the action of the one and of the other. Take the holiest man now living in the world, and let him have some of that religious worship that is referred to their female, not to say fictitious saints, as for instance, St. Catharine, St. Margaret, St. Bridget, St. Ursula, or the like; that is to say, Let a temple be built, and an altar erected to him; let his image be set up, and the people enjoined to fall down before it; burn incense unto it, &c. let vows and supplications be made to him, and that in several places, and in the usual forms: I say, let this, or something like it, be done to the holiest man now living, and I am confident the Papists, the pope and his cardinals, would with one mouth condemn it, as blame-worthy and abominable.

*Arg. 2.* This practice argues reverence and humility: It is pride and arrogance to make our addresses to God immediately. We seek to the king by the mediation of his courtiers, should we not much rather go to God by the intercession of those that are his favourites in heaven?

*Answer.* This pretence or shew of humility seems by Col. ii. 18. to have a main hand in introducing of angel-worship. And of this opinion is an ancient writer, who says, “They of old advised the invocation of angels upon this pretence, that the God of all things was invisible and inaccessible, and that it was fit we should procure his favour by the means or mediation of angels\*.” It was by this very argument that the Gentiles of old defended their dæmon-worship. This I have already hinted, and an ancient father doth plainly assert it, “That the Heathen idolaters, to cover the shame of their neglecting of God, were wont to use this miserable excuse, that by these they might go to God, as by officers we go to the king.” But the same author proceeds to discover the vanity of this pretence. I shall give you his words: “Go to, saith he, is there any man so mad or unmindful of his salvation, as to give the king’s honour to an officer? Whereas, if any shall be found but to treat of such a matter, they are justly condemned as guilty of a great offence against the king. And yet these men think themselves not guilty, who give the honour of God’s name to a creature, and leaving the Lord, adore their fellow-servants, as though there were any thing more that could be reserved to God. For therefore do men go to the king by tribunes or officers, because

\* Theodor. in Col. ii.

“ because the king is but a man, and knoweth not to whom  
 “ he may commit the state of the commonwealth. But to  
 “ procure the favour of God, (from whom nothing is hid,  
 “ and who knows the works of all men) we need no spokes-  
 “ man, but a devout mind \*.”

I shall conclude my answer to this plea of the Romanists, by proposing one thing to their consideration. Suppose a king should grant to all his subjects, the poor as well as the rich, free access to him, promising a redress of all grievances upon the only mediation of the prince his son; and the prince again should by open proclamation invite all freely to come to him, and proffer himself to be their mediator, promising he will not in any wise reject the meanest of them: Would it be arrogance in any to accept of this offer? nay, would it not be the highest presumption to take another course? to apply to the king by the mediation of this or the other courtier? The case is the same here. But I hasten to the third and last argument.

*Arg. 3.* The third argument is taken from the success of such prayers. This is insisted on by a late author, and he calls it a convincing argument. “ Certain it is, saith he, “ that many and great miracles have been wrought by God “ upon addressees made to the saints; that those who call up- “ on them are heard, and obtain what they desire †.” He gives several instances, and if the reader please, I will transcribe one of them: It is a story of what happened to one St. John Damascen, about the year 728. “ He is known, “ saith he, to have been a stout assertor of the veneration of “ holy images; and when the Emperor Leo Isauricus raised “ a persecution (so he calls it) for that cause, he wrote di- “ vers learned epistles to confirm the faithful in the tradition “ of the church. He was then at Damascus, where the “ prince of the Saracens kept his court, and highly in the “ favour of that prince for his wisdom and learning. The “ Emperor Leo, not knowing otherwise how to execute his “ fury against him, causes a letter to be forged, as from “ Damascen to him, and to be transcribed by one who “ could exactly imitate his hand: The contents whereof “ were to invite him to pass that way with his army, with “ promise to deliver the city into his hands. This letter the “ emperor (as out of friendship to an ally, and detestation “ of the treachery) sent to the prince of the Saracens; who “ no sooner saw and read it, but in a brutish passion com- “ manded the right hand of Damascen, which he supposed “ had

\* Ambros. ad Rom. c. i.

† Cathol. no Idolat. p. 420, 424.

“ had writ him, to be cut off. His hand was struck off,  
 “ and hung up in the market place till evening, when upon  
 “ petition that he might have leave to bury it, it was com-  
 “ manded to be given him. He takes the hand, and instead  
 “ of laying it in the ground, joins it to his arm, and pro-  
 “ strating himself before an image of our blessed lady, which  
 “ he kept in his oratory, humbly besought her intercession,  
 “ for the restoring of his hand, that he might employ it in  
 “ setting forth her son’s praises, and hers. This done, sleep  
 “ seized on him, and he beheld the image of the blessed  
 “ Virgin looking upon him with a pleasing aspect, and tell-  
 “ ing him that his hand was restored. Which when he a-  
 “ waked he found to be true, and a small circle or mark  
 “ only remaining in the place where it had been cut off, to  
 “ testify the truth of the miracle.” This is recorded, it  
 seems, by John, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in the life of this  
 St. John Damascen.

*Ans.* Do the Papists indeed think that this, and such  
 like pretty stories, is a good foundation for the practice now  
 in question? What if a man should be in doubt of the  
 truth of this, and other relations of this kind? We know  
 of whom it is said, that *his coming is after the working of Satan,*  
*with all power, and signs, and lying wonders,* 2 Thess. ii. 9.  
 If I might advise, the pope should put forth a bull for the  
 prohibiting, yea for the burning of all their legends and  
 histories of feigned miracles: They do not gain, but lose  
 greatly in their reputation by means thereof. Yea, what  
 if I should say the Christian religion suffers greatly in the  
 world upon this very account? How have Jews and infidels  
 been hardened in their unbelief of the gospel, and of the  
 miracles that Christ and his apostles wrought for the con-  
 firmation of it? And all by reason of those fables, and lying  
 miracles that are obtruded upon the world by those of the  
 church of Rome. Repent, O Rome; repent in time, of  
 the wound thou hast given to Christianity upon the score  
 of these fables and forgeries.

It is worth our notice, and may serve as a farther answer  
 to this plea, what Mr. Mede offers, “ That the Gentile  
 “ dæmon-worship did enter into the world after the same  
 “ manner it was first insinuated, and afterwards establish-  
 “ ed by signs and wonders of the very self-same kind; so  
 “ that the idolatry of saint-worship is in this respect also a  
 “ true counterfeit of their idolatry of dæmons.” He brings  
 in Chrysoptom affirming that the dæmons of the Gentiles  
 wrought miracles for the confirmation of Paganism, and  
 the Pagan idolatry. “ They oftentimes by their skill cured  
 “ diseases

“diseases, and restored to health those that were sick. “What, says he, should we therefore partake with them “in their impiety? God forbid.” He cites Eusebius also to this purpose: “When, says he, those wicked spirits saw “mankind brought off to a deifying of the dead, they in- “sinuated themselves, and helped forward their error, by “causing motions in those statues, which were consecrated “to the honour of the deceased, as also by oracles and cur- “ing of diseases: By means of which the superstitious and “credulous people took them to be some heavenly powers, “and gods indeed; sometimes to be the souls of their dei- “fied worthies. And thus, saith he, the earth-neigh- “bouring dæmons, which are the princes of the air, those “spiritualities of wickedness, and ringleaders of all evil, “were on all hands accounted for great gods.” And farther he adds, “That the memory of deceased worthies was “celebrated with great service, the feature of whose bo- “dies the dedicated images in every city seemed to repre- “sent, but their souls the wicked dæmons counterfeited by “working many wonders.” Let me shut up this answer with the saying of a laborious and learned person; his words are these: “If it be objected, That many have prayed to “the saints, and particularly to the Virgin Mary, and have “obtained their requests; and therefore such prayers are “available. We answer, That is no good argument which “is taken from the event: For so Livy writeth, that Romu- “lus prayed to Jupiter, that he would stay the flight of the “Romans, that he might keep off the Sabines, and it was “effected. Pliny also reporteth, that one Helpis seeing a “rampant lion come against him, prayed to Bacchus, and “was delivered. Like as the praying to Heathen gods is not “justified by the subsequent effects, no more is the invocat- “ing of saints\*,” &c.

We come now to a conclusion. I desire in the close of all, that these three particulars may be considered;

1. That this discourse doth not destroy that communion of saints which is the common belief of all Christians. It is levelled against the invocation, not against the communion of saints. Jerusalem is sometimes put for the church militant on earth, and sometimes for the church triumphant in heaven, to shew that both make but one city of God. The church below, and the church above, are two parts of one and the same catholic church, whence it is that those who are sanctified, and called on earth, are said to be come to the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven. So the apostle

\* Willet synopsis Papismi, p. 437.

apostle tells the Hebrews, that they are brought by the gospel into a blessed society, *with God the Judge of all, with Jesus Christ the Mediator of the new covenant, with an innumerable company of angels, and with the spirits of just men made perfect.* Both those that are already made perfect, and those that still abide in the state of imperfection, are fellow-citizens, and have mutual fellowship or communion one with another. They have mutual relation to one Father, and children of the same father have mutual fellowship amongst themselves: They have mutual union with one head, and members of the same body have mutual communion one with another: They have their animation by one and the same Spirit, as all the members are animated by one and the same soul: That Spirit which dwells in the saints on earth, doth bear them company into heaven.

If it be demanded wherein this communion consisteth which is between the saints above, and the saints below? I answer, It consists mainly in mutual affections and communications one to another. The saints in heaven rejoice at God's preservation of his church on earth; that so many of their brethren and fellow-servants are daily fitted for heaven, and translated thither, whereby their blessed society is increased. The saints above may also pray and intercede for those below: For though the Papists confound the intercession and invocation of saints, yet there is a wide difference betwixt them: And there be who allow them to pray for us, who yet will not admit of our praying unto them\*. But then they say that this intercession of theirs is for the church in general, and not for this or that member in particular, whose case or person it is most likely is not known to them. On the other side, the saints on earth pray for the resurrection of the bodies of the saints in heaven, that in body, as well as in spirit, they may be perfected and glorified. Yea, this is one sense of that petition in the Lord's prayer, *Thy kingdom come.* They likewise praise God for the rest they enjoy in heaven, that they are delivered from this valley of tears and trouble. They also groan, and that earnestly, to be glorified with them, and to be translated into their condition and company. Above all, they set them before them as their examples, walking in their godly steps; being followers of them, as they have been followers of that which is good. Though they do not

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invocate

\* They are very different questions, Whether the saints pray for us, and whether we must pray to them? It is one thing to know what the saints do in heaven, and another to know what we must do on earth. *P. du Moulin.*

invoke them, yet they study to imitate them, which is the highest honour they can put upon them. This is that which the apostle requires in the epistle to the Hebrews, when he bids us, *to be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

2. This discourse serves to excite Christians to be much in calling on him in whom they believe. To be frequent in praying to God in the name of Jesus Christ, *Take*, says James, *the prophets for an example of patience, and of suffering affliction.* Take, I say, the Papists for an example of prayer, such as it is, and unwearied devotion. It was the advice of a good man to his friend, that he would spend as much time every day in prayer and meditating, as he did in eating and drinking. It were well if we spent as many hours every day in the service and worship of God, as some of them do in serving and worshipping the saints. We may receive instruction from oxen and asses, and other brute creatures, and so we may from the blind Papists. *Go to the ant, thou sluggard;* and go to the Papist, thou slothful Christian: He hath his canonical and stated hours for his devotion, he is diligent in turning over his beads, in pattering over his *Pater nosters* and *Ave Marias*, and will admit of no avocation. How then art thou to be reprov'd, who neglectest prayer to God from day to day? How many prayerless families and persons are there in this nation? Christ says, *The Ninevites shall rise up in the judgment against the Jews,* and the Papists will rise up in the judgment against many Protestants, *and condemn them.* The charge of Eliphaz against Job will lie more rightly against many a one in the midst of us: *Thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God,* Job xv. 4. Some read the words thus, *Thou multipliest prayer.* The word notes, as one observes, the cutting or dividing a thing into small pieces or portions, which is indeed to multiply it. And it is as if he should have said, Thou dost mince thy prayers, and cut them out into many small threads, as if thou didst hope to be heard for thy much speaking. Such were the devotions of the Pharisees of old, and such are the devotions of the Papists their successors, to this day. Their collects and litanies are full of vain repetitions. But take the words as they are in our translation, *Thou restrainest prayer before God;* and then they denote either a total forbearing, or a partial diminishing of the duty: Some do not pray at all, others pray but seldom; both come under this reproof of restraining prayer. Remember who commands you, *to pray always, and to pray without ceasing.* Resolve, reader, whoever thou art, upon more frequency

frequency and fervency in this duty. Let an hour, or more, every day be set apart for secret prayer; and be sure, as Elias did, *to pray in prayer*, James v. 17. The Papists and others say prayers, but do thou pray in prayer to God. It is recorded of Luther, that he prayed every day three hours, and that when he was most fit for such a service: Go thou and do likewise.

King Alfred divided every day into three parts; he allowed eight hours to his devotion, eight to his employment, and eight to his sleep and refreshment.

~~2. This discourse may have farther fruit, to beget a dislike, yea a detestation of Popery.~~ One would wonder that a man in his right senses should ever become a Papist. Their opinions many of them are not only unscriptural, but irrational; a man must offer violence to his reason if he complies with them. ~~I might give many instances, Consider these two; the one is praying for the dead, the other is~~ *and* praying to the dead: We cannot help the dead by praying for them, nor can they hear us when we pray unto them. ~~Yea,~~ The popish religion is not only ridiculous, but idolatrous. There is a fivefold idolatry which we charge upon ~~the church of Rome.~~ 1. The worshipping of the *cross*. 2. The worshipping of *images*. 3. The worshipping of *relicks*. 4. The worshipping of the *elements* in the eucharist. 5. The worshipping of *saints* and *angels*. Well may she be called the *whore of Babylon*; yea that *great whore, and the mother of fornications, and abominations of the earth*. ~~The church of~~ The Jews did not forsake the true God altogether, only ~~she~~ would worship him in calves and images, and how often for this reason ~~is she~~ called a *whore*, and an *abominable harlot*? *are they* The church of Rome is a worse strumpet than ever she was; a *deep ditch* she is, may none amongst us be so far *abhorred of the Lord as to fall into it*. ~~Dearly beloved countrymen, Flee from idolatry: This is the abominable thing that God hateth. Popish idolatry is as bad or worse than Paganish. I shall conclude this sermon as the apostle John doth his first epistle.~~ *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.*

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# S E R M O N XI.

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Mr. W E S T.

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Purgatory a groundless and dangerous doctrine.

1 Cor. iii. 15. *If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.*

“ **T**HIS text, says Bellarmine, is one of the difficultest and yet most profitable of the whole scripture, in that the Catholics from hence conclude two great points against heretics, that of purgatory and venial sins.”

But I am mistaken if Paul would not have been as much puzzled to have understood them, as they are at a loss to find out his meaning. It is not likely that persons of that simple age were aware of such a thing as purgatory or venial sin.

It is strange to consider how many hard texts, even in this obscure matter, they pretend to have for them; although in our controversies with them, we must wholly confine ourselves to plain ones. These magicians, are for bringing water out of rocks: If it be hard in itself, they think it will be too hard for us; and like a mill-stone they cast it upon us, and urge us to give an evident sense, or admit theirs: And while we are heaving to extricate ourselves, they hope for this advantage leisurely to retreat from us; and before we overtake them again, to prepare fresh work of the like kind for us. It is a dastardly enemy that declines the open field, and fights only from hedges and holes of rocks, that it is greater difficulty to follow, than overcome them.

This text is confessed to be hard, and therefore, as we suspect they may be mistaken, we crave liberty to suspend our faith till we have made examination. But though hard, it is a profitable text for them, worth many thousands a-year. If souls went forthwith to heaven, they would not care a pin for them; if forthwith to hell, they would despair of benefit by them: But the opinion of purgatory makes them precious, especially as it is said, That souls there are defective in merit, and cannot further merit in that state them-

themselves, therefore they are the more beholden to them that will impart their oil to them; and in hope to partake of their spirituals, they can do no less than leave them a good share of their temporals. If gain be godliness, as some have supposed, certainly this doctrine of purgatory is a prime article of religion.—The saints in heaven are high and stout, they will give us nothing; the damned in hell are a poor or surly rout: The one does not need our prayers, the other does despise them; we must therefore threaten men with this prison of purgatory, else they will never pay their debts to us; but rather than lie and rot there, they will be ready to compound with us.

But here it will be necessary to show,

1. What the Papists mean by purgatory.
2. Whether any such thing is meant in our text?
3. Whether the word of God does any where give ground for such a conceit?
4. I shall briefly consider their supplementary articles.
5. Shew what ground we have from scripture to disbelieve any such thing.
6. What evil consequences follow the receipt of it.
7. I shall give you the genuine sense of the place, and improve it.

I. *What do the Papists mean by purgatory?*

That there is a purgation of souls preparatory to their immediate enjoyment of God, both from the guilt and filth of sin we freely grant. This is *eminently* done by the blood of Christ; hereby filthy wretches are cleansed, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. *When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*, Heb. i. 3. His coming was foretold as with fire and water, which are the great cleansers among us, Mal. iii. 2, 3. This purging work is ascribed *instrumentally*—to the word, John xv. 3.—to faith, Acts xv. 9. *Purging their hearts by faith*.—To afflictions, Psal. lxvi. 12. *We went through fire and water*. Such a purgatory we Protestants allow, and declare its place is in this world; and that the remainder of sin, which adheres to the best, is concluded in death, whereby the body is incapacitated, and all its moral as well as vital actions terminated. That then the soul is perfected by the immediate vision of God and Christ, into whose image it is changed, according to present experience, 2 Cor. iii. 18. and future hope, 1 John iii. 2. *We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*.

But our adversaries notion of purgatory is, “That it is  
 “ a certain place, wherein, as in a prison, souls are purged  
 “ after

“ after this life, that were not fully purged here, to the  
 “ intent they may enter pure into heaven \*.” If we en-  
 quire,

1. *Where is this place?* Bellarmine tells us, “The church  
 “ has not defined it, and there are eight several opinions  
 “ about it.” Fancy, you see, is fruitful: Every one hath  
 his own tale; but such variety cannot yield general satisfac-  
 tion. The generality of the Popish schoolmen, will  
 have it in the bowels of the earth, on the borders of hell:  
 But be where it will, I hope I shall never come hither.

2. *Who are to go thither?*

Bellarmino reckons up about eight opinions about this  
 also. Some thought all men, good and bad; others, both  
 men and devils; others all and only Catholics, &c. But  
 after enumerating all these different opinions of the fathers,  
 he concludes they were all wrong, except the following;  
 so that, it seems, the fathers are of no authority, except  
 when they speak for one. That purgatory is only for them  
 that die with venial sins, or that depart *cum reatus pœnae  
 culpæ suis remissis*. This is crabbed Latin. I was almost  
 stumbled at *venial sins*, but my author helps me to under-  
 stand that he means by such those who are worthy only of  
 a temporal punishment. These, it seems, are petty kinds  
 of sins; but this I pass over, as it is likely it will be examin-  
 ed by a better hand. But this *reatus pœnae*, this *guilt of pu-  
 nishment* that remains when the fault is pardoned, is a dif-  
 ficulty not easy to get over; for what is guilt without re-  
 spect to a fault? And what place has punishment after par-  
 don? It seems they are detained in that prison for some  
 few farthings, that Christ when he paid their debts left on  
 the score, or some pitiful little sins he made no atonement  
 for; and for these friends must pay that they may be re-  
 leased; but if all lies upon themselves they must tarry long,  
 perhaps thousands of years, until the resurrection, and may  
 thank themselves that by their bounty they obliged nobody  
 they left behind them to merit a speedy release for them.  
 It is likely to go very hard with poor folks and churls:  
 But the grievousness of the punishment, *fire*, is set before  
 them to fright them into a ready compliance. And it is e-  
 specially remarkable, that persons are not sent hither “ that  
 “ the fumes of sins may be washed, nor for any evil ha-  
 “ bits, that they may be amended, but purely that their less-  
 “ er debts may, by their personal punishment, and their  
 “ living friends piety and prayers, be fully paid †.”

II. We

\* Bellarm. de Purg. lib. ii. c. 6.

† Bellarm. de. Purg. lib. ii. c. 9.

II. We are to enquire, *Whether it is this Popish purgatory that Paul means by the fire in our text?*

Paul, in all his writings, is such a stranger to their notion of purgatory, that he cannot intend it here. Venial sins, punishment after pardon, human satisfactions by translation of ones works to another, when no one has half enough for himself; prayers for the dead, and the like, he was utterly unacquainted with.

But he talks of fire, and there is fire in their purgatory: What then? Are there not many notions of fire in scripture? Is not the word, the Spirit, afflictions, frequently set out by it? Where is the necessity then of interpreting this fire by purgatory?

1. It is certain, that the whole of Paul's discourse here is a metaphor, and it is likely that it is metaphorical fire that this metaphorical stubble and metaphorical builder is in danger of.

2. Whereas fire is twice used before, it is evident, that it is not there to be understood of purgatory-fire, and must be so confessed by themselves; and therefore it is unlikely having other fire at hand, he should run to purgatory to fetch fire, unless he had been a disciple of Ignatius that can never kindle fire enough.

Of the fire, ver. 13. it is said, that *it shall try every man's work*; whereas purgatory is not for trial of mens works, they are tried and found slight before any one comes thither; nor is purgatory for every one, the *very good* and the *very bad* come not thither; therefore this cannot be understood of purgatory-fire.

Again, the fire which is said to *burn* some mens works, is the same with the fire that *tried* them, for therein some are expressly said to *abide*, and others to *burn*.

Moreover, their purgatory-fire acts on persons, this on works, and such works as we cannot imagine how a material fire should touch them; for these works, as is clear by the context, are corrupt doctrines.

And what reason is there in this last clause to alter the notion of fire? One would easily conceive, that the fire which the builder escaped, was the same with that which burnt his works, for we hear of no other that he was in danger of. And if any fire here spoke of might be supposed to be understood metaphorically, much more this last, in that it is brought in with such signal notes of comparison, *yet so as by fire.*

You see then, that this text that looks fairest for their purpose of any in all the book of God, is so far from a cogency

cogency, that there is not so much as a probability of its meaning any such thing: We must then be excused from receiving this doctrine as an article of faith to be believed on pain of damnation, as Bellarmine urges it. There is such a deal of force to be used to these words, to make them speak to the Popish purpose, that we may perceive them loth to own it; and for my part, if they speak no plainer, they shall stand by a while, till we have examined other witnessess.

III. Let us enquire, *Whether the word of God does any where give ground for such a conceit, with that cogency especially, as that we should receive it as an article of faith?*

The principal texts they use either directly or indirectly, as tending to this purpose, I shall briefly examine.

The first, and which is far fetched, is Gen. iii. 24. where God is said to have placed *a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life*; this flaming sword, say some of them, was a witness to sinners, that they must pass through purgatory into Paradise.

*Answer.* If we mind the scope of the words, that text rather seems to have signified, That by the old way of works there was no entrance into Paradise; for this sword is said to be *placed to keep the way of the tree of life, lest man by eating of it should live for ever*; and so makes rather against purgatory, that seems a part or an appurtenance of the old way of works.

But a flaming sword seemed a good weapon, and they were willing to take it into their hands; and indeed their great argument for all their peculiar articles, has been *fire and sword*.

But to leave this sword in the cherubims hand, let us make a leap to 2 Maccab. xii. 43. which is the alone place Bellarmine pitches upon, where Judas Maccabæus, is said to *have gathered twelve thousand drams of silver, and sent them to Jerusalem, to be laid out in sacrifices for the dead*; and he adds, "That it is a pious and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins:" Whence he infers, 1. That the dead may be loosed from their sins, and therefore there is a purgatory: 2. That prayers and sacrifices do profit the dead. Three other inferences he draws, the last of which is, That purgatory and prayers for the dead must needs be an article of faith.

This text is their Hercules' club, that knocks all dead: Other texts render it but probable, this it seems makes it clear and necessary to be believed, that there is a purgatory.

*Answer.*

*Answer.* To this we reply a great many things.

1. As to the matter of fact that is recorded of Judas, that he did raise a certain sum of money, though not 2000, but 200 drams, as the Greek copy reads it, and sent it to Jerusalem to buy sacrifices, I will not dispute against it; he might do it, probably did it, and in his circumstances had good reason for it; but that he did it for the relief of the dead, that is Bellarmine's forgery: The text says only, *for the sin*, viz. lest being a notorious sin, the living should be plagued for it; and that this was his case, appears by verse 42. *They prayed that the sin might be blotted out, and Judas exhorted the multitude to keep themselves free from sin, seeing the punishment of them that had committed it;* and this is an interpretation of his fact, that agrees to the letter of the text, and the analogy of faith.

2. As for the author's gloss, *that it is a piece of piety to pray for the dead*, we are not much concerned in it; for whoever was the author of it, whether Jason, or his abbreviator, as may seem 2 Maccab. ii. 24. and however good an historian he was, we own him for no prophet; nor did the church of the Jews ever look upon his writings as canonical, as Papists themselves confess; though Bellarmine says the Christian church did, he gives slender proof of it: Austin indeed says, "It was received of the church not unprofitably, provided it was soberly read;" where he seems to caution against some dangerous passages in it, by which unwary readers might be prejudiced, as much as the more wise profited.

But the author himself acquits us from any veneration of him, by his courting his readers favour often, and desiring their pardon at least, if any thing had been said amiss, 2 Macc. ii. 26. which are condescensions below the Spirit of God, or any author inspired by it.

3. If this author had been good, and the Jews there had prayed for the dead, the Papists inference of purgatory, according to their own principles is weak: For it seems also by their faith, that people may be prayed out of hell; though this they will not grant for ordinary, lest it should spoil their purgatory; yet two instances they very confidently give of it, which speaks a possibility: One of Trajan a bloody persecutor, upon the prayers of Gregory; of which Damascen says, the whole East and West were witnesses: And the other of Falconilla a Pagan woman, by the prayers of St. Thecla. And if there was need of any more such stuff, the scull of a certain Gentile priest told Macarius, that its owner was delivered out of hell by his prayers;

and here is as good authority, as our adversaries will bring for their purgatory: Though I must confess, these instances, do not easily go down; for though they hugely advance prayer, the quite raze purgatory. To make up therefore differences between the combatants of each party, Aquinas tells us, "That they were not finally sent to hell, but according to their present merit; and that probably they were first raised to life, and so repented ere they were translated to heaven; and also, that this was not by common law, but special privilege." If one late penitent, though but one, is thought sufficient to prevent every ones despair, two such instances of damned persons recovered to grace, are ground enough to encourage prayer for all the rest. But there is no proper damnation in purgatory, and remission is said to be granted before they go to it; only an imaginary guilt remains there, that may be properly enough purged in an imaginary place, by an imaginary fire.

And thus I conceive the force of this text is fully enervated; the fact being shewn to have been misconstrued, the gloss not duely authoris'd, and the inference not firmly grounded.

We must now pass unto the New Testament, and there the most likely texts seem to be Math. xii. 32. where it is said of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, *that it shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor that which is to come*: hence conclude they, that some sins are forgiven in the other world, and therefore a purgatory.

*Answer*. 1. I deny the consequence; for according to their opinion, purgatory is for persons whose sins are already forgiven.

2. The original is, *ἢτε ἐν τούτῳ αἰῶνι, neither in this age, nor the age to come*; where the present age may signify the Judaic state, wherein grace was more confined, and the future that of Christ's kingdom, wherein it was expected larger. Thus *age to come* is often taken, as probably Heb. vi. 5. and according to some readings, Christ is called instead of *everlasting Father, the Father of the age to come*. Isa. ix. 6.

But if this will not be admitted,

3. Let Matthew interpret himself by what he says in the former verse, where he tells them without this exaggeration, that it *shall not be forgiven*; and to omit fathers, let me only refer them to his brother Mark, Mark iii. 29. where it is simply rendered, *that he hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of, or obnoxious to, eternal damnation*; both the former

mer ages are here wrapt up in the 'one of eternity, as it were to correct the popish nicety.

Another text they make use of, is Mat. v. 25, 26. where we are advised, *to agree with our adversary quickly, while in the way, lest the adversary deliver us to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and we be cast into prison, for we shall by no means come out thence, till we have payed the utmost farthing.*

Here also Papists do see, venial sins in the farthings, human satisfactions in the pay, purgatory in the prison.

But that no such things can with any congruity be hence inferred, you may observe,

1. That it is questionable, whether this is any parable, or looks any further than the civil differences between us and our brother, which we should take speedily up among ourselves, by the common rule of equity, and not suffer needlessly to come before the forensic judges, where we may expect utmost severity; the context inclines to this, and so this text is expounded by Chrysostom, Theophylact and Hierom.

2. If a parable: On that account, by the common rule of the schools it is not argumentative, especially in an article of faith.

3. Its scope must be intended, and not every particular word racked; and that seems to be only this, That we should make our peace with God in this life, and as soon as we can, in that here we may expect mercy; whereas, if we put off matters till we come to God's tribunal, we shall be dealt with in all severity; God will then exact the utmost farthing; he will not then hear of remission, or composition. The prison is hell, and there is no relief from it; the word *until* is all one with *never*.

A further text Bellarmine lays great stress upon, is 1 Cor. xv. 29. *What shall they do that are baptized for the dead? If the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptized for the dead?*

This we must confess is a difficult place indeed, and has worsted many great wits; but Papists think, that by way of requital, as it were, they may wrest it; and by baptism understand all their voluntary services for the dead, supposing hence that they may thereby profit the dead, and consequently, that there is a purgatory, wherein they are detained, till by these means they are delivered.

*Ans. 1.* Their notion of baptism is perfectly new coined, for though afflictions, which in the Old Testament are frequently set out by waters, are sometimes under the gospel couched under this name of *baptism*, Matth. xx. 22. yet prayers, alms, sacrifices, and such like voluntary services

were never so expressed, nor with any pretence of reason can be thereby understood.

2. If this was granted, purgatory could not be hence inferred; for this baptism whatever it was, referred to the resurrection of the *body*, as a typical representation of that, whereon it is made use of, for confirmation of the faith of that; whereas purgatory, according to them, is only for the relief of the *soul*: Were we wholly at a loss for the positive meaning of the text, or should we be out in our guesses at it, they could reasonably take no advantage of it; for to whatever it serves, it serves not to their purpose; the body and its resurrection, and not the soul and its purification, being concerned in it, as by the context clearly appears.

But however, to take occasion to explain that very puzzling text:

1. Some refer it to a corrupt custom taken up by the Corinthians and Marcionites, of baptizing a living person instead of his friend which was dead, which Paul makes use of to their conviction, without his own approbation. Let this have what weight it will with others, I must profess it little sways with me.

2. Others think this baptism refers to the washings that were used about the dead, which shewed hope of their resurrection, otherwise why should they make such a do' about the bodies of them: Of this custom we hear something, Acts ix. 37. but then we must take baptism here in the middle voice, and read the text, *Why do they baptize, or use washings about the dead.* Let this notion go as far as it will, I know no hurt in it.

3. According to others, baptism may be here taken for sufferings, and so this clause may be much the same with what follows in the next verse, *Why stand we in jeopardy?* Why do we thus expose our bodies, if they shall never be restored to life?

Let me add a fourth notion, that takes baptism in a literal sense, and supposes an ordinary figure of one number for another, where there is speech of the dead; and that the meaning is, If the dead rise not, what shall become of us and our baptism, that are baptized into Jesus who is dead? for *if the dead rise not*, as he there says, *Christ is not risen*, and consequently our gospel and hope is in vain; and thus by a small dispensation with grammar, which the apostle does not exactly tie himself to, we have a plain and safe meaning of this difficult text: However in regard of its difficulty, I should judge it improper, to make it the basis of any new uncouth article; I would rather use it for confirmation

mation of one that was otherwise sufficiently bottomed, and would keep to the apostle's scope in the application of it, till I had its fuller and surer interpretation; and that certainly is, to confirm us from something in use among us, of the future resurrection.

The last text I shall mention, that is of any probability, is 1 Pet. iii. 19. where Christ is said *by the Spirit to have gone and preached to the spirits in prison, that were sometimes disobedient in the days of Noah.*

This prison they dream is purgatory; and it seems that there is preaching in it too: But to what purpose, if there be no repenting or changing of estate, as every where Papists confess there is not in purgatory? And I suppose while the scripture speaks of the so great wickedness of the world before the flood, they will not think that the men of that age went generally to purgatory, and therefore Christ might have had but few auditors if he had gone thither to have preached to them.

The plain meaning of that text is, that Christ by his Spirit in Noah did once preach unto that generation, whose spirits are now in hold as criminals for their then disobedience, of which preaching of Noah, and the strivings of this Spirit, we hear, 2 Pet. ii. 5. Gen. vi. 3.

But to suppose Christ's personal going into those dark regions, to preach the gospel to spirits so long departed, is a ridiculous fable, and destructive even of their own notion of purgatory; that reckons the present life the way, the race, and that hereafter is no opportunity to obtain grace, but satisfy justice.

Such shifts then they are put to, that right or wrong will take upon them to defend a bad cause; and yet as little as these scriptures I have quoted make for them, and as much as in truth they make against them, they are their chief weapons: If I should mention several others, I could propose no other design than to shame them; but it may be they will say, Do that if I can; I shall however forbear, in that it may be an harder task than I am aware of, for some folks have whores foreheads, and will not be ashamed.

IV. Let us now briefly consider their *supplementary arguments*; which are ordinarily from these heads. 1. Reasons. 2. Fathers. 3. Councils. 4. Consent of nations. 5. Revelations.

*First*, Let us hear their strong *reasons* for a purgatory,

*Reas.* 1. In that some sins are venial, and only worthy of a temporal punishment, and it is possible a man may depart

out of this life only with these, therefore it is necessary that they should be purged, and expiated in another.

*Reas. 2.* When sinners are reconciled to God, the whole temporal punishment is not always remitted with the sin, and a man may die before he has discharged it, and therefore in the other world he must make it up; and hereon a purgatory seems necessary.

And these are all the reasons Bellarmine gives us; but add what I shall consider under the following distinct heads; and by this you will see upon what lame legs this great doctrine stands: For,

(1.) We utterly deny any sin, to be in this sense venial, having learned out of the scriptures, that *the wages of sin*, one as well as another, *is death*, Rom. vi. 23.

