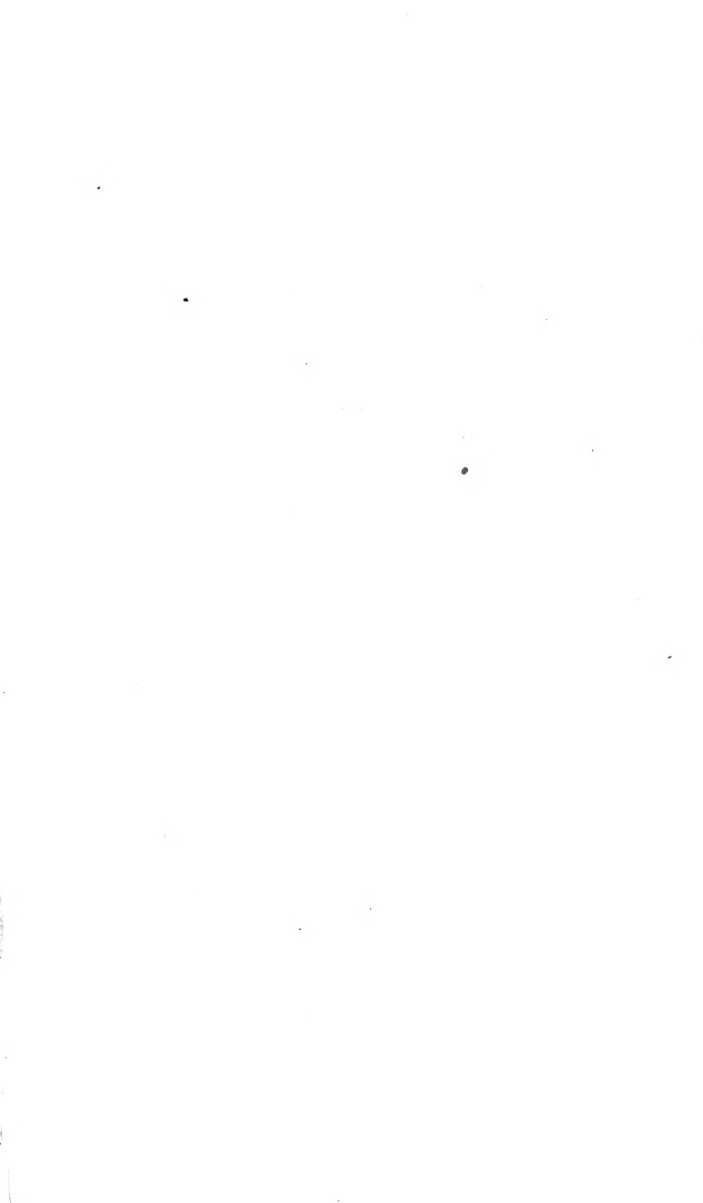


Division... BS2715

Section... D247

No. V.1.





JOHN

DAVENANT,

Bishop of

Salisbury.



AN
EXPOSITION
OF THE
EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL
TO THE
COLOSSIANS,
BY
THE RIGHT REV. JOHN DAVENANT, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY;

PRESIDENT OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, AND LADY MARGARET'S

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN CAMBRIDGE:

ORIGINALLY DELIVERED, IN A SERIES OF LECTURES, BEFORE THE
UNIVERSITY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN;

WITH A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

AND NOTES

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE WRITERS AND AUTHORITIES REFERRED TO
IN THE WORK:

BY JOSIAH ALLPORT,

MINISTER OF ST. JAMES'S, BIRMINGHAM.

TO THE WHOLE IS ADDED, A TRANSLATION OF

DISSERTATIO DE MORTE CHRISTI,

BY THE SAME PRELATE.

Quæ Pauli Epistola non melle dulcior, lacte candidior?—Ambr. Serm. 68.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO.

BIRMINGHAM:
BEILBY, KNOTT, AND BEILBY.

MDCCCXXXI.

BIRMINGHAM:
THOMAS KNOTT, PRINTER.

TO

HIS MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY

KING WILLIAM IV.

SIRE,

IT is a cause of joy to your grateful subjects to behold your Majesty uniformly evincing a lively interest in, and attention to, whatever is adapted to promote the welfare and increase the happiness of your subjects. Her Majesty the Queen, your Royal Consort, also proves herself a help-meet indeed in all that can second your beneficent aims—can render your Court exemplary in character, beneficial in influence, and attractive to the virtuous, the patriotic, and the good—and can secure to you both the affections of your subjects, and the protection and blessing of heaven.

Sire, it is the operation and the love of true Religion, with obedience to that Righteousness which is its essence, that exalts a nation—ennobles its princes—and will be the safeguard of them and their people. That Religion and Righteousness were never elucidated, at large, in a human composition, with greater excellence of manner, or power of argument, than in the Volumes here presented to your Majesty's approbation; the matter of which was put forth two centuries ago in the Latin language, and has never before been published in English.

In presuming to lay before your Majesty's subjects, in their vernacular tongue, this incomparable Exposition of a most interesting portion of the Word of God, to whom could the individual who has ventured on the hardy task, under all the considerations connected with it, crave permission to dedicate this Edition, but to your Majesty, whom the Providence of God has placed as a Nursing-Father over the Church of which he is an unworthy Minister.

Should your Majesty, and your Royal Consort, deign to give any countenance to the performance of one, who rests all his claim thereto on the unrivalled merits and the unspeakable utility of his Author, and who would not permit himself to aspire to it on any lower grounds, your Majesty may, by such condescension, be instrumental in promoting the welfare of the Church; for your countenance will commend to the attention of many, a work singularly adapted to impress upon the judgment those principles, which will be influential, where reason is under any due subjection to an humble desire to receive and obey the truth: thus will be ensured the practice of those duties which we all owe to God, to our Country, to Religion, and to each other.

That Peace, Prosperity, and Happiness may attend your Majesty's reign, and bless you and her Majesty the Queen, for years to come, is the earnest desire and prayer of,

SIRE,

Your Majesty's most unworthy,

But devotedly faithful,

And most obedient Subject and Servant,

THE TRANSLATOR.

THE

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

HAVING been urged about three years ago, by a very dear Friend, who well understood the value of Bishop Davenant's Exposition, to undertake a Translation of it, with the view of rendering its excellence of more public use, I then declined, on the score of other pressing engagements and occupations. But, a short time afterwards, taking down the volume, during the agitation of Roman Catholic affairs, in order to ascertain the Bishop's opinion on a certain point, I was struck with the frequent bearing of his remarks, not more on the tenets and practices of the Romanists, than upon many specious errors which have crept into the Protestant communities, and some of which are, unhappily, in our own day, producing effects equally injurious to the integrity of doctrinal truth, to the efficiency of the ministerial office, and to the preservation of Christian unity. Hence, it appeared to me that a re-publication of this Exposition, in the vernacular language, would prove of utility to many of the Clergy, and to the Church at large. In the hope of rendering a profoundly argumentative work on Divinity more useful to general Readers, and observing the number of Fathers

and Schoolmen constantly cited in it, many of whose names are now almost forgotten in the Church, I resolved to give short biographical sketches of each as they should occur. Finding, moreover, that no Memoir worthy of Davenant had been written, and that various misrepresentations had gone abroad respecting him and his opinions, I also came to the resolution of announcing in my Prospectus, a Memoir of the Bishop. Little did I then think what a task I was imposing upon myself: for the difficulty of getting at the truth amidst the various conflicting accounts given of antient authors, according to the party views, prejudices, or bigotry of their biographers, while it magnified the importance of eliciting the truth, induced considerable toil and expensive exertion.

As respects our Author himself, when collecting materials for some suitable account of him, it became requisite to search the lives and writings of his contemporaries, and wade through the histories of their time; and I soon discovered, that, however neglected in the present age, he enjoyed, in his own, a reputation among the first: and, anxious to do justice to his merits—an anxiety augmented by the efforts of some modern opponents of him, and of his faith, to revive and propagate old misrepresentations, in order to disparage the value of his works,—my investigation and research were redoubled.

In the course of such efforts, another important circumstance arose. It became expedient to take a survey of the proceedings, and to examine the various opinions respecting the Synod of Dort, at which he was one of the

English deputies of no inferior consideration. When the mist in which a great portion of the proceedings of that extraordinary Council are involved, and the mis-statements that have been published of them, and which have been revived and iterated under the sanction of great names, are recollected, it will be perceived that no light difficulty was to be surmounted in this department of my undertaking.

These investigations, which could only be encountered amidst arduous Clerical duties and other employments, if duly borne in mind, will convince my friends that I have not been forgetful of my pledge, nor remiss in my efforts to redeem it to the best of my ability; and this will prove, it is hoped, a sufficient apology for the delay of publication; a delay that has been painfully increased by severe domestic afflictions and bereavements, and by an unexpected change of situation. Such unavoidable impediments will, however, be found to have produced advantage to those numerous friends who have honoured me with their names as Subscribers to my undertaking, and encouraged me from time to time by procuring more; for the period that has elapsed, by protracting the date of carrying my volumes through the press, afforded me opportunity to extend my reading and inquiries, and has brought me into an acquaintance with several better informed individuals, to whom I was before unknown, and am now greatly indebted for much valuable intelligence and aid. To them I would here take occasion most gratefully to tender my best and sincerest acknowledgments; and to the Clergy and public

at large I would *humbly*, as it respects myself, but *earnestly*, as it respects my Author, commend my performance, trusting that it will not altogether prove unsatisfactory or without benefit to either.

As to my Translation, it is not for me to speak further than to state, what seems due to myself, that fidelity has been my great object; and to this I have sacrificed style, rather than, by giving a more engaging turn to a sentence, lay myself open to the charge, from any quarter, of having put a gloss upon the sense of the original.

Nothing further is requisite than to state, that in my limited space for the Life, it was necessary to use compression; and that much more might have been added in various parts. As some mis-statements may be corrected, some misapprehensions obviated, and much prejudice against those who hold the views of Bishop Davenant be removed, by the addition of documents and incidents in connexion with the facts adduced in the Memoir; it is my purpose, if God permit, and it should hereafter be deemed desirable, to revise, and take a more extended survey of the Bishop's life and writings, the period in which he flourished, and the sphere in which he moved. In the mean time, any communication of facts, records, or sentiments, from any individual qualified to impart what might be regarded new and important, will be thankfully accepted, and employed in a manner, which, it is presumed, will not be otherwise than grateful.

J. A.

Birmingham, May 1, 1831.

L I F E
OF
BISHOP DAVENANT.

THE DAVENANTS were a family of great antiquity and respectability, residing, from the time of Sir John Davenant, in the reign of Henry III., on a domain called Davenants' Lands, in the parish of Sible-Heningham, in the county of Essex. Our Prelate was born, May 20, 1572, in Watling-street, London; his father being an eminent merchant of the city. He was one of a numerous family; and some detailed account of his connexions will be given at the end of this biographical sketch. He was "remarkably born," says one of his biographers, "in the seventh month of his conception, and, as remarkably preserved in the first half seven years from his birth, falling down a high pair of stairs, and rising at the bottom with so little harm that he smiled."* "When a child," says his nephew Fuller, "he would rather own his own frowardness, than another's flattery, and when soothed by servants that 'not *John*, but some one of his brothers, did cry,' he would rather appear in his own face, than wear their disguise, returning, 'it was none of his brothers, but *John* only did cry.'"

In 1587, at the age of fifteen, he was admitted of Queen's College, in Cambridge, where he took his degree of A. M. in 1594, after giving such testimony of future eminence, that the profoundly learned Dr. Whittaker, Master of St. John's, and Regius Professor of Divinity, pronounced that he would, in time, prove an honour to the University. In that year a fellowship was

* Lloyd's Memoirs, p. 261.

offered him, which his father would not permit him to accept, on account of his plentiful fortune; which course our Bishop afterwards adopted, when President of the College: for, having given his vote against one of his own rich relations, (afterwards Sir John Gore,) he said, “Cousins, I will satisfy your father that you have *worth*, but not *want* enough, to be of our Society.” However, in 1597, he was elected Fellow against his will: the President replying to his objections with the remark, that “preference was not always a relief *for want*, but sometimes an encouragement *for worth*.” In 1601, he took his degree of B.D., and proceeded, in 1609, to D.D., and was the same year elected, against seven competitors, Lady Margaret’s Professor of Divinity; which he appears to have owed in a great measure to the high testimony of Dr. Whittaker. He was also presented by Archbishop Abbot, to the Rectory of Cottenham, Cambridgeshire.

In 1613—14, a Royal party visiting Cambridge, on occasion of the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth with the Prince Palatine Frederic, and an entertainment being given to them, Davenant was selected as Moderator, in the Theological Disputation, which, according to the custom of the age, then occurred. In the following year, on a similar occasion, another Public Disputation took place, between some chief divines of England and of the Palatinate, among whom the great Heidelberg Professor, Abraham Scultetus, distinguished himself. The Margaret Professor was then also appointed Moderator. The questions discussed, as we learn from Nicholl’s Progresses of James I., were these three: *Nulla est temporalis Papæ potestas supra reges, in ordine ad bonum spirituale. Infallibilis fidei determinatio non est annexa cathedræ papali. Cæca obedientia est illicita.*

It is amusing to hear the *con amore* animation with which the excellent, but pedantic Bishop Hacket, in his Life of Archbishop Williams, p. 26, records these academical feats. Speaking of one super-eminent disputant, Dr. Collins, he thus proceeds:—“He was a firm bank of earth, able to receive the shot of the greatest artillery. His works in print, against Eudæmon and Fitzherbert, sons of Anak among the Jesuits, do noise him far and wide. But they that heard him speak would most admire him. No flood can be compared to the spring-tide of his language and eloquence, but the milky river of Nilus, with his seven mouths all at once disemboguing into the sea. O how voluble! how quick! how facetious he was! What a Vertumnus when he pleased to argue on the

right side, and on the contrary. Those things will be living to the memory of the longest survivor that ever heard him. In this trial, wherein he stood now to be judged by so many attic and exquisite wits, he strived to exceed himself, and shewed his cunning marvellously that he could invalidate every argument brought against him with variety of answers. It was well for all sides, that the best divine, in my judgment, that ever was in that place, Dr. Davenant, held the reins of the disputation. He kept him within the even boundals of the cause; he charmed him with the Caducæan wand of dialectical prudence; he ordered him to give just weight, and no more. Horat. l. 1. Od. 3. *Quo non arbiter Adriæ major, tollere seu ponere vult freta.* Such an arbiter as he was now, such he was and no less, year by year, in all comitial disputations; wherein whosoever did well, yet constantly he had the greatest acclamation. To the close of all this Exercise, I come. The grave elder opponents having had their courses, Mr. Williams, a new admitted Bachelor of Divinity, came to his turn, last of all. Presently, there was a smile in the face of every one that knew them both, and a pre-judging that between these two there would be a fray indeed. Both jealous of their credit, both great masters of wit; and as much was expected from the one as from the other. So they fell to it with all quickness and pertinency; yet, thank the Moderator, with all candour; like Fabius and Marcellus, the one was the buckler, the other the sword of that learned exercise. No greyhound did ever give a hare more turns upon Newmarket heath, than the replier with his subtleties gave to the respondent. A subject fit for the verse of Mr. Abraham Hartwell, in his *Regina Literata*, as he extols Dr. Pern's arguments made before Queen Elizabeth: *Quis fulmine tanto tela jacet? tanto fulmine nemo jacet.* But when they had both done their best with equal prowess, the Marshal of the Field, Dr. Davenant, cast down his warder between them, and parted them."

In 1614 he was chosen President of his College. And standing now in the highest rank of English Divines for learning, eloquence, and judgment, he was selected, in 1618, by King James I., with four other theologians of the first name in the kingdom, to represent the British Church, and assist at the deliberations of the Synod of Dort; to which assembly his Majesty had been invited to send deputies. And here it will be necessary to take a brief survey of the circumstances which led to the convening of this famous Council.

The States of Holland had no sooner established their freedom from the Spanish yoke, than they were embroiled in theological contentions, which soon became intermingled with political cabals. The awful doctrine of the Divine decrees had been placed by the Belgic Confession and Catechism, in common with most of the other Creeds of the Reformed Churches, in the sacred and undefined simplicity of the Scriptures. But, in the period immediately subsequent to the Reformation, the prying curiosity of men, anxious to be wise above what is written, proceeded to the attempt of accurate and precise explanation of what is evidently inexplicable. When, therefore, the supralapsarian scheme began to take place of the moderate system hitherto adopted, it was opposed, on the other side, by those who, in their eagerness to sustain the freedom of human will, dangerously entrenched upon the freedom of Divine grace.

These disputes, however, led to no important consequences, until, in 1591, they centered, as it were, in James Arminius, professor of Divinity in the University of Leyden, a man who joined to unquestionable piety and meekness of spirit, a clear and acute judgment; and who had obtained no slight eminence by the talent with which he had extricated the doctrines of Christianity from the dry and technical mode in which they had hitherto been stated and discussed. His celebrity placed him in a situation ill-suited to his habits and temper. As a pupil of Beza, he had embraced the extreme views to which that divine had carried the tenets advocated by the powerful pen of Calvin. It happened that one Coornhert had advanced some opinions, which, if not loose in themselves, were, at least, expressed in a very unguarded way. The Ministers of Delft published a reply: in which the moderate and generally received sublapsarian hypothesis was sustained; which gave little less offence to the high Calvinists than did the heterodox language of Coornhert. Arminius, therefore, as the most talented Divine of the day, was applied to, in order to take up the pen, on both sides. On the one hand, his friend Martin Lydius, solicited him to vindicate the supralapsarian views of his former tutor, Beza, against the reply of the Ministers; and, on the other, he was invited by the Synod of Amsterdam, to defend this same reply against Coornhert. Placed in this remarkable situation, Arminius felt compelled to enter into an examination of the whole question, and was induced to change his sentiments, and to adopt that view of the Divine Dispensations which now

bears his name. His change, however, was very gradual; but appears to have been hastened by the publication, in Holland, of the *Aurea Armilla* of Perkins, a very powerful supralapsarian divine of the Church of England. This alteration of opinion would not have led to any serious consequences, had Arminius, and the moderate part of the Church, been left to themselves. The fundamental point of Justification by faith, with the doctrine of assurance, and even of final perseverance, were held by him to his death; and his exemplary piety and humility secured for him the attachment even of those who, when the dispute subsequently extended, became his most zealous opponents. The heat, however, of the less discreet part of the Church, and the dangerous opinions of some who leaned to the Socinian and Pelagian heresies, (among whom may be designated Episcopius, Grotius, Limborch, &c.) being, as is no uncommon case at present, confounded with the tenets of Arminius, led to angry and uncharitable controversies, by which the peace of the Church was grievously broken in upon. Still, the questions might have been amicably settled, but that, at the annual Meetings of the Synods, in 1605, the Class of Dort unwisely fanned the embers into a flame by transmitting the following grievance to the University of Leyden:—"Inasmuch as rumours are heard that certain controversies have arisen in the Church and University of Leyden, concerning the doctrine of the Reformed Churches, this Class has judged it necessary that the Synod should deliberate respecting the safest and most speedy method of settling those controversies; that all the schisms and causes of offence which spring out of them may seasonably be removed, and the union of the Reformed churches preserved inviolate against the calumnies of adversaries."

When this officious document reached Leyden, it gave offence to the moderate men of both sides; and met with the following reply from the Professors there: "that they wished the Dort Class had, in this affair, acted with greater discretion, and in a more orderly manner; that, in their own opinion, there were more disputes among the Students than was agreeable to them as Professors; but, that among themselves, the Professors of Theology, no difference existed that could be considered as affecting, in the least, the fundamentals of doctrine; and that they would endeavour to diminish the disputes among the Students." This was signed by Arminius, then Rector of the University, by Gomarus, and others.

From the signature of Gomarus to this reply, it is evident, that his subsequent bitterness against the Remonstrants at the Synod of Dort, was the result of that acrimony which controversy so often engenders; and that, at the period before us, he neither considered the views of his Colleague as affecting the vitality of the faith, nor even interrupting their private friendship; although, unhappily, afterwards, he denounced the former, as upsetting the basis of the Gospel; spoke of the latter, when deceased, in terms the most harsh and uncharitable, and fomented those persecuting measures against his followers, which have rendered the name of the Synod of Dort so odious.

This meddling interference of the Class of Dort, having brought the whole question before the public, kindled a flame through the United Provinces. In the heat of this, in the year 1609, Arminius died, with a spirit completely broken by the calumny and rancour with which he was assailed. His followers abandoned many of the views which he held in common with Calvin, particularly on the vital point of Justification. They became universally lax both in their opinions and in their society; and, as has too often been the case, aversion from Calvinism became a general bond of union. Having presented a strong remonstrance to the States-General in 1610, they obtained the name of *Remonstrants*, and their opponents having presented a counter-remonstrance, were termed *Contra-Remonstrants*.

To settle these disputes, the Remonstrants demanded a General Council of the Protestant Churches. This the States refused; but it was at length determined by four out of seven of the United Provinces, that a National Synod should be held at Dort—a town eminent for its hostility to the Arminians; and letters were sent to the French Huguenots, and to the different Protestant States of Germany and Switzerland, requesting them to send deputies to assist at the deliberations. Among others, the King of England, James I., was solicited in the same manner. And he, partly from political motives, and partly from his love of theological controversy, complied with the request, and selected for this purpose five of the most eminent theologians in his realm, viz. Dr. George Carleton, Bishop of Landaff, Dr. Joseph Hall, Dean of Worcester, Dr. Davenant, Dr. Samuel Ward, Master of Sydney Sussex College, and Walter Balcanqual, a presbyter of the Church of Scotland; and when Hall, on account of ill health, returned home, his place was filled by Dr. Goad, Precentor of St. Paul's, and Chaplain to the Primate, Abbot.

These divines, having received their directions from his Majesty at Newmarket, and from the Archbishop, proceeded on their journey.

On their arrival in Holland, and first public audience, Bishop Carleton addressed the States-General and the Prince of Orange, in an eloquent and impressive speech, urging them to the preservation of truth, and the cultivation of peace and unity. In all the documents and histories of this Synod, it is allowed that the British divines conducted themselves with equal talent, dignity, and judgment. It had been strictly enjoined them before their departure, both by the King and Archbishop Abbot, to allow of no meddling with the doctrine or discipline of the English Church, and to be peremptory on the point of introducing into the decisions of the Synod, the Universality of Christ's Redemption. To this they religiously adhered; and were extremely tenacious of the honour of their own Church, enforcing her moderation as a model on these subjects. With respect to *discipline* there was little difficulty. When the Belgic Confession was read, as that which was to prove the conformity or non-conformity of the Remonstrants, the articles concerning Church government were expressly excluded. Nevertheless, as the thirty-third article maintains, that "*all ministers have equal power and authority, because all are equally ministers of the one only universal Bishop and Head of the Church,*" Carleton, having consulted with his Colleagues, entered unexpectedly into a direct refutation of it; observing, that the assertion was in opposition to the example of Christ, and to the precedent of his age, of that of the Apostles, and of every subsequent period; and that the argument by which it was defended was singularly inconclusive; for the twelve apostles, and the seventy disciples were "*all equally ministers of Christ,*" yet the latter had not "*equal power and authority with the former,*" and though "*all men are equally men,*" yet it follows not that one man has not "*justly power and authority over another.*" To these observations no reply was made.* Upon *doctrines*, the difficulty was greater. The determination of the British deputies to have general Redemption admitted into the decrees, or else to withdraw from the Synod, led to some heated

* As it is so often deemed justifiable, by party writers, to confound what is called *Calvinistic doctrine*, with attachment to *Calvinistic discipline*, the Editor not only refers his readers to pp. 374—5 of this volume for Davenant's views, but has also annexed to this Memoir, a translation of *Quæstio* xlii. of his *Determinations*, which is an admirable summary of the episcopal argument.

discussions. Carleton came into direct collision with Gomarus upon the subject of our seventeenth Article and upon other points; and the testy Hollander could not help exclaiming, *Reverendissime Præsul, non auctoritate sed ratione agendum est*: for which intemperance an apology was afterwards exacted. However, the doctrine of Redemption as a blessing to be universally proposed and offered to all men, was so little relished by the Synod, that it is clear, nothing but the threatened loss of the English deputies induced its insertion. In fact, it led to so much unpleasant discussion, that it appears the Bishop would have given way: but Davenant declared he would sooner cut off his hand than rescind any word of it; in which he was supported by Ward; and it was ultimately agreed to. Our Author assigned his "Reasons" at length; and they are printed in John Hales's "Golden Remains," at the end of the "Letters concerning the Synod of Dort."* In fact, Davenant appears to have been peculiarly eminent in these proceedings. "What a pillar he was," says Bishop Hacket, "in the Synod of Dort, is to be read in the judgments of the British Divines, inserted among the public acts: his part being the best in that work; and that work being far the best in the compliments of that Synod."

At the close of the business, they received the *public* thanks of the States-General and of the Prince of Orange; and having travelled a short time in different parts of the Dutch territories, they

* It has been said, (see Carwithin's Hist. of the English Church, vol. 2) that "they held that the Redemption of Christ was universal, and consequently, that salvation was attainable by all." If this be a consequence, it is certain that neither Davenant nor the Synod allow it. His "Reasons" expressly maintain the contrary; and the articles of the decrees which admit the one, are immediately followed by an article which denies the other. The two articles, for which the Synod is indebted to our divines, run thus: (Cap. 11. art. 5, 6) "The promise of the Gospel is, that whoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish, but have eternal life. Which promise, together with a command to repent and believe, ought to be announced and offered, promiscuously and indiscriminately, to all men and people, to whom God, according to his good pleasure, sends the Gospel. But that many who are called by the Gospel, do not repent, nor believe in Christ, but perish in unbelief, this comes not from the deficiency or insufficiency of his sacrifice on the cross; but from their own fault." Art. 8, then says, "It was the most free counsel and gracious will and intention of God the Father, that the quickening and saving efficacy of the most precious death of his Son, should appear in all the clect, to endow *them alone* with saving faith," &c.

returned home, and were very graciously welcomed by the King, and with high approbation of their conduct. It is evident, however, that their labours in softening the decrees, and the general moderation of their conduct, had rendered them objects of suspicion to many in the Synod. Dr. Ward, in a letter to Archbishop Usher, says, “ We had somewhat to do, when we came to frame canons, with the provincials, and some of the *exteri*, touching some points, especially touching the second article. Some of us were held by some half Remonstrants, for extending the oblation made to the Father to all, and for holding sundry effects thereof offered *serio*, and some really communicated to the reprobate. I had somewhat to do with a principal man on this point: somewhat passed between us privately. We were careful that nothing should be defined which might gainsay the Confession of the Church of England, which was effected, for that they were desirous to have all things in the canons defined *unanimes consensu*. We foreign divines, after the subscription of the canons, and a general approbation of the Belgic Confession, and Catechism, which is the Palatine’s, as containing no dogmata repugnant to the word of God, and a decree against Vorstius’s doctrine, chiefly that in his book *De Deo*, were dismissed. In our approbation of the Belgic Confession, our consent was only asked for doctrinals, not for matters touching discipline. We had a solemn parting in the Synod, and all was concluded with a solemn feast.”

We have neither leisure, nor inclination, to enter largely into the proceedings of an assembly, whose results were alike disgraceful and injurious to the cause it was designed to support. The Synod was objectionable in its constitution, and overbearing and persecuting in its proceedings. The Remonstrants were summoned, not to be heard, but to be condemned; and this was scarcely attempted to be concealed. The council consisted of those alone whose views were well known. The President, Bogerman, had long been distinguished for his extreme bitterness against the followers of Arminius; and the official details of the Synod are palpably regardless, not merely of charity, but of candour. Whilst this is fully allowed, for truth requires no less, it must also be admitted that the Remonstrants gave their opponents every advantage, by insisting that the doctrine of Reprobation should be first discussed, and that they should afterwards proceed to the doctrine of election. Persisting in this demand, they were driven out with great choler and violence. The Synod then pro-

ceeded to frame their decrees, with the rejection of the opposite errors. And here the share of the British deputies happily terminates, as they had no part in the subsequent transactions. The Synod immediately followed up its decisions by a sentence against the Remonstrants, depriving them of all their offices, interdicting them from all ecclesiastical services and academical functions, and finally exhorting the States-General to enforce these Canons with the secular arm. Nor did this recommendation slumber. Politics had intermingled with all the proceedings. Maurice, Prince of Orange, was aiming at despotic authority, and found the Arminians his most powerful opponents. Hence, though an Arminian himself, he sided with the Synod, and, from secular motives, seconded their views. A series of disgraceful persecutions followed, in which some of the most virtuous and patriotic blood of Holland was shed; and this, doubtless, contributed to render the Synod generally odious, and to promote that decline of doctrinal Calvinism in England, which is so commonly said to have resulted from this convention.*

Of all assemblies, Religious Councils are most likely to be misrepresented. As few were more open to attack, so there are scarcely any which have been more grossly and unfairly assailed, than the Synod of Dort. By a series of authors in succession, a treacherous copy of its decrees, under the shape of an abridgment, has passed current. For instance, the Synod, cap. 1, art. 1, asserts, that "*God hath elected out of the common mass of sinners, a certain multitude of men—quorundam hominum certa multitudo,*" &c. but that he hath left the rest to condemnation, "*not only on account of their infidelity, but also their other sins—non tantum propter infidelitatem, sed etiam cetera omnia*

* Of an assembly of which so little commendable may be said, it must be noted, that they ordered a new Translation of the Bible for the United Provinces, with Annotations: "In which work they were assisted by many eminent and able divines from most of the Reformed Churches, and particularly from England by Dr. G. Carleton, Bishop of Chichester; Dr. J. Davenant, Bishop of Sarum; Dr. Hall, Bishop of Exon; and Dr. Samuel Ward, of Can. bridge; by whose great and assiduous labour, jointly for many years together, the said Annotations were completed, and came forth in print, first, ann. 1637." A. Wood's Athenæ. 4to. iv. 279. This Bible, with the Notes, was translated into English, and published in 1657, in two vols. folio, by Theodore Haak, under the title of "*The Dutch Annotations upon the whole Bible; together with the Translation, according to the direction of the Synod of Dort, 1618.*"

peccata, &c. The popular copy thus states this ; that God hath elected to salvation “ *a very small number of men*,” &c. and appointed the rest to condemnation, “ *without any regard to their infidelity and impiety*.” This garbled statement, or rather “ deliberate falsehood,” as it has been correctly termed, originated with Daniel Tilenus, who, being a Remonstrant, and harshly used in common with his friends, repaid his sufferings by falsifying the documents of his enemies, and publishing his desperate effort under the cloak of a “ *favourable abridgement*.” From him it was copied by Bishop Womack, from Womack by Heylin, and from Heylin by Bishop Tomline ; and thus passing current through so many hands, it continued to exasperate the enemies of the Synod, and even to excite the unqualified condemnation of its friends. Thus the late Mr. Scott, in the first edition of his reply to Dr. Tomline, not doubting the genuineness of the decree, exclaims, “ Who told these presumptuous dogmatists that the elect were ‘ a very small number of men ? ’ ” However, in 1804, the University of Oxford published the SYLLOGE CONFSSIONUM, being a collection of Confessions made about the period of the Reformation ; at the end of which are subjoined the genuine Canons, in full, of the Synod of Dort, as a contrast to the moderation of the early Protestant Churches, and of the length to which “ men, even publicly and solemnly assembled, may proceed, when enflamed by long controversy and embittered hatred.” From this publication the corruption was discovered, and exposed. Yet, in a much later publication, by Dr. Copleston, now Bishop of Landaff, in his “ Enquiry into Necessity and Predestination,” the forged copy is given, with the observation, that “ In order “ that the wide disagreement between these (i. e. the Calvinistic) “ doctrines and the articles of the Church of England may be “ seen at one view, I have subjoined in a Note the Lambeth Ar- “ ticles, together with that summary of the decrees of the Synod “ of Dort which Heylin has given from Tilenus, as the most mo- “ derate and impartial account of their proceedings.” This is evident enough, that the interpolation is not yet sufficiently public, since it had escaped the notice of this learned and candid Prelate. And here, one cannot but feel surprise that Mr. Nicholls, whilst discussing these points in the Notes to vol. 1 of his Edition of the Works of Arminius, and inveighing against every flaw in the conduct and opinions of antient and modern Calvinists, should not utter a single sentence of disapprobation of one of the most au-

dacious corruptions (abundant as they are) which literary history presents; but should complain of the “querulousness of Mr. Scott” on a subject which ought to excite the indignation of every honest man, especially the advocate of one who was himself the victim of calumny and injustice.

On the other hand, it ought not to be concealed, that the account of the Synod of Dort published by Mr. Scott, is a mere translation of the Synod’s own narrative of its proceedings; and their whole conduct entitles them to little respect when stating their own cause, even were it less evident that truth is not very strictly adhered to. The venerable Editor was probably not deeply acquainted with the history of the Council, nor well versed in the volumes of Carleton, Hales, and others, who were present; or in the detailed, though, perhaps, somewhat prejudiced, account of Brandt. Yet, agreeing, as he undoubtedly did, in the main, with the Canons of the Synod, and receiving their statement with a partial eye, his concluding observations are characteristic of the piety and good sense of that admirable man. Speaking of the persecuting conduct of other churches, he finally remarks, “The proceedings of the Synod of Dort, and of the rulers of Belgium at that season, were more exceptionable than those of any other; at least as far as I can judge.” It is, in truth, a melancholy reflection, that in reading the history of religious convocations, as well ancient as modern, Protestant as well as Papal, we cannot but observe how little equity, not to say sacred truth, has been regarded in their proceedings; how few proofs appear of the presence of the Holy Spirit in such assemblies; and how difficult it is for a candid mind to avoid approving the conclusion of an ancient father of the Church, “*I never saw any good in Ecclesiastical Councils, and am well nigh inclined to attend no more.*”

To compress the whole of our Author’s concerns with the Synod together, we have to notice an attack made upon him and his Colleagues some time after, for their conduct; himself being then in the See of Sarum, Carleton in that of Chichester, and Balcanqual in the Deanery of Rochester. It is well known that King James, in the decline of life, became much changed in his theological views; inclining towards Romanism, which he had once so stoutly opposed, and, of course, declining from the tenets of Dort, which he had once as stoutly advocated. Among the rising divines of that period, was Dr. Richard Montague, a very learned and able theologian, but as zealous against Puritanism as Laud

himself.* Having fallen into controversy with the Papists, he had made some severe reflections on the doctrines advocated at Dort. In consequence of this, two Clergymen, Wood and Yates, gathered out of his books certain propositions, and presented them to the House of Commons, as impugning the Established Faith, savoring of Popery, Arminianism, and what not. Montague was summoned before the House, and held to bail. He then applied to James, who was quarrelling with the Commons, and obtained leave to appeal from them to his Majesty. In consequence, he prepares a defence; but the King dying before the book was published, permission was obtained from Charles I.: and it came out, addressed to him, with the title of “*Appello Cæsarem, or a Just Appeal against two unjust Informers.*” In this work, not content with inveighing against the doctrine established at Dort, he positively asserts, with an attempt at proof, that “the discipline of the Church of England was condemned in that assembly.” To this gross and unprovoked attack, Bishop Carleton instantly replied; but as the charge affected the whole of the British deputies, they united in a distinct denial and refutation of it. This was printed with their several signatures, and, being a scarce document on an important subject, we have thought it would not be unacceptable in this place, being copied *verbatim* by a friend out of the Bodleian Library.

“*A joint attestation of several Bishops and learned Divines of the Church of England, avowing that her doctrine was confirmed, and her discipline was not impeached, by the Synod of Dort.*”

“It behoveth him that pretendeth to frame a ‘*just appeal from unjust informers,*’ therein to keep himself clear from the just imputation of unjust informing. Yet the author of the Treatise styled *Appello Cæsarem*, hath rashly, and without ground, cast a foul blot upon the Synod of Dort in general; and consequently, in common reputation, upon all the Members thereof: among whom those Divines that were by King James sent thither, and concurred in the conclusions of that National Synod, are particularly aimed at, as having betrayed or impeached the government of their reverend Mother. ‘The discipline of the Church of England,’

* He was, however, a moderate Calvinist, having declared himself ready to assent to Bishop Hall’s *Via Media*.

saith he, 'in that Synod is held unlawful:' and again, 'the Synod of Dort, in some points condemneth, by the bye, even the discipline of the Church of England.'

"Was that distressed Church,* in the midst of her distractions about matter of doctrine, so wily in her intentions, as to make preposterous use of their neighbour's assistance, and to draw them in for concurrence, in matter of discipline, with a foreign sister, against their own Mother? Were those that then aided that Church *tam naris obesæ*, so dull of apprehension as not to perceive the interest of their own? or did they demean themselves *tam sublesta fide*, so perfidiously, as to suffer the government of this renowned Church, so much as 'by the bye,' to be condemned by others there, and to sit down by it?

"Had there been any color for such surmise, it might have pleased the Appealer or Appeacher, before he recorded in print such his odious information, tendered to his Majesty's own hands, to have demanded, in private, such a question of some of those, from whom, in all likelihood, he might have received particular satisfaction. Civil correspondence required no less of him, towards those whose persons he professeth to respect, for ancient acquaintance, and other causes.

"The best is, though himself, for his own part, doth often salute that Synod with the compliments called in Rhetoric *χλευασμός* and *μυκτησιασμός*, 'non equidem invideo,' and such flowers strewed along his treatise; yet, in his indulgence, he giveth others as cause, so leave, to speak in their own behalf; 'let them look to it, and answer for it, whom it concerneth:' and again, 'let them that are interested plead for themselves.' We, therefore, who have hereunto subscribed our names, being 'interested' in that Synod, and withal deeply in this crimination of 'Puritanism,' can do no less than answer, and clear, in some public manner, this slander published against us.

"And first, *in general*, to remove the often objected suspicion of complication between 'Foreign Doctrine' and 'Foreign Discipline;' whereby is intended that there is a kind of natural consanguinity between that Doctrine which odiously he styleth 'Foreign,' subscribed unto by that Synod, and the Presbyterian Discipline established in that and other Foreign Churches;—

"We answer, that, in the Netherlands, the party opposite to

* Meaning the Belgic Church.

that Synod, and most aggrieved with the conclusions thereof, concerning the points controverted, are, notwithstanding, as vehement and resolute maintainers of *Ministerial Parity*, as any that concluded or accepted the judgment of that Synod.

“ Moreover, in our private conversations with the most eminent of the Ministry there, we found, divers times, upon occasion of our declaring to them the order and manner of our Church Government, that they were more ready to deplore than defend their own condition; and wished, rather than hoped, to be made like the Church of England. Nor were these, therefore, the less ready to concur for the Dort conclusions, but were rather of the principal and forward actors therein.

“ Secondly, *In special*, we plead against a supposed act of condemning our own episcopal discipline; which indictment, in a fair accusation, should have been laid more particularly. What action, what session, what conclusion now are we put to seek, not so much our defence, as our fault? And for such surmise, we can find no other footing, than possibly, in the approbation of the Belgick Confession, propounded to the consideration of the Synod, about a week before it broke up.

“ This Confession, composed Anno 1550, and received in their church, and in the Walloon churches, ever since the first Reformation of Religion, is unto them, for consent in doctrine, a rule, not much unlike to our Articles of Religion here established. Which, as it was formerly, Anno 1583, accepted and approved by the French Church, in a National Synod at Vitry, so upon the opportunity of this National Synod, the State and Church there recommended the same to more public judgment for further establishment.

“ And, because two or three articles thereof concerned Church discipline, and avowed a parity of ministers, they, prudently foreseeing that the British divines would never approve, but rather oppose the same, did, therefore, provide that, before the examining or reading thereof, protestation should be made by the President of the Synod, that nothing but the doctrinal points was to be subjected to their consideration and suffrages. And, for the surer preventing opposition or dispute, the articles concerning discipline were accordingly retrenched and suppressed in the reading of that confession to the Synod.

“ If, therefore, the British College had, in their suffrages, only answered *ad quesita* concerning doctrine, and uttered no opinion

at all *de non quæsitis* concerning discipline, they think they had not herein been wanting to their Synodical duty and calling:—the rather for that,

“ 1. They were sent to endeavour the peace and composure of that distracted church, by expressing their judgments in the points there already controverted, not by intruding in matters not at all questioned among them.

“ 2. Among the instructions given them by his Majesty, they had none to meddle with the discipline there established; but had charge to use moderation and discretion, and to abstain from multiplying of questions beyond necessity.

“ 3. In that subject, there was no hope or possibility of prevailing by argument or persuasion; especially in that church, where the civil government is popular, and so complieth more easily with ecclesiastical parity.

“ Yet we thought not fit to content ourselves with warrantable silence; but, upon our return from that Synodical Session to the place of our private collegiate meeting, we diligently perused the confession, not only for points of doctrine referred to our judgments, but also for those accepted (excepted) articles touching discipline: and consulting together what was fit to be done in delivering our opinions next day, we jointly concluded, that, howsoever our church discipline had not been Synodically taxed, nor theirs avowed, yet it was convenient for us, who were assured in our consciences that their presbyterial parity and laical presbytery was repugnant to the discipline established by the Apostles and retained in our church, to declare, in a temperate manner, our judgment, as well concerning that matter, though by them purposely excepted, as the other expressly referred to us.

“ Accordingly, the next morning, when suffrages were to pass concerning the doctrine comprised in that confession, we, having by our place the prime voice in the Synod, gave our approbation of the substance of the doctrinal articles, with advice touching some incommodious phrases; and withal, contrary to the expectation of the whole Synod, we added express exception against the suppressed articles, with some touch also of argument against them. Which our contestation, or protestation, for so it may be styled, was principally performed by him, whom for priority of age, place, and dignity, it best became; and from whose person and gravity it might be the better taken, by the civil deputies of the States there present.

“ Therein he professed and declared our utter dissent in that point; and further shewed, that by our Saviour a parity of Ministers was never instituted; that Christ ordained 12 apostles and 70 disciples; that the authority of the 12 was above the others; that the church preserved this order left by our Saviour; and therefore, when the extraordinary authority of the Apostles ceased, yet their ordinary authority continued in Bishops who succeeded them; who were, by the apostles themselves left in the government of the church to ordain ministers, and to see that they who were so ordained should preach no other doctrine; that, in an inferior degree, the ministers that were governed by Bishops, succeeded the 70 disciples: that this order hath been maintained in the church from the time of the Apostles; and herein he appealed to the judgment of antiquity, or of any learned man now living, if any could speak to the contrary, &c.

“ In giving our several suffrages, the same exception was seconded by the rest of us Colleagues, partly by other allegations, and partly by brief reference to this declaration, made *communione* by our leader. To this our exception and allegation, not one word was answered by any of the Synodicks, either strangers or provincials: so that herein we may seem to have had either their consent implied by silence, or, at least, approbation of our just and necessary performance of our bounded duty to that church whereunto they all afforded no small respect, though differing in government from their several churches.

“ Herein, perhaps, by some we might be deemed rather to have gone too far in contestation and upbraiding, *quasi in os*, the Civil Magistrate and Ministry there, with undue form of government of that church, whose doctrine only was offered to our opinions.

“ But, on the contrary part, it hath been suggested here at home by some, that herein we came short of our duty; that we ought to have stepped yet further, by exhibiting in writing a formal Protestation, to be entered and kept by the actuary of the Synod:—whereto we answer,

“ First, that the course there taken, for the manner of delivering our judgments, was not, as in the fifth question, controverted by subscription, but only by vocal suffrage; which gave no opportunity of putting in a written protestation; whereas if we had subscribed our names unto that confession, we would infallibly have added, with the same pen, our exception against the articles concerning discipline.

“ Secondly, in that vocal proceeding, had we been overborne by the multitude of their voices, or received any grievance or affront from them, touching discipline, we would have relieved our just cause, either by written protestation or better means. But, whereas neither the civil magistrate, in whose hearing our exceptions were constantly uttered, did gainsay us, nor any of the divines in the Synod once opened their mouths, either in offence of our government or defence of their own, what needed we to redouble our stroke upon those that turned not upon us.

‘ *Rixa suum finem, cum silet hostis, habet.*’

“ Peradventure, some hot spirits would not have rested in a formal recorded protestation neither, but would have charged those churches to blot those articles out of their confession, and forthwith to reform their government; otherwise not have yielded approbation to any article of doctrine, as there comprised; but renounced the Synod, and shaken off from his feet the dust of Dort,—‘ I have nothing to do with your conclusions; I have no part nor portion in them: what ends you have, how things are carried, I cannot tell, nor care.’

“ We confess, we were and are of another mind; our own dispositions, and the directions of our blessed peace-making King, kept us from kindling new fires where we had work enough to quench the old. We then thought, and so still in our consciences are confident, that we forgot not our duty to our venerable and sacred Mother, the Church of England, but took a course conformable to the rules as well of filial obedience, as of Christian moderation.

“ And even then, according to our custom of weekly transmitting into England brief narrations of the proceedings in each several session, to be imparted to his Majesty, we, by the next messengers, sent our relation hereof, as no whit ashamed of our deportment herein; which, because it was then framed when we did not imagine that any quarrel would be picked against us, for more impartial and impassionate attestations, is here inserted, as much as concerneth the particular.

“ ‘ 1619. April 29, *Stilo novo; Sessione 144, Pomeridiana.*’

“ ‘ *Gregorius Martin, unus ex politicis ad Synodum delegatis, Hagâ jam recens reversus, narrat quanto Domini ordines gaudio afficiantur de singulorum in canonibus sancientis unanimi consensu. Eo nomine Theologis cum exteris tum provincialibus*

‘ gratias habere eorum Dominationes ob labores Synodicos exant-
 ‘ lantos. Proximo in loco postulare ut Confessio Belgica perlus-
 ‘ tretur: ita tamen ut sine gravi causa nihil immutetur, nec phra-
 ‘ sium grammaticarum argutiis curiose insistatur. In eadem
 ‘ judiciis synodorum subjiciuntur tantum ea quæ doctrinam
 ‘ spectant, omissis prorsus eis quæ disciplinam. Intercurrit
 ‘ quæstio de authentico exemplari; sumitur illud quod in ecclesi-
 ‘ arum reformatarum confessionibus habetur. Totum perlegitur
 ‘ prætermisissis qui disciplinam ecclesiasticam attinent articulis.’

“ ‘ Sessio 145, April 30, Antemeridiana.

“ ‘ Rogantur de hac confessione suffragia. Dom. Episcopus
 ‘ Landavensis omnia doctrinæ capita probat, interea tamen de dis-
 ‘ ciplinâ paucis monet; “ nunquam in ecclesia obtinuisse Ministro-
 ‘ rum paritatem; non tempore Christi ipsius; tum enim duode-
 ‘ cim Apostolos fuisse discipulis superiores: non Apostolorum
 ‘ ætate, non subsecutis sæculis: nec valere rationem in hac con-
 ‘ fessione usurpatam, nempe quia omnes sunt æque ministri
 ‘ Christi: nam et 70 discipuli erant Ministri Christi æque ac
 ‘ Apostoli, non tamen inde Apostolis æquales; et omnes omnino
 ‘ homines sunt æque homines, non inde tamen homo homini non
 ‘ debet subesse.” Hæc non ad harum ecclesiarum offensionem, sed
 ‘ ad nostræ Anglicanæ defensionem, se substurnuisse professus est.
 ‘ Et reliquis Britannis non nulla alia sunt subnotata, de libero ar-
 ‘ bitrio, de passivâ Christi obedientiâ; præsertim vero de phrasi
 ‘ nimis durâ et generali, cum dicatur de canonicis libris nullam un-
 ‘ quam fuisse controversiam; quæ quidem incommoda phrasis
 ‘ vitio interpretis irreperat, cum originale *Gallican** bene se
 ‘ habeat. Item exceptioni de disciplinâ adjicitur a reliquis Bri-
 ‘ tannis similis exceptio, siquid contra legitimos ritus externos
 ‘ generaliter ibidem statuatur. Britannorum interpellationi a sy-
 ‘ nodicis responsum ne γρῦ quidem.’

“ About a year after our return, the acts of the Synod were published in print; wherein, among other particulars, the Belgic Confession is at large set down in 37 articles, whereof two or three contain matter of discipline received in those churches: these belike our censurer viewing, *prout jacent in terminis*, thereupon, without any further search, concluded that Synod guilty and condemnable, as concerning ‘ the discipline of the Church of England.’ But still we hold ourselves to stand clear, and therefore

* Evidently the Latin original of our Articles is the document referred to.

prosecute our appeal from the rash sentence of this Appellant ; alleging for ourselves

“ 1. Though all and singular the articles there comprised had passed Synodical scrutiny, and been approved canonically, yet will it not follow that all and every one of the Synodicks there gave consent thereto. For this approbation might have passed by the votes of the major part, *etiam reclamantibus Britannis*, who for number were not considerable, among so many others, both strangers and provincials. And so a favourable construction might have exempted the British Divines from being thought to reach forth their hand to the striking their mother.

“ 2 We deny, that, upon view of those Synodical acts, we, by presumption in law, need to be put upon purgation herein, as members involved in a capitular decree of the whole body. For, in point of discipline there passed no act at all ; there was no proposition made ; as evidently appeareth by the same book of the Synodical Acts, in the narration of the proceedings about this Belgick confession ; where the matter subjected to deliberation, is recorded with limitation ; first, *positive*, ‘ *quæ ad dogmata & doctrinæ essentiam pertinent* ; *points dogmatical and pertaining to the essence of doctrine* :’—then *exclusive*, ‘ *Monitum proinde fuit eo tempore articulum trigesimum primum et secundum non esse examinandum, quia in utroque de ordine ecclesiastico quem exteri nonnulli a nostro diversum habent, ageretur. Declaration was accordingly made, at the same time, that the thirty-first and second articles were not to be examined ; because in them ecclesiastical order, or church government, was handled ; wherein some strangers,*’ namely, the Church of England ‘ *differ from ours,*’ namely, from that of the Church of the Netherlands. This recorded testimony of so express withdrawing from the eye of the Synod all view of church discipline, might demonstrate, to any indifferent peruser of those acts, that whereas no possibility of Synodical condemning, so much as ‘ *by the bye,*’ the discipline of the Church of England, in such examining the Belgick Confession.

“ As for our manner of examining and judging thereof, though it be not so particularly set down in the said printed acts as we could have wished, and would have provided for, had we been made acquainted with any intent of their publication ; yet is it in some sort touched in the same page, in that very narration of the next session, testifying a cautelous delivery of our judgments.

‘Declarant clarissimi Magnæ Britannicæ Theologi, se Confessionem Belgicam diligenter examinasse, nihilque in ea deprehendisse, quod ad fidei quidem dogmata attineret, quod verbo Dei non consentiret. *The Divines of Great Britain declared that they had diligently examined the Belgick Confession, and that therein, for as much as concerned Dogmatical points of faith, they found nothing that agreed not with the word of God;*’ which reservation implieth that somewhat else which did not ‘concern points of faith,’ but other matter, received not their approbation. It may be said, and so we ourselves say, that the disposers and publishers of these Synodical acts had done more right to the British Divines, if special mention had been made of that other matter not approved by them, and of their particular exceptions against the articles which concerned church government.

“But it seemeth, as in most other local passages in this Synod, the actuary here intended abridgement, in what he set down; and meant not to express in particular what was said by any, concerning points not propounded to Synodical deliberation, especially touching upon so tender a thing as the open impeachment of their own established discipline: and so they think that they have given us our due herein; partly by thus pointing afar off to what we did in our own defence, leaving the reader to find it by implication; and partly by recording that all Synodical proposition and approbation of this confession was confined to matter of doctrine only.

“According to reserved form of expression, the President of the Synod, in the Great Church of Dort, immediately after the publication of the Synod’s judgment upon the five controversies, notifying the approbation of this confession, said, not that the whole and every parcel was approved, but ‘*Doctrinam in confessione comprehensam, in Synodo relectam atque examinatum, ut orthodoxam, &c. fuisse approbatam.*’ Which style of speech excludeth whatsoever is there comprised not concerning doctrine but discipline, whatsoever was not examined Synodically, nor so much as read in the Synod, whatsoever in common understanding admitteth the title of Orthodox, which attribute is proper to dogmatical points. In this sense, and of this subject, they did and well might there alledge the concurring judgments, ‘*omnium tam exterorum quam provincialium Theologorum.*’

“ Nor had we cause to expect that in such publication of the whole Synod’s doctrinal consent, they should trouble their own people, with expressing the dissent of some few of the exteri in a matter of church discipline ; which dissent of ours, they have delineated in this second of their acts, though over-veiled for their own peace, yet transparent enough for their own defence.

“ But it was our misfortune perhaps that he who turned over all the leaves of the Belgic Confession there set forth, to find the articles concerning discipline, could not extend to cast his eye upon the page next foregoing that confession, to view the limited manner of both propounding and approving that body of articles. Which limitation had he seen and considered, so confident are we of his ingenuity, he would not have cast this hard imputation upon us.

“ And now, being better informed by this our true account of the carriage of that business, he that hath traduced us will, we hope, make us some competent satisfaction, by acknowledging his oversight, and recalling what he hath unadvisedly written to our prejudice.

“ As for ourselves, in the ingenuity of our conscience, we herein do not decline the judgment of any indifferent impassionate man ; and such we hope this true and plain narration will satisfy. But above all, according to our duty and desire, we humbly submit this and all other our actions, concerning our calling, to the judgment of our most venerable mother the Church of England, from whose sacred rule we avow we have not swerved, nor any whit impeached her discipline, or authorized doctrine, either abroad or at home. And as in that Synod our special care and perpetual endeavour was, to guide our judgments by that sound doctrine which we had received from the Church of England ; so were we far and ever shall be from usurping our mother’s authority, or attempting to obtrude upon her children any of our Synodical conclusions, as obligatory to them ; yet remaining ourselves nevertheless resolved, that whatsoever there was assented unto, and subscribed by us concerning the five articles, either in the joint synodical judgment, or in our particular collegiate suffrage, stiled in the acts of the Synod, ‘ Theologorum Magnæ Britannicæ sententiæ,’ and at large extant there, is not only warrantable by the Holy Scriptures, but also conformable to the received doctrine of our said venerable mother ; which we are ready to maintain and

justify against all gainsayers, whensoever we shall be thereunto called by lawful authority.

“ GEORGIUS, Cicestrensis Episcopus.

“ JOHANNES, Sarisburiensis Episcopus.

“ GUALTERIUS BALCANQUAL, Decan. Roff.

“ SAMUEL WARD, Pub. Profess. Theol. in Acad.
Cant. & Coll. Sid. Prefect.

“ THOMAS GOAD, Sacræ Theol. Doctor.”

DAVENANT'S elevation to the Episcopate was the necessary result of his Theological eminence. “ He had,” says his animated eulogist, Dr. Hacket, “ been public reader in Divinity in Cambridge, and had adorned that place with such learning as no Professor in Europe did better deserve to receive the labourer's penny at the twelfth hour of the day.” Accordingly in 1621, he was nominated to the See of Salisbury, vacant by the premature decease of his brother-in-law, Dr. Robert Townson, who is said to have been a man of singular piety, eloquence, and humility; and who died a few months after his consecration, leaving a large family of fifteen children, and being the fourth Bishop of that Diocese who had been cut off in the space of seven years. It was probably on account of the domestic burthen that thus devolved upon him, rather than from his merit, that our Bishop was excused the payment of the introductory fees, and of the annual pension, which was then, it seems, customarily paid to the crown on all similar appointments, proportionate to the wealth or poverty of the individual;* and when introduced to the King, his Majesty enjoined him not to marry.

But though elected in July, his consecration was delayed by an unhappy event, which befel the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Abbot; who, as he was using a cross-bow in Lord Zouch's park, accidentally shot the keeper. Four Bishops-elect were then waiting for consecration. Of these, Williams, elect of Lincoln, who, as Heylin says, had an eye to the Primacy in case it had been declared vacant; and Laud, elect of St. David's, who had a personal hatred to Abbot, stated an insuperable aversion to being consecrated by a man whose hands were stained with blood. Davenant did not join in this unworthy cavil; but kept altogether aloof, lest he should be thought to act from private feelings of obligation to

* History of the Court of King James, by an Eye-witness.

the afflicted Primate: but despising the groundless objection of those who, from motives of personal pique and ambition, were willing to give up their own high views of the indelibility of the Episcopal character, and act upon the principle that it became vitiated and abortive in its operations, by an accident which, as the King justly remarked, might have happened to an angel. The rest, however, made so much of their scruples, that a commission was at length granted to the Bishop of London and four others, to discharge the Archiepiscopal function in this case; and by these, Williams was consecrated on Nov. 11: and Davenant, Laud, and Cary of Exeter, on Nov. 18.

Having resigned his Margaret Professorship, in which he was succeeded by his friend Dr. Ward, he took his leave of College; and in bidding farewell to his old servant there, one John Rolfe, with his characteristic humility and piety he desired him to pray for him. Rolfe modestly replied that *he* rather needed his lordship's prayers. "Yea, John," said he, "and I need thine too; being now to enter into a calling wherein I shall meet with many and great temptations."

His discharge of his episcopal functions is allowed, on all hands, to have been most exemplary; and it would not be easy to find a more decided testimony than that afforded by the Lord Keeper Williams, a man eminent for his learning and official attainments; for his long exercise in all the functions of public business; and for his penetration in diving into the characters of men. Upon resigning the great seal, and retiring to the more consistent duties of his See of Lincoln, he took Bishop Davenant for his pattern, and framed his measures upon what he deemed the most wise and successful example in these times of peculiar difficulty and danger; and it is confessed by his enemies, that the episcopal conduct of Williams was remarkably temperate, discreet, and conscientious.

Though benevolent and cheerful, Davenant never lost sight of the consistent dignity and gravity of his character. Upon one occasion, as Fuller records, being invited to dine with Field, Bishop of Hereford, and not well pleased with the loose company he met there, he embraced the earliest opportunity of departing; and when Field would have lighted him down stairs, "My lord, my lord," said he, "let us enlighten others by our unblamable conversation." At the same time he is spoken of as remarkably devoid of harsh or unkind judgment, as "more sensible of his

own infirmities than others, being humble, and therefore charitable." Upon no occasion does he appear to have forgotten CONSISTENCY. Being once summoned to attend the King at Newmarket, he refused to travel on the Lord's-day; and upon arriving a day later than required, he assigned the simple cause; and James, much to his credit, gave him a cordial welcome, not only accepting his excuse, but also commending his seasonable forbearance.

In the intervals of episcopal duty, Davenant turned his attention to the revision and publication of his different writings. His *Expositio Epistolæ D. Pauli ad Colossenses*, had been delivered in a series of Lectures to the Students at Cambridge, as Lady Margaret's Professor. This, as it is his most valuable work, so was it the first he issued. It was published at Cambridge in 1627, republished in 1630, and went into a third edition in 1639; each edition being in small folio. There is also a quarto edition, printed at Amsterdam in 1646. The character of this book has been happily expressed by a popular writer in the following terms: "For perspicuity of style and accuracy of method; for judgment in discerning and fidelity in representing the Apostle's meaning; for strength of argument in refuting errors, and felicity of invention in deducing practical doctrines, tending both to the establishment of faith, and the cultivation of holiness, it is inferior to no writing of the kind; and richly deserves to be read, to be studied, to be imitated, by our young divines."* We may also subjoin the testimony of an invaluable living writer, who in a letter to the translator, observes, "I know no exposition upon a detached portion of Scripture (with, perhaps, the single exception of Owen on the Hebrews) that will compare with it in all points. Leighton is superior in sweetness, but far inferior in depth, accuracy, and discursiveness."† Nor can we avoid adverting to an anonymous testimony, if it were only to illustrate the utility of occasionally annexing notices in the front of valuable and rare books. A copy was received some time since by a Clergyman, (the Rev. J. Garbett, Rector of St. George's, Birmingham,) from one of his Parishioners, who having bought it with a lot of other old vo-

* Hervey's *Theron and Aspasia*, Let. iii.

† The Rev. C. Bridges, author of the "Christian Ministry," the most invaluable practical book that has ever yet been published on this weighty subject; and which, next to his Bible and Prayer Book, should be the study and application of every divine of the Church of England.

lumes, and not being able to read it, had been repeatedly on the point of tearing it; but was as often deterred by the following monition on the title-page; and, at length, conscientiously surrendered it safe into the hands of his Pastor. “ *Don't abuse this good old book: for it is an extraordinary piece, and the best Exposition upon St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians that ever was published to this present year 1749, and I am afraid there will never be a better so long as the world endures. H. C. Idem testor, J. E.*”

In the following year, our Author printed, in London, a Sermon on Jeremiah iii. 22, on the occasion of a Fast; but of this the Editor has vainly endeavoured to procure a sight, and probably there is no copy now in existence.

About this time, Bishop Hall published his excellent treatise, the “ *Old Religion*,” in which he had, in common with every other considerate divine, admitted that the Church of Rome, though miserably corrupt, was still a true visible Church. The extreme Puritans took great umbrage at this Concession, as they deemed it. Hall, therefore, appealed to the judgment of some of the most eminent theologians of the day, and among others, addressed the following letter to our Author:

“ To the Right Reverend Father in God, John, Lord
Bishop of Salisbury.

“ My Lord:

“ I send you this little pamphlet for your censure. It is not credible, how strangely I have been traduced, every where, for that, which I conceive to be the common opinion of Reformed Divines; yea, of reasonable men: that is, for affirming the True Being and Visibility of the Roman Church. You see how clearly I have endeavoured to explicate this harmless position; yet I perceive some tough understandings will not be satisfied.

“ Your Lordship hath, with great reputation, spent many years in the Divinity-Chair of the famous University of Cambridge. Let me, therefore, beseech you, whose learning and sincerity is so thoroughly approved in God's Church, that you would freely, how shortly soever, express yourself in this point: and, if you find that I have deviated but one hair's breadth from the truth, correct me: if not, free me by your just sentence.

“ What need I to entreat you to pity those, whose desires of faithful offices to the Church of God are unthankfully repayed with suspicion and slander? Whose may not this case be? I had

thought I had sufficiently, in all my writings, and in this very last book of mine whence this quarrel is picked, shewed my fervent zeal for God's truth against that Antichristian Faction of Rome; and yet, I doubt not, but your own ears can witness what I have suffered.

“ Yea, as if this calumny were not enough, there want not those, whose secret whisperings cast upon me the foul aspersions of another sect, whose name is as much hated as it is little understood.

“ My Lord, you know I had a place with you, though unworthy, in that famous Synod of Dort: where, howsoever sickness bereaved me of the honours of a conclusive subscription; yet your Lordship heard me, with equal vehemency to the rest, crying down the unreasonableness of that way. God so love me, as I do the tranquillity and happiness of his Church: yet can I not so overaffect it, that I would sacrifice one dram of truth to it. To that good God do I appeal, as the witness of my sincere heart to his whole truth, and no-less-than-ever-zealous detestation of all Popery and Pelagianism.

“ Your Lordship will be pleased to pardon this importunity, and to vouchsafe your speedy answer to

“ Your much devoted and faithful Brother,

“ JOSEPH EXON.”

This Letter drew from Davenant the following reply, which is truly characteristic of his cautious and scholastic mode of discussing such topics.

“ To the Right Reverend Father in God, Joseph, Lord Bishop of Exon, these.

“ My Lord:

“ You desire my opinion concerning an assertion of yours, whereat some have taken offence. The proposition was this, ‘ That the Roman Church remains yet a True Visible Church.’

“ The occasion, which makes this an ill-sounding proposition in the ears of Protestants, especially such as are not thoroughly acquainted with School Distinctions, is the usual acceptation of the word ‘ true ’ in our English Tongue: for, though men skilled in metaphysics hold it for a maxim, *Ens, Verum, Bonum convertuntur*; yet, with us, he, which shall affirm such a one is a true Christian, a true Gentleman, a true Scholar, or the like, he is conceived not only to ascribe trueness of being unto all these, but

those due qualities or requisite actions whereby they are made commendable or praise-worthy in their several kinds.