(2.) Though we allow of fatherly chastisements that God lays on his people here, for others example, and their own amendment, as a fruit of love rather than justice; we understand nothing of a proper punishment by way of personal satisfaction that is required of us, when God has pardoned us; having learned that God does *abundantly pardon* where he pardons, Isa. lv. 7. and having confidence that Christ has fully satisfied, where he undertook to satisfy, *by one sacrifice perfecting for ever them that are sanctified*, Heb. x. 4. and that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ*, Rom. viii. 1. And we reckon it absurd, that we should be loosed in respect of our greater sins, by the sufferings of another, and held for our slighter peccadillo's to make satisfaction in our own persons; we cannot conceive why Christ that paid the pounds, should grudge the pence; and after he has paid our debt, he should suffer us to lie for fees. If there was a meetness we should smart for any of our sins, one would expect it rather for our great ones; but the goodness that passes over them, will not disparage itself to take notice of little things; but we assure ourselves where it sets on forgiveness, it will make clear work, *forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin*, that all glory may be to God.

(3.) We suppose the wise providence of God does so far subserve his covenant, that no surprizal shall happen to them interested in it, to cut them short of the full benefit of it, and that God will continue them in this life, till he has fitted them for a better; otherwise David was out in his notion of God's covenant, that reckoned it *ordered in all things and sure*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. and we are abused in what we hear of his exact and accurate providence, Matth. x. 29, 30. If this be all Bellarmine's reason for a purgatory, to catch those

of God's people that shall drop out of his providential hand, that they may not quite fall into hell, he may content himself, God is not so careless of his own matters, or people, as he would make him: His fruit drops not off the tree of its own accord, that there should be danger of its falling before it was ripe; but he gathers it in convenient season, so that there is no need of a purgatory, wherein it should lie mellowing. You see by what we have replied in these three particulars, how straitened they are for reasons, that they must extenuate the desert of sin, lessen the merit of Christ, and reflect on the wise providence of God, to have any shew of one: And I must profess, had I hesitated at the doctrine of purgatory before, such reasons as these for it, would have confirmed me in the disbelief of it: It is time to desert that faith, where I cannot be a believer, without being also a blasphemer.

*Secondly,* Their second argument is from *fathers*: As to which I briefly reply, that upon examination I find some false fathers imposed, others falsely quoted, others falsely applied to what they never intended: It were easy to give instances, were they not from other hands so abundantly ministered.

And further I find, as is said of a certain people, that they sell powder to friend and foe, whereby a great noise is made, and a great smoke is raised, in which a man may soon lose his religion; but I pity the poor man that is to seek it among them.

And herein I acknowledge God very good to his church, discouraging her by this human uncertainty from pining her faith on man, and directing her to his infallible word, on which alone she can safely and reasonably settle; and such an observation I conceive put the spouse on that particular inquisition after Christ himself, Cant. i. 7. *Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon; for why should I be as one that turneth aside, or sitteth veiled after the manner of harlots, by the flocks of thy companions?* That church that would keep itself chaste, must be aware of wanton shepherds, how it fits down by them, or dallies with them, and keep close to Christ, that it may be delivered from them: And that church or society of men is a strumpet, that draws a veil over its own eyes, not caring to distinguish between Christ and his companions, that listens to every ones voice, and receives every ones embrace; *Christ's sheep know his voice, and follow him, and a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers,* John x. 4, 5.

And

And a stranger he is, and a strange voice he has, that speaks not according to what is written, and so he should be looked on by you, Gal. i. 6, 7, 8, 9.

I speak not this to disparage the fathers; but I fear, as by the body of Moses, the devil had a design of imposing upon Israel; so under the name of divers upright and eminent fathers, the deceiver of the nations, and his prophets, have obtruded upon the world many gross superstitions and corrupt doctrines, whereof it is needful we should take caution, especially if there appears to us the ghost of an ancient father, long dead, and hid from former ages, and raised by we know not what enchantments of latter impostors, speaking things dissonant to the analogy of faith; as is the case in respect of divers of those fathers the Papists urge us with, as Dionysius, Clemens, Ephrem, &c. But universally it is a good rule, to beware of men, and have your eye to the word of God, *which is able to instruct you to every good work*, 2 Tim. iii. 17.

*Thirdly*, They pretend also *councils* in the case.

To which pretence I reply, that we find none of antiquity or universality to move us in the matter; nor for ought appears, was it ever industriously handled till the council of Florence, not much above two hundred years ago, as Bellarmine himself seems to grant; on occasion of Pope John XXII. being impeached of heresy, as believing the sleep of all souls till the general resurrection; he plainly tells us, that he "believed so, while it was lawful for him so to do without danger of heresy, for the church had not then defined what in that case was to be believed." And consequently the division of our dead saints into those in heaven and in purgatory, even according to him, was not determined in any antecedent council; and we are not moved by an article of faith that is so novel; our creed was completed 1600 years since, whereas, it seems, this great article of purgatory is not of 300 years standing; for before then we might safely have believed all souls quiet enough. And the truth of it is, this opinion did prevail among several of the ancients, and was probably the true foundation of those footsteps of superstition that we find among them in reference to the dead.

*Fourthly*, The fourth argument is, from *general consent of nations*; and here Bellarmine reckons up the Hebrews, the Mahometans, and the Heathens.

I expected he would have brought in the Greeks also: It may be supposed he took that for granted, in regard he had quoted so many of the Greek fathers in the former chapter,

chapter, that for ought I perceive spake good Greek, if that would end a controversy; but, say our Neotericks, however the Greeks differed in this point heretofore, they agreed to it in the council of Florence; where the Greek Emperor Paleologus, and Joseph the patriarch of Constantinople, with divers Greek bishops were present, and gave their consent in the disputed point of purgatory.

In answer to this, I reply,

1. That Bellarmine does yield the Greeks to be suspected at least of heresy in this business, and the Armenians also, and brings in Aquinas as of his mind; and yet further feeds his suspicion from the proceedings of the very council of Florence, whence latter writers would persuade us of their being right for the business.

2. Whatever was done by the Greek bishops in that synod, the rest of the Greek churches disowned when they came home, and interdicted them all Christian burial for their pains; and a fatal council this is noted every way to have been to the Greeks, for in it the patriarch dies, presently after the emperor, and within fourteen years after, Constantinople is taken by the Turks, the emperor's brother slain, the Greek emperor dissolved, the Christians of those parts enslaved, and made thereby to find their purgatory in this world.

As to their pretension of the Hebrews being for purgatory, they have shewed their proof, 2 Mac. xii. 43. and it is needless further to disprove them.

For the Heathen, especially the poets, I think we may grant several of them, as abettors, and, I suppose, fathers of this profound notion.

As to the Mahometans also, I will not much dispute, nor wonder if I find purgatory in their Alcoran, since Sergius the monk was one of the authors of it.

And on recollection of the whole, this specious argument of *consent of nations* results, in the sweet harmony of Turks, Papists, and Heathen poets; and like enough, if we would trace them, they agree in more points than this; and herein let them glory, while we comfort ourselves in our *redemption from our vain conversation received by tradition from our fathers*, 1 Pet. i. 18.

*Fifthly*, The fifth and last argument is from *apparitions*; and here I might tell you abundance of fine stories, were it worth the while.

But as to these I must frankly say, that if they had been true, and if there had been ten, where we hear only of one, it would have made this doctrine more suspicious; it seems

hereby the interest of hell to promote such fancies: These phantasms, ghosts, or what else you will call them, were never, as I find, allowed preachers; nor do any of the monks record that they shewed them their orders; and it is observable, they came with different stories, some describing a popish purgatory, and others as it were a Turkish paradise; but God has directed us to *Moses and the prophets*, Luke xvi. 29. and upbraided *inquiring for the living of the dead*, Isa. viii. 19. So that I look on all of this nature as diabolical delusion, and the heeding of such things as a great declension from God, and the very precipice unto all superstition. And now let Papists further brag, that they have not only Turks and Heathens, but even hell itself of their mind.

But we have followed them too far in their fopperies, let us briefly enquire,

V. *What ground there is from scripture to disbelieve any such thing as purgatory?*

1. The scriptures mention only a twofold state of persons departed this life, placing some in heaven, and others in hell; and accordingly allure the good by the hopes of the one, and fright the bad with the threats of the other, never setting before us for encouragement or discouragement any third state after this life, Matth. xvi. 16. *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned*: And lest sophisters should except, that he says not he shall presently be saved, but by the intermeditation of purgatory, we find it elsewhere, even in words of the present expressed, John iii. 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and on the contrary, the wrath of God is said to abide on him that doth not believe.*

2. The scripture only makes a twofold division of saints, in respect of place, dividing the *whole family* into them *on earth*, and them *in heaven*, Eph. iii. 15. Therefore none that are under his fatherly love and care, can well be supposed elsewhere.

3. The saints that undoubtedly knew the mind of God, have not only been assured themselves, but have assured one another, that on their bodily death, they should go forthwith to bliss: Whence is that, *To me to die is gain: I desire to depart, and to be with Christ*, Phil. i. 21. And again, 2 Cor. v. 8. *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord*; so the converted thief expected, and was assured, when he had no time to make personal satisfaction, as the Papists require, *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise*, not purgatory; there

to be sure Christ is not; and where he is, there you may all along observe, they expect to be, and that immediately. Lazarus is no sooner dead, but he is seen in Abraham's bosom, which sure was a place of rest; and in general, they are pronounced *blessed that die in the Lord, as resting from their labours*, Rev. xiv. 13. And lest this should be restrained to martyrs, and the former to eminent saints; we hear, that good men, without exception, are taken hence in pity, that they may be freed from the present evil, and go to rest after their hard labours; which certainly implies, not their being cast into purgatory-fire, especially if it be so fierce as it is painted.

4. The scripture speaks of Christ as having fully satisfied, and of believers as being intirely justified, and thereon at peace with God, and as rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, looking on all the afflictions that remains as little momentary things; which they would not certainly have spoke so contemptibly of, if they had thought they might have lain some thousands of years in purgatory-flames: No, they reckoned only of the sufferings of the present time, not dreaming of any afterwards; but on their justification by faith concluded of their peace with God. And again, they are spoken of *joying in God through their Lord Jesus Christ, by whom they had now received the atonement*, Rom. v. 11. they did certainly expect that God had no after reckoning for them; their smiling look on God, spoke evidently they thought not of further severities from him.

5. The scripture speaks of God as thoroughly pardoning upon our repenting, Ezek. xviii 22. *All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him.* Heb. viii. 12. *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more*; whereas he would remember them with a witness, if he should throw them into that prison, till they had made in their own persons an expiation, by such sufferings as are not to be paralleled on earth.

6. The scripture speaks expressly of this life as our way and only working-time, and that *in the night of death no man can work*, John ix. 4. and moreover, *that every man shall receive according to what he hath done in the body*, 2 Cor. v. 10. *he and not another; done and not suffered; in the body*, while soul and body were together, and not what the soul should do apart; and indeed, what is done out of the body, is not the act of the man, and so can tend neither to his good or hurt, and consequently, what the soul is supposed to suffer in purgatory, can no ways be imagined expiatory for what was done in the body, as Papists themselves in effect grant,

in denying that there is any merit, and thereby yield their purgatory a fantastical and insignificant thing.

7. And lastly, If there was such a distress incident to the souls of believers after death, no doubt God would have appointed something for their relief; but no sacrifice do we find under the law that refers to the dead, or any one office appointed or performed by any ancient saint under that dispensation, that can probably be applied to such a purpose; whereas every minute case was respected, and from all uncleanness care was taken we might be purged; but the dead, God seems willing should be deserted, not only by his passing them over, but charging us, as it were, to make as little ado as may be about them: We defile ourselves by touching of them, and are discharged those penances that natural superstition had engaged the nations in, in reference to them: Deut. xiv. 1. *You shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead;* and to the same purpose more fully, Lev. xix. 27, 28. which speaks, that persons removed into the other world, are either happy above our help, or miserable beyond it.

Thus much for scripture arguments against this doctrine of purgatory.

But I foresee a shrewd cavil, which yet I am ashamed to concern myself about, it has so little in it; but on the same account I might have let all alone. Let us then hear it;

We have brought never a positive scripture, that says, There is no such place as purgatory; and an huge out-cry is on such occasions taken up against our negative way of arguing against a doctrine that they positively profess\*.

*Answer.* 1. This old father had said something, if he had told us, they had positively proved it; but positive profession without proof, should not privilege any one from another's as positive negation, if I may so phrase it. And truly, on their part it lies to have given us positive and express scripture for purgatory, that would impose it on us as a positive article of faith to be believed on pain of damnation, which how they have acquitted themselves in, may be observed in the obscure and impertinent allegations before instanced in.

2. It seems abundantly sufficient for a suspension of faith, that we see, and are able to shew, that there is no foundation for it, which is that, I think, he calls our negative way of arguing.

3. It seems absurd to insist for positive express scripture against every particular chimæra that may come into mens heads.

\* E. W. Prot. without principles, p. 459.

heads, a thousand years after the scriptures were wrote; for so, if any man should assert, especially if many should agree to it, that Mahomet is a true prophet, or that the moon was a millstone, or whatever else can be supposed more unlikely; I am bound to subscribe to it, except I can bring particular, positive, express scripture against it. It has always been the prudence of lawgivers to direct their particular laws against faults in being, lest in forbidding all that might be, they might teach some, that never else would have been; God has walked in the same wisdom he infused into them, and it has sufficed him particularly to condemn what was particularly practised against faith and good manners, leaving general rules for the trial of after emergencies. Yet,

4. In the scriptures we have quoted, there is that positively asserted, that gives us good foundation positively to conclude, that there is no such place as purgatory. For if Christ has fully satisfied, and God fully pardoned; and given hopes to his people, that on their departure hence, they shall be immediately glorified, all which has been fully proved, we may positively conclude, that other satisfactions are not required, the saints shall not be so severely punished, nor their expectations at that rate delayed, as in the doctrine of purgatory is asserted. And thus we have done with our Doctor Positive.

VI. *What evil consequences are there of this doctrine of purgatory where it is received, and wherefore it should not be received?*

I have before hinted some, which I shall briefly recapitulate, and add a few others.

1. Hereby the freeness of God's grace is disparaged, and he is represented as an hard master to them that fear him, contrary to the notion he has every where given them of himself. God would make them believe, that *he was afflicted in all their afflictions*, and angry with them that laid an hard blow, or continued an heavy hand upon them, tho' it was but for seventy years, Zech. i. 15. But in this doctrine of purgatory he is represented as of a far other temper; and that when men have done their worst with them, they shall not escape so, but they must suffer exquisite torments, and some of them for more than a thousand years.

2. Hereby the fulness of Christ's satisfaction is denied, and faith in him much discouraged. What confidence indeed can be put in him, if he should leave us thus in the lurch, and force us to seek other friends, when we have most need of him. <sup>3</sup>

3. Here-

3. Hereby the horrid nature of sin is lessened, in that any thing that we can suffer in a little time, or our friends can do over and above their own duty, is reputed a satisfaction for it, or any the least remainders of it.

4. Hereon human works and helps are over advanced, and many a piece of superstition and will-worship introduced, and a pack of deceitful priests diverted from their proper work with the living, and vainly occupied about the dead, that have no more a *portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun*, Eccl. ix. 6.

5. Hence bad men are less careful to prepare for death, since a great part of their business may be done by other hands when they are gone.

6. Hereon good men are even afraid to die, for it seems a terrible thing to enter into this purgatory, where especially their coming out depends so much on man's sincerity, whom it is hard to trust when one is gone, and his reward is come. They that know the difficulty of believing in Christ, must needs be more straitened to place any comfortable confidence in a priest's prayers and masses, that though he be faithful while alive, lives not for ever to make intercession, or make up his satisfaction for him.

From all which I conclude,

That the doctrine of purgatory and prayers for the dead, as if thereby their afflicted, tormented souls could be relieved, is a corruption of lamentable consequence to the church, and a pernicious snare to souls.

But since there is no such thing as a purgatory after this life,

*Use 1.* Let us purge and prepare ourselves as much as we can in this life, making use of Christ's blood, Spirit and word to that purpose, and freely submitting to, and complying with present afflictions in their design this way, considering, *That Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.* Let the fire of holy zeal burn in your breasts, since the fire of an after purgatory is not like to kindle on your persons.

*Use 2.* Let this cut off all vain hopes after death from them that have neglected salvation-work in life, considering that there is no relief for them hereafter, but to hell God will immediately send them, Psal. ix. 17. *Consider this ye that forget God, and unpreparedly expose yourselves to his hand, for he will tear you in pieces, and there shall be none to deliver you,* Psal. l. 22. or yet further to speak to you in the Psalmist's words, *They that trust in their wealth, and boast them-*

*themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever,* Psal. xlix. 6, 7, 8.

*Use 3.* Let this chase away needless fears from good people at the point of death; for when they have drunk that cup, they shall taste no more bitter to all eternity, *Sorrow and sighing shall fly away, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads,* Isai. xxxv. 10.

*Use 4.* Let what has been said, commend the Protestant doctrine in denying purgatory, as an useful wholesome doctrine, while we live, and alike comfortable to them that have lived well, and learned to rely on Christ, when they come to die.

VII. *Let me give the genuine sense of this place, and improve it,* and this will force a more particular respect to the context.

1. The builders are generally understood, in a way of eminency at least, of the doctors of the church; though I will not contend, if any shall comprehend also their disciples that shall build their faith upon the doctrine which they have delivered.

2. The foundation that is built on by both builders, is supposed the same, *The Lord Jesus Christ*; such as own him, are as to the main Christian; they on all hands are allowed to broach *damnable doctrines* indeed, *that deny the Lord that bought them,* 2 Pet. ii. 1.

3. As to the materials that are superstructed on this foundation, though some of our adversaries are contentious about them, and will, against all sense, suppose by gold and silver to be meant *good works*, and by hay and stubble *venial sins*, which is a perversion of the very scope of the text, yet hereabout we are pretty generally agreed, that at least *properly and firstly*, the apostle speaks of doctrines, and by *gold, silver, and precious stones*, are meant a superstructure suitable to, and worthy of the foundation, *like precious faith*, that in the whole building there may be a proportion: And by *wood, hay and stubble*, we understand, an uncertain, frivolous, pompous doctrine, that has more shew than substance; that is of a base, rotten, mouldering, perishing nature; that is a blemish to the foundation, and destroys the uniformity of Christian religion; and makes a meer Nebuchadnezzar's image of it, part gold, and part clay; that can never cement or hold long together: And by these last builders, or rather dawbers, I understand eminently the Popish doctors: Christ they seem content should lie for the foundation, though some will tell them,

it is but a nominal Christ that they lay there neither, for the stress of their building is laid on other things, while they make use of his name; and we must be beholden to ourselves, and I know not what saints, for our salvation, though he bears the title of our Saviour. Yet grant it, that they make Christ their foundation, what incongruity is there between that and their superstructure? To instance:

Christ is *King*; this they pretend to own, a *golden foundation*: But they must reign. This in effect they infer; a wooden, dirty, dungy superstructure. If you ask wherein they do so? I answer, (1.) In dispensing with Christ's laws, which they do at pleasure. (2.) In making new laws equally obliging conscience, under pain of damnation. This they have done with that arrogance, that we may find ten of theirs to one of Christ's, as will appear by comparing their voluminous decretals with his gospels, and his servants epistles. And lastly, in taking upon them to authorise as it were and enforce his laws, as if they had their binding power, not so much from Christ's institution, as the pope's declaration: Nor in this can they pretend substitution, unless they could shew us his commission, had walked by his directions, or expressed more subjection. That scripture, in regard of the pope's arrogance, both in respect of Christ and his people, may well be applied to him; that *as God, he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*, 2 Thess. ii. 4.

Again, Christ is *prophet*; a good foundation: But we must ultimately hear and heed the pope; a strawy superstructure, and a perfect degrading of Christ by implication. See whether we bring against them a wrongful accusation: "Things are not to be believed because Christ said them, but because the church of Rome avouches them." The very scriptures themselves, and every particular article of faith, according to them, have their credibility, not from any character that Christ has put upon them, or seal that he has set to them, but as the church votes them, so we must believe of them: This is more notorious than that we should need to bring in particular authors of theirs; and what is the meaning of this, but while they give Christ the name, to usurp to themselves the office of instructing and enlightening the world: It may be no heresy to disbelieve what Christ has said, as was fore-noted in the instance of pope John XXII. but he that suspends faith to any thing, or dares think contrary to what the pope

pope and his council have instamped with their authority, he is an intolerable heretic, and fit only for hell.

Once more, They will not stand with us about Christ's being *priest*, wherein they seem to own the foundation; but as if they much doubted his sufficiency, we are taught by them to multiply sacrifices, as well as priests, as if he had not by that *one* he offered, *for ever perfected them that believe*, Heb. x. 14. We are put on personal satisfactions, directed to others intercessions; all ways are devised to affront him in this office, while they pretend to own him.

And by what in these particulars has been instanced, is evidenced what it is to rear a strawy superstructure on this golden foundation, wherein the Papists of all men are notoriously guilty.

4. By the *day* that shall declare every man's work; the Papists will have meant, as in their translation is read, *the day of the Lord*; by which some of them understand the day of the general judgment; though others will admit a more particular judgment, and with good reason; for if good and bad works were not declared till the day of the universal judgment, and the fiery tribulation of that day, the fire of purgatory would go quite out, for there would be no place for that: But it is confessed on all hands, that the generality of Greek copies, read only *the day*, not *the day of the Lord*; and that it is not *ἡμεῖς ἢ ἡμέρα*, as that great day is usually expressed, but only, *ἡ ἡμέρα*; therefore hereby I am inclined to understand some brighter season of the gospel, called *day* in respect of its light, to distinguish it from the former times, which were a kind of night, wherein those mists had arisen that the light and heat of this day should scatter and chase away; according as was foretold, *That this wicked one should be revealed, and that the Lord should consume him with the Spirit of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming*, 2 Thess. ii. 8. which word we find has been regarded, and that *wicked one* and his works have begun to be revealed, consumed, and we hope, as the day grows brighter, to see utterly destroyed. For as the day grows in light, we may expect it to increase in heat, that it shall be tormenting, through its violent scorching, to them that for their evil and odious works have always affected darkness and shade, Rev. xvi. 8, 9.

5. We are hereby led further into the understanding of the *fire* after mentioned, as a concomitant of this day, wherein every man's work, that is, words and faith, should be tried, all adulterate works consumed, and such like workers damaged and greatly endangered; and this fire I

understand partly of the word of God, which I find so expressed; *Is not my word like fire?* Jer. xxiii. 29. and so acting, *His word in my heart was a burning fire, shut up in my bones,* Jer. xx. 9. Partly I understand it of the Spirit, that shall blow up this word, and actuate it unto a greater vigour, making it to burn fiercer, as bellows do enrage our ordinary fire, to which there seems an allusion; *The breath of the Lord like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it,* Isa. xxx. 33. and in regard of the inflamations that are made in the heart by the Spirit's enforcing the word, it may be called a *Spirit of burning,* Isa. iv. 4. And yet further, I conceive, great and grievous tribulations may be a third ingredient of this fire, and all to make it yet fiercer and fiercer, that it may be effective for the various purposes for which it is sent, probation, purgation, or consumption, according to the pliability or obstinacy of the objects it meets with.

When this fire shall be kindled, and at this rate quickened, true and false doctrine shall be distinguished; the one cleared, and the other condemned; and so each man's works manifested.

This premised, what remains is easily explained.

6. His work may be said to *abide*, whose doctrine shall be approved, and *he shall receive a reward*; present, in the further satisfaction of mind he shall receive by the Spirit's confirmation and consolation of him, as to what he has preached, professed, or believed; and future, in the peculiar glory he may expect, as having found grace to be faithful in all times: This John exhorts the elect lady to look to, that both he and she might *receive a full reward,* 2 John 8.

7. His works are said to be *burnt*, that yields to the burning light of that day, that submits to the convictions of the Spirit, and quits his former errors; so Christ is said to *come to destroy the works of the devil, by the manifestation of himself,* 1 John iii. 8. That is, to burn them as here, with the brightness of his coming; and so the sons of Levi were purified, by his burning up their dross, and leaving them thereby a pure mass: It is, I am sure, no uncouth notion we give you, when we interpret this burning of their works, by a purification and consumption, through the Spirit's efficacious and clear conviction. But,

8. *How is the builder hereon said to suffer loss?*

*Ans.* It may seem his gain, and it will prove so, as Josses often do, even as the mariner accounts it, when by the loss of his lumber he saves his treasure; by the loss of his goods he saves his ship; by the loss of his ship he saves his life: But whatever he does gain, loss still he is reckon-

ed to sustain. So in the present case, he that on the Spirit's conviction quits his former errors, gets the knowledge of the truth, gets favour with God, which are far better things than what he has parted with: Yet inasmuch as these things might have been easier and cheaper had, than, it may be, he comes by them, and in that by a kind of force, as in a fire or shipwreck, to save himself he parts with them; they may bear the name of a loss, as Paul reckons the parting with his righteousness, though it was in order to the winning of Christ, *Those things that were gain to me, I counted loss, yea, doubtless, I count all loss. I have suffered the loss of all things, &c.* Phil. iii. 7, 8.

And in the present case, whenever these refuse-works are burnt, we may reckon up some loss, as the loss of time, the loss of labour, the loss of reputation, the loss of preferment, the loss of life; so some have found in quitting their corrupt opinions; but the promise is, *He that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it*, Matth. x. 39.

9. From hence naturally results the interpretation of our text, *But he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire*, that is, by yielding to these convictions, and quitting his false opinions, even as when a man's house is on fire, if he leaves his goods, leaps out of the window, and hastes away, he may save his own person with the loss of the rest; but if he obstinately resist the fire, in zeal to save his substance, he may perish himself: In like manner, if when this spiritual fire does fall from heaven upon our spiritual hay and stubble, we suffer it to prey thereupon, and content ourselves to escape with our own lives, giving up these idols of our hearts, and inclining ourselves to embrace God's revealed truths, we may save our souls with some little scorching. But if we go about to quench this fire, and suppress its light; with resolution to save this pitiful stuff; we may possibly preserve that, but more than hazard the everlasting burning of our own souls by it. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness*, Rom. i. 18. *and to them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish will God repay on every soul of them*, Rom. ii. 8, 9.

And this I suppose is the genuine meaning of the place.

*Obj.* But our adversaries will be asking, *What pope, what council says so? By what authority will we enforce their receiving of this sense?*

*Ans.* To which I answer in two particulars:

1. I note the commentaries of popes and councils, however good they be at it, are very rare things, and come not to every ones hands: One may guess them choice jewels that they keep them so close; though they are a spiteful sort of folks, if they only know the mind of God, that they so rarely apply themselves to open the word of God.

2. I suppose there is authority in the text sufficient to bow our minds to read it with meekness, and without prejudice; and being confident of this, I am less solicitous for the authority of the comment. For in our giving the sense of scripture, we pretend not to have dominion over any ones faith, that we should come with serjeants and bailiffs to arrest any ones consent without his due conviction to it; but it suffices us to propose with fidelity, what on our best search and most serious prayer, seems likeliest to be the mind of God, and commend ourselves and sense to *every mans conscience in the sight of God*; and he that hath an eye to see, let him see; but he that will flutter out all the light that is brought to him, because it is not set on such a candlestick as he pleases, let him lie in darkness; but let him think of the blackness of darkness that may be reserved for him, as a just punishment of his despite of light. This has been thought a meet recompence for such error.

Briefly then, as I promised, to improve this genuine sense,

1. By way of exposition of Protestants charity, wherein Papists much glory: Even we, say they, hold that they may be saved; we do, but observe in what cases: 1. In case of invincible ignorance; and thus we hope well of many a devout soul that died in their communion, in the night of Popery, and had not means or opportunities to know better: Their walking in all known duty, and repenting even of unknown iniquity, might commend them to God's infinite mercy; but still this is only our charity, a reliance on which, except we had better judgments than they think we have, makes not for their safety. 2. In case of their reformation in compliance with after conviction; and thus we have like hope of Turks and Pagans; and this I am apt to think is almost generally expected, since the day of gospel light has begun to dawn, and much more as it grows brighter and brighter, and its beams dart hotter and hotter upon their consciences. Let the learned of them especially look to it, for however it go with the simpler sort, that are so of necessity, they will hardly escape, persons and works too; but if they abide together, now the day of the Lord is begun, and his fire goes forth, they are like to be burnt

up; and perish together. And it is not our charity, nor God's mercy, that will relieve them, while Christ's merit, in despite of all the convictions of his Spirit, is thus slighted by them.

2. By way of call to ingenuous Papists to close with this way that is discovered for their salvation, by quitting their strawy and wooden superstructures, and giving up all their vain inventions to their first conviction: I would not have them prevent it, nor delay upon it: It is dangerous abiding in Babylon, when it is day; retaining the works of darkness, when it is light, when you do hear God's call, *Come out from amongst them, lest ye partake of their plagues*, Rev. xviii.

4. or to apply what was said to Lot, *Escape for your life, look not behind you, neither stay in all the plain, escape to the mountains, lest you be consumed*, Gen. xix. 17.

3. By way of caution to unwary Protestants, that may be hold the foundation; look also to the superstructure; take heed of strange and uncouth opinions, and when you have imbibed them, be not over-tenacious of them, but give them up to conviction, and stand not on the loss of reputation; the quitting them may be the only means of thy salvation. For though there may seem no great evil in thy opinion, thy obstinacy in adhering to it, when sufficient light is given to see the folly of it, may in continuance become the sin against the Holy Ghost, that will never be forgiven.

To conclude, I read of many *that had used curious arts, which brought their books together, and burnt them before all men, and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver, so mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed*, Acts xix. 19. A remarkable instance indeed of the power of the word: That scholars should be wrought on to burn their books, their books of curious arts, that got them probably their credit; their books of such a value. And the truth on it is, to accommodate our present case hereto; mens own notions and fancies are dear to them, when no outward advantage follows them, but much more when their interests are twisted with them: Yet methinks, their souls should be much more precious; and for their sakes, I beseech all concerned in the former charge of foolish builders, that they cast away their idols of silver and of gold, to the bats and to the moles; and I beseech God in the behalf of Rome, and all that partake with it in its unmeet and unworthy superstructures, though on the common foundation; that, on the warm application of the word, they may separate from their works, lest as the fire grows hotter,

hotter, they be consumed with them. A blessed bone-fire it would be, to see their works all burning, and therein blessed, as it would tend to their souls saving. But oh! my heart misgives me; if God's word so far prevail for their conviction, what means that crackling noise I hear, of fire and brimstone prepared for their destruction? Rev. xvii. 16. and chap. xviii. 8.

Cease frightening one another with your purgatory-flames, that are but imaginary; and fly the fire of God's wrath, kindled at his jealousy, that is like to prey upon you unto all eternity.

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## S E R M O N XII.

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Mr. J E N K Y N.

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No sin venial.

Rom. vi. 23. *The wages of sin is death.*

**I**T was a censure more true than smart, which Dr. Pri-  
 deaux pronounced against Popery, That the Roman  
 religion as it differs from ours, is a mere cheat or kind of  
 religious legerdemain. The imposture of that religion emi-  
 nently appears, in that under the varnish of Christian, most  
 of it seems calculated only for hooking in of worldly gain,  
 and promoting of secular advantage. What Bishop Sten-  
 house saith in his sermon upon Acts xix. 28. concerning  
 Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen their crying *Great is*  
*Diana of the Ephesians*, "The shrines of Diana causing their  
 shrieks for her, and their great gain raising up their cry  
 for her, shewed there was deceit in their contention for  
 the idol;" may as truly be said of the Romish Demetrius,  
 the pope and popish priests, it being not Christ but Mam-  
 mon, not piety but money, not God but gold, that engageth  
 them in their advancing of their doctrines and devotions.  
 As St. Ambrose spake of Benjamin's sack, When the sack  
 was loosed, the silver appeared; so resolve the most of their  
 theology into that whereof it is constituted, and gain will  
 be found to be the chief element of its constitution. Their  
 own writers shall prove this my accusation: "The Roman  
 court

“ court gives nothing without silver. It sells the imposition of hands, the gifts of the Holy Ghost; nor is pardon of sin given to any, but such as are possessed of money \*.” A poet of their own faith, That “ with them, temples, priests, altars, prayers, yea heaven, and God himself, are all set to sale for money. Rome gives trifles, and takes gold †.” “ Lay down but money, and then that which was forbidden before as an heinous wickedness, shall now be dispersed with, and made no sin. The vice they esteem greatest is to want money; and to have nothing is esteemed the greatest piece of barbarity. To heighten their abomination, they allow their very clergymen to dwell with whores and harlots, and to beget bastards for a certain tax, which they do not only receive of the adulterous, but even of the continent and innocent persons; alledging, that even these might have taken whores also if they had pleased.” I blush to translate what he adds, “ That bastards, thieves, adulterers, perjured persons, are not only absolved for money, but admitted to all dignities and spiritual benefices; and for money dispensations are granted for murders, though of presbyters, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, yea, of wives, nay, for witchcraft, incest with the nearest kin; and amazing! for the sin of bestiality ‡.” Rivet tells us, in his castigation of Petra-sancta the Jesuit, that “ there came to his hands a book written by one Toffanus Denys, printed 1500 at Paris, *cum privilegio*, where in fol. 38. are taxed, at a certain rate, all absolutions in the court of Rome, for murdering of brethren and sisters, fathers, mothers, wives, and for carnal knowledge of a man’s sister or mother §.” Chemnitius in his *Examen* concerning indulgences, gives us a copy of verses written over the altar of a popish cathedral, which when I read, I could hardly say, whether they more proved my foregoing accusation, or provoked my just indignation against Popery. All the verses of that pitiful piece of poetry are too many to set down; these are some of them:

*Ut tibi sit pœna venia sit aperta crumena,  
Hic datur exponi paradisus venditioni,  
Hic si large des, in cœlo sit tua sedes,  
Pro solo nummo gaudebis in æthere summo.*

The sum of the whole is, *Lay down your money, and doubt not of getting up to glory.*

The

\* Æneas Silvius, afterwards pope, ep. 56.

† Mantu. l. 3.

‡ Claud. Espens. digr. 2. cap. 1.

§ Rivet Jesuita capalanus, p. 37.