“ In this sense, the Roman Church is no more a True Church in respect of Christ, or those due qualities and proper actions which Christ requires, than an arrant whore is a true and loyal wife unto her husband.

“ I durst, upon mine oath, be one of your compurgators, that you never intended to adorn that Strumpet with the title of a True Church in this meaning. But your own writings have so fully cleared you herein, that suspicion itself cannot reasonably suspect you in this point.

“ I therefore can say no more respecting your mistaken proposition, than this, If, in that Treatise wherein it was delivered, the antecedents or consequents were such as served fitly to lead the Reader into that sense, which under the word True comprehendeth only Truth of Being or Existence, and not the due Qualities of the thing or subject, you have been causelessly traduced. But, on the other side, if that proposition comes in *ex abrupto*, or stands solitary in your Discourse, you cannot marvel though, by taking the word True according to the more ordinary acceptation, your true meaning was mistaken.

“ In brief, your proposition admits a true sense; and, in that sense, is, by the learned in our Reformed Church, not disallowed: for, the Being of a Church does principally stand upon the gracious action of God, calling men out of darkness and death unto the participation of light and life in Christ Jesus. So long as God continues this Calling unto any people, though they, as much as in them lies, darken this light, and corrupt the means which should bring them to life and salvation in Christ; yet, where God calls men unto the participation of life in Christ by the Word and by the Sacraments, there is the true Being of a Christian Church, let men be never so false in their exposition of God's Word, or never so untrusty in mingling their own traditions with God's Ordinances.

“ Thus, the Church of the Jews lost not her Being of a Church when she became an Idolatrous Church.

“ And thus, under the Government of the Scribes and Pharisees, who voided the Commandments of God by their own traditions, there was yet standing a True Church, in which Zacharias, Elizabeth, the Virgin Mary, and our Saviour himself was born, who were members of that Church, and yet participated not in the corruptions thereof.

“ Thus, to grant that the Roman was and is a True Visible Christian Church, though in Doctrine a False and in Practice an Idolatrous Church, is a true assertion; and of greater use and necessity in our controversy with Papists about the perpetuity of the Christian Church, than is understood by those who gainsay it.

“ This in your ‘Reconciler’ is so well explicated, as if any shall continue in traducing you in regard of that proposition so explained, I think it will be only those, who are better acquainted with wrangling than reasoning, and deeper in love with strife than truth. And, therefore, be no more troubled with other men’s groundless suspicions, than you would be in like case with their idle dreams.

“ Thus I have enlarged myself beyond my first intent. But my love to yourself, and the assurance of your constant love unto the truth, enforced me thereunto. I rest always

“ Your loving Brother,

“ Jan. 30, 1628.

“ JOHN SARUM.”

Three years after this, Davenant, whose principles had long placed him out of favour at Court, fell under the open displeasure of the head of it. A new king had arisen. Great changes had taken place in men and measures. Laud was now supreme in ecclesiastical affairs, and was pursuing that course of rash and tyrannical conduct which spared neither Puritan nor Prelate, and was rapidly hastening the downfall of both crown and mitre, which, perhaps, the most wary and cautious demeanour could scarcely have averted. To silence all disputes upon the Predestinarian controversy, Charles, under Laud’s advice, had prefixed “ His Majesty’s Declaration,” which still remains at the head of the Thirty-nine Articles, requiring “ all curious search” on that subject to be laid aside. During the Lent of 1630—1, our Bishop preached in his turn at Whitehall before the King; and his discourse was a continuation of a Sermon which he had delivered the preceding year on Rom. vi. 23. Charles testified extreme displeasure; and the Bishop was summoned before the Privy Council to answer for it, brought upon his knees, and treated by Harsnet Bishop of York, and Neile, in the presence of Laud, in a manner alike regardless of his station, age, or reputation. To this examination of Davenant, Dr. Ward thus alludes in a letter to Archbishop Usher: “ I suppose your Grace hath heard of my Lord of Sarum, how he was questioned before his Majesty in the

beginning of Lent last; the particulars of which you shall understand by the enclosed parcel of a letter he wrote me. I am right sorry the delivery of the established doctrines of our Church should be thus questioned." The details of this whole affair are given at length by Fuller and other writers. The Bishop was afterwards admitted to kiss the King's hand, but enjoined not to offend in the same way again!

Davenant, however, was not the only prelate who was annoyed by the Court at this time. Not to mention the long and bitter persecution with which Laud for so many years harrassed Williams, who had been *his* original benefactor, and which is detailed in all its disgraceful features by Bishop Hacket; who can hear without indignation, one of the most illustrious ornaments of the English Church, Bishop Hall, complain, that he was brought three several times on his knees before the Council, to answer false and idle criminations; and that he only escaped further worrying by plainly telling the Archbishop that he would rather resign his mitre than be subject to such persecutions?

During this year, our Author published at Cambridge *Prælectiones de duobus in Theologia controversis capitibus: De Judice Controversiarum, primo: De Justitia habituali et actuali, altero*. These points are discussed in a most ample manner, and form a thick folio volume, much more considerable in size than his Exposition. This work he dedicated to the King. In 1634, he published *Determinationes Quæstionum quorundam Theologicarum*. It is a small folio, and is often found bound with the second edition of the *Expositio*. It consists of a discussion of forty-nine subjects controverted between Romanists and Protestants, or between Protestants of different views. They are all handled with great acuteness, learning, and moderation. To one of these, *Quæstio xi.*, Archbishop Williams referred upon a memorable occasion, a short time after Davenant's decease. A Bill having been introduced to deprive Bishops of their seats in the house of lords, it was so ably opposed by Williams, as to lead to its rejection for that time. In this masterly speech, he refers to our Prelate as an authority entitled to veneration in that assembly. "The civil power," said he, in the course of his address, "is a Divine ordinance, set up to be a terror to the evil, and an encouragement to good works. This is the whole compass of the civil power. And therefore, I do here demand, with the most learned Bishop Davenant, that within a few days did sit by my side, in

the eleventh question of his Determinationes, *What is there of impiety, what of unlawfulness, what unbecoming either the holiness or calling of a Priest, in terrifying the bad or comforting the good subject; in repressing of sin, or punishing of sinners? For this is the whole and entire act of civil jurisdiction. It is in its own nature repugnant to no persons, to no function, to no sort or condition of men: let them hold themselves never so holy, never so seraphical, it becomes them very well to repress sin and punish sinners; that is to say, to exercise in a moderate manner civil jurisdiction, if the Sovereign shall require it.*" This is by no means an exact quotation of the passage of Davenant; its language is considerably softened; and perhaps, of the whole volume, it is the *Quæstio* which we should least readily accede to at present. It is needless to say the subject of civil right and jurisdiction was by no means distinctly understood at that period. But the Archbishop's allusion to Davenant on such an occasion, and his citing him in such an assembly, proves the opinion then entertained of his worth, his character, and learning.

In 1638, was published a little volume in 24mo. entitled, *De Pace inter Evangelicos procuranda Sententiæ quatuor; &c.* It consists of the opinions of Bishops Morton, Davenant, and Hall,* and of certain eminent French Divines, on the subject of Catholic Unity. They were addressed to Duræus, a Scotch Divine, who had laboured to unite the Lutheran and Calvinistic Churches, and had solicited the opinions of these Prelates on the subject. Having been previously published at Amsterdam, they were now reprinted, with a list of authors who had written upon the same point. Of this little book, the opinion of Davenant forms the principal part, and is, in every respect decidedly superior to either of the others: it is written with great force of argument, and in a very spirited style.

In this unhappy period, when every thing was a subject of contention, and the Church was gasping for breath in her struggles with enemies, Laud was fomenting internal dissension by enforcing conformity in every trifle; among which, few points occasioned more dispute than his insisting upon the communion-table being placed universally at the east end of the Church: "an evil beginning," says Bishop Hacket, "to distract conformists, who

* This letter of Hall has escaped the notice of Mr. Pratt, and is not contained in any Edition of the Author's works.

were at unity before, and to make them fight like cocks which are all of a feather, and yet never at peace with themselves." Yet Davenant, when the question came officially before him, decided in favour of the Primate's injunction on the subject. "Nor," says Heylin, "did the Archbishop stand alone in point of judgment as to these particulars. He had therein the testimony and assent of two such Bishops,* than which there could be none more averse from Popery, or any thing that tended to it. A difference happening between the minister and churchwardens, in a parish of Wilts, about the placing of the table, which the minister desired to transpose to the end of the Church, and the churchwardens to keep as it stood before, the business was referred to Davenant, then Bishop of Salisbury, who, on a full consideration of the matter, decided in favour of the Incumbent; and, by a decree under his episcopal seal, settled the table in the place where the altar stood, as the minister desired to have it. In which decree there are these two passages to be observed: First, that, 'by the injunction of Queen Elizabeth, and by Canon xxxii. under King James, the communion-table should ordinarily be set and stand with the side to the east wall of the Chancel;' and, secondly, that 'It is ignorance to think that the standing of the holy table in that place doth relish of Popery.'"† Here we perceive the cool judgment of Davenant opposed, in a point of discipline, to those with whose doctrinal tenets he agreed, and supporting Laud, whose views and conduct he doubtless disapproved. Few measures were more unpopular than this enforced conformity about the position of the Lord's table; and when Laud first introduced the alteration in Gloucester Cathedral, upon being appointed Dean, his Diocesan, the venerable and learned Miles Smith, never entered the Church afterwards.

One of the last occasions in which we hear of Davenant in public, was in 1640, the year before his death: when the convocation under the direction of Archbishop Laud, passed certain Canons, principally for the enforcement of uniform discipline; which, although unobjectionable in themselves, were extremely ill-timed; being at a moment when the Church was scarcely able to sustain even her existence: and so it was that the passing of these Canons was made a handle to hasten her destruction. All the Prelates

* The other was Morton, Bishop of Durham.

† Life of Laud.

and Clergy present signed their approbation of the new Constitutions, with the exception of Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester, who, being a Papist in heart, refused to sign, on account of one of them being directed to the suppression of Popery. The Primate, with his characteristic impetuosity, thrice called out to him, "My lord of Gloucester, I admonish you to sign." Upon his persisting in his refusal, he was immediately suspended; and would have been summarily deprived, but that Bishop Davenant, with his accustomed judgment and knowledge, observed, that before they proceeded against a Prelate of the Church, they should act upon legal advice and direction: and that it was not customary for the threefold monition of an authoritative superior to be uttered at the same moment, but at due intervals, allowing time for the offending party to reflect. The Archbishop thanked him for his opinion, and acquiesced in its propriety. The result was, that Goodman, to avoid consequences, signed the Canons; and, as it has been remarked, "Under these he conformed as long as the Establishment had wealth and honour to bestow; but when her inveterate foes had accomplished her destruction, he threw off the mask of hypocrisy and equivocation; and died avowedly, as he had lived secretly, a Roman Catholic."*

In 1641, our venerable Author published a treatise in support of his former views on the subject of Predestination, and in reply to a work which had appeared some years before. Samuel Hoard, B.D., Rector of Morton, in Essex, sent forth a tract, in 1633, entitled "*God's Love to Mankind, manifested by disproving his absolute Decree for their Damnation:*" and it appears to have been the earliest treatise in this country, in opposition to what is called the Calvinistic opinion.† Davenant penned a reply entitled "*Animadversions written by the Right Rev. Father in God, John, Lord Bishop of Salisbury, upon a treatise intituled, God's Love to mankind.*" Why he published it no earlier than after a lapse of eight years, we know not. It is written with all the powers of his mind. The whole of Hoard's book is incorporated in it, and he

* Garbett's Letter to the late Right Rev. Dr. Milner.

† Thus Whiston, in his Memoirs, vol. i. p. 11, speaking of his father, says, "I also remember his observation on Mr. Hoard's book concerning 'God's love to mankind,' as the first that began to set aside the Calvinists' unhappy scheme of election and reprobation in England, which, till then, was the current opinion of the members of the Church of England, as it is still the doctrine of the thirty-nine Articles."

appears to have been no contemptible adversary. His work is in the form of an Epistle; from which we find, he had originally held the views which he there took up his pen to refute: for he commences with this remark, "I have sent you here my reasons which have moved me to change my opinion in some controversies of late debated between the Remonstrants and their opponents." These treatises, thus united in one publication, seem to compress all that has been said in so many volumes on this subject. Hoard accumulates every argument in opposition to the Calvinistic views, and presses them with considerable energy: but in no work is the acuteness of Davenant's powerful mind more exhibited than in his reply. He maintains, with extraordinary force and eloquence, the unconditionate decree of election; and whilst he contends that this admits of sufficiency of grace given to all; he likewise maintains that Reprobation is of necessity involved in Election:* and his view of it is thus expressed, "Reprobation is not a denial of sufficient grace, but a denial of such *special* grace, as God knoweth would infallibly bring them to glory." The book abounds with striking passages: yet, who that duly appreciates the simplicity of inspired truth, does not, after reading this or any other treatise of the kind, gladly return to the sacred volume, and feel his mind relieved and comforted with the plain *infallible* assurance that "GOD IS LOVE," that salvation is his free gift, and that He "*will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth?*" The Bishop closes his book with what he conceived to be the "USES" of election; and, doubtless, speaks the result of his own experience, with these, which may be deemed almost his final, words: "If we will shew that we have not a fleeting or uncertain conjecture only, but a true and solid knowledge of our election, we must have recourse to the fore-named uses, and by them make trial whether our conceit of our election be a deceitful illusion, or a true persuasion springing from faith. We are to account it false and deceitful, if it prove idle and unprofitable; much more, if we find it to be the pernicious mother of presumption. But, if it hath taught us to conceive worthily of God; if it hath inflamed our hearts with the love of Him; if it hath kindled in us a zeal of true godliness; if it hath beaten down our pride, and begot in us true humility; if it defend us against despair; if it stir us up to frequent prayer; if it encou-

* Whitby's book on the "Five Points" opens with a memorable extract from this work of "good Bishop Davenant," as he styles him.

rage us to patience under the cross : then we may be assured of our predestination, and of our future possession of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Our Author's final work was well suited to his life and character. It was a small volume written with a view of uniting the Evangelical churches ; under the title of *Ad pacem Ecclesiæ adhortatio*, &c. which was translated into English with the title of *An Exhortation to Brotherly Love*, &c. Of this beautiful little work, Bishop Hall, in his "Peace-maker," laying down the principles of Church Unity, says, "None hath so fully cleared the point, as the late honour of our schools, the learned Bishop Davenant, in that last Golden Tractate which he wrote, now breathing towards the gates of his heaven ; his pious and pithy Exhortation of the Evangelical churches to a happy peace : wherein the fundamentals of our faith are so evidently laid open, that it is not hard to judge by that unfailing rule, whom we may and must admit to the communion of Christ's Church, and whom we ought to exclude from that holy society."

On the 20th of April, 1641, Bishop Davenant was summoned to his rest, in the full vigour of his faculties and piety, at the age of 71, having presided over the See of Salisbury twenty years. The immediate cause of his decease was an asthma, with which he had been long afflicted ; but his death is said to have been hastened by the melancholy forebodings of his mind, as to the sad prospects of the nation. "The righteous is taken away from the evil to come." He died, as it has been correctly said, at "a truly convenient season ; that he might neither see nor suffer those bitter calamities which speedily overwhelmed both Church and State ;"* and which his old friend, Dr. Ward, keenly experienced, being persecuted with great severity for his steady adherence to the Church and King, by the Puritan leaders, notwithstanding his piety and the soundness of his doctrinal views. Similar was the treatment also experienced by their colleague Balcanqual, now Dean of Durham, who literally fell a victim to the fury of the Puritans ; being driven from all he possessed, and dying at Chirk-castle, Denbighshire, in consequence of the severity he met with. The like persecutions, though in a slighter degree, involved our Author's Nephews, Archdeacon Davenant and Dr. Fuller, whose benefices were sequestered. The Bishop was interred in the South

* Bp. Godwin de Presulibus, Richardson's.

Aisle of the Choir of his own Cathedral ; where is a tablet to his memory. He bequeathed £200 for the benefit of the Cathedral : and he left to Queen's College, the perpetual advowson of the Rectories of Cheverill Magna and Newton Toney, Wilts ; and a rent charge of £31. 10s. per annum, to found two bible-clerkships, and buy books for the Library of the same College.

The following is the inscription on his monument :—

Monumentorum omnium
JOHANNIS DAVENANTII
 Minime perenne, quid loquatur audi.
 Natus Londini Anno Christi 1572 Maii die 20
 Cantabrigiæ in Collegio Reginali
 bonis literis opeam felicem dedit,
 Cujus cum Societate esset meritissime donatus
 Ætatemq. et doctrinæ et morum gravitate superaret,
 Cum nondum plures quam 36 annos numerasset,
 D. Margaretæ in S. Theologia Professr est electus
 Celebremque prius Cathedram longe ornatiorem reddidit.
 Intra quadriennium mox Collegii sui Præsident factus est
 Cui dubium Rector an Benefactor profuerit magis
 Tum vero a serenissimo et in rebus Theologicis
 Perspicacissimo Rege, Jacobo, honorifice missus
 Synodo Dordracensi magna pars interfuit,
 Tandem hujusce Diocæseos Sarib^{ns}. Episcopus
 Anno 1621 die Novembris viii* consecratus est.
 Cui velut vivum exemplar antiquitatis venerandæ
 Universas Primitivi Præsulis partes explevit
 Atque ita per 20 pene annos huic Ecclesiæ præfuit
 Summo tum bonorum omnium tum etiam hostium,
 Consensu optimus & vel inde felicissimus
 Quod ruinam sedis, cum superesse per ætatem non potuit,
 Priusquam oculis conspiceret, vivere desierit,
 Anno scilicet Christi MDCXLI. Aprilis die xx.

* Rectius xviii.

The following extract from Dr. Plume's Life of that zealous Churchman, † and excellent Christian, Bishop Hacket, prefixed

† Dr. Hacket is recorded as the last man in England who persisted to read the Liturgy in public, after it had been proscribed by the Parliament ; and the following well-known anecdote is given by his biographer, illustrative alike of his attachment to the Church, and of his holy courage. "One Sunday, while he was reading the Common Prayer in his church, a soldier of the Earl of Essex came, and clapt a pistol to his breast, and commanded him to read no further. The Doctor smiled at his insolency in that sacred place ; and, not at all terrified, said, ' he would do what became a Divine, and he might do what became a Soldier : ' so the tumult for that time was quieted, and the Doctor permitted to proceed."

to his sermons, is worthy of citation, as well for its good sense, as for the testimony it bears to our Author. “ In matters of doctrine, he (Hacket) embraced no private and singular opinions, as many great men delight to do, *in vetere via novam semitam quærentes*, says the father, (Jerome); but was in all points a perfect Protestant, according to the Articles of the Church of England; always accounting it a spice of pride and vanity to affect singularity in any opinions or expositions of Scripture, without great cause; and withal very dangerous to affect precipices, as goats use, when they may walk in plain paths. In the Quinquarticular Controversy, he was ever very moderate; but, being bred under Bishop Davenant and Dr. Ward, in Cambridge, was addicted to their sentiments. Bishop Usher would say, Davenant understood those controversies better than ever any man did since St. Austin. But *He* used to say, he was sure he had three excellent men of his mind in this controversy, 1. Padre Paulo,* whose letter is extant to Heinsius, anno 1604: 2. Thomas Aquinas: 3. St. Austin:—but, besides and above them all, he believed in his conscience, St. Paul was of the same mind likewise: yet would profess withal, he disliked no Arminian, but such a one as reviled and defamed every one that was not so: and would often commend Arminius himself for his excellent wit and parts, but only tax his want of reading and knowledge in antiquity: and ever held it was the foolishness thing in the world to say the Arminians were Papists, when so many Dominicans and Jansenists were Anti-Arminians: and so again to say the Anti-Arminians were Puritans or Presbyterians, when Ward, and Davenant, and Prideaux, and Brownrig, were Anti-Arminians, and also stout champions for Episcopacy;† and Arminius himself was ever a Presbyterian:—and, therefore, he much commended the moderation of our Church, which made not any of these nice and doubtful opinions the *resolved doctrine* of

* The famous Historian of the Council of Trent.

† To which might be added Hooker, Whitgift, Bancroft, Hall, Saunderson, Beveridge, and innumerable others. In fact, the ablest defences of our Church have proceeded from the pens of writers of these views. So true is the remark of Bishop Horsley: “ If we would look for warm advocates of Church authority in general, and for able writers in defence of our own form of Church government in particular, such we shall find among those Divines of our Church who were called in their day the Doctrinal Calvinists.” Charge at Rochester, 1800. It may be permitted us again to refer the Reader to Davenant’s sentiments on this subject in the Question given at the end of this life.

the Church: this, he judged, was the great fault of the Tridentine and late Westminster assemblies: but our Church was more ingenuous, and left these dark and curious points to the several apprehensions of learned men, and extended equal communion to both."

That the views of Davenant were such as bear the name of sublapsarian Calvinism, all his writings prove.* It has, however, been said, that with respect to the doctrine of Universal Redemption, he was led by Abp. Usher. This is distinctly stated by Baxter; and from this it has been inferred by many, that the views of Davenant underwent a change, and that he declined to the opinion that redemption is *attainable* by all. In fact, the extraordinary endowments of the Irish Primate, his stupendous and universal erudition, his extreme moderation, humility, fervent piety, and judgment, placed him in correspondence with all the learned men of Europe of all churches, who appealed to him for information and advice upon almost every topic of learning and theology.† When in London, "the most eminent divines were wont to apply themselves to him as a father."‡ Among others, Davenant was on close terms of intimacy with him; and to this the following passage of Baxter refers, in the year 1658, seventeen years after our Author's death: "In the time of my abode at Lord Broghill's, fell out all the acquaintance I had with the most

* Yet, Mr. Cassan tells us (*Lives of Bishops of Salisbury*, part ii. p. 113) "Davenant had adopted the supralapsarian hypothesis, i. e. of unconditional predestination in the utmost sense." This gentleman's definition of the doctrine is well-suited to his accuracy of assertion. He has, however, favoured the world with more than one choice specimen of his theological attainment; suited, indeed, to what might be expected from a man, who, in narrating a witty story of Bishop Thomas, concerning a Lutheran divine who refused to bury a Calvinist, sagely observes: "Although the Calvinism of the dead be not *contagious*, it may fairly be doubted whether a *known heretic* is entitled to have the service read over him, and to receive the same honours with one dying in the true faith of the Church. In this case, no doubt, the Clergyman was acting in conformity to the spirit of the Rubric. For a Calvinist must, *ipso facto*, be 'excommunicate:' and such, we know, are not entitled to Christian burial." The Reader will positively find this delectable passage in part ii. p. 316, of the above-mentioned volume.

† We need go no farther than a mere glance at the invaluable selection of letters which his Chaplain, Dr. Parr, selected from the vast mass of his correspondence, and published at the end of his life.

‡ Dr. Bernard's Funeral Sermon on Usher.

reverend, learned, humble, and pious Primate of Ireland, Abp. Usher, then living at the Earl of Peterborough's house, in St. Martin's-lane. Sometimes he came to me, and oft I went to him. And Dr Kendal, who had wrote pettishly against me, about Universal Redemption and the specification of Divine grace, desired me (when I had answered one of his invectives, and had written part of the answer to the other), to meet him at Bishop Usher's lodgings, and refer the matter to him for our reconciliation and future silence; which I willingly did. And when the Bishop had declared his judgment for that doctrine of Universal Redemption which I asserted, and gloried that he was the man who brought Bishop Davenant and Dr. Preston to it, he persuaded us, who were both willing, to silence for the time to come." (P. 205.) In the same book, referring to the same conference, he delivers the opinion more fully: "In my book called *R. B.'s Judgment about the Perseverance of Believers*, I shewed the variety of opinions about Perseverance, and that Augustin and Prosper themselves did not hold the certain perseverance of all the elect; but held that there are more sanctified than are elect, and that perseverance is affixed to the elect *as such*, and not to the sanctified *as such*; which Bp. Usher averred to Dr. Kendal, before my face, to be most certainly Austin's judgment, though both he and I did incline to another. From hence, and many other arguments, I inferred that the sharp censures of men against their brethren, for not holding a point which Austin himself was against, and no one author can be proved to hold from the Apostles' days till long after Austin, doth argue less of judgment and charity than many of the censurers seem to have."

Upon a topic so important, a few observations may be made. That Usher became less partial to the strict points of Calvinism in later life, rests upon evidence too distinct to be questioned; and Mr. Todd, in his life of Bp. Walton, has given some interesting letters on the subject. Nevertheless, so early as 1617, when yet a private divine, he maintained Universal Redemption, and his correspondence contains two powerful letters on the subject. But, perhaps, he would not then have so fully allowed what he afterwards maintained in one of his last conversations, when, having preached what he called "a soul-saving sermon," upon the words "*Whom he called, them he justified,*" and being asked by Walton, whether "God, with his word, doth give internal grace to all that are called by it, that they may repent if they

will; and that they certainly *can* will?" he answered, "Yes, they *all can will*; and that so many will not, is because they resist God's grace:" adding, "Bishop Overall was in the right, and I am of his mind."

It is from this, that a supposed change in Davenant's opinion has been inferred. Hence Mr. Jackson, in his able life of the great Puritan divine John Goodwin (the most profound Arminian theologian that this country has produced,) tells us, (and Mr. Nicholls, in the Preface to his works of Arminius, repeats the remark,) that "Bp. Davenant appears to have undergone a change of sentiment similar to that of Baxter."—There is no difficulty in refuting this; but there is much difficulty in reconciling Baxter's remark with the fact. Davenant's views at the Synod of Dort, prior to his acquaintance with Usher, are distinctly stated in his "Reasons," and in many of his works: and his reply to Hoard, just before his death, is in strict accordance with them. He held Universal Redemption, as we have seen, at Dort; but he held it as inseparable from Reprobation, or Preterition; and he maintains against Hoard the same doctrine, and the same inseparable Reprobation. The truth, or error, of the doctrine is, of course, not affected by this: but, as a matter of fact, the evidence is too distinct to be doubted for a moment, that not a shadow of change occurred in his opinions. How, therefore, to understand Baxter's remark I know not.

In 1650 was published a thin folio, containing *Dissertationes Duæ; prima, de Morte Christi*; (of which a translation is annexed to this work,) *altera, De Prædestinatione et Electione, &c.*; to which is appended, *Sententia de Gallicana Controversia, de gratuita et salutari Dei erga homines Peccatores voluntate, &c.* These treatises, selected from our Author's papers, had been sent to Abp. Usher, by Dr. Edward Davenant, for the purpose of publication. But the wretched state of the times prevented their appearing for some years; and it does not seem that the Archbishop was the Editor: for the preface is signed with the initials T. B. The French Controversy had arisen upon the opinions of Cameron, a divine of the Gallican Protestant Church: Davenant's sentiments were applied for, and are here given. At the end of this volume, but not named in the title-page, is *Sententia Ecclesie Anglicanæ de Prædestinatione et capitibus annexis, ab eodem (ut fertur,) Authore, jussu Regis Serenissimi conscripta.* How this can be imputed to Davenant, and received as such by the Editor,

is inexplicable. It is manifestly the production of an inferior pen, and is decidedly adverse to his views, as stated through the rest of the volume. The Editor, T. B., I conceive to be one Thomas Bedford, who, in the same year (1650), at the suggestion of Archbishop Usher, published, along with two divinity Theses of his own, a letter of Bishop Davenant's to Dr. Ward, entitled *Epistola de Sacramentis*.

In sending up the two *Dissertationes* above-mentioned to Abp. Usher, Dr. Edward Davenant says, "I have sent up that elaborate work of the Bishop of Salisbury, which, being committed to my charge, your Grace has done me unspeakable favour to undertake the publishing of it. . . . The short answer of his unto the French Divines, which I found scattered among his papers, is sent up in this book."* The regard of Usher and Davenant appears to have been reciprocal. The former, in writing to Dr. Ward, says, "For the Arminian Question, I desire never to read more than my Lord of Salisbury's Lectures, touching Predestination and Christ's Death." And again, "I thank you most heartily for communicating my Lord of Salisbury's Lectures. They are excellent; learnedly, soundly, and perspicuously performed; and, I hope, will do much good for the establishing of our young divines in the present truth."

Few men appear to have been more honoured and venerated by all parties than Bishop Davenant. In all the works of friends or opponents, there is not to be found a single sentence approaching even to disrespect, much less any thing that can tend to cast the slightest reflexion upon his deportment in any measure of his public or private life. His profound learning, acuteness of intellect, catholic spirit, active benevolence, and meekness, are constantly adverted to; and the phrases—"the good Bishop Davenant," the "excellent Bishop Davenant," the "learned Bishop Davenant," &c. &c. are the usual appendages to his name, even in the writings of those who took up the pen in express hostility to certain of his theological views.

* In 1641, the year of the Bishop's decease, the learned Dr. Gerard Langbaine published, at Oxford, a book, entitled "*Episcopal Inheritance*, or a reply to the humble examination of a printed Abstract, and the answers to nine reasons of the House of Commons against the Votes of Bishops in Parliament. To which is added a Determination of the late learned Bishop of Salisbury, Englished." This was reprinted in 1680, in London, but I have not been able to obtain the book.

A distinguished Nonconformist, Dr. E. Calamy, in the *Memoirs of his own Life*, recently published, gives an account of a conversation which he had with Bishop Burnet, who particularly requested to know the opinion of the Dissenters upon his explanation of the seventeenth Article in his “*Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles.*”—“I told his Lordship,” says Dr. C. “that as for those whom his Lordship particularly inquired after, though they were very thankful to his Lordship for his pains, and for his charity to those of different sentiments; yet, on the head of Predestination, which he had so laboured, they could not but be surprised to find that, when he had been at such pains nicely to state the two extremes, he should quite overlook the middle way, where truth commonly lies. He told me, that the true reason of that was, because he could not see how that called the middle way differed from one of the extremes. I freely told him this seemed more strange to several among us, because the learned DAVENANT, one of his Lordship’s predecessors in the See of Sarum, had not only vigorously asserted and defended that middle way in the Synod of Dort, in opposition to Remonstrants and Supralapsarians, but had also been at no small pains to support it in several of his writings; of which his Lordship took not the least notice. This led into a pretty close discourse of two hours’ length, in which his Lordship endeavoured to convince me, that such as declared for the middle way, must at last, when pressed, fall into the Arminian scheme: while I, on the contrary, asserted, and endeavoured to prove, that such as were in that way of thinking, were no more obliged to fall in with the Remonstrants than with the rigid Predeterminants.” (Vol. i. p. 276.)

In 1703, Dr. Calamy, preaching in the lecture-room at Salter’s Hall, discoursed from the text Rom. ix. 16, “*So then it is not of him that willeth,*” &c. and afterwards published his discourse, at the request of the auditors, under the title “*Divine Mercy exalted; or Free Grace in its glory:*” in the preface to which, he complains, that “Some have given themselves a liberty to reflect on their brethren who adhere to the suffrages of the British Divines in the Synod of Dort;” and recommends those “that would see the doctrine of particular election maintained, consistently with a general love of God to the world, to consult the learned and peaceable Bishop Davenant’s ‘*Animadversions upon Hoard’s Treatise;*’ a book not valued according to its worth.”

OUR notices of the Bishop's connexions must be very concise. He was one of many children. His elder brother, Edward, was a Merchant; but is spoken of by Aubrey "as an incomparable man;" a profound scholar, and a great mathematician. His Son, Dr. Edward Davenant, of whom Aubrey gives a long account, was promoted by his Uncle to the Vicarage of Gillingham, Dorset, and the Archdeaconry of Berks, which he resigned for the Treasurership of the Cathedral of Salisbury. He was pronounced by Sir Christopher Wren to be the greatest Mathematician of his age. He died in 1679, having been Vicar of Gillingham 53 years. He had one Son, Ralph, who was Rector of Whitechapel, London; and another, John, who was Fellow of Oriel College, Oxon; and also a daughter, Anne, who married W. Ettrick, Esq. of Wimborne; and another, Catharine, married to Dr. Lamplugh, Abp. of York. In the Bishop's will, he names three other of his brothers, viz. William, James, and Ralph. Of his Sisters, one was married to Thomas Fuller, Rector of Aldwinckle, Northamptonshire, and was mother to the admirable Author of "Worthies of England," &c. and who was promoted by his Uncle to the Precentorship of Sarum, and the Rectory of Broad-Windsor, Dorset. His appointment to a Bishopric was frustrated, at the Restoration, by his decease. A second sister, married, as we said before, Dr. Ralph Townson, Dean of Westminster, 1617, and Bishop of Sarum, to which he was consecrated in July, 1619, and died May the 15th following; leaving a family of fifteen children, poorly provided for; he is spoken of as a very hospitable and disinterested man. To his family, our Bishop, who succeeded him, was a father. His widow resided in the palace to the day of her death, having, as her epitaph records, found with him "consolation and a home." Of this numerous family, it is very remarkable, that two of the daughters married divines who were also successively Bishops of Salisbury; the See occupied by their Father and Uncle: Ellen being married to Bishop Henchman, author of the "Gentleman's Calling," and one of the numerous persons to whom the "*Whole Duty of Man*" has been ascribed; and Mary to Bishop Hyde, a Cousin of the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, and whose lineal descendant, by the female line, is the present Sir William Parker, Bart.: his daughter, Margaret, having married Sir Henry Parker, Bart.; a third daughter, Margaret, was married to John Rives, Archdeacon of Berks; and

a fourth, Gertrude, to James Harris, Esq. of the Close, at Salisbury, from whom descend the present Earls of Malmsbury.

There was probably some connexion, though I have not been able to trace it, between our Prelate and Sir William Davenant, the profligate Poet-laureate of Charles I.; for *his* brother Robert was Chaplain to the Bishop, and presented to a Stall in Salisbury Cathedral.

Lloyd, in his Memoirs, has given an Epitaph on our Bishop, which, as exhibiting a good summary of his genius and character, we here subjoin.

“ Hic jacet omnigenæ eruditionis modestæ
 Epitome. Cui judicium asservit
 Maxime discretiorum,
 quicquid uspiam est literarum Hebraicarum
 Ethnicarum, aut Christianarum
 Omnes linguas, artes et historias
 quicquid prædicarunt
 patres, disputarunt scholastici
 decreverunt consilia
 in sobriam pacificam, et practicam concoxit
 Theologiam.

Quæ in concionibus dominata est, Scholis
 Imperavit, et Synodis* leges dedit
 Prudens pariter ac simplex,
 ille, ille cui severior vita quam
 opinio; ut pote strictius vitam
 agens, quam sententiam, (Doctrina
 magna lux Ecclesiæ, exemplo major)
 Cujus libri omnes una hac notabantur

Inscriptione PRÆFUIT QUI PROFUIT,
 qui Regem venerebatur, sed et timebat
 Deum) non tam suo, quam publico morbo
 succubuit Aprilis 3, 1641, extremam
 in hæc verba agens animam:—

‘Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.’”

* “Bogerman confessed that Dr. Davenant’s experience and skill in the laws and histories, gave them directions for the better ordering of their debates and votes.”

DIVERSITY OF DEGREES

*In the Ministers of the Gospel is NOT repugnant to the Word of
God.*

FROM DAVENANT'S "DETERMINATIONES," QUÆST. XLII.

(REFERRED TO AT PAGE XIII.)

IT is not my present purpose to touch upon the assertions of Papists concerning seven degrees or orders of spiritual offices, especially since they are themselves compelled to confess that all below the Deaconate have been added. My only dispute is concerning Episcopacy and Presbytery. Nor shall I here subtilly contend, whether Episcopacy be a distinct order from Presbytery, or only another and higher degree in the same order. William of Paris distinctly affirms that Episcopacy is not an *order*, but an *honour*; which is also maintained by Gerson, whose words are these: *There is not another power of order in Bishops than in Presbyters, but the same is there in a more perfect mode.* Finally, Durandus (lib. 4. dist. 24) is of the same opinion: *Episcopacy, says he, is not an order strictly distinct from the simple Priesthood, but the distinction between them is of PERFECT and IMPERFECT.* Hither tends the argument of the Schoolmen, that the Episcopate, as distinguished from the simple priesthood, is not another order; but a more eminent power and dignity of certain who are in the same sacerdotal order. It is sufficient for us, (laying aside this verbal contention,) to shew that those who are peculiarly called Bishops have a higher dignity, greater power, and more excellent offices annexed to them than other Presbyters have, and that this is not repugnant to the word of God. But it were trivial to say, *not repugnant*; for it is easy to demonstrate, that in the Divine word, this eminence of Bishops above Presbyters is shadowed out, delineated, and by the Apostles themselves established.

For, first, that which was instituted in the Jewish Church by the most wise God, that a High Priest should be set over the other priests, and the priests over the Levites, (Numb. iii. and iv.) was prelusive to the establishing a like order in the Christian Church. Hence the remark of Jerome, *That we may know that the Apostolical traditions were taken from the Old Testament, what Aaron and his sons and the Levites were in the temple, the Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons claim for themselves in the Church.* It was the will of God that a certain order should flourish among the ministers of the Old Testament: the Church willed that an order not dissimilar should be found among hers. But where all are equal in dignity and power, there not even a shadow of becoming order is retained. For order is nothing else than the disposal of equals and unequals, assigning to each its place. Take away the inequality, and by the same act you leave among sacred ministers all order thrown into confusion.

Secondly, It is evident, that Christ himself, for the edification of his Church, constituted ministers not endued with equal authority, but distinct in degree of dignity and power. For the twelve Apostles were superior to the seventy disciples, and were placed above the same, not in excellency of gifts alone, but in amplitude of authority and power. Moreover, it is the constant doctrine of nearly all the Fathers, that the Bishops succeeded the Apostles in the ordinary government of the Church, as the Presbyters also succeeded the seventy disciples. Let one of them, Augustine, speak for all, upon those words of the Psalmist, *INSTEAD OF THY FATHERS THOU SHALT HAVE CHILDREN,* (Psalm xlv. ;) *What is this,* says he, *INSTEAD OF THY FATHERS THOU SHALT HAVE CHILDREN? The Apostles were sent as fathers. Instead of the Apostles, sons were born to thee; Bishops were constituted. For those who are at this day Bishops through all the world, whose children were they? The Church herself calls them Fathers; but she herself gave them birth, and she herself constituted them in the seats of the fathers.* The same is the sentiment of Jerome, Ambrose, and Theodoret; all of whom agree in acknowledging Bishops to be the successors of the Apostles, not in their extraordinary privileges, which were necessary to lay the foundation of the Church, but in that ordinary superiority which is required for her perpetual conservation and extension when founded. Add to this, that, immediately after the ascension of Christ, the Church was adorned and distinguished by evangelical

ministers, who differed from each other, not merely in variety of gifts, but in a certain imparity of dignity and power, (1 Cor. xii. 28, 29,) *God hath set in his Church, first Apostles, secondly prophets, then teachers, &c. Are all Apostles? Are all prophets, &c.?* They who will have all ministers to be of equal power, appear either not to know what Christ did, or account it unfit for his Church to imitate the same.

Let us descend, in the third place, to the Apostles themselves; and we assert, that, before they departed from earth to heaven, they placed in the great cities a Bishop, in authority superior to, and in power greater than, the other Presbyters. He was chief pastor of that city; he possessed a superiority, not only over the laity, but over the Clergy or Presbyters of the same city. Such was Titus at Crete, Timothy at Ephesus, James at Jerusalem, Euodias at Antioch, Amianus at Alexandria, Polycarp at Smyrna, not to mention others, who, it is most certain, were exalted to the episcopal seat, the Apostles being alive, and seeing, approving, nay, even directing, that very thing. It is also certain that, throughout the universal Church of Christ, the successors of these also held a certain eminent authority over their own flock, and over inferior ministers: and it is equally certain that there was a perpetual succession of the same. This is attested by the very titles which the antients continually apply to these Bishops and to their successors: They are called the *Great Pastors, Prelates, Heads, Princes of the Church.** If the power and dignity of all ministers were equal, they never would have dignified, or rather derided, Bishops above others with these empty titles. Nay, Christ himself gave to those chief Pastors of his churches, whom we call Bishops, the especial appellation of Angels (Rev. ii.) In the Church of Ephesus, of Smyrna, of Pergamos, and the rest, there were *many* Presbyters; but there was in each *one* Angel, or Bishop, whom Christ addresses singly. If he had been one of the body of Presbyters, neither in dignity nor power greater than the rest, there was no reason why Christ should address him, as it were, by name. Beza not inaptly expounds these words (Rev. ii.), *TO THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH OF EPHEBUS, that is, to the President;* which term very well suits a Bishop, who presides not only over the laity, but the other Clergy. But what he adds about the office of this President not being perpetual, is so clearly refuted by ecclesiastical

* By Nazianzen and Hilary.

history, that it is wonderful to see it asserted by a learned man not unacquainted with antiquity.

Be this, therefore, fixed and established, that among many Presbyters, who in some one city administered the word and sacraments, there was one set over the rest by the Apostles themselves, and armed with a certain peculiar dignity and power. These Bishops, being thus established by the authority of the Apostles, it is certain were succeeded in a perpetual series by those who were substituted in the same cities; and, when it seemed good to the Church, new ones also were constituted in other cities, after the same example.

But, in the last place, we must observe in what consisted this excelling dignity and power of Bishops, by which they were distinguished, not by their own presumption, but by Apostolical ordination, from other inferior Presbyters. And here it must be candidly acknowledged, that Bishops have certain privileges above Presbyters, which are derived, not from the primitive constitution of the Apostles, but either from the especial beneficence of Christian Princes, or from the authority of Councils; and of such, we say with Jerome, in his dialogue against the Luciferians, *These are rather for honour to the Priesthood, than of legal necessity.*

But of Bishops there are three peculiar marks by which they are readily distinguished from other Presbyters, and recognized as superior.

The first is, that in cities, however large and populous, wherein many Presbyters were created, the Apostles ordained one Bishop only, at whose decease another succeeded singly in the same See. Hence that decree of the Council of Nice, *Let there not be two Bishops in one city.* Hence Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, reproaches Novatus with ignorance for not acknowledging the singleness of episcopal succession: *This Vindicator of the Gospel is ignorant that there must be one Bishop in that Church, in which he is not ignorant there are forty-six Presbyters.* Euseb. vi. 42. If the Apostles approved a parity of all ministers, why would they have one to be distinguished from all the rest by this singleness of succession? Jerome, who is esteemed not very favourable to episcopal dignity, nevertheless confesses, that with this singleness of succession, a singular dignity and eminence was joined. For thus he writes, (in Epist. ad Evagrium,) concerning the Bishop of Alexandria, *At Alexandria, from the Evangelist Mark down to the Bishops Heraclas and Dionysius, the Presbyters always*

having elected one from themselves, and placed him in a higher degree, named him Bishop. From this eminent authority of one Bishop in one city or diocese, the most wise and holy Fathers saw that the peace and unity of the Church depended, and they have left their testimony to us. Cyprian, a man far removed from all pride and ambition, shews that this sacerdotal authority of one Bishop was confirmed by the Divine approbation, and immediately adds, *From no other quarter have heresies arisen, or schisms sprang up, than from this, that they would not render obedience to the Priest of God, nor think that in the place of Christ, there is one Priest in the Church at a time, and one Judge at a time:* (Epist. lib. 1, epist. 3 :) Which words are most impudently wrested by the Romanists to establish the monarchy of the Pope, when it is clearer than the meridian light, that the blessed martyr was speaking of himself, not of the Roman Pontiff. If in the cause of Bishops, the testimony of a Bishop be suspicious, let us again hear St. Jerome, who was not wont to depress Presbyters, or exalt Bishops unduly. Thus speaks he against the Luciferians, Cap. 4. p. 199, *The safety of the Church depends on the dignity of the chief Priest, to whom if a certain peculiar and eminent power be not granted by all, there will be formed in the churches as many schisms as there are priests.* This very singleness of the episcopal succession, always joined with a certain amplitude of authority, is sufficient of itself to crush the modern error of the parity of all ministers.

But we are to add the second mark of Episcopal dignity, viz. the right and power of ordination, which was transmitted by the Apostles themselves to Bishops, but denied to inferior Presbyters. Both which is clear from hence, that we see the Apostles sent Timothy and Titus to churches in which there were many Presbyters, viz. to Ephesus and Crete, that they might ordain Presbyters where there was need. *Lay hands suddenly on no man,* is the admonition of Paul to Timothy (1 Tim. v. 22,) who was endued with the power of ordination. *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Presbyters in every city,* are the words of the same Apostle to Titus (i. 5), and referring to the same thing. Why could not the Ephesian Presbyters ordain others before the arrival of Timothy? Why was it not lawful for the Ministers of Crete to do the like before Titus came? No adequate reason for this can be assigned, unless the power of ordaining resides in those alone

who discharge the episcopal function. Jerome (whom some suppose to have agreed with Aerius)* yet admits, (Epist. ad Evag.) that ordination is so peculiar to Bishops, that it is not lawful for Presbyters to exercise it. *What does a Bishop do, ordination excepted, which a Presbyter does not?* In this Apostolic Institution the Catholic Church always acquiesced, and did not acknowledge any other ordination lawful than that which was solemnized by a lawful Bishop. We find a remarkable example of this in the works of Athanasius. One Colythus, a Presbyter in the Church of Alexandria, presumed to ordain other Presbyters. But what was afterwards done? *This ordination of his was rescinded, and all the Presbyters made by him were reduced to the rank of laymen.* (Athanasius, Apolog. 2.) It is, therefore, certain, that the power of ordaining belongs to the office of Bishops only, and does not belong to inferior Presbyters, which is a manifest proof of Episcopal dignity and Presbyterial inferiority.

But here, in passing, we have to solve a doubt which was not omitted by the Schoolmen themselves; † for it is often questioned, Whether, besides a Bishop, who, by his office, dispenses sacred orders, can one inferior to a Bishop confer the same in case of necessity? To which I answer, Seeing that to confer holy orders is, by Apostolical institution, an act of the Episcopal office, if Presbyters in a well constituted Church do that, their act is not only unlawful, but is null and void. For here obtains the axiom of Hugo, *What is performed contrary to the institution is accounted null.* But in a disturbed Church, where all the Bishops have fallen into heresy or idolatry, where they refuse to ordain orthodox ministers, or where they account those alone to be worthy of holy orders who participate in their error and faction, if orthodox Presbyters be compelled to ordain other Presbyters, that the Church may not perish, I could not venture to pronounce ordinations of this kind vain and invalid. For if the danger that threatens a single infant be sufficient to transfer the office of baptizing to any layman, which, by institution, belongs to ministers alone, why is not danger impending over a particular church, sufficient to transfer the office of ordaining to simple priests, which, by institution, belongs to Bishops alone? Necessity has been aptly called *temporary law*; and in such case it defends that to

* Vide Medin. lib. 1. de Sac. hom. cont. cap. 5.

† Vide Durand. lib. 4. disp. 7. quest. 3.

which it compels. It is the opinion of Armachanus,* that if all Bishops were dead, inferior priests could ordain. Certainly the consideration is much alike, when all have become sworn enemies to the truth. For as a commonwealth, so a particular church, has a certain extraordinary power for the necessary preservation of itself. If, then, certain Protestant churches, which could not look for ordination from Popish Bishops, have, under this necessity, ordained Presbyters, with the consent of their own Presbyters, they are not to be judged as having injured the episcopal dignity, but to have yielded to the necessity of the Church.

The last token of episcopal dignity remains, which exalts them above Presbyters, and allows them not by any means to be accounted equal in degree. This is the power of jurisdiction, not only over the laity, but over the Clergy, who are also, by Apostolical institution, subject to Bishops. It is a saying as true as it is common, *Equal hath not power over equal*. But Bishops have power over the Clergy; not, indeed, a *regal* or *lordly* power, but one that is *Pastoral*, or *Paternal*; which is inconsistent with all kind of parity or equality. To say nothing of others, excommunication, which is the spiritual staff, is delivered into the Bishop's hand, to chastise, not only the vicious or contumacious of the laity, but also Presbyters that deserve this censure. This is most evident from the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, of whom one was constituted Bishop of the Church of Ephesus, and the other of Crete, by St. Paul. They are commanded to enjoin some not to preach diverse doctrines, to stop the mouths of deceivers, to reject heretics, and other points, implying jurisdiction and authority. It is also evident from the language of Christ to the angels of the Asiatic Churches. The angel, (i. e. the Bishop,) of the church of Pergamos is reproved, (Rev. ii. 15) because he had in his church some who held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. Thus, also, the angel of the church of Thyatira, (Rev. ii. 20) because he permitted the woman Jezebel to teach and to seduce the people. Therefore, in the judgment of Christ himself, the Bishop hath authority to restrain and reject heretics out of the Church. I do not say that a Bishop was accustomed to do this without the counsel of Presbyters; for what Cyprian declares of himself, (Epist. lib. 3. epist. 10,) *that from the beginning of his Episcopate he had determined to do nothing of his own private opinion without advice*, was probably observed by other pious Bishops.

* Richard Fitzralph, Abp. of Armagh.

Nevertheless, it is manifest that the censure proceeded from the Episcopal authority alone, and passed as an act of Episcopal jurisdiction upon offenders. For excommunication is called the *Episcopal sword*. In the case of excommunication, there was an appeal from the episcopal judgment to a Synod; which confirmed the Bishop's censure if it had been rightly denounced, or rescinded it, if otherwise. Therefore, in the act of excommunication, not the people, nor the Presbyters, are the acknowledged judges, but the Bishop alone. That this was the discipline of the primitive Church, can be made clear from antient Councils. Let the Councils of Nice, Can. 5; of Antioch, Can. 6; of Sardium, Can. 14, be inspected. Nay, Jerome himself does not doubt that the power of excommunicating Presbyters belongs to the Bishops. Hence he writes thus to Riparius (Epist. 53) concerning Vigilantius, an heretical Presbyter, *I wonder that the holy Bishop in whose diocese he is said to be a Presbyter, sits quiet at the frenzy of the man, and does not break this unprofitable vessel with the Apostolical and iron rod, and deliver him to the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved.* These things shew clear enough, that, from the very Apostolical times, Bishops were superior in power and degree to Presbyters, and that a parity among ministers of the Gospel never obtained. But a few arguments, which are alleged for the contrary, remain briefly to be solved:

1. Christ himself seems to prohibit this inequality among Gospel Ministers, in Matt. xx. 25, 26; *The princes of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them: but it shall not be so among you.* To which St. Peter adds, 1 Epis. v. 2, 3, *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*

In reply, We allow, that as to the Apostles, they were all equal in degree and authority, according to the institution of Christ; but we deny that this passage, or any other, establishes that parity among ministers of the Gospel which they contend for who attack the episcopal dignity. For, notwithstanding this command of Christ, the twelve Apostles were higher in dignity and greater in authority than the seventy disciples. And, notwithstanding this same command, there were constituted by the Apostles themselves (as hath before been shewn) in the church of Ephesus, of Crete,

and others, chief Pastors, who had a power of jurisdiction not only over the laity, but over the elders of their own churches. Therefore, neither Christ, nor Peter, intended to take away difference of degrees among ecclesiastical persons; but, whilst they granted to the Apostles, and to the Bishops their successors, *Pastoral rule and Paternal superiority*, they would not have them to assume over the elders, or the people of God, a *royal or lordly dominion*. This inequality Jerome acknowledged in his Epistle to Nepotian: *Be subject to thy Pontiff, and receive him as a father to thy soul*. And a little after, *Let the Bishops know that they are priests, not lords: let them honour the Clergy, as Clergy; and also let honour be paid to them as Bishops by the Clergy*.

2. It is objected, that in the Acts, and in the Epistles of St. Paul, Presbyters are called Bishops, and *vice versa*. Hence some labour to prove not only that Presbyters are equal to Bishops, but that they are altogether the same with Bishops. Thus, Acts xx. 17, 28, Paul addressing the Presbyters of one Church, calls them all *Bishops*. So also Phil. i. 1, he calls all the Presbyters of that Church, *Bishops*; and Titus i. 7, he designates the same persons with the name of *Presbyters and Bishops*. Moreover, the Apostle Peter applies the name *Elder or Presbyter* to himself, 1 Epis. v. 1, *The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also myself a FELLOW ELDER*. So also St. John, Epis. ii. and iii., calls himself *the Elder*. From which passages, Jerome (Epist. ad Evagrium) long since inferred, that the Apostles clearly taught that Presbyters and Bishops are the same.

To this, we concede, that in the time of the Apostles, these titles were promiscuously used; and that for many reasons. First, the Apostles, being in or near the spot, placed, for the time, in many churches which they founded, Presbyters alone, with equal power, to whose care in common the church was commended. And they were rightly called *Bishops*, whose office it was to superintend and preside over the flock committed to them. Furthermore, in those things which are of greatest moment to the salvation of men, viz. in preaching the Gospel and dispensing the Sacraments, Presbyters, no less than Bishops, keep watch, and superintend the promoting the salvation of souls; wherefore, the name Bishops would aptly be applied to them. Finally, it is probable that the Apostles, to testify humility, mingled the terms of ecclesiastical offices; because, as Gregory says, *in respect of humility, all Priests are equals*. But as the Apostles were not, therefore,

depressed below the degree of the apostleship, in being called *Disciples* or *Presbyters*; so when certain of the Disciples were called *Apostles*, and certain of the Presbyters *Bishops*, they were not directly equalled with the Apostles and Bishops properly so called. *Words signify according as they are understood*, says Durandus. Now, we understand, as well from Scripture, as from the perpetual practice of the Church, that the term *Bishop*, taken largely, may be accommodated to any one who has the care of souls: but, taken strictly and appropriately, it suits those alone who have the singular power of ordaining, and exercising the keys. Therefore, from the promiscuous use of the terms, a parity of ministers is not duly inferred.

3. They object, that although it be acknowledged that the Apostles were superior to the other Ministers of the Gospel, yet, as their vocation was extraordinary, so also was their power. Bishops, therefore, cannot claim superiority or power over other Presbyters, because this excelling power being annexed to the *persons* of the Apostles, did not pass over to the Bishops their successors.

We answer, that Jerome said rightly, *Bishops hold in the Catholic Church the place of the Apostles*. Yet we allow that many of their privileges were personal, and cannot be claimed by Bishops: Such as were, immediate vocation, universal delegation to all nations, infallibility in teaching, the gift of tongues and miracles; in one word, whatever specially related to the laying the first foundations of the Christian Church. But the Apostles had certain privileges which distinguished them from ordinary Presbyters, and were plainly necessary for the enlargement of the Church. Of this kind were *ordination* of Presbyters, that the Gospel Ministry might not utterly perish; and the *government* of Presbyters, that they might not destroy the Church by heresies, schisms, or corrupt morals. These, and such as these, without which a Church when constituted can neither well exist, nor be rightly governed, were transmitted to Bishops, and make them higher in degree, and greater in power, than other Presbyters.

In the last place, they strongly object the authority of Jerome, who says on Titus i. *A Bishop and Presbyter is one; and before parties took place in religion, the Church was governed by the common counsel of Presbyters*. And he adds; *Let Bishops know that they are superior to Presbyters, more by custom, than any true appointment of the Lord*.

To the two first remarks the reply is easy. For Jerome was referring to that time in which the Apostles had not yet ordained Bishops properly so called, but retained to themselves those privileges which are now proper to Bishops. In that interval the same persons were called Bishops and Presbyters; and the Church of Ephesus, Corinth, and others, were governed by their common counsel; but so that the Apostles, being near, reserved to themselves the ordaining of Presbyters, and excommunicating of sinners. But what certain learned men have thought, that this order of governing churches, as it were by a senate of Presbyters, was not changed, or one Bishop set over others, whilst the Apostles were alive, is plainly repugnant to Scripture and Ecclesiastical history. For it is certain that Timothy, Titus, James, and many other Bishops, properly so called, were set over, and, as it were, affixed to the churches of Ephesus, Crete, and Jerusalem, whilst the Apostles were alive. It is also certain, that those Asiatic churches to which Christ wrote (Rev. ii.) had their own Bishops, superior to Presbyters, whilst the Apostle John was living. It is no injury, therefore, to the dignity of Bishops, that Presbyters did, for a short time, rule certain churches, with equal authority and common counsel: but it rather confirms the necessity of the Episcopal office, seeing that that Presbyterial government rent the churches with perpetual discords, even whilst the Apostles were alive to witness it.

As to the last objection of Jerome, viz. that Bishops are greater than Presbyters more by custom than any true appointment of the Lord, it appears to press somewhat closer. But we answer, first, that his words are not to be too closely pressed; for he writes differently in different places, and inconsistently, on this same subject. Nevertheless, his words may be allowed in a sound sense; since he may be understood to speak of *the titles*, not of *the offices*: for custom, and not any appointment of the Lord, or his Apostles, hath made the *title* of Bishop greater than that of Presbyter. Or, Jerome may be understood to speak of that authority which Bishops had obtained over Presbyters in his age. For this consisted, in a great degree, in privileges which had been conceded to them by custom and the authority of councils; but was not founded in any constitution of the Apostles. Finally, Jerome perhaps intended by the expression *true appointment of the Lord*, an express command of our Lord in Scripture; and

by custom, a practice begun by the Apostles, and perpetually observed in the Church. But in whatever way his words be expounded, it is certain that Jerome acknowledged a diversity of degrees among the Clergy, which is sufficient to refute the equality of Ministers

AN
EXPOSITION
OF THE
EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL
TO
THE COLOSSIANS.

THE AUTHOR'S DEDICATION.

TO

HIS BENIGNANT MOTHER,

THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

AT ALL TIMES HELD IN HIGHEST RENOWN FOR VIRTUE,

PIETY, AND THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SOUND

DOCTRINE;

THESE FIRST-FRUITS OF

HIS THEOLOGICAL PROFESSORSHIP,

ORIGINALLY COMPOSED THEREIN,

AND NOW AGAIN REVISED,

ARE WILLINGLY AND DESERVEDLY GIVEN,

DEDICATED, AND INSCRIBED,

IN TOKEN OF AFFECTION AND HONOUR,

BY

HER MOST DEVOTED SON,

JOHN DAVENANT.

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER.

RECEIVE with indulgence these Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul to the *Colossians*, which I formerly delivered at the commencement of my Theological Professorship in the celebrated University of *Cambridge*. I have with difficulty brought myself, among such a number of very learned interpreters, to permit this my feeble performance to go before the Public: but at length the importunity of friends, who thought that some benefit might accrue from this my work to the Church of Christ (to which it is fit that myself, and all that is mine, should be subservient,) overcame me. Use now (if it seem good to thee), kind Reader, this labour of mine; but on condition that thou neither expect any highly wrought diction from the expounder of an Apostle who avowedly renounces all enticing words; nor, in the Exposition itself, require any thing remarkable from him, who acknowledges himself to be but one Expositor among many, and desires rather to be hidden in the thick crowd, than stand conspicuous. If I shall have brought any light to the clearer understanding of the mind of the Apostle; if in any way I shall have aided Tyros in Theology, by this my lucubration, my design, and (I imagine) thy expectations, are answered. Whoever from this

my writing shall derive any profit, let him render all the glory to God; from whom we have freely and gratuitously received our *sufficiency* (however much or little it may be) to accomplish this work. To this supreme God, the Giver of all good, commend me in thy prayers, and fare thee well in the Lord.

IN compliance with custom, I have a few things to premise, which may render the access to the explication of the context itself more easy; and these I shall refer to four heads: First, I shall say something of the Colossians; to whom this Epistle was written; next, of the occasion or cause of this writing; then, of the particular design of the whole Epistle; and lastly, of the distribution of it into its parts. We now proceed to these points in the order in which they are proposed.

Some seek for Colosse at Rhodes, induced by this argument, that it is evident the great Colossus of the Sun was in that Island; from which they will have the Colossians to have derived their name. But the opinion of Jerome and Chrysostom is far more probable, who write that this city was situated in Phrygia, not far from Hierapolis and Laodicea. This St. Paul himself seems to intimate, since in the fourth Chapter he commands this Epistle to be read in the Church of Laodicea; whence we may be allowed to conjecture that these two Churches were near each other: but no one places the Laodiceans among the Rhodians. Moreover, Xenophon bears attestation to this, who, in lib. 1, De Expeditione Cyri, writes, that after he had entered Phrygia, he went direct to Colosse, a populous, wealthy, and great city. Besides, Eusebius, in his Chronicles, relates that three cities of Asia, (Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse,) fell by the same earthquake. Add to these testimonies Pliny, who, in lib. 5, Natur. hist. cap. 32, has not placed Colosse in any Island, but reckoned it among the Towns of the Continent. But we need not anxiously inquire

*after those things which are the province of another, and may be sought from Geographers. Whoever the Colossians were, we may be firmly persuaded of this, that the benefit of this Epistle ought to extend to ourselves as well as to them.**

Now, as to the occasion of the writing, we must recollect that the Church of Colosse was founded in purity, and rightly instructed in the mystery of the Gospel by Epaphras, and other faithful Ministers of the Word. But there soon sprang up ministers of Satan, whose great aim was to obscure the Gospel, and trouble the Church. Some of these, as though the simplicity of the Gospel were unworthy the wisdom of man, obtruded philosophical subtleties upon the Colos-

* There seems no doubt that Colosse was situated in Phrygia, in the neighbourhood of Laodicea and Hierapolis, in whose destruction it is said, as above, to have participated. The Rev. F. Arundel, in his recent "Visit to the seven Churches," made a point of investigating the actual scite of Colosse, whose scanty ruins he seems to have clearly ascertained in the immediate vicinity of the present Town of Khonas, which appears to have sprung up from its ashes, for we find the Bishop of Chonæ present at the second Nicene Council. The Translator cannot forbear quoting the following interesting scene, which was presented to Mr. Arundel, when taking his farewell of this district. "Having crossed," says he, "a small river, (probably the Asopus,) flowing down to the plain, about half past two, our course nearly west, we were overtaken by a heavy shower, or rather a torrent, which lasted a full half hour. Nothing could exceed the grandeur of the scene just before the rain began to fall, and at the moment when it ceased. On the left were the lofty peaks of Mount Cadmus, of the darkest hue, with a few streaks of snow along their sides; clouds of a whitish colour rolling beneath those peaks, whilst the atmosphere above them was one mass of condensed clouds, black as night. On the right hand was the ridge of mount Messogis, partly in dark shadow, and partly bright with patches of sunshine; while the terrace on which were the ruins of Hierapolis, glittered with the reflexion of the white masses of incrustation, resembling sheets of water, or of ice falling over the edge. A rainbow of the most vivid colours I ever beheld, with an outer one as vivid as rainbows commonly are, extended over the whole of the scites of Hierapolis and Laodicea. This said, or seemed to say, 'Dark and gloomy as the prospect now is, and has long been, in these once highly favoured regions, the bow of mercy is again shining; and soon shall the rays of the Gospel-sun dispel all recollection of the days of pagan darkness.'"

sians; others, as though Christ were not sufficient for salvation, recalled the abrogated ceremonies of the Law. Thus, whilst they attempted to confound Theology with Philosophy, Christ with Moses, they threw that Church into the greatest danger. The devout Minister of Christ could not patiently bear these troublers; he hastens, therefore, to Paul, then a prisoner at Rome; he gives an Epitome of the Evangelical doctrine which he had been preaching; he shews the errors and impostures of the new teachers. Upon that, the Apostle, under the impulse and direction of the Divine Spirit, confirms the doctrine of Epaphras by his own authority, and exhorts the Colossians to persevere constantly in the same, despising the foolish subtleties and absurdities of all heretics.—Such was the occasion of his writing.

THE DESIGN of the whole Epistle is this, That all hope of human Salvation is to be reposed in Christ alone; therefore, that we must rest entirely on the faith of Christ, and live according to the rule of the Gospel, rejecting Mosaic Ceremonies, and Philosophical speculations.

Of the parts of this Epistle it would be out of place to say much. When we come to particulars these will be developed more advantageously; I will now exhibit only a cursory view of them. If, therefore, we set aside the title or inscription, the Epistle contains five parts: A congratulatory exordium, in which he commends the faith and other virtues of the Colossians, and desires for them advancement in faith and holiness. To this he immediately subjoins a lively description of Christ and his benefits; declaring him to be the true Son of God, the only Head and Saviour of his Church. Having firmly established this doctrine, in the third

place, he attempts a refutation of the seducers who were thrusting philosophical fooleries and antiquated ceremonies upon the Colossians. The fourth part contains instruction in morals; wherein he roots out vices, inculcates virtues, and, lastly, forms the life of Christians, both in duties common to all, and to their domestic relations in life. The conclusion contains some private matters and salutations directed to different persons.

CORRIGENDA ET EMENDATA.

In the course of inspecting the Sheets previous to their being done up, a few typographical errors in single letters have been observed, which it was difficult to detect in the proofs, especially in the Greek sentences; as, for instance, ς for ζ, in two or three places, and mostly at the end of a word: these the observing and learned Reader will correct for himself.

Page 93, line 22, for *access may be had*, &c. read, access to the Gospel is open to all nations.

Page 95, the passage from Tertullian about the middle ought to read thus, *When we have believed the Gospel, we require nothing farther; for we have beforehand believed, that there is not any thing which it is our duty farther to believe.*—Mr. Craig has given a paraphrastic version of this passage, in conjunction with another, in his “Refutation,” which may throw light on the quotation, obscure in itself: “When we have believed the Gospel, there is nothing further necessary to be believed; because from it we know every thing necessary to be known. This being the rule of faith which brings salvation, we have no further article, except that there is nothing further to be believed.”—The passage of Tertullian is from the treatise *De Præscript. Hæret. cap. 7*, the last words of the Chapter.

Page 146, line 10 from the bottom, for the Θ, read O.

Page 149, line 6 from the bottom, for *inwardly*, read outwardly.

Page 166, line 10, dele *straightway*.

AN EXPOSITION
OF THE
EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO THE
COLOSSIANS.

CHAP. I.

1. *Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother,*
2. *To the Saints and faithful Brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

THERE are four parts of this first Chapter. The first is completed in these two short verses which I have read; and contains the inscription or title prefixed to the Epistle itself. The second comprises a preface adapted to conciliate good-will; from the 3d to the 12th verse. The third part embraces an exposition of doctrine concerning Christ and his benefits; to verse 23. The last part to the end of the chapter, exhorts to advancement and constancy in the same doctrine.

In the title three things are to be observed: the subscription; the inscription; and the salutation. The terms *subscription* and *inscription* are derived from our custom in letter-writing. For it is usual for the name of the sender to be *subscribed* to the letter itself; and the name of him

to whom it is sent to be *inscribed* on the back of it. Of these in order.

The Subscription contains three things: the Names of those who send this Epistle, *Paul* and *Timotheus*: their different descriptions; the one *an Apostle of Christ*, the other *a brother*: the Founder of the apostolic office, *Jesus Christ by the will of God*. We shall now follow the thread of the context.

Paul.] I shall say but little concerning the Name, because nothing can be advanced which is either very necessary, or that is not very trite and frequently repeated. It is evident that he had been called *Saul*. Some therefore allege that he changed his name when he embraced the Christian Religion, that he might declare his change of mind by this circumstance; for from being a proud and haughty Pharisee, he became a lowly and humble disciple of Christ. This opinion is favoured by Augustine in his Exposition of Ps. lxxii. where he thus comments, *At first he was Saul, afterwards Paul; first proud, afterwards humble; not as though he changed his name from any vain glory, but because from a proud man, he became lowly; for the word Paulus means little*. Others think the Apostle assumed this name after he had brought *Sergius Paulus*, the Proconsul, to the faith of Christ, as a memorial of so great a conquest. But Luke himself discountsenances this, who, in Acts xiii. 9, calls him *Paul* before the conversion of the Proconsul. A third opinion is that of Origen; who writes that this our Apostle was distinguished from the first by two names; *Saul* being his family name given him by his parents, to intimate his religion and his origin; *Paul* being added to shew that he was a citizen of Rome. He uses this latter name in his Epistles, because it was better reputed, and more acceptable among the Gentiles. Indeed the same father shews in the same passage, that it was a common practice among the Jews to take two names. Now if any one wishes for a *personal description* of Paul, let him consult Nicephorus, lib. ii. c. 37; his *life and manners* let him seek from Acts viii. ix. xxii. and xxvi.; from Gal. i.; and 1 Tim. i.; his *praises* from Eusebius, who terms him, *the most learned of the Apostles, most powerful in*

speech and understanding: from Jerome,* who calls him *the trumpet of the Gospel, the thunder of the Gentiles, the stream of eloquence, &c.* But Chrysostom sets forth his praises most amply, in his discourses, *De Pauli laudibus*.†

An Apostle.] This is a title of office or dignity. It denotes, if we regard the origin of the term, any man whatever sent by another with a commission; for it is derived from the Greek *αποστελλειν*: but if we attend to the common application of it, it denotes certain select ambassadors of Christ. But, as Thomas‡ says, in *terms* we must regard not so much *from what they are derived, as to what purpose intended.*

The name, then, of Apostle, according to the use of sacred Scripture, belongs to those only, First, who had received an immediate call from God to preach the Gospel: *He chose twelve, whom he named Apostles, Luke vi. 13, and John xx. 21; As my Father hath sent me even so send I you.*

* Ad Pammach. advers. errores Joan Hierosol.

† The characters referred to in this section were either illustrious Fathers of the Christian Church who flourished in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries; or eminent writers of their day, whose productions have gained them celebrity and become standing authority. Augustine, Eusebius, and Chrysostom were Bishops of the early Christian Church; the former of Hippo, in Africa; the second of Cæsarea, and the third of Constantino-ple. This latter acquired the surname of Chrysostom, on account of his singular eloquence, the term meaning "golden mouth." He was an admired rhetorician and orator, and the praises of Paul were a fine subject for his powers to descant upon. Eusebius became celebrated by his numerous writings, but especially as an early historian of the Church of Christ. Jerome was particularly distinguished as a man of profound learning and extensive information; he was an able critic and a voluminous writer; the author of the Latin version of the Scriptures commonly termed the Vulgate, and from which Davenant in this Exposition generally cites his Scripture authorities. The Nicephorus referred to, is Nicephorus Callistus, a Monk of Constantinople of the fourteenth century, who wrote, in Greek, an Ecclesiastical History, in 23 books, 18 of which are still extant, containing the transactions of the Church from the birth of Christ to the death of Phocas, in 610. It was considered of such worth as to be translated into Latin by John Langius, and attained such celebrity as to have passed through several editions.

‡ Our Author means Thomas Aquinas, whom he often cites, sometimes under one name, sometimes the other.

Secondly, who had received a certain and infallible knowledge of evangelical doctrine, by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Christ promised this to them, John xvi. 13, *The Spirit of truth shall guide you into all truth*; this he fulfilled in Acts ii.* Thirdly, who had received an authority, not restricted to one place, or to a certain church, but plenary and universal; *Teach all nations*, Matth. xxviii. *Preach to every creature*, Mark xvi. Now it is evident that Paul possessed all these. His immediate call is proved from Acts ix. 15, *The Lord said to him* (i. e. to Ananias, who had hesitated to seek Paul) *Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me*; and Gal. i. 1. His immediate inspiration of the mystery of the Gospel, from Gal. i. 12, *I was not taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*. His universal authority, from Acts ix. 15, where he is called *a chosen vessel to bear the name of God before the Gentiles and the Children of Israel*. And elsewhere he is termed *the teacher*, not of this or of that church, but *of the Gentiles*, Rom. i. 5.

We have thus proved the Apostleship of Paul. Now let us inquire why in this place, and several others, he makes mention of *this* his office. First, he does it that he might silence the false Apostles, who whispered in the ears of the people that he was not one of the Apostles, because he had no intercourse with Christ whilst he dwelt upon earth, and because he was not among them when the Holy Spirit in the likeness of tongues of fire sat upon each of them. But notwithstanding this, he styles and proves himself *an Apostle*, because he was directly called and instructed by Christ, although not at the same time as the rest.

Secondly, he claims the title of *an Apostle*, that he might make known to the faithful themselves the certainty of his doctrine. For it is absolutely necessary that it should be known whence that doctrine proceeded which is delivered to the Churches; if from human opinion, it cannot be sure and infallible; but if from the ambassadors of God himself, and men inspired by the Holy Spirit for this work of

* By the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

preaching, then we can safely repose faith upon it. *All created truth is liable to error, unless so far as it is rectified by that which is uncreated*, Aquinas, quæst. disp. de fide, art. 8.

Lastly, Paul affixes the name of his office, that he might excite and stir up himself, to fulfil the work of an Apostle. For, in calling himself *an Apostle*, he owns that the duty of preaching the Gospel was entrusted to him; and woe unto him, if he did not perform it.

Of Jesus Christ.] He dignifies his Apostleship from its Founder.

By the will of God] i. e. Not only by the authority of Christ as man, but by the gift, ordination, and approbation of God. What is here spoken concerning God is to be attributed not to the Father alone, but to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: for Apostles are appointed by the will and authority of these also. *Christ gave Apostles*, Ephes. iv. 11. The Holy Ghost said, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul*, Acts xiii. 2. Neither can the will of these, whose essence is one, be dissevered. Paul therefore was called and chosen to the Apostleship; the sacred Trinity so willing, ordering, and ordaining it. The Apostle adduced this that the Colossians, to whom he was personally unknown, might understand that he did not write these things rashly, or intrude himself into the concerns of that church; but that he did it in virtue of his apostolic office and authority, whereby the care of all the churches rested upon him. And so he was able, though absent, to direct the faithful, to reprove seducers, and to support the sinking state of that church. For all these things were enjoined and imposed upon him *by the will of God*. Thus much concerning *Paul*.

And Timotheus our Brother.] Concerning Timothy very excellent testimonies are found in the Scriptures. He was descended from pious ancestors, as appears from Acts xvi. and 2 Tim. i. 5. He himself also was pious and faithful, as this our Apostle in many places testifies. He calls him *his work-fellow*, Rom. xvi. 21; *a Son dearly beloved and faith-*

ful in the Lord, 1 Cor. iv. 17; *most learned in the Scriptures*, 2 Tim. iii. 15; and he honours him with many other commendations. But in this place he calls him *Brother*, either on account of his agreement in religion and true doctrine with Paul, or from that common respect whereby all Christians call one another *Brethren*; because they are presumed to be children by adoption of the same heavenly Father.

It may be objected, Paul was the instrument of the Spirit in delivering the doctrine of this Epistle: why then does he associate Timothy with himself?

We answer; Three causes are alleged, why, in the title of this Epistle, he chose to join the name of Timothy with his own.

First, to shew that he did not preach any other doctrine to them than that very doctrine which Timothy approved, who was in repute among them. For although the doctrine of Paul does not require any outward recommendation, yet the agreement and concord of ministers in the same doctrine contributes much to persuasion. Secondly, to render Timothy more acceptable to that church, whilst in this subscription he unites him to himself as an equal. Lastly, because perhaps Timothy was his amanuensis in writing this Epistle.

Thus far we have explained *the subscription*. Now let us unfold the doctrines.

Paul calls himself *an Apostle of Christ*, and that *by the will of God*: What do we gather from hence?

1. That faith is to be yielded equally to these writings of Paul, as if Christ himself or God were speaking from heaven. For an Apostle is the ambassador of God, the amanuensis of the Holy Spirit. Among believers, therefore, they are received on their own authority, nor need any external or human testimony, any more than Christ himself needed it. If any one should enquire, Whence do you know these Scriptures to have proceeded from men inspired by Divine illumination, and not from impostors? I answer: This principle applies to all other things, That

you should understand what it behoves you to believe : but this faith is the gift of God. Thus says Augustine,* *Confess. lib. 6. cap. 5, Thou hast persuaded me, O God, that not those who have believed thy books, but those who have not believed them are to be blamed; neither should they be listened to, if any by chance should say, Whence do you know these books to be furnished to the human race by the Spirit of the only true God?*

2. That it is useful and necessary for all ministers of the Gospel oftentimes to bring to mind, what office and what station they hold in the church; that having their vocation continually in remembrance they may endeavour to fulfil their duty to the utmost of their power. For he

* Though Augustine has been already noticed, yet such readers as are not familiar with the ancient fathers may wish to know more of him; and especially as it will be found that our Expositor often refers to him. A few remarks, therefore, in addition to what was observed (page 3) may be allowed here. At an early age Augustine was instructed, by his pious mother, in the principles of Christianity; but being a youth of great vivacity, he was led into extreme dissipation, and gave himself to licentious pleasure without restraint. For this, however, he afterwards made ample reparation to society, in the most ingenuous manner, by his book of Confessions, cited above. Moving from place to place, in the study and profession of rhetoric and polite literature, and having taught at Carthage and Rome, his mind in the mean while thirsting after truth, he came at length under the preaching of St. Ambrose, at Milan; a circumstance which led to a thorough conversion at the age of 32. Soon after this his life became devoted to piety and religion; and, says a competent judge of his writings in the present day, "the humility, devotion, and unction of this father; the acute, lucid, and happy way in which he meets his objectors; and the heavenly wisdom running through his remarks, will always, notwithstanding the excess of allegorical interpretation and the defect of a clear statement of justification, make his writing valuable." Bickersteth's *Christian Student*. Perhaps, as Milner has remarked, "the doctrine of justification was never fully and clearly exhibited to the Church (after the times of the Apostles) until the days of Luther;" yet it is somewhat remarkable that, excepting this defect, Augustine has been deemed to accord mostly in doctrinal sentiments with Calvin. But another critic (Mr. Conybeare, in his *Bampton Lectures*) has observed, "he who is insensible to the beauty, the piety, and the devotion and spiritual feeling which are to be found in almost every page of Augustine's Commentary, must be, to say no more, both uncandid and fastidious." Augustine was ordained Bishop of Hippo in 395, and died in 430, aged 76. His works form 10 vols. folio. His "City of God," his "Confessions and Meditations," have been translated into English.

who is always reminding himself, I am a Bishop, I am a Presbyter, must needs at the same time understand, that it is not allowable for him to indulge in idleness, or natural inclination, but that he must keep his eye on his flock. It is scandalous to be compelled to say of ministers what Tacitus (Hist. 3) writes of Licinius, *Such a torpor had invaded his mind, that unless others reminded him that he was a prince, he himself would have forgotten it.*

3. That it is incumbent upon those appointed to ecclesiastical dignity, not only to discharge the duties of their office, but to defend the authority and respectability of that office against obstinate and schismatical revilers. For so Paul claims to himself apostolic dignity not from self-consequence, but lest the contempt of his authority should bring into contempt that of the Church: for contempt of religion itself always follows contempt of those who are at the head of the church and direct the affairs of religion.* Hence Paul advised Timothy so to conduct himself, as that *no one should despise his youth*, 1 Tim. iv. 12.

It would be easy to deduce from these instructions many things adapted to form and correct the manners; but that may be left to your own industry and prudence.† I shall add two things only, which, from the declaration that Paul was made *an Apostle by the will of God*, conduce greatly to the comfort of the godly. It hence appears,

1. That God cannot but prove efficient when those means are used for the salvation of men which he himself hath ordained for that purpose. Although, therefore, the preaching of the Gospel by men weak, despised, defiled by sin, may seem an insignificant means to the attainment of human salvation; yet, since it is the ordinance and will of God, it will prove most effectual: for *the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than man*, 1 Cor. i. 25. There will be no need therefore to ex-

* Here we are reminded of the well known opinion of Dr. Johnson, that "Malevolence to the Clergy is not far removed from irreverence for Religion." The coincidence of sentiment is singular.

† It should be borne in mind that this Exposition was delivered as Lectures to Divinity Students in the University.

pect either an angel from heaven, or extraordinary visions and divine revelations; we have only to hearken to apostolic doctrine, and it will be *the power of God to salvation to all that believe.*

2. It also follows, that this appointment of Apostles *by the will of God*, discovers to us the wonderful love of God towards mankind, and his inexpressible desire of our salvation. For what else is sending Apostles into the world, than sending ambassadors who should pray and intreat men that they would be reconciled to God; that they would embrace the offered salvation? Hence Paul calls the apostolic work *the ministry of reconciliation*, and says, 2 Cor. v. 20, *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.* Behold the *goodness and loving-kindness* of God, and that *spontaneous, not called for*, as Tertullian says, *by us.*

Now, in the last place, it will not be foreign to our purpose to scrutinize that apostolic dignity which the Pope claims to himself. For on all occasions he vaunts about the *Apostolic See, Apostolic Benedictions, Apostolic Anathemas*; in short, boasts of every thing Apostolic. Wherefore from what has been explained above concerning the nature of an Apostle, this question arises, Whether the Pope of Rome has, or has not, the apostolic dignity and authority?

Bellarmin,* De pontif. Rom. lib. 1. cap. 9, asserts the apostolic authority to be permanent in the successor

* Bellarmin. The greatest champion of the Church of Rome, whose folio volumes have been an exhaustless armoury whence her modern defenders have supplied themselves with weapons, though they have found it convenient seldom to imitate his ingenuousness; for his works are honourably distinguished for the full and candid way in which the Protestant views are stated. The celebrity of his labours may be evinced by the circumstance that all the most learned and eminent of the Reformed Advocates deemed it right to direct their powers against this famous controversialist. Yet notwithstanding his pre-eminence among her vindicators, it has been rightly observed by a living Prelate, that "Bellarmin was not in the best odour with the See of Rome; his notions of the Papal prerogative not being sufficiently high to reach the views there entertained of the Pope's supremacy." (Bp. Van Mildert's speech before the House of Lords, 1825.)—

of Peter alone, because supreme and universal power was given to Peter as to an *ordinary Pastor*,* who should have successors; but to the other Apostles, as to delegates, who should not. The Pope of Rome is therefore alone the *Apostolic Pontiff*, his only the *Apostolic See*, and his office that of an *Apostle*.

But on the contrary, the nature of an Apostle demands that a man be immediately called by God to that office; that he be also instructed in evangelical truth immediately, by the infallible inspiration of the Holy Spirit: but this is more than the advocates of the Papacy themselves dare arrogate to the Pope. He is not immediately called by God, but chosen by the Cardinals, and that very often through the intervention of intrigue and the basest fraud. His knowledge of sacred learning (if he has any) is acquired by study and industry, not inspired like that of the Apostles. Therefore although they may call him an *Apostle*, we shall conclude with Tertullian, advers. Marc. lib. 1, *The name is assigned in mockery to him to whom the nature implied in the name is denied.*

Bellarmin was a Jesuit of Tuscany raised first by Clement VIII., in 1599, to a Cardinalate, and afterwards to the Bishopric of Capua; which See he resigned to be near the Pope's person, and devote himself entirely to the affairs of the church. He died in 1621, in his seventy-first year; "bequeathing one half of his soul," says Du Pin, "to the Virgin, and the other to Jesus Christ!" thus affording a melancholy testimony of the power with which the superstition of the Church of Rome enchains her members: for this same strenuous defender of the doctrines of his Church, in the tranquillity of private meditation, comes to this conclusion in his book, De just. lib. v. c. 7. prop. 3, "Because of the uncertainty of our own righteousness, and the danger of vain-glory, it is the safest way to place our entire trust in the alone mercy and benignity of God." His devotional writings evince him to have been a man of undoubted piety; and, at his death, so impressed were the people with the idea of his sanctity, that it was necessary to place guards to keep off the crowds which pressed round to touch his body, or procure some relic of his garments.

* It is necessary for the reader, not versed in technical terms, to bear in mind here the Ecclesiastical meaning of the word "*Ordinary*." Williams, in his "*Laws of the Clergy*," thus defines it: "Ordinary, ordinarius (which is a word we have received from the Civil law) is he who has the proper and regular jurisdiction, as of course and of common right; in opposition to persons who are extraordinarily appointed."

Secondly, an Apostle is bound to the preaching of the Gospel (*Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel*), and that not in any one particular church, but every where: but the Roman Pontiffs do not think themselves obliged to preach through all the world, neither do they exercise that office at all: therefore they either lie when they call themselves Apostles, or act wickedly in neglecting to discharge the peculiar functions of an Apostle.

But perhaps it will be said, they send out preachers by their authority, and gather new churches in the Indies, and in the most remote parts of the world; and this property belongs to apostolic authority.

I answer, Nothing is less apostolic than to remain at home at ease, and send out others to labour: the Apostles indeed had inferior ministers under them, whose assistance they made use of; but they themselves in the mean time did not omit the preaching of the Gospel. Since therefore the apostolic work is not found in the Pope, neither is the apostolic nature: *for every thing evinces its own proper nature by its operations.** Add to this that he hath neither the power of working miracles, nor of conferring the Holy Spirit; and yet these were united in all who received apostolic authority from Christ. When the advocates of

* It may be seen by a reference to the history of the proceedings of their Missionaries in China, since Davenant wrote the above, and by the report of the Abbé Dubois, more recently, as to the result of his preaching in Hindostan, both on what anti-apostolic principles their preachers proceed, and what a different success attended them; and late statements from South America exhibit a woful description of their Priests and churches there. It has been asserted lately that the present Pope expends more money from his own coffers in promoting Missionary efforts of one kind or other than is raised by all the Missionary Societies among Protestants. If this be the case, whilst the above allusion to the results should satisfy Christians of the want of the main thing, yet such zeal, and sacrifice, and effort should, at the same time, reprove our lukewarmness and niggardliness.—For an ample account of Popish zeal, see “*Adams’s Religious World Displayed*,” vol. i. p. 323. A statement of Dr. Milner of America, given in the *Missionary Register* for June, 1830, and an article in the *Christian Examiner* for August, 1830, p. 611, both on the subject of papal zeal at the present time, are worth the reader’s consultation. They contain important and instructive details.

the Pontiffs are pressed with these clear reasons, they are compelled to shuffle, and to attribute a sort of half and mutilated apostolic authority to their Pope. So Bellarmin, lib. ii. de Rom. Pont. cap. 12, says, Three things are comprised *in the Apostleship*: First, that a man be immediately called and taught by God; and this he confesses that his Romish Apostle hath not: Secondly, that he should establish churches in those places where they never were: Thirdly, that he should have the chief power over all churches, and be the Ordinary of the whole Church: and he says these two marks of the Apostleship do meet in the Roman Pontiff. But Cajetan, in tract. 3, de Rom. Pont. institut. confesses, *If we must speak formally and exactly, Peter had no successor in his Apostleship more than the rest of the Apostles: but beyond this Apostleship he was the ordinary Pastor of the whole world: in this office of superintending the universal Church the Pope succeeds him, and so far his chair is called Apostolic.**

But neither must we concede this to the defenders of the Papacy. First, because God doth not set over the Catholic Church any universal Bishop fortified with apostolic authority, who may err, and draw those under him into errors. With this argument Gregory checked the pride of John of Constantinople. He says, Epist. lib. 4, cap. 76, *The Catholic Church must needs miscarry, when he falls who is called Universal.†* But it is agreed amongst the

* Cajetan; otherwise Thomas de Vio, of Gaeta, another eminent defender of the Papacy, who flourished prior to Bellarmin. Besides the work above-mentioned, he wrote notes on Aristotle and Aquinas, and an Exposition on almost all the Books of the Old and New Testament, which Mosheim describes as brief and judicious. Though an amiable man, he entertained such lofty ideas of papal authority, that in his efforts to reclaim Luther, he became a strenuous opposer of that Reformer; and in his proceedings both greatly lost his temper, and threw a cloud over his other excellencies. He was made a Cardinal, and afterwards Archbishop of Palermo; and accounted by Papists the oracle of his day.

† The well-known letter in which this sentence was given by Pope Gregory, commonly styled the Great, may be found at the end of all the complete copies of Brent's Translation of F. Paul's History of the Council of Trent. It must be admitted, that, viewed with reference to his character, there appears as much of personal ambition as of piety in this famous Epis-

defenders of the Papacy themselves, that the Pope may become an heretic, and in such case ought to be deposed. Distinct. 40, Can. Si Papa.

Secondly, he is not the universal Pastor of the Church, who, by virtue of his ordination, is bound to his own particular See: but the Roman Bishop, like any other, is bound down to his See, and to his Church of Rome; or, if he hath any more extended prerogative, he hath it by human, not by Divine right. And yet it is not of men, but of God alone to confer apostolic authority. So Cyprian: *No one of us appoints himself a Bishop of bishops. Be he whom you will, he has but the free control over his own jurisdiction.* Afterwards he subjoins that *the authority of*

tle; for Gregory was remarkable for his earnestness in exalting his See. Hence it has been justly remarked, that "there is no word in all the writings of Gregory wherein he more proudly boasts of the greatness of his Supremacy, than where he says, that he knew no Bishop who was not subject to the See Apostolic." Nay, this very letter is filled with assumptions of the same lofty kind; as where he asserts, that "to St. Peter was given the care and principality of the whole Church;" and that "the title of Universal Bishop was offered to the Bishop of Rome, by the Council of Chalcedon, and refused;" which appears to be altogether untrue. It is evident, however, that although pride and ambition were beginning to work in the Church on either hand, the grand principle on which all is built that has since brought the Church of Rome into such melancholy distinction was not, up to this period, admitted; for Gregory, in arguing with John of Constantinople against his adoption of the obnoxious title—Œcumenicus, or Universal—urges, that *it* was never given to St. Peter; none of the Bishops of Rome had ever assumed it; it was contrary to the Canons, to the Decrees of the Fathers, and an affront to Almighty God himself." But, in fact, through the letter, whilst he quarrels with the usurpation of the *Name* by his rival prelate, Gregory unreservedly claims the *Thing* both for himself and his See; to secure which he did not scruple to stoop to base flattery of the bloody usurper Phocas. Mr. Blanco White, in his interesting "Practical Evidences against Catholicism," imputes to Gregory that neglect of ancient literature, and the substitution of scholastic learning, by which the corruptions of Popery and the religious darkness of the world were fostered; and gives some extraordinary instances of his illiterateness; and it is the testimony of Ridley concerning Gregory, in his treatise against the errors of Transubstantiation, that "in his days both corruption of doctrine and tyrannical usurpation did chiefly grow." He was the inventor of the magnificent and pompous ceremonies attending the celebration of the Mass, if not of the Mass itself. The Translator cannot avoid adducing here the existing evidence of a fact communicated to him by a friend, who, on visiting Rome

*the African Bishops is no less than that of the Roman.** If however they will not hear Cyprian, yet they will not reject the Council of Nice, which restricts that Œcumenical Bishop within his own limits; vide Can. 6.†

Lastly, an universal and apostolic Bishop may every where ordain Bishops and Pastors of his own right: but if the Pope should ordain a Bishop out of his own province, that would not be a lawful ordination; for so it was held by the Synod above-mentioned. It is quite clear that if any one be made a Bishop without the consent of the Metropolitan, that Synod determined him not to be a Bishop.‡ Cajetan meets this argument ridiculously, by

in 1825, observed in the Church of St. Maria della Modestia (formerly a Temple of Romulus), in the Via Sacra, an inscription in Italian literally thus: "The portrait of the most blessed Mary over the high altar spoke to Pope St. Gregory saying, 'Wherefore dost thou no longer do me reverence?' The Saint asked pardon, and granted to those who celebrate Mass at this altar the liberation of a soul from purgatory, *i. e.* of that soul for which the Mass is said." It is thus the Church of Rome has drawn to herself that wealth whereby she has maintained her power. Gregory was most severe in the point of celibacy of priests; but *discouraged* the persecution of the Jews.

* Cyprian was Bishop of Carthage about the middle of the third century. The whole passage from which the above sentence is cited runs thus: "Neque enim quisquam *nostrum* Episcopum se Episcoporum constituit, aut tyrannico terrore ad obsequendi necessitatem collegas suos adiget." It contains, as Bishop Kaye, in his Ecclesiastical History, p. 239, well observes, "remarkable expressions," and is evidently "aimed at some Bishop who had called himself *Episcopus Episcoporum*."

† Council of Nice: Canon 6. "Let ancient customs prevail; as for instance, those in *Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis*: That the Bishop of Alexandria have power over all these, since the same is customary for the Bishop of *Rome*. Likewise in Antioch and other provinces, let the privileges be secured to the Churches. This is as manifest as any thing at all, that if any be made a Bishop, without the consent of his Metropolitan, this Great Synod has determined that such an one ought not to be a Bishop. If any two or three, out of affectation of dispute, do contradict the Suffrage of the Generality, when duly passed according to Ecclesiastical Canon, let the Votes of the Majority prevail."

‡ From a Translation of the Canons from the original Greek, by John Johnson, M.A. Proctor for the Clergy of the Diocese of Canterbury, in the Clergyman's Vade Mecum by him. 1714.

§ The celebrated Translator of Josephus and Eusebius from Greek into Latin, *Ruffinus*, a Priest, who flourished a little after this period towards

saying, *It is one thing to speak concerning authority, and another thing concerning the execution of it: that the Pope hath the authority of ordaining in the provinces of other Bishops; but that custom has established his non-exertion of this authority.* If he hath this authority by right, it could not be so abolished by custom as to make that ordination actually unlawful which he might effect without the consent of the Metropolitan; for *custom does not prescribe where a thing is forbidden by an express law*, says Hostiensis.* We do not deny that prerogatives have been con-

the close of the fourth century, in giving his sense of the 6th Canon of this Synod, is admitted to have stated it truly and clearly; viz. That the ancient custom he kept both in Alexandria and Rome; that he (the Bishop of Alexandria) have the care of Egypt; the other (the Bishop of Rome) of the Suburbicary Churches, i. e. over all those places in Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, &c. over which the Præfect, or the Vicar of the City of Rome, had jurisdiction in temporal affairs. And even the old *Latin* paraphrastical Version of these Canons confines the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome to the Suburbicary Churches. And not only these two Editions of the Canons, but those of other writers on them, call the several districts in which the Bishops of Rome and Alexandria exercised their jurisdiction, *Provinces*; whereas the district of a Patriarch was always called his *Diocese*, that of an inferior Bishop his *Parish*: And therefore by Metropolitans here must be meant those who had the largest Provinces, or were the most remarkable on account of the largeness of cities, and had a proportionable deference paid to them. The reason why such particular care was taken of the privileges of the Bishop of Alexandria was, that Meletius, Bishop of Lycopolis, being deposed about twenty years before this Council, by Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, in a *provincial* Synod, for idolatry and other crimes, did yet ordain several Bishops and Clergymen in *Egypt*, without the consent, and in opposition to the sentence passed against him by the Bishop and Synod. Against this the 4th Canon of the Council was probably framed:—"A Bishop ought to be *constituted* by all the Bishops that belong to the Province; but if this be not practicable, by reason of urgent necessity, or the length of the way, Three must by all means meet together, and when they have the consent of those that are absent, signified by letter, then let them perform the ordination; and the ratification of what is done must be allowed to the Metropolitan in every Province."

Let it further be observed, that the authority of Metropolitans must have been much older than this Synod; for here their privileges are called *ancient customs*. Vide Johnson's Clergyman's Vade Mecum.

* Hostiensis. The author here cited by Bishop Davenant is Henry de Suza, a celebrated Civilian and Canonist of the 13th century, of such repute as to have been called "the source and splendor of the Law." He

ceded to the Roman Church, and to the Bishop of Rome, by the ancients; but not because of his being the ordinary Pastor of the whole Church, and armed with apostolic authority by right Divine, but on account of the sobriety, the consistency, and the distinguished learning of those who, in the earliest times, were set over that Church; on account of the dignity of the city of Rome, which was the seat of empire; and, lastly, as Gerson says, by the gracious and voluntary concession of other churches.

Now let us sift a few arguments of our opponents.

1. Pellarmin, lib. 2, De Rom. Pont. cap. 12, says, Peter had the government of the whole church committed to him; but some one ought to succeed therein as supreme head by Divine right; and this successor can be no other than the Pope.

I answer, there is nothing solid in this argument. First, as it regards Peter, to whom they say the government of the whole church was committed when it was said to him alone, John xxi. 15—17, *Feed my sheep*. I confess, in his character of Apostle, the power of feeding the flock of Christ every where was given to Peter; but this was common to him with the rest of the Apostles, to whom also it was said, *Go, teach all nations*, Matth. xxviii. 19. Secondly, we deny that successors were appointed in this apostolic power either to Peter or any one of the Apostles; for not fresh Apostles, but Bishops, succeeded to Apostles. Thirdly, if we allow a successor to Peter in apostolic power, he will not be, by Divine authority, the Roman Pontiff; because no Divine authority appropriated the Roman See to Peter. Whence even Cusa* does not hesitate to

was first created Archbishop of Embrun, and then Cardinal-Bishop of Ostia in 1262; whence he derived the appellation of Ostiensis, or Hostiensis; under which title he is frequently cited, and by Davenant in the latter mode of orthography.

* Cusa was a profound Lawyer and Divine, created a Cardinal by Pope Nicholas V. in 1448, and afterwards Bishop of Brixia. It is said that he was the author of a Refutation of the Koran, addressed to Pius II. and highly esteemed as a very learned production. A treatise of his concerning "Learned Ignorance," in which he aimed to correct and reform the disorders and abuses which the Scholastic Divines had introduced into the Semi-

confess, that, *if a Bishop of Treves should be chosen for the head of the Church, he would be more properly the successor of Peter than the Roman Bishop.*

2. They argue, the Church is one body, and hath one head on earth besides Christ: but any other head on earth besides the Pope is assigned by no one; therefore he is the head and sovereign of the whole Church. And that it has a head on earth, he (Bellarmin) proves from those words, 1 Cor. xii. 21. *The head cannot say to the feet I have no need of you;* but Christ can say this; therefore there is a head in the Church besides Christ.

I answer; Although the Church be one body, and militant here in earth, yet no necessity obliges us to confess any earthly head of the whole Church; because Christ, who is ascended into heaven, is also in the world by his Spirit, and quickens and rules the whole Church; but he forms particular churches, and governs them by particular prelates and ministers. The plea, however, which he brings from the Scripture is futile and childish: for the Apostle means not by *the head and the feet*, the Pope and the Church; but by *the head*, any man in the church endowed with eminent gifts; by *the feet*, any humble or inferior person. This will readily appear if we weigh the scope of the passage. For he is not cautioning Peter against lording it over the Church; but he is warning those who were distinguished by spiritual gifts among the Corinthians, against despising their inferiors; as Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Aquinas explain it.*

naries, is still extant. Yet this erudite man, notwithstanding the bold admission also above made, in order to sustain the Papacy set up the notion of a *running sense* of Scripture, which might be suited to the various *occasions* of the Church, and *adapted* to every *new rite*. Vide Dr. Wright's Sermon at Salter's Hall, in 1734—5, on "Scripture and Tradition."

* Though the champions for the Papacy in former ages of comparative darkness might think to impose upon the ignorant and unwary by such "futile and childish" modes, as even Bellarmin for want of better could employ in the plea here refuted; yet in these days one would hardly imagine they would have the effrontery to risk it. However, in 1810, a Roman Catholic Priest in Lancashire, sent forth two octavo volumes of "Sermons;" and in one of them, in support of Papal Supremacy, revived an old gloss upon

3. The Church would not be governed in the best way unless it were governed by one supreme spiritual head; but Christ left the Church instituted and governed in the best manner; therefore by one.

I answer; Christ alone is the spiritual Sovereign of the whole Church; but to institute an earthly sovereign, on whose will the whole Church should depend, would be the worst mode of governing the Church; because no mortal can discharge that office even moderately well. For how shall the Pope sitting in the Vatican, take care of the churches of the Indians or the Ethiopians? But that Pontiff does not aim at the care of churches, but at empire.

4. The Church is always increasing, and it must increase until the Gospel be preached in all the world: but this cannot be done unless there be one chief president, on whom the apostolic charge and trouble of preserving the whole Church and of extending it, may devolve; for no one ought to preach unless he be sent; and no particular Bishop can send beyond his own province.

Scripture, much akin in fallacy and plausibility to the one above, but managed with more ingenuity. For, with the most artful sophistry, carried on through two pages, he labours to prove that the words of our Lord to Peter, recorded John xxi. 15—17, “*Feed my lambs; feed my sheep,*” were a commission to Peter, in the first place to govern the faithful intended by *the lambs*; in the next, a jurisdiction over the pastors of the faithful, conveyed in the words “*Feed my sheep.*” The consequence, he concludes is, that “since Christ gives Peter a superintendence over his whole flock, he confers upon him a jurisdiction distinct from that of the rest of the Apostles—a jurisdiction more enlarged than theirs—a jurisdiction reaching over the whole body of the Church, over the taught and the teachers, over the governed and the governors.” So that, as the Rev. Joseph Fletcher, in his excellent volume of “*Lectures on the Principles and Institutions of the Roman Catholic Religion,*” justly observes, “according to this arguing the ‘*lambs*’ mean the ‘*sheep,*’ and the ‘*sheep*’ mean the *shepherds!!!*” It is to be believed, that this is the *general* mode of Popish instruction. The recently published discourses of a neighbouring Priest, under every cautionary restraint, might be adduced as containing abundant evidence of the truth of the assertion; and, more recently still, a distinguished Papal Orator, in the town where the Translator writes, was heard, in his ordinary pulpit exercises, labouring to establish his auditory in the belief of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, by attempting to prove, that it was *the uniform and universal belief of the Christians of the first four centuries of the Christian era!!!*

I answer; To send preachers to infidel nations is not now the work of apostolic power, but of Christian charity. Every Bishop therefore in the vicinity of any heathen nation, may, from the duty of charity, either by himself, or by others, preach the Gospel to them; and, if they should embrace the Christian faith, what is to hinder Bishops and ministers being set over them (if they require it) legitimately ordained by any other Bishop? To extend the Church therefore there is no need of a new Apostle.

We conclude, then, since the Pope of Rome is not immediately called by Christ—nor embued with Evangelical knowledge by direct and extraordinary inspiration of the Holy Spirit—nor endowed with universal power over the whole Church, he can by no mode of reasoning be styled an *Apostle*, or *Apostolic Bishop*.*

Ver. 2. *To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, which are at Colosse.*

In these words is contained the second part of the title, which we call the Inscription, in which the Apostle describes both the place where they dwell, and the characteristics of those to whom the Epistle is sent: and this is entitled the *superscription* or *inscription* according to our custom, who are in the habit of inscribing these circum-

* The *grand* point at issue between Rome and her opponents, is the question of Infallibility: therefore, to the refutation of this from the actual history and tendency of her doctrines, Mr. Garbett's "powerful and valuable work" (as it has been justly styled) the "Nullity of the Roman Faith" is directed, and contains in its pages a refutation of the main arguments of their most famous modern defence, Bishop Milner's "End of Controversy." Upon the whole *Difficulties* of their system, it seems almost needless to refer to the well known volume of Mr. Faber in answer to the Bishop of Strasburg. For the recent attempts to remove the mass of crime that lies against their Church, Mr. Townsend's "Accusations of History" is quite sufficient. The present revival of this great Controversy, and the modern garb in which their advocates have cloaked the Papal tenets, have induced the Translator to refer the uninformed reader to works which appear to him to meet more especially the *existing* state of the discussion; and the study of which will leave him void of excuse if he be entangled in the mazes of this never-slumbering and artful enemy.

stances on the back of our letters, as we have before remarked.

The persons saluted then have a threefold description; First, from the place in which they live; 2. From three especial properties, *holiness, fidelity, brotherhood*; 3. From the Author of all, viz. *Christ Jesus*: for they are *saints in Christ, faithful in Christ, and brethren in Christ*.

Concerning the Colossians we have spoken already in the preface; nor is it necessary to add more. This only we shall observe by the way, that although the Catholic Church can never wholly perish, yet each particular church may fall away from the true religion. This happened to these Colossians; and to all the churches which Paul honoured with his Epistles: for either they were entirely swept away by Mahometan perfidy, or corrupted by some foul superstition. All boast about local succession, therefore, is empty, unless a succession of true doctrine be likewise proved. *They are not the children of saints*, says Jerome, *who hold the place of saints, but they who practise their deeds*. Disease succeeds to health in the same person, darkness to light; so, in the same land, superstition may succeed to Religion, unbelief to faith. But let this suffice here.

Saints.] That is, sanctified by the laver of baptism. Whence, says the Apostle, 1 Cor. vi. 11, *Ye are washed, ye are sanctified*. But when the Apostle calls all baptised persons *saints*, he speaks according to the rule of charity, which directs us to presume good of every one, unless the contrary be shewn. And for the very best reason baptised persons are called *saints*. For saintship imports two things: First, cleansing from impurity: whence Isidore writes, *That a saint is so called from two words sanguine tinctum; i. e. to be as it were tinged with blood; because anciently they who wished to be purified, were sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice*.* Secondly, it denotes a special de-

* Isidore: usually stiled Isidore Pelusiota, to distinguish him from two other eminent divines and writers of the same name, in the fourth and fifth centuries. He was a distinguished disciple of Chrysostom, a Monk, and

dication to the Divine worship: whence we call not only men, but temples and vessels, holy; because they are set apart to sacred uses in the worship of God. In both these respects a baptised Christian is rightly called *a saint*.

For, first, he is in baptism cleansed from original corruption, and the imputation of all sins. Whence it is called, in Titus iii. 5, *the laver of regeneration*. And in Acts ii. 38, it is said, *Be baptised every one of you for the remission of sins*. Hence also that saying of Nazianzen, *The water cleanses the body visibly; the Spirit accompanying it also invisibly cleanses the soul*. Hence also that ancient custom of putting white robes upon baptised persons; by which ceremony they signified the purification of their souls effected by virtue of holy baptism, as Lactantius expresses in that line, *De Pascha v. 93*,

Fulgentes animas vestis quoque candida signat:

Likewise the white raiment betokens their resplendent souls.

Neither does this purification consist alone in the washing away of sins, but in the combined infusion of spiritual graces; of which subject Parisiensis elegantly writes,* *Like as a royal treasurer gives the gifts promised by the king to him who produces the royal signet; so the Holy Spirit, the*

Priest of Danieta, anciently called Pelusium, in Egypt. He left 2012 letters, said to be written in a very superior style, on Scripture doctrine, discipline, and morals. Mosheim commends him as avoiding the allegorical mode of interpretation, so prevalent in that age; and asserts that his epistles discover more piety, genius, erudition, and wisdom, than are to be found in the voluminous productions of many other writers. An edition of his letters in Greek and Latin, in folio, was published at Paris, 1638. Might he not have had in view, in the above remark, the rite of ceremonial cleansing under the Law, as dwelt upon in Heb. ix. 12—22?

* The person here quoted under the epithet 'Parisiensis,' was William of Auverne, created Bishop of Paris in 1228. He was one of the most learned schoolmen of his time; being eminently skilled in theology, philosophy, and mathematics; he was also distinguished for his piety; and was moreover perhaps the most useful writer of the thirteenth century; for whilst his contemporaries were occupied in verbal quibblings and metaphysical intricacies, his works were directed to the promotion of practical godliness, the least understood of all sciences in that age of erudite ignorance and theological wrangling.

dispenser of spiritual gifts, imparts spiritual graces to those whom he beholds beaving the sign of holy baptism. Peter promises this to the baptised, Acts ii. 38, *Be baptised every one of you in the name of Christ, AND YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.* And this is the first reason why Paul calls baptised persons *saints*.

Secondly, they are called *saints*, because in baptism they are in an especial manner dedicated to the service of God. For in baptism a covenant is entered into with God. He receives us under his protection; we acknowledge him for our Lord, and renounce all other lords, viz. the world, the flesh, and the devil. We are therefore, as it were, certain consecrated vessels, set apart from profane uses to the sacred service of God. In this respect Nazianzen calls baptism, *the covenant of a more holy life with God*; and Peter, 1 Epis. iii. 21, *the answer* (επερωτημα) *of a good conscience towards God.*

From the consideration of this characteristic many inferences might be deduced; we shall deduce three.

1. Whereas the Apostle calls not this or that good man, but the Colossians promiscuously, *saints*, as many as put on Christ by baptism; hence we learn, that we must think and speak well of all who profess religion, unless by clear and manifest deeds they shew themselves to be ungodly and hypocrites. For the Apostles always, when they descend to particular men or churches, presume every Christian to be elect, sanctified, justified, and in the way of being glorified, until he himself shall have proved himself to be wicked or an apostate. So Paul writing to the Corinthians affirms indiscriminately concerning them, *Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified*, 1 Cor. vi. 11. For as in those things which relate to faith, we must speak and think according to Scripture, which is a certain and infallible rule: so, in other things which relate to charity, it is sufficient to think and to speak according to the probability of appearances. This rule may deceive; yet not by any fault or hazard of him who thought better of another than he truly deserved, but rather of that hypocrite,

who was a different and much worse man than he appeared or seemed to be.*

Secondly, Whereas all of us who have been baptised are called *saints*, we are admonished of our duty, which is to SERVE GOD IN HOLINESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIFE. For if we are without the life of saints, the name of saints will profit us nothing. *The participation of names or titles*, says Tertullian, *determines not the real state of things*. Although therefore hypocrites may be classed under the same denomination with true saints, yet they shall not receive the same rewards from Him who searches hearts.

Lastly, Whereas we are called *saints* because we have been consecrated to the service of God in baptism, it plainly follows, that every Christian who serves the devil, the flesh, or the world, is guilty of sacrilege; for he perverts vessels consecrated to God, i. e. his body and his mind, to profane, nay to devilish uses. Well spake the Orator, *It is established by the common law of nations, that mortals may not appropriate to their use that which is consecrated to the service of the immortal gods*. But how much

* How different *Roman Catholic* principles are to this rule of Christianity let the following fact determine, taken from Gauntlet's preface to his "Lectures on the Apocalypse." Speaking of the prevailing sentiments of Papists in regard to Protestants, he says: "Some years ago I was in the habit of frequent intercourse with several emigrant French priests. In my conversation with one of them, who subsequently held an eminent situation in a Roman Catholic College, our discourse turned on the salvability of individuals without the pale of the Romish Church. My opponent, for such in this point he was, strenuously argued on the negative side of the question. In order to bring his views to a practical bearing, and to try how far personal feelings might be a barrier to his creed, I remarked, 'Then you consign me among the other heretics to eternal damnation?' The substance of the firm and consistent reply was, 'I can make no exceptions; there is no salvation out of the Catholic Church.' My antagonist, it will be seen, was a genuine son of Rome—a true Papist, who was neither afraid nor ashamed to maintain the doctrine of that anti-catholic and anti-christian Church, of which *he* was a consistent and zealous minister." Doubtless instances of an opposite character and sentiment exist, and the Translator could give some; but they are rare; and, as Mr. Gauntlet well observes, those who take more becoming views of the subject dissent in an essential point from the *infallible* Church: they are not true Papists.

more shameful and abominable is it, that the devil should be allowed to take for his use a Christian, holy, and dedicated to God by baptism.*

So much concerning the first property.

Faithful.] This is the second property wherewith the Apostle dignifies the Colossians. Some would have this title to be an explanation of the former; as though the Apostle had said, We, by the law of charity, judge all Christians holy; but they alone are accounted saints before God who are truly faithful: For *God purifies the hearts of men by faith*, Acts xv. 9. For although the sacraments are not only signs representing, but also offering grace,† yet unbelief spurns and repels the grace offered by God. Hence that very remarkable saying of Augustine, *Whence is there so much virtue in the water, that it should but touch the body, and cleanse the heart, except by the word making it so; not because it is spoken, but because it is believed?* And Tertullian reproves those who think that the ungodly and unbelievers are made partakers of the grace offered in the sacraments: *Certain persons*, says he, *so think, as though God were bound to perform even to the unworthy what he hath*

* The Translator would here take occasion to recommend most earnestly to every reader who should not have seen it, whether an enquirer or a controversialist on the subject under treatment, the speedy and careful perusal of a work by the Rev. H. Budd, entitled, “*Infant Baptism the means of National Reformation.*” If duly weighed it is a volume pre-eminently calculated to settle disputation on the question, or, as the Author states his design, in the opening of the first letter, “*to compose our differences;*” but especially is it adapted to lead to practical and beneficial results of a nature highly to be prized and desired in the present age. Whilst his pen is thus occupied, the writer would also beg leave to commend in a similar manner to general perusal, three volumes of “*Essays on the Liturgy and Collects*” of our Church, by the Rev. T. T. Biddulph, as suitably displaying the principles avowed by every baptized Churchman, and enforcing the correspondent character and conduct that should, as a consequence, be maintained and exhibited by all such. Indeed, for sterling divinity, and Christian learning, and for all the purposes of the Christian life and experience, as well as for admirable practical illustration of the most important parts of our invaluable Liturgy, those Essays cannot be equalled, whilst they are written in a fervid and most elegant style.

† “*Non sunt tantum representativa signa, sed etiam exhibitiva.*”

promised, and they make his liberality to be compulsory. But God watches over his treasury, nor suffers the unworthy to steal in.

Others by *faithful*, understand those who persevere in faith received. For it is very probable that some were drawn away from evangelical doctrine by those who, in the place of the Gospel, obtruded philosophical speculations and Jewish ceremonies. By this term therefore he both commends those who remained stedfast in the true doctrine of faith, and obliquely rebukes others, who, following those new teachers, turned aside from the faith of the Gospel to errors and superstitions; and he points them out as unworthy his salutation. Therefore to be initiated into the Christian profession by baptism avails nothing unless there be a stedfast continuance in the same. *Not faith received, but faith retained, quickens*, says Cyprian, Epist. lib. epist. 5.*

* Epist. xiii. p. 29, edit. Oxon. 1628, or Epist. vi. p. 11, edit. Paris, 1726.

Cyprian could with peculiar propriety and emphasis deliver such a principle as the above, since, during the severity of the persecution under Decius, about the years 249 and 250, he had witnessed and proved the results of a mere profession of the faith, and the effects of its abiding influence in the heart. He too had experienced in himself all its power, and at last died a martyr to his stedfastness in the succeeding persecution under Valerian and Gallienus. His parents were heathens, and he himself had continued such to an advanced period in life. His conversion was brought about by one Cæcilius, a priest of the Church of Carthage, whose name he afterwards took; and who entertained so high an opinion of Cyprian's character as to commit to him the care of his family at his death. Cyprian had often employed his rhetoric (of which science he had been long an able teacher) in defence of Paganism; but on his conversion, as a proof of his sincerity, he composed a treatise entitled "*De Gratia Dei*," which he addressed to Donatus: he next composed a piece, "*De Idolorum Vanitate*." His behaviour both before and after his baptism was so highly pleasing to the Bishop of Carthage, that he very soon ordained him a priest, when he consigned over all his goods to the poor, and gave himself wholly to divine things. The Bishop dying the year after, none was judged so proper to succeed him as Cyprian. Compelled soon afterwards to flee from Carthage, to avoid the fury of the persecutors whom Decius had let loose, and whose cry was "*Cyprian to the lions*," he wrote in the place of his retreat, pious and instructive letters to his flock, and also to the Libellatici, or those pusillanimous Christians, who procured certificates of the heathen magistrates to shew that they had

Brethren.] The Colossians, and so indeed all Christians and faithful are called *brethren* for many reasons :

First, on account of their profession of one Religion, and the worship of one and the same God. For Scripture calls all those *brethren* who profess the same Religion. So Deut. xviii. 20, *Let not the king's heart be lifted up against his brethren*; and Matth. xxiii. 8, *Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, and all ye are BRETHREN*. Secondly, faithful and godly men are called *brethren*, because of the fraternal affection and love which ever flourishes among them. This fraternal charity the Apostles every where inculcate. Thus Rom. xii. 10, *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love*. This brotherly love Tertullian calls, *the jewel of the Christian name*: for true love is the heritage of Christians. Thirdly, we are called *brethren*, because we have one and the same father, i. e. God. For all the godly are by regeneration and adoption children of God himself, and thenceforward brethren with one another. *He gave them power to become the sons of God*, John i. 12. Lastly, we are called *brethren*, because we are grafted into the same mystical body of Christ, and are quickened by one and the same Spirit. As therefore they are brethren naturally, who have derived natural life and descent from the same parents; so they are brethren spiritually who derive their spiritual life and origin from the same principles.

Hence we are taught how great ought to be the concord among Christians; how far they ought to be removed from hatred and envy; how wicked it is to rejoice in the evil or

complied with the Emperor's order, in sacrificing to idols. At his return to Carthage, he held several Councils for the correction of evils which the persecution had introduced, for settling the course to be pursued towards such as professed repentance, and for the due regulation of the Church. But ere long he fell a sacrifice to that fidelity with which he *retained* and laboured to commend the faith of the Gospel, being beheaded in the persecution in 258. How important, then, does the principle adduced by our Expositor, from him, appear, in considering the life and the times of Cyprian! Should such periods for "the trial of the faith" of professors now arise, how many Libellatici would soon be discovered! It is a matter of serious inquiry how many Cyprians would be found to exhibit, as well as enforce, the *quickening* efficacy of faith, and a stedfast adherence to it?

disgrace of another; and various lessons of the same kind. For *among brethren there ought to be a common feeling of fear, joy, grief. They ought not to raise themselves upon each other's ruin, nor by the fall of one to seek their own elevation.**

In Christ Jesus.] The Apostle has dignified the Colossians with the brilliant titles of *holiness, fidelity, brotherhood*: now he shews from whence they obtained these so eminent endowments, viz. from *Jesus Christ*, the author and giver of them all.

First, as to our holiness: we are rightly called saints in Christ Jesus, because only by the Spirit of Christ, and by virtue of his blood, are we cleansed from our sins, and sanctified in the sacrament of baptism. The water represents externally the pledge of grace; but the Spirit internally works the works of grace, August. Epist. And upon Psalm lxxxvi. *Preserve my soul for I am holy*, the same Father says, *If thou shalt say that thou art holy of thyself, thou art proud; Again, being a believer in Christ, and a member of Christ, if thou shalt not acknowledge thyself to be holy thou art ungrateful.— Say unto God, I am holy, for Thou hast sanctified me.* Moreover we are called *saints in Christ*, because not only does he effect our sanctification, but by a gratuitous imputation he communicates to us his righteousness and perfect holiness, Phil. iii. 9.

Secondly, we are also called *faithful in Christ Jesus*; as well because true faith always looks to Christ Jesus, and acknowledges him the only Mediator and Saviour of the human race, as because that Christ by his Spirit works in us both our holiness and our faith.

Lastly, as to our brotherhood; we are also called *brethren in Christ Jesus*. For whether we be called *brethren* on account of our agreement in faith and religion, Christ is the only Teacher of the Christian faith and of religion; or on account of brotherly affection, Christ hath shed abroad this love in our hearts; or on account of God being the common Parent of us all, we are adopted through Christ

* De alterius ruina attolli, et prostrato superscendere laud oportet.— Tertull. De pœnit. cap. 10.

and in Christ among the children of God; or, lastly, on account of our being grafted into one mystical body; Christ is the Head of this body.

Hence we learn, that there is no sanctity, or faith, or brotherhood of any avail to salvation, unless it be grounded in Christ. For Jews, Mahometans, Heretics, have a certain sanctity of their own, a faith of their own, and also a brotherhood of their own: but all these they have apart from Christ. A Jew wishes to be *sanctified*; but by the rites of Moses, not by the blood of Christ. A Mahometan wishes to be accounted *faithful*; yet not in Christ, but the most wicked impostor Mahomet. A Papist wishes to be a *brother*; but a Franciscan, a Dominican, and any thing rather than a Christian brother; which name among them is base in comparison with those novel fraternities.

And thus far as to the *Inscription*.

Here the Translator must be permitted to observe, if such be the doctrine of the Gospel, as hath been thus shewn by our Expositor—if such the obligations entailed and required by Baptism, and by our taking upon us the Christian name through that sacramental rite; then, from what have we fallen in the last century? What have multitudes in this Christian country been doing; in reviling the *saints* of God and pouring contempt upon that holy Name; plunging into all the pomps and vanities they pledged themselves to renounce; abandoning their first principles and plainest duties; breaking the unity of the household of faith; neglecting the service of God; and so, bringing into contempt the Religion to which they had sworn subjection, and which they ought to have cherished, adorned, and promoted to the utmost of their power! And if these things have constituted the national guilt of this Country, can any wonder that God should have permitted us to be subjected to our enemies, and exposed again to the influence, and perhaps, the domination of Infidelity and Popery?

We come now to the latter half of the second verse.

Grace be with you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

In these words is contained the third part of the title, which we call the Salutation; wherein two things are to be remarked: the blessings which the Apostle desires for the Colossians; viz. *grace and peace*; and the authors of these blessings, *God the Father and Christ*.

Grace be with you.] In the first place we may make this general remark, that the Apostles changed or rather amplified the ancient salutation of the Hebrews. For their usual salutation was, *Peace be to thee*: but after the mystery of human redemption was revealed, in which God opened the fountain of grace to mankind, they also added *grace*. And these two blessings are thus united for the best possible reason. For *grace* is introductory good; *peace* is final good: he therefore who wishes these two blessings to any one, includes also every intermediate benefit. But let us consider them separately.

The term *grace* denotes three things: First, the gratuitous act of the Divine will accepting man in Christ, and mercifully pardoning his sins. This is the primary meaning of this word, which the Apostle every where enforces. *By grace are ye saved*, Ephes. ii. 5. *Being justified freely by his grace*, Rom. iii. 24. This gratuitous love of God is *the first gift*, says Altissiodorensis, *in which all other gifts are bestowed*. Aquinas acknowledges this grace of acceptation, Quæst. disp. de grat. art. 1. Secondly, under this term *grace* the Apostle comprises all those habitual gifts which God infuses for the sanctification of the soul. So faith, love, and all virtues and salutary endowments are called *graces*. The words of the Apostle in Ephes. iv. 7. have this sense: *To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*. The Papists acknowledge this inherent grace almost exclusively; and in the mean time think too lightly of that accepting grace which is the fountain and well-spring of it. Lastly, *grace* denotes the

actual assistance of God, whereby the regenerate, after having received habitual grace, are strengthened to perform good works, and to persevere in faith and godliness. For to man renewed and sanctified by grace, the daily aid of God is still necessary for every single act. When therefore the Apostle wishes *grace* to the Colossians, he desires for them the gratuitous favour of God, the habitual gifts of sanctification, and the unceasing actual assistance of God. The union of all these is necessary: inherent grace is not given unless the grace of acceptance has preceded it; neither being given is it available to the production of fruits, unless also the efficacious help of God follow and accompany it through every individual action.

And peace.] The Hebrews used this expression as we use the expression health or joy: it signifies a state of things prosperous, and flowing according to our wish, marked by no calamities either public or private. So Gen. xliii. 27, *Is there peace to your father?* or, as we render it, *Is your father well?* According to Tremellius,* *Is he doing prosperously?* And in Psalm cxxii. 6, *Pray ye for the peace of Jerusalem* (i. e. Ask for those things which pertain thereto). But with the Apostles it is used in a more extensive sense, and comprehends, in a more especial manner, spiritual joy and prosperity. Therefore under this term *peace* Paul, in the first place, desires for them internal peace, or peace of conscience, which arises from the grace of God accepting us for Christ's sake: hence said Christ, John xiv. 27, *My peace I give unto you*; and the Apostle, Rom. v. 1, *Being justified by faith we have peace with God.* This is that *peace which passeth all understanding*, and it for-

* Tremellius:—A learned Jew of the sixteenth century; a native of Ferrara, in Italy; first converted to Christianity in the Church of Rome, and afterwards to the Protestant Religion, and some time settled in Cambridge as Professor of Hebrew; but driven again to the Continent on the predominance of the Roman Catholic party upon the accession of Mary. He is celebrated for a Translation of the Bible, simple and perspicuous, and closely adhering to the Hebrew, published first in 1575, and again, with corrections, in 1587. It was very popular with the Reformed Divines.—Vide “Horne's Introduction,” &c. vol. ii. under the head “Modern Latin Versions.”

tifies and guards the heart of a good man as with a military garrison; so Phil. iv. 7, *φρουρήσει τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν*, *it shall keep your hearts.*

Secondly, as Jerome explains it, he wishes them brotherly peace; for so he means in that passage, *Pacem rumpentes gratiam excludunt*—*breaking peace they exclude grace.* And this peace is both a great and desirable good, and very frequently celebrated by the Apostles, and acknowledged as the special gift of God; whence it is said, 1 Cor. xiv. 33, *He is the God of peace and not of confusion*, and elsewhere (2 Cor. xiii. 11), *the God of peace and love.* The seeds of schism had been scattered abroad; there was need therefore of peace.

Lastly, he wishes also that external peace, viz. the well-being of the Colossian Church, and of all the individuals in it; but yet only so far as it does not militate against their spiritual good: for sometimes it conduces more to the welfare of the faithful that they be afflicted than that they enjoy external peace and tranquillity.

This is the sum of the apostolic wish: from whence we may gather many things worthy of observation.

From the order itself we are taught three things:

1. Inasmuch as he places *grace* before *peace*, he teaches us that this is first of all to be desired, that we may have God propitious. If he be hostile, even blessings will be turned into a curse.

2. He teaches besides, that true peace cannot belong except to those only who are in favour with God. *There is no peace to the wicked*, i. e. to the man not reconciled by Christ.

3. Lastly; from the very order in which these benefits are placed, he shews that all good things which fall to the lot of the godly, are as it were streams from this fountain of divine grace.

From the thing itself desired;

4. Paul shews us by his own example the duty of every minister of the Gospel; which is, not only to preach grace and peace to his people, but from their inmost souls to

intreat and implore the same from God by incessant prayer: neither is sufficient of itself.

5. He reproveth the folly of this world, in which almost all wish for themselves and their friends, health, riches, and honours; but grace, peace, and other spiritual good things, they neither regard, nor think of. But Christ commands us to *seek first the kingdom of God*, Matt. vi. 33.

6. He comforts the godly and faithful by shewing them that the grace of God, and the peace of God *they* always possess; in comparison of which good things whatsoever fall to the wicked are filth and refuse—*σκύβαλα*. *A God appeased*, says Bernard, *tranquillizes all things, and to behold him at peace is to be ourselves at peace*. Bernard, in Cant. 33.*

And so far as to the blessings desired. We shall now speak of the Authors of them, whom the Apostle designates in these words following,

From God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. In which words he points out both the fountain and the channel of all grace, and he describes both by their relation to us:

From God our Father.] The fountain of grace is God

* This Bernard is termed the last of the Fathers of the Church; he was a Monk of the Cistercian order, and Abbot of Clairval, born in 1091, and who died in 1153; after having acquired the greatest authority in the Church of any person in his time, even surpassing that of the Pope himself. "No emergency of importance in Religion occurred in which he was not consulted as an oracle; his free censures were received with awe and reverence in the remotest parts of Europe; and his example rendered the new order of the Cistercians so popular, that he lived to see the foundation of one hundred and sixty Convents, which acknowledged him as their second head." He was equally distinguished in his controversies against various heresiarchs, and especially the famous Abelard, and by his successful encouragement of the second Crusade; for "through his commanding eloquence he put in motion princes, nobles, and people throughout the European Continent," and descended to the grave followed by the title of 'The Great St. Bernard.' Such sentiments, however, as those quoted from his writings by our Expositor constitute his truest greatness, and these, it seems, abound in his works, often republished in 2 vols. folio: the Paris edition of 1690 being esteemed the best.

himself. For if by *grace* we understand the gratuitous love of God towards us, this love flows immediately from the Divine will, is not called forth by human merit: Hence says God, Jerem. xxxi. 3, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.* And most divinely does Bernard speak, in Cant. Serm. 59, *And God loveth: not that he derives this from any other source, but from himself the fountain of love; and therefore his love is the more intense, not so much because He hath love, as because he is himself love.* 1 John iv. 16. The love of God does not find us worthy, but makes us worthy of his love.—If we understand by *grace* the habitual gifts of holiness, it is manifest all these emanate from God alone to our souls. *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights,* James i. 17; which the Schoolmen shew by many reasonings; viz. That nothing can be a physically operating cause in the production of grace but God alone. 1. The infusion or the production of grace is analogous to the manner of creation; inasmuch as it neither has any innate cause in the subject in which it acts, nor any materials by whose capabilities it might be educed by a natural agent: it is therefore of God alone, who out of nothing made all things, to infuse and impress grace: *God will give grace and glory,* Ps. lxxxiv. 12.