The Romish Jeroboam, I mean the pope, sets up the two calves of his golden faith and worship to preserve to himself his carnal kingdom; of which faith and worship the greatest part is purely subservient to the pope's coffer or kitchen, and of which kingdom, more truly than of war, money may be said to be the soul and sinews. If their doctrines might be witnesses to prove so clear an accusation, I might produce a far greater number than is needful to make up an ordinary jury, by mentioning those of auricular confession, purgatory, sacrifice of the mass, merits, holiness of places, breaking faith with heretics, the pope's superiority over princes, dispensation with oaths; and this of venial sins. All these arrows, if they were not levelled at the mark of gain, yet sure I am, they most exactly hit and center in it. It was ingeniously spoken by a late poet,

*An Petrus Romæ fuerit, sub judice lis est,  
Simonem Romanæ nemo fuisse negat.*

We are not sure that Peter ever sat  
In Rome, but Simon did, we're sure of that:

Simon, who bartered for the Spirit with money, is constant resident at Rome, where some hundreds of years, he hath been as successful in selling to fools, as his predecessor was unsuccessful in his attempt to buy of the apostles.

I do not therefore wonder, that Bellarmine in his first chapter of *venial sins*; thus sets out, "We teach, by common consent, that there are some sins which of their own nature, do not render a man guilty of eternal death, but only of temporal punishment." To which expression of his orthodox Dr. Ames thus replies, "We Protestants deny with an unanimous consent, that which Bellarmine affirms is taught among them with common consent." My work this day is to declare my concurrence with our Protestant divines in their denying and detesting the blasphemous doctrine of venial sin.

Bellarmino tells us, "That some sins are so far from deserving eternal punishment, that God cannot punish them eternally without injustice." Gregory de Valentia saith, that "venial sin may be remitted without any infusion of grace." Andradius and Bonaventure assert, "That for venial sins we do not so much as need repentance." The provincial council of Mentz dictate, "That many depart this life, free from mortal sins, and for lighter sins they shall never be damned." The Concil. Senonense declares, "That he who dies involved in venial sins (among which it particularly mentions *idle words*;) though he be unfit for  
" heaven

“ heaven, yet neither is it fit he should go to hell, as being  
 “ a partaker of grace, but is to be purged by the fire of  
 “ purgatory, out of which he is to be delivered by the  
 “ prayers of the living; and that whosoever thinks other-  
 “ ways, is guilty of the Lutheran, Wicklevian, and Wal-  
 “ densian heretick pravity.” And the council of Trent re-  
 “ quires, “ That all bishops should take care, that prayers  
 “ and the sacrifices of the mass, should be devoutly offered  
 “ for the dead, and accurately performed to free them from  
 “ the punishment of venial sin.” But however, though  
 this be by common, yet not by unanimous consent; for  
 some of the most learned of the Papists, as Vega, Altissio-  
 dorensis, Almain, Azorius, Durand, Fisher of Rochester,  
 who lost his head for maintaining the pope’s headship, but  
 especially Gerson chancellor of Paris, assert that all sin is  
 mortiferous or deadly. To all which I add, that for the  
 first seven hundred years after Christ, the doctrine of venial  
 sin was never taught by any father, doctor, or council.  
 This being premised as an encouragement to our conflict,  
 that the best soldiers of the enemies army are come over to  
 our side, an evidence of their ensuing overthrow, you may  
 take up the truth of this doctrine concerning venial sin;  
 either in an affirmative or negative proposition. If in an  
 affirmative, receive it thus:

*Prop.* Every sin is, of its own nature, mortiferous and  
 deadly deserving eternal punishment.

If in a negative, thus:

*Prop.* No sin is venial in its own nature.

In the discussing this great truth, I shall discourse

I. By way of explication.

II. By way of confirmation.

III. By way of application.

I. In the explication I shall proceed, *1st*, By concession;  
*2dly*, By negation, or denial of what is not to be granted.

*1st*, By concession.

*Concession* 1. I grant, that all private offences of man a-  
 gainst man, have a pardon from man due to them, which  
 the scripture fully discovers in requiring *mutual forgiveness*,  
 Eph. iv. 32. Col. iii. 13. Bellarmine argues; That “ if all  
 “ offences dissolves the love of God, by the same reason  
 “ should they dissolve love and friendship between man  
 “ and man; but this they do not; therefore,” &c.

I answer; the consequence is not only false, but blasphemous;  
 for the favour of God, and the reasons for which  
 that is preserved or dissolved, are not to be paralleled with  
 the friendship of man, and the reasons for which this is ei-

ther maintained or destroyed: Nor are the offices of man to man to be equalized with the duties of man to God, and so neither the offences. To make this plain, I argue,

1. From popish principles. 2. From undeniable reason.

1. From popish principles: For,

(1.) Do not they constantly declare, That though a man be never so high, he neither doth nor should inflict great punishments upon his inferiors for light and small offences, yet that God inflicts grievous torments upon his children for venial sins, even the torments of purgatory, not less than those of hell, but only in duration.

(2.) Do not the Papists grant, that there are many kinds of offences which do not destroy human friendship, which yet exclude from God's love? As when a man out of a good intention of helping or benefiting his friend, proves hurtful or offensive to him; this excludes not a man from his friend's favour: But when a man out of a zealous intention to please God, doth offend him, as Paul did in persecuting the church, he doth in that case sin mortally, and deserves exclusion from the favour of God.

2. I argue from undeniable reason: Man offended by man hath causes to continue still his love to man, which God offended hath not.

(1.) Man is bound by God's precept to forgive man; but God is not capable of such a bond.

(2.) Man offended is a finite creature, and therefore offences against him are comparatively small and inconsiderable; but offences against God are against an infinite Majesty, and therefore infinite.

(3.) Offences against man are mutual; the offender to-day may be the offended to-morrow; but God can never wrong his creature, even though he hurts it. *What iniquity have your fathers found in me?* Jer. ii. 11.

(4.) Man offended perhaps hath been, or may be, benefited by the man offending; but to God no good of ours can extend.

(5.) A man offended oft warns not the offender that he should not offend or wrong him; but God hath a thousand times admonished, exhorted, intreated, and threatened against offending of him.

*Conces.* 2. I grant, Though all sins deserves eternal punishment, and though no sins are venial, yet that all sins are not equal, nor deserve equal punishments. The Papists calumniate the Protestants, as Duræus said of Calvin, that he held all sins were *equal*, because he held all were *mortal*. Gautierus in his Chronological Table of the fourth  
age,

age, speaking of the Jovinianists who held the equality of sin, impudently tells us, "Calvin's doctrine is conformable to those who held all sins equal, because it makes them all mortal." But Calvin, in his third book of *Institutions*, cap. 4. purgeth himself from the calumny, and confutes the argument on which it is grounded. *Scio quam inique doctrinam*, &c. "I know, says he, how unjustly the Papists calumniate our doctrine: They say, By our making all sins mortal and damnable, we set up the paradox of the Stoics of the equality of sins; but, the very doctrine of the Papists themselves will fully clear us: For I demand of them, Do they not acknowledge that among those sins they call mortal, there is an inequality, and that one mortal sin is greater than another, and therefore they cannot charge me with making all sins equal, because I hold they are all mortal." It is the constant doctrine of Protestants, That though all sins deserve eternal punishment, yet not the same degree of it. To some *it will be more tolerable at the day of judgment than for others*, Matth. xi. 22. As among the Jews there were several degrees of capital punishment for different offences, so are there in hell several degrees of punishment suited to the degrees of sin; some are to be *beaten with more stripes, and some with fewer*, Luke xii. 47, 48. In Mat. v. 22. we read of three kinds of punishment, termed *the judgment, the council, and hell-fire*.—The judgment is understood to be the sentence of the assembly which belonged to every city, consisting of twenty-three, who, according to the best writers, punished or *killed with the sword*.—The council or Sanhedrim, consisted of seventy elders, and was for greater offences, their punishment was *stoning*.—The punishment of *hell-fire*, or that which the old idolaters exercised upon their infants, when they sacrificed them in the valley of Hinnom. Christ by the similitude of these earthly punishments, which surpassed one another in sharpness and severity, sets forth the degrees of punishment in the place of the damned. If we duly consider the case, we may understand Christ as expressing himself thus, "Heretofore men have been deterred from murdering others, because the law commands that murderers shall be cut off by the sword; but I would have you beware of anger, because that is to be punished in the next world as severely as murder is in this: But if any to his anger, shall add evil-speaking, he shall be punished with a greater punishment, as stoning is greater than that by the sword. And if his evil-speaking be very grievous and heinous, he shall suffer more exquisite torments, such as those sustained who  
" were

“ were burnt in the valley of Hinnom \*.” Hereby Bellarmine’s cavil is answered, who to prove that all sins are not mortal, and deserving eternal punishment, argues thus; “ Here are two temporal punishments less than that of hell-fire; and because he only is deserving of hell-fire, who breaks out into such an outrageous anger as to call his brother FOOL, therefore the other degrees of anger are venial sins, as being only threatened with temporal punishments.” But this erroneous sophister perverts the true sense of this text, not considering that the true import thereof is this, That all the three degrees of anger here mentioned by our Saviour, are so many murders, as Pareus observes, and that the three degrees of punishment expressed here, are three degrees of one punishment in kind and nature, which is eternal punishment in hell; and that a less degree of torment in hell is understood by the *judgment*, than by the word *council*, and a less by *council* than by *hell-fire*; and that all the three degrees of punishment here expressed by Christ, equally intend the punishment of the damned in hell, though not in equality of punishment to be inflicted on the offenders. Thus Irenæus of old interpreted this text: “ Not only is he guilty of killing to damnation, who kills his brother, but even he who is angry with him without a cause.” Barradius and Maldonat, Bellarmine’s fellow Jesuits, interpret this text, That by judgment and council, as well as by hell-fire, the eternal death of the soul is to be understood, though with a gradual difference of the punishment.

*Conces.* 3. Though no sin be venial, but every sin deserves eternal death, yet no sin of its own nature necessarily and infallibly damns, but the sin against the Holy Ghost. Every sin that admits of repentance, is pardonable. All sins are remissible which are not followed with final impenitence, as is that sin against the Holy Ghost. Other sins make a man liable to death, this is pertinaciously opposite to the terms of life, being that *sin unto death* mentioned 1 John v. 16, 17. It is true John distinguisheth between a *sin not unto death*, and a *sin unto death*; but by both expressions he intends sins mortiferous, or such as deserve eternal death. By the *sin not unto death*, he understands a sin notwithstanding which a man may avoid eternal death, although he deserves it; and by a *sin unto death*, he intends a sin which whosoever commits can never be pardoned, and therefore can never escape eternal death; and hence he would not have such a sinner prayed for. Certainly the sin which the

apostle

\* See Grotius on the place.

apostle calls a *sin not unto death*, had meritoriously taken away the life of the soul, and so cannot be accounted venial; for by the prayers of the faithful *his life shall be given him*, but say the Papists, venial sins deserve not death. And if the apostle forbids praying for him whose sin is mortal; or deserving death, then it would unavoidably follow, that none should be prayed for who commit mortal sins, which is contrary both to Christ's precept, who commands us to pray for persecutors, and no Papist can deny that persecution is a mortal sin; and to his example who prayed for his persecutors, and after him that blessed martyr Stephen. Bartholomæus Petrus a Papist, and professor of Doway, ingeniously confesseth, That by a *sin not unto death*, is to be understood a sin from which a man may arise by repentance; and that by a *sin unto death*, we are to understand a sin from which a man can never arise by repentance\*. And that a mortal sin may be said to be *not unto death*, he illustrates by the speech of Christ concerning Lazarus's sickness. *This sickness, saith Christ, is not unto death*, because Lazarus was to be recalled to life; and so a *sin not unto death*, is a sin from which, and death its desert, a man may be recalled; as a *sin unto death*, is a sin from which, and death its consequent, a man can never be recalled. Thus also Lorinus and Justinian, both Jesuits, expound this text.

*Conces. 4.* Though no sin be venial in its own nature, and deserving of pardon, yet this hinders not but that sin is pardonable by an extrinsic cause, the grace and mercy of God in Christ. All the sins of the elect, though in themselves damnable, are yet pardoned through grace; for *there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. viii. 1. Though the least sin makes us guilty and liable to damnation, if God should deal with us according to the rigour of his law; yet the greatest cannot effect this guiltiness of damnation, where mercy through Christ is conferred upon the most unworthy. Though sin be not exempted from desert of punishment, because it ought not to be punished, yet it is exempted because God through Christ will not punish it. And hence it follows,

1. That as all the sins of reprobates are deadly, not only because of their merit, but also in the event, so likewise, the reason why the sins of the regenerate exclude them not from the favour of God, is not from their own nature, but merely from God's mercy.

2. Though damnation be actually inflicted upon some for their sins, *viz.* unbelievers; yet remission and salvation

may

\* Barth. Pet. in 1 John v. 16.

may be bestowed upon others, notwithstanding they have committed those very sins for which others are damned. To unbelievers whoredom is damning, and excludes from the kingdom of God, Eph. v. 5. and yet David's adultery excluded him not from that kingdom. The murdering of Christ was imputed to Judas and Pilate, and yet not to those who *slew Christ with wicked hands*, whom Peter wills to *repent*, and be *baptized for the remission of sins*, Acts ii. 23, 38. Lot's incest was pardoned, Herod's might not be forgiven. Solomon's idolatry was, and Jeroboam's might not be remitted: Yea, hence I fear not to assert, That greater sins may be pardoned to some, when smaller may damn others.

But Bellarmine argues, "If all sins be mortal in their own nature, and only venial to believers because of their faith; then all sins should be mortal to unbelievers, and venial to believers: But this is false; for if they be venial to believers, then much more are they so to unbelievers." But why so? "Because, saith he, the sins of believers are more grievous and hainous than the sins of unbelievers, as being committed against more light and love." This argument is easily answered: It is not false that sins though smaller in the kind of sin, should be mortal to unbelievers, and greater sins venial to believers; for as of their own nature they are mortal to both; so by accident, through the mercy of God, pardoning to believers both their greater and lesser sins, they become venial in the event, which accident being deficient to unbelievers in their sinning, it makes not their sins venial, but leaves them as they are in themselves mortal, as learned Pareus sheweth in his answer to Bellarmine. We grant, as Gerard phraseth it, that the pardoned sins of believers are more heinous than those of unbelievers; but hence it cannot be inferred, that some sins of unbelievers are venial: For that the sins of believers are so, it is not from the nature of their sins, but from the mere grace of God pardoning, and not imputing their sins; while the sins of unbelievers remain such as they are of their own nature, mortal. Cotton the Jesuit argues, That to hold all sins deserve eternal punishment, is the ready way to drive men to the precipice of despair. He might have said, It is the ready way to drive their priests, those silly quacks, into despair of purging the purse by the pill of purgatory. But this argument only becomes those who are strangers to the mercy of God in Christ, and will not trust to it for salvation. It is not the *smallness* of sin, but the *greatness* of Christ that saves us. Let me tell thee, O blind Papist, though thou sinnest much in making sin small, yet thou sinnest

finest more in making my Saviour so. I shall conclude this fourth concession, with manifesting herein the consent of the most learned of the Papists with our Protestant divines. Aquinas saith, "Eternity of punishment is due to every sin of the unregenerate, in respect of the state of him who commits it, who wants that grace whereby sin is only remitted \*." And Cajetan upon these words of Aquinas tells us, "That grace is the only fountain whence floweth remission of sin, and nothing maketh sin venial or remissible, but to be in grace; and nothing maketh sin irremissible and not venial, but the being out of a state of grace †." Fisher, bishop of Rochester, though a most bitter adversary to Luther, yet on this point speaks thus to Luther: "In this that sin is venial by the mercy of God, I am, Luther, wholly of thy mind." And Azorius confesseth, "That the remission of venial sin is a free and supernatural benefit, and afforded to none that are not in a state of grace ‡."

Thus far are our concessions, or granting what is not to be denied. I come now to the second branch of explication, which was,

2dly, by way of *negation* or denial of what is not be granted. That which I peremptorily deny is, That any sins are exempted from deserving eternal punishment, upon the account of any imaginary smallness or levity of sin.

"That guilty malefactor, saith learned Rivet, is unwise, who extenuates his fault before his judge, to whom his whole cause is known; nor is it less imprudent to diminish our sins before that God who can both convince of our debts, and compel us to make satisfaction §." Bellarmine, and his complices, are then none of the wisest, who dictate to us, that some sins are so trivial, that they deserve not eternal punishment: 1. Some in their *kind*; as when the will is carried out to that which contains in itself a kind of inordination indeed, but yet such as is not contrary either to the love of God or our neighbour, as an officious lye, or an idle word. 2. Some sins are venial, says Bellarmine, by the *imperfection of the work*; and these are of two sorts: (1.) Such as by their unexpected stealth creep into the soul, as sudden motions of lust, anger, revenge, &c. which get into the mind before reason can deliberate whether they are to be admitted or no, and so they have  
not

\* Aquin. quest. 87. art. 5. ad. 1. mihi, 275.

† Cajet. in loc. præd. p. mihi. 275.

‡ Azor. l. iv. c. 10.

§ Rivet. sum. con. Tr. quart. quest. 13.

not the full consent of the will. (2.) Other sins are venial by the *imperfection of the matter*, which are committed in a light and small matter, as the stealing of an halfpenny, which neither hurts our neighbour, nor destroys love. Against these we oppose, That there is no sin but deserves eternal punishment, by its own proper and intrinsic nature. As the least drop of water is water, as truly as the whole sea; so the least sin is as truly sin as the greatest; and the least sin according to the rigour of the law deserves an everlasting penalty. The imperfection of sin as to degree, takes not away from it, either the reason of sin, or the merit of penalty, as Medina, Azorius, Durand, and others confess. It implies a gross contradiction to say, that the least sin, should be called a sin, and yet deserve pardon; for if it deserves pardon, then also freedom from punishment; and if freedom from punishment, then it hath no guilt; and if it have no guilt, then it is no sin. It is little less than blasphemy what Bellarmine dictates concerning a sin venial, as an idle word, an officious lye, &c. that it is not against a perfect and a rigorous law. This is false, to say no worse; for that law truly binds the conscience to perform it, and therefore it is truly a law: And that it truly binds the conscience, is clear, both because it is made by him who hath a right of making laws, and also because it hath a sanction, and condemnation also, Matth. xii. 32.

As to what Bellarmine argues of those sins that unawares or by stealth come into the soul, and so are not perfectly voluntary, and therefore are venial: It is acutely observed by the learned Chamier, "That a sin may be by surreption, or inconsiderateness, and yet it may be voluntary also; surreption not being properly opposed to voluntariness, but to election, when upon weighing of circumstances a thing is chosen: For it often falls out, that the will is carried to a thing, though by a sudden and inconsiderate motion, as Peter denied Christ with his will, though suddenly and inconsiderately, and yet thereby Peter committed a mortal sin\*." And "though a sin of surreption be not voluntary in the highest degree, yet it is with a true and proper consent †." But besides the formal nature of sin, or that wherein it consists, is not its voluntariness, but its transgression of the law. The law of the Creator, not the will of the creature, is the rule of right and wrong. Voluntariness aggravates, but involuntariness excuseth not sin. It is excellently observed by the learned Davenant,

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\* Chamier, l. vi. c. 10.

† Ames Bellarm. Enerv. de Pec. Ven. p. 16.

“ That may be said to be voluntary, not only which is committed with an exprefs and actual willingness, but that which is not hindred by the will when it is bound to hinder it; but the will is bound to command its reason, that it should be wakeful and watchful to suppress all the motions of inordinate concupiscence \*.” Doth not the law prohibit and condemn all affections and motions, whether deliberate or by surreption? and hence we find holy Paul complaining of the sin that *dwelt in him*, Rom. vii. 19. He was afflicted not only for the deliberate motions of sin, but also for those that were indeliberate and involuntary; and would he have mourned under them if they had not been sinful? To conclude, The surreption and indeliberate motions of sin stealing into the soul, proceed from a damnable and depraved principle of nature? Must it not then be sinful and depraved also?

When Bellarmine argues for the veniality of sin from the smallness and slightness of the matter in which sin is committed, as the stealing of an halfpenny, or a penny, I wish he had remembered, that according to this doctrine, if Bellarmine should steal a penny from his poor neighbour ten thousand several times, he should not yet after all commit a mortal sin; since if the stealing of one penny, be but a venial sin, ten thousand venial sins cannot make up or amount to one mortal sin. Besides, the smallness of the matter in which a sin is committed, is so far from extenuating, that it often aggravates the sin committed; as it is a greater sin to murder a man for sixpence than for a hundred pounds; to deny my starving friend a penny loaf than a seam of wheat: And thus divines commonly aggravate Adam's sin by his breaking the command of God in so small a matter as was the forbidden fruit. And whereas Bellarmine tells us, that the stealing of an halfpenny or a penny is not against the law, because the law doth not expressly mention any prohibition of stealing an halfpenny or penny; what if I should ask Cardinal Robert, whether the law any where expressly forbids the stealing of a thousand pounds? Doth not the general prohibition of theft, contain under it all the kinds of theft? Doth not this command, *Thou shalt not steal*, forbid the stealing of any thing that is another's, whether it be great or small? even as the law forbidding adultery; forbids that sin with any woman, noble or ignoble, rich or poor, bond or free. In the overthrow of Jericho, Josh. vi. 19. vii. 21. it was not expressly forbidden to steal a Babylonish garment, or two hundred shekels of silver,

Q 9

or

\* Davenant Determ. q. 31. p. 145.

or a wedge of gold; and yet because of the general prohibition Achan died for stealing these. That which violates one *apex* or title of the law, breaks the law and offends God. Surely in Bellarmine's divinity, Adam's taking but an apple, and that from his wife, was but a venial fault. Bellarmine argues further, that such a small theft does not hurt our neighbour, and therefore it is venial, and not forbidden. It is answered, The law forbids not only the hurting of our neighbour in forbidding to steal, but it forbids the violation of justice too. The law forbids inward lust, but how doth inward lust hurt our neighbour? God in his commands respects his own purity, as well as our neighbour's utility. Further, it is evident, that the veniality of a sin committed against our neighbour, cannot be gathered from its hurting him. Joseph's brethren sinned mortally in selling their brother, although by that selling he was highly advanced. But Bellarmine urgeth, that the stealing so small a thing opposeth not charity to man, or love to God. I answer, 'Tho' a small theft does not destroy love and charity, yet it doth oppose that perfect love and charity which the law requireth, and it ariseth, from that inordinate lust which the law forbids. Herein lies the great mistake of Bellarmine, in that he judgeth of the nature of mortal sin by the *extinction* of charity, whereas it consists in any *swerving* or *declination* from the law of God, and charity. And when Bellarmine argues, that commands concerning the least things are not properly commands: Besides the full answer formerly given, I cannot but subjoin that smart expression of Gerard, who tells Bellarmine thus arguing, that "Satan himself was deficient in this piece of Bellarmine's sophistry; and that Satan could not more speciously have covered his temptation to the eating the forbidden fruit, than by saying, Tush, this is but a little command, about a trifle, an apple, and indeed it is properly no command at all." As romantic and weak is that argument which Bellarmine grounds on that of Luke. xii. 59. *Thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the last mite.* Lo, here, saith Bellarmine, the last mite can intend nothing but small, venial sins to be expiated in the prison of purgatory: But this bold sophister perverts this text, and plays too saucily with a most serious and severe scripture. For by the last mite or farthing we must not understand sins, but the punishments due to sins, and the smallest parts of punishment in hell. Thus the most learned even of popish expositors expound that place; As Brugensis and Jansenius, who make, and that truly, the meaning thereof to be this, *Thou shalt in the suffering*

suffering of eternal punishment, undergo the extremity and rigour of punishment from justice: So that the prison there mentioned, ver. 58. is not meant of purgatory, but of hell, as Tertullian expressly saith, and *utter darkness*, and the payment of the last mite or farthing, as Augustine expounds it, imports as much, as "No part of the punishment shall be abated, but the wicked shall be there punished, to the drinking the last drop and dregs of the cup of God's wrath." It is but a wretched shift of Bellarmine, when he tells us, that venial or lesser sins, are not against, but only besides the law; by which distinction, this blasphemous sophister not only falls foul upon Andrew de Vega, and other Papists, whom he very roundly reproveth for granting that venial sins are properly *against* the law, telling them, "That upon that principle, they can never maintain the possibility of a perfect impletion of the law," because, they can never get cleverly off from that scripture, *He that offends in one point, is guilty of all*, James ii. 10. but which is worse, he audaciously wounds the purity and perfection of the divine law, to shelter his venial sins. Further, as learned Baronius observes, were the sevenial sins of Bellarmine only *besides*, and not *against* the law, we ought not to call them sins, but indifferent actions, and so account them lawful; for that which is forbidden by no law is lawful. And further, if this doctrine were true, he that abstains from venial sins, should do a work not of precept, but of counsel only, and so of supererogation, the Papists teaching that every good work not commanded by God, is a work of supererogation: But how absurd would this be to say, That by abstaining from a sin, a man doth a work of supererogation. I shall only chastise the intolerable insolence of this popeling by asking him but one question, and it is this, What proportion is there between eternal death, and the eating a morsel of flesh in Lent, or a woman's spinning a yard of thread on an holy day? If you Papists forbid these under pain of damnation, and that merely because the church appoints it so; ye blind hypocrites, may not divine prohibition be allowed to make a proportion between a sin, and eternal punishment, as well as that which is human, yea, diabolical; in the latter of which expressions I am not too severe, as long as we hold, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. to be canonical. The sum of all is this: The smallness of sin alters not the nature thereof. Its nature stands in this, that it is *against the law*: If it be not prohibited, it is no sin; if it be, it is damnable, be it greater or smaller. I conclude this explicatory part of my discourse, with that holy and excellent

excellent advice of St. Austin, *Non afferamus stateras dolosas*, &c. "Let us not bring deceitful balances to weigh in them what we will, and how we will, according to our own pleasure, saying, This is heavy, this is light; but let us fetch a divine balance out of the holy scriptures, and in them let us weigh our sins, or rather let us judge of them as they are there weighed."

I have said what I intended in the explication of this great truth, the denial of venial sin, both as to confession and negation; I proceed now,

II. To the confirmation of it.

And my first, and more immediately scriptural argument shall be this:

*Arg. 1.* No fault is venial in itself, that deserves eternal death: But every sin deserves eternal death: Therefore no sin in itself is venial.

The first proposition or major is granted by the Papists, who tell us that the nature of sins veniality, stand in its not deserving eternal death; and therefore no sin is venial that deserves eternal death.

The minor or second proposition, *viz.* that every sin deserves eternal death, I shall clearly prove by scriptures and reason.

1. By scriptures; and I shall name three. The first is that which I named for my text, Rom. vi. 23. *The wages of sin is death.* The second is, Ezek. xviii. 4. *The soul that sinneth shall die.* The third is that of Deut. xxvii. 26. *Cursed be he that continues not in all the words of this law*, &c. To these scriptures Bellarmine answers, but very miserably.

To that of Rom. vi. 23. Bellarmine answers, That when Paul saith, *The wages of sin is death*; it is only meant of mortal sin, and thus is he to be understood, *The wages of mortal sin is death.* But I answer, With as good reason, in all the places of scripture, wherein we are dehorted from sin, he may cast this shameful gloss upon them, and say, that we are in them, dehorted not from all sin, but only from mortal sin; as when the scripture saith, *Eschew evil*, 1 Pet. iii. 11. Bellarmine may add this gloss, and say, we are not forbidden to shun all evil, but only mortal evil. And so when Paul saith, *Abstain from all appearance of evil*, 1 Thess. v. 22. that is, Abstain from all appearance of mortal evil; and *Abhor that which is evil*, Rom. xii. 9. *i. e.* mortal evil; yea, when we pray to be *delivered from evil*, that, with Bellarmine's comment, is only mortal evil, not all sin. But further, I would ask any Papist, only these easy questions, 1. What is the meaning of these words, Rom. vi. 23. *The wages*

*wages of sin is death?* The Papist will answer, by these words, the apostle means that *sin deserves death*. Let Benedict Justinian the Jesuit upon Rom. vi. 23. speak for all, who gives it thus, "By the desert of sin, eternal punishments are inflicted." 2. I demand, What is the meaning of this word *mortal*, when Bellarmine thus expounds this text, the *wages of mortal sin is death?* All the Papists with Bellarmine readily answer, that the meaning of a mortal sin, is a *sin that deserves death*. Now, reader, be pleased to add to the apostle's proposition, *The wages of sin is death*, that is, *sin deserves death*, Bellarmine's exposition, *The wages of mortal sin is death*; that is, *of a sin that deserves death*; and Paul's proposition will be turned into a gross tautology, and be made to speak thus, *Sin deserveth death that deserveth death*; a wretched depravation of the text; whereby they shew, that rather than they will renounce a gross error, they will make the divinely-inspired apostle, to speak gross nonsense. Besides, it is evident, that in this sixth chapter to the Romans, the apostle dehorts the converted Romans from all sin; particularly, ver. 2. *God forbid that we should continue in sin; and how shall we live any longer therein?* Now, will any dare so wretchedly to interpret Paul, as to say that the Christians are here dehorted only from some sins, and not from all? If any would offer so to expound the apostle, I would instantly stop his mouth by two arguments taken from the context, wherein the apostle dissuades from sin, ver. 3. 1. By a reason taken from being *baptized into the death of Christ*; now when we are so baptized, is not all sin washed away and destroyed? And, 2. The apostle useth another reason to dissuade from continuing in sin, and that is, the consideration of their *former yielding themselves to sin*; whence he argues, They ought now as much to serve *righteousness* as they formerly had *served sin*, ver. 19. whence it will follow, That as they had formerly served, not only greater, but smaller sins, so now they ought to cast-off the latter as well as the former, even all sin whatsoever. Now, if Paul by these two arguments dehorts from all sin, why should he not then do so by this next argument, *viz. the issue of sin, the wages of sin is death?*

As to that place of Ezek. xviii. 4. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die*; Bellarmine answers, The prophet only intends that threat against *mortal sins*, grievous and heinous abominations, not against smaller sins which he calls venial. But he abuseth the scripture, for the prophet there setting down the standing rule of divine justice, that none should die but for *his own sins*, makes no exception of lesser sins from being

ing within the compass of that commination; not saying the soul that *grievously* sins, but the soul that *sins*, shall die. It is universally exprest, as Pareus notes; but to put all out of doubt, that lesser as well as greater sins, are threatened to be punished with death by the prophet, it is plain from ver. 31. of that chapter, where the prophet plainly declares his meaning to be of sin in general without any restriction; *Cast away from you, saith he, ALL your transgressions, and make a new heart, for why will you die?* All sins therefore which opposed a new heart, are they commanded to cast away, and are here clearly discovered to be deadly.

To that place of Deut. xxvii. 26. *Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them;* Bellarmine still gives the old answer: By the *words of this law*, saith he, are not meant the words of the *whole law*; as if God had threatened a curse against *all sins* in general, but only of *mortal sins*, some grosser sins of murder, incest, idolatry, &c. But this is a cursed gloss put upon a divine curse; for the words here used, are the same with those of ver. 8. where the very same expression *the words of this law*, intend the words of the *whole law*; and it is evident, that here all those sins are intended which are opposed to legal righteousness, *Do this and live*; but such are all sins in general. But the apostle, whom I ever took for a better expositor than either Bellarmine or the pope, leaves no place for dispute in this matter, who, Gal. iii. 10. citing this very place of Deuteronomy, denounceth the curse, not against those that commit *some* gross sins against *some* part of the law, but against those that *continue not in all things that are written in the book of the law*; i. e. those that commit any sin whatever.

Thus I have made good by scripture this proposition, *viz. Every sin deserves eternal death.* I shall now proceed to prove it by two reasons; the first whereof is this:

1. Every transgression of the law deserves eternal death: Every sin is a transgression of the law: Therefore every sin deserves eternal death.

The second proposition, or minor, That every *sin is a transgression of the law*, is contained in the express words of scripture, 1 John iii. 4. where sin is called *the transgression of the law*, from which every sin is a swerving, and thence hath both its nature and name; and it is granted by the most learned among the Papists, that all sins, even venial, are *against the law*; so Durand, Gerson, Vega, Azorius, Cajeton, with others. And Augustine's old definition of sin, that "Sin is that which is either said, done, or desired against the law," falls in with them, or rather they with it;

it; and therefore Bellarmine's distinction of some sins that are only beside, and not against the law, is grossly false; for if all sins are forbidden by, all sins are contrary to, the law.

The major or first proposition, That every transgression of the law deserves eternal death, is most certain: But I prove it thus.

Whatever deserves the curse of the law, deserves eternal death: But every transgression of the law deserves the curse of the law: Therefore every transgression of the law deserves eternal death.

The major or first proposition cannot be denied, unless we will hold that the curse of the law, only contains temporal evils, which is horridly false; for if that were true, then Christ hath not delivered us from eternal death by delivering us from *the curse of the law*.

The minor or second proposition, That every transgression of the law deserves the curse of the law, I prove from that clear and full scripture. Gal. iii. 10. *Cursed is every one that continues not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* According to the rigour of the law, the least breach thereof makes us cursed; and this was the laws unsupportable burden, that when we were bound to do all things in the law, and were unable to do them, we were yet cursed for not doing them.

2. My second reason to prove that *every sin* deserves eternal death is this;

That which deserves an *infinite* punishment deserves eternal death: But every sin deserves an infinite punishment: Therefore every sin deserves eternal death.

The major or first proposition is denied by none, there being no infinity of punishment mentioned, or imagined, but in that called in scripture *eternal death*.

The minor or second proposition, That every sin deserves an infinite punishment, I thus prove:

If Christ laid down an infinite price to *redeem us from every sin*, then every sin deserves an infinite punishment: But Christ laid down an infinite price to redeem us from every sin: Therefore every sin deserves an infinite punishment.

The consequence is evident, That if Christ laid down an infinite price for every sin, then every sin deserves an infinite punishment, because it had been an unjust exacting of punishment upon Christ, had there been required of him the laying down of an infinite price for a finite evil, that required only a finite punishment to be inflicted for it.

The minor or second proposition, *viz.* That Christ laid down an *infinite price* to redeem us from every sin, is undeniable

niable by those that will neither deny scriptures nor catechisms: for that Christ redeemed us by an infinite price, hath not only the consent, but it is the ground of the comfort of all Christians. An infinite person made the price of infinite value. And that Christ laid down this infinite price for all sins, is with the like consent and comfort embraced by all that believe the scriptures aright, which abound in texts that express it, *He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities*, Psal. cxxx. 8. *The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin*, 1 John i. 7. *He gave himself that he might redeem us from all iniquity*, Tit. ii. 14. Hence it was a prayer of faith, *Take away all iniquity*, Hof. vxi. 2. *The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all*, Isa. liii. 10. *The Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world*, John i. 19. *He shall save his people from their sins*, Mat. i. 21. from every sin, and every sin perfectly.