2. Grace arises out of the supernatural participation of God; but it is the work of the divine goodness only to communicate himself in this gratuitous manner to his creature.

3. Grace is not imprinted on the soul, unless by that cause which is able to work immediately in the soul itself; but it is the privilege of God alone to be able to glide into the human soul, and to change and incline it by internal operation: Therefore God is the fountain of grace. Hence the error of Thomas,* with Bellarmin and his other follow-

* Thomas Aquinas, noticed by our Author sometimes under the one name and sometimes under the other, was born at Aquino, in Italy, in 1224. The number of his works is prodigious, amounting to seventeen volumes folio; though he died as early as the age of 50. He is stiled "The

ers appears evident, who attribute to external sacraments a physical causation of grace.

Our Father.] God, as God, as Creator, wills good to all his creatures, but not all good. For he wills the communication of the good things of nature not only to wicked men, but to the very brutes; because he bestows them as the Author of nature: but the good things of saving grace he communicates to his children alone; because these he dispenses as the Father of mercy. And for this reason the Apostle added *Our Father*. On this account the Saviour when he prescribed a form of prayer, taught us to invoke *Our Father*; because there is no hope of obtaining the good things of grace unless we are adopted among his children. And from this paternity of God he

Angelical Doctor;” and his authority among the Schoolmen was almost decisive in Theology. Like our own Hooker he was little less eminent for his self-denying humility, than for his wide erudition and deep reasoning powers. It is said that when Pope Clement IV. shewed him a vast heap of wealth, observing, ‘ You see the Church cannot now say, Silver and gold have I none;’ ‘ True,’ replied the great Schoolman, ‘ neither can she now say to the sick, Take up thy bed and walk.’—Though, like other fallible men, and especially voluminous writers, he is sometimes found in error, yet Protestant Divines and Scholars have done justice to the vast attainments of this wonderful man. Our Expositor frequently quotes him as authority in points of importance. Dean Philpotts says, “ I do not affect to be deeply versed in his writings; but I have read enough of them to bear testimony to the uncommon vigour and astonishing acuteness of his mind.” (Letters to Charles Butler, Esq.) And Mr. Southey speaks of him, as “ a man whose extraordinary powers of mind few persons are competent to appreciate.” (Vindiciæ Ecc. Aug.) As calculated in an especial manner to stamp the character of the man, and as a hint to those who forget that, *Bene orâsse est bene studuisse*, it may not be improper to insert here,

The Prayer of Thomas Aquinas before commencing study:—

“ Ineffably wise and merciful Creator! illustrious Source of all things! true Fountain of light and wisdom! Vouchsafe to infuse into my understanding some ray of Thy brightness; thereby removing that two-fold darkness under which I was born, the darkness of sin and ignorance. Thou, that makest the tongues of infants eloquent, instruct, I pray Thee, my tongue likewise: and pour upon my lips the grace of Thy benediction. Give me quickness to comprehend, and memory to retain: Give me a facility in expounding, an aptitude in learning, and a copious eloquence in speaking. Prepare my entrance into knowledge; direct me in my pursuits, and render the issue of them complete: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

concludes, whatever good is necessary to the pious shall be bestowed upon them by God; *How much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?* Matth. vii. 11.—Let these things suffice concerning the fountain of grace, viz. *God*.

And from the Lord Jesus Christ.] The Apostle here points out the channel of grace, viz. *Jesus Christ*, the Mediator between God and men. God the Father himself is the fountain of grace; but he chooses that it should be derived to men through and for the sake of his Son: For as by the first Adam sin is derived to those who, after the flesh, are descended from him; so by the second Adam, viz. Christ, grace is derived to those who are spiritually regenerate. Therefore Christ is said to convey grace to his people, either by the efficacy of his operation—or the benefit of his intercession—or the merit of his passion. As he is the Head of the Church, it is his peculiar office effectually to quicken his members, and to communicate grace, i. e. spiritual life and motion to them. Being a Priest, he prays and intercedes for this grace. Having offered himself a sacrifice acceptable to God, he meritoriously acquired the favour and grace of God for the Church. Hence it is that in the Holy Scriptures all grace and spiritual blessedness is set forth as given to us in Christ: as in Ephes. i. 3, 4, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: iv. 16, From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love; John i. 16, For of his fulness have all we received and grace for grace.*

The Lord.] Christ is designated by the relation which he bears to us; for he is Lord of us, and indeed of all creatures. And this title belongs not only to the divine nature, but also to his assumed nature: For God the

Father would have *all things to be subject unto him*; and *made him to sit above all powers*, Ephes. i. 20, 21, and Heb. ii. 8, *He put all things under him*. But he is *the Lord* of the godly, not only by right of Sonship, but also by right of redemption and deliverance.

Ye see whence grace flows to us, *From God our Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ*. Hence observe

1. They who are estranged from God through obstinate perseverance in sin, are destitute of quickening grace; and, if we speak of spiritual life, they are dead carcasses, not men. For as a man who turns himself away from the sun, deprives himself of light and heat; so he who turns himself from God through sin, deprives himself of the influence of saving grace: for *grace is from God*.

2. They who are not adopted children, assuredly cannot either ask or expect any grace from God. In order therefore that we may approach the throne of grace with the assurance of faith, God must be intreated that *He would send the Spirit of adoption into our hearts, whereby we may cry unto him, Abba, Father*. For this grace is not simply from God, but from *God the Father*.

3. Let him who seeks grace implore neither the saints, nor even the blessed mother of Christ; but ask it from the Father in the name of Christ his Son: for that which the Son requires, who is the medium of grace, is easily obtained. Therefore the Papists err, who say that no grace comes from heaven to earth without passing through the hands of Mary.

4. Since Christ is our Lord, let us conduct ourselves as good and faithful servants. It is the duty of servants to frame their life and manners according to the will of their master; diligently to discharge the duty assigned them by their master; to form no friendships with the enemies of their master; if they err humbly to submit themselves to their master; and innumerable other things of the like nature; which, so long as we neglect, we deny that Christ is our master not by our lips, but by our lives.

And thus far we have unfolded the apostolic salutation. From the consideration of which arises an important con-

troversy between us and the Papists, which we shall briefly touch upon. The Apostle, as you have heard, desires for the faithful *grace and peace from God, and from the Lord Jesus Christ*; i. e. gratuitous acceptance for Christ's sake, adoption among the children of God, and assurance of the remission of sins: Hence it is enquired Whether the faithful can or cannot assuredly determine with themselves that they are in favour with God, and that their sins are remitted them for Christ's sake, in whom they have believed?

Our opinion is that every faithful and truly justified man may, and ought, infallibly to believe,* that his sins are remitted to him as an individual, and that God is reconciled to him; i. e. that he hath this *grace and peace*, which the Apostle desired for the Colossians.

The opinion of the Papists is, That they who are truly justified and in favour with God, yet neither can nor ought to believe that they are reconciled to God and justified; but to hope and conjecture only that they are in a state of grace, and have obtained remission.

We establish our opinion by these arguments:

1. From the nature of faith. He who is endued with true faith sees, by the very light of that faith kindled in his heart through the Holy Spirit, that he believes in Christ, and is justified by faith: but he who sees this, at the same time is able to conclude that he is in favour with God, and that his sins are remitted him. For Scripture plainly states, *Being justified by faith we have peace*, Rom. v. 1. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life*, John iii. 16 and 36. Therefore the whole difficulty lies in this, To shew that a believer is authorised to say, not from conjecture and opinion, but from conviction, I believe in Christ. This is proved from Augustine, De Trin. xiii. 1, *That which we are commanded to believe we are not able to see; yet faith itself when it is wrought in us, we know to be in us*. So Thomas, *Whosoever hath knowledge or faith, is sure that he hath it*;

* An expression corresponding to this opinion in one of the Collects of our Church is "perfectly and without all doubt." Vide Collect for Saint Thomas's day, a striking and godly prayer, that, as Churchmen, it may be even so with us.

because it is of the nature of faith, that a man should be certain of those things of which he hath faith. To which purpose also Cajetan thus writes, *By the certainty of faith any one knows that he hath the gift of faith infused into him, and he believes this, as he believes other things which he does believe, as for instance, the incarnation of Christ, &c.* Durandus* also writes, *He that hath faith is as certain that he hath it, as he is certain of any thing else: For, believing, he experiences that he believes, Lib. iii. dist. 23. qu. 7.* Thomas alleges this reason; *Because every state of the intellect itself is the proximate cause of its own recognition, since its very essence exists in the mind.*† It may be confirmed by many testimo-

* Durandus: one of the most learned Lawyers of his time, who flourished in the thirteenth century, and whom Davenant often quotes. He was a pupil of the celebrated Henry de Suza, after quitting whom, and taking his Doctor's degree, he taught Canon law at Bologna and Modena, and published a famous work entitled "Speculum Juris," which gained him the surname of "Speculator." Being introduced by his former Tutor, now Cardinal-Bishop of Ostia, at the Court of Rome, he was employed by Clement IV. and four succeeding Pontiffs, in important and honourable charges. Among other posts of distinction assigned him, he was made Master of the sacred palace. The person holding this office was "a kind of Domestic Chaplain, or preacher of the Pope." A part of his jurisdiction in this capacity "referred to the printing of books, and the power of prohibiting them." Of this office Mr. Mendham has given a full and interesting account in his valuable work on the "Literary Policy of the Church of Rome," Ch. i. pp. 11—13. In the progress of his preferments and honours, Durandus was created Bishop of Mende, and employed as Legate to Gregory at the Council of Lyons. Being recalled to Rome, he was afterwards created Marquis of Ancona, and then Count of Romagna, which provinces he governed during the tumults of the Guelph and Ghibelline factions. The "Rationale Divinorum Officiorum" is, however, the best known of his works, and has been the most frequently reprinted. It is a detailed view of the rites and worship of the Roman Church, and contains a competent portion of fable. He died at Rome in 1296.

† On account of its ambiguity and the difficulty of translating this passage, the original extract is here adduced: "Quia omnis habitus intellectivæ partis, ex hoc quod per essentiam suam in mente consistit, est principium proximum suæ cognitionis." *Recognition* seems to the Translator to be the sense of "*cognitio*" in this place, as including the mind's assent and confession of its own perceptions. In the verses subjoined 1 Cor. ii. 12, and 2 Cor. xiii. 5, we may observe the nicety of the Apostle's expression; in the first εἰδῶμεν, simple perception; and in the second ἐπιγινώσκετε, the acknowledgment of this perception.

monies of Scripture, that the regenerate know that they are born again of the Spirit, and the faithful know themselves to be the faithful: Thus 1 Cor. xi. 12, *We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are given us of God*; 2 Cor. xiii. 5, *Know ye not that Christ is in you except ye be reprobates?* 1 John iv. 13, *We know that we abide in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.* For faith, as light, not only makes other things, but itself visible.

2. From the nature of the promises. The promises of gospel grace and the remission of sins, through the reconciliation of Christ, are to be so believed by us as to afford firm and solid consolation: but unless I in particular believe that I am reconciled, and that I am absolved from sins, they cannot yield this consolation. The former is evident, because the very end of gospel grace and of the divine promises is, that *we may have strong consolation*, Heb. vi. 18. But that general faith of the Papists, that every one who believes truly and lives piously, hath remission of sins; or that conditional faith, I, if I am faithful, am in the grace of God, does not yield *strong consolation*, because it may consist with despair. *It is necessary*, says Bernard, *to believe that you cannot have forgiveness, unless by the mercy* of God; but at the same time believe this, that your own sins are forgiven you through him.* Bernard, De annunt. Serm. 2. And the reason is because promises of God do not take effect until they have been accepted by us; although, therefore, remission of sins, upon condition of faith, be offered to all, yet it must of necessity be accepted by men individually and singly, that it may be useful and salutary to each one. Promises are not accepted by those who do not, but by those who do know, and understand, and feel, that they apprehend and accept them.

3. The Holy Spirit specially seals each particular believer, and makes him sure of his adoption, by a certain wonderful and secret testimony: for he is given to every

* The *Indulgentia plenaria*, *plenior* and *plenissima*, with other expressions, shews that the Scholastics gave the force of forgiveness to *Indulgentia*, as if in opposition to absolute justice.

believer as a pledge of divine love; and he, finally, pronounces in the hearts of the godly, that they are in favour with God: which testimony they both may and ought to believe. Therefore they do believe in particular that they are in the grace of God, and that their sins are remitted them. The authorities from which all this is proved are well known: Rom. viii. 16, *The Spirit beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God*; Gal. iv. 6, *Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father*; and Ephes. i. 13, 14, *Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit, after that ye believed, which is the earnest of your inheritance*. Nor is this testimony fallacious or conjectural, but certain and infallible in all in whom it is found. For the word is *the ministration of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii.; and faith conceived by the ministration of the word, is always joined with the witness of the Spirit itself. Therefore the impression of faith by the Holy Spirit, in the heart of a particular man, is, as it were, a particular testimony that he is in grace, and that he is a child of God. So Bernard, Serm. 5, *De dedicat. ecclesiæ, Who can tell whether he is worthy of love or hatred? Who hath known the mind of the Lord? Here it is necessary that faith should come to our aid; that what is concealed concerning us in the heart of the Father, may be revealed to us by his Spirit; and his Spirit bearing witness may persuade our spirits that we are the children of God*. But he persuades by calling and justifying us freely through faith.

Bellarmin replies, that the Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirits only by some experience of an internal suavity and peace which produces nothing better than a conjectural certainty. *De justif. lib. iii. cap. 9.*

But Bernard rejects this jesuitical comment: for he says this testimony is received by the act of faith; and that the Holy Spirit persuades our spirit that we are the children of God, by faith, not by fallible conjectures. So Chrysostom in viii. ad Rom. *When the Spirit testifies can any doubt remain?*

4. From the effects of faith. True believers have *boldness, and access with confidence to God the Father by faith*;

Ephes. iii. 12, and Heb. x. 22. But he who continues doubting, and ignorant whether he be a child of God or not; whether he be in a state of enmity or reconciled; he cannot approach the throne of grace with this confidence; he cannot call God his Father, but with the greatest hesitation; much less can he confidently ask those things which are necessary for salvation from him, as from a Father.

Bellarmin rejoins, For enabling us to approach the throne of grace with confidence, it is not necessary that we be certain of our justification in particular; a positive assurance from the Catholic faith, that Christ suffered for us, died, rose again, and intercedes with the Father, is sufficient.

But this reply is invalid; because although it may be a general truth that the death of Christ was sufficient for all; yet is it also true, that the fruit of the death, of the resurrection, and of the intercession of Christ, actually belong only to those who are implanted into Christ; that I should be sure, therefore, the benefits of Christ belong to me, it is necessary I should be sure also, that I am become a member of Christ, i. e. am justified and reconciled to God. For, if I doubt whether I am effectually called and justified, I must also doubt, whether I am *without Christ, without God, an alien to the commonwealth of Israel, and a stranger to the covenants of promise*, or not, Ephes. ii. 12. When all these things are left in doubt, what place is there for confidence?

These are our arguments: several others we shall omit for the sake of brevity. Now let us proceed to

The arguments of the Papists.

Bellarmin, *De justif. lib. iii. cap. 4*, endeavours to prove the uncertainty of grace and of the remission of sins,

From the Scriptures.

1. From Prov. xx. 9, Who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin? Although therefore some may be clean from sin, yet they themselves do not know it, neither have they an infallible testimony of their purity and righteousness.

I answer, that no one can say this : neither are any clean from indwelling sin, as Bellarmin fancies ; but this does not forbid the assurance of the remission of sins and of a state of grace. For Paul acknowledges indwelling sin ; and yet believes that he was freed from condemnation, and from the imputation thereof, Rom. vii. Therefore though his argument may be good with the Papists, who place their hope in works and inherent righteousness ; yet it is frivolous among the orthodox, who seek justification from faith and grace, not from the law and their own righteousness.

2. *No man knoweth whether he is worthy of love or hatred, but all things are held doubtful as to the future.* Eccl. ix. 1.

For the version I contend not with our adversaries. It is clear that Solomon spake of the judgment which is formed from external events ; for he subjoins, *because there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked*, ver. 2. He does not therefore deny that the godly may be certain, through faith, of the favour of God, but by events. Which exposition Bernard approves, who says, that *faith here comes to our help, and reveals to our hearts that we are the children of God*, as we have before shewn.

3. *Concerning propitiation be not without fear, to add sin unto sin : And say not His mercy is great ; he will be pacified for the multitude of my sins.* Ecclesiasticus v. 5, 6. This place strangely galls the heretics.

Perhaps it does gall heretics, but it does not in the least affect the orthodox ; for it leads to no conclusion against the assurance of remission. In the first place, because the passage may be understood of those who thought that their sins were taken away by the expiatory sacrifices, although they continued in the intention of sinning, and added sins to sins daily : such people as these who without true conversion of heart, thought their sins were expiated by victims, it does direct to be not *without fear of their sin being propitiated*, or (as it is in the original) *of the propitiation of their sin*. And this exposition those words following confirm, (ver. 7) *Thou shalt not delay to turn to the Lord ; for suddenly his wrath shall come forth, &c.* But we may allow

it to be understood concerning those whose sins, upon true repentance, have been remitted: They ought not to be without fear concerning propitiation and remission of sins; for instance, adultery, theft, drunkenness, or any other: but that fear is, not lest the sin should not be remitted, but lest the same and greater imputation should return if it be again committed. *For sins remitted return through ingratitude, not as it regards the act, but inasmuch as he who falls again is for his ingratitude rendered liable to much greater punishment than if his sin had not before been absolved.* Durand. lib. iv. dist. 22. q. 1.

4. A fourth argument Bellarmin draws from those passages where justification and remission of sins is proposed under a condition. *If the wicked man shall repent for all his sins, he shall live,* Ezek. xviii. *Ye shall be my friends if ye do what I command you,* John xv.; and the like. But no one can be certain by the assurance of faith, that he is turned to the Lord with all his heart, and hath true faith and penitence such as is required; since no where in Scripture is a testimony of this kind found concerning our faith and penitence in particular.

I answer; To receive the grace of remission, the condition of faith and true penitence is necessary on our part; but what he adds, That no one knows whether his faith and repentance be such and so great as is required by God, is most false. For justification does not depend on the degree or measure of faith or penitence, but upon the genuineness: And every man who hath received faith and repentance by the gift of the Spirit, has experienced that his faith and penitence are true, and not hypocritical, as was before shewn. Whence that saying of Augustine in Ps. cxlix. *There is a mode of glorying in the consciousness that you have ascertained your faith to be sincere, your hope certain, and your love without dissimulation.* As to his plea, that a testimony concerning our faith, or our remission in particular, is not found in Scripture, we will explain it when we come to the reasonings of Bellarmin; for there this will recur.

5. He endeavours to find a fifth testimony from those passages where remission is proposed to the penitent under the form of a doubt: Joel ii. 12, 14, *Turn unto me with all your heart. Who knows if God will return and repent?* And Acts viii. 22 (in reference to Simon Magus), *Repent, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee.* These, and like passages, says Bellarmin, signify an uncertainty of remission, not in respect of the divine promise, but in respect of our disposition.

To the first testimony another Jesuit shall answer this Jesuit. Thus then Ribera* upon this passage, *Who knows if God will return and repent?* says, *That is, perhaps he will not suffer the Chaldeans to come into your land, nor that ye shall be led captives, if ye will repent.* The prophet, then, does not direct them to doubt of the remission of their sins if they turn, nor does he command the truly penitent to doubt the fact of their penitence; but he shews that he himself is not certain concerning the removal of external judgments, although they turn: respecting this, therefore, they might hope, concerning the other they might be certain. Moreover, he shews from Ambrose, that this phrase is not always expressive of doubt; and from Gregory, that it sometimes indicates the difficulty of a thing, and the scarcity of instances in which it has been done.

To the second likewise Ribera answers; That *Peter had no doubt of his sin being remitted, on his repentance; but he doubted if the penitence of Simon would be real.* That may

* Ribera (Franciscus de): A Spanish Scholar of the sixteenth century; who acquired a high reputation for his intimate acquaintance not only with the Latin, but also the Greek and Hebrew Languages; at the same time being considered one of the most excellent Divines of his age. Being ordained a Priest, Ribera retired to his Alma Mater at Salamanca, to pursue his theological studies in uninterrupted privacy, and was then persuaded to enter the Society of Jesuits; a member of which body he continued till his death in 1591, after having filled the Chair of Professor of Divinity in the University of Salamanca for thirty years. He wrote Commentaries on the Minor Prophets and on St. John's Gospel, with other works, mostly published after his death, and eulogised in high, but evidently deserved and just terms, by his Roman Catholic Biographers.

be also added which Tremellius has observed: *This is not the phrase of one who doubts, but of one rising above his doubts and difficulties.*

6. He, lastly, brings forward those passages which recommend diffidence to the godly and faithful themselves; as, *Happy is the man that feareth always*, Prov. xxviii. 14. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. ii. 12. Therefore we ought not confidently to believe (says he) the remission of our sins.

I answer; Filial fear does not exclude certainty concerning reconciliation and the remission of sins; on the contrary, it is necessary that he who believes that he is reconciled to God, should so much the more fear, lest by giving the rein to his lusts he should fall into fresh guilt. These quotations do not direct us to be doubtful about the remission of sins, but to be careful and fearful of offending God.—And so much concerning the testimonies that are brought from the Scriptures.

Those which he has brought from the Fathers are of no value; for they prove only this, that although a man may not be conscious to himself of any sin, yet this affords no certainty of his being free from sin; which we readily confess. But it is one thing to be absolved *from* sin, and quite another to be *free from* sin.

But let us come to the reasonings of Bellarmin, which he promises us shall be no common ones:*

1. Nothing can be sure by the certainty of faith, unless it be either directly contained in the word of God, or, by evident consequence, may be deduced from the word of God: but that such, or such a man, hath his sins remitted him, is not contained in the word, nor evidently deduced from it; therefore it is not sure with the certainty of faith. The Minor is proved by the word of God testifying only in general that sins are remitted to the faithful and penitent: but that Peter or John may believe or may repent, is not revealed in the word, nor can it be correctly inferred from it; because there is no other inference than this, The word of

* Egregias rationes—conclusives!

God testifies, that they who truly believe and are converted obtain remission of sins: I am sure that I am a true believer and penitent; therefore I have obtained remission of my sins. The Minor, says Bellarmin, is not only false, but also impossible without a special revelation.

Answer. Before I come to the Minor, I will premise a few words in explanation of the Major. What Bellarmin says, That nothing can be sure with the certainty of faith, unless it be propounded or deduced from Scripture, must be understood concerning the doctrine of faith which we believe, not concerning the habit or act of faith by which we believe. For example: That God is three in one is a doctrine of faith; of this therefore we are sure because it is thus written in our Bible; but my believing in the Trinity in Unity, is an act of my faith, the certainty of which is not written in the Scriptures, but on the tablets of my heart. Certainty of the former respects the whole Church; therefore it is revealed in Scripture, which lies open to the whole Church: but the certainty of the latter, that is to say, of the habit or act of faith dwelling in the heart of this or that man, respects him alone, and is therefore discovered to him alone by a reflex act of the mind itself, and still more clearly by the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, who, together with faith and grace, gives a consciousness of that faith and grace being received, as we have before proved. Here we may adduce Scotus, who, 3 dist. 23, says, *Like as I believe that God is three in person and one in essence; so also I believe, that I have faith infused, by which I believe this.**

* Davenant here cites from Duns Scotus, a famous Scholastic Divine who flourished in the fourteenth century; a Briton by birth, educated first in the Convent of Franciscan Friars at Newcastle, and then sent to Oxford, where he made rapid progress and was soon distinguished. It is said that not less than 30,000 students came to Oxford to hear his Lectures: This led to his transfer, by his Order, to Paris, where he was appointed Regent of the Divinity Schools. He was considered one of the first wranglers of his time, and was an indefatigable writer. Such was his acuteness and ability as to obtain for him the epithet of Doctor Subtilis; but differing with his Master Aquinas about the efficacy of divine grace, he gave rise to a controversy which engaged the learned in eager and trifling disputes for

Another observation must be added which also pertains to the Major; viz. that every conclusion is of faith which is drawn from one proposition contained in Scripture, and another following by fair consequence; whether it be known by sense, or by reason, or in any other mode. This Gerson teaches, *De vita spirit*; and Medina.

Now I come to the Minor; and I deny that it may not be maintained by evident inference from the word that this or that believer hath his sins remitted. For Scripture speaks to individuals; Rom. x. 9, *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

But Bellarmin urges that the Minor proposition is as yet wanting, viz. I confess, and I believe: therefore the conclusion, I shall be saved, cannot be derived from faith.

I answer, as above, that this Minor does not respect any general doctrine of faith, but the particular act of the believer: it must not therefore be sought in our Bibles, but in our hearts. But now if by any spiritual perception, or certain experience, or, lastly, by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, or by all these, the Minor proposition be established, the conclusion will be of faith, because the Major proposition was of faith. And we have before proved from the Fathers, from the Schoolmen, and from the Scriptures, that believers have a clear knowledge of their faith and reconciliation: the same things therefore we shall not again repeat.

Still our adversary urges; We see many to be really deceived, thinking they have faith and grace when they have not. For many heretics boast the assurance of faith; many also think, though not renewed, that they have obtained faith, and the remission of their sins from God: therefore they have not this certainty of which they make such a parade.

I answer; all this is nothing to the point. For we do not maintain that every man who dreams that he has faith, grace, and the remission of sins, is really possessed of

years; and of the twelve folio volumes which resulted from all his labour and study, how small a portion would probably repay the trouble of perusal!

these gifts ; but that every one who is indeed possessed of them, knows also that he truly believes, and is in favour with God, &c. The Jesuit concludes affirmatively from the Major to the Minor, in this manner : An heretic and carnal man is deceived, in judging concerning faith and grace ; therefore the truly faithful and renewed man may also be deceived. Like as a man is deceived, who in a dream thinks not that delusions but realities are presented to his mind, yet it follows not from thence that he is, or can be deceived, when he is satisfied that he is not asleep, but sees the things placed before his eyes : so the heretic and carnal man, dreaming about faith and grace, is deceived, fancying that he possesses the realities ; but the truly renewed man beholds these things presented as it were to his mental eyes, in the watchfulness of open truth, not in the vision of dreaming vanity ; he therefore cannot be deceived. At last he asks, By what mark shall we prove that we are not deceived, and that others are ? Foolish question ! By what sign will you prove to one sleeping, that he is not awake, but that you are ? By the experimental certainty of watchfulness itself, which hath a clearer and stronger perception, I do not think, but I know that I am awake : the dreamer thinks the same, but he is deceived. So by a certain experimental proof the faithful know that they have faith ; yet they are not able to prove this to others, who do not perceive the internal emotions of their hearts : Neither can they persuade those dreamers that they have not faith, because indeed they adhere, if not more confidently, yet more pertinaciously to false notions than to true ones.

2. This article of faith, *I believe that my sins are remitted me*, is laid down in no summary of faith ; therefore it is not proper to believe it.

The conclusion is utterly invalid ; however I shall not stop to repel it ; but I answer, that the article is laid down in all creeds. First, by evident consequence. For when I say, *I believe in God*, (as Augustine, and after him all the Schoolmen have it), I say not only that I believe that there is a God, or that I believe his words ; but *that I myself love him, and through believing in God go to him, and am in-*

corporated among his members. For all these things are implied in the words, *I believe in God.* Compend. theol. 5. 21. Secondly, it is laid down expressly by that article, *I believe in the forgiveness of sins.* For that which Bellarmin pretends is not the sense, I believe that remission of sins is given in the Church; which the devil and any reprobate may believe: but I believe remission of sins to be given me through Christ, because I believe in him. This Aquinas himself seems to grant, De justif. art. 4, where he says, *In the justification of a sinner, it is not necessary that all the articles of faith be in actual contemplation at the time, but only that God be contemplated as justifying and remitting sins; in which the other articles are implicitly included.* In quæst. disp. in respon. ad 9mo. Here I ask, To whom is God regarded as forgiving sins? Is it to any undefined individual, or to the justified person himself? Beyond doubt, to that man himself, who is then meditating on the remission of his sins.

But again he objects, If we are bound to believe the remission of our sins, then whoever does not believe this is an heretic: but he neither can nor ought to believe this, who offends wilfully and remains in mortal sin: therefore every such sinner is an heretic; which is contrary to reason.

Bellarmin is deceived in two points: First, in this, that he determines him to be an heretic who does not believe whatsoever he ought to believe: for not the defect of faith, whether of act or of habit, constitutes an heretic, but a pertinacious opposition to the doctrine of faith. For, if every one be an heretic who does not believe the mysteries of the Christian faith, all Gentiles would be heretics; even all Christians who are not renewed would be heretics: for no one believes any article of faith by scriptural and infused faith, before he has received the gift of faith in regeneration. Secondly, that is not by any means sound, which he says, That a wilful sinner is not bound to believe the remission of his sins. For he is bound to surrender his will; he is bound to repent, and also to believe God, who promises remission to the penitent. We say not, therefore,

That he, voluntarily remaining in grievous sins, can believe that sins are remitted him, or ought in his present condition so to do: but we say, that he, by the help of God, may, and is in duty bound to come out of that state, and to believe this.

3. It is not expedient that men should have certainty concerning the remission of their sins and special grace; for he who is confident that he is justified, easily becomes proud as a Pharisee.

I answer, He who is confident that he is justified by inherent righteousness and his own works, is easily puffed up: but he who believes that he is justified freely, thenceforward glories in God, in himself is abased: For, *what hath he which he hath not received?*

4. God hath revealed the remission of their sins to some by special favour, as Authors testify concerning St. Anthony and St. Francis. But why should he reveal that to certain persons by special grant, if the assurance of it be common to all the faithful?

The credit of these narrations rests with the authors. But I answer; There is nothing to prevent that which is believed through faith, from being more distinctly and evidently shewn by special revelation, if such be God's will. Paul believed through faith the bliss of the future state; yet God was pleased to communicate to him in a trance a brighter vision of the celestial happiness. So, although they believed the remission of their sins, yet God would impart to them a more manifest assurance of it.

5. The most perfect and holy men have trembled and doubted concerning their state and the remission of their sins: how therefore is an assurance of special grace and remission set before all believers?

Answer. We do not maintain that true believers never doubt either the remission of their sins, or the state of their reconciliation with God; but we contend that these doubts arise from the flesh, not from faith. This, therefore, is the difference between us and the Papists: They commend doubt in the faithful themselves, and attribute it to the virtue of humility; we recognise it as sin, and say

that it is a remnant of sin : they leave a believer in perpetual doubt ; we say that he at length breaks through it, and is convinced by faith that his sins are remitted, not by conjecture, or hope only, into which, as the Papists suppose, deception may enter. But that, whilst we are in this frail body, faith may abide in a man who is subject to frequent doubts, is evident from Matth. xiv. 31, *O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*—This the Schoolmen also grant. *In a believer, an idea may spring up in opposition to that which he most firmly holds,* Aquinas, *De fide*, art. 1. And in another place, *The certainty of faith implies the steadfastness of adhesion, not the quiescence of the intellect.* So Durandus, *Lib. iii. dist. 23, qu. 7, Faith may be subjected to some degree of doubt, and yet be sound.*

It is not, therefore, necessary, that the assurance of faith exclude all doubts, but that it prevail.

And these are Bellarmin's extraordinary conclusives, with which he opposes the assurance of faith, conceding in the mean time the assurance of hope to the faithful ; concerning which distinction I shall also add a few remarks, and conclude.

I ask of the Papists, then, whether they mean human hope, i. e. hope arising from probable conjectures and the deduction of human reason ; or divine and scriptural hope, i. e. a virtue inspired by the Holy Spirit. If they say that the godly are assured of grace and the remission of sins by human hope, they allow nothing more to the godly, than what the unbeliever may have ; if by inspired hope, let them hear their own friend Durandus,* *Lib. 3 : That which depends upon inspired hope cannot but come to pass.* Scripture also assigns the same certainty to this hope as to faith. *Rom. viii. 24, We are saved by hope ; and xv. 13, The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.* Faith, therefore, is the eye of this hope ; and this hope is excited and established by the Holy Spirit, whose gift it

* Vide Note p. 38.

is : unless, therefore, faith be blind, and the Holy Spirit excite to false persuasion, there will be the same certainty in inspired hope as in faith. For inspired hope not only comprehends that pleasing expectation of future good, which lies in the will ; but the undoubted assurance of obtaining those things which subsist in the realising and self-appropriating act of the mind ; so also faith : as Parisiensis, De mor. cap. 3, rightly observes.

Finally, I add the confession of adversaries : of Catharinus,* who in the Council of Trent, maintained that *the faithful have the assurance of divine faith as to their own grace*

* Ambrose Catharinus, of Siena, a Dominican Friar ; a celebrated Divine of the sixteenth century, who was one of the Theologians deputed to the Council of Trent in 1545, where he displayed remarkable ability. He is represented by Roman Catholic Biographers, as having, in that Council, “ distinguished himself as much by the singularity of his opinions, as by his profound learning.” The fact seems to be, that along with his defence of some peculiarities of Popery, he commented freely upon the distinctions which the Romish Church draws between Divine faith, and the faith of the Church ; and in the various discussions in which he took a part, he proved himself not only an able Divine and Rhetorician, but he boldly maintained and defended some scriptural truths alleged against Luther as heretical. Vide Father Paul's History of the Council of Trent.—He was, however, soon afterwards created Bishop of Minori, and from thence translated to the Archbishopric of Conza in 1551 ; and died suddenly at Rome in 1553.

Since writing the above, the Translator, as he had some difficulty at coming to what appeared to him the truth relative to Catharinus, has been pleased on finding that the Rev. Mr. Scott, in his survey of the Council of Trent, vol. 2 of the “ Continuation of Milner's Church History,” corroborates the view he had taken. Page 272, he observes ; “ On the nature of justification knowing how much the Church of Rome confounds it with sanctification—making it to include an infused habit of grace, and not simply to be acceptance to the favour of God—we are surprised and gratified to find some leading characters openly asserting the forensic sense of this term.” Then p. 276 : “ On Free-will, Catharinus maintained, that without God's special assistance man cannot do what is morally good ;” p. 279, “ We may add, that Catharinus avowed the same sentiment which was adopted by our own Milton (viz. with respect to election), and by Dr. John Edwards.”

No wonder he should have been represented by his Biographers as “ maintaining singular opinions ;” or that F. Paul, the faithful historian of the Council of Trent, who disclosed all its secrets, should have been pronounced by such writers, “ a Calvinist in a Friar's frock !”

and justification: of the Divines of Cologne, who write in Enchirid. Christ. institut.* *That it is necessary for justification that every one should assuredly believe that his sins are remitted him*: of Bellarmin himself; who is forced to confess that the hope of Christians should be most sure, as well on the part of the will as of the understanding; and that by reason of a peculiar disposition only, it is accompanied by any fear. But we have before shewn that these fears and doubts do not take away assurance, but oppose it, and at length are put to flight by faith resisting, and cleaving to the divine promises.

We conclude, therefore, that every true believer hath, and believes that he hath that *grace* and *peace* of God which Paul wishes for the Colossians.

* Cologne long held a conspicuous rank among the Papal cities of Germany, and was noted for its University and the zeal of its Clergy. In 1536 Herman de Meurs, its then Archbishop, having embraced Lutheranism, and adopted the Reformation in his Archiepiscopate, sent for Beucer and Melancthon to preach in his province, assembled a Council of his Bishops and Clergy, and drew up a new code of laws for their regulation. Probably this *Enchiridion* was one of the results of their sittings on this occasion: for the writer is informed, that in Seckendorf's Comm. de Lutheranismo ad Indicem I. Hist. Schol. &c. mention is made of such a book as written in German under the title *Enchiridion Plebei*, in 8vo. The Papists in Cologne were offended at it as containing the Lutheran doctrine, and wrote against it. Most likely it was translated into Latin. The Papal answer might adopt the title of the book intended to be answered. But the above-cited proposition, adduced as from an adversary, is hardly consistent with any modification of Roman doctrine on the subject. Herman was deprived of his Archbishopric in 1547, and his successor Adolphus summoned a Council of the Bishops and Clergy, which, according to Du Pin, sat from March 11, of that year, to April 6, 1549, to restore matters that had been unsettled, and adopt such regulations as were deemed necessary to adjust the affairs of that church; and doubtless every thing was *revised* which Herman had introduced, though the Bishops and Clergy that had concurred with him might guard against much Popish restoration. But the Translator has not been able to trace out any thing corresponding to the work in question. In Howell and Co.'s Catalogue for 1829, there is mentioned, under the title Colon, *Canones*, &c. with *Enchiridion Christianæ Institutionis*, appended; date 1538, and in *folio*: but the latter work may have been in another *form* and date, and bound up with the former.

Verses 3, 4.

3. *We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.*
4. *Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints.*

We have dismissed the inscription or title to this Epistle. Now follows a preface or exordium, adapted to conciliate their good will; which is the second portion of this chapter, and extends from this third verse to the twelfth. Its parts are three, 1. A congratulatory proposition, in verse 3d. 2. The causes of this congratulation narrated and illustrated, from the 3d to the 9th. 3. A solemn prayer for the increase of all spiritual good things, from the 9th verse to the 12th.

1. The congratulatory proposition; *We give thanks to God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.*

We give thanks.] The persons congratulating are denoted in this first word, and also the mode of congratulation.

The persons who rejoice and congratulate, on account of the faith and love of the Colossians, are Paul and Timotheus, preachers of the Gospel. Whence it appears how godly ministers are affected towards the people of God; viz. that they rejoice not so much because they receive temporal fruit from their flock, as that the flock of Christ reap spiritual fruit from their preaching. This is a mark of true love and pastoral affection, that he rejoices in their good as much as in his own; especially in their spiritual good.

The mode of congratulation, and of expressing apostolic joy is by giving thanks, *Ἐυχαριστοῦμεν*. To give thanks, is to declare oneself grateful for a kindness received, by acknowledging it, and by proclaiming the author of it. For in this the apostolic congratulation differs from civil or ordinary congratulations: in the latter, we are wont to celebrate the fortune, or the industry, or the prudence of those to whom, because some great good has happened, we are glad; but the congratulations of the Apostles are nothing else than simple renderings of thanks, in which

they celebrate the benignity of Him who bestows spiritual gifts on men. Now who that is, is declared ;

To God and the Father of our Lord, &c.] Here the person is described to whom thanks are presented by the Apostle. And he is described as well by his absolute name, that it is God ; as by his relative title, that it is *the Father of Christ*. The Apostle employs both with the best design.

In the first place, he gives thanks to God because He is the Giver of all good : but although he designates the first person in the Trinity, yet he does not exclude the rest. *For the works of the Trinity, as it respects things external, are undivided.* Therefore what God the Father gives to the creature, the same the Son gives, and the Holy Spirit. But because the first person is the fountain of Deity, therefore the rest are understood where he is named.

Observe, 1. From the apostolic example, we here learn, in all our joy for good things bestowed either upon ourselves or others, that the recollection of God ought instantly to occur to us ; because whatever is *joyful* and *salutary* comes of his beneficence.

2. We are admonished of this, that it behoves us, as often as we observe any one adorned with remarkable gifts from God, to break out into the praises of God and to giving of thanks : for God will have this payment of praises and thanks to be rendered to him, by all those who hold his benefits, as a recognition of his supreme dominion. So the Psalmist, cxvi. 12, 13, says, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me ? I will take the cup of salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord.* Every man is bound in the debt of honour (as the Schoolmen say), to render something to that person who has done him a favour. But God needs not our good things ; we should therefore render to him what is his own, i. e. the glory of his benefits. If we are unwilling to do this, as he who does not acknowledge his feudal lord, by this crime of ingratitude loses his copyhold ; so he who does not acknowledge God, the Author of his good, may in justice be deprived of that good.

And the Father of our Lord, &c. These words are not so to be understood, as though God were one, and the Father of Christ another; but are to be explained in this manner; *to God and the Father of Christ*, i. e. to God, which God is also the Father of Christ: or so, *We give thanks to God and the Father of Christ*, i. e. to Him who is both the God of Christ, and at the same time also the Father of Christ.

He is called *the God of Christ* in regard of his human nature. For the human nature of Christ, like other creatures, hath God for Creator and Preserver; whence Christ hanging upon the cross, cried to the Father, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Matth. xxvii. 46: and in John xx. 17, said, *I ascend to my God and your God.*

But he is called *the Father of Christ* also in respect of each of his natures. For the Father by an eternal and ineffable generation hath communicated to his Son his Divine essence. I say by an eternal generation: because we must not think in divine things that God the Father is prior to his Son, as among creatures the father always is. Well spake Damascenus,* *Ἐπὶ μὲν οὖν τῆς τοῦ Υἱοῦ γεννήσεως ἀσεβὲς λέγειν χρόνον μεσιῦσαί:* *with respect then to the generation of the Son it is impious to say that there was interval of time.* For the Son is not brought into existence from a state of non-existence, but always was with the Father, and in him from all eternity, and without beginning begotten by him.

* Johannes Damascenus, or John of Damascus, so called from his being born at that place, where his father, though a Christian, was Counsellor of State to the Caliph of the Saracens. He was educated by a Monk of Jerusalem, from whom he imbibed the religious opinions of the times, and became one of the most distinguished writers of the eighth century. On the death of his father he succeeded him in the situation he had held, and occasioned great troubles and vexations to the Emperor of Constantinople, by becoming an active defender of image worship. Yet, though thus heterodox, he left a treatise, from which the above citation is quoted, on the orthodox faith, against all heresies, which seems of value. The two kinds of Theology, which the Latins termed scholastic and didactic, were united in this laborious performance. The book, says Moshem, was received among the Greeks with the highest applause, and was so extensively admired, that at length it came to be acknowledged among that people as the only rule of divine truth! It was published with his other works in Greek and Latin by Lequien, in 2 vols. folio, in 1712.

Whence John xvii. 5, the Son says to the Father, *Glorify me with that glory which I had with thee before the world was.* But concerning the Divine nature of Christ, we must speak more largely hereafter. In respect also of the human nature, Christ, by special privilege, is called the Son of God; and God, the Father of Christ: Luke i. 32, *the Son of the Highest*: Luke xxiii. 46, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*: John x. 36; and in many other passages.

But it may be asked, Why, in this place, it was not sufficient for the Apostle to say, *We give thanks to God*, but he should also add, *and to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*?

I answer, first, he adds this for our consolation: for in the verse preceding he had called God *our Father*; in this he calls the same God *the Father of Christ*. He intimates, therefore, that we and Christ are brethren; and thence that our true Brother always intercedes with God the common Father, for his brethren; and that is easily obtained from the Father which the Son requests; especially when he requests any thing for his brethren, not for strangers, Heb. ii. 11.

Secondly, to distinguish Christian invocation, from the invocation of Heathens and Jews. For an Heathen invokes and praises *God Almighty, who made the heaven and the earth*; a Jew invokes *the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob*; but Christians alone invoke and acknowledge *God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

Lastly, that he might shew that the benefits of God the Father are derived to us through his Son and our Brother Jesus Christ. For unless God were the Father of Christ, and of us through Christ, we should have no hope of obtaining the benefits of God.

Praying always for you.] The Apostle here shews for whom he gives thanks, viz. for the Colossians; and when, *praying always*, i. e. always when we do pray.

Observe 1. In that the Apostle gives so frequent, so regular thanks to God for benefits conferred upon others, he shews the nature of Christian love, which *rejoices with*

them that do rejoice, weeps with them that weep, and finally reckons the happiness and misery of its friends as its own. Parisiensis well terms *love the most trustworthy and innocent of thieves, because it makes all the goods of its neighbour its own, and yet takes away nothing from him*. Nay out of another's good things it finds a gift which it may present truly acceptable to God, viz. the praising of God and giving of thanks.

2. The Apostle by his conduct reproves the envy and jealousy of this age: in which, so far from men being willing to give thanks to God for the distinguished and excellent gifts of others, they are rather ready to turn the same to evil, and revile them with malevolent detractions. From which this disadvantage always happens, that they who, by rejoicing in the prosperity of others, would have found their own benefit, by envying it do but torment themselves: for *set aside envy, and what I have is thine; set aside envy, and what thou hast is mine*, as says Augustine in Psal. cxxxix.

Praying always.] I join these [two words], because they were not always in the act of giving thanks; but they always gave thanks then when they prayed. Therefore the latter word is a limitation of the former; and it is customary among the Greeks to explain a participle by the subjunctive.

Observe 1. The time of praying is therefore the most convenient time for rendering thanks to God; for prayer is *the elevation of the mind to God*; and then especially thanks are to be given to God when the mind glows with pious affections. For thanks are accounted dry and sterile before God, which proceed only from the outward lips; they must be drawn from the bottom of the heart, which, becoming fervid by prayer, is fain to celebrate the glory and the praises of God, not for form's sake, but seriously.

2. Hence also, we gather this, that the giving of thanks for benefits received, is the most suitable introduction to petition for new benefits, whether for ourselves or for others. For this is Paul's method: he gives thanks to God for the good bestowed on the Colossians; then he de-

sires from God a confirmation of those gifts; as ye shall hereafter hear.

And so far concerning the congratulatory proposition. The narration and the illustration of the cause of this giving of thanks follows; the narration in the 4th verse; for there he names those good things which had excited him to give thanks to God, viz. their *faith and love*. The illustration follows to the 9th verse.

Ver. 4. *Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and the love which ye have to all the saints.*

In this fourth verse, the Apostle explains (as I have said) the cause of his joy and congratulation: and he does it by the enumeration of certain spiritual gifts which were conspicuous among the Colossians. Here he specifies two; viz. *faith and love*: and each gift he illustrates by annexing, not its adequate, but its primary and principal object; *faith in Christ, love towards the saints*.

Your faith.] By *faith* here he means the profession of the Christian religion, which the Colossians had embraced, through the ministry and preaching of Epaphras and others; not indeed the external profession of faith alone, but an internal and sincere faith dwelling in the heart: for by the rule of charity, the latter is always to be presumed in the former, unless hypocrisy and impiety be discovered to evince the contrary.

He places this faith in the foreground, and puts it before other spiritual gifts, because it is in its nature prior to the rest. For it is the foundation and root of godliness and religion; it is the gate of life, through which God first enters into the human mind; it is the basis of the spiritual building. For as in the creation light preceded the other creatures; for God said, *Let there be light, and there was light on the first day*: so in the work of regeneration, God says, *Let there be the light of faith, and it first shines in the mind, then other virtues follow*. The very first *approach to God* is made *through faith*, Heb. xi. 6. The first *purification of the human heart* is effected *by faith*, Acts

xv. 9. That our works may be pleasing to God, faith is in the first place required, Heb. xi. Whence Prosper, *De vita contemplat.* iii. 21, excellently writes, that *faith is the foundation of righteousness, which no good works precede, but from which all proceed: it purges us from all sins, illuminates our minds, reconciles to God, &c.**

Hence it appears, whatever is done by unbelieving men, however holy and pious it may seem, is yet the dead carcase and image of a good work, not a good work, nor to be recompensed by any reward which is promised to true godliness.

We will adduce a few testimonies of the Fathers, because the Papists, who decry faith upon all occasions, and extol works, ascribe a certain merit to these works of unbelievers.

I. Clemens Alexandrinus,† *Strom.* 1. says, *When life is ended it will be of no avail to men to have done rightly now, unless [in conjunction with all this laudable morality] they have faith.* Augustine says, *Whosoever hath not a right faith towards God, with all his laudable deeds, departs from this life into condemnation,* lib. iii. *contra duas epis.* Pelag. cap. 5.

* Prosper:—An Ecclesiastical writer of the fifth century, of great excellence and eminence, and who at that early period ably opposed the Pelagian heresy: he died about the year 463. There is an edition of his works in 8vo. so recent as the year 1732.

† Clemens Alexandrinus:—a distinguished Father who lived in the third century. He was employed as a Catechist, and afterwards made a Presbyter in the church of Alexandria. Under him arose many eminent men; though, from the manner in which his mind was evidently imbued and warped by the mystical philosophy of his time (in which he had acquired an extensive knowledge, as any of his writings would shew), his statements of Christian doctrine were defective. He was a copious writer; but of all his works only the following appear to remain, viz. his “Protrepticon, or an Exhortation to the Pagans;” “Pedagogus, or the Instructor;” the fragment of a treatise on the use of riches, entitled, “What rich man can be saved?” and his “Stromata,” the work cited above by our Expositor. This title is borrowed from Carpet-work, and intended to denote the miscellaneous nature of the philosophical and religious topics of which the work treats. It is considered valuable, as containing many quotations from ancient books, and recording several facts which are not to be met with elsewhere.

All the life of the unbelieving is sin: Prosper, Sent. 106. When the acknowledgment of God is wanting, all righteousness is like the human body without a head, Lactantius, vi. 9.—I bring forward no more: these sufficiently shew why the Apostle in the first place gives thanks to God for the faith of the Colossians, viz. because without faith nothing can be grateful and acceptable to God.*

So much concerning the first gift.

In Christ Jesus.] The Apostle shews the object of Christian faith; not the general, or adequate object, but the principal; and, if we regard the act of justification, the peculiar object.

The general and adequate object of faith is, all the truth revealed by God in the Holy Scriptures. There is a sort of general faith which answers to this description, and which by a sure persuasion resolves that whatever things are made manifest in the word of God, are most true. But this general assent of faith cannot justify; because justification brings with it peace of conscience, purification of heart, free access to God, and many other privileges, of which, doubtless, any one may be void, notwithstanding his firmly believing the whole Scripture to be true and in-

* On this use of the Fathers by Davenant, it may be permitted the Translator to adduce a passage from Bishop Douglas in their behalf. Speaking of Dr. Middleton on Miracles, he observes, what may justly be applied to some other writers respecting those ancient witnesses to many important truths: "He has justly provoked the indignation of every serious Christian, by the indecent contempt with which he treats the earliest Fathers of the Church, whose names have been venerable in every age, and whose labours in defence of Christianity, for the truth of which most of them laid down their lives, ought to have secured them from insult, if they could not procure his esteem. And if there be any superstitious conceits, or weak prejudices to be met with in their works, a veil ought to have been thrown over them, as these are faults not of their own, but of the times in which they lived; and which, if they disgrace the pages of the Fathers of the Christian Church, detract equally from the merit of their cotemporaries, the Philosophers of the Platonic and Pythagorean schools." Douglas's "Criterion;" or "Rules by which the true Miracles recorded in the New Testament are distinguished from the spurious miracles of Pagans and Pagans." Edition by the Rev. William Marsh; a work deserving of every enquirer's perusal in this age of rebuke and blasphemy.

spired by God: For the devil himself knows the Scriptures, and acknowledges them to have proceeded from the Author of truth. Therefore in this general object of faith, viz. the word of God, there is one special and main object which is principally to be considered by a believer, and to which all other things that are delivered in the Scriptures have a certain relation and reference, as Durandus speaks, in Prolog. Sent. And this object is, Christ Jesus in the character of a Mediator and Saviour, which is intimated under his very names; for *Christ Jesus* means nothing else than—*anointed Saviour*.

Now it is clear from the Scriptures that he is the principal object of faith, and that all other things which are delivered in the Scriptures regard Christ as their end and aim. John v. 39, *Search the Scriptures, they testify of me;* and a little after, *Moses wrote of me.* So in Luke, ult. ver. 44, *All things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me.* So it is affirmed concerning the whole law, that it was *a Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.* Him the prophets described; Him the ceremonies of the law shadowed forth; Him, in short, with all his benefits, the Gospel offers and exhibits to us. The Apostle, therefore, has rightly placed, as the special and principal object of faith, not the Word of God in general, but Christ Jesus our Saviour and Mediator, who is principally regarded by a believer, and to whom all things in Scripture have reference.

Now from hence it follows, that the proper and principal act of justifying faith, is the apprehension and particular application of the gratuitous promises which are offered to believers in this Mediator, Christ. Which particular and justifying faith includes general faith; for if it should waver in general concerning the truth of the divine word, it could not confide in particular concerning the promises made to us in Christ the Mediator; but it justifies, not so far as it assents in general to the divine word, but so far as it is applied to this its principal and peculiar object, viz. to the promises of grace in the Mediator.

Which is evident, first, because as Thomas expresses it,

I quæst. 45, art. 6, *the justification of a sinner pertains to the goodness and the mercy of God superabundantly diffusing itself.* But we neither can, nor ought, to seek or apprehend the goodness and mercy of God, independently of the promises of grace, which are made and ratified to us in Christ the Mediator: therefore in these alone, as in the proper object, the act of justifying faith is exercised, when and as far as it justifies.

Secondly, it is evident from the distribution of the Scripture; for it is divided into the Law and the Gospel: but justification is not sought or contained in the doctrine of the Law. Not in that part which prescribes obedience and promises a recompence to those fulfilling its commands; because the conscience of every one witnesses, that we cannot be justified by the legal covenant. Much less in that other part which contains the threats and punishments due to those who violate the law; because this doctrine affords not the hope of salvation, but inspires the dread of hell. It remains, therefore, that justification be sought in the Gospel, i. e. in the promises of grace; and the act of faith, as far as it justifies, should be especially directed to these promises.

Thirdly, we shew this from clear testimonies of Scripture. Acts xiii. 38, 39, *Through Christ is preached the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* And Rom. iii. 21, 22, *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.*

I argue these points the more at large, because Bellarmine, *De justif. lib. i. cap. 8, &c.* says, that justifying faith is a general assent to all things which are contained in the word of God; and makes, not the promises of grace, but the whole revelation of God, the object of this faith. If he intends, that justifying faith assents to the whole divine word, we willingly concede it: but if he denies that it has a certain principal object in the word which it regards before all others in the act itself of justifying, viz. Christ the Mediator, and his gratuitous promises concerning the

remission of sins, he is opposed to St. Paul, who, in a hundred places, names Christ as the principal object of faith, not the word in general: he also opposes even Aquinas, who says, that *faith in the act of justifying does not even regard and contemplate all the articles of faith alike, much less the whole word of God, but only God as remitting sins.*—But here a doubt which is raised by the Schoolmen may be briefly solved.

They ask, How Christ can be the object of faith, when faith has for its object an enunciation or proposition revealed by God? Christ is a thing, and (as the Logicians say) an incomplex term, not a proposition in which truth or falsehood is perceived.

It is answered, That is called an object of faith which is either believed itself, or concerning which any thing is believed. The thing itself which is believed is a proposition or enunciation; that concerning which it is believed is a thing signified by a simple term, as Durandus says. Aquinas more plainly remarks; The object of faith is regarded in a twofold manner: either on the part of the thing believed; and so the object of faith is always something incomplex, viz. the thing itself concerning which the propositions of faith are formed, as Christ, the resurrection, the final judgment, creation, and the like: or on the part of the person believing; and so the object of faith is that enunciation which faith apprehends concerning the thing, as that Christ is the Mediator and Saviour, that our bodies shall rise again, and that Christ will come to judge the world, that God created the world, and the like.—Thus far concerning the first gift, i. e. faith, and its object, viz. Christ.

And love to all the saints.] This is that other gift, from which the Apostle has taken occasion to give thanks to God in the name of the Colossians; and to which also is joined a certain special object of this virtue, viz. *the saints.*

Respecting this gift itself we must first enquire what it is. Lombard* thought (lib. i. dist. 4), that love was

* Peter Lombard, commonly known by the title of Master of the Sentences. He was born at Novara, in Lombardy, but brought up at Paris, in the University of which place he distinguished himself so much, that he

nothing else than the Holy Spirit himself immediately moving the will to the act of love. For he put this difference between love and the other virtues, that the Holy Spirit moved the soul to acts of other virtues, by the intermediate infusion of certain habits, but to the act of love immediately by himself, without any other habit being created or infused. And he grounded this opinion especially upon that passage of John, 1 Epis. iv. 8, *God is love*; and again in vers. 16, *God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*. But this opinion can by no means be supported: for as faith and hope are created gifts, so also love is a habit created by God, by which the will is inclined to love God above all things for his own sake, and all other persons for the sake of God. For if the act of love were an immediate motion of the will by God, without a habit infused, it would follow, First, that the act of love would not be voluntary, because it proceeds neither from the will naturally (for love is above nature), nor from the will as perfected by supernatural habit; but only from the will as it is moved as the instrument of a superior cause; just as the hand or the foot may be moved by something else. Secondly, it would follow, that man would not have any promptitude in love, or delight in the exercise of love: for promptitude and delight in actions, argue a habit either acquired or infused.

The Scripture itself also opposes this comment of Lombard, and clearly teaches that *ἀγάπη*, or our love, is not the Holy Spirit, but *a fruit of the Holy Spirit*, Gal. v. 22. The Fathers also testify against it. *Ἀγάπη ἐστὶ διὰθεσις Ψυχῆς ἀγαθῆ*, *it is a disposition of the mind by which it is made to prefer nothing to God*, Maxim 1. centur. sentent. tom. 7.

was first appointed Canon of Chartres, afterwards Tutor to Philip, son of Lewis VI., and finally Bishop of Paris. He died in 1064. His great work of the Sentences is looked on as the source of the Scholastic Theology of the Latin Church, as that of Damascenus had been of the Greek. Of the occasion and nature of this work, of so much importance in the conduct of Papal Theology, Du Pin has given a full and interesting account in his Ecclesiastical History, Cent. 12. Chap. xv. Lombard also wrote Commentaries on the Psalms, and on St. Paul's Epistles.

And Prosper; *Love is a rectified will turned from all earthly things, and inseparably united to God, kindled by a certain fire of the Holy Spirit*; De vita contemp. iii. 13. He says that love is *inspired* by the Holy Spirit, not the Holy Spirit himself. To the passage cited from John, *God is love*, the answer is easy; For God is called love causally, not formally (as the Schoolmen say), i. e. inasmuch as he causes love in us; for he is the eternal fountain whence our love, and all other virtues, flow to us. Or God may be called love essentially, in the same manner as God is said to be wisdom, and justice; because these attributes are not accidents in God, but one and the same essence with God. But this does not in the least prevent the possibility of our love being a created gift; as our prudence, and righteousness, and holiness are created gifts, although God may be rightly called prudence itself, and righteousness itself, and holiness itself.

We see what love is. Now, in the second place, since it is connected by the Apostle with faith, let us enquire concerning the connexion of faith and love, viz. Whether true faith can exist without love?

First, we grant that the mind of man can be so enlightened as to believe God, i. e. to assent to the divine word in general, and yet at the same time, be destitute of love. The Schoolmen call this *fides informis*;* we, *historical faith*, or *general faith*. So the very ancient Schoolman of Altisiodorum, lib. 3, *We believe God by informal faith, i. e. that God is, and that God is Almighty, and many other things*. Concerning this also James speaks, Chr. ii. 14, *What doth it profit though any one say he hath faith, but hath not works?* Then a little after, *The devils believe and tremble*.

But there is also another faith, which we call *justifying faith*, the Schoolmen *fides formata*,† which not only believes God, but in God, i. e. which apprehends God as appeased and reconciled in Christ; and this we say is never separated from love. The former is a simple irradiation, not a

* That is, indefinite or crude faith.

† That is, formed or definite faith.

theological virtue ; this latter is the first among these three celebrated theological virtues.* And the perpetual connection of this with love is proved by many reasons :

1. Because this faith apprehends God as good and merciful, and the Author of salvation to a man's self through Christ ; and this apprehension produces necessarily the love of God : For so Altissiodorensis, *The estimation with which any one regards God through faith to be his chief good, engenders the desire of that good ;* lib. 3.

2. Because justifying faith sanctifies and purifies the heart ; but a heart void of love is not sanctified or purified.

3. Because every one who believes with true and justifying faith, has a right to eternal life : For so the Baptist, *He who believes in the Son hath eternal life.* And Paul to the Galatians, *Ye are all the children of God by faith.* But these things are united in no one who is void of love.

4. The Schoolmen themselves shew that these three theological virtues are always joined. So Altissiodorensis ; *All the virtues are united : for faith is the necessary cause of hope and love,* lib. 3. But concerning the connection of faith and love in the very act of believing, thus Parisiensis writes ; *Living faith is not only a light to shew the things believed ; but a life exciting us to do or to decline those things, to*

* The "lively" or living faith of the Church of England, defined in her 12th Article, which alone interests the soul in Christ for justification, it has been well observed, is not to be confounded with the "formed" faith of the Church of Rome—i. e. a faith clothed in all the fruits which it is to produce, and justifying us by means of its fruits ; "They say that the Scriptures which speak of justification by faith ought to be understood of a *formed faith* ; i. e. that our justification is to be ascribed to our faith, only on account of our love" and other fruits of it : "nay they make love to justify, and not faith. But what else is this than to abolish the promises again, and return to the law ?" Melanc. Apol. Confess. p. 52, ed. 1537. "The Papists say that man is justified by a *formed faith*. They mean, not by faith, but by other virtues." I. Op. 1, 373.—In the Council of Trent, Marinarus "liked not that it should be said, that *faith is formed with charity*, because that kind of speech is not used by St. Paul, but only that *faith worketh by charity*" or love. F. Paul. 183. Conv. I. 306. Vide Scott's Continuation of Milner's Church History : and also Bellarmin's conclusion noted in this vol. p. 10 : Note.

seek or avoid them. And Durandus, *To believe in God is not simply an act of faith, but the act of faith and love together.*

From these considerations it is manifest, when the Papists argue that true faith may be separated from love, they are either playing upon words, or opposing their own Schoolmen. For that faith which is void of love, differs in kind from that which is justifying; for the last is a theological virtue, the other is not: they differ in the object; for this apprehends God reconciled to us in Christ; that is not able to apprehend any such thing: they differ also in their effects; for this brings peace to the conscience, that fear: they differ, lastly, in their acts; for the act of this is to believe in God, the act of the other is only to believe God, as we have before shewn.

The last question, which has respect to faith and love, remains; viz. Whether love be so conjoined with faith that it is the form of faith? So it appeared to Thomas, to Durandus, and to others of a more recent date. For they imagine faith by itself to be a certain dead and inanimate thing, and whatever it hath of life or merit, to be borrowed from love as from its soul and form.

But on the other hand, Altissiodorensis (whom I have often named)* opposes this, lib. 3, where he maintains, that true and formed faith naturally precedes love; and he adduces the following reasons:

1. *The just lives by faith;* therefore he loves by faith; therefore living faith is prior in its nature to love, and hence it is not formed and enlivened by love.

2. From 1 Tim. i. 5, *The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of faith unfeigned:* therefore true faith, and that which purifies the heart, produces love; and by consequence it is not formed from love.

3. The motion of true faith precedes the motion of

* The person often cited by Davenant under the epithet of "Altissiodorensis," was William Bishop of Auxerre, whose Theological Summary is far superior to the general style of Divinity of the twelfth century, in which he flourished. Though little is recorded of him, his character and excellence as a Writer and a Christian, are quite evident by Davenant's quotations from him here, and especially under the 18th verse.

love; therefore the habit itself of true faith naturally precedes the habit of love. For we believe and repose our faith on God before we are able to love him.

4. From the Apostle to the Galatians v. 6, *In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love*: therefore faith is the efficient cause of love, and hence love is not the form of faith, but its daughter or handmaid.

But when they (the Papists) are driven to straits, they endeavour to explain their opinion in this way: That love is the form of faith, not in such manner as in natural things, a form is said to give the shape to material; but only in this respect, that by love the act of faith is perfected: for faith hath its entire efficacy and merit from love. Thus Aquinas, Q. 2. quæst. 4, art. 3. and qu. disp. de fide, art. 5. And Durandus, lib. 3. dist. 33. quæst. 8, *Love is not the inherent, but extrinsic form of faith; neither does it become a form of faith as being of its nature, but as far as it is meritorious.**

But all these things are fallacious and weak. For, first, love does not elicit nor perfect the proper act of faith; because although they are simultaneous, yet naturally the act and even the habit of faith precedes the act and habit of love.