*Arg. 2.* My second argument to prove that no sin is venial, is this:

Whatsoever is contrary to the loving of God with the whole heart, is not venial but mortiferous; but every sin is contrary to the loving of God with our whole heart: Therefore every sin is mortal, and so not venial.

The first proposition or major is undeniable; because he that loves not God with *his whole heart*, sins against the express words of the command. And the *loving God with all the heart*, is called *the great command*, Matt. xxii. 37. and is preferred before the *love of our neighbour by Christ*, ver. 38, 39. Since therefore there are many commands of love to our neighbour, which cannot be violated, but we must needs sin mortally, it will evidently follow, That a transgression of the command of loving God with *all the heart*, must needs be a mortal sin.

The second proposition or minor, That *every sin* opposeth the loving of God *with all the heart*, and that whoever sins, loves not God with all the heart, is as true as the former.

Bellarmino therefore dares not here answer by denying this truth absolutely; but by a lame and lamentable distinction, That to love God *with all the heart*, may be taken two ways:

1. To love God so intirely and perfectly as that nothing is preferred before God's love; and this love of God, saith Bellarmino, is both the meaning of the command, and such alone also which venial sins do not oppose.

2. To love God so perfectly as that a man is so wholly taken up with the love of God, that no sinful and vicious thought at anytime can creep or steal into a person's heart:

But,

But, saith Bellarmine, such a love of God as this, is not commanded in this life, and this love of God he confesseth is opposed by venial sins. This impious distinction of Bellarmine, is both most false and frivolous.

1. He tells us, That it is not necessary to the love of God with all the soul, that all vicious thoughts be hindred from admission into a man; which is clearly opposed not only by St. Austin of old, but by others, even Papists of late. St. Austin tells us, That “to love God with all the soul, is to confer all the life, thoughts and understanding upon him, from whom we have them all; and to suffer no part of the life to give way to be willing to enjoy any thing else, but whatsoever else comes into the mind to be loved, is to be carried thither.” Victor expresseth it thus; “A man should burn with so hot a love to God, that nothing should creep into any faculty of the soul, that either diminisheth love to God, or carries it any whither else.” Anselm excellently thus, on Matt. xxii. “In the understanding no place is to be left for error; in the will nothing is to be willed contrary to God, in the whole memory nothing is to be remembered whereby we may the less think of him.” Aquinas thus also; “A man must so love God, if with all the heart, as to subject himself to him, and follow the rule of his commandments in all things; for whatsoever is contrary to his law, is contrary to his love.”

Alvarez expressly opposeth Bellarmine in these words; “To love God, is to admit nothing into the heart contrary to God.” Theophylact saith; “To love God with all the heart, is to cleave to him with all the parts and faculties of the soul; to give ourselves wholly to God, and to subject the nutritive, sensitive, and rational faculty to his love.” Now, according to these explications of the love of God, the least sins, which Papists call venial, are contrary to it; for in them there is not a pleasing of God in all things, nor a forsaking of all things contrary to his will; yea in these venial sins there is an admission of a contrary and unlawful love of the creature into the heart, and not a total subjecting thereof to God.

2. In every venial sin, there is the preferring of something before God, and therefore a manifest transgressing of the law of loving God. As to a formal and explicate preferring the creature before God, so as to account the creature a more excellent good than God is, this all those do not, that live in the grossest and most mortal wickednesses, as the Papists acknowledge; for men may live e-

ven in the hainous sin of persecution, and yet think thereby they serve and set up God: But as to a virtual and interpretative preferring the creature before God, this men do in the least sin; they carrying themselves so, as if the creature were to be preferred before God; they fearing not for the love of the creature to offend God, and injuriously to his justice, to break his commandments. And how may a man be said to shew by his carriage more respect to the creature than to God, if not by breaking the commands of God and contemning his will for the creature. To shun the dint of this answer, the Papists are forced to this wretched shift, which is, to answer; That he who sins venially, prefers not the creature before God, because he knows that venial sins will not dissolve that knot of love and friendship between God and him. But what a pitiful excuse is this for venial sin, since they who commit venial sins, thinking these sins will not dissolve the favour of God, either think such sins are so light and slight that they deserve not the dissolution of God's favour; or they think, though they do deserve that dissolution, yet that God will deal so graciously with them, as that for such sins, he will not exclude them from his favour: If they think that they do not deserve the dissolution of God's favour, they grossly err, yea, grievously sin against God, by judging their sins to be light and little, and by a bold fixing of limits to God's justice; as if God could not justly punish their sins with that penalty which he tells us they deserve: But if they think that their sins do deserve the dissolving of God's favour, and that it is merely from the grace of God that they who commit them, are not excluded from it; then it follows, That they for the love of the creature offending God by these sins, prefer the creature before God and his favour; for whosoever for any creature, dares do that which may justly exclude him from God's favour, doth prefer the creature before the favour of God: Nor doth their knowledge that these sins do not exclude them from the favour of God, when yet they will commit them, extenuate or excuse their contempt of God's favour, of which they are guilty, but contrarily it aggravates that contempt; since though they know it is by God's grace and favour that their smaller sins do not exclude them from his love and mercy, yet they abuse the clemency and goodness of God to a licentiousness in sin, which is almost the highest contempt of divine favour, imaginable.

*Arg. 3.* An opinion that overthrowes the nature of God's pardoning of sin, is impious and erroneous; but this opinion

nion that some sins are venial and deserve to be pardoned, doth thus overthrow the nature of God's pardoning of sin: Therefore, this opinion is impious and erroneous.

The major or first proposition is evident. The minor or second proposition I prove thus: If pardoning of sin designs an act of free grace and favour, in pardoning, which God according to strict justice, might not have done; and if the doctrine of sins veniality and deserving to be pardoned, makes pardoning an act of justice, so that God cannot but in justice do it, then the opinion of sins veniality overthrows the doctrine of divine pardon:

But the pardoning of sin designs an act of free grace and favour, which God might not have done unless he had pleased, and the doctrine of sins veniality makes the pardoning of sin an act of justice which God cannot but do; therefore the Popish doctrine of venial sin, overthrows the doctrine of divine pardon.

The major or first proposition is evident, and will be granted by all. The minor or second I prove thus in both its parts. As to its first part, it is most manifest that pardon designs an act of free grace and favour; it is needless to multiply scriptures in so clear a point; *Forgiveness of sin according to his grace*, Ephes. i. 7. *According to thy mercy blot out my transgressions*, Psal. li. 1. *I obtained mercy*, 1 Tim. i. 13. faith pardoned Paul.

For the second part of the minor, that the doctrine of the Papists about the veniality of sin, makes the pardoning of sin an act of justice, which God cannot but do, if he will do justly, is no slander cast upon the Papists in this point. Let them be judged in this case, by their own confessions. The council of Mentz professeth, "That they cannot understand how God should be just, if he punish any for venial sins with eternal punishment." Sonnius, the Papist, tells us that venial sin is worthy of pardon. And Bellarmine, That they "hold with a general consent, that venial sins make not a man guilty of eternal death;" and he asserts with intolerable blasphemy, "That God should be unjust if he punished venial sins eternally; justice requiring a forbearance to punish that offence which deserves not punishment." From all which it follows that divine pardon is so far from being an act of free grace in the account of a Papist, that when he recites his *Pater noster*, if his devotions agree with his doctrines, he may rather say, *Lord pay us*, than *forgive us our debts*.

Arg. 4. From the words of Christ, *Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till*

till all be fulfilled, Matth. v. 18. The Lord Christ by these words, shews it is impossible that any thing in the law, though accounted never so small, should pass from it, but all must be fulfilled with a perfect satisfaction, and opposeth the Pharisees, who taking it for granted, that there was necessarily required to righteousness and life, a perfect fulfilling of the law, and yet finding that it was impossible to to have such a perfect conformity to the law, that there should be no lusting contrary to it, coined this distinction, that some of the commands of the law were small, and some great; and though none could in those little commands against sinful motions of the heart, perfectly satisfy the law, yet if he kept the great commandments of the law, concerning outward acts and works of the law, he should be just before God; since those commands of little things were but little commands, and therefore God would not condemn a man for transgressing of them, provided he performed the external works commanded in those great commands. Now Christ vehemently denies that there are any commands of the law so small and minute, as that God would not much regard them, or of which in the establishing the righteousness of the law before God, a man should give no account for the breaking them, but God would account him righteous whether he observed them or no. And therefore to shew the necessity of fulfilling the law in the most perfect and exact manner, Christ assures, there should not pass from the law one jot or tittle thereof that should not be fulfilled; not a *jot*, the least letter, not a *tittle*, the least point, but was so highly accounted of by God, that before they should pass away without being fulfilled, *Heaven and earth should pass away*. So that there was required to the fulfilling of the law, that all things in it, even to the least apex or tittle, should be fulfilled. To which doctrine of Christ agrees that of Moses and Paul, who denounced a curse, not only against those who continued not in the *great things*, but in *all things written in the law*, Gal. iii. 10. And James, who saith, *Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, shall be guilty of all*, James ii. 10. and this one is here to be taken for any one. As Luke xv. 2. *If he have an hundred sheep, and lose one*, that is, *any one*. So Matth. x. 42. *Whosoever shall give a cup of cold water to one*, that is, to *any one* of the least believers, &c. So that any one jot or tittle of the law shall not pass away, but must be fulfilled.

*Arg. 5.* Is taken from that *stain*, or *filth*, that every sin, even the least and lightest, leaves behind it. This stain  
left

left behind the commission of every sin, is by several considered different ways : Either as an habitual aversion from God ; or as an habitual disconformity to the law of God ; or as the impairing of inherent grace, the beauty of the soul, and the weakning of its acts ; or as a greater habitude and inclination to sin : In regard of some, or all of these left upon the soul after the commission of any sin, it is said, that sin defiles and pollutes, *Matth. xv. 11. 18. Rev. xxii. 11.* and that every sin is a spot, *Ephes. v. 27* and filthiness, *2 Cor. vii. 1. James. i. 12. Ezek. xxiv. 13. Ezek. xxxvi. 25.* and when a man repents of sin, and hath sin pardoned to him, he is said to be washed and cleansed, *1 Cor. vi. 11. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. 33.* And because we are said to be cleansed, *1 John i. 7.* from all sin, therefore all sins, even such as Papiſts call venial, leave a spot and stain upon the sinner, even as Vasquez the Jesuit confesseth. Now since there is this stain and defilement befalls us after every sin, there follows an *exclusion for all sin, from the kingdom of heaven, into which no unclean thing shall enter,* *Rev. xxi. 27.* and that exclusion Bellarmine tells us, is proper to mortal sins ; and indeed that which excludes from heaven, must needs deserve eternal death, and so be mortal. And that this exclusion is not to all, perpetual, it is not from the nature of sin, nor from the cleansing virtue of any purgatory-fire, but merely of God in Christ pardoning and purifying.

*Arg. 6.* If God can justly prohibit the least sins, under an eternal penalty, then may he justly punish those sins prohibited, with that eternal penalty. And that God may prohibit the least sin under an eternal penalty, is evident, not only because the will of God forbidding any sin under an eternal penalty, is a sufficient reason of that penalty, and makes the punishment proportionable to the demerit of the sin ; but because God hath actually prohibited under pain of eternal punishment, things in themselves lawful and indifferent, as abstinence from several kinds of meats, blood, &c. and therefore surely he may forbid all sin under that penalty. Yea, God in the covenant of works made with Adam, actually prohibited all sin under the penalty of eternal death : Which is evident, because if God promised eternal life to Adam, upon condition of perfect obedience, certainly the commission of the least sin would have made Adam liable to eternal death, for he that performs not the condition prescribed in the covenant, cannot obtain the reward, but contrarily deserves the punishment appointed against those who violate the covenant ; but if Adam had committed the least sin, he had not performed the condition prescribed

scribed in the covenant, which was perfect obedience; therefore he had deserved the penalty appointed against the violators of the covenant. And if the covenant of works bound not Adam to avoid every sin for the escaping of eternal death, then it bound him, to repent of sin for the escaping of eternal death, there being no remission of any sin, or avoiding of eternal punishment for it without repentance: But under the covenant of works there was no obligation to repentance for sin; for if there had been any obligation to repentance for sin, there must have been a promise of pardon upon repentance; but that is false, because the promise of pardon belongs only to the covenant of grace, pardon being only bestowed through Christ.

*Arg. 7.* I argue from the *typical remission of sins* in the Old Testament; for they were then commanded to offer sacrifices, not only for greater and more enormous offences, but for the lesser sins, as those of infirmity and ignorance, which the Papists call and account venial. As is evident from Levit. iv. 2. 12, 28, &c. and Lev. v. 17. Now those sacrifices respected that only sacrifice of Christ, by which all our sins are expiated, as Christ was *made a curse for us that he might deliver us from the curse*, Gal. iii. 13. And from this, saith the learned Walæus, it is invincibly demonstrated, That every sin of it self is mortal.

*Arg. 8.* I argue from the *infinity of evil* that is in every sin, to its desert of an infinite punishment. That every sin is an infinite evil, is most certain; I mean not that it is infinite intensively, as to itself or bulk; for as the sinner is but finite, so sin is a privation but of a finite rectitude; and if every sin were infinite in its intensiveness, all sins would be equal. But yet two ways sin is infinite: 1. Objectively, because committed against an infinite Majesty. 2. Extensively, and in respect of its duration, because its stain and defilement last for ever, in regard of the sinner who cannot of himself repent. In like manner, there is an infinite punishment due to sin, two ways, as sin was said to be two ways infinite: 1. An infinite punishment is due to sin, objectively, by the sinners being deprived of that infinite good, against whom he hath here offended, and whom he hath here neglected and despised. 2. A punishment infinite extensively, in respect of its duration for ever, because the stain contracted from sin committed in this life, endures for ever; and therefore the wicked who continue for ever filthy and unclean, continue for ever unworthy of ever having communion with God. He that never ceaseth to be evil, never ceaseth to be miserable. The most venial fault

fault therefore, being an infinite fault, deserves an infinite punishment. That it is an infinite fault, it is plain, because it is against the infinite Majesty of the Law-giver, and because its stain of itself, and without the mercy of God, endures for ever.

*Arg. 9.* That *all sins*, even such as Papists call venial sins, deserve an eternal punishment is evident, because the least sins of reprobates, *idle words*, shall be punished with eternal punishment. That those least sins shall be punished eternally, is plain from Mat. xii. 36, 37. *Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* This condemnation here mentioned by Christ, plainly imports an eternal punishment; for in the day of judgment there will be no condemnation to a temporal punishment. And that therefore the least sins deserve eternal punishment is evident, because otherwise the punishment which shall be inflicted for these sins, would not be just, and proportional to their demerit.

Nor can the Papists shun the force of this argument, by saying, That it is merely by accident that venial sins are punished with eternal death, not in regard of themselves, but because of the condition of the subject of these venial sins; which sins by accident in reprobates cannot be repented of, because they are joined with mortal sins that exclude grace necessary to repentance: This pitiful shift, I say, will not at all help the Papists; for these smaller sins, which they call venial, are of, and by themselves, the cause of condemnation to an eternal punishment, as is evident from this place, Mat. xii. 36, 37. where Christ proves that an *account* shall be given of *every idle word*, because by our words we shall be condemned; by which expression he manifestly shews, that those idle words of which he spake, though Papists count them venial, are yet of themselves a sufficient cause of condemnation to eternal punishment; and besides, if it be unjust, as Bellarmine blasphemously speaks, to punish venial sins with eternal death, because they deserve it not; and if a venial sin by its conjunction with a mortal sin in a reprobate, is not made greater or deserving of a greater punishment, but retains the same nature that it had before, it will then unavoidably follow, it cannot deserve eternal punishment, and by consequence, it will not be punished with an eternal punishment; for, if it were, God should punish sins beyond their desert: Nor can the Papists come off, as Baronius well observes, by saying, Though a venial sin by a conjunction with a mortal sin, is not made more grievous  
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and heinous, yet it is more durable by that conjunction; as having thereby an eternal duration of that stain which follows it; because without repentance, which by a mortal sin is hindered, there is no taking away of that stain. This subterfuge, I say, is very insufficient; for the faults in reprobates, which Papists call venial, either in themselves do, or do not deserve eternal death; if they do not deserve eternal death, then they are punished beyond their desert, which is blasphemy to say: If they do deserve eternal death, then that desert of eternal death is founded in the heinousness of the faults themselves; and eternal death is inflicted, not alone for the duration of the stain of those sins, but for the demerit of the offences themselves; to which the scripture expressly agrees, which testifies, that eternal punishment in the day of judgment, shall be inflicted for those things *done in the body*, 2 Cor. v. 10. so Mat. xxv. 42, 43. And hence it was that Scotus, Biel, Vega, and Medina, because they saw that venial sins were punished eternally, they should be so punished because of what they were in themselves, and in their own nature, and by the demerit of the offence, labour to put off all, by asserting, that the punishment wherewith the damned in hell are punished for venial sins, is not eternal, but temporal, and that it shall at length have an end, tho' their punishment inflicted on them for mortal sins shall last for ever: But others of their own fraternity, condemn this justly for an absurd opinion, particularly their great Vasquez the Jesuit, thus confutes it: "If, saith he, the opinion of Scotus be true, *viz.* That the venial sins of reprobates shall not be punished in hell eternally; it will follow, That we may pray for those in hell, that they may be freed from the punishment due to their venial sins; if that punishment after they have suffered long enough, be by God to be taken off."

*Arg. 10.* I argue from the *ridiculous absurdity* of the doctrine of veniality of sin, to the erroneousness of it. The way, say the Papists, how sins venial come to be expiated and removed, is either in this life, or in the next: "In this life by sprinkling with holy water, confession to a priest, beating the breast, whipping, saying the Lord's prayer, crossing, eating no flesh, giving to the church, &c. In the next life venial sins are only expiated by the most torturing flames of purgatory, greater than any torments here in this life, yea, as tormenting as hell-fire, setting aside its duration, and oft to be endured many hundreds of years." I demand then, If in this life a venial sin may be expiated with a toy, as sprinkling with holy water,

water, and crossing, or the doing that which is oft, and always should be done with cheerfulness, as giving alms, and yet in the next world it requires so many years of torturing flames to expiate it; what is the reason of this difference of the ways of expiating venial sin, that here it may be done with a sport, and there it requires such long and inexorable tortures in fire a thousand times hotter than any here in this world, and as grievous as the torments of hell? To this question the Papists answer, The sinner is in the fault, who did not, by so light and easy a way, expiate his sin while here he lived; *here* he neglected his duty, and therefore *there* he smarts for it. But then I demand again, Was that neglect of doing his duty in this world a mortal sin, or was it a venial sin? If a mortal or damnable sin, it should have carried the offender to hell; if a venial sin, the difficulty again returns, Why may not it be expiated as easily as other venial sins are?

Having now produced what I judged sufficient for confirmation of this truth against the veniality of sin, I could add many allegations out of the fathers, which abundantly testify their consent with Protestants in this point. As out of Jerome who hath these words on Gal. v. "It matters not whether a man be excluded from blessedness by one sin, or by more, since all alike exclude." Out of Nazianzen, "Every sin is the death of the soul." Out of Augustine, especially, besides what I have formerly mentioned in this discourse, who *Epist.* 108. saith, "Our little sins, if gathered together against us, will press us down as much as one great sin. What difference is there between a shipwreck caused by one great wave, and by the water that sinks the ship, which comes into it by little and little." The same father, *Tract.* 12. in John, speaks thus, "Little sins neglected, destroy as well as great ones." But to avoid needless prolixity, I shall very briefly dispatch this whole discourse, with but naming the heads of those many inferences from it, which have taken me up much time elsewhere.

#### APPLICATION.

My inferences shall be,

1. Speculative and controversial:
2. Practical.

*First,* For controversial inferences.

1. If every sin, even venial, be damnable, as breaking the law, as hath been proved; and none can live without them, as Papists confess; it is clear then, that now none in this life perfectly keep the law.

2. If no sins be venial, but all mortiferous and damnable, and make us guilty of eternal death, then down falls merit by the worthiness of any works; for to be guilty of death, and deserve eternal life, cannot stand together.

3. Purgatory is but a fable, if no sins be venial; why should that fire burn, if it be not purgative? or rather, how can it burn, if it have no fuel?

*Secondly,* The practical inferences, which are many, I shall but name.

1. If every sin be damnable and mortiferous; then sin is of a very heinous nature. There is more malignity in an idle word, and injustice against God in a vain thought, than that all the world can expiate; more weight in it, than all the strength of angels is able to bear.

2. If the least sins are mortiferous, what then are the greatest? If a grain presseth to hell: If an atom can weigh down like a mountain; what then can a mountain do? If whispering sins speak so loud; what then do crying ones, bloody oaths, adultery, murder, oppression?

3. If every single sin be damnable, what then are all our sins? Millions of sins, sins of all our ages, conditions, places that ever we lived in, relations? If all were as St. Austin speaks, gathered into one heap against us, what an heaven-reaching mountain would they make?

4. If every sin be damnable and mortiferous, God is to be justified in the greatest temporal severities which he inflicts upon us. As God never punisheth so severely here, but he can punish more; so he never here punisheth so severely, but we deserve more and greater severities. Pains, flames, sword, pestilences, those mowings down of so many millions, are all short of damnation, deserved by sin. God is to be justified in sending such judgments, as the fire of London, and the tempest lately in Utrecht.

5. They who instigate others to sin are damnable and mortiferous enemies to souls. They draw to an eternal punishment. Soul-murder is the greatest; and soul-murders most resemble the devil in carriage, and shall in condemnation. How deeply dyed are those sins and sinners that are dipt in the blood of souls!

6. It is no cowardice to fear sin. Of all fear, that of sin is most justifiable. It is not magnanimity, but madness; not valour, but fool-hardiness, to be bold to sin. Surely, the boldness of sinners, since sin deserves eternal death, is not want of danger, but discerning.

7. How excusable are ministers and all Christian monitors, that warn against sin. They bid you take heed of damnation.

damnation To warn against which with the greatest, is the mercifullest severity.

8. What a madness is it to be merry in sin! to make a mock of it! What is this but to sport with poison, and to recreate ourselves with damnation? If here men are counted to play before us, when they are sinning, it will be bitterness in the end. There is no folly so great as to be pleased with the sport that fools make us, nor any fools like those that dance to damnation.

9. Inconceivably great is the patience of God toward sinners, especially great ones: God's patience discovers itself eminently, in that he spares damnable sins, though he sees them, hates them infinitely more than we can do, is able to punish them every moment, is infinitely the sinners superior, yea seeks to prevent their punishment by warning, intreaties, threats, counsels; yea, puts forth daily acts of mercy and bounty towards those that sin damnably; yea, he waits, and is long-suffering for scores and hundreds of years, though this waiting shews, not that he will always spare, but that we should now repent.

10. It is our interest to be holy betimes; it is good, that as much as may be of that which is so damnable, should be prevented. Shouldst thou be converted in old age, it will be thy extreme sorrow that it was so late, though thy happiness was at all. Early repentance makes an easy death-bed, and makes joyful the last stage of our journey unto eternal joys.

11. No smallness of sin should occasion boldness to commit it. 1. In some cases, the smallness of inducement to sin, the slightness of the matter of thy sin, aggravates the offence. To deny a friend a cup of water, is a greater unkindness than to deny him a thousand pounds. What, wilt thou stand with God for a trifle, and damn thy soul for a toy? Wilt thou prefer a penny before God and glory? 2. Small sins are with more difficulty shunned: A small bone of a fish easily gets into the throat, and it is hard to avoid it. 3. Small sins dispose to greater; the wimple makes way for the auger. 4. Sins many, though small, are as one great one; an heap of sands presseth to death as well as a sow of lead; a ship may sink by water coming in at a leak, drop by drop, as well as when overwhelmed with a great wave, as Austin speaks.

12. I note, The great reason why Christ should be dear to us. Thou canst not be without him, no, not for thy little, thy least sins, and those of daily incurfion. Oh! that this doctrine might make you and me prize Christ more, as  
long

long as we live. Because the best cannot live without small sins, neither can they live without a great Saviour; none of us can live without these smaller sins, as the very Papists grant; but oh that we may take a wiser course to get pardon of them, than they do, by our looking upon God's pity through Christ's blood, as our only purgatory. The Pharisees of old saw that we could not live without breaking the law in smaller things, as we have shewn before; but let us more study than they did, God's design in giving a law which fallen man is not able to keep. The apostle tells us God's design herein; he aimed at *Christ*, Rom. x. 4. who was intended by God as his end in giving such a law which fallen man could not keep; namely, that sinners might seek after his righteousness, by seeing their own inability to keep it. How much do we want Christ at every turn, for our smallest inadvertencies, impertinent, wandering thoughts, in the adjacent defects and defilements of our holy things! Lord, I want thy blood, as often as I fetch my breath!

Lastly, I infer the happiness of believers under the covenant of grace. The least sin damns, and none of us but every day, and in every duty, commit sin; but here is the comfort, we are all delivered through Christ, from that damnation which we deserve for all those unavoidable defects and evils, that attend the best in their best observing the law of God; we being loosed, under the covenant of grace, from the rigid exaction of the law, which suffers no sin to go without eternal punishment, and delivered by Christ from the necessity of a perfect and exact fulfilling the law of God, under pain of damnation. It is true, the law still commands, even believers, perfect obedience; and it is a sin in believers under the covenant of grace, that they do not obey the law of God to the utmost perfection thereof; but here is our happiness, that Christ hath obtained, that the imperfection of our obedience shall not damn us, but that our imperfect obedience to the law, shall through him be accepted. If indeed there were only the law, and no Christ, no obedience but that which is absolutely perfect, could be entertained by God; but now, though by the law, perfect obedience be required, yet by grace, imperfect, if sincere, obedience is accepted; for under the covenant of grace, strictly and precisely under pain of damnation, we are only obliged to that measure of obedience which is possible by the help of grace; and hence it is that Christ's yoke is called *easy*, Mat. xi. 30. which cannot be understood of the law in its rigour, but as mitigated by the covenant of grace; That

That yoke would not be easy, but intolerable, if it propounded no hope of salvation, but under that impossible condition of perfect obedience to the law. And 1 John v. 3. *His commands are not grievous*; but so they would be, if their exactions were rigorous in requiring perfect obedience under pain of damnation, of us that cannot perform it: But for ever blessed be God, that though our best obedience be imperfect, yet the perfect obedience of Christ imputed to us, supplies the defect of ours; yea, that our imperfect obedience doth not only not damn us, though the imperfection thereof deserves damnation according to the rigour of the law, but that it is ordained to be the way of our salvation; I mean not its imperfection, but it, notwithstanding its imperfection. Reader, if thou art a believer, till thy love to Jesus Christ, prompts thee to a more suitable ejaculation, accept of this for a conclusion of this whole discourse. “A blessed eternity, Father of mercy, will be short enough to praise thee for him, who hath delivered us from those many millions of sins, the least whereof deserve a damning eternity: Dear Lord Jesus, who hast saved us from the least sin that ever we had or did, help us to serve thee with the greatest love, that our souls can either admit or express. And as (through grace) the guilt of the least sin shall not lie upon us; so neither let the love of the least sin lodge within us. Thou who hast made our justification perfect, daily perfect what our sanctification wants. And never, Lord, let us put limits to our thankful returns, for those satisfying sufferings of thine, that knew no bounds, no measure.”

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## S E R M O N XIII.

Good works of believers not meritorious of eternal salvation.

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Mr. V E A L.

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*Psal. lxxii. 12. Also to thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.*

**T**HERE is scarce any sin more natural to us than pride, and no pride worse than spiritual pride; it was the condemnation

condemnation of the devil. Spiritual pride shews itself most of all in those high and overweening thoughts we are apt to have of our own worth and excellency. Though when we have done evil, we are filled with guilt; yet if we but think we have done well, we are tickled with conceit. One while we are conscious we have offended God, another while we are ready to believe we have obliged him. We can scarce be enlarged in a duty, pray with any life or warmth, hear with attention and affection, but we are ready to take our Lord's words out of his mouth, and greet ourselves with a *well done good and faithful servant*, Matth. xxv. 21. And that too not only, as if the work were wholly our own, but as if we had deserved something by it. We commonly contend with the Papists about the antiquity of our religion; they bear us in hand that theirs is the more ancient; for my part, I readily grant it in this sense, that Popery, as to several of the chief points of it, is plainly the religion of corrupt nature, and nature hath the start of grace in the best of us. If the doctrine of merits be in Papists only, their faith; yet it is in carnal Protestants, their nature; and in saints themselves, may sometimes be their temptation\*. And therefore, Christians, though my present business lie mainly with them of the Romish religion; yet do not you look upon yourselves as altogether unconcerned; but remember that the same arguments which conclude directly against Popery without you, may at the same time be levelled against Popery within you. Acquaintance with yourselves, and the constitution of your own souls, is the best way to establish you against the most dangerous errors of Popery, and the better you can deal with that little young Antichrist in your hearts, the better you will be able to defend yourselves against that great old one at Rome. And that I may help you so to do, as God shall enable me, I have chosen this text, which I rather fix upon, because I find it in the head of a whole squadron of scriptures, pressed by Bellarmine into the pope's service. His holiness's commission you know cannot compel any scripture to maintain the catholic cause, although against its own consent. I shall endeavour in the progress of my discourse, to rescue both this and other scriptures from the injury of an involuntary warfare, in  
which

\* The most violent assault Mr Knox ever had from Satan was at his dying hour, when he was tempted to think that by his faithfulness in his ministry he had merited heaven itself. *Vide Melch. Adam. in vita Cnoci.*

which they are forced to fight against the truth, which God commissioned them to defend. If we look into the body of this psalm, we shall find the royal penman of it, once and again, declaring and professing his faith and confidence in God, and him only, verses 1, 2, 5, 6, 7. in despite of all his enemies opposition against him, over whose power he doth triumphantly insult, verse 3. as well as tax their malice, verse 4. and persuades others to the like fixing their faith on God, verse 8. labouring to take them off from their false and ill-grounded confidences, whether in persons or things, either as wicked or vain, verse 9, 10. and then lays down the reasons and grounds of the boldness of his faith, God's *power*, verse 11. and his *mercy*, verse 12. one shewing his sufficiency and ability to overtop all those enemies, and effectually to save; the other his readiness so to do for all that do thus trust in him, and wait for him. The latter of these, God's mercy, he sets forth by a most eminent instance of it, that most glorious retribution he makes to those that do believe and obey him. *Also to thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: For thou renderest to every man according to his work.*

And so the words do both assert that great attribute of mercy in God, and prove it; the one in the former part of the verse, *To thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy:* The other in the latter, *for thou renderest to every man according to his work.* The great day of recompensing men according to what they have done in the flesh, will be the most ample proof, and illustrious manifestation not only of the righteous, but merciful nature of God.

We enquire here what is meant by *work*, and what by *rewarding* men according to it.

1. By *work* we are not to understand barely one individual work; but a plurality of works, of the same kind, which altogether make up one integral work. All the particular actions men do of the same kind are but parts of the great work they are doing, either for God, or the devil, and so are all included in it. And the miscarriages of God's children, are so many haltings in their course, so many bunglings in their work, which are blemishes in it, though not absolute interruptions of it.

But if it be farther enquired, What kind of works is here intended? I answer, Good ones, especially; for in the rewarding of them it is that God's goodness and mercy so greatly appears, when his justice is manifested in the recompensing of evil ones. Or we may thus paraphrase the words: *To thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, in that thou renderest*

to every man according to his work; not only evil to them that do evil, and have deserved it; but good to them that do good, though they cannot challenge it.

2. By rewarding men according to their works, I understand God's recompensing men according to the nature, kind, or quality of their works: Such as their works have been, such shall be their reward, *Who will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life. But to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, &c.* Rom. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9. And so the proportion is between the kind of work, and the kind of reward. Where the work was good, the reward shall be suitable; and where the work was evil, the reward will be answerable. Natural good the reward of moral, as natural evil the reward of moral evil: If it be *well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked*, Isa. iii. 10. 11. who can say but the reward is according to their works; though the righteous man's reward be a thousand times greater than his work? Here is therefore a likeness of quality between the work and the reward, but not a proportion of equality.

The truth then we infer from the words thus explained, is this,

*Doctr.* That the best of men, by their best works, do not merit the reward that God gives them.

If the consequence of this doctrine from the text be questioned, it may thus be proved. That which is merely out of the mercy of the rewarder, cannot be for the merit of the worker; *And if it be by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace: But if it be of works, then is it no more of grace; otherwise work is no more work*, Rom. xi. 6. But the Psalmist here affirms, that the reward of good works is out of the mercy of the rewarder: And therefore it follows, that it is not for the merit of the worker. And so I come to the business in hand, to shew you that good works do not merit eternal life, that being the reward spoken of by the penman of this Psalm. Here we must,

I. Explain the terms of the question.

II. Give you the state of it.

III. Confirm the truth.

IV. Take off objections.

V. Make application.

I. For explication of the terms, it would be enquired into.

1. *What is meant by good works?*

*Ans.* Not to wrong our adversaries, they themselves do generally understand such good works as are wrought by them that are furnished with truth of grace, or a supernatural principle suited to, and productive of, supernatural actions: Such good works as are the vital actions of the new man, the motions of that *divine nature* whereof believers are *made partakers*. And indeed, those works which proceed not from such a principle, can be but equivocally called good, as not partaking of the nature of that which is truly, *i. e.* supernaturally good: And of those only we are here to speak, and not of any such as are antecedent to the first grace, or conversion of the heart to God. But when we speak of these good works, we mean not only those of the second table, works of justice, charity, bounty, though the Papists like them best, at least when done to themselves: But we take them more largely and comprehensively, for the duties of both tables, and those too not only external, or such as are performed by the outward man, but likewise for the inward actings of this supernatural principle which yet proceed no farther than the heart, such as the inward workings of love, thankfulness, hope, joy, humility, patience, &c. And in a word, all that good fruit of all kinds, which grows upon this good root.

2. *What are we to understand by meriting?*

*Ans.* I shall not stand to enquire, what is the original signification of the words *mereri*, and *meritum*, but that which is most in use in our present age, and which the Papists, for the advantage of their cause, make most use of, is expressed in English by *deserving* and *desert*. But if we look back to former times, we shall find these words taken in a far different sense by the antient fathers, to say nothing of Heathen writers, than by modern Papists. The fathers commonly take *mereri*, to merit, for the same as *consequi*, *obtinere*, to obtain, or gain; and so to merit eternal life is in their sense no more than to do those things which are the way wherein eternal life is to be obtained. And this is evident in that they apply the word merit to those actions in which any real desert, or proper worthiness of the reward, can never be rationally imagined. Thus Augustine frequently tells us, "That the worshippers of devils are said to merit certain temporal comforts †." Elsewhere; "That the Virgin Mary merited to conceive, and bring forth Christ ‡." And again, that "Paul by so many per-

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† Aug. de Civit. Dei. l. 5. c. 24.

‡ Aug. de nat. et grat. c. 36.

“secutions and blasphemies, merited to be called a chosen vessel \*.” And yet again, “That the people of Israel had a stiff neck, for that they merited to be delivered from their bondage by so many miracles.” And I find a passage cited of Austin, which, if merit be taken in the present popish notion, all the world cannot reconcile to sense. *Nullis precedentibus meritis per gratiam Dei meruimus templa Dei fieri*, “By no antecedent merits, we by the grace of God merited to become the temples of God.” And can a man merit without merits? deserve with deserts? If he have no merits properly so called, he cannot properly merit to become the temple of God; but without merits he may obtain this favour of God. And yet more strange is that expression, whoever is the author of it, which some tell us is still sung in the Roman rituals, where speaking of Adam’s sin, it is said to be *felix culpa qua tantum meruit redemptorem*: An happy transgression which merited so great a Redeemer. And will any believe that Adam’s sin deserved so well at God’s hands? Was Christ’s coming into the world to redeem sinners, the reward of sin, or the remedy against it? And yet the reward of it, it must be, if the word meriting be taken in its proper sense. The same way the word is taken by others of the fathers. “If they, *i. e.* the Israelites, did not merit to come into the land, because they murmured against God: How shall we merit to come into heaven, when we live so like the Heathen †?” And Cyprian speaking of Dorcas being raised from the dead, “She, saith he, who ministred help to the afflicted widows that they might live, merited to be called back to life at the prayers of widows. ‡” In the same catachrestical way we sometimes find the word used in the vulgar translation, Josh. xi. 20. we read it, *That they might find no favour*: The vulgar hath it, *that they might not merit any mercy*. And Gen. iv. 13. *My punishment is greater than I can bear*: Our margin reads it, *Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven*: But the vulgar, *Mine iniquity is greater than that I should merit forgiveness*. What can meriting in these places signify, but *obtaining*, a signification very far differing from that in which the Papists now take it? Words are to be taken as they are used; and who knows not that words have their modes and fashions, as well as mens habits and manners? And so those which are in fashion in one age, are quite out in another, or taken in

\* De predest. et grat. c. 16.

† Amb. in 4. ad Hebr.

‡ Cypr. de op. et elemos.

in a quite different sense, and sometimes the metaphorical signification of a word may be more in use than the proper; and we shall make strange confusion in the nature of things, if those words which properly signify those things, be always taken in their proper sense. I insist the more on this, because it is all the answer I intend to the testimonies of the fathers, which the Papists think to run us down with.

But to pass from the word to the thing: If we enquire into the pedigree of this darling doctrine of the Papists, we may easily derive it from their great-grandfathers the pharisaical Jews, from whom they have received a great part of their religion: The Pharisees were for infallibility, and a magisterial imposing spirit in matters of conscience before the Pope was born; and the Rabbins were for tradition before there were any Papists in the world: And as for merits, Camero cites a passage out of Maimonides, where he says, "That every man hath his sins, and every man his merits, and he that hath more merits than sins, is a just man; but he that hath more sins than merits is a wicked man\*." And that learned author, as well as others, is of opinion that the apostle James hath an eye to this error of the Pharisees, when he says, *That whosoever offends the law in one point, is guilty of all*, chap. ii. ver. 10.

Others tell us of seven sorts or degrees of Pharisees among the Jews, one of which had its name from their professing to do all still that was required of them, or asking, Was any more yet to be done? Like the young man, Mat. xix. 20. And indeed we need go no farther than our Saviour's frequent reflections upon them, and the apostles smart disputations against them, in the point of justification. But from whencesoever the Papists have received this doctrine of merits, thus they manage it: Merit, say they, is twofold, one out of Congruity, the other out of Congnity. The former is a work to which the reward is not due out of justice, but out of some kind of decency, or congruity; or, as some of them speak, out of the liberality of the person who accepts the work; so that though the work do not really merit the reward, and is not proportioned to it, yet there is some kind of meetness or congruity that it should be rewarded. This kind of merit some of them contend to be found in men while in their natural state, in relation to that grace which is afterward bestowed on them, or wrought in them: But others of themselves do as stiffly oppose it, and maintain that sinners cannot even

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\* Camero in Matth. xix. 2. oper. 170.

in this way merit the first grace, nor the pardon of their sins, and that believers when fallen from grace, as they suppose they may, cannot merit their own recovery. But this is not the merit we are to speak of: The other is that which is out of condignity, which Durand distinguisheth into two kinds: One taken more largely for a work of that dignity or goodness which is according to God's appointment required in it, that it may be rewardable with eternal life; and that is no more really than the graciousness, or supernatural goodness of the action, as proceeding from a supernatural principle, and ordered to a supernatural end, which we acknowledge must be in every good work which is capable of a supernatural reward, and is to be found in every truly gracious action. But there is a merit out of condignity, in a more strict sense, which is defined to be "A voluntary action, for which a reward is due to a man out of justice, so that it cannot be denied him without injustice." Others define it much after the same manner, *viz.* "Such an action as hath an equality of dignity or worth in relation to the reward, which is therefore due to it out of justice." And this is the merit we are to speak of, to say nothing of that third kind some add, merit upon supposition of a promise, as when a reward is promised to a man if he do some work, which yet bears no proportion to that reward, and for which antecedently to the promise he could not challenge any; but such a promise being made, he may; and consequently, say they, may be said to merit.

II. The question then between us, and the Papists is, *Whether the good works of believers, such as God doth reward in the future life, do truly and properly deserve that reward, so that it is due out of justice, and God should be unrighteous if he should deny, or refuse it?* The modern Papists generally affirm it. The council of Trent so lays down the judgment of the present church of Rome, as to assert that good works do truly merit eternal life, and anathematize any that shall say the contrary\*.

And though those cunning fathers speak somewhat darkly, and so involve things, blending truth with error, as if they designed to make younger brothers of all the world beside; yet the great interpreter of councils speaks more honestly, that is, more broadly, and plainly tells us, "That  
" eternal

\* Siquis dixerit hominis justificati bona opera ita esse dona Dei ut non sint etiam bona ipsius justificati merita, aut ipsum justificatum bonis operibus et non vere mereri augmentum gratiæ vitæ eternæ, &c. Anathema sit. *Concil. Trident. can. 32.*

“ eternal blessedness is no less due to good works of good men, than eternal torments are to the evil works of wicked men.” And that “ eternal life is so the recompence of good works, that it is not so much given of God freely, and out of liberality, as it is out of debt:” And that “ the nature of merit and grace not being consistent, the reward is to be reckoned, not as of grace, but as of debt †.” Now well fare Andradius for a plain-dealing enemy; as it is a commendable quality in any, but a rare one in a Papist. He saves us the labour of guessing at the councils meaning. Had all spoke out like him, we should more easily have understood them, and fewer would have been deluded by them: And yet not to wrong any, other modern Jesuits are no less rigid in the point than this author; nay, who among the Papists do not assert the worthiness of good works in relation to the reward, though they are not yet agreed from whence that worthiness should arise: Some say, as Bellarmine tells us, from the promise of God engaging to reward them; but these are few, and too modest, and indeed half heretics for their pains. Others say, from the intrinsic worth, and excellency of the works themselves, setting aside the consideration of the promise. These are the impudent children of the holy church, fit sons for such a mother. And yet the cardinal himself comes little behind them, if at all; he is of opinion, that the good works of righteous men are worthy of eternal glory, partly by reason of their own proper goodness, and partly by virtue of God’s promise. Others say, Good works are worthy of eternal life, as they are dipped in Christ’s blood, dignified and commended by his merits, from which they receive virtue and power, to be themselves meritorious. And so our business is,

III. To confirm the truth, by shewing that good works do not on any account, either of themselves, and their own internal excellency, or of God’s promise, or Christ’s merits, deserve eternal life.

*Arg. 1.* Good works are rewarded merely out of God’s mercy and grace, and therefore not out of man’s merit. What more opposite than mercy, and merit? *Not by works of righteousness, but of his mercy he saved,* Tit. iii. 5. What a man doth really deserve by his works, cannot be said to be given him out of mere mercy and grace. But it is from thence only that the best works of God’s children are ever rewarded with eternal blessedness. Thus the text, *To thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, for thou renderest to every man according*

† Andr. apud Chemnit.

ing to his work. Were not God infinite in mercy, the best saint upon earth would fall short of a reward in heaven. *Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life, Jude 21. Hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. i. 13. And Paul prays for Onesiphorus, That he might find mercy of the Lord in that day, 2 Tim. i. 18. the great day of retribution. The reward then that these saints expected, and would have others look for, is one given them out of mercy. Men never need mercy more than when they come before God's tribunal, and even there when they look for the reward of their good works, they must expect it from the mercy of the Judge. So Nehemiah did, who after making mention of some of his good works, and praying that God would remember him for them, chap. iii. 14. he farther prays that God would spare him according to the greatness of his mercy, ver. 22. Now when is it that Nehemiah desires to be spared, but then when he expects his works should be rewarded? God's sparing extends even to his judging. God's remembering him for good, ver. 31. his not wiping out his good deeds, and his sparing him, all proceed from the same mercy of God. But eternal life, say the Papists, is ascribed to God's mercy, not that it is not truly and properly the reward of man's merits, but that those merits themselves are the fruits of God's mercy. To which we may easily reply, That if God do out of his mercy save us, and out of mercy remember us for good, and reward us according to our work, then it is clear that he doth more than only enable us out of his mercy, to do those good works which tend to salvation. It is one thing for a man to be saved, another thing to be put into a way of salvation by being enabled to work for it. As it is one thing to crown a man for conquering, and another to give him weapons and teach him to fight. God could not be truly said to save any man, if he only gave him grace to work in order to it: Nor to save out of mercy, if for all that mercy he must be saved by his merits, and without them, might fall short of salvation.*

*Arg. 2. Eternal life is the gift of God, and therefore is not deserved by our good works: It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, Luke xii. 32. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, Rom. vi. 23. That therefore eternal life is a gift none can deny, that will not deny the plain words of scripture: And that then it will follow that good works do not deserve it, will appear by the opposition that there is between a free gift, and a due reward: That which is of grace is not of debt, and that which is of debt*

is not of grace, Rom. xi. 6. What I owe, I cannot be said properly to give; and what I properly give, I cannot be said to owe. So that if God properly gives eternal life, he cannot be said to owe it; and if he do not owe it, I am sure we do not deserve it. So much we see in the apostles antithesis, *The wages of sin is death*; death is truly and properly the wages of sin, as being deserved by us, and it is justice in God to give us our desert. But he doth not say, Eternal life is the wages of our righteousness or works, but the gift of God, as being free, and altogether undeserved by us. Ὁψώνια, *stipendium*, he alludes to the *pay* that was given to soldiers in the wars, and for which they had served. *Be content with your wages*, Luke iii. 14. But eternal life he calls the *free gift* of God; such an one as is given *out of grace*: As soldiers sometimes were wont to have gifts, largesses, given them over and above their pay, as we know was the frequent practice of the Roman emperors to do, unto which it is not unlikely that our apostle may allude in the latter part of the verse, as well as he plainly enough doth to their pay in the former. “The apostle doth not say, Eternal life is your wages, says Theophylact, but God’s gifts; for you receive not the compensation, and remuneration of your labours, but all these things come by grace through Jesus Christ. \*”

*Arg. 3.* Eternal life is given to believers by way of inheritance, and therefore not by way of merit: *Which is the earnest of our inheritance*, Eph. i. 14. *If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*, Rom. viii. 17. *Who shall be heirs of salvation*, Heb. i. 14. This none can deny. And that it follows, that if they be heirs of glory, they have it not by the merits of their works: *Not by works of righteousness,—that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs*, &c Tit. iii. 5, 7. *If the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise*, Gal. iii. 18. To have eternal life by the law and by works, is opposed to our having it by the promise, and by inheritance. And this may be farther confirmed; for if a believer merit his inheritance, then either he doth it by works done before his adoption, which the Papists themselves will not say, who acknowledge eternal life not to be the wages of servants, but the portion of children; and that merits cannot be in any who are not reconciled to God, and accepted of him: Or else it must be by works done after a man is adopted; but that cannot be neither, because whoever merits, doth thereby acquire a right to something to which he had none before,

\* In Sext. c. ad Rom.

before, whereas every believer hath a right to the heavenly inheritance by his very adoption, and before those good works be wrought, whereby it is pretended he merits it. *If children, then heirs, &c.* Rom. viii. 17. But, say the Papists, believers have a right to heaven by their adoption, yet must merit the actual possession of it. It is subtilly distinguished: As if an adopted person had not a title to the possession of the inheritance the very first moment he is adopted, or as if a man might have a right to heaven, and yet not have a right to the possession of it. We acknowledge that obedience is required in a son before he come to possess his inheritance, yet that obedience, though antecedent to his possessing that inheritance, is only the way in which he is to come to it, and the means whereby he is to be fitted for it, but it is not meritorious of it: There is no right to the inheritance required by his obedience which before he had not, though farther fitness for, and suitability to it there may be. The Israelites were to fight, and subdue their enemies ere they possessed the promised land, but their right to the possession of it they had before by the promise; and who can say that they were worthy of it merely because they fought for it?

*Arg. 4.* Believers owe all to God, and therefore can merit nothing of him: They owe all to God, both as being his servants to whom they are bound, and his beneficiaries who have received all from him.

1. They are his servants: *Say we are unprofitable servants, Luke xvii. 10. Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.* What that price is, Peter tells us, *Not corruptible things, gold, silver, but the precious blood of Christ, &c.* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. All the creatures are his servants, because made, and employed, and maintained by him: But believers are more especially his servants, because they are redeemed by him too, from being servants to sin and Satan, of whom they were held in bondage, and purchased by Christ to be his own possession, his *peculiar people*, and to do his work, to be *zealous of good works*, Tit. ii. 14. I suppose none can deny believers to be as much God's servants, as any man's servants are his; and that he hath as absolute a dominion over them, as men ever can have over those which are theirs, being bought with a price as well as any. Now, who knows not that servants are so their masters, that they are not their own: They cannot command, nor dispose of themselves, their time, or their work; all they have, and all they do is their Master's. Believers then being thus God's servants, have nothing, do nothing, but  
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what belongs to their Lord; and so can deserve nothing at his hands by all the service they can do to him, seeing they owe it all to him. And therefore, if God reward his servants, he doth it out of his liberality, and because it pleaseth him to reward them; not that any thing is due to them. And if he never should reward them, nor promised them a reward, yet still they being servants were bound to do his work. Hence our Saviour in Luke xvii. bids his disciples when they have *done all that is commanded them*, or supposing they could and should do all, yet even then to acknowledge themselves to be but *unprofitable servants*; not only unprofitable to God, but unprofitable to themselves, in that being bound by the condition of servants to obey their Lord, they could not deserve so much as *thanks*, ver. 9. much less a reward. And so, in a word, If God give believers any thing, it is grace; if nothing, it is not injustice. He that would deserve any thing of his master; must first be made free; manumission must go before merit.

2. Believers owe all to God, because they are his beneficiaries, and have received all from him; *What hast thou that thou hast not received?* 1 Cor. iv. 7. *It is God that worketh in you to will, and to do of his own good pleasure.* Phil. ii. 13. *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God,* 2 Cor. iii. 5. And indeed Papists themselves dare not in plain terms deny it. And the more ancient, and sounder schoolmen roundly assert, all the good we do, as well as enjoy, to come from God. "No man is before-hand with God in doing any thing for God, but God himself in every good work and motion is the first mover and doer \*." And, "Whatever we are, faith another, whatever we have, whether good actions, or good habits, or the use of them, it is all in us out of the liberality of God freely giving all, and preserving all †." The good actions we do, are indeed ours as they are wrought by us, and come from us; yet all that is good in them is of God, and they have no more goodness in them than what they have of him. Now then, hence it will follow, that men can deserve nothing of God, *Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?* Rom. xi. 35. They which have not first given to God something which is their own, something which they never received from him, cannot oblige him to recompense them. And indeed, it is contrary to common sense, that a man should deserve any thing of another by giving him back what he received from

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\* Bradw. de causa Dei, p. 343.

† Durand. in Sent. l. 1. dist. 27. q. 2.

him, and so that God should be a debtor to us for those very good works which he himself hath wrought in us. Nay, the more good a man doth, the more he receives from God, seeing it is of God that he doth that very good, and therefore is so far from obliging God by what he doth, that he is himself more bound to God. The more a man owes to God, the less capable he is of deserving any thing of God. The more good a man doth, the more he owes, because he receives more; and consequently the best saints, seeing they receive most, must needs owe most, and therefore merit least. Indeed, did they do their good works merely in their own strength, and without receiving grace from God, so that they could call their works purely their own, more might be said in defence of merit; but when no believer in the world ever doth one jot of good more than what he is enabled by God to do, and which God works by him; it follows that still as his works encrease, so his receipts encrease; and as they grow, his merits, so to speak, abate.

*Arg. 5.* The good works of believers are imperfect, and therefore they cannot merit by them. How can a man merit any reward of the lawgiver by doing that which doth not answer the law, which requires not only good works, but perfectly good ones? He doth not deserve his wages that doth not do his whole work, and do it as he should. Or, how can a man deserve a reward by those works which deserve punishment? Can he deserve the blessing and the curse at the same time, and by the same works? But imperfect good works, though the imperfection of them be not actually imputed, and what is good in them be accepted, yet as imperfect, and falling short of the demands of the law, do deserve the curse; for *cursed is every one that continues not in all that is written in the book of the law to do it*, Gal. iii. 10. And the perfection of good works, as well as the works themselves, is one of those things which are written in the law; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, &c. Luke x. 27. Now, that the good works of believers are imperfect, not only altogether, but each of them in particular, how clear it is to any that ever really exercised themselves in them? Where is the saint in the world, but hath some sins mingled with his good works? Who ever holds on in so constant a course of obedience and holiness, but that the good he doth is interrupted with the mixture of some evil? *There is not a just man upon earth, that doth good, and sins not*, says Solomon, Eccl. vii. 20. *And if we say, we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*, saith St. John, 1 John i. 8. And David speaks for himself, and all the world

world besides, that if God should *mark iniquity*, none could stand, P<sup>sa</sup>. cxxx. 3. And though our adversaries tell us here, that the intermixture of some venial sins, with the good works of the saints, doth not hinder their perfection, nor meritoriousness, and that their sins are no other: That believers may, as they walk towards heaven, have a little dust fall upon them, but do not wallow in the mire; that they do but turn aside in God's ways, not turn their backs upon them; but halt in them, not forsake them; but squint a little on the world, not turn their faces wholly toward it: Yet this will not suffice, till they can solidly establish the distinction of mortal sins, and venial, upon scripture foundations, which they can never till they have made an expurgatory index upon the Bible itself, and condemned the holy penmen of it, for making those sins *mortal*, which they themselves would so fain have only *venial*. No, nor after they have done that, till they can produce some one saint who hath lived all his days without ever falling into any one of their mortal sins. Let them ransack their whole college of cardinals, search all their religious houses, examine Peter's chair itself, and they shall not find one that dares pretend to be wholly without, or free from some or other of those sins, which they themselves count mortal.

And if we look to the good works of the saints in particular, we shall find some defectiveness in every one of them; the best but proceed from an imperfect principle; the new nature, which, in believers during their present state, is but in its growth, not come to its full maturity. God promises that believers shall grow in grace, *The righteous shall flourish as the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon*, P<sup>sa</sup>. xcii. 12, 13, 14. They are commanded to grow, *Grow in grace*, 2 Pet. iii. 18. It is their endeavour to grow, *They reach out to things before them, and press forward*, &c. Phil. iii. 12, 13, 14. And it is their privilege that they do grow; *Their inner man is renewed day by day*, 2 Cor. iv. 16. And there is no time of a saint's life in which it is not his duty to grow in grace; the command obligeth them all, as long as they are on this side heaven. But if grace were come to its full perfection, there would be no more need of growing in it, no more obligation so to do. Besides, there is no saint, but as he hath some grace in him, so he hath some remainders of corruption too, *sin dwelling in him*, as well as Paul had, Rom. vii. 17. *the law of the members*, as well as of the *mind*, ver. 23. *flesh* as well as *spirit*, Gal. v. 17. As one principle which draws him off from sin, so another which inclines him to it; as one which puts him

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upon good, so another which makes him in some degree averse to it; as something which makes him do the work, and in some measure as he should; so something which checks and cools him, and makes him not do it altogether as he should. Now from hence ariseth a double imperfection in the best works of the saints: One is a wanting or failing of that intenseness, or those degrees of goodness, which the law of God requires; for where the principle itself is not fully perfect, the actings of that principle cannot but be imperfect; the effect can be no better than the cause: The other is the adherence of some evil to the work, some spot or stain cleaving to it: As sin dwells in the same soul, the same mind, the same will and affections with grace, so it mingles itself with the actings of grace; there being something of mud in the fountain, it dirties the stream; so that upon the whole every act of a saint is, some way or other, defective, and blemished, and comes short of a legal accurateness, and therefore is not able to abide a legal trial: That any are at all accepted with God, is upon the sole account of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 5. Him we find, Rev. viii. 4. offering incense with the prayers of the saints, and his type the high-priest, *Bearing the iniquities of the holy things which the children of Israel hallowed in all their gifts*, Exod. xxviii. 38. And sure then, if the good works of believers are accepted for Christ's sake, they are not rewarded for their own. Their goodness cannot deserve a recompence, when their infirmities need a covering. Their weakness argues their not answering the law; and if they do not answer it, they cannot deserve to be rewarded according to it.

*Arg. 6.* Believers need forgiveness of sin, and therefore cannot by all their good deeds merit life. That they need forgiveness is plain, not only by the former argument, and by our Saviour's command to pray for pardon, and that daily, *Forgive us our debts*, Matth. vi. 12. But likewise by the practice of the saints in scripture, Psal. xxv. 11. Dan. ix. 19. 1 Kings viii. 34. 36. and the practice of the Papists themselves; how many *Pater nosters*, and *Kyrie Elefons*, do they daily say? The veriest saints among them confess their sins, and pray for pardon. The Pope himself, for all his holiness, and his pardoning other mens sins, yet confesseth his own. Now, if saints themselves need forgiveness, how do they deserve heaven? How can the conscience of sin, and the merit of life consist together? He that prays for pardon, confesseth himself a sinner; and he that owns himself a sinner, acknowledgeth himself to be worthy of death; and if he be worthy of death, how is he worthy of life?

If he deserve a punishment, sure he doth not at the same time deserve a reward? If they shall say, that they pray only for the pardon of venial sins, it signifies little; they had as good keep their breath for something else, seeing after all their seeking the forgiveness of them, yet they must be fain to expiate them hereafter in purgatory: And if they do by their venial sins deserve purgatory, how do they at the same time merit heaven? And therefore, either let the Papists cease to pray for pardon, or not pretend to merit. To beg forgiveness, if they do not indeed sin, is to mock God; and to pretend to merit, if they do, is to mock themselves.

*Arg. 7.* The good works of believers are not commensurate and equal in goodness and value to eternal life, and therefore cannot deserve it. Common sense will evince the truth of the consequence. Who can say that such a work deserves such a reward, if it be not equal in worth and value to it, any more than that such a commodity deserves such a price, if it be not of equal worth with it? And Papists themselves grant as much; Aquinas make the just reward of a man's labour, and the price of a thing bought, to be both alike of justice, and requires an equality wherever strict justice is. And that the good works of the saints are not equal to eternal life, unless they be grown better than they were in Paul's time, is clear by Rom. viii. 18. *For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us:* And if the sufferings of the saints are not worthy of their glory, sure none of their other works are; their sufferings, wherein they are not merely passive, but active too, for *they chuse to suffer afflictions*, Heb. xi. 25. being some of the most excellent of their works, and in which most grace is exercised.

*Except.* The Papists say, That the good works of believers as they come merely from them, and their free will, are not worthy of, or equal to, their glory; but yet that they are, so as they proceed from grace, a supernatural principle in their hearts.

*Answer.* But we have seen before, that that very principle though excellent, noble, divine, as to the nature of it; yet in respect of its degrees, is but imperfect, and therefore the actings which proceed from it must needs be so too; there being such a mixture of sin in the heart where grace is seated, it mingles itself with the actings of grace in our works. And how then can we say that an imperfect work deserves a full reward? That the poor lame performances

of believers are equal to that abundant glory, which God in his goodness hath prepared for them?

*Arg. 8.* Believers cannot recompense to God what they have already received of him, and therefore cannot, by all they do, merit any thing of him. They that are debtors to God, can by no means make him a debtor to them; when they owe him so much, he can owe them nothing. Debt to God must be discharged before any obligation can be laid upon him. And that saints cannot recompense God for what they have received of him, is clear by what was said before; for they have received of him all they are, all they have, all they do; their being, their powers and faculties, their good inclinations, principles, actings. And what can a man return to God, which may recompense him for all these? It is a known saying of the philosopher Aristotle, That no man can requite God, or his parents. And indeed, if a son cannot return equal to his father for the being he hath received from him, though but subordinately to God, much less can he recompense God himself for that, and all else which he hath received from him. But deserving a reward at God's hands, especially such a one as we speak of, is much more than merely to requite him for what he hath done for us, and therefore such a reward, by all our good works, we can never possibly merit. I conclude this with that of Bradwardine, "God hath given  
 " to and for man, miserable captive man, man obnoxious  
 " to eternal flames, himself made man, suffering, dying,  
 " buried, that he might redeem him; and he promiseth,  
 " and giveth himself wholly to be enjoyed by man as his  
 " great reward, which infinitely exceeds any mere man:" And consequently, all his power, all his holiness, all his good works. What saint on earth can requite God for giving himself for him, and how then can he merit the enjoyment of God? If the first be above his requital, I am sure the other is above his desert.

*Arg. 9.* He that deserves any thing of another, must do something whereby that other hath some benefit or advantage; for no man can be said to merit at another's hand, by doing that which is advantageous only to himself. But believers, by all they do, profit themselves, if any, not God; they bring no gain, make no addition to him: It is their own good, their own happiness they further and advance by all their holiness and good works, but not God's, who is still, after all the good works of all the saints on earth for these 5000 years and upwards, the same he was before. All their mites have added nothing to his treasures, all  
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their drops nothing to his ocean. *Can a man be profitable to God, as a man that is wise may be profitable to himself? Is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect?* Job xxii. 2, 3. And therefore it must needs follow, that believers, by their good works, deserve nothing of God.

*Arg. 10.* The Popish doctrine of merits highly derogates from the honour of God and Christ, and therefore is not to be admitted.

*1<sup>st</sup>* It derogates from the glory of God;

1. In his *liberality*, for God is the most liberal giver, Jam. i. 5. Every good, we say, by how much the greater it is, so much the more communicative it is; and God being the greatest good, must needs be most communicative, most liberal, and that too to such an height, as nothing can be conceived more so. Now, he that gives freely, is more liberal, more generous, more communicative, than he that gives out of debt, or on the account of desert; and therefore that most free and liberal way of giving must be ascribed unto God, as most suitable to him; and we cannot say that God gives any thing to his creatures out of debt, but we diminish the glory of his liberality.

2. In his *liberty*. It is a subjecting him to his creatures. He that owes any thing to another, is so far forth subject to him; *The borrower is servant to the lender*, Prov. xxii. 7. He that gives all freely, is more free himself, than he that gives only because he owes it. And therefore, if God be a debtor to man, and bound in justice to reward him, he doth not act so freely as if no such obligation lay upon him.

*2dly*, It derogates likewise from the glory of Christ, because from his merits. Whoever merits any thing, acquires thereby a right to that thing which before he had not, either in whole or in part. A day-labourer hath no right to his wages, but by his work, and till his work be done, cannot challenge it; and so, if believers merit eternal life, they do by their works get a title to it, which before their working they had not: And if they do by their works acquire a right wholly to eternal life, then Christ hath not at all merited it for them; and something there is in eternal life which Christ hath not merited. And it is in vain to say that Christ hath merited for the saints a power of meriting, and that it is more for his glory to enable them to do it than to do it wholly himself. For, besides that, the Papists can never prove that Christ hath merited any such power for believers, it is really more for the honour of his bounty to purchase all for them himself, than to enable them to do it.

As he is more bountiful who gives a man a great estate out of his own proper goods, than he that enables him to get an estate by his labour and industry.

Indeed Bellarmine speaks plainly, that God would have his children merit heaven, because it is more for their honour than to have it given them †. So little is his eminency concerned for God's glory, as zealous as he is for the credit of the saints. Methinks, he might have remembered, that what is given to the one is taken away from the other; and if it be more for the saints honour to have their inheritance by way of merit, yet it is more for God's glory that they have it as a gift.

I have been larger in these arguments, because, though some of the more learned among the Papists place the meritoriousness of good works upon something else than the intrinsic excellency of them, yet this is the most popular and dangerous error among them; the vulgar sort not understanding the distinctions and niceties of some few scholars, are more apt to believe their good works to be of their own nature, and for their own excellency, meritorious.

Bellarmino further says, That the compleat meritoriousness of good works ariseth from the addition of God's promise to them; so that they which would not have merited eternal life otherwise, though proportioned to it, yet the promise being made, are truly worthy of it.

Against this we argue; That if the accession of the promise make good works to be truly meritorious; then it must be, either because the promise makes good works better, more excellent and noble than they would have been, had no such promise been made; or else because, which is this Cardinal's notion, the promise obligeth God in justice to reward them, which without it he were not bound to do.

1. But the addition of God's promise doth not raise the rate of good works, nor add any intrinsic dignity or worth to them, nor make them in themselves better than they would have been if such a promise had not been made, the promise being something extrinsic to the works themselves, &c. From hence therefore they can receive no new degrees of inward goodness or worth. The proper formal excellency of a good action ariseth from its conformity to its rule, the rightness of the principle from whence it proceeds, and the end to which it is directed: If therefore it proceed from a supernatural principle, and be referred to a supernatural end, and be in other things agreeable to its proper

† Bellar. de justif. l. 5. c. 3.

proper rule, which is the command of God, and not the promise; it hath all in it that is necessary to the essence of a good work, whether any promise be made to it or not. Indeed, the more high and intense the principle of grace is from whence it proceeds, and the more directly and expressly it is ordered to its end; and the more exactly it is conformable to its rule, the more good, the more gracious it is; but the adding of the promise makes it not one jot more gracious, more intrinsically-worthy: Had God never made any promise of rewarding the good works of believers, yet they would have been as good as now they are. Did any new goodness accrue to a good work by the accession of God's promise, it would follow, that the least good work of a saint should thereby be so elevated and raised in its worth and value, as to be made equal to the greatest: The giving *a cup of cold water* to one of Christ's disciples, should be equal to a man's laying down his life for Christ; for they which agree in some third, agree between themselves, as the learned Bishop Davenant argues; and so, if the giving a cup of cold water to a disciple of Christ, be by God's promise made equal to eternal life, dying for Christ being no more, even after the accession of the promise, they must be both equally good, and equally meritorious actions; because both commensurate to, and meritorious of the same reward. Nay, supposing God should promise eternal life to a merely moral work, which had no supernatural goodness in it, or to an action in itself indifferent, yet that action, though not gracious in itself, should be of as great dignity and value as any the best and most spiritual action whatever; for the best action cannot be imagined by Papists themselves to deserve any more than eternal life; and even a mere moral or indifferent one would, by the help of the promise, deserve as much, and yet the Papists acknowledge that none but gracious ones can deserve it. And how absurd would it seem in the things of this life, for a promise or contract thus to raise the value of a man's labour or money, above the due estimation, and intrinsic worth of it? Would it not seem strange, nay, ridiculous to affirm, when two men buy two parcels of a commodity, of equal worth in themselves, but at unequal rates; suppose the one at 100 *l.* as the full value, the other at 5 *l.* that the contract made between the buyer and seller; or the promise of the seller to let his chapman have his goods at such a price, did raise the value of his five pounds, and make it equal to the others hundred? who would grant this? who would not say that such a commodity were in a

manner given away, or the just price of it abated, rather than the value of the money raised? What our adversaries speak of good works being made meritorious by the addition of God's promise, is no less ridiculous and void of reason.

2. The addition of God's promise of rewarding good works, doth not bind him in strict justice to reward them. We acknowledge that he is engaged, by his immutability and faithfulness, to reward the holiness of his saints, having once promised so to do; but that is no more than to say, that God is engaged to act like himself, suitably to his own nature. It is agreeable to God, as God, to be faithful and true to his word: If he were not faithful, he could not be God; not to be *faithful* were to *deny himself*, 2 Tim. ii. 13. But it is quite another thing to be bound in strict justice to render to men such a reward as he hath promised. For the object of justice being the equality of the thing given, and the thing received; and it being the business of justice to see to that equality, and that so much be returned for so much, God being bound by his promise to make such an equality of the reward to the work, argues imperfection in him; for it implies that God is man's debtor, and hath received more of him than hitherto he hath given him, or that a man's works exceed all his receipts, and all God's former bounty: In a word, that man hath done more for God, than God hath yet done for him, on the account whereof he is bound to give him more, (*viz.* the reward) that so there may be an equality. And if this do not imply imperfection in God, what doth? Besides, if after God hath promised glory to a righteous man walking in his righteousness, yet he should not give it him, such an one could only say that God did break his word, or act contrary to his faithfulness, but he could not say, he acted unjustly, or did not give him as much as he received from him. "If, saith a Papist himself, God should not give glory to a man that died in a state of grace, or should take it away from one already possessed of it, yet in so doing he should not be unrighteous \*.

To conclude; justice properly taken, implies an equality, and where equality is not, there cannot be justice; but there is no equality not only between God and man, but between man's working, and God's rewarding; and it is not the addition of a promise that either levels the reward to the work, or raiseth the work to the reward.

But,

\* Aquin. 1. 2. p. 114. art 1.

But, say some of our adversaries, Good works become meritorious of eternal life, by being sprinkled with Christ's blood, commended to God by his merits. We would willingly see the proof of it; let them tell us, if they can, what it is which Christ's merits do superadd to the goodness of the work whereby it becomes meritorious, when before, though truly good, it was not so. We grant indeed, that as there is no goodness in ourselves, so likewise none in our works, which is not the effect of Christ's merits; but supposing the goodness of them, we would know what it is that Christ's merits do further add to them to make them meritorious. True indeed, the merits of Christ do procure both acceptance and reward for the good works of the saints, but they do not make these works intrinsically perfect: They are the cause why the failings of the saints in them are not imputed, but they do not remove those failings and weakneses from them. Nay more, Christ's merits do no more make the good work of believers meritorious, than Christ communicates to believers themselves a power of meriting, but that can never be; a mere creature is incapable of such a power. To merit is proper to Christ only, and cannot agree to any of his members: The power of meriting eternal life consists in the infinite virtue of the person meriting, answering to the glory merited; and therefore to say that Christ, by his merits, makes the good works of the saints meritorious, is to say that he communicates to them an infinite power, and to their works an infinite excellency.