Secondly, love does not, as they think, render the act of faith meritorious, or acceptable to God: but on the contrary, the power of meriting (as they speak) i. e. of rendering our actions acceptable, is placed more especially in faith than in love. For without faith it is impossible that the act of loving can be acceptable to God. Also the regenerate man renounces his own understanding through faith, before he does his own will through love. Love therefore is not the form, but the offspring of true faith.

Hitherto we have considered the gift itself of love: Now let us come to the object.

To all saints.] Where two things are to be remarked: the object of love, specified in this place, *the saints*; and the extent of the object, *all saints*.

* "Nec informat fidem quoad esse naturæ, sed quoad esse meritorium."

By *saints* the Apostle understands the baptised, and those who profess the Christian religion, as we have before shewn;* for love presumes such to be true saints.

As to the object of love we must know, that the saints are neither its only nor primary object. For, as Augustine writes, *De doctrin. Christ. i. 25, There are four objects of our love; one, that which is above us, viz. God; another, that which is ourselves; the third, that which is near to us, viz. our neighbour; the fourth, that which is beneath us, viz. our own body.* Concerning each of these we shall speak somewhat briefly.

1. First, then, the principal, and also the formal object of love, is God himself: for he is loved for himself, all other things in their relation to him, and as far as they participate, or are able to participate the Divine likeness and blessedness. When, therefore, the Apostle celebrates the love of the Colossians to the saints, he does not exclude, but necessarily supposes love to God. For as a colour is not seen without light, because light is the medium of seeing colour: so our neighbour is not loved without the love of God, because God is the medium of our loving our neighbour. Hence the Saviour in those two great commands places foremost the love of God, as the cause and fountain of the love of our neighbour. Matth. xxii. 37—39. Hence also Augustine, *Confess. lib. 10, cap. 29, observes, He loves thee less than is right, who together with thee loves any thing else for any other cause than because he loves thee.*

2. Augustine places oneself as the second object of love to every one, and that rightly. For as the Philosopher (Aristotle) has observed, *Eth. ix. cap. 8, 'Απ' αὐτου πάντα τα φιλικὰ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους διηκει: All kindly feelings proceed from oneself towards others.* And God himself in the command of loving our neighbour includes the love of oneself; *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* Plain reason also evinces this. For since love is founded upon the communication of the divine fruition or blessedness,

* Vide p. 20, 21.

every one, so far as he understands that he can be a partaker of the divine fruition, is bound to love himself, and to desire that divine good to himself which is the proper subject of love.

Nay, we may moreover add, that no one is able to love God truly,* who at the same time does not truly love himself: for he who loves God, wishes to enjoy the divine blessedness; but to wish this good to himself is to love himself truly. Furthermore, every one wishes the enjoyment of God to himself first, and more intensely than to another; so that if it could not be vouchsafed to more, every one had rather it should be communicated to himself by God than to another. And the reason is, because more causes concur to make him in this manner love himself rather than another. For another may fall from this divine good without my loss or fault, but I myself cannot.

But it may be asked, if every one is bound to love himself, and that more intently than another with this kind of love, why is there no express and direct precept concerning the loving oneself? Nay, why is the love of oneself condemned, 2 Tim. iii. 2, *Men shall be lovers of themselves.*

It is solved thus: Since to love God is to love oneself, therefore when it is commanded that we love God, it is commanded in effect that we love ourselves. For he who loves God wishes to enjoy God, desires to be united to God; he wishes therefore the chief and greatest good to himself, and hence he loves himself as much as possible. Also, it may be replied, that the written law was given in aid of the law of nature, which was obscured through sin; yet was not so obscured, but that it might move any one to love himself: therefore an express command concerning the love of oneself was not necessary. But as to what is said that the love of oneself is condemned in Scripture, it must be understood concerning an inordinate love which respects sensible good, not of that kind of love which has respect to divine good. For no one can too much love, or

* Ex charitate.

too much desire for himself spiritual good things; but sensible and transitory ones he may; and in this consists that love which is to be blamed.

3. I now come to the third object of love, which our present design has chiefly in view; and this is that which is *near to us* (as Augustine says), i. e. *our neighbour*.*

But a person is called a neighbour not *from consanguinity* only, but from a *mutual participation of reason*, as the gloss has it. So also Justin Martyr, *A man's neighbour is nothing else, but a being participating in a similar condition and in rational faculties*.† But this must be observed by the way, that a neighbour is loved by us with true love, not simply as he is a partaker of rational nature, but so far as that rational nature may be a partaker of the divine blessedness: for love is founded in the mutual participation of the divine fruition, as was before observed. Among neighbours therefore, i. e. among men, the especial objects of our love are holy men, as the Apostle both here and elsewhere teaches; as in the Epistle to the Galatians, vi. 10, *Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who*

* A couplet from Augustine, which it is said he caused to be inscribed upon his table, is worthy of being cited here; it is a practical testimony that *he* was not actuated by the "bitter and unchristian spirit" recently attributed to those supposed to hold Calvinistic tenets:—

" Far from this table be the worthless guest
Who wounds another's fame though but in jest."

† *Justin*, or *Justinus*, surnamed the *Martyr*; one of the earliest writers in the Christian Church, was born at Neapolis, the ancient *Sichem* of Palestine, in the province of Samaria. His father Priscus was a Greek Gentile, and he himself was deeply versed in the Platonic Philosophy, when he was led by a conversation with a Christian convert, to inquire into the merits of that Religion which he afterwards embraced in 132, and supported both by preaching and writing until he was called upon to seal its truth with his blood. He was beheaded, after having been scourged, according to the imperial edict, in the reign of M. Aurelius, A.D. 165. Among his works (a good summary of which has lately been given to the public in a small 8vo. volume, by Bishop Kaye), the best known are his 'Dialogue with Trypho the Jew,' and his first and second Apology for the Christians; the former of which he presented to Antoninus Pius, and the latter to his successor, Aurelius. Specimens from these will be seen as we proceed, and evince the power of the Gospel, in the ennobling of the mind, above all Philosophy.

are of the household of faith. So Augustine, *The more holy members are to be embraced with a greater love.* And the venerable Bede; *The union of hearts is more sacred than that of bodies.** But it is easy to assign a reason, why the saints are more to be loved by us than others, viz. because that which is the formal reason of love, is more visible in them than others: For as those objects are better seen, which are placed more in the light, because light is the formal object of vision; so those men are more loved, who are more united to God, because God is the formal and proper object of love.

The last object of love Augustine makes to be, *the human body*: which he has therefore done, because love being

▪ Bede, justly named the Venerable, was born about the year A.D. 670, in the country between the mouth of the Ware and the Tyne. His works make eight folio volumes, and consist principally of Commentaries on the Scriptures, chiefly drawn from the Fathers: and abounding with allegorical interpretations. From his writings it is evident that he had acquired all the learning, philosophical and theological, that could be attained. His information, surprising as it may seem for a person in this country, at that age, had been derived from his access to a library collected at the Monastery at Jarrow, by Benedict Biscop, a Monk who had been encouraged under Alfrid, King of Northumberland, to collect books in France and Italy. The volumes he got together contained the concentrated wisdom of ages; and from these treasures were Bede's productions gathered. His most valuable work is his Ecclesiastical History, which, though abounding in legendary fables, the natural result of the credulity of the age and the sources of his resort, is an inestimable record of the early history of the Anglican Church.—Mr. Southey in his *Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, has given a very interesting view of the character and productions of this eminent and holy man. He was employed at the period of his dissolution, and during a long and painful illness, in dictating to Wilberth, a young disciple, a translation of St. John's Gospel. Just as this was being brought to a close, he said, "It is now time that I should be released, and go to Him who created me. I have lived long and my merciful Judge hath ordered my ways well. The hour of my freedom is at hand; and my soul desires to behold Christ in his glory." The young disciple then said to him, "Master, there is yet one sentence more." "Write quickly, then," replied the adoring saint. Presently Wilberth said, "Now it is done." "You have said truly," rejoined the dying man: "It is finished. Take my head between thy hands. and place me so that I may look towards my oratory, and then call upon my Father." Being then laid on the pavement, in the position which he directed, he expired presently, chaunting the doxology with his latest breath.

founded upon the communication of divine blessedness, whatever may participate that blessedness may be the object of love. But now, although our body cannot enjoy the divine blessedness in knowing and in loving God, yet it may be the instrument in many works of piety of a soul that does know and love God; whence from the beatification of the soul redounds a certain incidental blessedness to the body, viz. the blessedness of immortality and incapability of suffering.—So much concerning the objects of love. Now let us consider the extent of that object which is here expressed by the Apostle. He would have love to extend to *all* saints, i. e. professors of true religion.

All.] When the Apostle extends love to *all* saints, he is to be understood, not only concerning the internal affection, but the external exercise of love, which is discerned in liberality and beneficence towards those who stand in need of our aid, For, as much as in us lies, we ought to be beneficent towards all, not only our neighbours or relations, but strangers, nay enemies and wicked men.* Concerning strangers we have the practice of the apostolic Church: The Macedonians and Achaians made a collection for the poor saints that dwelt at Jerusalem, Rom. xv. 26. So the Corinthians are excited to supply the wants of others from their abundance, 2 Epis. viii. 13.† So Gaius is praised for his love toward strangers, 3 Epis. John, ver.

* Who can forget the exemplifications given us of this by our Redeemer in the parable of the good Samaritan, and as implied in Rom. v. 6—10?

† Tertullian in his "Apology," cap. 39, gives a fine illustration of the effects of the Gospel in inducing this Christian love: "Every one," says he, speaking of the conduct of the early Christians, "pays something into the public chest once a month, or when he pleases, and according to his ability and inclination; for there is no compulsion. These gifts are, as it were, the deposits of piety: Hence we relieve and bury the needy, support orphans and decrepit persons, those who have suffered shipwreck, and those who, for the word of God, are condemned to the mines or imprisonment. This very charity of ours has caused us to be noticed by some:—See, say they, how these Christians love one another!"—The world had not before witnessed the like; and surely these persons had learned of him whose benevolence "excludes no persons from its tender regards; which disdains no condescension, grudges no cost, in its labours of love." Luke xix. 10; 2 Cor. viii. 9.

5. Well spake Lactantius, *What we give to our relatives through affection, we should give to strangers from philanthropy.* It is a saying of a Grecian poet, *That a good man, if he abound in riches, is a common treasure.* The Scripture in many places enjoins that enemies should be loved: *Do good to them that hate you,* Matth. v. 44; and Rom. xii. 10, *If thine enemy hunger, feed him;* Whence that saying of Tertullian to Scapula, *It is the custom of all to love their friends; but it is the peculiarity of Christians to love their enemies.** And this especially points out the power and

* Scapula, the President and Proconsul of Africa; to whom Tertullian wrote in consequence of his improper conduct towards the Christians in his Province, pleading their cause in as admirable an address as he had before composed in their behalf under the persecution of the Emperor Severus. The Romish Church, *professing* the Religion of Jesus Christ, yet seems to have always retained the character of her Pagan ancestors, and not content with retaining a barbarous hostility towards her enemies in principle, has ever evinced the same towards those, partakers indeed of faith and love, but unable to comply with her superstitions. Hence her principle and conduct towards all those, whom *she* deems heretics, is hatred, persecution, and—if possible—extermination; and she has ever gloried in the effects, the more appalling they have been to humanity. For historic evidence of this, let the Reader look into “Townsend’s Accusations,” p. 248. In addition to the statements there given of the exulting commemoration of the massacre of St. Bartholomew’s day, the writer may add, on the testimony of a friend before referred to, p. 13, who recently visited Rome, and communicated the fact to him, that two scenes of that massacre were painted in Fresco by the famous Vasari, on the walls of a noble chamber in the Vatican! One is the murder of Coligny. The figures are of the natural size, and the scientific painter has fully represented the horrors of the scene. This chamber forms the communication between the Pauline and Sistine Chapels, where the great mysteries of the Roman Catholic Church are celebrated by the Pope in person; and when the Pontiff carries ‘the body of Christ’ every Easter, from one to the other, he passes within two yards of the representation of the dead body of Coligny, preserved as a triumph of Holy Mother Church!!

As facts of this kind are often most disingenuously denied, when it is supposed *proof is not at hand*, the following confirmation must be deemed decisive and important by all who would not abjure common sense. It is the spontaneous and express testimony of the Jesuit Bonanni, in his *Numis Pont. Romæ* 1699, Tom. 1, under Greg. XIII. p. 336, where he is describing the notorious medal struck on the occasion HUGONOTORUM STRAGES. He not only particularly relates the public rejoicings which then took place at Rome, but affirms with relation to the painting in the

efficacy of love. For as that fire is hotter and stronger which not only is able to warm things that are near, but such as are far remote; so that love is the more perfect and lively, which not only extends to neighbours, but to those most distant, i. e. to enemies. Neither ought we to think this love of enemies to be a matter of advice, but of command; for he loves not God above all things, who does not love an enemy: which may be thus demonstrated:

In every enemy of ours two qualities are found: one which is a ground of love, viz. a participation of the divine likeness, and the possibility of his participation of blessedness: another which is the ground of hatred, viz. that he inflicts an injury upon us, and opposes us: if therefore, setting aside the ground of love, we are altogether converted into hatred, our enmity outweighs divine love. Now, as to men openly wicked, such as are given to drunkenness, adultery, perjury, Christian love does not desert even these. For *love hopeth all things*; 1 Cor. xiii. 7; it therefore hopes that these may be converted to God; and

Vatican, executed by command of the Pope—"Colinii et Sociorum cædem in Vaticanæ Aula describi coloribus jussit a Georgio Vasaro Religionis vindicatæ monumentum, et de profligata hæresi trophæum, sollicitus indequàm salubris ægro Regni corpori tam copiosa depravati sanguinis emissio esset profutura." The whole passage would be worth the attention of the Readers of Dr. Lingard, if the credit of the Papal historian had not been sufficiently disposed of by Dr. Allen.—On the subject which it is here wished to impress upon the consideration of the thoughtful Reader, if he still doubt of the true character and tendency of Popery, let him only peruse the last chapter of Mendham's "Literary Policy of the Church of Rome." Indeed the Translator would intreat every one who has not read that volume, and who desires to come to a right conclusion about the real character of the Infallible and unchangeable Church, to procure it for that purpose. It is of vital importance to a decision in the mind of a wavering Protestant, as to the light in which he should view Romanism and its efforts at the present time. It is more than probable, that on closing the volume, after perusal, his mind would recur to recent events in France as affording a practical demonstration of the reflections with which its statements close. It is a fact, moreover, pretty well accredited, that the recent Revolution there was occasioned mainly by the intriguing of the Priests with the Court party, and by their attempts to introduce that system of things, which in this country, and in Ireland, they are ever and anon insinuating that the Protestant Clergy are interested in upholding.

that they may become partakers of the communion of saints and of eternal blessedness: Therefore the godly man hates the wicked man, but with *a perfect hatred*: but a perfect hatred is that which is neither defective in justice, nor knowledge, i. e. that you neither hate the men on account of their vices, nor love the vices on account of the men.

From these considerations, therefore, it is manifest, that Christian love embraces every rational creature except devils and the damned; because all either are, or at least as far as we know, may be partakers of holiness and blessedness. But devils and the damned love forsakes, because God has forsaken them: therefore we cannot desire to them the good of eternal life, to which love chiefly has respect; because this would be repugnant to love, which approves the justice of God, and acquiesces in his revealed will.

And these things may suffice concerning the virtue of love, the object, and the extent of the object: and having dwelt so long upon these heads, we must pass over the inferences which might be drawn either for instruction, or for direction, or even reproof, and proceed.

Verse 5.

For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven; whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel.

In the former verse the Apostle has explained the causes of his giving of thanks, viz. the faith and love of the Colossians: now he proceeds to illustrate and confirm the same, from the final and instrumental causes. The final cause, *the hope laid up in heaven*: the instrumental cause, *the word of the Gospel*. But because the connection and even the sense of these words is disputed, these doubts must be cleared away, before we proceed to treat the subject matter.

Some connect these words, *because of the hope which is laid up for you*, with that expression, *we give thanks*, which is placed in the beginning of the third verse, in this sense; We give thanks to God having heard of your faith and

love, because from hence we understand you to be of the number of those for whom an eternal reward is laid up in heaven. So Athanasius.

Others refer these words to the verse immediately preceding in this sense; We give thanks to God having heard of your faith and love, which faith and love ye have embraced, and persevere in, on account of the hope laid up in heaven, i. e. on account of celestial blessedness. For hope here is put for the things hoped for, as faith is often taken for those things which are believed. So Chrysostom and Theodoret. Now let us return to the words of the Apostle.

For the hope which is laid up, &c.] Some one of the Colossians might ask from Paul, Why do you give such thanks to God for our faith and love? What good shall accrue to us from thence? Do you not see plainly that the faithful and godly are despised and trodden upon by all? Paul answers, I give thanks not on account of the temporal advantage which you are about to derive, but on account of the heavenly felicity, which from thence I know to be reserved for you.

And here three things must be observed: The name of the heavenly reward; it is called *hope, our hope*. The manner: the reward is not said to be conferred immediately, nor only proposed and offered, but *laid up*, set apart for us. Lastly, the place must be remarked, *in heaven*.

For the hope.] Under the name of hope is comprehended whatever of good is to be expected in the life of glory. And by this word he intended to point out celestial happiness;

First, that from hence we may understand that this reward is to be expected by us with patience: for so the Apostle in writing to the Romans viii. 25, says, *If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it*. A patient expectation is the proper effect of hope, and therefore very necessary; because whatever is hoped for, is deferred: and delay by its very nature is distressing, unless patience attend us to sustain the mind. And this is the language of patience, which Tertullian expresses in his

book *De Animâ*; *Some one may I ask, When shall I come to this hoped for joy? Patience answers, When God shall be pleased to give it: for no delay of that which will certainly come is long.*

Secondly, The promised blessedness is called our *hope*, i. e. the thing which we hope for: through an *Antonomasia*;* that hence we may be led to consider that this object alone is worthy of our hope; and that other frail and transitory things which are commonly hoped for and sought after, are, in comparison with this heavenly prize, rather to be trampled under foot than hoped for or sought after.

Lastly, By this term the carnal and worldly are reprov'd, who neither care nor hope for future blessedness; they covet only the pleasures of the present life, and into those they plunge themselves. But as Cyprian speaks, *De bono patient, The very fact itself of our being Christians is the substance of hope.* If you find not comfort and pleasure in the things hoped for, you are a Christian in vain. Thus far concerning the name of this treasure.

Laid up, αποκειμένην.] Here he intimates the manner of the reward, that is to say, the way in which it concerns us in the present time. It is not given to us nor are we brought into the possession of it immediately: for this would subvert the nature of hope, and of the thing hoped for. For the present possession of any thing is enjoyment, not hope. Whence the Apostle, *Hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he hope for it?* Rom. viii. 24. Neither is it said that this prize is only offered to us, and proposed; for it would weaken our hope, if the certainty of the things hoped for should depend upon ourselves and our disposition, so as either to be given to us or denied, according to the merit of our works. But it is said to be *laid up for us*, i. e. hidden in reserve with God our Father. But if any thing be in reserve for us, even with a good and honest man, we entertain no doubt concerning its future recovery; nay, our goods are placed for that end with ano-

* *Antonomasia*: a figure of rhetoric, in which for some proper name is put the name of some office, possession, or dignity; or to one object the name of any other which nearly resembles it.

ther, through fear of their not being in safety with ourselves. When therefore the Apostle calls the kingdom of heaven *the hope laid up for us*, he shews that the godly ought to be certain of the attainment of life eternal; because it is as a treasure kept in store for his children by God himself their Father. Hence that saying of Christ, Luke xii. 32, *Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.* Admirably writes Clemens Alexandrinus concerning the certainty of the godly. *A faithful man hath the God whom he has loved; and by faith has received what is uncertain to others; and he obtains the promise κρατει επαγγελίας; he possesses future things as present: nay he hath so certain a persuasion, that he makes more sure of them than of present things.* But whence this so great certainty, unless because he knows that this treasure is laid up for him?

In heaven.] Behold the place where this treasure is! From which we learn that such is the nature of this treasure, that when once possessed it never afterwards can be taken away. For so says the Saviour, Luke xii. 33, *Hither thief approacheth not, nor moth corrupteth any thing here:* as though he would say that all things laid up in heaven, are beyond the toss of fortune, and the danger of loss.

Secondly, from the fact that the reward hoped for is laid up *in heaven*, we are given to understand, that it is not any thing low or mean, but divine, magnificent, and plainly celestial. Concerning all earthly things, Prudentius (Hymno ad Galli cant.) hath well said,

Aurum, voluptas, gaudium,—opes, honores, prospera,
Quæcunq; nos inflant mala,—fit mane, nil sunt omnia.*

But as these earthly things pass away and vanish, and have nothing fixed or permanent about them; so *heavenly*

* Or gold, or pleasure, wanton mirth,
Wealth, honours, or prosperity;
Whatever evils chafe on earth,
When morning dawns,—as nought they be.

Prudentius was a Poet of the fourth century, a Spaniard by birth, born at Saragossa about the year 348, author of several poems on devotional subjects, first published at Venice, in 1501, in 1 vol. quarto, and afterwards in

things stand on the solid basis of their perpetuity, and have nothing fading or transitory : Parisiensis de retribut. sanctorum.

Lastly, if our hope be laid up in heaven, there ought our mind to be perpetually directed: *for where the treasure is, there is the heart*, Luke xii. 34. That saying of Paul is the saying of every true Christian; *We have our conversation in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour*, Phil. iii. 20. Upon this, Clemens has elegantly observed that *every faithful person, even upon earth, verges upon a celestial nature and life*. Strom. 2. But such a forgetfulness of heavenly things hath taken possession of us, that that saying of Prudentius may justly be turned upon us,

Nemo animum summi memorem genitoris in altum,
Excitat, ad cœlum mittit suspiria nemo.*

In Hamart.

And these things concerning the prize hoped for, concerning the manner in which it respects us in the present life, and also concerning the place where it is lodged. It remains that we say something of that interpretation of Chrysostom and Theodoret, which we adverted to above.

These words, *for the hope laid up for you in heaven*, Chrysostom refers to the love and faith of the Colossians; as though he would say, Ye have believed, and have exercised love towards the brethren on account of the hope laid up for you in heaven, i. e. on account of the reward of celestial blessedness. It is necessary to say something concerning this interpretation, inasmuch as the words bear it, and many interpreters follow it.

a Variorum Edition at Hanau, and a third In usum Delphini, 4to. at Paris, in 1687.

* Surely this *was* a Christian Poet, who in this couplet had in view Isaiah lxiv. 7; and may not the Apostolic appeal, Col. iii. 1, be allowed us *here*, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."

The sense of the above quotation is thus attempted for the advantage of the mere English reader:—

Regardless of its lofty birth, the mind
Ne'er wakes a thought th' Almighty Sire to find;
Ah! who with ardent longings soars on high
To gain th' eternal realms beyond the sky!

But because it agrees in other respects with the former interpretation, while in this one it differs, that it makes the hope reserved in heaven, the motive, not in respect of Paul's giving thanks, but of the faith and love of the Colossians ; we shall discuss only this one question ;

Whether it is lawful to do good works, such as to believe in Christ, to love the saints, with a view to, or for the sake of the reward reserved in heaven ?

Against this is objected John x. 12, where the Saviour reprehends hirelings, who propose to themselves their own advantage in feeding the sheep of God.

To this we answer, They are not blamed because they expect the eternal reward promised by God to well-doers, but because they had respect to temporal reward, and that alone ; and in the mean time neglected the work commanded by God : *he is a hireling, and cares not for the sheep,* verse 13.

It is objected, secondly, that it is the way of servants, not of sons, to work for the sake of reward : but we are sons ; therefore we ought not to regard the reward in our work.

I answer, to work for the sake of reward, as he does who would not serve God without reward, is truly sordid and servile, neither becomes a son loving his father ; but whilst labouring, to have respect to the reward promised by our father, is neither servile nor sordid.

Thirdly, to believe in God, or to love God (or one's neighbour) on account of the reward of blessedness, is to love for the sake of something else : but we ought not to believe in God, or to love God on account of any thing else, but for his own sake ; consequently not because of the reward of blessedness.

I answer, God himself is the reward promised to the faithful ; therefore whilst they expect and regard an eternal reward, they expect nothing but God. But if we understand the reward to be not God himself, but the very act of enjoying God ; then it must be answered otherwise, viz. that this reward is not to be so regarded, that it should be the end for which we love God, but only that it should

be the end of our action, i. e. of our affection and love : And this is allowed ; because a less good is lawfully made subordinate to a greater, as to its end ; yet the enjoyment itself of God at home is a greater good than faith or the love of God by the way ; therefore faith and love are lawfully subordinate to that as to the end.

Even some Fathers are quoted against this opinion. Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. 4, asserts, *that a good and perfect man does no good, either through the fear of punishment, or because of the hope of reward, whether from men, or from God himself.* Bernard, in his book *De amore Dei*, is cited by Durandus in support of this opinion, *Though God cannot be loved without reward, nevertheless he is not to be served with a view to the reward.*

The same answer may be given to both ; viz. that the reward ought not to be regarded as the only, or even as the principal motive, but God and his glory is to be regarded as the ultimate end : whilst our heavenly felicity is to be regarded as an end subordinate to that : for we aim at the reward of blessedness, that we may love God more securely and ardently for ever.

These objections being answered, the truth must be established by reasons drawn from Scripture.

1. What was done by the saints and commended in the Scriptures, it is lawful to do ; but the saints had respect to this reward, and it is recited to their praise. David in Ps. cxix. 112, says, *I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes, even unto the end.** Moses, Heb. xi. 26, is said to have *looked to the recompence of reward*, ἀπέβλεπεν εἰς μισθαποδοσίαν. Paul to the Philips. iii. 14, *I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling.*

2. Right reason directs the agent to regard the end of his action : for it is of the nature of an end that it should be aimed at, and from the desire of it excite the doer to

* Davenant follows the Vulgate, which is *propter retributionem*, and admits of a sense apparently more accordant with the tenor of the argument, though that of our version is the primary meaning : the version of Tremellius is *in finem usque*, id est, says he in explanation, *tota vita.* Vide Note, p. 30.

action; for the end is the principle from which in actions the practical intellect reasons concerning those things which relate to the end. But the reward of blessedness is the end proposed to faith, and love, and to all good works, as is evident from 1 Peter i. 9, *that ye may receive the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

3. God himself offers this reward to those who do well: therefore he wishes that to be regarded by us; nay, he bids us to regard it. For he would have given no promises of blessedness to the pious, unless he wished that we should have respect to them whilst acting well. In Matth. vi. 33, we are commanded to *seek first the kingdom of God*: but who seeks what he is not permitted to regard? In 1 Tim. iv. 8, it is said, *Godliness hath the promises of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*; but in vain if it be not lawful to be excited to do well by the prospect of them.

We conclude, therefore, that a reward to good works is proposed by God, and that it ought to be regarded by us,

1. That hence we may learn the will and munificence of God.

2. That we may exercise hope and faith by fixing our view upon it.

3. That hence we may be excited to cheerfulness in good works.

But we ought not to regard and look to the reward;

1. So as to be unwilling to serve God if there were no reward.

2. So as to set the blessedness itself as our end in loving God.

3. So as to infer any merit in our good works from the reward being proposed.

Hitherto we have treated of the final cause of the faith and love of the Colossians: It now remains to speak of the instrumental cause in these words, *Which ye heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel.*

The Apostle shews in these words whence the Colossians conceived the hope of obtaining this celestial blessedness; to wit, from the Gospel preached to them before by Epa-

phras. But here are two things to be noticed by us: the instrument of producing faith and hope in general, viz. *the word of God* heard; in particular *the word of the Gospel*, which is distinguished by an adjunct, viz. *truth*.

As to what pertains to the first, the things which are hoped for and believed by Christians, are placed beyond human reach; therefore that they may become known to us, there is need not only of human, but of divine instruction. But the word of God is the organ of this divine instruction, according to that appeal in Rom. x. 14, *How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

But here we must shew more explicitly in what sense the word preached by men becomes the instrument of producing faith and hope, since faith and hope are free gifts derived immediately from the fountain of grace, Jas. i. 17.

We must know therefore, that two things concur to produce faith or hope; a knowledge of the things to be believed or hoped for; and the assent of the heart. This knowledge arises from hearing the word: for the knowledge of salvation is not communicated to men in these times by extraordinary revelations or inspirations; but *the word preached is the power of God unto salvation to all that believe*. Therefore as to the propounding and knowledge of the things to be believed and expected, hope and faith depend upon hearing as a necessary instrument. But then, as to the internal assent of the heart, whereby every one firmly apprehends and applies the doctrine proposed to be believed and hoped in to his own comfort, this assent arises from feelings of hope and faith infused by the internal operation of the Spirit. Therefore the doctrine of faith and hope is promulgated by man, but the habits of faith and hope are infused and implanted by God himself. Whence Clemens, Pædag. 1, Ἡμεν κατηχησις εἰς πίστιν περιάγει, πίστις δὲ ἀγίῳ παιδευέται πνευματι. *Instruction indeed leads to faith, but faith is also taught by the Holy Spirit*. And here that celebrated saying of Augustine applies. *Think not that man can learn any thing from man: if there be*

*no teacher within, all our babbling is in vain. There are certain outward assistant teachers and admonitions; he who teacheth the heart hath his seat in heaven.** So the Apostle to the Hebrews iv. 2, *The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*

Therefore God himself is the Creator of faith and hope in the hearts of men: but the hearing the word of God is the instrumental cause; as well because it shews the object and proposes it to the mind of the person believing or hoping; as because those habits of faith and hope are not imparted to sleepers, or to those occupied any other way, but to hearers of the word of God, and to those meditating in the same; on which account the word is called *the ministration of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 8. Contemners of the word are void of the hope of salvation.—Thus much concerning the general instrument, viz. *the word of God.*

Through the word of the truth of the Gospel.] Now he declares in particular whence the hope of eternal life springs. For the divine word is not adapted in every part to produce hope; nay the law serves to arouse fear. Hope, therefore, arises, not from the preaching of the legal covenant, *This do and thou shalt live*; but from the promulgation of the evangelical covenant, *Believe, and thou shalt be saved.* Well spake Tertullian, advers. Marc. iii. cap. 16, *The possession of eternal life comes not to us through the discipline of the law, but through the grace of the Gospel.* As the possession is through grace, not through the law, so the hope of the possession is excited through the preaching of the grace of the gospel, not of the doctrine of the law. They who expect eternal life from the covenant of works, do not hope, but presume. But it has been shewn before by us, that the proper object of faith and hope, is, not all those things in general which are delivered in the word, but the promises of grace: it is not necessary therefore to take up more time in explanation or proof of this matter.

* August. tract. 4 expos. in Epis. Joan. The original is singularly expressive: *in celo cathedram habet qui corda docet.*

The word of the truth.] The Apostle distinguishes the Gospel by a paraphrastic expression. Erasmus* translates it *the veracious word*, because the genitive of a substantive should be often rendered by an adjective, after the usage of the Hebrew language. But he has not sufficiently reached either the meaning or force of Paul's expression. For both the doctrine of the law is *the veracious word*, and many doctrines of the Philosophers are *true*; but *the word of truth*, is (by way of eminence) appropriated to the Gospel.

* Erasmus, well known by his philological and theological treatises as an able scholar and useful writer; the "Πρόδρομος," says Aubery, "of our knowledge, and the man that made the rough and untrodden ways smooth and passable." He was born at Rotterdam in 1467, and educated in an excellent school at Dusseldorf, in Cleveland; and at nineteen years of age entered among the regular Canons of the Monastery of Stein. From thence he went into France, visited Paris, and studied in the College of Montaigne. Obtaining there some English pupils, he was induced to visit this country, and studied awhile at Oxford; afterwards he travelled into Italy, and gained great reputation. He came again into England, on the express invitation of Henry VIII., at whose Court he flourished about the commencement of the sixteenth century; and also became further distinguished by Lectures read in Greek and Theology to the students at Cambridge, in which University he was appointed Lady Margaret's Professor about 1511, and was presented to a Prebendary by Wolsey, and afterwards to the Rectory of Aldington, in Kent. But though thus naturalised, as it were, here, he returned again to the Continent, and was created Counsellor to Prince Charles of Austria. He did not, however, stay long at the Austrian Court, but withdrew to Basil, and spent his latter days in active literary employ with friends he had made there. He entered warmly into the affairs of the Reformation, and in 1516 published his celebrated New Testament, in Greek and Latin, which was received with the utmost eagerness by all those whose minds were turned to Theological pursuits: yet there were many others to whom the publication of the various Editions of the Scriptures by Erasmus and his brother Reformers, and the circulation of "THE WORD OF THE TRUTH" by their means, was most offensive. It alarmed the profligate and illiterate Monks. They declared from the pulpit, 'that there was now a new language discovered, called Greek, of which people should be aware, since it was that which produced all the heresies—that in this language was come forth a book called the New Testament, which was in every body's hands, and was full of thorns and briars—that there was also another language started up, called Hebrew, and that they who learnt it became Jews!' Besides such efforts to promote learning, Erasmus built a School at Rotterdam, endowed it, and directed the order of the Institution. But it is unnecessary to dwell upon his life, though full of interest and incident; it has been written at length by different hands, besides the prin-

A twofold reason may be assigned for this ; First, because what is most excellent in any kind, is wont (per antonomasian*) to claim its generic name as by special prerogative. Since, therefore, among the various kinds of truths, saving truth is more excellent than the rest ; the doctrine of salvation is called the doctrine of *the truth*. The doctrine of the law, since we are become weak through sin, becomes a doctrine of death ; the doctrine of the Philosophers relates to men as citizens, not as touching their salvation ; the doctrine of the Gospel therefore remains, which alone is saving, and therefore is alone called, by way of eminence, *the word of the truth*, i. e. saving truth.

Secondly, the Gospel may be called *the word of the truth* because it is the word concerning Christ, who is *the way, the life, and the truth* ; John xiv. 6. For Christ is the true body, in comparison with which the legal rites and ceremonies were shadows and figures : whence that word, *The law was given by Moses, grace and truth by Jesus Christ*, John i. 17. And John viii. 31, *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed ; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*. Since, therefore, Christ is the truth, and the Gospel hath Christ, both as its author and its object, it is most aptly called *the word of the truth*.

I must not here proceed to such observations as may be deduced from what has been hitherto advanced concerning the instrumental cause of producing faith in particular, and also from this title whereby the Gospel is distinguished, being anxious to hasten forward to the verses which follow.

cipal features of it being embodied in various and ample Biographical Sketches, in works either well known or easily accessible. Though an eminent promoter of the Reformation by exposing the abominations of the Church of Rome, he had not, like Luther and Melancthon, the probity or courage publicly to abjure her. That church, however, after his death, which happened at Basil in 1536, repaid whatever services he might have rendered to Religion by his ridicule of her practices, by condemning him for a heretic. This took place in a conclave held at Rome about 1655.

* Vide Note p. 79.

Verse 6.

Which is come un'to you as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth.

Paul in the preceding verse celebrated the Gospel, inasmuch as it was the instrumental cause of producing hope in the hearts of the Colossians: but he still advances in his praises of the same gospel. For it is the custom of this Apostle, having once named the Gospel, forthwith to launch out in commendation of it. Which he does the more freely in this place, because having commended the Gospel, both the Colossians who so readily received it, and Epaphras who so faithfully preached it among them, are associated by him in that commendation.

Now let us come to the text.

In it the Apostle introduces three things: First, he shews the diffusion of the Gospel, in particular—*it is come to you*; in general—*and to all the world*. Secondly, he declares its efficacy, *it bears fruit*; where the Vulgate, and Chrysostom also add a word which is wanting in our versions, viz. *et crescit*, καὶ ἀυξανόμενον, and increases. Thirdly, he extends this efficacy from the circumstance of time, *since the day ye heard*, &c.

Which is come unto you, τοῦ παρόντος εἰς ὑμᾶς.] Here the goodness, and the love of God towards the Colossians shines forth: For the Colossians had not come to the Gospel, but the Gospel to them. The sick are wont to seek physicians, and to provide medicines at their own expence; but the heavenly Physician seeks the sick, freely sends the medicine of the Gospel to them who are neither looking for, nor thinking of it. So the prophet, Isa. lxxv. 1, *I am found of them who sought me not*. And the Saviour himself says, Luke xix. 10, *The Son of man is come to seek, and to save that which was lost*. Upon this Cyprian observes, *De Baptismo Christi, The beloved of the Father loved us without any desert of ours, of his own free grace bestowed on*

us the benefit of his advent, of his own free grace healed us, of his own free grace cured us.

From this also, human misery and infirmity are apparent : for we cannot live by the powers of nature and the freedom of the will, so as to merit, from the grace of congruity, the light of the Gospel. Some of the Schoolmen have fancied that a man who has turned his natural good disposition (*bonis naturalibus*, as they say) to good account, deserves, of congruity, that God should impart to him the knowledge of the saving Gospel and other benefits gratuitously. Whence Durandus ; *There is no one, if he does what is in his power, but God will reveal to him all those things without which there is no salvation.* And elsewhere ; *He who lives well according to the law of nature, God will aid in things necessary to salvation.* But we know that the Gospel came not to Socrates, Phocion, Aristides, Cato, Seneca, and others, who turned their natural good dispositions to better account than those Corinthians to whom it came, who were *whoremongers, thieves, drunkards, &c.* 1 Cor. vi. 10. Therefore as the Gospel came to the Colossians, not called for by their merits, but voluntarily offered by the divine goodness ; so also we must think concerning all others. *It is emphatically expressed (says Gerson*) in the Lord's Prayer—*

* Gerson, so named from the place of his birth ; otherwise John Charlier, a distinguished Ecclesiastic who flourished in the latter part of the 14th and the commencement of the 15th centuries. On account of his eminence and excellence as a Scholar and a Divine, he was made Chancellor of the University of Paris ; but he became most celebrated for the parts he sustained, first, at the Synod of Pisa, in 1409, and then in the Council of Constance in 1414, where he appeared as Ambassador from the King of France, and Deputy from the University of Paris and the Province of Sens ; and obtained the titles of “ Evangelical and Most Christian.” At that Council, Cardinal Zabarella pronounced him to be “ the greatest divine of his time.” Mosheim places him at the head of the Latin writers of that period, and calls him the most illustrious ornament of it ; asserting that he was a man of the greatest influence and authority, whom the Council of Constance looked upon as its oracle, the lovers of liberty as their patron, and whose memory, he adds, is yet precious to such among the French as are at all zealous for the maintenance of their privileges against Papal despotism. In the Council he urged many things for the Reformation of the Church, besides preaching boldly on the subject ; and a Treatise

Let thy kingdom come, i. e. let it come to us, because we are not able by any inward power of our own to go to it.

As also in all the world.] To the particular extension of the Gospel to the Colossians, he adds its general diffusion *in all the world*. For the Gospel is compared to the sun, which traverses and illuminates all parts of the globe. This light the Apostles and disciples of our Saviour spread about. Paul himself preached the Gospel from Jerusalem as far as to Illyricum; Mark, in Egypt; Matthew, in Ethiopia; Thomas, in India; Simon Zelotes, in Britain; and others, elsewhere: And Ecclesiastical writers relate what provinces each of the seventy disciples traversed in their preaching. The most ancient Fathers also speak of the Gospel as even then disseminated among the most remote nations. We shall be content with the testimonies of Jus-

which he composed at the time on “the trial of Spirits,” is said to abound with excellent rules for the detection of feigned revelations and visions, and contributed to ^{prevent} the canonization of some pretended saints. An observation of his ^{idea} in the Protestant Confession of Augsburg is worth recording here, as being in unison with the afore-cited sentiment. That Confession ^{says} (Vide Scott’s Continuation of Milner’s Church History), “Gerson writes, that *many fell into despair, and some even committed suicide, because they found it impossible satisfactorily to observe the traditions of the Church, and had heard of no consolations from grace, and the righteousness of faith.*” Yet the solid learning and good sense of this man, though they had carried him through the other official stations which he had sustained with such credit and distinction, and his correct views of the sovereignty of divine grace and the need of the Gospel here evinced, were not sufficient to raise him much above the darkness of that period, or to carry him through what the plain state of things indicated to his judgment as necessary. It is a burning zeal for the glory of Christ—the welfare of his Church—and the salvation of precious souls, which alone can conduct a man through the work of a Reformer. Gerson retired to Lyons in the prime of life, probably out of disgust at what he had witnessed in the discharge of his public functions, or through vexation for having taken part against Jerom and Huss, raised up in Bohemia to proclaim the kingdom of God, and revive again the consolations of grace and the righteousness of faith among men. He, however, passed some years in his retirement at his Brother’s, in pious and useful exercises, carrying his humility so far as to instruct youth at school; and died in 1429, aged 66. He wrote several works, which have been justly valued, and have passed through various editions. “The Imitation of Christ,” passing under the name of Thomas a Kempis, has been attributed to him.

tin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Tertullian.* *There exists no race of men, whether of Barbarians or Greeks, or bearing any other designation; either of those who use their traines for dwellings,† or of those who dwell in tents,‡ or of those who know not the use of dwellings, among whom prayers are not offered up in the name of the crucified Jesus, &c.* Justin Martyr, Dialog. cum Tryphon. *The word is withheld from none, the light is common, it hath shone to all men: there is no Cimmerius§ in the word.* Clemens Alexandrinus has these words; *Whom have all people heard of? In whom have all nations believed, unless in Christ? Tertullian, after enumerating all nations, adds concerning us; The abodes of the Britons, inaccessible to the Romans, yet have been brought under subjection to Christ.||* And elsewhere; advers. Marc. he asserts, *That Christ had captivated the whole world by faith in his Gospel.*

* These Fathers, as living in the first ages of the Church, and becoming Apologists for the early Christians, are (next to the brief notices we gather from Scripture), the principal sources from whence information respecting them is obtained.

† Probably alluding to the ancient Germanii or Sarmatii.

‡ The Arabians as being the most distant.

§ Nullus Cimmerius:—Alluding to Cimmerius on the Western Coast of Italy, so gloomy as to have become proverbial, and have its name used to express any condition of obscurity.

“ There, under ebon-shades, and low-brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.”

L'Allegro of Milton.

Vide also Hom. Odyss. lib. ii.

|| Roman Catholic writers have been accustomed to boast of the introduction of Christianity into Britain under Pope Gregory, from the well known circumstance of his being struck with the interesting appearance of some of the West Angles forced from Britain and exposed for sale at Rome; and many Protestant writers have given currency to the assumption.¶ But the obligations of England to him by sending Augustine to the West Saxons have been strangely overrated. Tertullian, who flourished nearly four centuries before Gregory, speaks of the important event of the reception of Christianity by this country as having occurred before *his* day. It had certainly been previously introduced into the greatest part of South Britain, and was not unknown even at the Court of Ethelbert before Au-

¶ See an elegant poetical Version of this by Wordsworth.

But here a doubt is started by some, who think the Gospel could not have spread into all the world in so short a space of time, as for instance, forty or fifty years. They also urge that objection, that many nations, nay, another hemisphere is now discovered, which was unknown in the times of the Apostles.

Now to this it may be replied, first; That expression *into all the world* is to be explained (by synecdoche) for the greatest part of the world. For we must not think that the Apostles penetrated into all the corners of the known world; but into the most noted provinces, and especially preached the Gospel in the great cities, i. e. they diffused it far and wide. So Luke ii. 1, *There went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed*, i. e. all the provinces subjected to the Roman Empire. So John xii. 19, *All the world is gone after him*, i. e. men of all kinds indiscriminately.

Secondly, the Gospel is come into all the world, inasmuch as a school of Evangelical doctrine is open to all the world, although it may not be preached in particular places. It is opposed, therefore, to the doctrine of Moses, which was open to one nation only, whereas access may be had to the Gospel for all nations. Whence that saying of the Apostle, Titus ii. 11, *The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men*. Not that the preachers of the Gospel, bestirring themselves in all directions, could preach to all and every one; but the preaching of Gospel grace is offered to all and every one without distinction of nations.

But as to what is objected in the last place about the New world, viz. that the Gospel was never known to those people, since they were unknown in the times of the Apostles; I

gustine was known there; for his Queen Bertha was a Christian, and had a Christian Chaplain about her person; and the arrival of Augustine was soon succeeded by the too common accompaniments of the Roman creed—tyranny and persecution. How small a portion of Britain is indebted to Gregory may be seen, among other writers, in the learned “Defence of English Orders,” by Mason, translated by Lindsey. “Adams’s Religious World Displayed,” may also be consulted with satisfaction, vol. i. p. 393.

answer, First, that this is uncertain ; for we learn from Ecclesiastical history, that the Gospel penetrated into the farthest coast of the Eastern India ; and the most learned men (among whom is Arias Montanus, in libro Phaleg.*) think the Eastern parts of this India were contiguous to the Western parts of America, or of the New World. Although this also could be answered, that those regions began to be inhabited, long after the times of the Apostles ; yet when the Gospel is said to have come into all the world, it is understood into those parts of the world which were inhabited by men. It is now quite clear that the Gospel was preached in all the world.—But why does the Apostle introduce the mention of this thing in this place ?

First, that he might shew the prophecies of the ancients to have been truly fulfilled, and also of Christ the Saviour, concerning the calling of the Gentiles, and the propagation of the Gospel. *The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising*, Isa. lx. 3. *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light*, ibid. ix. 2. *This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world*, Matth. xxiv. 14. This could not but confirm the Colossians in the doctrine of the Gospel, when they understood that it was destined for the Gentiles, by the divine decree, from the beginning of the world.

Secondly, (as Chrysostom has observed), because persons are confirmed in the faith from having many associates in their tenets. For although the multitude of those who err does not procure credit for error ; yet a multitude of per-

* Arias Montanus : a learned Spaniard, born at Frexeneda, in Estremadura, in 1527. After studying in the University of Alcalá, he took the habit of a Benedictine, and attended the Council of Trent in 1562, where he obtained considerable reputation. On his return to Spain, he retired to a hermitage, whence he was withdrawn by Philip II. to edit a new Polyglot, which he completed in 8 vols. folio, Antwerp, 1572. After satisfactorily clearing himself at Rome, from a charge of corrupting the text, he was offered a bishopric by Philip, but preferred a second retirement, from which he was again solicited by the king to return, and become librarian of the Escorial. He died in 1593, aged 71. Besides the Antwerp Polyglot, Arias, who was one of the most learned Divines of the sixteenth century, published several other works, which are chiefly erudite Commentaries on the Scriptures.

sons concurring in the truth, strengthens the minds of the faithful, and as it were reproaches unbelievers with their infidelity. Whence that remark of Augustine, *Whoever now requires miracles to establish his faith, is in himself a mighty miracle, who, in the midst of a believing world, does not himself believe.* De Civitat. Dei. xxii. 8.

Lastly, the Apostle calls to mind the propagation of the Gospel through the whole world, that the Colossians might hence understand that those new doctrines of the Philosophers and Seducers, which began to be sown in that Church, were not a part of the Gospel, because they were not propagated by the Apostles through the whole world. And with this same argument we disprove all the errors of the Papists: For they can never prove either the supremacy of the Pope of Rome, or the infallibility of his authority, or the worship of images, or the sale of indulgences, or any other dogma in which they differ from us, to have been preached through the whole world by the Apostles or their coadjutors: Theirs, therefore, are not the decrees of the Gospel, but the silliest imagination of lying dreamers; wherefore the faith of Christians is not bound by them. Shrewdly spake Tertullian, *When we believe the Gospel we have no liking for any thing further: for this we first believe, that there is not any thing beyond it that we ought to believe.**—So much concerning the diffusion of the Gospel: Now of its efficacy.

And bringeth forth fruit.] Here we must supply, *in all the world, as it doth in you*; we may also add, (what is found in many copies), *and increaseth.*

These first words, *and bringeth forth fruit*, shew the efficacy of the Gospel in producing faith, love, and holiness in the hearts of them that hear; in regard to which, preaching is aptly compared to sowing, and the word to seed, which, *cast into the ground, bringeth forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty,* Matth. xiii.

* From Tertullian's piece, "De præscriptione Hereticorum," a tract in which he enumerates and censures the various heresies that had infested the Christian Church.

The Apostle, therefore, here speaks of that spiritual fruit which is perceived in conversion, and in the entire change of manners and hearts, when men overwhelmed before in vices, begin to bloom in virtue, and become resplendent in holiness.*

The Fathers every where laud this efficacy of the Gospel. Clemens Alexand. in Protrep̄t, for instance where he says, *The Gospel of Christ hath tamed the fiercest beasts, viz. very wicked men:* and Lactantius, Instit. iii. cap. 26,†

* This was fully exemplified in the conduct and characters of the primitive Christians: the change of conduct, the mental effects which conversion produced in the early ages of Christianity, is unparalleled in the history of man: "We," exclaims Justin Martyr, "who formerly rejoiced in licentiousness, now embrace discretion and chastity: we, who resorted to magical arts, now devote ourselves to the unbegotten God, the God of goodness; we, who set our affections upon wealth and possessions, now bring to the common stock all our property, and share it with the indigent; we, who, owing to diversity of customs, would not partake of the same hearth with those of a different race, now, since the appearance of Christ, live together and pray for our enemies, and endeavour to persuade those who unjustly hate us, that by leading a life conformed to the excellent precepts of Christianity, they may be filled with a good hope of obtaining the same happiness with ourselves from that God who is Lord above all things." In an age of Libertinism, we see, the *Christian* was distinguished by purity. Hatred was transformed into love, and the violence of passion subsided into tenderness and peace. The proud became humble. The contemner submitted to contempt. All felt that the *Morality of their Religion* was a fixed and imperative Rule, and not, like the Ethics of Philosophy, mere reasoning, often too vague and imperfect to convince, and always too destitute of authority to command. But *this reform* was vital; it altered not so much the exterior appearance as **THE INWARD HEART.**

† Lactantius was a Christian convert of Africa, and an eminent writer of the early part of the fourth century. On account of his fine genius he was chosen by the Emperor Constantine to be Tutor to his Son Crispus; and it is recorded to the commendation of his character, that, in the midst of the Imperial Court, he lived in such contempt of earthly advantages, as to be often in extreme poverty! His most celebrated work is his "Divine Institutions," which, whilst it powerfully refutes Paganism, is not free from many erroneous views. He is the most elegant of the Latin writers on subjects of this nature, and has been called the Christian Cicero, not only for the clearness and purity of his Latinity, but from its resemblance to the works of that Orator. His authority as a Theologian is, however, very small, many of his opinions, even on fundamental points, being extremely

observes, *The wisdom of philosophers does not extirpate vices, but conceals them: the precepts of God change the whole man, and, the old Adam being cast out, they render him A NEW CREATURE.* This is depicted in the Prophet Isaiah by an elegant similitude, *lv. 10; As the rain cometh down from heaven, and returneth not thither again, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud; so shall my word not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

And on this passage, it is worth while to observe, that the Apostle immediately subjoins the bearing of fruit to the preaching and hearing of the Gospel: From which fact he teaches us that the power of the Gospel, consists not so much in the illumination of the understanding, as in the reformation of the will. If this tree be not made good, and produce not the good fruits of holiness and newness of life, in vain we glory in the Gospel; which falls upon unholy men not as a benefit, but as their condemnation. Heb. vi. 7, *The earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and beareth thorns and briars, is rejected and is nigh unto cursing.*

And increaseth.] This is found in various copies, and is expressed by the Syriac translation; which words shew the efficacy of the Gospel in the multitude of those professing it. For it is said to increase when the number of those increases who embrace the Christian faith. And truly in this sense the Gospel has increased to a miracle. *The Grecian philosophy* (says Clemens) *if any magistrate prohibited it, immediately died away; but the Kings of the earth opposed the Christian doctrine, and yet it increased.* The Church had been harassed by ten continual persecutions

unsound. St. Jerome remarked with truth, that he was better able to destroy the errors of the heathen, than to maintain the doctrine of Christians; and our learned Bishop Bull, whom no one will accuse of depreciating the ancient Ecclesiastical writers, says, "that he knew little of Christianity, was ignorant of Scripture, and was never reckoned among the doctors of the Church." Still he could judge of the *effects* of Christianity on the lives and morals of its subjects, and the citation of him by our Expositor, as a witness from an "Imperial Court," is powerful; and goes to prove, as in other instances, how conversant Davenant was with the best authors.

under the Heathen emperors, yet, for all that, it was not even impaired by so many calamities : but as Augustine writes, Epis. 42, *The Gentiles, and their idolatries, are overcome, not by the opposition, but by the death of the Christians.**

In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke in many places takes care to record this increase of the Christian Church, as a proof of the Divine protection and the power of the Gospel. Thus, ch. v. 14, *The multitude of them that believed increased*; and xvi. 5, *The churches were established, and increased in numbers daily*. It is no sign of Evangelical truth for its professors to propagatè their Religion by arms (as the Mahometans do), or by fire and fraud (as the Papists); but when by preaching, or by patience, Religion prevails against those who oppose it, this is a strong argument that Divine assistance is present with its ministers. We have a clear evidence of this in the restoration of the Gospel through Luther and other pious men, in that it increased daily, whilst the Pope was gnashing his teeth, and the kings of the earth raging.—So far in regard to the diffusion and efficacy of the Gospel.

From the day ye heard it and knew the grace of God in truth.] He magnifies the efficacy of the Gospel in these words; and, at the same time, extols as well the Gospel, as the Colossians themselves, and Epaphras too, as some think : the Gospel from its peculiar doctrine; the Colossians from their mode of hearing, and Epaphras from his mode of preaching.

The efficacy of the Gospel is magnified from the circumstance of time; as soon as it was preached it began to work, and it continues still to work : Here is double praise be-

* It was the unparalleled patience of the Christians under sufferings; the improbability that men addicted to vice should submit to the loss of all that is desirable, and deliver themselves voluntarily to the executioner, which first awakened the curiosity of the philosophic Justin; such the first reasoning which led him to embrace a Religion, for the professors of which he became such an apologist as we have lately seen, and of which he himself became subsequently a Martyr. The translator dwells upon these points as facts calculated to meet the scepticism and libertinism of the present day.—Vide Note p. 99, and the History of the Christian Church in the second and third Centuries, Encyclopædia Metropolitana.

stowed upon the Colossians; first, for their docility, because they had immediately embraced the Gospel; secondly, for their constancy, because they hitherto persist and abide in the same.

Observe, Hearers of the Gospel must not procrastinate, but from the moment of its being preached they are bound both to believe it, and to bring forth fruit. Thus the Apostle, Heb. iii. 8, *To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* And truly it is the voice of the devil which says, Give the present time to sin, the future to God and the Gospel; yield the flower of your age to sin, the residue to Religion.

Nor, secondly, is it sufficient, as soon as the Gospel is offered, to receive it with joy, and bring forth fruit; but it behoves us to persevere in each, viz. both in faith and in holiness. The parable of the stony ground is well known, which received seed, and brought forth fruit, yet to which it is imputed as a fault, that those fruits withered away through the heat of the sun. This inconstancy is also blamed in the Ephesian church, Rev. ii. 4, *I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love:—repent, and do the first works.* *The past things perish,* says Cyprian, *if those things which were begun cease to go on to perfection.* Cypr. De bon patient.

The grace of God.] He magnifies the Gospel from that peculiar feature whereby it is distinguished from the Law. For the Law declares the will of God *imperatively*, and imposes its mandates upon us; the Gospel shews the will of God *savingly*, and offers us grace in Christ: And these distinctions are not to be confounded by persons who would not obscure the Gospel.

Here the error of the Papacy is detected, who promise to the regenerate grace and salvation in the doctrine of the Law. For they teach that men are justified by inherent righteousness, and merit salvation by their works. If justification and salvation are by the Law, why should the Gospel be called the doctrine of grace, and be distinguished by this title from the Law? Let Paul decide this question, Rom. iii. *By the works of the law shall no flesh be jus-*

tified: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested—by the faith of Christ. For all have sinned and are justified freely by his grace, &c. Aquinas himself, convinced by such evident testimony, writes in this manner, *The legitimate use of the law is, that man should not attribute to it what is not contained in it: the hope of justification therefore does not stand in moral precepts, but in faith alone.* In Rom. iii.

In truth Ἐν ἀληθείᾳ.] These last words are explained very diversely. For some would have Ἐν ἀληθείᾳ to be nothing else than *in the Gospel*; because the Gospel is before called *the word of the truth*. Therefore Paul here says that they knew the grace of God *in the truth*, i. e. in the Gospel. Of this exposition we shall say nothing now, both because I do not much approve of it, and because I have before spoken concerning this title of the Gospel.

The second exposition is that of those who interpret *in the truth* to mean in truth and sincerity, free from all external disguise and hypocrisy; and they refer this to the Colossians, and to their praise, who, not by outward pretence, but in reality, were embracing the Gospel.

Whence arises this clear evidence, that neither the *name* of Christian, nor of the Gospel, can any ways profit men, if the reality of the things themselves be wanting. For he who is not a true Christian, is not a Christian at all; he who is not truly Evangelical, is not Evangelical at all. For *entity and truth are convertible terms*, as the Metaphysicians are wont to say. Hence that rebuke denounced against the Angel of the church at Sardis, Rev. iii. 1, *Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.* But a mere name can have no place, either among the good or the bad, as says Justin Martyr, Apolog. 2.*

The last exposition is that of those who refer these words to the praise of Epaphras, who had preached the Gospel truly and sincerely to the Colossians, unmixed with the error either of philosophical speculations, or the leaven of

* This citation refers to the distinction of things into three classes, *the good, the bad, and the indifferent*; according to the philosophy of that age.

Jewish superstition. Therefore it intimates that they ought to be persevering in the doctrine already known, nor should allow themselves to be carried away by any wind or new doctrine whatever; because the doctrine of the Gospel was before delivered to them in truth, but now to depart from the truth and embrace errors, was base and shameful.

And hitherto the Apostle has set forth the praises of the Gospel, from its extension, from its efficacy, from the circumstances of time, from its proper object, and, lastly, from the mode of its promulgation. In the next verse he passes from the praises of the Gospel to the praise of Epaphras, who had preached this Gospel to them.

Verses 7, 8.

*As ye also learned of Epaphras, our dear fellow-servant,
who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;
Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.*

In these two verses the Apostle is wholly intent upon sending back Epaphras, the minister of the Colossians, to that church, with the strongest commendations. For it conduces much to the promotion of religion that a people think honourably of their prelates and ministers: for if the priests of God begin to be despised, religion will soon be despised, and the worship of God contemned; which we see in the case of the Sons of Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 17. Here, therefore, we shall note three things in general; and afterwards proceed to a particular exposition of the words.

1. By the example of Paul, ministers are taught not to decry others that themselves alone may stand pre-eminent, but to take as much care of the reputation and good esteem of others, as of their own: for whilst we turn our carpings and the scourge of our revilings upon one another, we, one and all, become spurned at and trampled upon by the laity.

2. Since the reputation of ministers is so essential to the Gospel, let us understand that each of us must strive

to obtain a good report: therefore we ought not only to abstain from all evil, but from all appearance of evil. *They are not to be listened to*, says Augustine, *who say that a good conscience before God is enough for them, and in the mean time recklessly despise the esteem of men. Whoever keeps his life from gross sin, does good to himself; but whoever guards his reputation, is charitable towards others. Our good conduct is necessary for ourselves: our reputation for others,* De bono viduit, cap. 22.

3. Since the unspotted reputation of ministers is a matter of such moment, let those persons consider how much guilt they fasten upon themselves, who, either by malevolent detractions call undeservedly into suspicion, or by witticisms and jokes expose to derision, those who, even on the mere ground of their vocation, ought to be honoured by men. That Poet spake piously, whoever he was, who said, *Reputation, integrity, and the eye cannot be trifled with.* Moreover, Theologians determine this detraction to be worse than theft: Both are bound to make restitution, viz. the robber and the detractor: but satisfaction is made much more easily for theft than for detraction; because the quantity of loss in the former may be known and estimated; in the latter it cannot.—Let these general remarks suffice concerning that upon which the Apostle laid such stress, viz. that Epaphras, the minister of the Colossians, might be acceptable and honourable among his own people. And now let us treat, specifically, of those commendations which are heaped upon him by the Apostle.

As ye also learned of Epaphras, our dear fellow-servant.] In these words he commends Epaphras by a comparison, or reference to himself, and that on a two-fold ground: first, that he was *dear* to him; secondly, that he was his *fellow-servant*.

Dear.] On account of his sincerity in preaching the Gospel: for Paul embraced all those with a wondrous love who laboured faithfully in the Gospel. Now this was highly to the honour of Epaphras, that he was one of the bosom friends of Paul: for if it be to one's honour to be

commended by those who are themselves approved among men, then much more is it to one's honour to be both commended and loved by them. Whilst, therefore, he calls him *his beloved*, he intimates that he ought to be beloved by them. *The potter envies his fellow-potter, and the smith the smith*; but it should not be so among ministers.

Our fellow-servant.] On account of the same office of preaching the Gospel, in which both served the same Master. But, when he calls him his *fellow-servant*, he puts the Colossians in mind by the way, that Epaphras was no common minister, but a general in the Gospel warfare, and their Apostle, as it were.

And here we should mark the humility and candour of such a man, who, placed, as he was, at the summit of Apostolic dignity, acknowledges Epaphras as his equal. They who, among the ministers of the Gospel, surpass others in rank and dignity, ought to imitate this humility. Humility is a bright ornament in all Christians; but it is brightest and greatest when seen in those who are most eminent and exalted.

He pursues the commendations of Epaphras still farther, on the ground of the character and relation in which he stands to Christ and the Colossians.

Who is for you a faithful minister of Christ.] Here is a three-fold commendation of Epaphras: from his office or vocation, *a minister of Christ*; from the character of his ministry, *a faithful minister*; from the design or end of his ministry, *for you*, i. e. for your salvation. Upon all these grounds, he ought to be held in the highest esteem and love among the Colossians.

A minister of Christ.] The word *διάκονος*, *Minister*, which is used in the Greek text, is not employed in this place for the special office of taking care of the widows of the poor, to which duty the seven were chosen, Acts vi. 3; but in a larger sense, it is put for any dispenser of the divine word; so that sometimes it comprehends the Apostles themselves, as in 1 Cor. iii. 5, *Who is Paul, or who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed?* in the Greek, *ἄλλ' ἢ διακονοὶ δι' ὧν ἐπιστεύσατε*. But waving any remark upon the word, let us

inquire into the dignity of the office itself. *A minister of Christ*; i. e. a minister of the Supreme King of heaven, of earth, and hell. Not even angels disdain to minister to and serve this Lord.

But a minister in what? (for this also adds much to the dignity of the ministry). Not in any mean or abject business, but in the dispensation of the most precious treasure, viz. Gospel grace. Among the ministers of kings, the treasurer is accounted one of the most honourable: how much honour therefore should people attach to those, through whom the treasure of the grace of the Gospel is dispensed to men? Such a minister was Epaphras; and, therefore, worthy of being loved and honoured by the Colossians.

From this title, which is given to preachers of the word, many things may be deduced.

1. That, since they are the ministers of Christ, they may not be despised, or injured with impunity, by any man. David avenged the injury done to his ambassadors by the Ammonites, in shaving their beards and cutting off their garments, 2 Sam. x.; how much more shall Christ avenge his ambassadors and ministers, if any thing be done against them injuriously or contumeliously, by Ammonites amongst us?