To all these I add but this one general argument. It is not lawful for men to trust in their own works, and therefore they do not merit any thing of God by them; for what reason can be given why a man might not put confidence in them, if they really deserved a reward of God, and so were really the cause of man's salvation? It is true indeed, the confidence of a believer, and his rejoicing in the goodness and safety of his spiritual estate, and hope of life, may be helped on by, and in a sense proceed from, his obedience and good works, because they are an evidence of his faith, and so of his interest in Christ, acceptance with God, and title to the heavenly inheritance; but this is quite another thing: There is a vast difference between a man's taking comfort in his obedience, as the evidence of his title to glory; and trusting in it, as that which gives him that title. Nehemiah, though he reflected on his good deeds, and comforted himself in them, yet he expected his reward on another account, *Spare me according to the greatness of thy*  
*mercy,*

mercy, Chap. xiii. ver. 22. and so our Psalmist in the text, *To thee belongeth mercy, for thou renderest to every man according to his works.* And how frequently do we find the saints disclaiming all confidence in their own holiness and obedience, when they have to do with God and his judgment? But to descend from the saints to a cardinal, Bellarmine himself after his laborious disputes in defence of merits, and for justification by works, in the very same chapter where he pleads for the lawfulness of mens trusting in them, at last hath this conclusion, "That, because of the uncertainty of man's own righteousness, and the danger of vain-glory, it is the safest way for men to place their whole confidence in the mercy and goodness of God alone\*." And if Bellarmine say it is safest, I will say it is wisest; and the Cardinal doth but trifle in contending so much for the merit of good works, and so, in a business of the highest importance, putting men upon a course which he himself dares not say is safe.

Having said thus much for the confirmation of the truth against the Papists, it is high time we give them leave to speak for themselves, and hear what they can say for the merit of good works in relation to the reward of eternal glory.

*Object.* 1. They tell us, that eternal life is in scripture frequently called a reward, *Great is your reward in heaven,* Matt. v. 12. *But that we receive a full reward,* 2 John 8. ver. *I come quickly, and my reward is with me,* Rev. xxii. 12. and so in other places. Now, say they, *merces et meritum*, a reward and merit are correlates; so that merit infers reward, and reward implies merit; and therefore if heaven, which is given to believers, be the reward of their works, their works must needs be the merit of that reward.

*Ans.* 1. A reward may be taken either strictly and properly, for that which is given to a man, not only on consideration of his work, but is proportioned, and measured out according to it, and is in strict justice due to him for it. And in this sense we deny that eternal life is ever in the scripture called a reward; and let our adversaries prove it if they can. Or, it is taken improperly and metaphorically, and then there is no such relation between it and merit, as the objection mentions. Thus, *God hath given me my hire, or reward,* saith Leah, Gen. xxx. 18. and yet who can say that she merited a son at God's hands, by giving her handmaid to her husband? *The fruit of the womb is his reward,* Psal. cxxvii. 3. and I wonder then what is the merit? Indeed,

\* De justif. l. 5. c. 7. prop. 3.

deed, what is *reward* in the latter part of the verse, but the same that *heritage* is in the former? So, *I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward*, Gen. xv. 1. And will the Papists say that God himself falls under mens merit? And yet so it must be, if there be such a necessary relation between reward and merit. Yet more fully, *To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt*, Rom. iv. 4. Here are plainly two sorts of rewards, one proper, and of debt; the other improper, and of grace. And therefore I conclude, that eternal life is called a reward in scripture improperly, and metaphorically, and no otherwise than as any thing given to another on consideration of service done, may be called a reward, though it be a thousand times greater than the service is, or though it be not at all due to him to whom it is given; as when a master gives something to his slave who hath done his work well, though he were not bound to it, his servant being his money, and being bound to do his work, and do it well, though no reward should be given him.

*Ans. 2.* As eternal life is sometimes called a *reward*, so it is other times called a *gift*, Rom. vi. 23.

*Except.* If it be here excepted, that it is properly called a reward, and metaphorically a gift.

*Ans.* Camero answers, That which is properly a gift, may metaphorically be called a reward, as if it be given on the account of some service, as when a master gives a gift to his servant for doing his work, which yet he was not obliged to give; but that which is properly a reward, can by no means be called a gift, because a real proper reward implies something worthy of it, whereby it is deserved, and the reward is a debt due in justice to such a work; and so if eternal life be a reward, it cannot at all be called a gift, at least without an unpardonable *catachresis*; whereas, though it be properly a gift, it may figuratively be called a reward, because of some resemblance to it, in that God rewards men with eternal glory after they have done him service, though they were bound to have served him, had no such reward been given them. And yet again, eternal life is called an *inheritance*, as well as a reward; and, says a learned man, either both these names are given it properly, or both figuratively; or one properly, and the other figuratively; the first cannot be, for to be properly an inheritance and reward too, will imply a contradiction: Who knows not that a reward properly taken is always deserved, but an inheritance is not; and so eternal life, if it be properly both, must be given to some antecedent desert, because

because a reward; and without it, because an inheritance; and so freely, and not freely; out of justice, and not out of justice. If it be only metaphorically called both a reward and an inheritance, we gain as much as we need, for then it is not properly a reward, and so not truly deserved, the Papists themselves being judges. If one be taken properly, the other figuratively, it may easily be proved that the figurative sense must rather be applied to its being a reward than an inheritance, unless we will say, not only, that eternal life is properly a reward, but believers are properly mercenaries; and if the Papists are so fond of their merits, that rather than fail they will own themselves mercenaries, much good may it do them, we envy them not the honour.

*Obj. 2.* The scripture speaks of believers as worthy of the reward: *That ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God,* 2 Thes. i. 5. *They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy,* Rev. iii. 4. Much stress they lay upon the word *worthy*, and so argue the saints to merit eternal life, because they are said to be worthy of it.

*Answer.* The *worthiness* spoken of in such places, is plainly the saints fitness for, and suitability to, the reward of glory; that disposition which God works in those which he intends to glorify; of which the apostle speaks, Col. i. 12. *Who hath made us MEET to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.* And in how many other places is the same word used for fitness, or suitability? *Bring forth fruits meet for repentance,* Matth. iii. 8. that is, such as become those who truly repent; and yet the Greek hath it, *worthy* of repentance: And if we take it in the popish sense, what fruits are they which are worthy of repentance, so as to merit it? Not works before it; for they themselves will not affirm works wrought before the first grace, to merit that grace, at least by way of condignity. Nor can it be said of works after repentance; for who is so weak as to say, a man may truly and properly deserve what he hath already, by something which he doth afterwards? Other places confirm our interpretation of the word; *That ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,* Eph. iv. 1. which is no more than to walk suitably or agreeably to their calling. And to have our conversation *worthy* of the gospel, is no more, than as our translation renders it, as *becomes the gospel*, Phil. i. 27. And the word which we render to *count worthy*, is no more than *dignari*, to vouchsafe, 2 Thess. i. 5. and the same use both of the Greek and Latin word, is frequent in Heathen authors; so that nothing for merit, in a proper sense,

can

can be inferred from it. Or, if dignity must needs be in the case, the Greek word will rather signify, to dignify, or put honour upon another, than suppose any dignity inherent in him; or, if you please so to deal with a man, as if he were worthy, whether he be so or not: And thus it will rather imply a kind of imputation of worthiness to a person, than its being really in him.

Again, when the saints are said to be worthy, it is not to be understood of any such dignity in them, as answers to what the law requires, or of an absolute worthiness of the reward, but rather of a comparative one: When they are said to be worthy, they are compared with wicked men, in respect of whom they may be said so to be; because, although in strict justice, they do not merit life, yet they are qualified for it, and suited to it, by having those holy dispositions wrought in them, which God intended to furnish them with, in order to the enjoyment of so glorious a recompence as he hath designed them for.

*Object.* 3. Those places of scripture are objected, in which the reward is said to be given men according to the proportion and measure of their works and labour: From whence they infer, that in rewarding good works, God hath respect not merely to his liberality, or promise, or favour, but to the dignity and efficacy of the works themselves; so that as evil works do really deserve eternal death, good ones do likewise deserve eternal life.

*Answ.* The general answer to this argument was laid down in the explication of the text, *viz.* That God's rewarding men according to their works, is to be understood of the nature and kind of them; not of the value and dignity of them; that they who do well, shall fare well; and they that do otherwise, shall be otherwise dealt with: *It shall be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked;* there is a blessing for the one, and a curse for the other. As for the particular scriptures, they may be easily answered: First, my text is brought in against me, that God *renders to every man according to his work*, but it carries its answer along with it, That though God reward men according to their works, and so give life to those that are righteous, yet it is out of mere mercy he doth it: Let but Bellarmine read the whole verse together, and make the best of it he can. And for Luke vi. 38. *With the same measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again;* either it is to be understood not of God's judging and rewarding men in the future life, but of man's judgment in this life; as if he had said, As you deal with others, so others shall deal with you; you shall have such

as you bring, and be paid in your own coin: Or else, if it be meant of God's judgment, yet it is of a judgment of condemnation, not of absolution, and so is wholly impertinent to the business in hand: Christ doth not say, Do not absolve others, lest God should absolve you; but, do not condemn others, *i. e.* rashly, sinfully, lest God condemn you righteously; and so much seems to be implied in the parallel place, Math. vii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. iii. 8. is alledged too, *Every man shall receive his own reward according to his labour*, but to little purpose; for the apostle speaks not there of the salvation of some, and the damnation of others, but only of the difficulty of the salvation of some, who had built on the foundation, *wood, hay, stubble*, ver. 12, 13, 14, 15. who, he says, should be saved, *yet so as by fire*: Some should be saved with more difficulty than others, yet all should be saved. The other places they bring here, Matt. xvi. 27. *Reward every man according to his works*. Gal. vi. 7. *Whatever a man soweth that also shall he reap*. Rom. ii. 6. *Who will render to every man according to his deeds*, need no more than the general answer before given, which is confirmed by ver. 7, 8, 9, 10. of the same chapter, which speak plainly of the kind or quality, according to which the reward shall be given, not of the worth or dignity of them; and yet it is further assured, by the last place the Papists alledge under this head, Rev. xxii. 12. *To give to every man as his work shall be*. This text is a commentary on all the rest, for what is in the other place according to their works, is in this place, *as his work shall be*; that is, if a good work, eternal life; if an evil one, eternal death.

*Obj.* 4. Those places are urged, in which eternal life is so said to be given to good works, as that those works are the reason why it is given them. The chief are. Matt. xxv. 34. 35. *Inherit the kingdom prepared for you, &c. for I was an hungred, &c.* Rev. vii. 14, 15. *These are they which come out of great tribulation, &c. therefore are they before the throne of God.*

*Answ.* The stress of this argument lies on those particles, *for, therefore, &c.* too slender twigs to keep the popish cause from sinking. For they do not always signify a connexion by way of causality, or one thing being the true and proper cause of another, but only by way of consequence, or the following of one thing upon another; the connexion of two things, whereof the one is antecedent, the other consequent; as if you say, It is day, for the sun is up; you then assert the sun's being up to be the reason of its being day, and rightly too: But if you say, It is day, for I see the sun; you will not affirm your seeing the sun to be the reason of its being

being day, and your *for* will signify no more than that your seeing the sun, follows upon its being day: You prove well that it is day, because you see the sun; but you prove it not by the cause, but by the effect. If you should say, Popery is a wicked religion, for it makes treason lawful, you shew why it is a wicked religion; but if you say, Some Papists have been wicked wretches for they have been convicted of treason, and hanged for their pains; you do not alledge their being convicted and hanged, as the cause of their wickedness. So likewise in the places urged upon us, When the reward is said to be given to men *for* or because they have done thus and thus, that doth not imply their having done so and so to be the proper cause of the reward given them, but only the connexion between their work and their reward; their so doing, and so receiving, 1 Tim. i. 13. Paul speaking of his blaspheming and persecuting, says, he *obtained mercy, because he did it ignorantly in unbelief*. And can any man say, that Paul's ignorance and unbelief, allow that they might lessen the sinfulness of his persecution and blasphemy, were the meritorious causes of his obtaining mercy? Matth. xvi. 2. *When it is evening, ye say it will be fair weather, for the sky is red*. Is the redness of the sky the cause of fair weather, or only an indication of it? When therefore Christ invites the saints to inherit the kingdom prepared for them, &c. because he *was an hungered, and they gave him meat, &c.* he doth not thereby signify that their good works were the meritorious causes of their inheriting that kingdom, but only the *antecedents* of it, and the *evidences* of their title to it. And that is confirmed by our Saviour's own words, in that he doth not merely call them to take possession of it, but to inherit it, or take possession of it as heirs and by right of inheritance, and consequently not in the right of their merits. And if he had meant those works he mentions to have been the meritorious cause of their salvation, he could have more clearly expressed it, and plainly told them, that they had merited the kingdom, and he was bound in justice to see them settled in the possession of it; so that it can no more be concluded from hence, that the saints do, by their good works, deserve heaven as their reward, than, if God should have said to the Israelites at the end of their forty years voyage toward Canaan, Go in now, and possess the promised land, for you have been forty years in the wilderness, and have been exposed to many difficulties and hazards, that therefore they had merited that land.

*Excep.* If it be said that Christ speaks the same, and as  
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much of the good works of the saints, as he doth of the evil works of the wicked, the same word *for* being used, ver. 42. as well as ver. 35.

*Ans.* It will not follow from thence, that good works are as truly and properly the causes of salvation, as evil ones are of damnation, there being so great difference in the case; and we do not conclude mens wicked works to be the cause of their damnation, merely because of the conjunction used by our Saviour in this place, but from the nature of the thing itself, and other scriptures, which speak more fully to it.

As for that place, Rev. vii. take but the whole words together, and Bellarmine hath his answer, ver. 14. *These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;* then follows ver. 15. *Therefore are they before the throne of God.* Wherefore? because not only they come out of great tribulation, but because they have washed their garments, &c.

*Object.* 5. These places of scripture are urged where eternal life is promised to good works, Matth. xix. 17. *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* Ver. 29. *Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, &c. for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life;* so 1 Tim. iv. 8. *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* James i. 12. *Shall receive a crown of life, &c.* Thus they argue from such places as these: They that do these works to which eternal life is promised, merit that life; but believers do those works, therefore they merit, &c.

*Ans.* 1. It is most false, that they that do that to which the reward of life is promised, do deserve that reward; for (1.) No man deserves that which is promised to him, unless by doing something that is adequate and proportionate to the thing promised; but the good works of the saints are not proportionate to eternal life, nor answerable in goodness and dignity to it, and so cannot deserve it. You may promise a man 100 *l.* for a day's labour, which is not worth above two shillings, and can it then be said that he deserves your 100 *l.*? (2.) A promise may be made to a man for doing that which he is bound to do, though nothing were given him; as when you promise a reward to a slave, who yet was before bound to do your work, and then his doing it doth not deserve what you give him. (3.) Justification is promised to them that believe, and repent; and will the Papists say, that a man deserves to be justified by his faith and repentance? A king promiseth pardon and life to a rebel,

rebel, if he lay down his arms; to a robber, if he leave off his robbing; and can it be said that such do deserve pardon or life for laying down their arms, or leaving off their wicked courses, when they were bound however to have done it, and the prince was not bound to hire them to it?

*Ans. 2.* To the minor proposition we answer, Eternal life is promised to good works, though improperly; the reward being promised not to good works themselves, but to them that do them; either, (1.) In the first covenant, or covenant of works, and then works are the sole and adequate condition of salvation, and a man's right to it; but then those works must be every way perfect, and answerable to the law that requires them; and thus the minor proposition is most false, that any believer on earth doth that to which eternal life is promised; for none do all they should; and what they do, they do not as they should. (2.) Or in the second, the covenant of grace, as where the *crown of life* is promised to them *that love God*, Jam. i. 12. and other places of the like import: But then it would be considered, (1.) That life is promised not to works, alone, nor merely as works, for that is the very tenor of the law, but as joined with, and proceeding from faith; and then they are neither the *only*, nor the *complete* or *adequate* condition of obtaining eternal life. (2.) That they, to whom this promise is made, are believers; such as are accepted in Christ unto eternal life, even before those works are wrought, and then their works are not at all the condition of their being entitled to life, though the evidence of their title to it, and the means of fitting them for it, they may be. And so we say, that however believers do those things to which eternal life in the covenant of grace is promised, yet they are not entitled to it by their so doing, and therefore do much less deserve it. This may suffice for the other places alledged. As for that of Matth. xix. 17. it is manifestly a legal command, suited by our Saviour Christ to the question of the young man, who sought for life by the law; our Saviour therefore accordingly answers him, and sends him to the law; *What good thing shall I do?* says the young man; *Keep the commandments*, says Christ: If thou wilt have life by the law, fulfil the righteousness of the law: If thou art only for *doing*, *do all that God hath set thee to do*; and this was the way to bring him to faith by convincing him of the impossibility of fulfilling the righteousness of the law, which he farther doth by the following command, *Go sell all thou hast*, &c. where he detects the young man's secret covetousness whereby he had broken the law, and that af-

ter all his endeavours after a righteousness of works, if he would at last be saved, he must quit his hopes of life by them, and look to Christ alone for it, seeing elsewhere it was not to be found.

*Object.* 6. They argue eternal life to be deserved by believers, because it is given to them out of justice; and that it is so, they prove by 2 Theff. i. 6, 7. *It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled rest with us, &c.* 2 Tim. iv. 8. *A crown of righteousness.* Heb. vi. 10. *God is not unrighteous to forget your work, and labour of love:* And so James i. 12. Rev. ii. 10. and such like places.

*Answer.* God gives eternal life to believers, not out of strict justice in a proper sense, but out of that which we call justice or righteousness, or faithfulness or constancy; and though he may be said to reward both saints and sinners righteously, or out of righteousness, yet not in the same way, or out of the same kind of righteousness: It is indeed righteous for God to recompense the labours and sufferings of his people, because he hath promised so to do, and it is righteous that he should act according to his own determination and promise; but it is not so righteous for him to do it, as that his recompensing them is formally an act of remunerative justice. And when the apostle tells the Hebrews, that *God is not unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love*, he means no more, than that he is not unfaithful, not unconstant; he will not change, nor break his word. But is not the last day, called the day of *the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds?* Rom. ii. 5, 6. The same day, as it is called the day of God's righteous judgment, so is likewise called the day of *redemption*, Eph. iv. 30. And a day of *mercy*, 2 Tim. i. 18. *The Lord grant that he may find mercy in that day;* and a day of *refreshment*, Acts-iii. 19. *When the times of refreshing shall come.* And as Christ is said to come to judge the quick and the dead, 2 Tim. iv. 1. so likewise to appear to the salvation of believers, Heb. ix. 28. That great day therefore is properly a day of mercy, of redemption, of refreshment of salvation to believers, and but figuratively a day of righteous judgment as to them, so far as it hath some resemblance to a righteous judgment, because God then gives eternal life with respect to something going before, *viz.* the obedience and holiness of those whom he rewards; not as if it did really deserve that reward, but because it is the way in which God hath determined to act:

He gives glory to those that have lived graciously, happiness to them that have continued in the exercise of holiness.

*Object.* 7. They argue from those places of scripture where God is said not to be an acceptor of mens persons, Rom. ii. 11. *For there is no respect of persons with God.* Gal. ii. 6. *God accepteth no man's person.* 1 Pet. i. 17. *Who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work.* Hence, says Bellarmine, "respecting mens persons is contrary to distributive justice, as when a judge gives a reward without merit, or a greater reward to lesser merits, or on the contrary. Therefore God, in giving rewards, considers mens merits, and according to the diversity of them assigns them their several mansions in heaven."

*Ans.* That God is no respecter of persons we grant; and that accepting mens persons is contrary to distributive justice we grant too; but what is that to us, who deny that God's rewarding the good works of the saints, is an act of distributive justice? for it is an act of grace; and accepting of persons hath no place in rewards of grace, though those rewards be never so much above the deserts, or altogether without deserts in the persons so rewarded. They that laboured but one hour in the vineyard, Matth. xx. 12. received as much as they that had been all the day at work, which ought not to have been according to distributive justice, but well might according to grace. What God gives, he gives out of no stock but his own, and may he not do what he will with his own? What is it to Bellarmine, if God will give glory and blessedness to those that never deserved it of him? seeing he wrongs not others in what he gives to some, and he receives nothing from any to distribute to any. What God gives, he may, if he please, not give at all; or he may give out, and dispense to whom, and as he sees fit.

Several other arguments Bellarmine brings to prove the merit of good works, but they are all of lesser consequence, and not like to prevail with any that can answer the seven already mentioned, which indeed are the most plausible of any he brings, and the very *seven locks* wherein the *great strength* of this great champion lies, and these being thaven off, (let them grow again if they can) this Romish Samson is but like another man. As for the testimonies he brings out of the fathers, you need not fear them, and I shall not trouble you with them, having in the beginning given you an account in what sense they generally take the word merit, which makes nothing at all for the Papists cause.

Only one argument more there is still behind, which, though

though all the Papists conceal, I will not. You find it, Acts xix. 25. *Ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.* I dare say Demetrius speaks the very heart of Bellarmine; only he was a mechanic, and a fool, and so uttered all his mind, whereas our cardinal was a crafty Jesuit, and knew how to keep in his. But how to answer this argument I know not, unless by granting the whole. That the doctrine of merits is a gainful doctrine, cannot be denied, when the art of meriting is so liberal an art: It first replenisheth the church-treasury, which again, by the help of indulgences, empties itself into the pope's exchequer. Only these good works suffer some alteration in the exchange, and by I know not what kind of new ferment in their last receptacle, what was merit in the church store-house, is in the Pope's purse transubstantiated into metal, which puts his holiness out of a capacity of saying as Peter did, *Gold and silver have I none,* Acts iii. 6. The sum is this: The doctrine of merits is no doubt a fundamental doctrine, supererogations, indulgences, purgatory itself, and prayers for the dead, are built upon it; and, not to go so far as the other world, how many good things in this life are built upon the foundation of popish good works; many religious houses, and many religious orders, many a fair monastery, and many a stately temple, and many a fat benefice. And who can say but the foundation must needs be precious, when the superstructure is so rich? Well then may the popish priests stickle for the principal, when the interest is all their own. Well may they contend for merits, as not only for their altars, but for their chimneys too, when it is the zeal of meriting that keeps their kitchens warm. In a word, Well may they *sacrifice to these nets, and burn incense to these drags, when by them their portion is made fat, and their meat plenteous,* Hab. i. 16.

But here two queries may be made.

*Quest.* 1. Upon what account are believers bound to the practice of good works, if they merit not by them?

*Answ.* Upon several, and good ones too: Reason enough we have to persuade us to the practice of good works, though we place no merit in them.

1. God's command is of itself sufficient, though no other reason could be given. He hath commanded us to *be holy,* 1 Pet. i. 15. To *exercise ourselves to godliness,* 1 Tim. iv. 7. To *follow peace and holiness,* Heb. xii. 14. To *put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, &c.* Col. iii. 12. To *be ready to distribute, willing to communicate,* 1 Tim. vi. 18. And in a word, that *they who have believed in God, should be care-  
ful*

*ful to maintain good works*, Tit. iii. 8. God is our Sovereign, his will is our rule, and our reason; what he will have us do, we must do, and his command is sufficient to make our actions not only lawful, but necessary; not only to warrant us in the doing of them, but oblige us to do them. And we need not doubt but that our actions will be as acceptable to God, which are done out of compliance with his will, as any that are done with a design of meriting at his hands: Obedience will go as far as mercenariness.

2. Good works are the way in which God hath appointed us to walk in order to obtaining eternal life. They are the path of life, the way to God's kingdom, the work we are to do ere we receive our reward, the race we are to run ere we be crowned. Though God save us not for them as meritorious causes of his saving us, yet those that are capable of doing them, he doth not ordinarily save without them. *We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them*, Eph. ii. 10. *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14. Though eternal glory be not, as hath been proved, properly a reward, nor God's giving it an act of strict justice, yet God hath determined to give it after the manner of a reward, in that he will not give men the glory he intends them till they have done him some service; not treat them as conquerors, who never fought his battles; not respect them as faithful servants, who have been sluggards or loiterers. The *sanctification of the Spirit* as well as *belief of the truth*, must go before *salvation*, because God hath *from the beginning chosen us to salvation* by the one as well as the other, 2 Theff. ii. 13.

3. The practice of good works is a special means to strengthen and encrease good habits in us. The actual exercise of grace heightens the principle of grace; doing good is the ordinary way whereby we grow better: While we employ our talents, we add to our stock; we get grace while we act it, and lay up for ourselves by laying out for God. Active Christians are generally the most thriving Christians; they gather by scattering, and are enriched by their very expences. The more humility men act, the more humble they grow; and the more love they exercise, the more love they have. As the more we use our limbs, the more agile and nimble they are; and the farther a river runs, the broader it spreads.

4. Good works fit us for the reward: It is by them we are *made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*, Col. i. 12. Though by faith we are entitled to that inheritance,

inheritance, because we are *the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ*, Gal. iii. 26. *And if children, then heirs*, Rom. viii. 17. Yet over and above our title to it, there is required in us a suitability to, and fitness for it. The father of the prodigal first embraces and kisses his poor returning son, and then puts the robe upon him, the ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; he first pardons him, and then adorns him, and at last brings him into his house and feasts him; he fits him for his entertainment ere he brings him to it. God's pardoning a sinner is one thing, and his fully saving him is another; his receiving him into favour, and receiving him into heaven; his giving him a right to the inheritance, and giving him the actual possession of it: The first is done in a sinner's justification, the other in his final salvation; but between these two comes in a third, which is God's *working* in him a fitness and meetness for that salvation, which meetness consists in a temper of spirit agreeable to, and capable of such enjoyments as are expected by, and settled upon them that are the heirs of glory. And indeed, if we look into it, we shall find, that there is not only a *congruity* that they who are to be made happy, should first be made holy, in that it would be unbeseeming the wisdom and holiness of God to let them enjoy him, who never loved him; or crown them with everlasting blessedness, who never prized or sought it, but a *necessity* too, in that unholy souls have no capacity for true happiness; merely natural hearts are not suited to a supernatural good; heavenly enjoyments are above the reach of sensual creatures, and the faculty, till elevated, and raised by grace, would be so much below its object, that it could take no delight in it. Now, grace or holiness in the heart, is that very temper I speak of, which makes a man capable of, and fit for glory; a supernatural principle for a supernatural happiness: And though God begins this frame, and infuseth something of this principle in the work of regeneration, yet it is further strengthened by the exercise of grace, and a course of good works, which we therefore say do fit men for heaven by increasing grace in them, wherein their fitness consists. Mens abounding in good works is the way to heighten those graces from whence they proceed, and the heightening their graces is the ripening them for their glory. And though God himself, as the Author of all grace, is the principal agent in carrying on this work of sanctification in them, and he who doth gradually work them for the glory he intends them, yet they themselves having in their new birth received a new life, and new power from God, so far as they are  
active

active in the exercise of grace, which under him they are, so far likewise they are active in preparing themselves for glory, and therefore deeply concerned to live in the daily exercise of good works, as the means of preparing them for it.

5. Good works bear witness to the goodness of our faith; they evidence it to be true, and of the right kind, not counterfeit: And therefore we are greatly concerned to maintain good works, that thereby we may be able to assert our faith against a quarrelling conscience, or an accusing devil, which otherwise we shall never be able to do. We acknowledge that only to be a true justifying faith, and so of the right stamp, which *purifies the heart*, Acts xv. 9. *Works by love*, Gal. v. 6. encourageth, promotes, and produceth holiness, and *shews itself by works*, James ii. 18. So that if faith be the root of good works, good works are the fruit of faith; and how then shall we know the root but by the fruit? So, if the devil or conscience charge us with disobedience to God, and breach of his law, and that therefore we are liable to the curse of the law, we plead in our defence, that though we are not without sin, yet we are not without faith neither: Though we have offended God, yet we have believed in Christ: So, if we be accused of hypocrisy, or unbelief, and told that we have not received Christ by faith, and therefore are liable to the woe of the gospel, we then produce our good works, a course of holiness, as the undoubted signs and evidences of the reality and power of our faith: And in this sense we may say, that as we ourselves must be justified by our faith, so our faith must be justified by our works.

6. Hereby they further our assurance, and help on our comforts. The great comfort of a believer comes in by his faith, Rom. xv. 13. And therefore usually so much comfort a Christian hath, as he hath evidence of the truth and sincerity of his faith. While it is uncertain to him whether his faith be right, he can have little comfort in it; little *joy and peace in believing*, while he knows not whether he really believes or not. The same we may say of other graces, so far as they conduce to the consolation of a Christian; a believer can enjoy little comfort in them, if he perpetually doubt of them; while he suspects himself to be an hypocrite, it is no marvel if he taste not the sweetness of sincerity. And therefore, they that desire the comfort of grace, must be diligent in the exercise of grace; they that are concerned for their own peace and joy, are consequently so concerned to live, and act, as that they may attain that end.

Beside, we might add, That the applause and commendation of a sanctified conscience, upon the performance of good works, and that inward secret delight which is usually the concomitant of gracious actings, is no small part of a Christian's pleasure, and therefore no weak inducement to diligence and constancy in such a course.

7. We are bound to the practice of good works, that so we may be conformed to God and Christ. Christ, when on earth, *went about doing good*, Acts x. 38. He did not only abound in holiness, but activity; had not only a fulness of habitual grace in him, whereby he was always in a fitness and readiness to do good, but did continually exercise himself in it; and that he did, not only that he might fulfil the law, but give us an example, and so for the imitation of believers, as well as satisfaction of divine justice: We therefore are commanded *so to walk, even as he also walked*, 1 John ii. 6. And the apostle Paul bids us *be followers of God*, Eph. v. 1. And Peter, *be holy in all manner of conversation*, (and so practically) *as he who hath called us is holy*, 1 Pet. i. 15. And our Saviour Christ bids us *be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect*, Matth. v. 48. It is our perfection to be like God, not in infiniteness, immensity, independency, attributes wholly incommunicable to us, unimitable by us, but in righteousness and holiness; this was our primitive perfection in innocency, and will be our final perfection in glory; and still the more we encrease in righteousness and holiness, the more perfect we grow, because the more like God; and the more good works we do, still the more we go on in grace toward perfection and conformity to God. Men generally look on it as a desirable thing to be like God in one way or other: Let but those desires be regulated, and carried toward that likeness to him, which they may attain, and ought to seek, and that will be inducement enough to the practice of good works, as the most proper means to bring them to that conformity.

8. Good works are the end of good principles. God gives us grace that we should exercise it, puts a price into our hands that we should use it. Exercise is the immediate end of habits. We are not to look upon grace as an idle quality, a dormant principle, something to lie by us, and be sluggish within us. It is not to be as a candle under a bushel, but on a candlestick; not as money hoarded up, but laid out. And the more we exercise it, the better, because so much the more we answer God's end in bestowing it upon us.

9. Lastly,

9. Lastly, God is most glorified by our good works, John xv. 8. and therefore, we are the more to abound in them. The more the excellency and beauty of grace appears, so much the more God is glorified, and the exercise of grace doth most of all discover the beauty of it. Holiness is but God's image, and if the image be so ravishing, what then is he that is resembled by it? If there be so much lustre in a beam, what is there in the sun? Grace in the creature is but the expression or imitation of some attribute in God to which it answers, and so the more grace we act, and the more good we do, so much the more we declare what excellencies are in God, or in Peter's phrase, *shew forth his virtues*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. So that good works are the most effectual way of glorifying God, because the most convincing demonstration of those perfections which are in God.

And is not here reason enough for the practice of good works? Is it nothing that God hath commanded them; that they are the way to glory; and fit us for glory; increase grace, and discover grace; help on our comforts, and promote God's honour, unless withal we merit heaven by them, and oblige God to reward us for them?

*Quest.* 2. If good works are not truly meritorious, why then, and upon what account doth God reward them?

*Ans.* 1. Because he hath promised so to do, and he is constant and unchangeable, and will not be worse than his word.

2. Because of the love he bears to, and the delight he takes in holiness, and those good works which are the fruits of it. *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness*, Psal. xi. 7. God delights first in himself, and next in that which comes nearest to him, and most resembles him, as holiness doth; the actings of which in good works, is but the beaming out of his image in the soul; and it is not strange that God should delight in his own image. Beside that, good works are God's works; they not only resemble him, but come from him, and then well may he delight in them; and that he may shew how much he doth so, he bountifully rewards them.

3. To encourage men to the practice of them, by the hopes of reward. Though obedience be our duty, even without consideration of the reward, yet to enliven our desires, and put more vigour into our endeavours after it, he sets the crown in our view, and assures us, that if we *abound always in the work of the Lord, our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. xv. 58.

Something from this doctrine we may learn for our *information* in the truth, and something for our *instruction* as to duty.

*1st.* For our information, we see here,

1. How much the best of saints are beholden to the Lord Jesus Christ, for purchasing life and glory for them, which, by all their good works, they could never have done, though they were a thousand times more than they are. Had not Christ made the purchase, they could never have received the inheritance; had not he laid down the price, they could never have had a title or possession to it. All the grace they ever have, or act in this life, could never deserve the least degree of glory they receive. So fair an estate, so rich an inheritance, so weighty a crown, so transcendent a blessedness is fit only for so great a purchaser as the Lord Jesus Christ to buy out. They might as well purchase a kingdom in the world with a single penny, as everlasting glory with all their good works. Whatever title they have to a future happiness, whatever hopes of it, whatever rest, and peace, and joy they expect in it, they owe all to Christ, and are his debtors for all. They owe him more than a whole eternity of praises will ever recompense. How miserable would the best of saints have been, if Christ had not merited for them? How should they ever have obtained eternal life, got a place in heaven, or indeed have escaped everlasting burnings, had it not been for Christ's undertakings? When they had been working and labouring all their days, they would have lost their labour at last. They might have prayed, and heard, and given their goods to feed the poor, and their bodies to feed the flames; they might have done all they could, and suffered all their enemies would, and yet have fallen short of a reward. One sin committed by them, would have done more to shut heaven against them, than all their good works could to open it to them.