2. That, since they are ministers of this heavenly King, it behoves them not to set their hearts upon temporal advantages, but to look for a heavenly reward. This splendid recompence Christ promises to his servants, Dan. xii. 3, *The wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.* Upon this crown Paul had his thoughts ever fixed, 2 Tim. iv. 8, *There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, &c.*

Faithful.] This in a special manner conduces to the praise of Epaphras. It is a great thing to be a minister of Christ, i. e. a dispenser of the Gospel; but as the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. iv. 2, *It is required in stewards, or ministers, that every one be found faithful*; this faithfulness is particularly to be noted in two things:

1. In this, that a minister should always regard the honour of his Lord, not his own glory. But he regards the honour of God, who *so speaks as the oracles of God, that God in all things may be glorified*, 1 Pet. iv. 11; and he seeks his own glory who so speaks that he may please vain men, and be commended by them either on account of genius, or learning, or eloquence. Concerning this desire of vain-glory, Paul says to the Galatians, i. 10, *Do I seek to please men? If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.* A wholesome admonition to preachers is that direction of Prosper; *Let them not in preaching place their confidence in splendid diction; but in powerful effects. Let them not be gratified by the acclamations of the people, but by their tears: nor let them aim at eliciting applause, but sighs.* De vita contempl. lib. i. cap. 23.

2. The faithfulness of a minister is apparent in this, that he not only advances his Master's glory, but promotes with all his power, the benefit and safety of the people committed to him. This they do by watching over the flock; by distributing to them the food of their souls seasonably; by dispensing milk to babes, and strong meat to the more advanced; and, to sum up all in a word, by never omitting, through indolence, to do or speak whatever may be necessary to the salvation of the people; nor to teach or do any thing, by any act of treachery, which may be hostile to their salvation. We have an illustrious specimen of this faithfulness in Paul, who, with a bold confidence, could declare concerning himself, *I seek not mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved*, 1 Cor. x. 33. But, to exhibit this faithfulness, it will be useful for every one constantly to propose to himself these three circumstances; Who? What? To whom?

Who he is, let him first of all carefully consider. He is not a private man, nor free, and master of himself; but an ambassador and servant of Christ: wherefore it behoves the pastor not to indulge in ease and pleasure, but to prosecute, with all diligence, the business laid upon him.

What he has undertaken to handle, he should next se-

riously think with himself; viz. the Word of God, and the Sacraments of Christ. Either to conceal the former, or in any manner to adulterate it, is a gross impiety; to cast the latter before dogs or swine, or deny them to the children, is the greatest sacrilege.

To whom all these things are to be administered, let him consider in the last place;—To the sheep of Christ, to His brethren, to the children of God; to those *whom Christ redeemed, not with silver and gold, but with his precious blood.* He who shall lose even one poor soul of these by his unfaithfulness, *it were better for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea,* Luke xvii. 2.

But here it may be asked, Why in extolling Epaphras, the Apostle should mention only his faithfulness, not his wisdom; when each is required in the dispensation of the Divine word? as it is said in Matth xxiv. 45, *Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath appointed over his household?*

It is answered, First, because these two qualities are connected and joined with each other, so that true faithfulness cannot exist unless wisdom also be with it, which teaches and shews what is required from a faithful man: for wisdom is *the eye of every virtue.*

Secondly, that by the way he might check those new and false teachers in the church of the Colossians, who affected a shew of wisdom, whilst at the same time, they divested themselves of all regard for fidelity. He therefore calls Epaphras *a faithful minister of Christ*, that he might oppose him to those in whom an opinion of their own wisdom predominated, when, nevertheless, they were unfaithful towards Christ.

For you.] After the Apostle had recommended Epaphras on the ground of his vocation itself, that he was *a minister of Christ*; and on the ground of the character of his ministry, that he was *a faithful minister*; he now adds what greatly conduced to conciliate their love to him, *for you*, i. e. for your good, for your salvation.

From the design, therefore, and end of the ministry, he

shews that honour is due to a minister from his flock: for Epaphras is not a minister of Christ for himself, but for others, viz. the Colossians.

It was a true dogma of the Philosopher (Aristot. Pol. 22), that there are two properties in every thing which excite the love and care of men, τὸ ἴδιον, καὶ τὸ ἀγαπητόν, i. e. *it is their own, and it is beloved by them.* Both of these are found in Epaphras; τὸ ἀγαπητόν, worthy of love, for he was a minister of Christ, and moreover faithful; τὸ ἴδιον, for he was peculiarly the minister of the Colossians. Hence arises a useful and necessary lesson, and which can never be sufficiently learnt by the laity.

Although a Christian people are bound to love and honour all ministers, yet each flock ought to cherish with especial love and honour those who are set over them in particular. So Paul, 1 Thess. v. 12, *We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake.*

Whence it appears how defective and blamable is that affection in many who prefer to hear, and more love, any one rather than their own proper settled minister. If Paul had written to men of this sort concerning any one—*Who is a minister of Christ for you,* he would have excited, not their love of him, but their contempt. These are they, who, *having itching ears, heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts,* as the Apostle writes 2 Tim. iv. 3.

So much for the commendation of Epaphras from his office, from his fidelity in the execution of it, and from the peculiar design thereof, viz. that he was appointed to the Colossians.

Verse 8. *Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.*

Paul has commended the faith and love of the Colossians, when yet he was unknown to them by face, as appears from Ch. ii. 1 : Therefore some one might have asked, Whence, Paul, could you have this knowledge of us and of our affairs? He meets this question, and shews that he has not commended them rashly, but he had discovered and ascertained all by the relation of Epaphras, a most competent witness.

Who also declared.] He shews the author of the relation, which he does in order that he might gain favour for Epaphras among them : for it is natural to all to love those whom they have understood to think and speak honourably concerning them.

And here it is to be observed, how faithful a minister of Christ Epaphras was, not only in preaching the Gospel, but in exciting the minds of men to mutual love. For, as it is likely he had declared to the Colossians, how great an Apostle Paul was, with what admirable knowledge, with what singular zeal, he was distinguished; and thus excited in their minds an admiration and wondrous love of Paul; then he goes to Paul and explains how much affection there was in the Colossians towards him. This, then, is the duty of an ingenuous and pious man, to promote love and charity among all; not to sow the seeds of hatred and strife.

Your love.] Here the Apostle touches upon the chief head of his relation : for he had said many good things to Paul concerning them, but had particularly extolled their love. Some refer this their love to all the saints; but inasmuch as he had commended that in the fourth verse, the opinion of Chrysostom is the more probable, who refers it to the Apostle Paul; which also the following words seem to intimate.

In the Spirit, or, through the Spirit.] Two reasons are assigned by interpreters, why he states their love to be *in the Spirit*.

The first, a general one, which regards the very nature of love: to wit, because the Holy Spirit is the author of it; and also because love flows from a spiritual heart, i. e. from a heart regenerated and renewed.

Hence observe the dignity of Christian love. For natural love, or predilection, arises from those inclinations which they call *στοργὰς φυσικὰς*, natural affections. Worldly love arises either from views of interest or from conformity of manners; carnal, from the appetite for pleasure: To all these something corrupt, sordid, and vicious always adheres. But Christian love arises from the *Holy Spirit*, and is altogether full of holiness and purity.

The other reason why the love of the Colossians is said to be *in the Spirit*, is special, and hath respect to Paul himself; For, as we have before said, they had never seen Paul, but had only heard of him through Epaphras and others: because, therefore, they had loved him whom they never saw in the flesh, they are said to love *in the spirit*. Therefore the word *spirit* is taken in the same sense as in 1 Cor. v. 3, *Being absent in the body, I am present with you in the spirit, &c.*

Hence observe, that the duty of every good man is, to embrace with spiritual love all good men, although known only by report. That any one may be esteemed worthy of our love, it is sufficient if he be known in respect to his virtue, although he be unknown in person.

And thus far we have been employed in explaining the first and second part of the exordium. The last remains, which is comprised in the three following verses, 9, 10, 11.

Verses 9, 10, 11.

For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; &c.

In this verse and the two following is contained the last part of the exordium; which consists of a prayer for the increase of spiritual blessings, of which the Colossians had been made partakers in some measure.

But the Apostle desires for them three kinds of blessings: the first, those which respect the perfect knowledge of the truth, ver. 9; The second, those which respect the exercise of godliness and purity, ver. 10; The last, those which respect patience and the enduring of the cross, ver. 11.

In this 9th verse, from which we must begin, we may observe three things:

The motive which excited Paul to this prayer, *For this cause we also, &c.*

The manner of the prayer itself, *cease not to pray for you and to desire.*

The sum of the prayer, *that ye may be filled, &c.* to the end.

Since the day we heard it.] Here he intimates the motive to his prayer, viz. the relation of Epaphras about their faith, love, &c. For these words refer to the whole narration concerning their faith in Christ, their love to the saints, their hope laid up in heaven, and also their love in particular towards the Apostle: for because so many good things had been told him of the Colossians, *he ceased not from that day to pray for them, &c.*

Observe 1. The best method of declaring our love and affection consists in this, that we pray for those whom we love, and desire these *spiritual* and *salutary* blessings for them from God. For to love, is to wish good to another not for our own, but for his sake; and truly to love is to

wish real blessings to another ; but real blessings are these spiritual ones, which render the possessors good. Hence, though the Apostle most tenderly loved all those to whom he sent his Epistles, yet we no where read that he sought honours or riches for them from God, but faith, love, holiness, patience, and other things of the like kind.

2. It ought especially to stir us up to pray for our brethren, when we perceive in them the first fruits of the Spirit and of renovation, and, as it were, the seeds of piety. For so Paul, because he understood the fundamentals of Religion to have been laid in the Colossians, *on this very account*, more earnestly sought from God the increase of the same graces. We may observe the like in his Epistle to the Ephesians, i. 15, 16, *Having heard what faith and love is in you, I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, &c.* Chrysostom illustrates this by an elegant similitude : *As in the race*, says he, *we especially wish well to, and excite by our encouragement and our cheers, those who are not far from victory ; so in this race of the Christian life, we ought chiefly to favour and assist with our prayers those whom we perceive pressing with alacrity to the destined goal.**—And so much concerning the motive.

* John Chrysostom flourished toward the close of the fourth century. He was a native of Antioch, born of a noble family in that city about the year 354 ; and became, as he advanced in years, so celebrated and admired for his attainments and virtues, (being, by the care of his mother, like Augustine, instructed in Christianity), that at an assembly of Bishops, it was resolved to enrol him among their body. On hearing this, Chrysostom retired to the summit of a mountain, in company with an old man, and afterwards entirely secluded himself in a dreary cave, from all converse with mankind. But his health suffering in this state, he returned to Antioch, the Bishop whereof soon promoted him to the office of a Presbyter ; and his reputation as a preacher became so great, that, on the death of the Patriarch of Constantinople, he was, by general consent, elected to that dignity ; but to proceed to his See he was obliged to leave Antioch privately, the people being unwilling to part with him. At Constantinople he commenced a reform of the abuses among the Clergy, who had been suffered to relax through the negligence of his predecessor : he retrenched a great part of the expences in which Nectarius had lived, in order to feed the poor and build hospitals ; and he preached with the utmost zeal and plainness against the pride, luxury, and avarice of the great. His attention to the condition of his Clergy, led to his justly admired discourses on the Priesthood. His

We cease not to pray and desire for you.] The Apostle now expresses the manner of his praying, which is perceived in two things: in its importunity, *we cease not*; in its fervid devotion, *to pray and desire*.

freedom of speaking against reigning vices, and especially in declaiming against the gaiety, impiety, and corruption that prevailed at the Court of Arcadius, raised him many powerful enemies. Theophilus of Alexandria first obtained his deposition and banishment; but so great was the tumult of the people, that the Emperor was compelled to send him letters of recal. Eudoxia, however, soon after had him banished again to a most inhospitable and barbarous place in Armenia. But there he gained such respect that the jealousy of his enemies was further excited, and an order was procured for his removal to a still worse station, the very shore of the Black Sea; when, as he was being removed, the soldiers (no doubt suitably instructed) treated him so roughly that he died by the way, A. D. 407, in the 60th year of his age. Chrysostom, if not so Evangelical in his views as some of the Fathers, yet confined himself more to the literal and historical sense of the divine word than others; and is justly ranked among the most eminent Christian orators: his eloquence was manly, and his fidelity as a minister of God's word unbending; his genius was uncommon, and his erudition extensive. He exhibited himself both as a moral and controversial writer; composed a great number of homilies; and his works were so abundant as to form thirteen folio volumes. His treatise on the Priesthood has been translated into English: and we are further indebted, if not to his own pen, yet to a Greek Liturgy commonly ascribed to him as the compiler, for that most excellent prayer at the close of our daily service, than which it would be difficult to conceive one more suitable to the conclusion of our prayers and supplications.

The Translator is informed, that in the service of the Greek Church as performed in Russia, no less than five prayers of St. Chrysostom are retained, of which the following is one; and, as a testimony of that Church's holding the essentials to salvation, and as corresponding with the statements already given in this work of the doctrine of the sacred Trinity, the insertion of it in this place may not be deemed impertinent:

“ It is just and right to praise Thee, to magnify Thee, to worship Thee, in all places of thy dominion; for thou art, O God, unspeakable, unknown, unseen, incomprehensible; Thou art the very same from eternity; Thou and thine only Son, and thine Holy Ghost. Thou broughtest us out of nought into existence, and when we were fallen through our disobedience, thou liftedst us up again, in that thou didst every thing to bring us to heaven, and to give us an inheritance in thy kingdom which is to come. For these and all other benefits, known and unknown, seen or hidden, we give thanks to Thee, and thine only Son, and thine Holy Ghost. Accept our humble thanks that thou hast vouchsafed to receive this service at our hands: Thou who art surrounded with thousands of archangels, and ten

Importunity in prayer is commanded in Scripture; *We ought always to pray, and not to faint*; Luke xviii. 1. *Pray without ceasing*, 1 Thess. v. 17. *The constant prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, James v. 16.

But it may be said, How is it possible that Paul should never desist from prayer, when the weakness of human nature will not sustain continual praying? nay, the Euchitæ, or Messaliani, who made constant prayer the pretext of indolence and sluggishness, are reckoned among heretics. Theodor. lib. 4. Augustine, tom. vi. De hæres.

I answer, We are said not to cease from prayer, or not to leave off praying for any thing, when we have a fixed desire of that thing in our heart. So Augustine, in Psalm xxxvii. *Thy desire is thy prayer; if there be a continual desire, there is continual prayer.*

Secondly, we are said not to faint, or not to cease from praying, when we exercise it in its proper time and place. For it is idleness in a man, and he ceases from his work, which he does not perform when he can and ought.

In either respect, therefore, Paul said truly, *We cease not to pray for you.* For there was both a perpetual desire in his mind (at least as to the habit) of promoting their good; and that also, as much as in him lay, he did promote by his prayers, as often as opportunity of praying offered itself to him.

Observe, then, the duty of the pastor is not only to teach his flock, and to commend them to God in public prayers, but also in his private prayer he ought never to be unmindful of the people committed to his care. Thus Samuel was actuated towards the people of God, *Be it far from me to sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you*; 1 Sam. xii. 23. So our Apostle, *God is my witness, whom I*

thousands of angels, who, together with the many-eyed Cherubim and six-winged Seraphim, sing, and declare and proclaim this song of triumph."

From the Holy Liturgy of our holy Father John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople; as given in the German of Yasnowsky, Chaplain to the Grand Duchess of Saxe Weimar, and Minister of the Greek Chapel of her Imperial Highness.

serve, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, &c. Rom. i. 9.

Neither let any one here object, that men of remarkable holiness, such as were Samuel and Paul, might help the people of God by their constant prayers; but that other ministers who are destitute of this holiness, cannot: For well hath Augustine taught, *that even wicked priests are heard when they pray for their flocks, although they are not heard when they pray for themselves*, contra Epist. Parmen. lib. ii. cap 8. And so much concerning the importunity of the Apostle's prayer: What follows is concerning its vehement devotion.

To pray and to desire.] In these two words the Apostle intimates the devotion and even the vehemency of his prayer for the Colossians. Some by the word *προσευχόμενοι*, understand the desire of the mind; by that other, *αἰτούμενοι*, the expressed petition of the lips. But here, by *προσευχην*, I not only understand the internal elevation of the mind, but that part of prayer which especially paves the way for our petitions, in which we adore and glorify God, commemorating his majesty and goodness, and those other attributes which excite love and devotion in the minds of those who pray. But *αἰτησις*, is the petition itself of the things desired, which follows this *προσευχην*, or devout direction of the mind and of the prayer to God. When, therefore, the Apostle says that he prayed, *προσευχέσθαι*, for the Colossians, he seems to me to intimate that he commended them to God, whenever he felt his mind at all devoutly inflamed towards God: indeed, the prayer of a mind kindled and inflamed is most efficacious, so as to penetrate the very heavens. But when he says that *he desired, αἰτεῖσθαι*, for them, he signifies the vehemence of his petition: for *αἰτησις*, *desire*, is the entreating for necessary things. He therefore so prayed to God for the spiritual progress of the Colossians, as men are wont to intreat others for the things which they greatly need.

Observe 1. Devotion and a pious affection towards God ought always to open the way to our particular peti-

tions, whether we seek necessary things for ourselves or for others. For he who rashly, and without regard to the Divine Majesty, dares to launch forth to make any petition, provokes God to indignation, not to beneficence.

2. We should seek benefits from God, not coldly, neither for form's sake; but we ought to be actuated by a clear perception and an earnest desire of those things which we seek from God. For he who requires that with his mouth which he disregards with his heart, does not pray to God, but mocks him.

We have explained the cause, and the mode of the Apostle's prayer; it now remains that we consider the sum of the petition itself, comprehended in the words immediately following:

That ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.] Now the Apostle begins to unfold the sum of his prayer. And here two things are to be noted: the quantity of the blessings sought, and their quality.

That ye may be filled.] The Apostle has before shewn that the Colossians were endowed with faith, hope, and love, and all other spiritual gifts; but now he asks something greater from God, viz. that they may be *filled* with the same.

It may be said, we are not able to obtain full and perfect knowledge, or love, or holiness, whilst we carry about this mortal body. For so the Apostle, 1 Cor. xiii. 9, *We know in part, and we prophecy in part, &c.* Why, then, does the Apostle pray that they may be *filled* with knowledge, which he himself knew could not be attained?

I answer, there is a twofold plenitude of knowledge and of every grace: a plenitude for the inheritance, and a plenitude for the way. The plenitude of the inheritance is the greatest measure of grace which the mind of every one is able to contain: this is not to be had before we are introduced to the state of glory. But the plenitude of the way is the greatest measure of grace which God has determined to impart to every one of the elect in this world: and this is had by all the elect before they remove from this life.

Concerning this the Apostle speaks, Ephes. iv. 7, *To every one of you is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ.* And Augustine, in Psalm xxxviii. *There is a certain perfection, according to the measure of this life; and it belongs to that perfection, that each knows that he is not yet perfect.* This perfection and plenitude of grace the Apostle desires for the Colossians in this prayer.

Hence we are taught that we ought never to think that we have attained the fulness of any grace destined for us in this life; but we ought always to strive and to seek from God, that we may be filled more and more with all spiritual gifts.

We are, whilst we live here, as children who are not yet arrived at maturity: whence the holy Scriptures excite all to a constant advance in every gift of divine grace. Lest I should be tedious, I will only note the places, I will not recite them. To the increase of faith, 2 Cor. x. 15: of hope, Rom. xv. 13: of love, Ephes. iv. 15: of knowledge, Ephes. iii. 19: of all grace, 2 Pet. iii. 18. Many passages from the Fathers might be adduced for this opinion. Nazianzen, for instance, says, *A Christian either advances or falls back; he cannot remain in the same state.* Bernard says, *He is by no means good who does not wish to be better; and where you begin to be unwilling to become better, there you leave off to be good.**

* This renowned Romanist—Bernard (vide Note page 32)—engaged against the uncorrupted Christians of Cologne (who had settled there from among the persecuted Albigenses, to the great annoyance of the Papists,) when he came to describe those followers of Arnold, said: “If you ask me of their faith, nothing can be more Christian; if you observe their conversation, nothing can be more blameless; and the sincerity of their language they prove by the consistency of their deeds. In testimony of his faith you may see a man of this order frequent the church, honour its elders, offer his gifts, confess his sin, and partake of the Communion: and what can be more expressive of the Christian? In life and manners also, he circumvents no man, defrauds no man, does violence to no man. His fasts are frequent, his bread is not that of idleness, his labour procures him his support.”—Such is the testimony of an opponent to the Protestants of Piedmont. Would to God that as honourable a report could invariably be borne of modern Protestants, or that different practices could not be affirmed of them, nor *their* enemies! At all events, the foregoing

We must therefore always seek and labour that we may be filled more and more with spiritual gifts.

Thus much as to the quantity.

The knowledge of his will.] In these words and the following the Apostle explains what are those blessings which he desires for the Colossians, and of what kind. *Abundant knowledge* is one blessing, *ἐπιγνωσις*, i. e. knowledge upon knowledge: a cumulation and fulness of knowledge. But of what kind? Not any whatever, but that which is here described by its object and its cause, viz. *the knowledge of the divine will* flowing from *wisdom and spiritual understanding*. *The knowledge of the divine will* denotes the act with the object: *Wisdom and understanding* mark the habits infused, whence this actual and efficacious knowledge flows. As to the object of this knowledge, we must know that the divine will, in itself, is of infinite consideration, and inscrutable to men: This knowledge, therefore, must be limited and restricted to the revealed will; for knowledge (*agnitio*) presupposes a manifestation of the thing to be known.

But now, this revealed will, the full knowledge of which the Apostle seeks for the Colossians, is referred to two kinds: a knowledge of the things to be believed, and of those to be done; or of faith, and new obedience. With respect to faith, *This is the will of God, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life*, John vi. 40. As to holiness and obedience, *This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that every one should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour*, 1 Thess. iv. 3, 4. The knowledge, therefore, of the divine will embraces in itself the knowledge of the Law and of the Gospel: of the Law, which shews us the abyss of our misery, and also proposes to the regenerate a rule of new life; of the Gospel, which opens to us the depths of divine mercy, and also teaches the method of obtaining salvation.

passage, if no other could be produced, would of itself alone be sufficient to crush the foul slanders which, even at this day, continue to be discharged by the ignorant and malevolent against a most exemplary and brutally persecuted community. But calumny naturally follows persecution.

Neither is the bare apprehension of these things called *the knowledge of the divine will*, but the efficacious apprehension which applies Christ to ourselves, and expresses the rule of the law in our life and actions, as far as in us lies. *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments*, 1 John ii. 3; the commandments as well concerning faith as obedience.

Ye see the object of this knowledge: now let us proceed to the cause or fountain of it.

In all wisdom and spiritual understanding.] The Apostle shews whence that efficacious knowledge of the divine will arises, or in what it is grounded, viz. *in wisdom and spiritual understanding*. What is expressed in the Greek by *επισοφια*, some render *per sapientiam*; others *cum sapientiâ*: but it comes to the same thing; for all understand that that knowledge of the divine will is not from us, neither by human learning, but by infused wisdom.*

Let us, therefore, inquire into two things: What is wisdom and understanding? and whence derived?

Lombard, and after him, all the Schoolmen have indulged in many speculations respecting these points, where they dispute about the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: the ground of which disputation is sought from Isa. xi. 2, where, however, only six are enumerated. But, omitting all other, let us enquire what is their opinion of these two gifts.

Wisdom, says Lombard, quoting the passage above-mentioned, *is a habit infused for the contemplation of, and delight in, eternal truth alone; understanding, for the consideration of the Creator and invisible creatures.*†

* Or by wisdom imparted from above, according to John Baptist's declaration, John iii. 27, "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven;" and our Lord's to his disciples, Matth. xiii. 11, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom:" Hence St. James testifies, i. 17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights."

† The celebrated Peter Lombard, vide Note p. 64. His Sentences, from which the subjoined definition is cited, are a collection of ancient authorities in defence of primitive truth, illustrating especially the moral condition

Parisiensis says, that *the gift of wisdom is opposed to childishness ; and the proper office of this is to produce in the mind a contempt of vain and temporal things, and to cause it to take knowledge of such as are heavenly, and to embrace them with delight ; but the gift of understanding is opposed to stupidity ; and its property is to penetrate the secrets of things and their signs ; to see clearly into what are veiled in mysteries, or shadowed forth in any manner ; not to cleave to, or be deceived by the external appearances of things.* It is therefore, as it were, the acute and polished light of wisdom itself, and without some measure of this gift, he says, no one can attain unto salvation.

Altissiodorensis says, *Wisdom is the knowledge of God absolutely, understanding is the knowledge of God relatively, viz. in reference to the creatures.* He adds, that *wisdom is the knowledge of God by spiritual taste, because by means of wisdom, the graciousness of God is tasted.*

Gerson says, *That understanding is a certain spiritual light, infused into creatures for the knowledge of God ; that wisdom is a light infused, under, or by which, divine things are perceived experimentally.*

But these descriptions of the Schoolmen do not seem to me sufficiently ample : for they restrict, as well wisdom as

of man, and the articles of the Christian salvation : they were so far appreciated by the Clergy of the time as to call forth a succession of Commentators, whence “ Theology assumed a new aspect, and instead of the divine truths of the Gospel being presented to the mind, as they originally were, in their native purity and excellence, they were involved in sophism and the intricacies of metaphysical subtilty. Thorny and perplexing arguments superseded the artless simplicity of primitive instruction. The Aristotilian Philosophy itself was resorted to, and was so intimately blended with the system, that the Stagyrite, and not St. Paul, became the standard of authority in the Schools. The advantages accruing to the See of Rome from this revolution in Theology were numerous ; and the Canon law, which was brought into existence about the same time, while it added to the influence of the Roman See, tended to establish the reign of superstition. So far was the Gospel removed out of sight at this time, that it was impossible for men to see how much its beautiful simplicity was disfigured ; or what a wide departure from ‘ the faith once delivered to the saints’ had now taken place.”—Vide Grier’s Epitome of the General Councils of the Church ; p. 182.

understanding, to a contemplative life ; whereas both equally regard an active one.

Wisdom, then, is the infused knowledge of those things which pertain to faith and a good life, with pious affections inclining to the application and practice of the same.

For spiritual wisdom consists not of the illumination of the intellect alone, neither of the renovation of the affections alone, but of both conjointly. Which may be proved from many testimonies of Scripture: *The fear of the Lord is wisdom ; and to depart from evil is understanding*, Job xxviii. 28. *Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son*, Prov. xxviii. 7. From which and similar places, it is manifest, that this wisdom, although as to its essence it is a certain perfection of the intellect, yet as to its matter and use, is also practical and moral. Wisdom, therefore, is not only the light of the soul, but a certain healthiness and perfection of it. The light of mere knowledge is sometimes communicated to the wicked ; for many know the will of God, but they do it not, nay, they plainly hate it : but the light of wisdom always renders a man pious, because it at once inclines the will to that good which is apprehended by the intellect. Such wisdom Paul supplicates for the Colossians.

As to what pertains to the understanding or intellect, *συνεσις*, I do not think it to be a gift in reality distinct from the afore-mentioned wisdom ; but to be a more eminent degree ; and, as it were, the pinnacle of wisdom. It is, therefore, a certain ripeness of wisdom, by which any one is fitted to judge of truth and falsehood, good and evil, when they are involved in some special difficulty, from particular circumstances. Hence the disciples of the Saviour are said to be *ἀσύνετοι*, *without understanding*, Matth. xv. 16, because they understood not the doctrine of Christ clothed in parables. And Paul wished for Timothy, *an understanding in all things*, 2 Tim. ii. 7.—But we shall render these points more plain by adducing examples ; and first in things to be believed, then in things to be done.

Let a question be proposed, Whether the only Mediator of God and men be the man Christ Jesus ; every one en-

dued with the gift of divine wisdom will immediately affirm that he is. Now let it be involved in special difficulties, Whether he is *so* our only Mediator, that he has not communicated the office of interceding to his glorious mother and to other saints; or whether he is *so* our Mediator, that he alone hath made satisfaction for our sins, having left no part of the satisfaction to be made by us. Now there will be need of understanding, i. e. of the clearness of wisdom, which, if wanting, we shall easily fall into error.

Let it be also enquired, Whether it is lawful for subjects to bear arms against their Sovereign; even every Papist will immediately answer it is not lawful. Now let particular circumstances be added: Is it lawful by force of arms to oppose their king when condemned for heresy, and excommunicated by the order of the Pope? If the gift of understanding be wanting, every Papist will doubt and vacillate; nay, he will break out into open rebellion, as we have seen testified by experience.—You perceive what wisdom is, what understanding, and what is their difference.

Now, in the last place, is it asked Whence these gifts come to us? The Apostle points out that in one word, when he adds *spiritual*.

Spiritual.] But it is called so, because it is produced by the Spirit of Christ, not acquired by our ability. For the uncreated Wisdom of God, is the Author of this created wisdom.* In Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, and the rest of the heathen writers, that wisdom in which they excelled was an acquired habit; but in the faithful, saving wisdom is an infused habit. *If any lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally*, Jas. i. 5. Whence says Clemens, *Wisdom cannot be bought with earthly coin; nor is it sold in the market, but in heaven*, Pædag, lib. ii. cap. 3.

From these considerations we deduce some inferences.

* It may be permitted to refer the Reader to a splendid illustration of the nature and excellencies of this wisdom in Ecclesiasticus xxiv.

1. Whereas the Apostle intreats a full knowledge of the divine will for the Colossians, we gather that a blind ignorance, however devoted, is not pleasing to God. *For that is not good which is not rationally good*; as Tertullian intelligently remarks against Mare. lib. i.

2. Whereas he wishes wisdom and understanding for the Colossians, we learn that that trust in the faith of their prelates, which the advocates of Popery every where extol, is not sufficient for the people; for he who hath wisdom and understanding, sees with his own eyes, not the eyes of others.

3. They are led not by an Apostolic, but an anti-Christian spirit, who deny to the people the ordinary means of obtaining wisdom and spiritual understanding, viz. the reading and understanding of the divine word: *For the law of the Lord is undefiled, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple*, Ps. xix.

And thus much concerning the first part of the Apostle's prayer, for those good things which regard the perfect knowledge of the truth.

Verse 10.

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

We have dismissed the first part of the Apostle's prayer, where he seeks for the Colossians those good things which conduce to the perfect knowledge of the truth. Now I come to the second, where he earnestly desires for them the perfect exercise of piety and holiness.

And, in the first place, it may be observed, from the order itself of this prayer, That wisdom and spiritual understanding are poured into the minds of men from God, not for barren knowledge and idle speculation, but for the practice and exercise of holiness.

The Apostle in the verse before us does two things: He proposes, in general, the sum of this his desire, *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord*. Then he draws it out into parts, and explains how we may walk worthy of God: First, as to the intention and scope, if we refer all things εἰς ἀρέσκειαν, to the pleasing of God; secondly, as to the two-fold operation, if we be fruitful in works, and increase in the knowledge of God.

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord.] To walk is an Hebrew phrase, often put in the Scriptures for beginning and keeping to a course of life: as *to walk deceitfully*, and *with simplicity*, in many passages of the Proverbs of Solomon; and *to walk in the ways and in the statutes of God*, as is frequent with David in the Psalms. So in the New Testament, *to walk according to the flesh*, and *according to the Spirit*, i. e. to live and to converse. By this form of speaking, we are admonished that Christianity consists in a perpetual journey towards the celestial country, and that no one must halt by the way, but must perpetually walk and go forward. But how is he to walk?

Worthy of the Lord.] What these words mean we shall readily understand, if we compare them with similar forms of speaking, which occur elsewhere in this our Apostle; so Ephes. iv. 1, *I pray that ye walk worthy of the vocation*. Phil. i. 27, he exhorts them to conduct themselves *worthy of God*. He walks worthy of the Lord, therefore, who so lives as becomes him who is called by the Gospel to the adoption of the sons of God, and to the lively hope of the inheritance of heaven.

Here some may ask, How is it possible to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, or of God, or of the Gospel, or of our vocation; since nothing adequately corresponds to the high excellency of all these things, except perfect and immaculate righteousness and holiness, such as is not found in men who retain this body of sin?

I answer, the word *worthy*, in the Scriptures, does not always denote the exact proportion of equality of one thing to another, but a certain accordance or suitableness,

which takes away repugnance, though it does not establish absolute condignity. So Matth. iii. 8, *Bring forth fruits WORTHY of repentance*, i. e. according with and befitting, not repugnant to the repentance which ye profess. He, therefore, walks worthy of God who flees from the baseness and folly of carnal men, who carries himself as a faithful soul, loving God and his brethren, although he often slides and sins through infirmity. For this our worthiness does not depend upon our absolute perfection, but upon the gratuitous condescension of God, who accounts, as worthy his favour, those who follow the guidance of his spirit; and those unworthy who yield themselves slaves to the flesh and sin.

Hence is to be noted,

1. The infinite goodness and compassion of God, who accounts us children, worthy of adoption and of the heavenly inheritance, although we are very far from perfect holiness; provided we *walk not in the counsel of the ungodly, and stand not in the way of sinners, and sit not in the seat of the scornful; but delight in his law, and meditate therein continually*, Ps. i.

2. Hence also appears the pride of those who, from this divine loving-mercy, attempt to establish the merit of *condignity*; as though *to walk worthy of God* was to merit heavenly felicity by their works. But the Apostle dreamt no such thing; only he would have them strive after holiness, that it might thence appear they did not receive the knowledge and the grace of God in vain.—And this is the sum of his desire in general.

Unto all pleasing, or compliance; or That ye may please in all things.] What the Apostle had proposed in general, he now begins to explain particularly; and first he shews how we may walk worthy of God, as to the intention and universal scope of our life; if, forsooth, all our actions have reference to pleasing God.

Therefore the word *ἀρέσκειαν*, pleasing, I think is to be taken, in this place, not so much for the result of pleasing, as for the desire and intention of pleasing. For so the

word itself is often used: Rom. xv. 2, *Let every one of you please his neighbour.* And Gal. i. 10, *If I pleased men I should not be the servant of God.*

But as the Apostle adds a note of universality, *that ye may please in ALL things*, so the Greek Scholia explain it by distribution into *λογοις, εργασις, και δογμασι*, *words, works*, (as well internal as external) and *also doctrines*.

The reason why the Apostle emphatically requires this general intention of pleasing God, is this; Because the end determines the quality in moral things, as the form does in natural things. *Our duties are to be judged of, not by the beginning but by the end*, says August. in Ps. cxviii. And, lib. iv. contr. Julian, cap. 3, *Whatever good is done, and is done not on this account, because it ought to be done, although it seems good in the view of its being a matter of duty, yet the end itself not being right, it is sin.* So Clem. Strom. 6. *The action of every heathen is foul, because he has not the right end in view.* The scope therefore of our whole life ought to be this, that we may please God, and may glorify him thereby.

But here, in regard to the intention of pleasing God, it behoves us to resolve some doubts.

It is asked, 1. Whether in every good work, the actual intention of pleasing God be necessary through the whole course of the work? For instance; A dutiful son obeys his parents with the intention of pleasing God; I ask, whether he sins in any particular instance of duty, if he should not always actually keep this intention in mind?

I answer; It suffices if that intention should have preceded, and be habitually retained, although it be not thought upon in every single act: for many operations proceed by virtue of some primary intention, although the actual intention hath ceased to accompany them. As a dart, by the single impulse of him who throws it, is borne through an intermediate space to a point, although he thinks not either of the space or the point; so a good work proceeds from a single impulse of the will to its mark, when the performer no longer actually thinks of the mark and of his first intention. The same may be illustrated by

the similitude of a traveller, who does not actually, every step he goes, think of that place whither he is going, and yet proceeds straight thither, by virtue of his primary intention.

But here we should be admonished of two things: First, that we must endeavour, as much as possible, to retain the actual intention of pleasing and of glorifying God in each particular work. Secondly, we must take care, lest, after the first good intention, some bad and inordinate intention insinuate itself: for this latter does not derive rectitude from the former; but the former will by this latter be marred, corrupted, and defiled.

2. It is asked, Whether it be possible for a regenerated man always to retain this habitual intention of *pleasing God in all things*, although in the mean time he fails in many?

I answer; That not only is it possible, but necessary, if he wishes to retain faith and a good conscience: for these cannot consist, neither remain in the same heart with the design of sinning and of displeasing God. Therefore every believer constantly keeps in mind the purpose of pleasing God and of abstaining from sin, according to that saying of Paul, *The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*, Rom. vii. 19. He who chooseth good, and not evil, retains the design of pleasing God, although, being allured by evil concupiscence, he sometimes does that through infirmity which displeases God, he makes it his main business to please in all things, whilst he studies to avoid every single sin.

Lastly, it is asked, Whether a believer retaining this design of pleasing God, is always acceptable and pleasing to him, notwithstanding those his failures and infirmities?

I answer, first, That the person of a godly and faithful man is always pleasing and acceptable to God, because he is regarded by God not as he is in himself, but as a member under Christ the head; *But there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. viii. 1. Secondly, The good works of the faithful, although imperfect, are nevertheless pleasing to God, because they are regarded by him

as by a loving Father, not as an austere judge ; as covered and adorned with the most perfect obedience of Christ, not as naked and alone. Lastly, The failings and sins of the faithful are indeed hateful and displeasing to God, but out of a simple hatred, not redounding upon the person.* And therefore God hates sin in the regenerate, and for that reason declares war against it, through the Spirit of grace ; but the regenerate themselves, in the mean time, are acceptable to him, and on that account he favours and blesses them. And so much concerning the intention of those who walk worthy of the Lord. We must proceed to the working.

Being fruitful in every good work, and increasing, &c.] Good working ought to follow a good intention, if we wish to walk worthy of God, and to please him. But he names two kinds of working : the first is practical working, which tends to labour : the other is theoretical working, which labours for the acquisition of knowledge itself. In the first, two things are to be observed : What he requires, *fruitfulness* ; What is the matter about which this fruitfulness is exercised, *Every good work*.

Fruitful.] This is a metaphorical expression taken from a tree ; not every tree, but one bearing fruit. For the godly are compared to *trees planted by the rivers of waters, which bring forth fruit in their season*, Psal. i. They are compared to branches grafted in the fruitful vine : *I am the vine, ye are the branches : he who abideth in me bringeth forth much fruit*, John xv. 5. From this comparison three things may be noted :

1. As no tree can bear fruit, unless it hath a certain life-giving seed in itself, and is moreover nourished daily with good sap ; so no one can bear spiritual fruit, unless he hath in himself the seed of the Spirit, and is daily watered with the outpourings of divine grace. *Without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered*. Hence it is said, 1 John iii. 9, *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin ; for his seed*

* Vide page 77, on the meaning of " a perfect hatred."

remaineth in him : and he cannot sin because he is born of God. The Holy Spirit is called seed, because by his power, as a certain life-giving seed, men are rendered fruitful in good works. Not much unlike this similitude is that of Parisiensis, when he says, that *virtues are called fruits, because the mind of the regenerate man is like a field sowed with the life-giving seed of the word of God; which conceives and brings forth all kinds of virtues, from the gratuitous and spiritual embrace of its eternal Spouse, i. e. God.*

2. As that tree is pleasing to God, which does not occupy the ground in vain, neither dissipates the moisture which it draws on leaves and blossoms alone; but produces good fruits: so he alone is pleasing to God, who does not uselessly occupy room in the Church, neither wears the appearance and form of godliness alone, but puts forth its power and virtue by fruitfulness. Very remarkable are the places of Scripture on this point: in Luke xiii. 7, the Lord says concerning the fig-tree, *I seek fruit and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?* On the other hand, a fruitful tree is pleasing to its Lord, and is customarily his care and delight: *My Father is the husbandman: every branch which beareth fruit he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit,* John xv 2.

I therefore say with Nazianzen, *Let no Christian be indolent or unfruitful, but let every one from the things which he hath bring forth fruit to God: the sinner, penitence; he who runs well, perseverance; the youth, chastity; the old man, prudence; the rich, mercy; the poor, thankfulness, &c.**

* Gregory Nazianzen:—Our Expositor has cited this Father before, with advantage to his readers (vide p. 21 and 116) though it was not convenient there to insert a sketch of him: But the beauty of this quotation induces us to enquire into his character; because it is not always the case, that the maintenance of Christian truth is an evidence of consistent conduct and fair pretensions to Christian integrity.—Gregory, surnamed Nazianzen, from Nazianzum, a town of Cappadocia, of which his father was Bishop, was born A.D. 324, at Azianzum, a village near it, and was one of the most illustrious ornaments of the Greek Church. He was made, much against his inclination, Bishop of Constantinople in 379; but was scarcely seated in his Episcopate, than his tranquillity was disturbed by a schism in his Church. occasioned by the attempts of Maximus, a Cynic Philosopher, whom he

3. As a tree lives and bears fruit, not for itself, but for the owner, and for others to whom he sees fit to impart of its fruits; so a godly man ought not to live to himself alone, nor to care only that his life be honourable to himself, but that it may be especially honourable to God, who is *his* Lord, and beneficial to all his brethren; for this is to resemble a fruitful tree.—And thus much concerning the fruitfulness required: It remains to speak of the matter of this fruitfulness.

In every good work.] Behold the very broad and spacious matter in which the fruitfulness of a godly man is exercised: And truly in this he differs from a tree: For no person seeks different fruits from one and the same tree; but God expects that every one of the faithful and regenerate should produce every kind of good works. And the reason of this dissimilitude arises from this circumstance, that since the fruit of any thing answers to its seed, a tree produces only one sort of fruit, inasmuch as the virtue and power of the seed planted is limited to one; but the seed which is sown in the hearts of the pious (viz. the Grace of the Holy Spirit) avails to the producing equally of every spiritual fruit: Unless, therefore, they

had baptised, to supplant him in the See: Supported by the Emperor Theodosius, he defeated his opponent, and his election was confirmed in the Council of Constantinople, held in 381. The difficulties of his situation, however, induced him shortly after to resign it; when he retired to his paternal estate at Nazianzum, and there lived in seclusion till 389, the period of his decease. He was not only a man of piety, learning, and talent; but also in other respects an estimable character, displaying on most occasions more moderation and liberality than was usual among the Divines of his age. As a Divine he so far outstripped the rest of his day, that “he was entitled *’ο θεολόγος κατ’ ἐξοχην*; and a difference from his doctrine was “identified with Heresy. A dutiful son, a faithful friend, and universally “beneficent, he would have been a model for society, had he not been too “sensitive, and, perhaps, too ascetic. Humble, though full of energy; “despising worldly advantages unless he could apply them to the advance- “ment of Religion; untainted by immorality, forgiving injuries, and in- “defatigable in his Ministry, he may be accounted the most exemplary, “as well as the most able Christian on record in the fourth century.” Vide Encyclop. Metropol. under Ecclesiastical Writers of the fourth Century. His works are extant in 2 vols. printed at Paris in 1609. His style is said to be equal to that of the most celebrated orators of ancient Greece.

produce every fruit, they do not answer the nature and efficacy of the seed. For *the fruit of the Spirit* is not one alone, but manifold; viz. *love, joy, peace, patience, long-suffering, goodness, benignity, and the like*; Gal. v. 22. There are, therefore, two things to be noted in the matter of the fruitfulness:

The first, that God does not approve of every kind of fruitfulness, but restricts it *to good works*. But those are called good works which are commanded and directed by God. They, therefore, who by their own inventions, and a certain superstition, *ἑθελοθρησκεία*, a will-worship, attempt to please God, are judged not to grow fruitful, but wanton. For so speaks the Psalmist, cvi. 39, *They were defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions*. Wisely and piously spake Cyprian, *The exercises of righteousness are to be chosen not by our own will, but by the will of God*, De singul. cleric. And in Isaiah God complains of the Jews, that they *worshipped him by the precepts of men*, ch. xxix. 13.

The second, that fruitfulness of any one kind is not sufficient, but we must be fruitful in *every good work*. If any one produce the good fruit of alms deeds, and mingle with them the impure fruits of lewdness; or if any one be conspicuous for chastity, and defile himself by avarice; he would not answer the divine will, or the Apostle's desire of being fruitful in every good work: nay, he is accounted by God bad and unclean. For who shall say that any one is clean, who is wont to wallow even in a single sewer? Hence the Apostle bids us *abstain from all appearance of evil*, and wishes us to be *sanctified wholly ὁλοτελεῖς*, wishes *spirit, soul, and body to be preserved blameless*, 1 Thess. v. 22, 23.

And so much concerning that practical working whereby we please God.

Increasing in the knowledge of God.] This is that other working of those who walk worthy of God, and study to please him. As they are fruitful in good works as far as respects an active life, so they increase and advance in the knowledge of God as far as respects a contemplative life.

The Apostle alludes to that increase in our spiritual stature, concerning which he also speaks in Ephes. iv. 13, where he shews, that we must increase *till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*—We observe,

1. Increase in knowledge is no less necessary to a Christian man, than fruitfulness in works; because we are bound to both by the divine command, and we are taught to seek both from God by Apostolic example.

2. From the circumstance of the Apostle joining these two, he wishes to intimate that fruitfulness in works cannot exist, without this progress in wisdom; nor progress in wisdom and the true knowledge of God, without fruitfulness.

The reason of the former is this; Because wisdom so directs the operation of virtue, as sight does the walking faculty. Take away sight, and no one can walk aright; take away wisdom, and he cannot be fruitful as he ought. For that action is bad which is not directed by knowledge, although it belong to the class of the good.* And the reason of the latter is, because the desire and the practice of holiness is, by the divine œconomy, a certain preparation for obtaining more abundant knowledge from God; and on the other hand, the neglect of holiness and good works, is the cause why God inflicts spiritual blindness, and gives men over to a reprobate mind. *I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts*, Ps. cxix. 100. *Into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter; nor dwell in the body which is subject unto sin.* Wisdom i. 4: And Rom. i. 21, 28, *Because when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, their foolish heart was darkened, and God delivered them over to a reprobate mind.* As therefore from true knowledge, arises the study of holiness and the practice of good works; so again from this fruitfulness knowledge itself takes a new increase: as also from ignorance arises an abandoned life; so again, from this abandoned life, igno-

* Vide Note p. 100.

rance and spiritual stupidity is increased.—But let it suffice to have said thus much concerning the second part of the Apostle's prayer.

Verse 11.

Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.

This is the last part of the Apostle's prayer for the Colossians, and has especial respect to the enduring of the cross. And there are three things to be noted in it:

1. The good itself which is sought, strengthening; *being strengthened with all might.*

2. Whence this good is expected and obtained: from *the glorious power of God.*

3. To what end this good of being strengthened subserves; *unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.*

Strengthened with all might.] These words are connected with the 9th verse; *We cease not to pray for you, that ye may be filled with all knowledge, &c. that ye may walk worthy of the Lord. . . . being strengthened with all might, &c.*

This strengthening fortifies the mind as well to endure as to abstain; for it impresses that fortitude on the mind, *which, as Prosper says, not only being beaten by divers troubles remains unshaken, but also yields, through being enfeebled, to no allurements of pleasure, De vita contemplat. iii. 20.* It is most properly, therefore, the business of this strengthening to invest a man with that spiritual power, by which he may act virtuously and live religiously, notwithstanding those difficulties and dangers which restrain him from godliness.

The School doctors affirm somewhat more explicitly that this might exercises its energies in five things;

1. In attempting good works, however arduous. 2. In striving against vices. 3. In despising earthly things. 4. In resisting temptations. 5. In enduring afflictions. And here it is proper to observe the order of the Apostle's

prayer. He entreated for them, in the first place, an infused *knowledge* of the divine will; secondly, *fruitfulness* in works of holiness: now, lastly, he desires for them *might*, from some special strengthening, because the cross awaits *all those who will live godly in Christ*, 2 Tim. iii. 12.

Observe; Even after a knowledge of the truth is infused, and the grace of holiness imparted, yet the regenerate remain infirm and weak to undertake any spiritual good, to strive against vices, to resist temptations; unless they are further strengthened and sustained. This Paul confesses, *To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not*, Rom. vii. 18. This was manifested in David and Peter, who, by reason of this infirmity of our nature, fell in the day of temptation.

This infirmity of the regenerate and sanctified man, Parisiensis illustrates by some beautiful similitudes in his book of Temptations and the means of resisting them; of which it will not be foreign to our undertaking to adduce a few, that it may be understood what wisdom the Apostle evinced in desiring strengthening also for them after sanctification.

1. He compares *the regenerate and sanctified man to a knight splendidly armed, who proceeds to battle mounted upon a prancing and refractory horse: for he is often thrown by the movements of his steed, unless some other person come to his assistance: so the regenerate man, having in himself a concupiscence resisting and fighting against the Spirit, will oftentimes be thrown to the earth, unless he be supported and strengthened from another quarter.*

2. He compares *the regenerate and godly man to a building, the upper part of which consists of firm and solid materials, the lower is dry and combustible: for so the renewed man, as to his regenerated part, viz. his spirit, consists as it were of endowments and graces that are divine, which possess in themselves stability; but as to his inferior part, viz. the flesh, he consists of lusts and evil inclinations: as therefore that building, so the renewed man, being easily inflamed in the inferior part, will be wholly destroyed, unless he be protected and succoured from some other quarter.*

3. *As a Virgin, although she be adorned with remarkable chastity and modesty, yet if she pass her life in the midst of corruptors, will need assistance lest she be overcome by their blandishments or threats; so the human soul adorned with grace and holiness, nevertheless requires constant strengthening, because it exists among corrupting men and evil spirits, and also inbred lusts.*

Ye see the necessity of strengthening on account of the infirmity of the flesh. But why does the Apostle say, *strengthened with ALL might?*

First, to intimate that we fight not against one enemy, neither are opposed by weapons on one side only, but by many, and on every side. There are three chief adversaries, the flesh, the world, the devil; under each of which, as leaders, there are innumerable bands of troops. Secondly, to signify that it profits us little, if we conquer any one or some of these enemies, unless we bravely tread them all under our feet. For, as Cyprian speaks, *if avarice be overthrown, lust rises; if lust be subdued, ambition succeeds; if ambition is spurned, wrath incenses, pride inflates, &c.* Unless we overcome these enemies one and all, we are conquered: There is therefore need of *all might* against every kind of enemy.—Thus much concerning the good which is sought.

According to his glorious power, Κατὰ τὸ κράτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.] This is an Hebraism; for the genitive case of the substantive is put instead of an adjective, *vim gloriæ*, i. e. *vim gloriosam, the power of God for glorious power.* Now in these words the Apostle shews whence the strengthening and might of the godly comes, namely, from the glorious power of God. Three things are to be considered: What this strengthening power is; Why it is called glorious power; How it comes to us, and whence it is derived. As to the first: The strengthening power is the Holy Spirit himself, with his gifts; who breathes wonderful might into our infirm minds. For so Christ himself speaks, Luke xxiv. 49, *Tarry ye, said he to the Apostles, in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high; i. e. until the Holy Spirit enter into you from heaven: For so*

Paul when writing to the Ephes. iii. 16, *May God grant you, that ye may be strengthened mightily by his Spirit in the inner man.*

We are here taught

1. That no one ought to confide in his own strength, as though by his own power he could resist temptations, or endure griefs and afflictions for Christ; but he should seek strengthening from this Spirit. Piously and wisely spake Augustine, *A presumption of stability keeps back many from stability: no one will be strong by God, but he who perceives his weakness in himself,* De verbis Domini. serm. 13.

2. That when temptations are overcome, it behoves us to ascribe the glory to God, not to ourselves, or to our own power. *Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name give the glory,* Ps. cxv. 1. For it is a species of pride when any one would seem to have that from himself which he borrowed from another.

Lastly, when we see heretical and impious men confidently undergoing pains and torments, we must know, that it is not might, but madness; not strength, but stupidity: for true courage is the gift of the Holy Spirit, and is given to the sanctified alone. For the things which seem to be done by heretics and the wicked with a certain fortitude, argue not so much their strength, as the violent impulses of the devil: *for the deeds of heretics are as the deeds of dæmoniaks,* as says Parisiensis, De moribus.

Thus it appears whence this *strengthening might* comes. Let us enquire why it is called *glorious*.

Glorious.] The Apostle could have said, we are strengthened by God, or by his power; but he adds this epithet, *glorious power,* or *glorious might*;

1. That we may place the greater confidence in this divine power: Because this very word contains in itself an earnest, or rather a promise of victory and triumph: for this could not be glorious power, if it might be overcome by an evil spirit and sin. *In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who hath loved us,* Rom viii. 37.

2. It is called *glorious power* on account of the admirable mode of conquering the devil, the world, and the flesh. For the Spirit of God not immediately, by his absolute power, beats off these enemies of our salvation; but by inspiring us with strength causes even ourselves to trample them under. Moreover that power must necessarily be very admirable and glorious, which makes feeble man, clothed with sinful flesh, to overcome the insults and wiles of devils, the alarms and solicitations of the flesh, the hatred, snares, and injuries of the whole world. Of this glorious power God himself speaks, *My strength is made perfect in weakness*, 2 Cor. xii. 9. Vide 1 Cor. i. 27.

Only one thing now remains to be explained: How this glorious power of the Holy Spirit comes to us. It is derived unto us by the gracious mediation and intercession of Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father. Concerning the gift or sending of his Spirit into the hearts of believers, we have the promise of Christ, John xvi. 7, *It is expedient for you that I go away, for, if I go away, I will send the Comforter unto you*. Christ, therefore, as God, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, gives this glorious power of the Holy Spirit to his people. God alone gives God. Christ, as man, intercedes with the Father, and by his intercession obtains this Spirit of fortitude for all the elect: John xiv. 16, *I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever*.

Hence we gather that Christ, although seated in heaven, is yet the living head of, and really united to, the Church which is on earth. For as the natural head diffuses sense and motion through its body; so Christ, the spiritual head of the Church, communicates the vital power of his Spirit to all his members.

Here we see the real practical use of that article, *He sitteth at the right hand of the Father*: For we do not believe as we ought the sitting of Christ at the right hand of the Father, unless we believe that he so reigns in heaven, as far more effectually to protect and strengthen his people

by this his glorious power, than if he continued to be yet present upon the earth in the body, and stood by each one of us.

We have unfolded what, and what kind of good that strengthening is which the Apostle intreated for the Colossians; we have explained also whence it is derived, and by whose mediation it is conferred upon us: It remains that we now explain what end it subserves.

Unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.] He shews the use and end of our divine strengthening and of our spiritual fortitude, viz. that it may beget in us *patience* or *endurance*, and *long-suffering*; then he annexes the characteristic of Christian patience, viz. *joyfulness*. Let us inquire, first, what is the nature of these virtues.

Interpreters are not sufficiently agreed what is *ὑπομονη*, *patience*, and what *μακροθυμία*, *long-suffering*. Some refer *ὑπομονη*, i. e. *patience* or *endurance*, to those evils which are inflicted by God; *μακροθυμία*, to those which are laid upon us by men. Chrysostom so distinguishes them, as to say, that *endurance* is to be exercised towards those whom we are not able to punish; *long-suffering* towards those whom we may. He endures, therefore, who bears with equanimity that evil which he cannot repel: he is long-suffering, who, being offended by an equal or an inferior, takes not revenge though he has it in his power.

But these expositions appear to me to restrict both words too much. It is more probable, then, that we should say *ὑπομονη*, or *endurance*, respects that load and weight of affliction visited upon us, either by God, or by men; (for this word is derived *ἀπὸ τοῦ ὑπομένειν*, which signifies *to remain under* a load of afflictions, and not to be overwhelmed by their weight); but *μακροθυμίαν*, or *long-suffering*, respects the length and duration itself of the incumbent evil. Therefore, he who is not broken either by the deferring too long our deliverance from evil, or by the protracting too long our reinstatement in good, the same hath this *long-suffering*, because his mind duly extends its view to the end which is far distant. (Tit. ii. 3; 2 Pet. iii. 12; Jude, 21).

These two virtues are the inseparable companions of that strength and fortitude which the Spirit liberally bestows upon us; for they are joined to that *fortitude*, as secondary virtues to the primary one. But they differ in this principally, that *fortitude* arms us against the fear and dread of evil approaching and attacking us, and does not allow us to flee and decline the fight: *endurance* and *long-suffering* support the mind itself against the perception of evil which has already come upon and arrested us, and does not permit us to sink under grief and sadness, but teaches us to bear it without any immoderate or unbecoming passion.—We see now what is the nature of endurance and long-suffering.

Let us consider, secondly, the necessity of these virtues; and first of patience. Now this virtue is very necessary to all the godly, because occasion of exercising it occurs on every hand.

1. If we regard God himself, he exercises their patience in chastising them. *Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth; and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth*, Heb. xii. 6. This chastisement, if patience be present, works with it for salvation; if absent, produces murmuring, desperation, and finally, condemnation.

2. If we regard the world, patience is very necessary to the godly: for *in the world, and from the world they will have tribulation; and as many as will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution*. He, therefore, who is destitute of patience, is exposed naked to the iron storm of all weapons.

3. Lastly, if we regard other virtues, patience is necessary. For to faith, righteousness, chastity, punishment is often held out with infamy: Here patience unfolds its strength, and exhibits itself, as it were, a shield to the other virtues; for

The virtue which patience does not sustain is a widow.

Prudent.

Patience is so ordained in the things of God, says Tertulian, that no one who is a stranger to patience can perform any precept. Whence that saying of Paul to the Romans ii.

6, 7, *God will render to every one according to his deeds ; to those who endure, the glory of good works.*

Now let us observe what relates to *long-suffering* ; nor is there less necessity for this :

First, by reason of the promised good ; for *hope which is deferred afflicts the soul*, Prov. xiii. 12. There is need therefore of long-suffering to those to whom the blessedness of heaven is promised, lest they grow remiss, and, through despair of the reward, cast off the exercise of godliness. For the flesh murmurs and rebels, and accuses God of delay and slackness, because he does not immediately confer what he promised : but this spiritual long-suffering says, *For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Heb. x. 37.

Secondly, there is need of long-suffering, by reason of the incumbent evils. For that which Epicurus was wont to say consoles not the godly : *All grief, if long, is light ; if heavy, is short ;** for their afflictions are both heavy and protracted : The whole of their life is a warfare ; all this life is to them a vale of tears. *Ye shall weep and lament*, says Christ, John xvi. 20, *but the world shall rejoice.* Where, then, is the comfort of the godly ? *In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength* ; as Isaiah beautifully says, cap. xxx. 15. And Jerome, Lament. iii. 25, 26, *The Lord is good unto them that wait for him. It is good that a man should silently wait for the salvation of God.†*

* The Philosopher, whose maxim is here cited, the Leader of a Sect well known by the name of ‘ Epicureans,’ flourished about three hundred years before Christ ; he maintained notions respecting the gods which bordered on Atheism ; and made *pleasure* the end of his doctrine. His followers became divided into two kinds, the rigid and the remiss ; the latter illustrated the leading principle of the system abundantly in their practice. It was such who said, “ *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,*” and against the spread of whose pernicious errors the Apostle directed that pungent corrective, 1 Cor. xv. 33 : “ *Be not deceived ; evil communications corrupt good manners : awake to righteousness and sin not, for some have not the knowledge of God.*” How could such offer any consolation to the afflicted and miserable !

† *Bonum est præstolari cum silentio salutari Dei.* Davenant in loc. from the Vulgate.

We have seen the nature and necessity of patience and long-suffering: Now let us ponder the fruit and admirable effects. And this is first to be premised, that the benefits which arise from afflictions, whatever they are, do not arise but through the medium of this patience: therefore they are the rather to be ascribed to patience than to that affliction, which is most hurtful to those who are impatient.

1. Patience discomfits and overthrows all its enemies, without inflicting or returning a wound; it does not deign to aim a weapon at them, nevertheless it achieves a conquest even by quietude. *The heathen and their idolatries*, says Augustine, Epist. 42, *are overcome not by resistance, but by the martyrdom of Christians.*

2. Patience causes all its enemies to serve itself, and contribute innumerable advantages: to say nothing of the rest, it occasions its persecutors to prepare for it the crown of the eternal kingdom. *Blessed are they who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*, Matt. v. 10. Whence that saying of the martyr Vicentius to Dacian his tormentor, *Never hath any one so well served me as thou hast.*

3. Our patience confounds the devil, causes angels to rejoice, glorifies God himself, and, lastly, sometimes melts and converts the most inveterate enemies. Tertullian, captivated by the great advantage of this good, exclaimed, *De patient: Let me lose all the world, provided I am enriched by patience.**

With joyfulness.] These last words determine the character of true and christian patience; for hereby it is distinguished from that which is philosophical and hypocriti-

* Next to the displays of this grace as given by the primitive Christians, and the martyrs at the time of the Reformation, the conduct of the Waldenses under their severe and long protracted persecutions, affords the most instructive illustrations of its excellence and advantage on a large scale. Vide "Authentic details of the Waldenses, collected during a residence among the Vaudois of Piedmont and Wirtemberg, in 1825," Hatchards; a volume, it is apprehended, not sufficiently known on account of its unpretending merits, and the profits of which are intended for the benefit of the Vaudois.

cal. That which is philosophical, (such as is celebrated in the instance of Socrates) had not this spiritual joy united with it; that which is hypocritical hath inward repining: that alone which is Christian possesses joy and spiritual cheerfulness in the midst of calamities. *They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.* Acts v. 41.

But an objection is raised from the passage before adduced, viz. *Ye shall lament, but the world shall rejoice*: therefore the afflictions of the godly (it is said) do not produce gladness, but grief and tears. That opinion of the Philosopher in his Ethics, (Ethic 3) is also well known, That fortitude is occupied about a troublesome and unpleasant object, and therefore it is sufficient if a brave man be not sad, although he may not be joyful.

I answer, This gladness is not concerning the object of patience, for that inflicts pain; but concerning the act, the advantage, and the end; for the consideration of these produces gladness. To rejoice concerning an object is not suitable to every virtue; for there is some kind of virtue to which it pertains to grieve about its object, viz. penitence: but to rejoice concerning its own act pertains to every virtue; because to every one endued with virtue, it is delightful to exercise himself according to the habit of that virtue. Whence even the penitent himself rejoices, though it be at his own sorrow: so the brave and patient are made joyful by the very exercise of fortitude and patience, although from the objects of these virtues they feel grief and pain.

But this joyfulness, which arises from the consideration of its own virtuous and praiseworthy employ, is not that which the Apostle chiefly regarded; but rather that which arises from confidence of the divine love; from a sure knowledge that all our afflictions work together for the good of our souls; from the certainty of deliverance, and the hope of glory. For so says the Apostle, *All things work together for good to them that love God*, Rom. viii. 28. And in the Epistle to the Philip. i. 28, *In nothing terrified by your adversaries; which is to them an evident token of per-*

dition, but to you of salvation. And the Saviour, Matth. v. 11, 12, *When ye shall be persecuted, rejoice; because great is your reward in heaven.* Gregory says, *The more severely I am oppressed by present evils, the more certainly I anticipate future joys.*

And thus much concerning the third part of the Apostle's prayer, with which he concludes his exordium, or second part of this Chapter, and of the whole Epistle: We proceed to the third.

Verse 12.

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Having explained the title of the Epistle, and the preface, we come now to the third part of this Chapter, which extends to the 23d verse; and contains the sum of Evangelical doctrine concerning the redemption of the human race.

Now in this part of the chapter the Apostle accomplishes three things.

1. He sets forth the benefit itself of redemption, from verse the 12th to the 15th.

2. He describes the person of the Redeemer, from that verse to the 20th.

3. He explains the manner of the Redemption, or of the procuring of our salvation, to verse 23d.

The benefit of Redemption contains in itself many other benefits, which we shall discuss in their order one by one. But we may reduce the sum of the Apostle's discussion to this proposition, viz. We are saved by the merit and passion of Christ alone, who is sufficient to procure human salvation, without Jewish ceremonies and the other means which were foisted in by the false Apostles.

Let this in general be observed and premised: The best preservative against error is to hold aright the benefit of redemption; as also the sufficiency and efficacy of the Re-

deemer. For why does the Apostle undertake to unfold this doctrine? Doubtless that by the understanding of it all seductive subtleties may be dissipated.