2. How unreasonable is their pride? how unpardonable is their folly that boast of, and put confidence in their own good works? That ever men should think God to be their debtor, and that they have him in bonds to them! That ever they should have such high thoughts of such pitiful things as their own works! Sure they have little knowledge of themselves that have such great conceits of themselves; know little of their ill deserts, that think they have any good ones; they have cheap thoughts of God's grace and Christ's merits, that do so magnify their own performances. David, and Paul, and all the ancient saints were of another

mind;

mind; they durst not abide God's trial, nor confront his judgment with the choicest of their works. They, it is like, were saints of a lesser size, and their graces and good works of a lower alloy: Our Popish saints have over-topped them in holiness, are giants to them. Suarez and Vasquez have got the start of Job and David, Job ix. 15. and xl. 4. Psa. cxliii. 2. and have found out a way to heaven unknown to all that went formerly thither. Jacob, poor man, counted himself *less than the least of God's mercies*, Gen. xxxii. 10. but these count themselves worthy of the greatest of them. The twenty four elders, Rev. iv. 10. *cast down their crowns* before him that sits on the throne, in token that they had received them from him; but Papists scorn to do so; they think they have won them, and therefore may wear them; and instead of *giving glory, and honour, and thanks to him that liveth for ever*, they take them to themselves, at least share them with him. The Lord tells the Israelites, *That he gave them not that good land to possess it for their righteousness*, Deut. ix. 6. speaking of the earthly Canaan, but these audacious merit-mongers think that even the heavenly one is given them for theirs. Great saints no doubt they are, and well deserve to be canonized, when they thus deserve to be saved.

3. And yet more egregious is their folly, in expecting advantage by the merits of others, and thinking to eke out their own righteousness by borrowing of their neighbours. If no good works of the saints merit any thing at God's hands, then the Popish treasury is quite empty, and his holiness is a mere bankrupt, supererogations fail, indulgences fail, and there is no borrowing from Peter to supply Paul. If the best have no merits at all, sure they have none superfluous, none to spare. The wise virgins, Matth. xxv. have no more oil than will serve for themselves, and are not they foolish ones that think to accommodate their friends? and they yet more foolish that hope to borrow of them? The scripture speaks indeed of a *superfluity of naughtiness* in mens hearts, but it no where speaks of a superfluity of goodness in their hearts or lives. A redundance of merit we acknowledge in Christ, *unsearchable riches, all fulness*; but woe to them that seek for the like redundance of merit among men. Ask the old patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, to lend you some of their merits, and they will all tell you they never had any of their own, they were all beholden to Christ, and to him you must go as well as they; the church store-house cannot furnish you.

2dly, For instruction in point of duty : learn hence,

1. To be humble, and acknowledge the insufficiency of all you do, to deserve any thing at God's hands. Own yourselves as *unclean things*, and your *righteousness as filthy rags*, Isa. lxiv. 6. Do but study your hearts, the workings and lustings, the inclination and temper of them; study your actions and ways, the best as well as worst; your duties, and choicest service; and study God's law, the purity, holiness, spirituality, and extensiveness of it; what it forbids, what it requires, how far it reaches, and compare both together, and then be proud if you can; boast if you can; trust in your own works if you can: And, in one word, be Papists if you can.

2. Learn to admire the grace of God in rewarding your works. It is much that he accepts them, and what is it then that he rewards them? It is much that he doth not damn you for them, seeing they are all defiled, and have something of sin cleaving to them, and what is it then that he crowns them? You would admire the bounty and munificence of a man, that should give you a kingdom for taking up a straw at his foot, or give you an hundred thousand pounds for paying him a penny-rent you owed him: How then should you adore the rich grace, and transcendent bounty of God in so largely recompensing such mean services; in setting a crown of glory upon your heads, as the reward of those works you can scarce find in your hearts to call good ones? You will even blush one day, to see yourselves so much honoured for what you are ashamed of, and are conscious to yourselves you have deserved nothing by. You will wonder then to see God recompensing you for doing what was your duty to do, and what was his work in you; giving you grace, and crowning that grace; enabling you to do things acceptable to him, and then rewarding you as having done them. Take heed therefore now of rivalling God's grace, or Christ's merits; of inverting his praises, and ascribing any thing to yourselves which belongs only to him. Set the crown upon the right head: Let him have the honour of the work that hath done it, the glory of your reward that hath purchased it. Say with yourselves, "What am I, and what are  
" my services, that ever God should thus plentifully re-  
" ward them? I never prayed, but I sinned; never con-  
" fessed sin, never begged pardon of it, strength against it,  
" but I did at the same time commit it: I never heard a  
" sermon, received a sacrament, did any good duty; but  
" with some mixture of coldness, deadness, distractedness.

“ I never had any grace but what God gave me, nor acted  
 “ any but what he stirred up in me. All the good I ever  
 “ had, or did, I received from him, and therefore I owe  
 “ all to him. I am a thousand ways his debtór, for my life  
 “ and being, for the good things of this life, for the means  
 “ and offer of eternal life, for the knowledge of his will,  
 “ conviction of sin, restraint from sin, the change of my  
 “ heart, the reformation of my ways, the graces of his  
 “ Spirit, the priviledges of his children conferred upon me.  
 “ I am his debtor for all the evils he hath delivered me  
 “ from, all the good he hath offered me, wrought in me,  
 “ done by me. And doth God take so much notice of  
 “ such poor things? Will he indeed reward such weak  
 “ endeavours, such lame performances? Must I live in  
 “ heaven, that never deserved to live on earth? Must I  
 “ wear the crown of righteousness, who never deserved  
 “ any thing but the punishment of mine iniquities? Must  
 “ eternal glory and honour be my portion, who have des-  
 “ served nothing better than shame, and everlasting con-  
 “ tempt? I have nothing to boast of, nothing to glory in.  
 “ I must cry Grace, grace. All I have, and to eternity am  
 “ to have, is grace. The foundation of my salvation was  
 “ laid in grace, and so will the top-stone too. It was grace  
 “ sent Christ to redeem me, and grace will send him at last  
 “ fully to save me. I have received all from God, and  
 “ therefore desire to return the praise of all to him: It is  
 “ but just that all should be ascribed to him, from whom  
 “ all came.”

3. Labour so to exercise yourselves in, and to good works,  
 as yet to put all your confidence in God's grace. I do not  
 go about to cry down good works, or discourage the prac-  
 tice of them, but take you off from confidence in them;  
 nor to dissuade you from that exercise of holiness where-  
 by God may be glorified, and your souls advantaged, but  
 that sinful reliance on your own righteousness, which is  
 God's dishonour, and your loss. Be as holy as you will;  
 do as much good as you will; abound as much in the work  
 of the Lord, and walk as circumspectly and closely with  
 God as you please, and the Lord make you abound more  
 and more; only, if you value your comforts, if you love  
 your souls, if you are concerned for God's glory, take heed  
 of putting any the least confidence in what you do, or ex-  
 pecting to merit a reward by your most laborious working.  
 It is the great art and wisdom of a Christian to join the  
 exercise of faith and holiness together, and yet distinguish  
 their different relations to his salvation; not to give so  
 much

much to the one, as to exclude the other; but so to believe, as still to own the usefulness of works; and so to work, as to see the necessity of faith: To believe like one that had no works, and to work like one that were to be saved by his works. In a word, to be diligent in good works, but not put confidence in them, and so to acknowledge their necessity in their place, but not their meritoriousness. He is a believer of the right stamp, who neither contemns Christ's law, nor dishonours Christ's grace, but is alike an enemy to Antinomian faith, and Antichristian works.

If you do trust in your good works, your best duties and services; consider that,

1. You do but lean upon a broken reed, build upon a sandy foundation, which will at last fail you, disappoint you, undo you. What a defeat will it be to expect to be saved by your merits, when, at last, it appears you have no merits; to fancy yourselves worthy of a reward, when it appears you have been worthy of nothing? And as sure as the scripture is true, you can merit no more at God's hands by all your services, than a debtor can of his creditor, by paying him some small part of what he owes him; and your very confidence in your works will bereave you of any benefit by Christ's merits: Christ alone must be trusted in, relied on, and glorified by you. You must not think to be parcel-saviours with him; either he will be your only Saviour, or not at all; your only righteousness, or not at all your righteousness: If you divide Christ's honour, you lose his help; your works cannot be your righteousness, and Christ will not; and so you will *lose the things you have wrought*, 2 John ver. 8. by thinking to gain too much by them; miss of the substance while you catch at the shadow.

2. However you trust in your works while you live, you will not dare to do it when you die. When men come to die, and close the eyes of their bodies, usually those of their minds are most open; and as their reflections are then most strong, so their prospect is most clear. The nearer they are to death, and judgment, and eternity, the truer apprehensions they have of them: They then best see how holy the Judge is, how impartial his search, how righteous his sentence; and how do they fear him then, with whom they made so bold before? How doth the confidence of their lives shrink at their death? Alas, they did not think either God so strict as now they believe him, or their goodness so imperfect as now they come to find it. They see the necessity of grace, which before they slighted; and the insufficiency

iciency of works, which before they idolized: Mercy is mercy indeed to a dying man, and works are but works, and not merits. Let me see the face of the Papist, that, when he is coming to the highest tribunal, dares trust to his good works; and put in his claim to the crown of glory upon the account of his merits, and tell God to his face; "Lord, I have done all thy will, and done it as I should; or if I have fallen short in some things, I have outdone it in others: I have heard so many masses, said so many *Pater nosters*, and *Ave Maria's*, observed so many canonical hours, made so many confessions, done so many penances, given so many alms, gone so many pilgrimages, fasted so many lents, mortified my flesh with hard lodging, and harder blows: And this is as much as heaven is worth; thou art now a debtor to me: I have done my work, I challenge my reward, let justice be done me, and the crown be given me. I ask no more than I have laboured for, and deserved at thy hands. It is but just that I should be joint-heir with Christ, seeing I have been joint-purchaser with him." I am persuaded there is not the Papist upon earth, unless be most brutishly ignorant of the nature and law of God, and of his own heart, that will dare in a dying hour thus to bespeak him. And how foolish is it for men to boast of that now, which they will not dare to boast of then; and build upon a foundation in their life, which they must be forced to relinquish at their death? Remember, Christians, there is a time to die, as well as to live; a time to be judged in, as well as to act in; a day of recompence, as well as a day of service: And therefore bethink yourselves before-hand; see your confidence be rightly placed. Expect your salvation from him only now, from whom you will expect it at last; and put your souls into his hands now, into whose you would then most willingly commit them: Set aside your works, though not as to the practice of them, yet as to your confidence in them. Eye Christ alone as to the business of your justification, acceptance, reward. Labour for such a faith in Christ, and free grace, as will support you under the weakness and imperfections of your present righteousness, and encourage you against the terrors of approaching death. In a word, so believe and hope, now that you are going on toward eternity, as you would do when you are stepping into it.



A

PICTURE OF POPERY;

FROM THE

PASTORAL LETTERS

OF THE

REV. MR. *PETER JURIEU*,

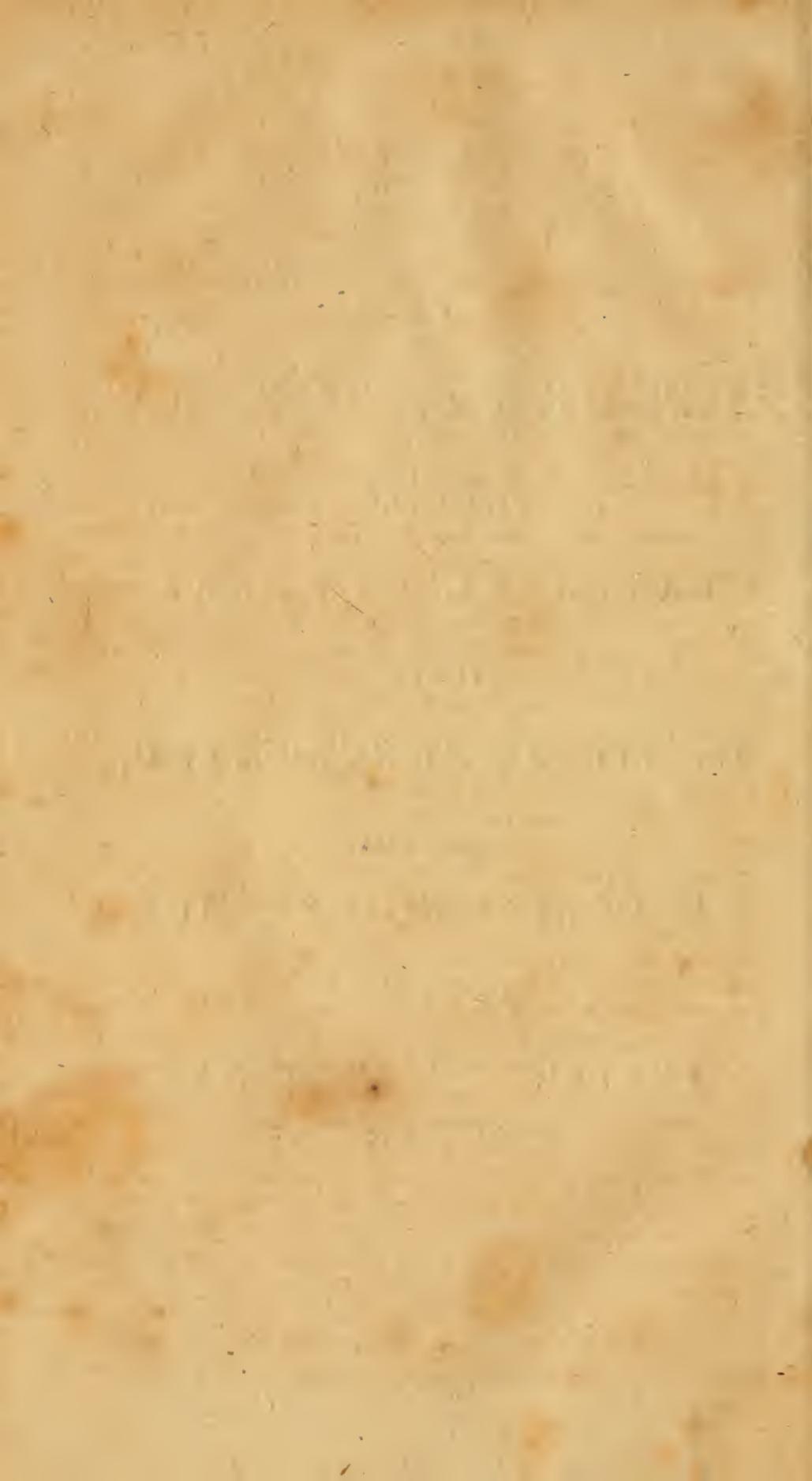
Directed to the

PROTESTANTS OF FRANCE,

Groaning under the

BABYLONISH TYRANNY,

In the Year 1687.



## PASTORAL LETTERS.

## LETTER XIX.

*The great corruption of the Roman church, forced us to to a separation.—A picture of Popery.*

*Dear Brethren in our Lord, Grace and peace be given you from our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

**H**ITHERTO in speaking of schism, we have reasoned upon one or other of these two suppositions; either that our separation was not established upon good reasons, or at least that the corruption of the church of Rome was not at the highest degree, and therefore it was in some sort tolerable. We have proved in our 13th pastoral letter, that although our fathers had done ill at their separation, nevertheless you do not hazard your salvation by continuing in the Protestant communion. Afterwards we made it appear, that supposing the church of Rome very corrupt, although the corruption were not wholly intolerable, you cannot return thither at this day, without destroying yourselves, because the providence of God hath drawn you thence by a miracle in the persons of your fathers. And we have dispersed the illusions which you put upon yourselves therein, and which some amongst you have communicated to those who are fled for protection into those countries. But at present let us no longer suppose any thing which is false; let us consider things as they are, *i. e.* let us consider the corruption of the church of Rome in its utmost extent, and reason upon it.—I will then shew you, that you cannot, with a good conscience, return to Popery. If the corruption of the church of Rome be extreme, if she be idolatrous, if she be impure, if she be Antichristian, if she have introduced true Paganism into the church, we must necessarily separate from her, as soon as we can; and the separation being made, to re-unite ourselves unto her is a crime for which we can expect no mercy. There can be nothing of doubt in this kind of reasoning, but the supposition, *viz.* That the corruption of the church of Rome is extreme, and wholly unsufferable; so that this is the only thing which remains to do, about the matter of schism, to justify our separation, and prove to you, that you cannot  
return

return to Popery without damnation: This we shall do in this and the following letter.

To give you a true and natural idea of the corruption of Popery by a short description, it is necessary at first, That you discharge yourselves of those vain charms, and false appearances, wherewithal they dress, and present it to your eyes.

*First*, You may not consider Popery by the Christianity upon which it is built, for it is thither that you turn your eyes immediately. It is a religion, say you, where the true God is worshipped, and the true Jesus; where the holy Trinity is believed, the incarnation of the Son of God, redemption by the death of Christ Jesus, the last judgment, the resurrection of the flesh, everlasting life, and everlasting death. How can such a Christianity be ill?

My brethren, distinguish in the popish church Christianity from Popery. That which I have told you is Christianity, and which I would have you to consider. But that which I will describe unto you, the ugliness whereof I will set before you in an abridgement, is quite another thing; it is that which hath been added to Christianity, it is Popery.

Say not, it sufficeth us that Christianity doth continue in the Roman church; that is false, it is not sufficient. It is not enough, that the substance doth continue in poisoned wine, to make it safe and wholesome. Do not imagine, that this is only a plain comparison, it is an example that doth demonstrate and prove, that wine as good and excellent as it is, is not more poisoned by the mortal poison mingled with it, than Christianity in the church of Rome is spoiled by the Popery added thereto. Have you never read any where that the Roman church is like a great double temple, whereof the lower part is consecrated to God, and the superior part to an idol? This is a comparison which hath all the force of example, to prove and demonstrate.

Do you believe, that a man after he had worshipped in the church below, consecrated to the true God, should ascend to the church above, and adore idols? Do you believe, say I, that such a man were in a good and safe way? It is true, Christianity remains in the Roman religion; it is the church below; but they have built upon it the idol church, and that is Popery. Do not you therefore imagine, that you can worship only in the church below, or live in the Christianity of the Roman church without partaking in Popery. This cannot be; these two parts of the Roman church are not built together as two churches, whereof the one is below, and the other above: But by an  
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unhappy artifice of the devil, you cannot enter into the one, without entering into the other. You cannot worship God, without partaking in the worship of idols. You cannot partake in the heavenly sacrament of Jesus Christ, without participation in a false and corrupt sacrifice; and without prostrating yourselves before the idol of bread. You cannot confess Jesus Christ head of the church, without adhering to a false head, to the head of a body which is altogether Antichristian. You cannot call upon God in public worship, unless, at the same time, you call upon creatures. It remains therefore that we prove unto you, that Popery, so confounded and mixed with Christianity, is mortal, impure, and intolerable.

The second general advice which I have to give you, is, That to understand Popery well, you must not look upon it in the books of your convertors \*, in the explications of the Catholic doctrine, or other painted tables which disguise to you the religion into which they force you to enter. Discharge yourselves also from this wicked imagination, That we ought to attribute nothing to Popery, but what is ordained by its councils: For there is nothing more false,

\* The reader must here advert, that these letters were particularly designed by the author for the conviction and reduction of those of the Protestant religion in France, who, through the artifices and illusions of popish priests and emissaries, and the force of persecution, had been drawn to join in the Romish idolatrous worship. Liberty for the free exercise of the reformed religion in France had been established by law, in the famous edict of Nantz, and had continued for about an 100 years. Lewis XIV. revoked this edict, October 1685. The consequence of this was, that the public exercise of the Protestant religion in France was intirely abolished, and so continues to this day. Their assemblies were forbid, their churches pulled down, and their ministers ordered to withdraw; and such as did not, were seized and martyred. All of the reformed religion were also required by the new edict, either to abjure, or depart the kingdom. The promulgation of the new law was preceded by a public address or admonition of the assembly of the clergy of France, directed to those of the reformed religion, exhorting them *to renounce their heresy, and return to the bosom of the church.* This general warning being succeeded by the industrious private labours of priests and Jesuits, and by the dreadfully rigorous execution of the king's edict, had the effect to bring too many of the Protestants to yield, through weakness, an outward compliance with the requisition of the clergy, for a time. See *Dupin's Church History, Folio edit. vol. 4. ad annis 1685, —86, —87.*

false, and more distant from truth, than that the councils have not expressed, in their decisions, all those frightful excesses into which Popery is fallen, therefore they are not to be imputed to her. It is a wicked consequence; all that is done in a church, be it by order of her councils, be it by use and common custom, ought to be imputed to her. It is true that St. Austine, in a passage which we quoted above, would not grant, that the Manichees should impute certain superstitions which the people practised, to the church; but it was because there were few persons, in comparison to others, that fell into them; and the teachers condemned them, instead of supporting and maintaining them: But we impute nothing to Popery, but extravagances universally practised, and defended by their most famous doctors.

I will give you yet a third advice, That for the true understanding of Popery, and all its deformities, you must not look on it in certain places, and at certain times. For example; at this day in France, they shew you the popish religion in a smooth and polished condition. With respect to the authority of the pope, they tell you, that, to speak properly, he is no more than the first bishop; he is not the vicar of Jesus Christ; that he is not true head of the church, nor the true center of unity; that he is not infallible; that he has no more power over the bishops, than the bishops have over him. They speak to you with great indifference concerning the worship of images, as a thing esteemed not very necessary; they do extremely mollify the invocation of saints, reducing it to a small matter. The bishops give order, that little of these popular devotions which are capable of giving you scandal, be practised in their diocesses. I do declare to you, that it is not by the small country of France, nor by this little space of present time, that you ought to look to Popery, to know and see all its deformities.

In what follows, we shall have occasion to shew you, that all these reformations are nothing, that they are fictitious; and that although they should go further, in I know not what appearances, it would not suffice; but in expectation of that, I advice you at present, my brethren, that for a true understanding of Popery, it behoves you to look on it every where, and in all times. You must behold it in Italy and Spain, as well as in France and Germany: You must look on it in all preceding ages, at least in the seven hundred or eight hundred years which went before our reformation; observing these three rules, 1. That you look on  
Popery

Popery such as it is in itself, distinct from Christianity.  
 2. That you look on it in its practice, and universal usage.  
 3. That you look on it, above all, in Spain and Italy, as well as elsewhere; and that you look on it in all those times which preceded the Reformation. If you do thus, say I, I do maintain that you cannot behold the deformity of Popery without horror.

1. You will there see a *beast* which calls himself the most holy Lord, his Holiness, and the Vicar of Jesus Christ, who bears on him all the characters of Antichrist. He sits in the temple of God, as if he were God; he makes himself to be adored as God; he has his seat at Rome, the city upon seven hills. He hath ten kings under him, which give obedience to him; he is clothed in scarlet, as the whore in the Revelation; he bears a triple crown. He has upon his forehead the names of blasphemy, calling himself God on earth; the vicar of Jesus Christ, the spouse of the church, the mouth which pronounces infallible oracles. He sits upon a beast, *i. e.* on an empire, *viz.* the Roman empire, which he hath raised up again. He makes the image of the beast to speak, and be adored. He hath established in the church the true image of the Roman empire; and causes this image to be adored on pain of death. He hath two horns, two powers, as a Lamb, the temporal and spiritual; speaks like a dragon; and is the protector of lies and falsehood. He works false signs and wonders to support his false religion; his teachers make profession of austerity, celibacy, abstinence, and fasting, and refuse marriage. He hath his seat in Babylon, that city of merchandize, where all things are sold, and where they make merchandize even of the souls of men: He causes his mark to be born, *i. e.* his profession, upon the hands and the forehead; the name of Latin church, and Latin pope, contain exactly 666, which is the number of the beast. This pope, this pretended vicar of Jesus Christ, is seen under a canopy, or cloth of state, in pomp, and in magnificence; he is seen trampling crowned heads under his feet, making himself to be carried on the shoulders of emperors; causing princes to kiss his feet. He hath been seen as a furious lion in all ages, covering the earth with blood, dethroning emperors, pulling off their crowns, absolving subjects from the oaths of fidelity given to their kings, and thereby putting a sword into their hands, from whence have followed cruel and barbarous civil wars. He has been seen encouraging the father against the son, and the son against the father; subjects against their kings, and stirring them up to run their swords into the

bowels of their sovereigns. He has been seen putting all Europe into a flame, and carrying confusion, blood, and disorder every where by his ambition. He hath been seen fighting with competitors, called anti-popes, conducting armies, shedding blood, dispeopling cities, and laying waste fields by fire and sword. He has been seen with his arms in his hands, like a mad man filling the world with horror and desolation, to maintain his pretended succession to the inheritance of Christ Jesus. He has been seen sometimes keeping whores, sometimes a Sodomite, sometimes a forcerer, sometimes a murderer, and a parricide, sometimes an adulterer, and corrupter of wives, and women; sometimes like a blood-sucker devouring provinces, swallowing up kingdoms, exhausting their substance, and drawing tributes from all the earth. He hath been seen cheating, deceiving, making false oaths, violating treaties, stirring up seditions, moving to wars. He has been seen to make an horrible traffic of sins, selling pardon for Sodomies, for having lain with sister and mother, and even with a beast; for having killed his father, his benefactor, and even his king. He himself hath been seen killing, poisoning, robbing, exercising rage, ambition, and dreadful robberies. I do profess, that he must be fallen to a reprobate sense, to call such a man the vicar of Jesus Christ, and to imagine that such a fee is the seat of the church.

2. After you have looked upon the head, if you consider the *members* of Popery, you will see great lords, lovers of the world, who call themselves the princes of the church; who being oftentimes nothing but the dregs of the people, dispute place with sovereigns: They keep houses, and the train of princes; they have magnificent equipage, stately lodgings, sumptuous furniture, and delicate tables: They are the council, and the senate of the pope; they are the cardinals which call themselves the pillars of the whole world, upon which the church stands: These are the ministers of Jesus Christ, who said to his disciples, *That he who will be greatest among you, let him be your servant. Verily, verily, I say unto you, That if you humble not yourselves as a little child, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Below these prince-ministers of the antichristian empire, we see bishops, another sort of secular princes, governors of the diocesses, *i. e.* the provinces of the pope, who call themselves bishops, archbishops, &c. by the grace and favour of the holy see, after the same manner that the governors of the provinces of a kingdom take the title of their dignity, by the favour of their king: These men possess a great revenue, which  
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was appointed by the donors to nourish the power, but serves nevertheless to maintain the best table in the province; a great number of debauched and unruly servants, cooks that are most expert in the art of making curious meats and sauces, coaches with six horses, packs of hounds, and oftentimes a race of prostituted whores. These men cause themselves to be called my lord in the world, and treat their inferiors like pages and foot-boys: These have not the least grain of that which is called the Spirit of the gospel, but are animated by the spirit of the world, that of disorder, debauchery, ambition, and avarice: They watch not over their flock, but after some benefice greater than their own, after which they gape always like wolves after their prey.

3. Below these superiors are seen an *inferior clergy*, composed either of canons appointed to sing vespers and mattins in cathedral churches, whose repose, ease, good cheer, long sleep, drunkenness, sloth, fat and plumpness have always served, and do serve still for matter of satyrs and jests: Or they are curates who are not only for the most part the dregs of the clergy, but dregs of the people; excepting those of the great cities, who put themselves to the labour of instructing themselves at the least, in the way to live like the world; the rest are ignorant, brutish, drunken whoremasters, and given to the basest and most shameful vices: And besides this, the clergy is made up of an infinite number of little priests, which are (above all in Italy and Spain) as they were heretofore every where, ministers of the filthiest pleasures, and of the most criminal attempts. Are these the guides of Jerusalem, or the builders of Babel? My brethren, look not upon the clergy of Paris, who are better governed; consider that during the space of seven or eight hundred years, the popish clergy were of this make in all the Roman church; look upon Spain and Italy, where it is publicly known, that the clergy are yet thus formed and fashioned: Consult those which have seen Rome a little near at hand: Learn from them that religion there is an interlude, and that all the ecclesiastics are comedians which do not believe in God. An honest man came a little while since from Italy, and told us, from his own observation, That when they are at their devotions they commit indecencies, and make such noise there, that honest men in France would not do at play. Judge whether it be likely, that God hath permitted so horrible a corruption of manners in a church pure and infallible.

4. From the clergy, *i. e.* from the priests, pass to the *monks*, which are the holy part of Popery, where are found the reverend fathers, the seraphical and angelical doctors: Draw the curtain from their hypocrisy, and you will see an abyss of impurities; men who under pretence of long prayers, devour widows houses; wolves gaping after a prey, which compass about the beds of the sick and dying, to obtain great gifts and presents; men who think gain to be godliness; who dress religion like a play, that they may draw spectators, who in their houses perform Paganish devotions, and such as are ridiculous and worthy of the theatre, to draw the crowd of people, and to obtain offerings, who by this means obtain those alms which belong to the poor, who by these alms maintain themselves in a criminal sloth and idleness, without being of any use to church or state; who behind their own walls and curtains, abandon themselves to the utmost extremities of wickedness; who eat and drink, and sleep like hogs; who go not without the walls of their cloisters, but to run after strange flesh; who corrupt wives and daughters, and to that end, serve themselves of all the most hideous and diabolical arts: The pretence of religion, sacraments, and the most holy things are employed therein. You will see houses of sacred virgins, (so they call them) which are the lodgings of impurity, the houses of prostitutes, the places of those that are debauched. Behold those who are the principal, and the most illustrious members of Popery, during the space of seven or eight hundred years, by the confession of all the world, and what they are yet to this day, in an infinite number of places unto which the Reformation has not come: It is by this, that you ought to look upon the members of Popery, and not by some reformed societies which are in France, whereof they let you see nothing but the outside. Judge whether the true church, and the true religion, could permit and suffer such horrible disorders! Are these the pastors of Jesus Christ, or the false pastors of him, who in the last times was to teach a doctrine of devils, by men whose consciences were seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and abstaining from meats, which God hath created to be received by believers.

*June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1687.*

**I**N our seventeenth letter, you may read the continuation of the cruelties which are exercised in Languedock; you have there seen that they fill vessels with confessors to send them to America: The last news from that country doth inform us, That two of these vessels are gone for Martinique, and among other eminent persons, there is Monsieur the Baron of Verliac, with Madam his wife, but with this augmentation of cruelty, that they have put them in divers vessels, to the end that whether they live or die in the voyage, they may be no consolation to each other. Monsieur Matthew, an advocate of Durafs, of whom we have spoken heretofore, one of our most illustrious confessors, is also of that number. How sad soever the lot of these exiled confessors which are carried into another world, I do not think that they have so much reason to complain, as those that abide in the kingdom: For the most cruel hangmen remain there to put the constancy of those which persevere in their religion, to the utmost trial. Above all, Rapine continuing in France, the new world cannot boast to have a more cruel tormentor. This monster, nevertheless, would be very proper to revive the cruelties, which the Spaniards exercised heretofore upon the poor Indians. We have promised you a history of the horrible actions of this villain, and we will not fail to give it you, when it shall be sent unto us.

We thought, even at this time, to have given you the memorable history of the martyrdom of which he caused Monsieur Menuret to suffer, the most illustrious martyr it may be that the church hath ever seen; and also the history of some other women martyred by the same Rapine, the most cruel rascal in the world: But this letter which comes to be communicated to us, must go before it; it comes very opportunely to acquaint you with the news of the confessors, which are sent to America, and whereof we speak but now.

Part of the 17th letter referred to above.

You have heard of the death of Monsieur Du Crosse; Monsieur Brousson had bailed him, seeing him sick in the vessel which was to carry him, with others, to America. He was an example without equal. The bishop of Marseilles told him, "Monsieur, if your religion be true, I must confess that you are a saint." Let him die in his religion, and be buried in a dormitory of the Turks. He had not the grief to understand the death of his youngest daughter,

daughter, who had been carried some time since from the castle of Saumiere to Valence, with another of her sisters, and four daughters of Monsieur Audemane's and Mademoiselle de la Farelle : All these persons are a thousand times worse treated than if they were among Barbarians. At their arrival in the hospital, he which hath the government thereof, caused them to be shaven; afterwards he caused them to be stripped of their shifts, to give them others of hair, which made sores and ulcers on them to their finger ends. They give them little food and a great many blows. Mademoiselle de la Farelle received a blow with a cudgel over her face, which beat out all her fore-teeth. They seize on persons every day of the Reformed religion, on the borders of Lyons and Geneva. Some days since they killed Monsieur Quista, who was conveying his wife and child out of the kingdom. Meeting some countrymen, and finding himself well-horsed, he made opposition to them; but one of them gave him a knock with a flint, which overturned and killed him. His wife and child are now prisoners. On this accident the wife of M. Bonigoll escaped, and is now at Geneva.—*April 5. 1687.*

He which commits these cruelties in the prisons of Valence is Rapine, whose cruelties deserve a particular history.

I hope that Marseilles, which has seen the last hours of the martyrdom of M. Du Crosse, will become more famous by the number of martyrs, than by its antiquities, and other singularities. We have been informed, that two good old men of Vassé in Champagne, have there received their crowns. One of them is called Monsieur Chantguyon, of seventy four years of age, of which he employed thirty four in the service of that church, in quality of an elder, with great care and fidelity. This good old man was arrested on the frontiers of Champagne, endeavouring to go out of the kingdom; he was condemned to the gallies. He appealed to the parliament of Metz, whither he was transmitted. His sentence was confirmed, and there he received that glorious chain under which he breathed his last. He was so oppressed with age and infirmities, that he was so far from being able to bear a chain, that he was not able to bear himself. His judges were touched and afflicted with it; but they said they must make examples. He went from Metz about the end of September, with his brother-in-law Mr. Chemet, who was sixty-nine years of age, and also in chains, and much more infirm than he, having both a rupture and an asthma. They were both full of joy, and gloried that they were found worthy to suffer for the name and truth of God. In all the places through which they passed upon the road, they found persons which had given testimony to their constancy and courage. These two martyrs bore their chain to Marseilles; but the end of their journey was the end of their race, and the time of their coronation.

coronation. They both died within a few days of each other, giving glory to God, and confessing his truth, having never had any inclination to deny it, in order to deliver themselves out of this sad condition. Mr. Chantguyon is of the blood of the martyrs; for his grandfather Peter Chantguyon was one of those who suffered death in the massacre of Vassi, which was the signal to the civil war of the past age.