By laying down the same foundation concerning the sufficiency of Christ the Redeemer and Mediator, we shall be able to expose and crush the errors of the Papists, respecting the invocation of saints, the necessity of human satisfactions, the granting of indulgences, and many others with which they have contaminated the Christian Religion. Most truly said Calvin, *Popery stands not except with ignorance of Christ.**

* Our Expositor has here cited an authority, a reference to whom is, in the minds of some well-meaning and otherwise sensible and intelligent persons, more odious than an exhibition of sin itself. But none, surely, will object to, or take offence, at the sentiment adduced, so truly in point, except those who favour the dominance of that noxious and blighting system justly animadverted upon. The Translator, however, cannot refrain from taking occasion to observe, that whilst we are to yield deference to names, or parties, only so far as they speak the language and follow the steps of Christ, we should still not stand aloof from the admission of truth, on account of a name; and though he is no admirer of Calvin's peculiarities, or, rather, the excrescences grafted upon truth as his opinions, by ultra and anti-Calvinists; yet, as a receiver of those doctrines which Calvin held and well maintained, in common with all *true* Believers, from the first shining of the Sun of Righteousness upon this earth, he thinks it well to lay before his readers a few remarks upon the subject adverted to, judiciously selected from various competent judges by the pen of another. That excellent Author, the Rev. T. H. Horne, in his admirable work "The Introduction to the Critical Study of the Scriptures," vol. ii. Append. No. vi. Sect. 14, "on the principal Commentators," &c. art. 2; has some citations well worth the knowledge and the consideration, of every fearful and prejudiced person, in reference to the character under notice. "The Commentaries and other expository writings of this great man" [Calvin], says he, "have always been deservedly celebrated and admired; though it has been the fashion, with some modern divines, to depreciate them, on account of those peculiar dogmas which Calvin deduced from the Sacred Writings." "Calvin's Commentaries," says the learned Matthew Poole, in the preface to the 'Synopsis Criticorum Sacrorum,' "abound in solid discussions of theological subjects, and in practical improvements of them. Subsequent writers have borrowed most of their materials from Calvin; and his interpretations adorn the books, even of those who repay their obligation by reproaching their master." The great critic Scaliger said, "that no Commentator had better hit the sense of the Prophets than Calvin:" and another eminent

Now we will follow the thread of the context, and begin from this 12th verse, in which three things are to be observed :

1. The primary cause of salvation, or of our redemption, the mercy of God ;

2. The primary effect of this mercy, *ἰκανότης*, a certain new and supernatural faculty and fitness in us ;

3. The end of this new faculty or meetness, that we may participate in the heavenly inheritance.

Giving thanks to the Father.] These words are connected with the 9th verse, where the Apostle says, *We cease not to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with all knowledge, &c.*; now he subjoins, *Giving thanks to the Father who hath made us meet.* This third part of the chapter, which relates to the benefit of redemption, the Apostle beautifully and wisely opens by the giving of thanks : By which conduct of his he would intimate to us these two things ;

1. That this benefit of human redemption is so great that it would be impious not only to discourse, but even to think of without the utmost gratitude of soul. Scarcely ever does the Apostle mention this, but forthwith he breaks out into praising and blessing God. Ephes. i. 3, *Blessed be*

critic of our own time (Rosenmüller), has remarked, “ that although Calvin was not deeply versed in Hebrew, yet, as he possessed an acute and subtle genius, his interpretations of Isaiah in particular, contain many things which are exceedingly useful for understanding the Prophet's meaning.” Nothing, indeed, can more satisfactorily evince the high estimation to which the Commentaries of Calvin are still entitled from the Biblical Student, than the following eulogium of one of the most learned Prelates that ever adorned the Anglican Church—Bishop Horsley. “ I hold,” says he, “ the memory of Calvin in high veneration ; his works have a place in my library ; and in the study of the Holy Scriptures, he is one of the Commentators whom I most frequently consult.” To this testimony may be added that of another accomplished Scholar lately deceased, the Rev. J. J. Conybeare. “ The Commentaries of Calvin,” he observes, in his Bampton Lectures for 1824, p. 237, “ though in the exercise of our Christian liberty we may freely question and dissent from many points, both of doctrine and discipline, maintained by their illustrious author, are yet never to be perused without admiration or instruction.”

the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. So Zacharias, Luke i. 68, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath redeemed, &c.*

2. That we ought to give all diligence to be certified through the Spirit of faith, that we are in the number of those whom God hath made meet for the participation of eternal life. For it is absurd and preposterous to give thanks for a benefit received, when you are not yet sure whether it has been received or not. He therefore who, by his own example, wishes the Colossians and other Christians to give thanks to God for having obtained the benefit of salvation, wishes all to labour, that, by a true and lively faith, they may attain to this knowledge, being most full of comfort, and very needful to the Christian in this vale of tears. But to whom are thanks given? To God *the Father.*

To the Father.] To God and the Father, in some copies. The Apostle points out the primary cause of human salvation, viz. the unmerited goodness and mercy of God the Father. He names the Father, because as he is the fountain of Deity, so also is he to be understood as the fountain of all spiritual benefits. James i. 17. But we must not exclude either the Son or the Spirit: for their will and operation are conjoined in the salvation of the elect. As, however, there is an order in the procession of the divine persons, so that the Son proceeds from the Father, and the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son: so also a certain order is to be understood in their operation; the Father worketh from himself, the Son from the Father, and the Spirit from both. We say that God the Father, or the whole Trinity, is the primary cause of our salvation from a twofold consideration;

First, because *from the mere good pleasure of his own will, before the foundations of the world were laid, he predestinated us to eternal life;* as it is said Ephes. i. 4 and 5. For this, therefore, eternal thanks are to be given to God; for, without this, assuredly we should be altogether excluded from heaven. Rightly spake Prosper, *No other shall come into the fellowship of the inheritance of Christ, but those who were*

chosen before the foundation of the world, De lib. arbitr. So the Saviour himself, Matth. xxv. 34, and Luke xii. 32, εὐδοκῆσεν, &c.

Secondly, because in time, through effectual calling, he draws the elect to himself, who, if left to their own inclination, would never embrace the salvation offered. *No man, says Christ, cometh unto me, except the Father draw him,* John vi. 44. But he draws by special, secret, and efficacious grace, which is communicated to those alone, but is ^{withheld from} ~~denied to~~ all others. Whence that observation of Augustine, In Epist. Joan tract. 4, *Many hear, but those only are persuaded to whom God inwardly speaks.*

Thus far concerning the primary cause of our salvation, viz. the mercy of God predestinating and effectually calling us; for which cause thanks are to be given to him.

Who hath made us meet.] Now let us weigh the primary effect of this divine goodness and mercy. And that is a certain spiritual *worthiness* or *fitness*, whereby we are, and are accounted meet to participate in the spiritual benefits which are communicated to men in Christ. But that this fitness or condition of new worthiness be found in us, presupposes two things on God's part; powerful operation and merciful acceptance. For it is by the Divine operation and acceptance we are made *meet* to participate in the lot of the saints.

The divine operation is necessary, because we must be changed and become new creatures, before we can be partakers of celestial benefits. For there is in us nothing but an entire unfitness either to understand, or do, or, finally, to receive, spiritual good. Ὁυχ ἱκανοὶ ἔσμεν. *We are not sufficient of ourselves,* 2 Cor. iii. 5. *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom,* &c.: 1 Cor. xv. 50. *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,* John iii. 3. Therefore that these obstacles may be removed, and we may be rendered meet, God renews us by the Spirit; he breathes into us the new life of grace; finally, he pours into our minds, faith, hope, love, and those other virtues which are required for the participation of the heavenly promises. *For this divine grace* (as Aquinas has well said,

Quæst. disput. de virtut. art. 10,) *is therefore communicated to the elect, that they may perform the actions ordained unto the end of eternal life.* For it confers upon the soul a certain new principle of a spiritual and divine nature, whereby it is rendered meet for the participation of things that are spiritual and divine. *For the nature of the human soul, how perfect soever in natural gifts, is, without grace, not susceptible of glory.* Parisiensis, lib. de virt. cap. 11. Therefore the grace of God alone makes us *meet* for the participation of divine things, in effectually calling us, justifying, and sanctifying us by a certain internal operation of his Spirit.

But besides this operation of God, which renders us meet by changing and regenerating us, the merciful acceptance of God is also required, to cover our infirmities and reckon our feeble endeavours in the room of perfect obedience. For as there is nothing good in us, unless we have been renewed by the divine operation; so the good things of the renewed would be even as nothing worth for the enjoyment of the heavenly heritage, unless they were accepted by the most indulgent Father for the sake of the transcendent worthiness of Christ. Therefore, that there may be in us the least spark of good, the power of God in working it is required; and that that good, whatever it be, may make us *meet* to be reckoned among the children and heirs of the kingdom, his fatherly clemency is requisite in accepting it.

Nor need we look far for a reason why we think this acceptance necessary, since it is certain, that in the regenerate themselves, after the operation of the regenerating Spirit, there is not perfect newness: but as in wine diluted, the water as well as the wine is mingled in every part; so in the whole renewed man, the qualities of regeneration and the remains of corruption, are found blended together. *No one in this life is thoroughly perfect: for the infirmity of the godly is not yet healed, but is daily being healed,* Prosper, De vit. contempl. i. 9. Whether, then, we regard the inward qualities, or the external acts of the godly, they are not *meet to participate the lot of the saints in*

light, without this merciful acceptance. *Woe to the commendable life of man, if thou sift it without mercy*, says Augustine, Confess. lib. ix. cap. 13. And the Psalmist, cxliii. 2, *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh be justified*. Beautifully writes the Apostle to the Ephes. i. 5, 6, *God hath adopted us according to the good pleasure of his will. He hath accepted us by his grace in the beloved*.

These things being established concerning the Divine operation and acceptance, we may deduce a few corollaries :

1. It is not in the power of fallen and corrupted man to make himself meet for the participation of spiritual gifts, such as grace, faith, blessedness : God alone, who imparts the gifts, gives with them the disposition also for their reception. Wherefore what some of the Schoolmen assert about the preparations and dispositions which proceed from the power of free-will in the state of corrupt nature, are to be received with caution : Such as that saying of Durandus, In Sentent. lib. i. qu. 6, *Although it be not in the power of man to produce in himself love or grace, yet it is in his power so far to dispose himself, as that God will give grace to him*. And that of Albert, Compend. v. 2,*

* Albert, styled the Great, a German, of the Dominican Order, and a follower of Peter Lombard ; “ a man,” says Mosheim, “ of vast abilities, and an universal dictator in his time.” His celebrity, however, is so clouded with the legendary tales related of his acquirements and performances in occult philosophy, that it is impossible to say what portion of it is duly merited : and of the twenty-one folio volumes attributed to him, it has since been ascertained that many pieces which are there inserted were not composed by him. Still the distinction he obtained for his extensive acquaintance with the subtle philosophy and obscure theology of the times was so great, that, in 1248, he was called to Rome by Pope Alexander IV. and appointed Master of the Sacred Palace (vide Note *, p. 38). In 1260, he was elected Bishop of Ratisbon ; but finding his episcopal duties inconsistent with his love of retirement and study, he resigned his Bishopric, and returned to Cologne to enjoy the leisure of Monastic life. He was, however, drawn from his retirement by Pope Gregory X. who sent him into Germany and Bohemia to preach the Crusade. He afterwards attended the Council of Lyons, and then returned to Cologne, where he remained until his death in 1280.

Grace is not given unless to those who have an aptitude for grace.

But to these we oppose plain Scripture, which everywhere teaches that God *ἰκανῶσαι*, i. e. *renders us sufficient and meet* for spiritual and heavenly things, since of ourselves we are most unmeet, either to receive or perform them. Against these also we place in opposition the more sound of the Schoolmen: *Free-will*, says Aquinas, *is not the cause of grace, by means of an adequate disposition. God, observes Parisiensis, previously confers upon us our efforts and preparations, that he may afterwards render them more profitable. And again, Although I am moved towards thee, O Lord, but faintly and weakly; yet am I not moved at all, but by Thee, when drawn towards Thee. Idem.*

2. The general offer of grace which is propounded to all by the ministry of the Gospel, is not sufficient to procure salvation; but, that it may become efficacious, there must needs be added the internal operation of God, which renders us meet to receive grace and salvation. The offer of grace and salvation is common to all through the preaching of the Gospel; but that internal efficacious operation, which fits and qualifies us to lay hold upon salvation, is peculiar to the elect. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, John vi. 37. The world cannot receive the Spirit of truth, John xiv. 17. Whence also that in Acts xiii. 48, As many as were ordained to eternal life believed. Augustine acknowledges this peculiar operation of God in the case of the elect, De prædest. sanct. lib. i. cap. 16, They who attain to the vocation according to the purpose, must all be taught of God, neither can any one of them say, I have believed, that thereby I might be called: for I have been called by the mercy of God to believe. God does not work in us to will and to do good, because by precepts externally given he speaks inwardly upon our senses, but because he inwardly sheds abroad his love in our hearts. Idem, De Spirit. de lit. cap. 25.*

3. No one from the merit of inherent righteousness, or of his good works, can claim to himself the lot of the saints: For how can we force our righteousness upon God,

or urge our good works as meriting heaven, when we have nothing good of ourselves? But as Augustine well said, *Whoever reckons up his deeds of righteousness to Thee, what does he enumerate, but Thine own gifts?* Confess. lib. ix. cap. 13.

Let us therefore be content to be called, through grace and by Divine acceptance, to the enjoyment of the heavenly heritage, and humbly confess that of ourselves we are most unworthy of so great a favour. God has made us meet, by regenerating us through the Spirit, and by accepting us for Christ's sake. And thus much concerning this primary effect and benefit of Divine mercy, viz. *that He makes us meet for eternal life.*

To partake of the inheritance of the saints in light.] The Apostle here shews the end or fruit of the Divine operation in the regenerating and sanctifying of the elect. For it may be asked, What profit arises to us hereby, that we are renewed and enlightened? that we become imbued with faith and love? that we are received into the favour of God? The answer is, By this Divine work we are *made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,* εἰς τὴν μερίδα τοῦ κληροῦ.

In all these expressions there is something ambiguous and obscure. The word *sors* is taken in two ways, either for a state and condition, or for a portion and inheritance.* It is used for state and condition by the poets. *Sors tua mortalis*, says Ovid, *Your mortal lot*: so in Horace, *Nemo dicitur vivere contentus suâ sorte*, *No one is said to live contented with his lot*, i. e. his state and condition. If we adopt this meaning, the Apostle says that he gives thanks to God, because He had translated himself and the Colossians from the state of children of wrath, into a new state and the condition of children of God. For God, in regenerating the elect, and infusing into them faith and holiness, gives them this dignity, *that they may become sons of*

* Davenant here, as elsewhere, quotes the Vulgate, where the Greek τοῦ κληροῦ is rendered *sortis*, of the lot; in our translation, *of the inheritance*.

God, John i. 12, 13; that from being *strangers and foreigners*, they may become *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*: Ephes. ii. 19. So Acts xxvi. 18.

But this, although it be a true, is not the full exposition. I annex, therefore, that other concerning the portion and heritage to be participated by all the godly. For, as the Israelites divided the land of Canaan by lot, it hence came to pass that that inheritance which had been assigned to each tribe, was called its lot. Hence *the lot of Ephraim*, and *the lot of Judah*, &c Josh. xv. 1. Here the Apostle, alluding to the heavenly inheritance, calls it also *the lot of the saints*. He would therefore have the Colossians made meet not only for participating the condition of children now, but also for their future inheritance.

In light. And because he adds *in light*, some explain this of the light of faith; others, of the light of glory: but the Apostle, methinks, would include both with reference to the respective periods. For,

1. God renders all his children meet to partake of life eternal by a participation of the light of hope and faith commenced in this life; even as it is said in John vi. 47, *He that believeth in me hath eternal life*: he does not say *shall have*, but *hath*. *A true believer*, says Clemens, *rejoices because of those things which are promised, as already present; and being certainly persuaded of them, he already possesses them, though future*. Strom. 7.

2. But it must also be added, that they are likewise made meet to partake of the lot of the saints in the light of glory, as to the future world. For grace is given to the faithful, that they may be led on to glory; according to those words of the Apostle, Rom. viii. 30, *Whom he predestinated, he called; whom he called, he justified; whom he justified, he glorified*. God, therefore, in effectually calling and justifying the elect, makes them meet to obtain glory, i. e. *to partake of the lot of the saints in light*. We are now in possession of the meaning of the Apostle: hence let us deduce some observations.

1. Inasmuch, as the Apostle says that we are made meet *εις μερίδα*, not *εις μερίδας*, for a *portion of the blessed*, not

for portions, he would have us to understand the wide distinction between this heavenly and an earthly inheritance. For an earthly inheritance the more it is divided among several, the less is possessed by each: but the heavenly kingdom is possessed entire by innumerable saints; yet so that the number of the participants hinders not the most perfect and full participation to each.

2. But because he calls eternal life *a lot*, he intimates under the name of *a lot* that this kingdom is not to be attained by our own strength or virtues, but is bestowed upon us by divine Providence; as we have it in Prov. xvi. 33, *The lot is cast into the lap; Jehovah autem est ratio ejus*, as Tremellius renders it; *but the Lord is the disposer of it*.

3. It is called the *lot of the saints*, not of all persons indiscriminately, that the unbelieving and unholy may understand this lot belongs not to them. For so the Apostle, 1 Cor. vi. 9, *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, &c.* The ungodly have their lot, but it lies in earthly gains and pleasures; as they themselves confess, Wisdom ii. 7, 8, 9, *Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments; let us crown ourselves with roses; for this is our portion, and our lot is this.* Far more excellent is this lot of the godly: for *God is their portion*, Lam. iii. 24. They who *have* obtained this lot, are called saints in heaven: they who *would* obtain it, must live as saints upon earth.

4. Lastly, this inheritance of the blessed is said to be laid up *in light*, that we may understand it to be something lovely, delightful, and comforting in the highest degree; for nothing can be more lovely or more pleasant than light. That region of the saints shines not by the light of the sun, *for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*, Rev. xxi. 23. By this metaphor then, the kingdom of heaven is contrasted with that place of torment which is said to be filled with thick darkness, that the mind may conceive of it, as a place most horrible, hideous, and loathsome. He would therefore inflame us with a love of this lot of the saints, which is illumined with such light; and fill us with horror at that opposite

lot of the wicked, which is enveloped in darkness and deep gloom.

Verses 13, 14.

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son : In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

The Apostle has been hitherto employed in enumerating and enlarging upon those saving benefits which have been bestowed upon us by God the Father: for the benefits of our redemption are so united, that he who is a partaker of one is a partaker of all. *Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*, is the verse preceding. Now, in verse 13, the Apostle connects two other benefits, without which that preceding one cannot stand; and these are, *deliverance from the power of darkness*, and *translation into the kingdom of his dear Son*.

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.] In explaining this benefit, three things are to be shewn by us: 1. *Who* hath delivered; 2. *Whom*, or what sort of persons; 3. *From what*.

1. *Who?* *God the Father*; for these words are immediately connected with the foregoing, *Giving thanks to God the Father, who hath made us meet*—*Who also hath delivered, or hath forcibly plucked us away*.* But the Father being spoken of, we ought to understand the whole Trinity in these external operations; as we have before observed. Wherefore the original author of man's deliverance is the Triune and One God, who purposed this from eternity, and in the fulness of time sent his Son to accomplish this work which he had decreed. *So God loved the world*, &c.

* Ἐρρυσάτο, eripuit. "Not simply liberavit, sed eripuit. The word signifies by main force to deliver, or pluck away, even as David pulled the lamb out of the bear's mouth."—Vide Leigh's *Critica Sacra*.

John iii. Therefore it is properly said by the Schoolmen, *The whole Trinity redeemed man by an act of power; the incarnate Son redeemed him by the effect of his humiliation.* And no one else ought to, or could, deliver man, except God alone; of whose power and will he was created out of nothing. None other ought, because (as Tertullian well observes) *by this act he would forcibly take away from the Creator his own servant.* For so great is this benefit of deliverance, that it binds us more than the benefit of creation itself. If, therefore, one had made us and another had delivered us, we should have been more strictly bound to that other deliverer than to God the Creator. Hence also another remark of Tertullian, *Who ought to seek the lost sheep? Ought not he who lost it? Who lost it? Was it not he who possessed it? Who possessed it? Was it not he who created it?* But neither could any other deliver. For he must necessarily be stronger than the devil who could wrest his prey from him: *For no one can enter into a strong man's house and seize his goods, unless he shall have first bound the strong man, and then he shall spoil his house;* Matth. xii. 29. But who could overcome and bind this prince of darkness who was holding us captive, except the mighty God alone? It was he, therefore, who plucked us from him.

Us.] We must consider, in the second place, *Whom*, or what sort of persons God delivered. And this consideration may be twofold; of those who were to be delivered, or of those who have been delivered.

While we were to be delivered, i. e. previous to our deliverance, we were not only diseased and weak, but were openly and secretly opposed to our own deliverance. Œcumenius,* describing the infirmity of fallen man, says, *He was without strength, and having need of great help.* Also, shewing his rebellion, and hostile mind, he says, *he was*

* A Greek Father, who was Bishop of Tricca, in Thessaly, towards the close of the tenth century, celebrated for Commentaries on the Acts of the Apostles and the whole of the Epistles, which are said to be judiciously compiled from Origen, Chrysostom, Eusebius, and others.—Vide Home's Introd. vol. ii. append. p. 195, 6th edit.

even impious, having rejected the helper. The Apostle himself paints man in the condition of corrupt nature in these same colours, in Rom. v.

1. Observe here the immeasurable love of God, who would deliver such persons: for no one cares to redeem a thing of no value.

2. Observe the infinite power of God, who delivered man in spite of the devil, and against the will of man himself; as the angel did Lot out of Sodom.

And now the other thing is respecting those who have been already delivered: for after they have been set at liberty, they are faithful and holy who were before rebels and unholy. If therefore it be asked, What sort of persons are they whom the mercy of God hath delivered? The answer is, that they now are new men, shining in faith and godliness. *Us*, says the Apostle, *hath he delivered*; i. e. us who believe; us who love the brethren; us who walk worthy of the Lord, bringing forth the fruit of all good works: such he hath delivered.

Hence it is manifest,

1. Whatever carnal men dream about their deliverance and salvation, is most vain. For as the Israelites, whilst they served Pharaoh, and lusted after the Egyptian flesh-pots, were not in the enjoyment of liberty; so Christians, whilst they obey the devil, whilst they wallow in the delights of sin, are not delivered from slavery and a state of condemnation.

2. Hence also we infer, for the consolation of the godly, That the faithful and godly alone are free, are honoured, are unspeakably precious with God; whilst, on the other hand, the ungodly, although they glitter in the eyes of men, are accounted for slaves the most vile and abject. Truly said Clemens, Strom. viii. *The most excellent thing in the earth is the man who most serveth God.*

From the power of darkness.] Who the deliverer is, what sort of persons they who are delivered had been and are, has been shewn: it now remains to explain from what they have been delivered, *From the power of darkness*; i. e. from the power of the devil, of sin, and of hell; or, in one

word, from the state of corrupt nature, under which all those things are comprehended; or, as others are accustomed to say, from the darkness of ignorance, of unrighteousness, of misery. All these come to the same point: we need not, therefore, labour for words.

We are said to be delivered *from the power of darkness*, because we are delivered from the power of the devil, who is *the prince of darkness*, and labours more and more to darken and to blind his subjects. We all are born under his kingdom and power, so that before our deliverance he worketh in us according to his own will. Thus in Ephes. ii. 2, *Wherein in times past ye walked according to the prince of this world*, Wherefore one of the Fathers said, *That a throne, as it were, was erected for the devil in the heart of every ungodly man*: and those who are not yet liberated he terms, *the horses of the devil*; because he drives them hither and thither at will. But this *prince of darkness* is bruised under the feet of the faithful, Rom. xvi. 20, to whom, by the Spirit of God, new strength is administered to trample upon this unclean spirit.

2. God hath delivered us from the power of sin, which hath blinded the understanding, corrupted the will, and placed us in a condition of darkness both as to knowledge and to spiritual and saving practice. *Ye were sometime darkness*, Ephes. v. 8. So John i. *The light shineth in darkness*; iii. *but men have loved darkness*, viz. the darkness both of ignorance and wickedness. Now from this darkness God has rescued us, whilst he pours in the light of faith, whilst he imparts the Spirit of holiness; which blessings being bestowed, this power and dominion of sin is dissolved. *Ἄμαρτια ὑμῶν ἔκκυρτέουσιν*, Rom. vi. 14, *The body of sin is destroyed, that henceforth ye should not serve sin*, ver. 6.

Lastly, He hath delivered his people from the power of hell, i. e. from the miseries and calamities which arise from the guilt of reigning sin. For hell is described as a place of darkness, Matth. xxv. 30, *Cast ye him into outer darkness*. From the power of this infernal darkness they are delivered by the Divine mercy, *for there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. viii. 1. In every case,

therefore, God hath delivered his people from the power of darkness. We touch upon these points lightly now, because all of them are to be treated again.

1. Observe for instruction; that the whole world is involved in darkness under the devil, neither is there a spark of saving light to be found in us before deliverance; for we are in *the power of darkness*; that is to say, spiritual darkness hath dominion over us.

2. Observe for caution; that the godly, being delivered, ought to have no fellowship with the works of darkness: for they are rescued from the power of the devil and of sin, and therefore by serving these they shew themselves to be deserters. *Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, &c.* Rom. xiii. 12.

3. Observe for consolation; that although the godly are often oppressed by temporal calamities, yet they are delivered from that great misery which consists in the horror and guilt of eternal death, in comparison of which misery, all external evils are light and trifling.

And hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.] The Apostle annexes a new benefit, which much enhances the loving-kindness of God. For it seemed a light matter to him to deliver us from the power of darkness, i. e. from a condition of the deepest misery, unless he translated us from thence into the kingdom, i. e. into a state of the greatest felicity and joy.

From which conjunction of these benefits we may infer; That there is no middle state; but all men are either most wretched slaves under the dominion of Satan, or translated into the kingdom of Christ. There is no third kingdom; neither can the same person be a subject to both. But let us come to the express words of the text.

There are three points to be well considered in these words: What is the nature of this translation? What may be understood by the kingdom into which we are translated? Why it is called *the kingdom of his dear Son*, and not *of God*, or *of heaven*, or *of light*? which regard to the contrast seems to have required.

And hath translated us, μετεστησε.] This word seems to have been borrowed from those who plant colonies and compel people to migrate from their native soil, in order to inhabit some new region: for so God has translated us from the kingdom of darkness, which is the native soil of us all, into the kingdom of the pious and blessed.

But how hath he translated us? We may understand that from the contrast. We are living in the kingdom of darkness, in consequence of our blindness, infidelity, and impurity; but from this kingdom to that other we remove by means of effectual knowledge, faith, and holiness. Acts xxvi. 18. Unrighteousness and wickedness constitute us the servants of the devil; faith and godliness constitute us the household of God.

God translates us then from that melancholy and gloomy kingdom, when he illuminates our hearts by pouring into them faith, when he changes and restores our will by imparting grace; for, being enlightened and sanctified, a man is by that very act translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his Son; because he cannot possibly be at the same time a citizen of two cities, which observe contrary laws and institutions.

Here observe, To be delivered from darkness it is not enough that we be called to this kingdom, and admonished to desert that other; but it is necessary that we be translated and changed by the mighty working of the Holy Spirit from our former condition into this new one.

Here the error of the Pelagians is detected, who would have grace to be nothing else than that which acts as a monitor of free-will.* But from this passage and innu-

* Our Expositor has here alluded to an heresy universally prevalent in the benighted heart of fallen man, and which has been a greater barrier with multitudes to the reception of the humbling religion of Jesus, and more injurious to the welfare of the Church, than, perhaps, any other; having been maintained openly, or taught covertly, either from design, or through ignorance and negligence, in all states of the Church. The primary advocate of the baleful delusion implied under the title of Pelagianism, and which begins in a denial of original sin, and proceeds, consistently with this denial, to dispute the necessity of the grace of God to quicken,

merable others, it is manifest that we have need not only of such admonishing grace, but of that which changes, heals, liberates, and translates; for without such grace no one gets out of the kingdom of Satan.

Therefore He is to be regarded with the highest and unceasing honour who has translated us into this kingdom: for so are colonies accustomed to honour their founder.

Into the kingdom.] Let us inquire now what is intended by this word *kingdom*. *The kingdom of God, or the kingdom of Christ, or the kingdom of heaven*, in sacred Scripture denotes many things.

1. First, it is put for the state of glory and blessedness: as when we are commanded to *seek the kingdom of God*, Matth. vi. 33; when [it is said] the ungodly *shall not inherit the kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 9. If we understand *the kingdom of the Son* in this manner, then God must be said to have translated his people into this kingdom, inasmuch as they have a right to it, and possess it in hope, although not in reality. But this does not seem to me to accord with the design of the Apostle in this place.

enlighten, and sanctify the soul, was one Morgan, (a name of the same signification as Pelagius,) said to be a native of Wales, born in 354, and educated in the Monastery of Bangor, of which he became Abbot. In the early part of his life he went to France, and from thence to Rome; where, about the year 400, he commenced formally and systematically to promulgate his opinions. His morals being irreproachable, he gained many disciples; but his errors were promptly and ably met and exposed by Augustine, who flourished at the same period, being born in the same year, and who, on account of the zeal and eloquence with which he supported Evangelical truth, was emphatically called, 'The Doctor of Grace.' The heresy, however, made a rapid progress after Augustine's death; and, under one modification or another, it is still widely operative in the visible Church, to the present day; opposing the most important truths of the Gospel, and destructive of vital religion in the heart. It would be well for every one, who is not alive to the effects of this error, to examine into the nature and tendency of it; and to reflect on the aptitude of the human heart, through love of self, and pride of intellect, to receive and maintain its doctrinal theory. For a satisfactory elucidation thereof, the Reader is referred to the Dissertation on the Death of Christ, appended to the second volume of this work; in the opening chapter of which our excellent Expositor has given an extended view of the subject.

2. Secondly, it is put for the promulgation and knowledge of the Gospel: as, *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*, Matth. xiii. 11. *The kingdom of God shall be taken from you*, &c. Matth. xxi. 43. *These only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God*, Coloss. iv. 11. In this sense God is said to translate those into the kingdom of his Son, whom he plucks from the darkness of ignorance and idolatry, and enlightens with the knowledge of the Gospel. Thus the Colossians, thus all Christians, are *translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of Christ*, which is *the kingdom of light*. But this translation denotes only the external and apparent state of a Christian; whereas the Apostle speaks of the internal.

Lastly, it is taken for a state of grace, i. e. for the acquisition of remission of sins, of renovation, and of divine favour on account of Christ the Messiah and Mediator: also for the whole multitude of those who are in this state. *The kingdom of God is within you*, Luke xviii. 21. *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom, xiv. 17. I deem this to be the peculiarly proper sense of this expression. For God is said to have translated us into the kingdom of his Son, because he hath communicated to us those spiritual gifts, and wrought in us that spiritual condition, which makes us subjects and members of Christ. Therefore, by the kingdom of Christ we must understand all the benefits of grace which are obtained through union with and subjection to Christ our spiritual King. You now understand what the kingdom of Christ is.

From what has been said, observe now the contrast of these kingdoms, that ye may be able to hate the one, and long after the other. The kingdom of Satan is the kingdom of darkness, i. e. of ignorance, of wickedness, of misery: the kingdom of Christ is the kingdom of saving knowledge, of righteousness, of happiness. Who would not deliver himself by flight from that doleful kingdom, and shift his abode to this blessed one? But we find that it happens far otherwise; for all are desirous of remaining

in the kingdom of the devil, almost even to their latest breath, and then only to be translated into the kingdom of Christ.

The kingdom of his dear Son; or of the Son of his love.]

It remains that, in the last place, we consider well why the Apostle calls it *the kingdom of his Son, not of God, or of heaven, or of light*, as in other places.

1. It is very aptly called the kingdom of *the Son*, because God admits no one to this kingdom, be it understood either of grace or of glory, except through his Son as Mediator. He is the channel of grace; through his mediation its streams flow to us, and we are planted in this spiritual kingdom; as is evident from Ephes. i. 3, 8.

2. This kingdom is called *the kingdom of the Son*, because Christ the Mediator received it from the Father to order the government and administration of it to the end of time. He is the Head and the Saviour of his Church; he confers both *grace and glory* after his own good pleasure: *I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me*, Luke xxii. 29.

3. The Apostle probably called it the kingdom of *the Son*, rather than of *God, or of light*, because he wished to open the way and make an easy transition for discoursing on the person of the Son. For he immediately enters upon that doctrine, which he could not so aptly have proceeded to unless he had expressly named the Son.

Now since this kingdom of grace and glory may be truly called the kingdom of Christ, we must strive to be one with Christ, and to be grafted in him: For those who are plucked away from Christ, are the withered branches of the vine, and exiles from this kingdom, although they seem to dwell in it, and even to enjoy its privileges.

Of the Son of his love, or his beloved Son, της ἀγάπης αὐτου.]

This is an Hebraism: The Son of his love, i. e. his Son most beloved; as, *the Son of perdition, the most abandoned*.

Christ is rightly called the Son of the Father's love, because he hath the Father's whole and entire love commu-

nicated to him, even as he had his essence. This God himself hath manifested by a voice from heaven, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, Matth. xviii. 5. But it is mentioned in this place, that from hence we may understand that we are loved by God in Christ the well-beloved.

This is a great consolation to the godly man, when he calls to mind that he is not merely a subject, but a member of Christ so beloved of God. For hence he derives the hope of obtaining from God whatever is necessary to salvation. For how can he refuse his subjects, his friends, the brethren of his Son whom he loves with singular love?

Hence, if any one being planted in Christ is seduced through his infirmity, or the temptation of Satan, to commit sin, he takes confidence of pardon; for God, who with such a supreme affection loves Christ himself, cannot hate those who are in Christ, and enjoy the having him for their intercessor with God. 1 John ii. 1.

To conclude, in a word: The love of God towards Christ, is the cause and most certain earnest of his kindness towards all those who are translated into the kingdom of Christ.

Verse 14.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

The Apostle descends from God the Father to Christ *the God-man*, the Mediator, the instrumental cause of our salvation: For God hath delivered us from the power of darkness, God hath translated us into the kingdom of grace; but by the mediation of his Son.

Therefore in this short verse he accomplishes three purposes: he shews, 1. Who is our Redeemer; the incarnate Son of God, *In whom we have redemption*. 2. What, and what sort of redemption it is of which he speaks; viz. such

as consists in *the remission of sins*. 3. With what price this redemption was acquired and purchased, *through his blood*.

In whom we have redemption.] These words are connected with the last in the former verse: *In whom*, viz. in his beloved Son. Here, therefore, it is proper to consider the person of the Redeemer.

Christ the Son of God, *the God-man*, is our Redeemer. This work required God, that he might overcome death: and man that he might die for us. As God, by right of property he undertook this work of redeeming his creatures; as man, by right of relationship he undertook to redeem his brethren.

To accomplish this work of redemption, not the Divinity alone, not the humanity alone was necessary; no, not an angelic nature; but the Son of God alone; who, as the Apostle says, Phil. ii. *when he was in the form of God, made himself of no reputation: and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men*. Whence also that declaration that *the Church was purchased with the blood of God*, Acts xx. 28. Well spake Augustine, *that which mediates between divinity alone, and humanity alone, is the human divine nature, and the divine human nature*. Nor was it ill said by Aquinas, *The humanity of Christ is the instrument, the divinity is the chief agent in fulfilling the work of our salvation*, Quæst. disp. de verb. art. 5.

From this consideration of the person who redeems us, we may observe the infinite guilt of sin; agreeable to that remark of Bernard, *Acknowledge, O man, how grievous are those wounds for which it is needful the Son of God should be wounded*. This ought to strike us with horror and detestation of sin.

It demonstrates also the infinite love of God towards the human race, who willingly sent his own Son to redeem miserable mortals. Let this inflame us with reciprocal love; let this excite us to every kind of obedience.

It must also be observed, that the Apostle does not say we have redemption by the Son of God, but *in him*. For *by Christ* the whole world is said to be redeemed, inasmuch

as he offered and gave a sufficient *ransom* for all ; but *in* him the elect and faithful alone have effectual redemption, because they alone are *in* him.

Hence we learn that no one hath, or can have, any fruit of the redemption procured by Christ, unless he be in Christ. But we are engrafted in Christ through faith by the Holy Spirit. Therefore salvation is not derived to us unless from Christ our Head ; for when he becomes our Head, and we his members, then we are in him, then his saving virtue extends to us ; but not before : For *he is the Saviour of his body*, Ephes. v. 23.

Here also we must briefly resolve a doubt. For, when the Apostle says, *In whom we have redemption*, viz. we Christians, through the one oblation of the Son of God our Redeemer ; it may, I say, be asked, Whether the Fathers under the Old Testament enjoyed this redemption ? Christ not being then born, not to say offered, for the expiation of the sins of men.

We answer, the faithful under the Old Testament enjoyed redemption in Christ through his blood which was to be shed, like as we have through his blood having been shed : because this sacrifice of Christ had a saving efficacy, not only by the actual offering, but by the eternal decree of God, and the eternal efficacy of the same sacrifice, as well before as after it was offered. *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for evermore*, Heb. xiii. 8. *The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, Rev. xiii. 8. Therefore all the faithful under the Law, by faith in the Son of God, had Redemption even as we under the Gospel. *Abraham saw the day of Christ and was glad*, John viii. 56. He saw it, not by carnal but spiritual vision. Augustine, and the rest of the Fathers concur in this most true opinion. *All the just before Christ lived by the same faith as ourselves*, Contr. Epist. Pelag. lib. iii. cap. 4. *In ancient times there were spiritually righteous men ; faith in a Christ to come dwelt in them*, Contr. adversar. leg. et proph. lib. i. cap. 17. *Their faith and ours was the same, because they believed that would be done to him which we believe hath been done*, ad Optat. Epist 157.

Thus much concerning the Redeemer, viz. Christ the Son of God, incarnate and dead as concerning us; but who was to become incarnate, and to die, as concerning the ancient Fathers.

The forgiveness of sins.] The Apostle summarily comprises and explains what he understands by *redemption*: for these words are connected by apposition with those, *In whom we have redemption, i. e. the forgiveness of sins.*

The Apostle adds this explanation with the best intention: for we have not as yet entire and full redemption, but we expect *it* in the day of the resurrection. We have that redemption which consists in the forgiveness of sins; and having obtained it, we are delivered from the bondage of the devil, of sin, and of hell. The devil cannot any longer detain us as captives, rule us as his slaves, and drive us here and there as he pleases; sin itself which cleaves to us cannot reign in us; finally, even hell cannot torment us with perpetual fear, or claim any lordship over us: For, our sins being remitted, the power of the devil is broken, the wrath of God is removed, the condemnation of eternal death is taken away. From all these things, therefore, we have redemption at the same time that we have forgiveness of sins. But there is yet another bondage, viz. that of the corruption of our bodies, and of eternal sufferings, from which the elect are not yet redeemed, but shall be redeemed at the coming of Christ. Luke xxi. 28, *Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.* The Apostle calls this ἀπολύτρωσις περίποιήσεως, *the redemption of the purchased possession*, Ephes. i. 14. This also Christ merited for us: but he would not bestow upon believers at once this incorruption of their bodies, and deliverance from present external miseries, and from the remains of sin, for the following reasons;

First, lest the condition of the head and of the members should be plainly dissimilar. For Christ himself was *a man of sorrows*, having endured every kind of misery: he did not at once sit down at the right hand of the Father in glory, but first underwent hunger, thirst, crucifixion, and death: it is therefore but consistent, that the members

of Christ should pass likewise through sufferings and death itself to glory.

Secondly, they are not fully redeemed from these bodily afflictions, neither from the remains of sin, that they may have matter for glorifying God, whilst they endure them with the greatest constancy and patience, whilst they resist with all their might all the lusts of sin; that God, even as a just judge, may confer upon them, after having well fought this fight, the unfading crown.

Lastly, he would not straightway deliver the faithful from this bodily misery instantly, lest Christians should seem to embrace Christ on account of this temporal deliverance, rather than on account of that spiritual one.

To conclude, therefore, when the Apostle explains redemption by *the remission of sins*, he wishes to shew what part of the benefit of redemption is granted to believers now, and what is reserved for them in another world.

Through his blood.] We have already treated of the person of the Redeemer, and also of the blessing of redemption itself. The last branch only of this verse remains, concerning the price or method of redemption, *through his blood*, i. e. this redemption was procured through his bloody death. The Apostle states the price expressly, because captives are redeemed or liberated from bondage in many other ways :

1. By free manumission : as when a master voluntarily dismisses his slave from his bondage and declares him free. But this mode was unsuitable ; because God had determined otherwise ; and because the devil, who held us captive, never would have voluntarily dismissed us.

2. By exchange ; so we read it was often practised in wars, as when the Carthaginians sent to Rome, ten Romans who had been taken in battle, upon condition that the Romans should restore as many taken from the Carthaginians. But neither in this way could the redemption of man have been accomplished : for by no exchange of any creature could the reproach brought upon God by man be compensated.

3. By violent abduction : as when David by force of

arms delivered his men, and recovered them from the hands of the Amalekites, 1 Sam. 30. But neither in this manner ought the human race to have been delivered: for although Christ might justly wrest from the devil, by main force, the prey which that robber had acquired by wicked craft; yet could not man, guilty as he was of treason against God, be reconciled in that manner.

4. The last and only ground therefore of redeeming us remained, viz. that which might be effected by way of justice, all our debts being paid by our Surety, Christ Jesus. But by the payment of what ransom did he discharge so vast a debt? *Not with gold and silver, but his precious blood*, 1 Pet. i. 18.

Through blood.] He points at Christ's bloody death: not that the previous acts and sufferings of Christ did nothing to merit human salvation; but that by pouring out his blood, i. e. in death, there was a completion of satisfaction. *Although*, as Aquinas truly says, *any one act of Christ was meritorious in our behalf, yet to make satisfaction for the guilt of human nature which was under the bond of death, it was necessary that Christ should sustain death*; Quæst. disput. de grat. Christi, art. 7. But we are redeemed by this *blood*, or by this death, of Christ, inasmuch as it expiated the wrath of God, inasmuch as it dissipated the power of the devil.

Christ averted the wrath of God from us, by undergoing the penalties due to it, that he might liberate us from our debts. *He without any evil deserts* (says Augustine) *underwent punishment, that we without any that were good might obtain grace*. And the Apostle, Gal. iii. 13, affirms, *Christ was made a curse for us, that he might redeem us from the curse*.

Here therefore we must observe, that although the devil held us captives, yet the price of our redemption, that is to say, the blood of Christ, was offered as a satisfaction to God, not to the devil: therefore it rested with God either to condemn or to absolve: and God being reconciled, and sin remitted, the power of the devil immediately vanished. And God is abundantly satisfied in the death of Christ for

the sins of the whole world, because the death of Christ was the death of God; the blood of Christ, the blood of God: Therefore from the infinite dignity of his person, the price of his blood and his flesh which he offered for us was infinite. So Cyril, *De recta fide ad Regin.* lib. 2, *If God incarnate and suffering in his own person be understood, every creature is trifling in comparison of him, and the death of his one body suffices for the redemption of the world.**

Thus, then, satisfaction has been made to God and our sins expiated. Now we must shew how the shedding of the blood of Christ, not only hath reconciled God to us, but also utterly destroyed the power of the devil: for from him hath this bloody death of Christ delivered us.

Now to understand this, in the first place it must be admitted, that the power of the devil over man was upheld by the sin of man. For if we suppose that man is free from sin, then by no pretext of right whatever could the devil exercise any power over him. When, therefore, the devil attacked Christ our Saviour who was free from sin, and by his satellites, the Jews, put him to a most painful and ignominious death, he lost, by the judgment of God himself, the power which he had over us the guilty, through having exercised that which he had not over Christ the innocent. For, by this injury offered to Christ, and endured patiently by him, God adjudged to him power over the devil, and over all that he had possessed; so that he might take from him the spoil at his pleasure, and rescue out of

* Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, the writer here cited, flourished in the fifth century, and “ distinguished himself by his zeal against Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople; who, in some of his homilies, had asserted, that the Virgin Mary ought not to be called the Mother of God. The dispute at first proved unfavourable to Cyril, whose opinion was not only condemned, but himself deprived of his Bishopric and thrown into prison. But he was soon after released, and gained a complete victory over Nestorius; who, in 431, was deposed from his See of Constantinople. Cyril returned to his See at Alexandria, where he died in 444. He also wrote against Theodorus of Mopsuestia, Diodorus of Tarsus, and Julian the Apostate. He composed Commentaries on St. John’s Gospel, and wrote several other books. His works were published in Greek and Latin, in 1638, in 6 vols. folio.” Platt’s Univer. Biogr. Vide Pearson on the Creed, in Notes from Cyril.

his hands whomsoever he might think fit. Therefore after that the devil was overcome by the death of Christ in a way of justice, and deprived of his possessions by the Divine decree; then Christ, having triumphed over him, took from him, by an irresistible arm, his own elect, and trampled him not only under his own feet, but under the feet of all his people. Thus the devil was vanquished by the death and blood of Christ, and we are rescued from his jaws.

To this doctrine both the Scriptures and the Fathers bear testimony. God foretold this victorious death of Christ, Gen. iii. 15, *I will put enmity between thy seed and between the seed of the woman: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* And in Isa. liii. 12, *He shall divide the spoils of the strong,* because he hath poured out his soul unto death.* He suffered his innocent soul† to be forced from him, that he might deliver our guilty souls from the power of the devil. Augustine, lib. xiii. De Trin. cap. 14, *What is the righteousness by which the devil was conquered? What but the righteousness of Jesus Christ? And how was he conquered? Because, though he could find in him nothing worthy of death, nevertheless he slew him. And verily it was just that he should let go the debtors whom he held, because they believed in him whom, without owing any debt, he slew.* And cap. 15, *In redemption, the blood of Christ is given as a ransom, as it were, for us; which being accepted, the devil is not enriched, but bound, that we might be freed from his bonds.* Similar expressions are to be met with in Theodoret, De Provid. Serm. 10, and in Leo, Serm. 5. De passione Domini.‡

* “Dividet spolia fortium:” Davenant here quotes from the Vulgate, which follows the Septuagint on this text.

+ Vide Isa. liii. 10—12, to justify the adoption of this word, and support the doctrine conveyed by it.

‡ Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus, a town in Syria, an Ecclesiastical Historian, who was a native of Antioch, and a disciple of the celebrated John Chrysostom. He was raised to the See of Cyrus A.D. 420; and after having favoured the opinions of Nestorius, he wrote against that heresiarch, and indeed opposed all the different heretical sects of the time. His zeal

From what has been thus said concerning the method of our redemption, various passages of Scripture apparently opposed to each other, are reconciled: Some of which assert that we are justified and saved *freely*, as Rom. iii. 24; others teach that we are redeemed with a *price*, as 1 Cor. vi. 20. Some declare that by *the might and power* of Christ, we were delivered from the power of the devil, and that he was *spoiled, triumphed over, and destroyed*, as Col. ii. 15, Heb. ii. 14. Now all these passages are equally true. For we are redeemed and saved *freely*, as it respects ourselves; since we ourselves contributed nothing to our redemption. We are redeemed with a *price*, as it respects God; for Christ offered his own blood to him for our redemption. We are delivered by *power and might*, as respects the devil; whom, being previously conquered by Christ, and delivered over to him by right, He spoiled by force of arms.

From this redemption obtained by the death and blood of Christ alone, we deduce these inferences;

1. We are not our own masters, but the servants of the Redeemer: we ought not therefore to serve our own lusts, but to yield obedience to his commands.

2. Neither our own satisfactions, nor merits, nor the sufferings of martyrs, could redeem us from the penalties

for the *Catholic* Faith rendered him obnoxious to the Eutychians, by whom he was deposed in the Synod which they held at Ephesus; but he was restored to his diocese by the Council of Chalcedon in 421. Nothing is known of his future history, except that he was alive till after A.D. 460, and was renowned for the sanctity and simplicity of his manners, and as an eloquent, copious, and learned writer, remarkable for his acquaintance with all the branches of sacred erudition. He wrote, besides his Ecclesiastical History from the time of Constantine to that of Theodosius the younger, and his Discourses on Providence above adverted to, Commentaries on the Scriptures; Epistles; Lives of famous Anchorites; Dialogues; and Books on Heresy. In his ingenious and learned treatise, *De curandis Græcorum affectionibus*, “he opposed,” says Mosheim, “with fortitude and vigour, those that worshipped images;” and in his first and second dialogues occur some remarkable passages, bearing decisive evidence that the doctrine of transubstantiation was not then known to the Church. The Jesuit Sirmond gave at Paris, in the year 1642, a noble edition of the works of this prelate, in four vols. folio. Garnier published an edition in 1648, to which he added a fifth volume.

due to our sins: but the blood of Christ only, who was without sin. Well spake Tertullian, *If thou hast offended in no instance thyself, thou by all means suffer for me: but if thou art a sinner, how shall the oil of thy poor vessel suffice for thyself and me?* De Pudicitia. cap. 22.*

* Our Author has frequently quoted Tertullian before, and no wonder he should have done so; for the glory of God, and the increase of Christianity, were the objects which influenced the conduct, and appear prominent in the writings, of that distinguished man; and induced him to devote his life to the study of the Holy Scriptures; the elucidation of truth; and, generally, the exposure of error. He was a Presbyter of Carthage, born there about the middle of the second century. His father was a Centurion under the Proconsul of Africa, and had his son well educated in all the accomplishments and learning of the Greeks and Romans; and he grew up intimately conversant, as well with all that was ornamental, as instructive in general literature. It is uncertain how he was occupied previous to his embracing Christianity, though some persons have supposed he was an advocate. His conversion took place not long after the commencement of the reign of Severus, and a little before the conclusion of the second century. Being a man of a strong and vigorous mind, and dissatisfied with Paganism; observing the efficacy of the Christian Religion over the lives and minds of men; considering its great antiquity, as it regarded its main principles through the promises and prophecies of revelation; the harmony and truth of the predictions recorded in the books of the Christians; the frequent testimonies which the heathen deities gave to its truth and authenticity; he, by such means, was brought to profess Christianity. The cruel conduct which, about this time, was manifested towards the Christians by Severus, induced Tertullian to undertake the vindication of their cause. To accomplish this object, he published his celebrated "Apology," which has been referred to at page 74, dedicating it to the magistrates of the Roman Empire. In this work, with great learning and eloquence, he pleaded the cause of the persecuted Christians; complained of the injustice of their enemies, and the methods of their proceedings; and demonstrated the falsehood of the crimes with which they were charged: he proves the meekness and innocency of the devoted followers of Christ; their temperance and sobriety; their piety to God, and obedience to their prince; the reasonableness of their principles, and the holiness of their lives, beyond contradiction. The result of this was very satisfactory, as it certainly, in some degree, mitigated the enmity of the Emperor; and for some time the persecutions ceased. Tertullian also kindly and usefully engaged in writing to the martyrs in prison, to comfort them under their afflictions, and exhort them to perseverance. About the year 205, the Bishop of Rome published a constitution, by which he admitted persons guilty of adultery and fornication to a place among the penitents. Against this constitution, Tertullian wrote his book, cited by Davenant, as above—De Pudicitia. For this he was excommuni-

Verse 15.

Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature.

In the three foregoing verses we are told of the benefit of redemption itself. In these four which follow we have an accurate delineation of the Redeemer. And the Apostle introduces this excellent personal description of Christ that it may more evidently appear with what security we can repose all our hopes of salvation in such a Redeemer; and that all other methods of salvation foisted in by seducers ought to be rejected as most palpable fables.

Now the Redeemer is described by a threefold relation :

1. By his internal relation to God; he is *his image*.
2. By his external relation to the creature formed; he is *the first-born of creation*, its Creator and Preserver.
3. By his relation to the creature renewed, that is to say, to the Church: for he is *the Head*—the origin, &c.

Who is the image of the invisible God.] The Apostle commences the description of the Redeemer, from his internal relation to God. And here we have to consider three particulars :

1. How many things enter into the consideration of an image, i. e. what is considered to constitute an image.
2. What sort of an image of God, Christ is, or in what sense he is called *the image of God*.

cated: the ill usage which he received from the Ecclesiastics of the Church of Rome occasioned his becoming a Montanist; and whether he was ever reconciled to their communion is uncertain. He lost hereby the title of *saint*; but, as Dr. Jortin has well observed, Charity bids us suppose that he lost not what is infinitely more important. Besides his writings before noticed, he composed and published many other books and tracts, on various subjects of divinity and matters of controversy of his time, to the amount, it is said, of 50. But for further and ample particulars respecting his writings, opinions, and character, the Reader may refer for satisfaction to Bishop Kaye's "Ecclesiastical History of the second and third centuries, illustrated from Tertullian."

3. Why God, of whom Christ is the image, is called *invisible*.

As respects the first point: in the consideration of *an image* there are these three particulars: First, that what is called an image must possess the likeness of some other thing. For if no likeness subsist between them, it is absurd and contrary to all reason to call it an image: for it cannot represent the other; which is the peculiarity of an image.

Secondly, it is required in an image, that that which is properly understood by this term should be in some way drawn and derived from that of which it is called the image. For a mere resemblance where there is no deduction or derivation of the one from the other, does not constitute a proper character of an image: as, for example, we do not call milk the image of milk, or an egg the image of another egg; because the one is not derived from the other.

Lastly, it is required, that the likeness which exists between the image itself, and that of which it is the image, should pertain to the specific nature of the prototype, as far as to its participation in, or, at least, its designation of the species. When it pertains to the very nature of the species, it is called an essential and natural image, or an image of equality: when it extends only to the outward designation of the species, it is called an accidental or artificial image, or an image of imitation. In the former way, the image of a king is said to be in the prince his son: In the second, the image of a king is said to be impressed upon his coin, or painted on a picture. Having laid down these principles, let us now enquire, What sort of an image of God Christ our Redeemer is, or in what sense he is called *the image of God*.

And here a twofold consideration occurs. For Christ is to be regarded either as he was the eternal and invisible image of the Father before the foundation of the world, or as he was the visible and manifest image of the invisible Father, viz. after the assumption of the flesh.

Christ, then, was from all eternity, and always will be, the uncreated WORD, the perfect, essential, and invisible image of his invisible Father. Before either angels or men existed, to contemplate this image by mental vision, yet even then, he was the image of his Father:

1. Because he possessed the exact likeness of him, for he was *χαρακτηρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ*, Heb. i. 3, *the express image of his person.*

2. He moreover had this likeness drawn and derived from God the Father through that wonderful and ineffable generation from the Father. For the eternal Father, knowing himself from eternity, begets the Word, the consubstantial image of himself. If any one expects aught from me concerning the mode, he shall have that sentiment of Ambrose: *Thou art commanded to believe: it is not permitted thee to discuss*, De fide lib. i. cap. 5.*

* Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan in the latter part of the fourth century. He was son of a Prætorian Præfect in Gaul, and appointed at an early age, on account of his talents and learning, first, to be Assessor to Probus, and the Governor of the Provinces of Liguria and Æmilia, about the year 370. He was chosen from hence, to the eminent station he afterwards occupied in the Church, by the unanimous call of the people, on his entering an assembly of the Milanese, by virtue of his authority as Governor of the Province, on an occasion of a popular contest between the Catholics and Arians, about a new Bishop; when he pleaded for peace and subordination with such singular suavity and wisdom, that a cry was raised—‘Let Ambrose be Bishop.’ But he was exceedingly averse to accept a function to which he had been so unexpectedly but honourably chosen. No person, indeed, could ever be more desirous to rush into the office of a Bishop, than he seems to have been to avoid a post of such distinction and responsibility: but, when induced to accept it, he entered upon its duties with equal assiduity and diffidence. He preached every Sabbath, and attended to every thing incumbent upon him in such a station, with evident sincerity and the most undeviating fidelity and justice. He had succeeded to Auxentius, an Arian; but he soon effected the expulsion of Arianism from Italy. He became no less eminent for his eloquence as a Divine, than he had been as a Lawyer; and, on various occasions, had to display it; which he did with the greatest success, both on behalf of the truth against the Arians, and of the church, against Maximus and Justinia the Mother of Valentinian. He gave a remarkable evidence of firmness in refusing the Sacrament to Theodosius, and even denied him entrance into the church of Milan, on account of cruelties the emperor had exercised at Thessalonica; representing to him

3. Lastly, it is not a shadowy image of the Father that he bears, in a nature dissimilar, but in the same essence and Divine nature.

It may be asked, How is Christ called the image of God, when he himself is God; for it is impossible that the same thing should be called the image of itself?

We answer, The word *God* is, in this place, taken with reference to person, not to essence; for it designates the Father only, not the Divine nature in general. Christ,

his guilt in such forcible and pathetic terms, as to induce his remorse, contrition, and repentance. Ambrose died in peace at the seat of his Bishopric, at the age of 64, after having been twice compelled to leave it through the troubles and wars of his time. Amidst every other fluctuation, he evinced a simple dependance on the mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus; and left behind him a bright example of indefatigable exertion, and of zealous devotedness to the duties of his sacred calling. His character and conduct, however, have been variously judged of, and as diversely represented, according to the partialities and prejudices of men who have undertaken to canvass his active habits; to scrutinize his ardent zeal in the cause of religion, and on behalf of the church; or to criticise the numerous writings he left behind him. On a careful and repeated review of every account of this Father which the present writer could obtain, he is disposed to adopt the concluding remarks of Dr. Adam Clarke's notice of Ambrose and his writings, as affording the fairest representation: "Having been bred up in the
 " midst of State affairs till advanced in life, his knowledge of *Theology* must
 " necessarily have been both limited and superficial; hence we find him
 " flying to allegory for interpretation—the easy resource of an uninformed
 " mind but a lively conception, as requiring no argument to prove it, and
 " no study to frame it. His works on *Morals* are, undoubtedly his best
 " performances, and evince the strong conceptions of an upright character:
 " in *Doctrine* he is all that Rome could wish him, and a mysticising fancy
 " could make him: as a *Disciplinarian* he has the noble fortitude of a man
 " conscious of rectitude, and yet not austere where circumstances appeared
 " to call for lenity, (*Epist. to Sinagrius*)." There is reason, however, from the very numerous conflicting opinions respecting Ambrose, to apprehend, that a *correct* opinion of what he was, can hardly be formed from his works as now extant; since Papal expurgators and emendators, seeing what might be made of them, may have turned them to as good an account in their favour as Cyprian's: For what will not Jesuitical policy and authority, intrigue and ingenuity effect, where it has the power and influence, and as the circumstances of the *infallible* Church require? Ambrose was a composer of *Hymns*, and is understood to have been the first who introduced regular choral music into the Christian Church.—Vide "Clarke's Succession of Sacred Literature," and Encyclop. Metropol. under "Ecclesiastical Writers of the Fourth Century."

therefore, is the image of the Father, not of the Godhead. The person of the Son bears the likeness of the person of the Father; but the Essence or Divine nature in the Son is altogether the same as in the Father: *I and my Father are one.* Christ therefore cannot be the same *in person* with Him of whom he is the image; but there is no reason why he may not be the same *in essence.*

It may again be asked, Why is the term image appropriated to Christ, since the Holy Spirit also is of the same essence with God the Father?

To this we answer, Not because he lacks the reality of the Divine nature; for the Spirit is also of the same essence with the Father and the Son: but because the Spirit proceeds by mode of the will, the Son by mode of the nature; and because he proceeds not from the Father alone, but likewise from the Son; but an image ought to be the representation of one definite person.—These things being explained, let us now deduce some observations from this declaration of the Apostle, *Christ is the image of God.*

Observe, 1. The error of Arius is disproved, who denied that Christ is of the same essence with the Father: for if he is the image of the Father's person, he is co-essential with the Father; because a creature cannot be the *eternal image* of the Creator, but only after the image, through the communication of free endowments.

2. The contrary error of Sabellius is also refuted, who affirmed that the Son is the same with the Father, nor to be personally distinguished from him: but nothing can be more manifest, than that an image is something distinct from that of which it is the image. There is the Father; and there is also the Son, because the image of the Father is the Son.*

* When the numerous express declarations of Scripture respecting the person of the Saviour are borne in mind, and when the almost unanimous testimonies of the early Fathers are called to recollection, it seems marvellous that such errors, as those above-mentioned, should ever have occurred; especially among men professing to take the word of God for their guide. Arius, the celebrated propagator of the heresy first adverted to, arose in the beginning of the fourth century. He was a man of family and educa-

3. We are instructed by whom we are to be formed again to the image of God which we have lost; viz. through this perfect and essential image of God, whom God sent

tion, and owing to his being encouraged, and his heresy espoused by Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia, and by the sister of the Emperor Constantine, it soon spread. But there were too many in that age valiant for the truth, for adherence to which the Church had undergone ten persecutions; and such a resistance was made by those who knew the truth as it is in Jesus, to an error so awful as the denial of the supreme and co-eternal Godhead of Christ, that a Council was speedily convened—the *first general* Council of the Christian Church, viz. that of Nice; at which 318 Bishops, from all parts where Christianity had been established, were assembled, with numerous Presbyters and others, to the number, it is said, of above 2000 persons. At this Council the anti-Christian doctrine was condemned, and that Creed drawn up, which, something enlarged and confirmed at another Council about fifty years afterwards, is held by the Church of England to this day; and in which it is the glory of a fallen sinner believing in Christ for salvation, to confess Him the Redeemer and Saviour, the Son of the living God, one with the Father, co-equal and co-eternal; and the Holy Ghost as the author and giver of life.—The opinions of those who rejected this faith, once delivered to the saints, have undergone material changes since Arius's time. The two Socini, theological speculators in the sixteenth century, were the chief agents in these mutations; and since their emendations, Christ is held to be, by the followers of men of such superior wisdom, information, discernment, and *rationality*, not what even Arius taught—“the first and most glorious production of creative power, who, though he had a beginning, existed before, superior to all other creatures, and the instrument by whose subordinate agency the universe was formed;” but he is sunk in dignity and worth to a mere peccable creature, without any existence before his birth of the Virgin, or other prerogative besides the excellence of his moral character, and his mission from the Father; so far does one fundamental error lead to another; those who adopt the first lie generally proceeding further, and raising up other sects that are still more remote from the truth. “The radical mistake,” as a modern writer of great utility on the subject has justly observed, “in all these systems, whether heretical or orthodox, proceeds from the disposition, so natural in man, of being wise above what is written. They are not satisfied with believing a plain declaration of the Saviour, ‘I and my Father are one.’ They undertake, with the utmost presumption and folly, to explain in what manner the Father and the Son are one; but man might as well attempt to take up the ocean in the hollow of his hand as endeavour, by his narrow understanding, to comprehend the manner of the Divine existence.” The great work of Bishop Bull, “*Defensio Fidei Nicænae*,” upon which his renown permanently rests, remains a tower of strength upon this point. Bishop Horsley's tracts dispersed the shadows of Dr. Priestley's raising. But, perhaps, to those who would have the summary of the early opinions concisely, but decidedly, ex-

into the world on purpose that he might renew man, fallen and shamefully corrupted. *Only by this image of God can you be conformed to the image of God*, says Ambrose, *De fide*, lib. i. cap. 4.

Now let it suffice to have spoken thus much concerning the Son, as far as in himself he is the invisible, eternal, and natural image of God the Father before the foundation of the world. But Christ must also be regarded as far as

pressed, the recent admirable volume of Dr. Burton on the "Testimony of the Fathers," may be strongly recommended. We cannot, however, but regret, that this able writer should have dismissed a subject of such vital importance, without an exhibition of the *practical* efficacy of the orthodox system.