*From Cadiz, April 17th, 1687.*

**M**onsieur ——— I do not doubt but you are informed of what passes in France, with respect to our families, which groan under the yoke of cruel persecution; but it may be you are not yet informed of a new kind of persecution which they have lately invented: After they had tired out the constancy of an infinite number of unhappy persons; foreseeing that they had no farther progress in the work of conversion, they send them to the islands of America, in the king's ships, to be sold to them who give most for them. These things are an abhorrence of nature, that those who are called Christians should sell other Christians for money; it is a thing that was never heard of, till this miserable age in which we live. The tears which I have, and do pour out every moment, permits me not to tell you all that I have seen, being accompanied by Monsieur ———, your son, and an officer, which escaped, and is now in our vessel; a tempestuous wind hath caused us to put in, and refresh ourselves in the haven of Almaria, which is the kingdom of Granada, and hath kept us there five weeks, and every day we see vessels arrive there from some nation or other, which this tempestuous season doth oblige to seek some place of safety. On the sixth of April, a vessel, bearing the admiral's flag of France, arrived there: As soon as the stormy season was over, Monsieur the Count of Stirum, sent one of his lieutenants to the said French vessel, to inform himself whence it came, and whither it went; we learned that it came from Marseilles, and that it went to carry them for slaves to America. This obliged me to desire a chaloupe, that I might satisfy myself in the doubt wherein I was, suspecting there might be in it men of our religion; and indeed it proved true. After we had been on board the French vessel, they brought us a collation, and soon after we saw some gentlewomen appear, upon whose countenances death was drawn, who came upon the deck to take the air: We asked them upon what account they went to America; they answered us, with an heroic constancy,

constancy, Because we *would not worship the beast*, nor prostrate ourselves before images: Behold, say they, our crime. We enquired of them, if there were any from Cevennes; they answered, there was two from thence, the one of fifteen, the other of sixteen years of age, who were below, and they were of a village called St. Ambrose. This increased my curiosity to see them, the one was sick unto death, the other was with her to assist her in what she could: At my desire the captain granted, that she who was not sick, should come up; as soon as she appeared on the deck, I well perceived that her countenance was not unknown to me: Monsieur your son asked her, Mademoiselle, from whence are you? She said, I am from St. Ambrose. What is your name? I am named Peirique. I needed no more to assure me, that they were cousin germans: I had resolved to permit her to speak a while, but the tears which began to run from her eyes would not suffer it. I drew near to her and said, Madam, do you not know me? At that very moment casting her eye upon me, falling on my neck, she said, Is it possible, my dear cousin, that I should see you once again in my misfortunes. She added a hundred other things so affecting, that there was not a person in the ship, which did not pour out a river of tears, at least of those who had the guard and keeping of them. I desired leave of the captain to see her sister, which was not able to come upon the deck, which he freely granted me: I was no sooner below, but I saw fourscore women, or maids, lying upon matts, overwhelmed with miseries; my mouth was stopped, and I had not one word to say. They told me the most moving things in the world, and instead of giving them consolation, they comforted me; and I not being able to speak, they told me, with one common voice, We put our hands upon our mouths, and say that all things come from him who is the King of kings, and in him we put our trust. On the other side, we saw a hundred poor miserable persons, oppressed with old age, whom the torments of tyrants had reduced to their last gasp: We saw there of all sorts, of all ages, and of all qualities, for they spare none. They told me, when they left Marseilles, they were two hundred and fifty persons, men, women, girls and boys; and that in fifteen days, eighteen of them died. There is but one gentlewoman that is of Poictou, all the rest are of Nismes, or Montpellier, and the countries in the neighbourhood thereof. A countryman who lived about a league and a half from St. Ambrose, who had suffered

ferred all that he could suffer, upon whom these barbarians could gain nothing, was put on board among others, and is since dead in the harbour of Granada; his son, who was in the same ship, knew me at first sight; he is called Griollet, and the village of his abode Ceurla. There are yet six vessels upon their departure from Provence, laden with these poor men, who expect nothing but a fair wind to hoist sail. I was willing to have encouraged my kinswoman; she told me, Dear cousin, it is not death that I fear, if God will call me hence, I shall escape a great many miseries which I have yet to suffer, but I am resigned to whatever he shall please to lay upon me. A young gentleman which the captain entertained at his own table, died of grief about some eight days since. After I was returned to our vessel, and had given a particular account of what I had seen, Monsieur the Count of Stirom signified a great deal of trouble at it, and sent me back again with some fowls, wine, and other things, together with some money for their refreshment; and if it had been in his power to have rescued them from their misery, I am sure he would have spared nothing to have done it. Mademoiselle, your sister, is yet wandering about, as my kinswoman informed me; they themselves lay hid a long while in the woods of D'Orfre and Arowbac. They told me so many things that I have not power to express them to you. The day after we drew up our anchor, at the point of day, to my very great trouble; I went to bid them farewell, and in that little time that I was there, with one voice, they repeated to me, "We intreat you to remember us in your prayers, that God would give us grace to persevere unto the end, that we may obtain the crown of life." You will take it in good part, Monsieur, that I desire, on the behalf of these poor unhappy persons, the same thing which they desired of me; I assure myself that you will intreat Monsieur d' Marais to be mindful of them; they repeated it to me a hundred times after the most moving manner in the world. I conclude in professing myself ———

The mother of a minister, and her sister, who are also in the same ship, intreated me to give intelligence concerning them to her son, who is a minister in Holland; he is called Monsieur Arnolt, of Languedock. Monsieur, your son would have written to you, but we have thought that this will suffice for us all.

As soon as this letter was communicated to us, we have not delayed one moment to give it you, that it may be scattered all over Europe, and that all the reformed churches

may answer the wishes and desires of these illustrious confessors, by praying to God for them, by name, and that without ceasing. We see by this letter, what false zeal and cruelty, animated by a spirit of superstition may do; this is an example thereof which has no precedent. It cannot be said, that these were rebels, and such as defended themselves by arms: They were poor innocent women, and such as had no other faults, but that of desiring to worship God without serving the creature: It is a voice that cries loud towards heaven. Oh God of vengeance, when wilt thou awake? We intreat all those who have friends in divers parts of the world, to disperse this letter among them, without delay, that the voices of all believers, united together, may pierce the very heavens, and render God favourable to these poor victims, who bear our iniquities into another world, and suffer the evils of a persecution which our sins have caused. They are the innocent and the most just which suffer, the criminal and faulty withdraw themselves from sufferings, either by their apostasy, or by their dissimulations. Those among them, who are of this number, ought to make serious reflections thereon.

*June 1. 1687.*

## L E T T E R XX.

*The extreme corruption of Popery hath forced us to a separation.  
— Conclusion of the Picture of Popery.*

**I**N the preceding letter, we began to make you a picture of Popery, to convince you of the justice and necessity of our reformation. This corruption of Popery may be either considered in its guides, its head, and principal members, or in its doctrine.

We did consider this corruption in its head, the pope; in its guides, the cardinals, primates, archbishops, and bishops; in its principal members, such are the priests, the monks, and the nuns; and in all this we have seen the characters of the conductors of Babel, and the emissaries of Antichrist.

These are the mouths of Popery, but what can proceed out of such mouths? It is easy to judge. They appoint for you, at this day, preachers which speak good things. There have been for some time past, a number of persons raised up to obtain the use of the word of God, and the holy scripture, for the people; but this is neither ancient-

nor

nor general: You must know the Popish ministry by what it was not long since, and by what it is in all places where it is regnant. Hear those which tell you the holy scripture is a dangerous book, and obscure book, all full of traps, snares, and precipices; that an infinite number of men have ruined themselves thereby; that it is from thence that heretics have drawn their heresies; that it is imperfect; that it contains not half the Christian religion; that to understand the true sense of this half, there needs another which is called the *unwritten word*, tradition, the infallible voice of the church. However it be, they do assure you, that the scripture has no authority without tradition; that without the testimony of the church we were no more obliged to believe the gospel, than Titus Livius, or the fables of Homer. Moreover, at this day, the Jansenists, great defenders of the holy scriptures, tell you plainly, and without scruple or hesitation, That by the holy scripture we cannot prove the divinity of Jesus Christ; and that it were a folly more clear than the day, to go about to prove the divinity of the holy scriptures by the scripture itself. There is nothing that Popery doth not do to decry this sacred book: Not only it is insufficient, obscure, has no authority by itself, but it is maimed and imperfect: Many books thereof are lost; those which remain are corrupted either by the Jews, or by the negligence of transcribers: We cannot know with any certainty what is intire, or what is not; the translations thereof are spoiled; there are none of them conformable to the original. Good God, what a prodigy is this! And how great must the patience of God be, to tolerate a religion which makes it its business to vilify, debase those oracles which ought to be so venerable among all Christians? What Christianity is this! but that, in which for the space of more than a thousand years, the scripture was an unknown book almost to all Christians; and is so yet at this day in all those places where Popery domineers without contradiction?

Observe also the profound ignorance in which those people live that are subject to the Popish inquisition. To find among them the figures of Aretine, or some others infamous work, is no fault; but to find a Bible in the vulgar language, is a crime not to be forgiven; for which reason, in these countries, they know God no better, and, it may be, a great deal worse, than in Turkey. The sacred histories are utterly unknown to them; they know nothing of Christianity, but what we find thereof in their Catechism,

mingled

mingled and confounded with the errors and superstitions of Popery.

Instead of the true gospel, what do they preach in those places that are under the dominion of Popery? And what have they preached in the times when it did rule, and prevail without contradiction?

They did there preach,

1. *Corrupt morality*; according to which a man might commit murder, to save a crown, to defend his honour, and secure himself from some small affront; according to which a man might rob, when a person did not think himself sufficiently recompensed for his labours; according to which a man might exercise usury, and infamous monopolies; according to which a man might keep concubines, and abandon himself to Sodomy, without mortal sin; according to which a man might lye by equivocation and mental reservations; according to which he might live all his life without the fear of God, without performing one act of contrition, or the love of God to his death; and he might be dispensed with at the point of death, provided he exercised an act of the fear of hell, when he receives the sacrament of penance.

Popery has produced this detestable morality; it hath taught it where it could, inspired it into private persons, and suffered it where it durst not teach it.

2. For *holy history*, instead of the pious and sacred histories of the scripture, which might turn mens minds towards devotion, they entertain the people with fabulous legends. Instead of speaking to them of the miracles and greatness of the Virgin: They say that she was conceived without sin; that her father and her mother had been advertised of her birth by an angel; that at her birth the angels assembled together, and formed a choir and consort in the air; that this celebration of the birth of the holy Virgin, is repeated every year on the same day; that many saints have heard them in the air; that this holy Virgin was bred and brought up in the temple, and in the most holy place called the *sanctuary*; that when she conceived Jesus Christ, it was by three drops of her blood which the holy Spirit took from her heart; that after she had lived most holily, she died in the presence of all the apostles, whom the holy Spirit brought in the air from all parts of the world, whither they were gone to preach the gospel; that three days after, she rose again, and was carried up into heaven, with charming music made by the voices of Jesus Christ and the angels; and that she was set very near to Jesus Christ, a-

bove

bove all the seraphims. After the assumption of the Virgin into heaven, they made her do a thousand and a thousand ridiculous miracles upon earth. Sometimes she appeared to a monk, sometimes to a pilgrim, sometimes to some one of her devoted servants: She kisses them, she makes them kiss her; she opens her bosom to them; she gives them suck from her breasts; she appoints them to build a chapel to her in such a place, and that they should perform such or such devotions to her: She fixes herself in certain places, and there makes her choice to dwell, and do miracles. All those who come thither for sickness, blindness, palsy, loss of blood, deafness, loss of members, return thence safe and sound. When one of her houses formerly frequented, ceased to be so, she transported it beyond the seas, and fixed it in another country to draw thither new servants to her devotion: She forgets nothing that may favour those which serve her. In one convent she takes the place, office, and figure of a debauched nun, which ran to the places of prostitution, because this nun when she was going, did devoutly commit the convent into her hand. In another place, because an abbess did most devoutly commend herself to her, when she had polluted herself with her domestics, she delivered her in private of her great belly, and restored her virginity, in such sort, that those who had accused her, remained ashamed and confounded.

Instead of entertaining the people with the *miracles* and *virtues* of true saints, as were the apostles, to oblige them to an imitation of them, Popery hath substituted unto them new saints which were fools, and wicked fools too, St. Francis, St. Dominick, St. Hyacinth, St. Vincent Ferrerius; or imaginary saints, as St. Christopher, and the eleven thousand virgins; or modern and unknown saints, such as St. Milorus, St. Alldem, St. Colganus, and a thousand others: To which they attribute ridiculous and impertinent actions for virtues, and such sottishnesses for miracles, as are unworthy of those little demons called *hobgoblins*. One, to testify his humility, made himself to be tossed in a sieve by little children; another, to draw upon himself contempt, counterfeited the fool and the idiot; another fouled the bed of his host, that he might be despised of him; another kept company with beasts, wolves, and swallows; another preached to fishes, or birds; another stripped himself naked, and in that condition exposed himself to public view; another made himself women of snow, and embraced them to cool and extinguish his

his lust; another, through great mortification, lay with the fairest women without touching them; another made himself a bed of stones and sticks, and crowns of nails, and girdles of iron; another thrust thorns into his body, washed his hands in quick lime, and covered his face with an eating powder, which made the flesh thereof one entire ulcer. Behold a small part of the idea that Popery gives us of the virtue of its saints!

As to miracles, they produce to the people faithful chronicles, as they say, by which it appears, that some of these saints, for their parts have raised fifty-two dead persons; another thirty; another twelve; another six, or four. They have healed desperate diseases, raised dogs, parrots, and other animals from the dead. The water in which they washed their hands, cured all sorts of diseases; the clippings of their hair, and the parings of their nails, put into the cracks of walls, closed them up again, and have made houses ready to fall, firm and strong. When these saints preached to the birds, these animals reached out their bills, and clapped their wings: When they preached to the fishes, they gathered together on the top of the water, that they might hear: When they pleased, they drove away not only evil spirits which troubled them, but also living creatures which interrupted their discourse. They made angels serve them not only at mass, but also they used them as grooms to dress their horses. They caused themselves to be carried by the devil to places whither they would go: They made him hold the candle till he burnt his fingers therewith. If the devil turned himself into a cat, they put him into such distress, that he left behind him a matter which infected the air. When birds were roasted, and set upon the table, with signs of the cross they made them fly away. Another nourished a child in a desert, by making him suck the clapper of a little bell. Another hung his cloaths upon the shadow of a tree, or on a ray of the sun, as upon a peg. Another made whole again a basket of eggs that had been broken. Another made a golden cup of a pound of butter. Another by sucking a leprous person, drew from his navel three great lunctions of fat matter, whereof he made so many ingots of gold. To conclude, there are no impertinencies, nor ridiculous things which Popery doth not make its saints to do. And here behold the history which they put in the place of the evangelical story!

3. As to what concerns *doctrine*, they speak but little of the august mysteries of religion to the people, such as those of the divine attributes, the persons of the Trinity, the incarnation

carnation of Christ, and redemption by him. These mysteries were laid by and neglected; or, if they spake any thing of them, it was after a scholastical manner and method; it was by mingling with it a barbarous philosophy of *entities* and *quiddities*, with obscure and unintelligible distinctions; it was by raising foolish questions on the subject of the most venerable mysteries: For example, Whether God could make matter without form; whether he could command sin; whether this proposition, God is a beetle or a gourd, could be as true as this, *God is man*; whether the number of three persons in God, ought to be referred to the first or second intentions; whether the second person in the Trinity, could take the nature of a devil, or of an ass, as he took the nature of man? The books which contain these *fine* questions, are not yet destroyed.

At least they entertain people with the false doctrines of Popery. Instead of speaking to them of the efficacy of the venerable sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the cross, they speak nothing to them but of the greatness and utilities of the holy sacrifice of the altar called the mass. It was good for every thing, for the sound, and for the sick, to cure all diseases for travellers, for those who undertook great things, to find silver, horses, asses, and hogs that were lost. It was good for the dead, as well as for the living; it was excellent to fetch souls from purgatory, or to abate their sufferings, for which reason they could not tell how to say too many for that purpose, 100, 200, 300, 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000. and all with a design to draw by this practice maintenance for a million of fluggards, who have nothing to live upon but these masses.

Instead of exalting the divine virtue of the blood of Jesus Christ, they spoke nothing but of purgatory, of a certain fire which was to burn souls after death; but of what sort of men? of those who had not made pious foundations, who had not left great revenues to convents, and who had not left great alms to the monks to say masses. And upon this account they had always some soul in pickle which came from purgatory bringing news from thence, who desired masses, and suffrages, and who complained lamentably that his friends had forsaken him.

Amongst the means of appeasing the wrath of God, true repentance, which consists in contrition, and amendment of life, was passed over very lightly. But they insisted mightily upon satisfactions, mortifications, whippings, hair-cloaths, and pilgrimages: They advanced the value of these things; they spake of them with prodigious excesses, and ascribed

ascribed salvation wholly to them. And because all the world were desirous to be saved, but few were capable of these hard penances, they found out ways more easy and commodious. If you give money to a monk, he will whip himself for you, and you shall go to heaven for him. If you give great alms to a convert of the frier minors, or the preachers, or the Augustines, or the Carmelites; if you take the cord-girdle, or the rosary of the fraternity, and bestow great bounty and liberality on them, and get the letters of adoption of St. Francis, or St. Dominick, by these means you partake in the merit, *i. e.* in all the scourgings and macerations of the monks of that order scattered all the world over.

For greater security, they have established a lovely, good, and inexhaustible treasure of indulgencies, made up of all the superabundant scourgings of the good monks, mingled with the infinite merit of the passion of Jesus Christ. And from this treasure the bishops and the popes, as sovereign dispensers, fetch indulgences, and remission for all sins, for 40,000 years, for a 100 000 years, for 500,000 years, and all this by paying well for it. So that if a man had committed so many enormous crimes, that they could not be expiated under less than 500,000 years penance, he becomes discharged of them in a moment by his money. And there was no distinction of sins, incest, adulteries, parricides, sodomies, brutalities, all fell under the grace of indulgences.

Instead of abasing man before God, by speaking nothing to him but of grace, and the forgiveness of sins; instead of saying to him perpetually, you are saved by grace, thro' faith, which is the gift of God; instead of making him understand that his good works could merit nothing before God, because they were very imperfect; instead of doing all this, I say, they endeavoured to fill man with himself; they spake nothing to him but of the merit of his works, and of the profitableness of human satisfactions. They made him believe, that above all, in matter of satisfactions, he could do more than he was obliged unto; that he had merit remaining, and that he did works of supererogation; and there are found even in this age, devout persons so foolish and proud, as to say to their friends, that *they will give them their merits.* They never speak any thing to them, but of their power, of their free will, of their good works, of their merits, of the crowns which are prepared for them above others. And above all, these works to which they affix these crowns, are not prayers, devotions, severe morals, or holy lives; charity, and alms to the poor:

But

But they are sack-cloths and hair-cloths; it is to shut themselves up in convents, and there to make vow of virginity; it is to abstain from certain meats; it is to live in retirement, without seeing or speaking to any one; it is to wear a frock without a shift. With this furniture of good works, these men look on heaven as an inheritance by full right, and according to all the laws and rigour of justice. And for other men, these pretended righteous persons full of pharisaical pride, looked on them with a great contempt, by saying, *Come not near me, for I am holy.*

Instead of instructing men in the true way of possessing, and being united to Christ Jesus, they have invented a carnal and corporeal manner, and of small expence, to receive him, and taste all the saving fruits of his presence. They have enclosed him under a morsel of bread, from whence they have withdrawn the substance, leaving nothing but the accidents there: And under these accidents they have conveyed in the substance of Jesus Christ, by the virtue of transubstantiation, concomitancy, and I know not how many monstrous imaginations and barbarous expressions. Behold thus much for the opinions and doctrine of Popery!

4. Let us a little consider its *worship*. Instead of the adoration and worship of the only true God, who is jealous of his honour and glory, they have truly re-established pure Paganism. The most blessed mother of Jesus Christ hath taken the place of the mother of the gods: They have set her upon the throne of God; they call her the Mother of mercies, the Redemptrix of mankind, the Perfection and accomplishment of the Trinity, the Queen of heaven. They give her the power to command her Son by the authority of a mother; they address themselves to her in all their needs; they desire of her remission of sins, health, the life of men, the recovery of the sick, and the resurrection of the dead. Those which are devoted to her, are greatly advanced above all others. Devotion to the Blessed Virgin is with them an infallible mark of predestination. He cannot be damned that prays to the Blessed Virgin. She hath oftentimes fetched men from hell; she hath raised them to the end that they might do penance: She hath rescued the souls of wicked men out of the hands of devils, who had already dragged them down into the bottomless pit. Persons rejected by the Son have been received into favour by the mother. The white ladder of the Virgin's milk, is a more sure way to ascend to heaven, than the red ladder of the blood of Jesus Christ. In the place of the gods and demy-gods of Paganism, of their

tutelar gods, their household gods, their protecting gods, subordinate to the great God Jupiter, Popery hath put its saints, taken not only from among the apostles, martyrs, and confessors, but from among its bigots, its devout people, its hypocrites, its monks, its founders of orders, its fanatics, and proud Pharisees. It hath placed them in heaven very near unto God. It hath pulled Jesus Christ from the right hand of the Father, where he was to intercede continually for us, and hath placed there in conjunction with him, its tutelar gods, and the patron gods that are there, not only to offer to God their intercessions, but their merits; for they pray unto God to have regard unto the merits of these saints. These patron gods have here below their temples, their chapels, and their altars, which bear their names: For here are to be seen the churches and the altars of St. Paul, St. Peter, the Virgin, and other saints. They have their sacrifices of the mass; that is to say, The adorable body of the Saviour of the world, and God of the universe, by a worship as fantastical as it is criminal, is offered to the honour of St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Roch, and St. Francis. Litanies, prayers, supplications, genuflections, and generally all religious worship is given to these inferior gods, to these canonized saints. They have their part every where; they are taken for protectors; kingdoms, cities, families, and persons are put under their defence. Men beg of them life, health, forgiveness of sins, and eternal happiness. They are constituted princes, regents, governors of the world, to break the nations with rods of iron. It is not enough to adore their persons, men adore their relics: They expose their ashes, their bones, shreds of their cloaths, their girdles, their slippers, their shifts; the iron, nails, the wood, the blood, tears of Jesus Christ; the teeth, the milk, the hair of the Virgin; the cradle of Christ, and a thousand other things which are a shame to the Christian name. These relics do wonders, heal the sick, open mens eyes, raise the dead. They are laid with great respect and honour upon altars; men bow down unto them, and kiss them with great devotion: They are carried in state about the streets; men cry before them, as before Joseph, *Bow the knee*: Men expect from them rain and fair weather, plenty and abundance, peace and war.

That Paganism may be complete, they have filled the churches with idols, which they call holy images. They picture God against his express command; they represent angels, though altogether spiritual, by corporeal figures; they set up material crosses, and crucifixes of wood, stone, and

and metal in all places. The Virgin hath her pictures, where she is painted with a child in her arms. All the saints have their seat in their churches, and upon their altars; men fall down before them, they offer incense to them, they kiss them, and act towards them as if they thought some divine virtue in them. For although the doctors do sometimes say, that we ought not to affix any divine virtue to them; they do nevertheless authorize, by their toleration and examples, the fury of the people, who make nine days devotions and pilgrimages to them; who there rub their beads and their handkerchiefs, who make their children touch them to sanctify them thereby. They dress them up after a stately manner on their festivals; they crown them with flowers and garlands; they carry them in pomp, and cause them go in procession; they put their confidence in these relicks and these images.

The devout persons bear about them a little piece of the pretended wood of the cross; some small filings of the nails thereof; a pretended thorn of his crown; and a little bit of the bone of a saint. They carry these about them as preservatives against the devil, against death, and all perils by sea and land. Every family hath his patron, every particular person his saint, for whom he hath a singular devotion; he hath the image thereof placed in his oratory, he prostrates himself before it, to make his prayers.

To indemnify the true God for all the losses which he hath sustained in those worships given to his creatures, they have dedicated to him in particular, an idol, which they call the *Sacrament of the Altar*; there they adore, in his honour, a little morsel of dry and flat paste, which they call in great reverence *Our Lord*; which they make all the world adore with great ceremony, which they carry in state about the streets, that every one may worship it; and whoever does not so, is execrable and accursed. They inclose Jesus Christ therein in a state of annihilation, without head, feet, hands, soul, motion, or life, subject to be eaten by rats, stolen by thieves, trod under foot by the profane, and vomited by the sick. But in compensation to God, they adore this tomb of Jesus Christ, as the sovereign God, Creator of earth and heaven. If on the one hand they have corrupted the worship by adding in the Eucharist, that which is not there, on the other hand they have taken away half thereof: They give but one part of the sacrament, and by so doing give nothing. They have made private masses, contrary to the institution of Jesus Christ, and the custom of all sound antiquity.

To conclude, What have they not done, to disfigure the worship of God? How many vain and ridiculous ceremonies, and of no use? How many signs of the cross, holy waters, exorcisms, *Agnus Dei's*, and other toys. And above all, they cover this with the veil of an unknown tongue; they speak Latin to the peasants of France, Germany, and Spain, who are edified by what is said, as much as if they spake Arabick. Behold, my brethren, a very short, but very true *Picture of Popery*. After this, will you think that our separation was unjust? You will yet say, that we must bear many things; and that it is a religion in which a man may conveniently enough be saved. In the name of God do not say that this *Picture* is extravagant, and that you do not see all this therein. For it is a true *description of Popery*, such as it hath been in France, as well as elsewhere, for more than seven or eight hundred years. There is no man that knows any thing of antiquity, that can dissent from it; it is yet at this day the Popery of Italy, Spain, Portugal, and all countries where the reformation hath not been tolerated. Yet at this day, do the people of Spain and Portugal, know any thing of God, and of Jesus Christ, but the names? The object of their devotion, is an image, which works miracles on the top of a mountain, or in some church of a monastery; and their piety spends itself in foolish and Pagan processions, in which there are mingled all those things which may render a show ridiculous, and devotion impious. We wish you could hear those which being banished from this Country, a while since by the order of the court of France, are again returned hither. The Bible is imprisoned in those unhappy countries: An illustrious fugitive carried one of them thither, the inquisition, who laid hands on him, seized it, and kept it as you keep a dangerous enemy: And never could that illustrious exile get it out of their hands, till he came out of the country, then they permitted this dangerous book to carry its poison elsewhere. God grant that you may give attention to all this, to the end that you may remain fully persuaded, that your fathers were obliged to separate from the church of Rome, and that you cannot return thither without damnation.

**WE** shall now give you that which we omitted in our last Letter, it is the history of some cruelties exercised at Valence by Rapine, which deserve to be consecrated to the memory of all ages of the church.

First, you shall know how he treated the daughters of  
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that illustrious Martyr Monsieur Du Croffe, and thereby at the same time you will learn after what manner he labours in the conversion of all others: When these gentlewomen were arrived, and delivered into his hands, he separated them, and put them in different dungeons filled with dirt and ordure; he took away their cloaths and linnen, and sent them to an hospital to enquire for shifts, which had been many weeks, and sometimes many months upon bodies covered with the itch, ulcers, and carbuncles, full of matter and putrefaction: After this manner he cloathed the daughters of Monsieur Du Croffe. This villain gives them nothing to support their lives, but a little water and bread which dogs would not eat. Rapine visits them many times in the day, with his lacquies, by whom he strips them, and gives them many blows with a bull's ~~piss~~, and he himself beats them with his cane on the body, and upon the very face itself, in such a manner, that they have nothing of human shape remaining: He breaks them with so many blows, that they are not able to set one foot before another, nor lift their hand to their mouth, nor move their arms; besides this, he causes them to be plunged many times in a day in a deep mire, moistened with stinking water; he draws them not from thence, till they have lost all sense and knowledge; at last they faint under these torments, which have no example in the history of the most barbarous Pagans; after which they were exported to a convent, where they are, having neither form nor figure, covered with wounds from head to foot. ~~This we have received from an honest man who saw them in this frightful state.~~

Mademoiselle de Farelle of Nismes, ~~is at this day~~ <sup>was</sup> in the hands of this villain, with many other gentlewomen. The Parliament of Grenoble, a little while since, sent him twenty five, or twenty six persons, both men and women, to be converted by these ways and methods. Monsieur ~~the~~ Baron de Faugere of Languedock, whose fidelity is known to all those who know his person, met the rector of the Jesuits of Nismes, at St. Esprit, who told him, he was going to Valence to labour in the conversion of an obstinate Huguenot, who had resisted all the means that they had made use of. And a few days after, meeting the same gentleman, told him, That he could prevail nothing; and that he had said to Rapine, that no body but he could be successful therein, and that he ought to labour in it. So that this poor gentlewoman, with many others, have without doubt passed the ingenious cruelties of this infamous hangman.

We may very well boast, that he has given us an example of courage and constancy, which may dispute it with all the ancient and modern martyrs: It is the famous Monsieur Ménurett, an advocate of Montlimar; he was eminent throughout his conversation, for an exemplary life and devotion: When the missionary dragoons were sent into Dauphine, and to Montlimar, he strengthened all persons about him, by his exhortation and example. The governor of Montlimar caused him to be arrested, they put him three months into something like a chamber, where he had nothing to lie on but a sorry matt. After these three months, they put him into a hideous dungeon. He went thither full of joy, comforting his friends who wept, and bewailed him as they accompanied him thither: He told them, they ought to rejoice, that God did him the favour to suffer for his name. He was six months in this noisome dungeon, and there became dropical. They drew him from thence to carry him to Valence, and put him into the hands of Rapine, which is the last trial to which they put the faith of the martyrs of that country. Rapine drew near to him with the countenance of a lion, and with words like roaring, concluding, "We will see whether thou wilt be so obstinate in my hands." He put him into the entry of a chamber, under which ran all the sinks of the hospital, even those of the bogg-houses and jacques; and for a bed, they gave him a plank. This place was opposite, by another little entry, to the chapel of the hospital, where they said mass every day; they would have obliged our martyr to have assisted at the mass by this entry, but they could never effect it. All these evil treatments not being able to vanquish this illustrious confessor, Rapine comes to his last remedies; he caused Monsieur Menurett to descend into the court, where there was a mulberry-tree, and fastned his arms on high thereto, his feet scarce touching the ground; he rent off his cloaths to his very shirt, and caused him to receive an infinite number of blows with a bull's pisle: This treatment was continued for the space of fifteen days, with so much violence, that our martyr voided blood by his urine, and by all the parts of his body. In the midst of these horrible torments, without ceasing, he begged mercy and grace from God for himself, and for his persecutors, and implored the compassion of his hangmen in so moving a manner, that two Capuchines, who heard his cries, exhorted Rapine to cease his cruel punishment; he did so, and was content to employ our martyr to carry stones for a building which they were making at the hospital. The first

first day of April last, the bishop of Valence went to visit him in this stinking sink, but gained no more upon him at this time, than at others. In conclusion, Rapine enraged with his long opposition, entered like a devil into the prison of this holy man, accompanied with two lacquies, or serjeants, and gave him so many blows with a bull's pisle, and for so long a time, that the cries of the martyr did even rend the air all round about. This monster about two hours after, (having been wearied with the pains that he had taken to martarize this saint) returned with his serjeants, to repeat the punishment; but he found our martyr expired in the midst of these cruel torments. He was put into the hands of Rapine in the month of June 1686, and died in the beginning of April 1687. I cannot tell whether after this, they will have the impudence to maintain, that all these cruelties which have been exercised, have not been authorized by the ministers of his majesty, and the judges, nor by the commandment of the dragoons; but that they are the violences of the soldiery, which have been condemned and punished when they have been known. Rapine is neither soldier, nor dragoon, he has no commission to exercise these cruelties, but such as he receives every day: He is guardian of the hospital of Valence. The parliament of Grenoble have sent him twenty five or twenty six persons at a time, as I said but just now, to be converted by these cruel methods. The bishop, and the Jesuits put into his hands all those upon whom they cannot prevail: But to the end that they may not say any more, that authority does not interpose in these cruelties, they ought to be informed of a memorable story happening at Uzes, and which I think has been attested by twenty letters of different persons, all which agree in the thing: There is at Uzes a house of Propagation, governed by four creatures, called the Daughters of the Propagation; in this house are many gentlewomen of the reformed religion, imprisoned, who have resisted preceding violences and temptations: One of these four Daughters of the Propagation went to complain to the intendant, of the rough answers which these poor persecuted gentlewomen gave, and of the small disposition they had to be converted. The intendant, Monsieur de Bauille, whose name, for his conduct in Languedock, deserves to live to all future ages, this intendant, I say, immediately appointed scourging against ten of the most untractable. In the execution of this command, four foldiers were set at the gate with musquets charged, and lighted matches, ready to give fire. Two priests went in  
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with the major of Viuon, and the judge Larnac, sub-delegate to the intendant : In their presence these creatures of the propagation, stript these gentlewomen from the girdle upward, and doing the office of hangman, scourged them after the most cruel manner, with straps made of cords, at the end of which hung bullets of lead ; afterwards they were thrown into a dark prison. During the time of this punishment, they uttered cries which were heard into the street ; but they encouraged each other to suffer these trials for the name of Jesus Christ.

I will at this time tell you no more sad news, but on the contrary, I will comfort you, by giving you to understand, that in this general misfortune, wherein the reformed church of France sees so many persons, in some sort fall under the temptation, we have the joy to know, that scarce one falls in love with this wicked religion. We have taken care to enquire concerning it, of those which came from all parts ; and we have caused enquiries to be made upon the places, as much as is possible for us ; but we can assure you, my brethren, as a thing certain, that the hatred of the Roman religion increases every day, insomuch that the persecutors are farther every day from accomplishing their designs, than ever : We may say, without fear of lying, or hyperbole of expression, that this persecution has not gained to the church of Rome two hundred hearty converts ; and altho' I know a vast number of persons have been prevailed withal to make their subscriptions, yet the number of those which have with a satisfied judgment embraced their religion, is so small, that it does not deserve to be computed. But on the contrary, by a surprising marvel of divine providence, this persecution has opened the eyes of a great number of ancient Catholics, as they are called. That which we tell you, is no conjecture or fiction, it is that which we know upon good testimony : So that it is certain, that the church of God has gained more souls than it has lost. These seeds will bring forth in their time. Every day we see persons arrive here, who abjure the Roman religion ; and amongst them there are such as are eminent by their merit, by their birth, by their parts, and by their learning. When we know that they will not take it ill, if we name them, we will do it ; for it is necessary that all the world know it, that the depths of divine providence, and his judgments may be admired thereby.

*June 15. 1687.*