Sabellius was an African Presbyter or Bishop, who lived in the century preceding Arius, and gave name to the heresy next adverted to by our Expositor. The notions said to have been maintained by him in systematizing and vindicating errors previously broached, and to account for the glorious declarations of the Gospel and the great Mystery of Godliness which it unfolds, are curious indeed. But his history and opinions are involved in great obscurity. He is generally stated to have held, as the foundation of his heresy, that, (in the words of Bishop Bull), "God was but one person; and that there was no real distinction, much less division of persons, in the Divine essence;" and against this the arguments of Davenant are levelled. The learned Mosheim, however, does not hesitate to pronounce, that "this is in great part false." In his "Commentaries" he has entered copiously into the whole review of what is to be gathered from the ancients concerning this heresiarch; and seems to have proved that his heresy has been confounded with that of Noetus. The summary of his investigation is, that "the opinion of Sabellius is not the same with that of Noetus; for the former did not suppose, as the latter seems to have done, that the person of the Deity was in entire simplicity one, and that it had assumed and joined to itself the human nature of Christ; but that a certain energy, emitted from the Father, or rather a part of the person and nature of the Father, was joined to the man Christ; and that this virtue, or part of the Father, was the Holy Spirit," (p. 683).—But these, and the above-mentioned errors and subtleties, are not befitting us to dwell upon. They are evidently not to be sustained by the Word of God; and our Expositor, from that fountain of truth, overturns them at once; and, if the foundations be destroyed, what shall the foolish builders do? It need only be added, that the reader who desires farther information, as to the history and progress of these or other errors, and has not more ample means of obtaining it, or who would find the works mentioned in the preceding article of a literary character beyond his attainments, will in Grier's "Epitome of the General Councils of the Church," and Douglas's "Errors of Religion," meet with suitable satisfaction.

he is the visible and manifest image of the invisible God since his incarnation, and that with respect to ourselves, because he represents God to us.

And to this also the Apostle seems to me to have had an eye, inasmuch as he does not barely say, Christ is the image of God, but τῷ Θεῷ ἄρρατόν, of *the invisible God*; where an implied antithesis is to be understood; as though he had said, that Christ is now become the visible image of the invisible God. For that substantial image of God shone forth in Christ incarnate, and represented to us, as in a glass, God the Father, when he shewed himself to us in the flesh, as the mighty and present God, and gave us to behold in that flesh the justice, mercy, truth, and power of God. For in the man Christ shone forth the most bright image of the Divine perfection: Ὁ Θεὸς ἐφανερώσθη ἐν σαρκί, *God was manifest in the flesh.* And Christ himself says; John xiv. 7, 9, *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.* Here we behold the Divine wisdom and goodness, for he who is the invisible God proposes to mankind the visible Son and God manifest in the flesh, that by him who is *the light, the way, and the truth*, we may more easily approach to him who is *invisible and incomprehensible.*

From this most wise Divine appointment we gather, that it is not fit for us to know God out of Christ, or, passing by Christ, to proceed directly to God. For this kind of knowledge or approach to God, would rather strike horror into us miserable mortals defiled by sin, than afford comfort.* *The sight of God*, says Nazianzen, *instils fear into men; because God drawing nigh to us convicts the soul of its disease.* Orat. 4. [Isa. vi. 5.]

Wherefore, in like manner as they who are unable to fix their eyes on the blaze of the sun itself without pain, may yet look upon its reflex image even with pleasure; so we who are not able to behold the Divine Majesty in itself, contemplate the living image of it in Christ with the highest joy.

* It was a wise saying of Luther, "Nolo Deum absolutum."

This may suffice concerning Christ *the image of God*.

It remains that we attend to that last observation; viz. why God is called *invisible*. And that is to be considered either in respect of the Divine nature in itself [absolutely], or in the person of the Father.

Invisible.] First in respect of the Divine nature considered absolutely; because neither by the eye of the body, nor even of the mind can it be beheld, whilst we sojourn here. *Ye cannot see my face*, Exod. iii. 20. *No man hath seen God at any time*, John i. 18. *He dwelleth in the light inaccessible*, 1 Tim. vi. 16. It is impossible that we should see God with our bodily eyes, because the act of seeing pre-supposes a visible object: but in God there is neither corporeal light, nor colour, nor form; nor, in short, any thing that hath the nature of a visible object. Whence the folly of the Anthropomorphites is evident, who attributed to God a human appearance, and bodily lineaments, not unlike our own.* If God were such, he could not be invisible.

But neither in this life are we able to behold the essence of God with our mental eyes. *No one hath seen that fulness of divinity which dwells in God, no one comprehends it in his mind*, says Ambrose, in Luke lib. i. cap. 1. Which will easily appear if we consider the modes of our knowledge whilst we are in this pilgrimage.

* These were a sect of ancient heretics, whose doctrine proceeded from taking every thing spoken of God in the Scripture in a literal sense. Locke seems to think that this prejudice is almost inherent in the mind: it was entertained by the whole sect of the Stoics, and examples of its influence may easily be traced, not only in the writings of many of the Fathers, but also among modern Divines. Other writers, however, have fallen into the opposite extreme; and supposed that God is not only a stranger to human affections, such as pity, love, joy, &c., but that even the ideas of wisdom, justice, mercy, and the like, are different in the Divine mind from what they are in our conceptions, not merely in degree, but even in kind. This opinion was embraced by Hume, and admitted by Archbishop King, though on different principles of reasoning; and has latterly received the sanction of a learned and able writer of the present day. As Socinianism has of late assumed much of its cast from these notions and principles, there is the greater propriety in adducing these remarks, and in drawing the attention by them to the refutation deduced by our Expositor, and in requesting the consideration of the young to the first article of our Church.

For we know God either by causality, or by remotion, or by eminence.* By *causality*; whilst we contemplate the Creator, through the creatures of which God is the cause. But notwithstanding this knowledge, the essence of God remains invisible: because an effect shews not the essence of its cause, unless when it is of the same species with the cause, or demonstrates the whole virtue of the cause.

We know God by *remotion*; when we consider the imperfections of the creatures, and perceive them to be remote from God; as conceiving him to be immortal, not susceptible of suffering, and incapable of sin. But this knowledge does not extend to the Divine essence: for considerations of remoteness indicate negatively what God is not; they do not shew positively what he is. For no privation belongs to the essence of a positive existence.

We know God by *eminence*, when, after considering the perfections of the creatures, we ascribe them to God in the highest degree of excellency; thus, because wisdom, strength, holiness, are perfections in the creatures, therefore we judge God to be perfectly strong, perfectly wise, perfectly holy. But neither in this way do we rise to a perception of the essence of God, because none of these things are predicated of God, and of the creature univocally. Aquin. Quæst. disput. De simp. div. essen. art. 4.

To this threefold way of knowing God add also that knowledge which we have by faith; and yet then the divine essence remains invisible. For so Paul himself confesses, 1 Cor. xiii. 12, *We see now through a glass darkly*. For faith shews rather what sort of a being God is towards us, than what he is in his own essence. Therefore God in himself is to us invisible.

2. But we must also add that God in the person of the Father may be said to be *invisible* by a certain special mean-

* “Cognoscimus enim Deum vel per causalitatem, vel per remotionem, vel per eminentiam.” It is scarcely needful to observe how impracticable it is to render these and other technical phrases of the School divinity, which occur in this work, into English, with any thing like precision. They become sufficiently perspicuous, however, by the tenor of the passages in which they are employed.

ing; for in this place, the name of God (as we have before suggested) is to be taken with respect to person rather than to essence.

God the Father, then, is called invisible, because (as the Fathers with reason held) he never appeared to the Patriarchs: but the Son, who also was invisible as to the divine nature, chose to appear to them by assuming some created form. So Tertul. in lib. De Trin. et alibi: *He who spake to Moses was the Son of God, who always also appeared to the Patriarchs.* So Prudentius, in Apotheosi. *Whoever is recorded to have seen God, saw the Son sent forth from him.* In this manner the Son of God chose, as it were, to give a prelude of his incarnation; the Holy Spirit also we read of as having appeared in the visible form of a *dove*, and of *tongues of fire*; but the Father never took any visible appearance, but was always in every respect invisible.

Now the first use of this is, since God hath made it clear that he is *invisible*, the heathen and papists who worship him under the likeness of man are hence convicted of idolatry. For God himself, inasmuch as he hath not shewn himself visible, hath decided that he is not to be worshipped under a visible image, Dent. iv. 15. This base idolatry of the Church of Rome, all the Fathers, and some even among the Papists themselves, have condemned. *To worship the divine essence in material things, is to dishonour it by the senses,* Clem. Strom. 6. *No image of him ought to be worshipped, unless that which is the same as himself,* August. Epist. 119. *It is foolish to make images to represent God, or to adore them.* Durand. But they do make them for worship: Cajet. in 3 quæst. 25. art. 3.*

* Vide page 14.—The Papists sometimes attempt to deny that they do this, or else excuse themselves, saying, that “to paint or grave any of the three persons, or the three persons, as they appeared visibly and corporally, is no more improper or unlawful, than it was indecent for them to appear in such forms.” To this we may oppose the opinion of Tertullian, who, in his Treatise De Idololatriâ, shews that *making idols*, no matter of what *substance*, or in what *form*, was idolatry; and that building their temples or altars, or adorning their shrines, though even to gain a living, was idolatry also. But the Romish Church not only enjoins the adoration of such images, but goes farther, and by the ninth article of Pope Pius IV. main-

Secondly, Since God is invisible to us in this life, and yet our happiness consists in seeing him; we ought to sigh for that other life: and we ought so to frame our life that we may at length attain to the beatific vision of the invisible God. It behoves us, therefore, to guard our heart against all defilement: *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they*

tains “ that the images of Christ, and the mother of God, are to be had and retained, and that due honour and worship is to be given to them.” It was the grossness of this constant practice of image worship—“ the reverential bowings and bendings of the knee, and prostrations practised before the images and relics in the public worship of the church of Rome,” says the Rev. James Smith, “ that first led me to the suspicions I conceived of the erroneousness of the church of Rome, as contrary to the express words of the Second Commandment.” This took place whilst he was a student in the Romish College at Lisbon, and eventually led to his separation from the church of Rome, and becoming a Clergyman of the church of England. His volume on “ the Errors of the Church of Rome” is a publication well worth attention, containing a fund of information on the subjects at issue between us and them. This is what constitutes Protestantism. Papists are wont to assail Protestantism as a *new* Religion, and to brand *us* as heretics; whereas true Protestantism is a return to the true, and ancient, and orthodox faith—“ the faith once delivered to the saints,” and from which **THEY** have swerved. They are fond of reverting, as it respects us in England, to Henry the Eighth’s time. But the case is parallel to the one just adverted to; only differing as to magnitude and numbers. As Sharon Turner in his *Modern History*, vol. i. p. 573, has well observed: “ All Henry’s Court, and Parliament, and Nation, were born and educated in the Romish faith, and all they did was therefore the act of Catholics. A different state of things began in Edward VI. and Elizabeth’s time. They were trained up to Protestant principles; and so were the children of most of the subjects of Henry VIII. The acts of these were therefore those of Protestants. If any of the preceding Catholics threw off opinions and habits, which they thought wrong, they were still Catholics who so acted, and their decisions were the decisions of Catholics discerning what was erroneous, and preferring what their reason and conscience perceived to be preferable. Their children being educated as Protestants, acted on different principles; they judged as Protestants, as their fathers had judged as Catholics. This distinction is important. The change of Catholics into the new opinions, was the verdict of Catholics in their favour; who met them with a Catholic mind, and examined them with Catholic prepossessions. The English Reformation was thus the wise and good work of the Catholics themselves, correcting the abuses of their own church, and establishing a purer system of Catholic Christianity. Protestantism is Catholic Christianity reformed from its papal corruptions. Romanism is sectarianism, compared with Apostolical Christianity.”

shall see God, Matth. v. 8. It behoves us to follow peace and holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord. To conclude, in one word: If any hope or desire dwell in us of ever seeing him who is invisible, always let us bear in mind that of St. John, 1 Epist. iii. 2, 3, When God shall appear, we shall see him as he is: And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he also is pure.

And so far concerning the comparison of Christ to God.

The first-born of every creature.] Here the Apostle describes the Redeemer by comparison with the creatures, and asserts that he is begotten of God before any creature existed. But in this place it must not be concealed, that these words are expounded in different ways by interpreters.

Some make them apply to the human nature of Christ, and explain *the first-born of every creature* to mean, the Lord of every creature; and think the Apostle alludes to the prerogative of *the first-born* under the Old Testament. For he who was *the first-born among many brethren*, was honoured by the rest as head: he discharged the office of king and priest in his family: upon him, therefore, the other brothers depended; from him was derived blessing and sanctification to all. Since, therefore, the man Christ is constituted the Lord of the whole world, Psalm viii. and Heb. i.; since by him his brethren are sanctified, Heb. ii. 11, he is most fitly called *the first-born of every creature*, because he hath the right and prerogative of the first-born over every creature.

Augustine, in many places, applies the word *first-born* to the human nature of Christ. In lib. De fide, et symb. tom. 3. And against Secundinus, Manich. tom. 6. *He is called*, says he, *the only begotten Son, because without brethren; the first-born, because with brethren. You will not find in what manner you may understand both expressions concerning him with respect to the same divine nature.* This sense has no disadvantage, and some embrace it, that they may more easily meet the cavil of the Arians.

But almost all the Greek Fathers, and many of the La-

tin, interpret the word *first-born* of Christ, in his divine nature. Therefore they would have this to be the sense of these words: *the first-born of every creature*, i. e. begotten before any thing was created, *τεχθεὶς πρὸ πάσης κτίσεως*, because begotten from eternity. Let us adduce a few of their testimonies. Tertullian, in libro de Trin., says, *How could he be the first-born, unless because, according to his divinity, the Word proceeded from God the Father before every creature?* Ambrose, De fide, lib. i. cap. 4, says, *He is called the first-born, not the first-created, that he may be believed in, as begotten in respect to his nature, and first in respect to his eternity.* Chrysostom in this place observes, *Ὁν πρωτόκτιστος, ἀλλὰ πρωτότοκος; not first-created; but first-born.*

But it may be said, Why is he not called *the first-born of God*, instead of *the first-born of every creature*?

The construction is somewhat harsh, when we explain *the first-born of every creature* to be begotten of God before every creature: but the Apostle chose to connect the mention of the creature with the eternal generation of Christ, that from thence he might be understood to have been so begotten by God the Father from eternity, as in time to become the efficient beginning, and even the basis and foundation of the whole creation, which, unless it depended upon him, would fall into nothing.

Thus says Basil,* *He is called the first-born of every creature, because he is the cause of creation, coming into existence from things which were not.*

* This eminent Father is placed by Erasmus among the greatest orators of antiquity; he is admitted by all to have been one of the most learned and eloquent doctors of the Greek Church. He was born of highly respectable Christian parents, who spared no pains in his instruction. After studying at Athens, returning to his own native place Cæsarea, and teaching rhetoric there with success for some time, he travelled into Syria, Egypt, and Lybia; but finding there was no true rest or enjoyment to be had but in the privacies and exercises of Religion, he returned home to give up himself thereto. The reputation he obtained for learning and piety, occasioned at length his being chosen Bishop of Cæsarea, about the year 370, which station he held about nine years. He was much persecuted by the Emperor Valens, because he refused to embrace the Arian doctrine. Besides Expository, Homiletical, and Moral works, Basil left upwards of 400 Letters, which, it is said, are models of epistolary style, and replete with valuable information

But here two things are to be avoided: First that we do not, from its being said that Christ is *the first-born* in respect of the divine nature, infer, that this ineffable generation took its origin from some beginning of time. Christ hath a beginning of origin, viz. his Father of whom he is begotten: but he hath not a beginning of time; for he is begotten by the Father from eternity. Well spake Thomas, *The Son hath not so received from the Father as though receiving afterwards what he had not before: but because he hath his being from the Father even from all eternity: according to that Scripture, The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way*, Prov. viii. 22. *His goings forth have been a diebus eternitate, from the days of eternity*, Micah v. 2. *In the beginning*, John i. 1. Therefore this word *first*, when it is spoken concerning God, does not impute a temporal beginning to God, of whom it is affirmed; but only excludes the priority of other things: *I am the first and the last*, Rev. xxii. 13. Nor hence must we infer that God either had a beginning or will have an end; but we must from hence deny that any thing either existed before him, or will continue after him. So, when Christ is called the *first-born*, we are not to infer that therefore he had a temporal beginning of his existence: but we must therefore deny that any thing was co-eval, or more ancient than He.

Secondly, we must be aware of inferring with the Arians, from Christ being called *the first-born of every creature*, that therefore Christ is a creature. For thus they argue; As the first-born of brethren is of the number of the brethren

respecting the history of the eventful times in which he lived; evincing also, that, “to a capacious and powerful understanding, richly stored with original conceptions and acquired knowledge, Basil united great activity, presence of mind, and moral courage; and was neither disheartened by difficulties, nor intimidated by dangers. In a variety of ardent contests, and most trying circumstances, he is seen universally acquitting himself with dignity and firmness; and even when unsuccessful, maintaining the respectability of his character and station.” The opinions of a man like this—being founded in truth, tried by experience, and guarded by intelligence, learning, and principle—are to be regarded; and whilst the value of them is thus evident, the propriety of our Expositor’s frequent reference to him is apparent.

ren, and the first-born of the flock are of the flock : so the first-born of every creature is of the number of the creatures. But in the passage before us, we must understand no numbering of him among the creatures, but only a precedency to them. In the case of first-born, they who are second-born have the same nature with the first; because they take their origin from the same person : But Christ is so termed *the first-born*, that he is also *the only begotten* : for he alone is begotten of God the Father ; creatures are not begotten, but created by God. Therefore the first born of every creature, signifies nothing else than begotten before any created thing.

Christ is the true God, because begotten not made ; because begotten before every creature. For whatever exists is either Creator or creature.

Verses 16, 17.

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers : all things were created by him and for him.

And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

The Apostle proceeds in describing the Son of God by a comparison with the creatures ; and proves and illustrates what he had laid down in the preceding verse, viz. that *Christ was the image of God, and the first-born of every creature* ; in other words, that he is the Son of God according to nature, begotten of him before any creature was made, i. e. from all eternity. This he proves by reasoning from the nature of cause and effect : and he shews that Christ is the efficient, the preserving, and final cause of all creation ; and on that account prior both in dignity and time to every creature. And this argument he illustrates from the various divisions of creation. But each of these will be more conveniently discussed by following the order of the context.

For by him were all things created.] He here gives the reason why he had termed Christ *the first-born of every creature*. And his reason, as the Schoolmen will have it, is derived *à causa exemplari*; from his being the ideal cause, or the cause as a model. And they infer this because it is said, *'εν' αὐτῷ, in him*; not *δι' αὐτοῦ, by him*. And here they philosophize at large about the eternal idea of all things in the Word. Nor, indeed, do we ourselves deny that the Maker of the world, had in himself from all eternity, the plans of all things ready described, so that all things were present *to* the Word, though not present *in* themselves. For as the Philosopher says, 7 Metaph. de rebus artificialibus, *The form of those things must have existed in the mind of the workman, before they could have been exhibited in the workmanship; as every material house is always built according to the immaterial pattern which was already planned in the mind of the architect*: so concerning the system of nature, we may with truth assert, that the plan or scheme of all things must have existed in the Divine mind and arrangement before they were actually produced.

Now if in this manner we explain the words of the Apostle, *'εν' αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη πάντα, in him were all things created*, we obtain the strongest proof of Christ being prior to, and more excellent than all creatures; inasmuch as the ideal cause is always prior to that which is made according to it. I have chosen to notice this interpretation of the Schoolmen, because there is no fallacy in it: but I am myself much more inclined to the opinion of Chrysostom, and our writers, who regard this expression as a Hebraism, and say that *'εν' αὐτῷ* and *δι' αὐτοῦ* have the same meaning, so that the reason is derived from the efficient cause. For this preposition *in* is often taken for *per* in the Scriptures. Hoc genus dæmoniorum non ejicitur nisi in jejunio;* *this kind (of evil spirits) can come forth by nothing but by fasting*. So 1 Cor. xii. to speak *in* the Spirit, and to receive gifts *in* the Spirit, are certainly used in each case for *by* the Spirit [as expressed in our English Bibles]. And I the more wil-

* Vide Vulgate, Matth. xvii. 21; Mark ix. 28.

lingly concur in this opinion because the Apostle himself says, *condita*, not *cognita*; i. e. *made*, not *designed*; and also because in the end of the verse, resuming what he had said after a long parenthesis, he uses the word $\delta\iota\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$, *by him*, thereby plainly shewing that he considered these words equivalent.

The argument therefore is most valid—Christ is not a creature, but before all creatures; because by him they were made. For that which makes is before the thing made, *not only in cause, but in time also*, as the Philosopher rightly observes, De part. animal. i. 1.

But here some person may object that we are solving one obscurity by the introduction of a still greater; inasmuch as it may be disputed, whether Christ is the Maker of all things, or not.

I answer, The Apostle is writing to the Colossians, not to Pagans, but to Christians; and therefore takes it for granted that they allow Christ to be not a mere man, but the incarnate Word; which being allowed, it follows that he is the Maker of all creatures, John i., *The word was in the beginning with God: ALL THINGS WERE MADE BY HIM, AND WITHOUT HIM WAS NOT ANY THING MADE.*

That are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible,] What he had just asserted, that *all things were made by Christ*, he now illustrates by a twofold division of things created: the former of which is drawn from the different locality of the things created; the latter, from their different qualities.

In heaven and in earth.] In this division he comprehends the whole creation. For under the term *heaven* he understands, as is customary in Scripture, the Highest Heaven, the abode of angels and of the blessed; the starry sky also, in which are fixed the heavenly orbs; and the atmosphere, in which meteors and other volatile bodies do move: When he says *in earth*, he means not only all things which are on the surface, but those also which are subterraneous; such as are laid up in the bosom and bowels of the earth, and in the sea likewise, which surrounds the earth, and with it makes up one sphere. Thus Moses himself speaks, Gen. i.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; under which two names the whole fabric of nature is comprised.

Visible and invisible.] This is the second division, drawn from their qualities, which also includes all created things. The visible things of heaven are the sun, moon, and stars; the invisible, are the angels: The visible things upon earth are the plants, the animals, the elements; the invisible are the souls of men. These, as well as all other things whatever, were created by Christ.

Now this statement that Christ is constituted *THE Creator of the things which are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible*, refutes at once the foolish aberrations of many Philosophers and heretics:

First of the Peripatetics,* who fondly imagined that the world must be eternal. Consequently they admit of no creation, but lay down that there is an eternal motion in the heavens, and an eternal succession of generation and corruption in sublunary bodies. But they are convicted of error, not only by the Apostle's authority, but even by plain reason. For if motion had been eternal, time also must have been infinite. But how then has the whole of it passed away and ceased to flow, if it hath been infinite? for what is infinite cannot pass or flow away. If the heavens have existed from eternity, then the sun has performed an infinite number of revolutions, and an infinite number of years are gone by. But this is impossible, since the days that have elapsed are by the known laws of proportion, greater than the number of years: for no other number greater by a certain and known proportion than that which is infinite is admissible; for this would of itself evince that both were finite. As to generation and corruption, it cannot be so much as imagined to be eternal, unless it be granted that there is in causes either an infinite progression or circulation. Besides, the possibility of

* The well known sect of Philosophers which arose from Aristotle, and were so named from their habit of walking when giving and receiving instructions in their tenets.

coming into existence, and of going out of existence, is repugnant to every idea of eternity; but in every thing created there is implied this possibility of decay. These, however, are very thorny topics, nor does an over inquisitive debate concerning them belong to the Theological chair. Justin Martyr, in his *Quæstionibus*, and William of Paris,* in *lib. de Universo*, part. ii. cap. 11, may be consulted on these subjects.

2. As to the dreams of those other Philosophers, who think that the angels were created by God, and this material world by the angels, which error the followers of Apelles have adopted; vide Tertullian *de carne Christi*; † I answer, to create is the work of Christ, and not of angels. For it is an admitted axiom among Divines, that the act of creation cannot be conceded to a creature, not even as the instrumental cause, much less as the principal: First, because in the process of creation, there is a bringing forth from non-existence into existence; but between non-existence and entity there is plainly an infinite distance, impassable to the powers of any created thing. Secondly, because every action of a creature is an accident; but accident has no admission, except in a subject already existing: therefore the creature cannot possess the creative accident; for then it would possess an accident, when there was nothing in which the acting power could inhere as its subject. Finally, because in creation the entire being of a thing is imparted; but the entire being is only imparted by Him who is entirely one act; for a finite and natural cause can never form any thing out of nothing. But the authority of Scripture is sufficient for us, which teaches that the whole fabric of the world was made, not by the ministry of angels, but by the power of the Word.

3. Of the Marcionites and Manichæans, who scout the works of creation, especially those of a material and vi-

* Vide page 21, Note *.

† In the present day, Bishop Kaye's "*Ecclesiastical History*," illustrated from Tertullian, 1 vol. 8vo. may be referred to, for information on this subject, with every requisite advantage.

sible nature, as if unworthy of God's operation; vide Tertullian aduers. Marcion, lib. 1.*

The Apostle, however, testifies of these very works, that they were created by Christ; and God himself pronounced that they were in their kind *very good*, Gen. i. Nor is it true that a thing which is inferior to another, is therefore bad and imperfect, provided it possess all those properties which belong to its species. Therefore, although earthly and material substances may be inferior to the heavenly and spiritual, yet are they in their kind good, and worthy of Christ as their Creator. Even this very world, in that it consists of both substances, is in reality more complete than it would have been, if containing the invisible alone.

Fourthly, Of the Sadducees and Atheists, who reject invisible substances altogether; for they neither admit the existence of angels or immortal souls. But these rob

* Marcion was a heresiarch of the second century, born at Sinopia, a town of Paphlagonia, upon the Euxine: he was the son of a Bishop of that place, and being excommunicated by his father for an act of immorality, he went to Rome, joined the heretic Cerdon, about the year 143; and these two erected, on the foundation of the Gnostics, a structure of considerable extent, embracing those doctrines adverted to by our Author, with others of an extraordinary character; and they were soon spread over Italy, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and the adjacent parts. Marcion seems to have been the chief promulgator of their opinions, and gave the denomination to the sect. This heresy may be seen more at large, together with a refutation of the various notions it comprises, in Bishop Kaye's *Early History of the Church*.

The Manichæans were a sect which arose in the latter half of the next century; so called from the opinions they derived from Manes, or Manichæus—a Persian, and educated among the Magi, being himself one of that number before he professed to have embraced Christianity, which he sadly corrupted; and spread the seeds of his heresy, or rather of his motley mixture of some of the doctrines of Christianity with the ancient philosophy of the Persians, principally in Arabia, Egypt, and Africa. Besides inculcating the dogmas of the two eternal principles of light and darkness, so prevalent among the Magi, and the other notions opposed by our Expositor, Manes represented himself as the Comforter promised by Christ; not identifying him, as our Lord does, with the Holy Spirit, but understanding an Apostle sent by the Spirit, to complete what the Saviour had left imperfect. The inquisitive Reader, who wishes for more particular information respecting these men and their various notions, will find much curious and interesting matter about both in Bower's "*Lives of the Popes*."

Christ of the chief glory of creation: for those invisible substances are far more dignified than the visible. They lop off the most noble part of the creation. They oppose the most evident experience, which hath concluded upon the existence both of good and evil spirits, from the various effects that cannot be produced otherwise than by spiritual beings.

Let us, therefore, rejecting at once all these errors, confess that *by Christ were all things created*, &c.

[*Whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers.*] The Apostle had before asserted that Christ was the Maker of all things, as well visible as invisible: Now he illustrates and extends that assertion by a new sub-division of the invisible creatures. But it must be observed, that the abstract is here put for the concrete: for by *dominions, principalities*, and *powers*, we are to understand angels appointed to dominion, principality, and power; that is, governors and princes.

Melancthon thinks, that under these denominations, not only all orders of invisible angels, but all governments, and the whole range of created things, of civil and domestic polities, are included. According, therefore, to his interpretation,* the Apostle teaches, that all the creatures were not only made, but arranged by Christ; so that those which presided over others, both in heaven and in earth, are still in subjection to him, because all degrees of pre-eminence and command are arranged and appointed by him.

* *Mosheim* says of Melancthon, that “by his example, influence, and instructions, many were greatly animated; and that his sentiments relating both to sacred and profane erudition, were so universally respected, that scarcely any had the courage to oppose them.” The annals of antiquity indeed, present few worthies that may be compared to him. With a mind stored with every species of learning, and competent to engage in any disquisition on literature or religion, he rendered more signal advantages in his time to each than, perhaps, any of the other doctors of the age. Though most intrepid when the cause of religion was in peril, and of unshaken constancy in the hour of trial, yet he was pre-eminently distinguished by a love of peace and concord. A fellow labourer with Luther in the Reformation, his remains were deposited close by that Champion’s, and an elegant epitaph was inscribed on his tomb by the learned Beza; which, as a compendium of his character, a summary of his excellences, and a testimony

But the exposition of those who apply the terms used in this passage exclusively to heavenly and invisible beings, is both more general and, in my opinion, more just. For thus says the Apostle himself in Ephes. i. 20, 21, *God hath set Christ at his own right hand in the heavens, far above all principality, and power, and dominion*; where without doubt he understands what is heavenly. In the third chapter, indeed, he openly states that sentiment in these words, *principalties and powers in heavenly places*, verse 10. Let us, therefore, take it for granted that he is speaking of invisible beings.

In the next place, we must enquire what kind of distinction amongst the angels the Apostle has laid down in these words. Dionysius,* and the Schoolmen who follow him, from this and other passages, in which angels are spoken of under different names, so describe their various orders, duties, and properties, as if they had themselves been conversant with heaven for many years, and had learnt precisely their whole polity. And though I have no vast fondness for their fine spun comments, yet, because it is proper for the Divine to be acquainted with the errors of Theologians of any name, I shall give a summary of the points which are copiously handled by them.

of the estimation in which he was held, may be permitted a place here, as translated in "Coxe's Life of Melancthon."

Here then, Melancthon, lies thy honoured head,
 Low in the grave amongst the mould'ring dead!
 In life 'twas thine to make all others blest,
 But to thyself denying peace or rest:
 Thine was the holy toil, the anxious tear,
 Lov'd Philip—to the good for ever dear!
 O Earth! let lilies here profusely spring,
 And roses all around their odour fling!
 For rose and lily each their glories blend,
 The sweet, the fair, in our departed friend!
 Soft let him sleep, and none disturb his rest;
 None *he* disturb'd while living—none oppress!

* Davenant refers to the treatise of the Celestial Hierarchy, which, though not of an earlier origin than the fifth century, was falsely pretended to have been written by Dionysius the Areopagite, the Convert of St. Paul; and is commonly quoted, as here by our Expositor, under his name; which is the case with the other forged writings imputed to him.

Hugh de St. Victor,* in Sum. Sentent. tract. ii. cap. 5, distributes the heavenly angels into three classes or hierarchies, which he terms the highest, the middle, and the lowest. Each of these he subdivides into three orders. In the highest are *cherubim*, *seraphim*, and *thrones*: In the middle class are *dominions*, *principalities*, and *powers*: In the lowest are *virtues*, *archangels*, and *angels*.

Now these titles they are pleased to attach to the angels, as characteristic either of the qualities in which they excel, or of the offices assigned to them by God. Thus they choose to call those *Cherubim* which excel in the splendour of knowledge; *Seraphim* those which are most ardent in divine love; *Thrones* those which contemplate the glory and equity of the Divine judgments. The *Cherubim*, they say, enlighten others with wisdom; the *Seraphim* inspire with love; the *Thrones* teach to rule with judgment. Those of this first class they suppose never to be sent forth to discharge any office, but to wait upon God continually. In the middle class (as hath been said) they place the *dominions*, *principalities*, and *powers*. The *dominions* regulate the duties of the *angels*; the *principalities* preside over people and provinces; the *powers* are a check upon evil spirits. In the last class they put the *virtues*, *archangels*, and *angels*. The *virtues* have the power of working miracles assigned to them; the *archangels* are sent as messengers in matters of most importance; *angels* in those of less conse-

* Hugh de St. Victor, or Cardinal Hugo: a Divine who lived in the early part of the twelfth century; a native of Flanders, a Monk of the Dominican order, and the first Monk that was made a Cardinal. He settled in Paris, where he became Prior of St. Victor, and, with the assistance of 500 other Monks, formed a Concordance of the Bible; but died at the early age of 44, distinguished by his learning and genius, and obtaining such reputation by his works (consisting of Commentaries on Scripture, Sermons, Dialogues, &c.), as to be called a *second Augustine*, and sometimes, from his close adherence to the doctrine and imitation of the style of that Father, *the tongue of Augustine*. He held the Protestant doctrine respecting the Apocryphal books: "Non ad probationem fidei, sed ad morum instructionem;" and he defended the Canon of Scripture against those who would introduce apocryphal books as true! His works were printed at Rouen in 1648, in three vols. folio.

quence. These opinions are collected from Dionysius, from Gregory the Great (hom. in Evang. 34), and from the Schoolmen; and in collecting them together I have followed their more generally received opinions; for they are by no means agreed among themselves on these subjects; some of them referring *the virtues* to the second class, and *the principalities* to the last; others again opposing this arrangement.

Our Divines treat this subject with a more becoming reserve. For though they admit these different titles, which are found in this passage and others, as marking distinctions both of order and dignity amongst the angels themselves; yet, inasmuch as the Scriptures do not explain what these distinctions are, or in what they consist, they do not presume to discuss and define them. So Augustine before them observed, *What is the actual distinction between these titles, let those say who can; at the same time, let them prove what they say: for myself I am content to confess my ignorance of them.* Enchirid. cap. 58. And in another place, ad Oros. contra Priscill. cap. xi. tom. 6, *That there are distinctions of some kind, I believe, but what those distinctions are I know not.* Therefore, passing by these speculations, we will infer the following corollaries:

1. As for the angels, even the most perfect of them, to whatever degree of dignity advanced, Christ is above them all; being himself their Creator and their Disposer. Whence that observation, Heb. i. 6, *Let all the angels worship him.*

2. Neither the offices of Christ are to be attributed, nor divine worship paid, to the angels; since they are the servants and creatures of our Redeemer.

3. The different titles by which they are distinguished, do not so much express their inequality in natural dignity, as the difference of offices which they seem to discharge in the affairs of men. For from this difference of offices, some of which are more dignified than others, they receive these titles of *angels, archangels, principalities, powers, &c.* Nor are we able to state, for a certainty, whether the same angels always perform the same duties, and retain the same

titles, or not: indeed, the more probable supposition is, that different names are given them, according to the different offices to which they are commissioned.

But a question remains to be resolved, viz. When were these angels created? The Apostle says, they were created by Christ; but Moses does not mention angels among the works of the creation.

Dismissing those Philosophers who insist upon the eternal existence of these spiritual substances, the opinions of Divines on this point are twofold. Some think they were created before this visible world; and in this opinion almost all the Greek Fathers coincide. Basil says that before this world there was another *ἀδευρηλον και ἀνιστόρηλον*, invisible, and undescribed by Moses,* on account of the stupidity of the Jewish nation: and he affirms, that in this more ancient world, those *thrones, dominions, and powers* existed, of which the Apostle speaks. Chrysostom and Nazianzen are of the same opinion; and among the Latin Fathers we may reckon Jerome and Hilary.

To confirm this notion, that expression of Job xxxviii. 4, 7, is first alleged, *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth—when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?* By the *Sons of God* they understand the angels, and hence infer their existence before the foundation of the world.

But it is answered, We are not authorised to conclude from this expression, that angels were created before the visible world, but before the earth was founded, i. e. before the dry land was formed. Moreover, it may be said, that though the angels were created at the same time with the world, yet they might very possibly be enabled to praise the Creator of the world from the first moment of their existence.

And therefore their opinion is the more probable, who suppose that the angels were created at the same time with the heaven of the blessed; and they say that there is a synecdoche (a part put for the whole) in those words of

* “ Intelligibile et a Mose non descriptum.”

Moses, *God created the heaven*, meaning thereby, both heaven itself and all those blessed existences which that heaven contains :

1. Because the angels are parts of the universe : but if they had been created apart, before this visible world, they must be totally distinct from the order of material creatures, and of themselves have constituted a distinct intelligible universe.

2. Because Moses expressly states, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth* ; i. e. both those bodies and every thing else which heaven and earth contain : *In the beginning*, viz. of time or creation, as Lyranus correctly expounds it.* Therefore angels were not created before that beginning. This, however, is more plainly asserted, Exod. xx. 11, *In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and all that in them is* : and therefore also the angels. Whence the Schoolmen affirm (Aquiu De creat. art. 18),

* Lyranus, or Nicholas de Lyra, so called from the place of his nativity, Lyre, a small town in Normandy. He was descended from Jewish parents, but embracing Christianity, entered among the Franciscans at Verneuil, in 1291. Having remained there some time, he was sent to Paris, where he applied with the greatest diligence to his studies, and was admitted to the degree of Doctor. He was author of "Postills," or a Compendium of the whole Bible, which occupied him seven years in accomplishing. The Rev. James Smith, a man of considerable learning, first educated for the Romish Priesthood, at Lisbon, but who afterwards became a Protestant Clergyman, in a valuable work published by him in 1777 on "The Errors of the Church of Rome," says, that Lyra "was one of the most celebrated Commentators on the Scripture of the fourteenth century." "It is no inconsiderable praise that, by the general soundness and justness of his expositions, he attracted the admiration, and contributed, probably, in some measure, to the instruction of Luther, and of his great co-adjutors in the work of Reformation." Luther said of him, in reference to his work, "Ego Lyranum ideo amo, et inter optimos pono : quod ubique diligenter retinet et persequitur historiam, quanquam auctoritate patrum se vinci patitur, et nonnunquam eorum exemplo deflectit à propriétate sententiæ ad ineptas allegorias." The best edition of Lyra's Commentary is that of Antwerp, 1634, in six vols. folio : it is also found in the *Biblia Maxima*, edited by Father De la Haye, in 19 vols. folio. Lyra was also the author of *Moralia*, or Moral Commentaries upon the Scriptures."

For further account of this Author, his work, and the principles that guided him, vide Conybeare's Bampton Lectures for 1824, pp. 210—215, and "Horne's Critical Introduction."

that there are four first-formed and coeval things, viz. the angelic nature, the empyreal heaven, shapeless matter, and time.

3. Because Jude says, verse 6, That *the angels who kept not their first estate, but left their habitation, are reserved for judgment.* Here heaven is called the *habitation*, or dwelling-place of *angels*; and it is not very likely that angels should have existed many ages without a dwelling-place peculiarly their own. We conclude, therefore, that Moses when asserting, *In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth*, and the Apostle when affirming that *all things were made by Christ which are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible*, had both exactly the same meaning.

All things were created by him and for him, καὶ εἰς αὐτόν.] The Apostle here, by repetition after a long parenthesis, resumes his first position, that *all things were made by Christ.* On these words, I need add nothing further than my former observation, that *ἐν αὐτῷ*, and *δι' αὐτοῦ* are synonymous terms, and are henceforward put one for the other in this resumption of the statement.

The Apostle, however, was not content with the plain and simple repetition of the former assertion; but in order to amplify the dignity of Christ, he adds, that not only were all things made *by him*, but *for him*, or *on his account.*

For him.] Here then he shews that Christ is not only the efficient, but also the final cause, on whose account all creatures were made.

But how were all things created *for Christ*? That they might minister to his glory; inasmuch as they shew forth his Divine power and infinite goodness, and inasmuch as all things are subservient to him. For God does not act from a wish destitute of an end, as men do, but from love of an end to be accomplished, which, as far as is possible, he is pleased to communicate to his creatures. Christ possesses, and in all fulness, infinite glory from all eternity; but in creating the world he manifested this his glory to us, and laid on all his creatures the obligation of glorifying him. Hence the Psalmist, in Ps. cxlviii. beginning with the angels, runs through the whole scale of creation,

and calls upon all to glorify God, because *at his word they were created*. Christ, therefore, in creation intended this his glory, not indeed as the price of his labour, nor as private advantage to himself; but as being proper, decorous, strictly his due, and beneficial to the very creature itself. For every creature as it hath come forth from God, so it returns to him as far as it can, as Boethius has expressed it in those lines, *De consol. lib. iv. metr. 6,*

Hic est cunctis communis amor,
 Repetuntque boni sine teneri :
 Quia non aliter durare queant,
 Nisi converso rursus amore,
 Refluant causæ, quæ dedit esse.*

Thus translated by Duncan,

“ This love to all is common, and they seek
 To be confined within the bounds of good ;
 Because no otherwise can they endure,
 Unless, by love attracted, they return
 To that First Cause which gave them to exist.”

Duncan's Boethius, 1789.

* Boethius, Anicius Manlius Torquatus Severinus, the author of the above lines, was a prose as well as a poetical writer. descended from one of the noblest families in Rome, and born about the year 479. At an early age he discovered excellent parts ; and to enrich his mind with the study of philosophy, as well as to perfect him in the Greek language, he was sent to Athens. Returning to Rome, he was soon distinguished, and promoted to the principal dignities in the State, being chosen to the Consular dignity three times, created a Patrician, and made Master of the Offices. Though living in great affluence and splendour, he studied theology, mathematics, ethics, and logic ; and his success in each of these branches appears from his works still extant. The great offices which he bore in the State, and his consummate wisdom and inflexible integrity, procured him such a share in the public councils as to give rise to jealousies, which led to plots and intrigues to effect his ruin. But the employment of his pen in the defence of true Religion, and against the Arian heresy, which then prevailed in Italy, appears to have afforded those who felt his influence and hated the truth, the strongest ground against him. Three chiefs among the Arians, whose errors he had exposed in a treatise, ‘ *De Unitate et Uno,*’ and who were in that period a persecuting body, with whom Theodoric took part, at length succeeded in turning the mind of the Monarch against him. Whilst he was engaged in a distant part of the western empire, they alleged against him a treasonable correspondence with Justin the Emperor of the East ;

Hence observe,

1. Since all things made by Christ are also formed for the glory of Christ, it is incumbent upon us not to dishonour our Creator, for the manifestation of whose glory we were created. For if that instrument be accounted useless and good for nothing, which does not answer its end; then is that one evil and execrable which is in opposition, and, as far as possible, detrimental to the purpose intended by it.

2. Since the angels themselves were created for the glory of Christ, they must not be so united with him in the work of salvation, as to (detract from, much less) oppose the glory of their Creator.

and the Senate, without summoning him to his defence, condemned him to death. Theodoric, however, apprehending some bad consequences from the execution of a sentence so flagrantly unjust, mitigated it to imprisonment in a solitary tower at Pavia. In that forlorn state he endeavoured to derive from philosophy and religion, those comforts which they were capable of affording to one in such a situation; sequestered from his friends, in the power of his enemies, and at the mercy of a capricious tyrant; and, accordingly, he there composed that "golden volume," as a great historian has termed it, from which the foregoing lines are quoted. About two years after his banishment, viz. in Oct. 526, Boethius was put to death, and it is asserted, in a most barbarous manner. Thus perished, owing to the spirit of the times, the first Philosopher, Orator, and Theologian of the sixth century; and, perhaps, the most generous, liberal, and noble-minded man. His tomb is to be seen in the Church of St. Augustine, at Pavia, but his bones were removed some years after, by order of Otho, to a more honourable receptacle.

Boethius wrote several philosophic works, besides the one on Divinity already mentioned. But his most celebrated performance is "The Consolations of Philosophy" above cited. Few works have undergone so many editions, and it has been translated into all cultivated languages. There are two versions by British Sovereigns; one in Anglo-Saxon by Alfred the Great, and an English Translation by Queen Elizabeth. It is to be regretted, however, that it does not embrace the range of Christian consolations which, from Boethius's knowledge of Christian Theology, might have been expected; though probably he would have added a book on those firmer supports under the "afflictions of the present time," had he been spared a little longer; since his work is evidently unfinished, and there is an order in the topics leading to that supposition.

Verse 17.

And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

The Apostle in this place dignifies Christ with two prerogatives: He is before every creature; and is, as it were, the foundation and support of all creatures.

The point of priority has been explained and proved above; for we have shewn that Christ was begotten of God, and that the world was made by Christ: each of which proves that he has the precedency of all creatures, as well in dignity as in time. For he whom God begat, must of necessity be both co-eternal and co-essential with God. *All other things*, as Aquinas properly observes, *are such as God was pleased to make them; but the Son is such as God himself is.* Now he who made the world must have existed before the world: for he made it by imparting existence to that which had no existence previous to its being created. From these two considerations therefore, both that he was begotten of God, and that the world was made by him, it is proved that *he is before all things.*

This declaration of the Apostle clearly refutes those who deny Christ to have had a personal existence, *ὑφίστάμενον*, before his incarnation. For how could he have been *before all things* if he was not before his incarnation? How could he frame all things who was not himself in existence? Tertullian, in Praxiam, says, *He who came forth from so great an essence, and made such great existences, could not but himself have a personal existence.**

* Tertullian against Praxeas:—"The schisms and commotions that arose in the Church, from a mixture of the Oriental and Egyptian Philosophy with the Christian Religion, were, in the second century, increased by those Grecian Philosophers, who embraced the doctrine of Christ. The Christian doctrine, concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the two natures united in our blessed Saviour, were, by no means, reconcilable with the tenets of the Sages and Doctors of Greece; who, therefore, endeavoured to explain them in such a manner as to render them comprehensible. Praxeas

By him all things consist.] This is a new and excellent privilege of Christ, that he not only made all things at first, but that he also sustains and supports them by his Divine energy, in such a manner that, if he should withdraw it, they would again sink into their former non-entity.

This, therefore, is the doctrine of this passage; Every creature, whether earthly or heavenly, visible or invisible, would sink back again into its former nothingness, if the Divine preservation were withdrawn. This proposition of the Apostle is by no means easy to be understood; therefore we will endeavour to support it both by argument and authorities, as well as clear away what is wont to be advanced against it.

1. No acting force of the agent remains in the effect, when the action of the agent has ceased, unless in some way or other that force be converted into the very nature of the effect, so as to be inherent in it as its own property: but if it be a something transcending the nature of the effect, and a property peculiar to the agent alone, then it must cease when the action ceases. Since, therefore, *self-existence* is the peculiar property of God alone, it can remain in no created body, even for a moment of time after this action of Divine conservation has ceased. Theologians illustrate this argument by comparing the action of God on the creature, to that of the sun on the atmosphere; for the essence of every creature has the same relation to God, as the light of the atmosphere to the sun.* The sun derives its light from its own proper nature, the atmos-

[a Philosopher of Phrygia, in Asia], a man of genius and learning, began to propagate these explications at Rome. He denied any real distinction between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and maintained that the Father, sole Creator of all things, had united to himself the human nature of Christ. Hence his followers were called Monarchians, because of their denying a plurality of persons in the Deity; and also Patropassians, because, according to Tertullian's account, they believed that the Father was so intimately united with the man Christ—his Son, that he suffered with him the anguish of an afflicted life, and the torments of an ignominious death!"—Mosheim.

* Aquinas cont. Gent. iii. cap. 64.

phere by participating in the influence of the sun : so God has his existence from his own nature ; all other things by participating in existence from him. As, therefore, the brilliancy of the atmosphere immediately ceases when the bright shining of the sun ceases ; so the existence of every creature instantly vanishes when God's conservating power is withdrawn.

2. In reference to God, the action is the same with the preservation as the creation of his creatures ; the only difference between them is, that creation exhibits the acting power of God in the original production of a creature ; preservation shews the same action in not deserting the creature when produced. A creature has the beginning of its existence from the energy of God ; the continuance of its existence from the same God, not withholding that energy. Durandus, therefore, has not hesitated to assert of every creature, that, *as long as it is in existence, so long it is being created by God, because as far as God is concerned, the work of creation and the preservation of creatures is the same.* Hence it follows, that by whomsoever all things are formed, by the same also are they preserved ; for *preservation is not by a new act, but by the continuance of that act which originally gave existence.* Durand. lib. ii. dist. 1. quæst. 2.

3. As every work of art presupposes a work of nature for its foundation ; so every work of nature presupposes a work of God : for as every artificer borrows his materials from nature, so nature herself does from God. In the same manner, therefore, as the existence of all works of art is preserved by virtue of the natural substance of which they are composed ; so the essence of natural substances continues by virtue of the preservation of God, who created them.

4. Every effect depends upon its cause, as far as it is its cause ; as a house depends upon the architect for its construction : although for its duration it depends upon the solidity of the wood and stones. The architect is the cause of its having been made ; therefore for *its making*, i. e. for *the structure itself* it depends upon him : but the nature of its material is the cause of its actual existence ;

therefore upon the material it depends for *its durability*. Now to apply this to our argument: God is the cause of things, not only as to *their formation*, but as to *their being*: *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, Acts xvii. 28. Therefore all things depend upon him, not only as to their first production, but as to the continuance of their essence; since he is the cause both *of the being* and also *of the formation* of all things.

To confirm these arguments I will adduce but two passages of Scripture: The first from John v. 17, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*. Which passage interpreters apply to this continual operation of God and of Christ in the preservation and government of the creatures. For *God rested on the seventh day* from making new creatures; but he never rests or ceases from the preservation of, and administration to, the creatures that are made. The other authority is taken from Heb. i. 3, where Christ is spoken of as *upholding all things by the word of his power*. Which expression intimates that the Divine power of Christ is the support* and the foundation, as it were, of all creatures, which would presently fall at once into annihilation unless sustained by him.

And now let us draw some testimonies from the Fathers:

1. Justin Martyr, De decret. Aristot. reprehens. says, *As that which sprang into existence never would have existed unless God had pronounced his Fiat: so neither would they continue in existence, unless the same God had commanded those things which are not subject to decay, to stand for ever; and that those things which spring up and decay, should constantly increase and multiply*. Here, by the way, I may be permitted to remark, what I had before passed over, viz. That Christ not only sustains and preserves every individual thing, by the virtue which flows from him, which we have already likened to a continued work of creation: but also, that by virtue of this primary blessing, he propagates the various species of things by successive generations.

* The Fulcrum, as it were; as a friend remarked, 'Here is the very desideratum of Archimedes.'

Augustine, sup. Genes. ad lit. lib. 4. cap. 13, says, *The power and energy of an Almighty and All-sustaining God, is the cause of subsistence to every creature; and if that energy which created them should at any time cease from ruling them, their species would all at once cease, and all nature fall to nothing.* If, therefore, we credit Augustine, no creature whatever could exist without this Divine upholding, or *manutention*, to use the scholastic term.

Gregory, Moral. 16. cap. 18, on those words of Job, xxiii. 13, *He alone is*, observes, *But why does he say, He alone is? All these things (says he) are, and yet fundamentally they are not, because in themselves they have no subsistence; and unless they were upheld by the hand of their Governor, they would by no means exist. For all things subsist by him who created them. Inasmuch as all things were made of nothing, and their being would again fall into nothing, unless it were retained by the hand which made them all.*

Gerson, De vit. spirit. lect. 1. says, *As a vessel contains water and gives it its shape, so that it is prevented from flowing away rather by the help of the vessel than by its own nature; so God in his own nature prevents the defectible principle of the creature from acting, and preserves it by his agency from falling back again into nothing.*

Let us now meet some objections to the contrary.

1. A created agent communicates to the work made, the power of holding together when his operation has ceased, as we continually see in an architect and his building: Therefore God, whose operations are far more perfect than those of any artificer, must impart this property to his works.

We answer, There is no parity of reasoning. For a created agent is the cause of that work being *constructed* only, and not of *its continuance in existence*. A house, for instance, depends upon the architect only as long as it is *in building*; but when it is *actually built*, it depends for its existence, as I have before shewn, upon the nature of the materials. But with God the case is very different; because (as we have proved) he is the cause of the *original existence* as well as of the *formation* of all things. It in-

volves a contradiction therefore, that God should communicate to any creature an existence independent of himself: for this would be, in fact, to place it above the condition of a creature.

2 It is objected, There are some created things which cannot but continue, inasmuch as they have in themselves neither the power of assuming a new form, or the contrary; of this kind are all the heavenly bodies: these, therefore, at least, may continue in their state, even if the Divine conservation were withdrawn.

We answer, The consequence does not hold: because although the heavenly bodies have no natural power whatever of assuming a new form, neither is there any thing external which may effect their dissolution, yet would their very form and substance cease and vanish away, if the Divine conservation were to cease. For this liability of created things to dissolution (or non-entity) depends neither upon the nature of the material, or of the form, but upon God's withdrawing his influence. This objection may also be answered by a distinction in the mode of conservation. For there is an *indirect* conservation, viz, by removal of the destructive principle: this the heavenly bodies do not require, but only the elementary and corruptible things. As far as this is concerned the objection is allowed. But there is a *direct* conservation of which we are now treating, through the immediate upholding of the Creator: and of this preservation, both the heavens, and every other being dependant on the First Being, stand in need.

3. They object, Every creature hath an innate earnest desire of its own preservation: but no natural desire is either vain or impossible: therefore every creature has the power of self-preservation.

It is answered, The creature seeks its own preservation, but not to be preserved of itself and by its own powers, but by that very Cause which gave it its existence. Therefore the desire is not *vain*; for it gains its end by the proper means.

4. It is said, Such is the state of angels and of men in happiness as no longer to require a preserving Providence; for happiness (as Boethius, lib. 3, De consolat. defines it,) is a state perfected by the assemblage of all good things: but the power of self-preservation is one of those good things especially, without which all the rest are frail and uncertain: therefore the spirits in blessedness have this power, and so do not require other preservation.

We allow that happiness is a state of perfection, and that among the assemblage of blessings in which it consists, the power of preserving itself in this state of happiness must be found. The blessed Spirits, therefore, have this self-preserving power, as far as they have the power of inseparably cleaving to God; but not so far, as that if they were separated from God, they could preserve either their own happiness or existence. If any one wishes any thing further on this subject, let him consult Aquinas, 1 quæst. 104. art. 1; and quæst. disput. De conserv. rerum, art. 1; and also contra Gentiles lib. 3, cap. 64.*

From what has been said we may gather the following remarks for our own benefit.

1. For the support of our confidence; for we may rely fearlessly on this Redeemer, and the preciousness of his blood, who is a person of such infinite power and majesty that he did create all things, and still upholds all things, which would otherwise relapse into nothing.

2. To produce within us humility. For if we cannot retain our natural existence even for a moment without his preserving power, how much less our supernatural and freely given existence? With Gerson (Par. 2) I will unhesitatingly assert; *In whatever degree a man is more accomplished than ordinary in natural or gratuitous endowments; in the same degree is he more liable to fall short and fall away, when this special sustentation by the arm of Christ is withdrawn. We may form a conjecture on this point from the case of Lucifer,*

* The Reader may profitably consult our own Hooker, who has much that is very excellent, and quite to the point, on this and the preceding topics, in his first Book of the "Ecclesiastical Polity."

Adam, and others, whose perfections, when left to themselves, what were they, but an increase of the weight to their downfall?

3. For persuading us to obedience ; since it is but reasonable that all our life should be devoted to serving Him by whom we were both brought into this life, and are sustained in it. Thus the Psalmist reasons, Ps. c. 2, *Praise the Lord with gladness ; come before his presence with a song ; be ye sure that the Lord he is God, for He hath made us, and not we ourselves.*

Lastly, let us add this consideration : that these things are not so to be appropriated to Christ, as to exclude either God the Father, or the Holy Ghost, from the preservation of the creature. For, as they said at the creation of man, *Let us make man ;* so could these three persons say, *let us preserve man.* And what has been said of man the same might be said of all creatures ; viz. that all were both at first created, and are still preserved by the united operation of the whole Trinity. For that saying of Augustine, De Trinit. lib. i. cap. 4, is most true, *The persons are inseparable, and operate inseparably.*

And thus much concerning the character of the Redeemer, derived from a comparison of him with the creature formed : We must come to the last part of this character, derived from his relation to the creature renewed, i. e. to the Church.

Verses 18, 19.

And he is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.

For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.

We have explained that description of Christ which was drawn from his relation to the creature in general. It now remains to explain that which is derived from his relation to the creature redeemed, that is to say, the Church. In these two verses he does two things: First, he sets forth Christ by titles peculiar to him, *the head, the beginning, the first-born*. Secondly, by certain arguments he demonstrates that these titles are his indefeasible right: the first is taken from the final cause, *that in all things he might have the pre-eminence*; the second, from the efficient or ordaining cause, *for it hath so pleased him*, viz. the Father; the last from the formal cause, because in him is *all that fulness*, which can constitute him *the head of the Church*, &c. Let us begin by an explanation of the titles; and first let us set forth this of *the head of the Church*.

The head of the body, the Church] i. e. of his body, which body is the Church; for so the word *Church* is joined with the word *body* by apposition. And here there are three things to be discussed by us respecting this *head* and *body*.

First, we shall enquire, In which of his natures Christ is the head of the Church.

Secondly, in what respects this title of *head* is assigned to him.

Thirdly, who they are of whom this body of Christ consists.

As to the first; we say Christ is the head of the Church in each of his natures. For here he is called *the head of the Church*, who had before been called *the image of the in-*

visible God. But that image was the eternal Son of God, the incarnate Word: Therefore Christ, *the God-man*, is the head of the Church. For the Church ought to possess such a head as might have a natural conformity with the rest of the members to be incorporated in it. Now this conformity suits Christ according to his human nature; whence Christ and the Church are called *one flesh*, Ephes. v. 31. But it was also necessary that the Church should have such a head as could infuse into it spiritual life. Now this is the province of God alone; whence God is plainly called *the husband* and *the head* of the Church, Psalm xlv. 10, where, under the representation of the marriage of Solomon with Pharaoh's daughter, the espousals of Christ and the Church are prefigured; *Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thy father's house: so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord God.*

It is, however, objected, That Christ was not the head of the ancient Church in each nature, because he had not yet assumed human nature. But it is the office of the head to impart and communicate its excellencies to the body; and the human nature of Christ could not benefit the Church before his incarnation; because that which does not exist cannot operate. Therefore he was not the head of the Jewish church as to his humanity.

We answer, Although Christ had not yet actually united the human nature to his own; nevertheless, as to the Divine decree respecting his future incarnation and passion; as to the eternal efficacy thereof; and as to the living faith of the Patriarchs; even the human nature of Christ, and that which he was to do and suffer in human nature, although not actually undergone, produced many benefits to the ancient Church. All believers, being elect in Christ, *from the foundation of the world*, are, through Christ, adopted into the family of God, Ephes. i. 4, 5. God, therefore, by reason of his eternal purpose concerning the incarnation of Christ, even then accounted as members of his body all who believed in him. He was *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*; why not then also the living head of the

Church from the foundation of the world? Things are present to God and to faith, which are not present to nature. Aquinas, quæst, disp. de gratia Christi, art. 4. ad. 9m. says, *That Christ, according to his human nature, was the head of the Church before his incarnation, by the operation of faith, which apprehended his future incarnation; and so acquired the benefit of justification.* But that Divine of Altissiodorum speaks much more clearly, lib. 3. tract. i. quæst. 3. de dignitate Christi capitulis, &c. He asks, *Whether Christ, as to his human nature, was the head of Abel and of the rest of the faithful; and whether they were members of the body of Christ?* He answers, *that there was then the same faith respecting his future incarnation, as there now is concerning his past incarnation; and the same efficacy in their faith as in ours. As, therefore, faith in Christ who is now come, makes a man a member of Christ incarnate; so their faith in Christ to come, made them members of Christ who was to be incarnate. Christ then was, even as to his humanity, the head of Abel and of the rest of the faithful; not indeed according to his humanity as actually existing; but according to his humanity as existing in their faith. For faith looks beyond time. By this faith blessings flowed to them from the fulness of Christ, even as they do now to us.* Thus far Altissiodorensis.

But it is also further objected; that Christ is not the head of the Church in his Divine nature, inasmuch as according to that he hath not a conformity of nature with the rest of the members; nor yet according to his human nature, because in respect of that he has not the power of infusing spiritual life to his members: therefore in no way is it the case.

We answer, first, generally; If there be found in the person of Christ the perfect quality of a head, this is sufficient for his being in strict truth called the head, although neither in one nature nor the other, separately considered, all the conditions of headship may meet. To that which was objected concerning the humanity not infusing life and spiritual motion, we answer by a distinction. The life of grace is infused either by the primary agent, who creates grace in the soul in the way of its original source; and in this sense grace flows from the Deity alone; or by an in-

strument attached to the primary agent; and so the humanity of Christ is said to infuse grace and spiritual life instrumentally. As, therefore, it derogates not from the nature of a *corporeal* head, because it infuses life and motion to the other members not immediately of itself, but by means of some secret power; so neither is it any detraction from the honour of the *mystical* head, that it infuses life and grace, not primarily from itself, but by means of the indwelling Deity. Christ is, therefore, notwithstanding these things, the head of the Church in each nature.

You see what kind of a head the Church has; not God alone, nor a mere man; but Jesus Christ, God and man. Hence many observations arise:

1. Whereas the head of the Church is God, we infer that the Church will abide for ever, neither *shall the gates of hell prevail against it*; for *if God be with us who shall be against us?* A less than God would indeed have been incompetent to the protection of the Church: for the devil, and almost the whole world wage constant war against it. Herein, then, is the consolation of the Church, that *Christ, the head of the Church, is greater to protect it, than the devil, the enemy of the Church, is to oppose it*; Cyprian, De exhort. martyr. cap. 10.

2. If the head of the Church be God, the members of the Church ought, with all fear and reverence, to obey its head in all things. For there is an infinite obligation which binds every creature to obey its God; but that obligation, if possible, surpasses infinite, whereby the Church redeemed and sanctified, is bound to be subject to *its* God, its mystical and life-giving head.

3. If the head of the Church be God, then the ascension of Christ into heaven has not deprived the Church of its head: nay, he is present, and will be always present, with his whole Church, by the presence and power of his Divinity, although he may not appear to our eyes by his bodily presence. This he himself promised, Matth. xxviii. ult. *I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* The error of the advocates for the Papacy, therefore, concerning an earthly head is to be discarded; who, as the Israel-

ites heretofore said to Aaron, *Make us gods which shall go before us, for as for this Moses we wot not what is become of him*; so say they, Let us make to ourselves some visible head of the Church, for we know not what has become of Christ.* Moreover also, inasmuch as our Head is a man, we infer two things,

1. On account of this alliance of nature, he must of necessity intimately love us, and have such a keen sense of our miseries, as to be most ready to succour us (Judg. x. 16). This the Apostle himself infers, Heb. ii. 17, 18, *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of*

* It is worthy of remark, that on a Papist—a Jesuit of learning and distinction—a Professor of Rhetoric, History, and Philosophy in the Universities of Rome, Fermo, and Macerata, and, in the latter place Counsellor of the Inquisition—being employed about the middle of the last century to prove the Pope's supremacy, by shewing from century to century, that since the Apostle's time to the present, it had ever been acknowledged by the Catholic Church, he soon found that he had undertaken more than it was possible to perform; viz. on coming to the close of the second century. "Nay," says he, "while, in order to support and maintain this cause, I examined, with particular attention, the writings of the Apostles, and of the many pious and learned men who had flourished in the three first centuries of the Church, I was so far from finding any thing that seemed the least to countenance such a doctrine, that, on the contrary, it appeared evident, beyond all dispute, that, during the above-mentioned period of time, it had been utterly unknown to the Christian world. In spite, then, of my endeavours to the contrary, reason getting the better of the strongest prejudices, I began to look upon the Pope's Supremacy, not only as a prerogative quite chimerical, but as the most impudent attempt that had ever been made: I say, in spite of my endeavours to the contrary; for I was very unwilling to give up a point, upon which I had been taught by Bellarmin, that THE WHOLE OF CHRISTIANITY DEPENDS; especially in a Country where a man cannot help being afraid of his own thoughts, since upon the least suspicion of his only calling in question any of the received opinions, he may depend upon his being soon convinced by more cogent arguments than any in *Mood and Figure*. But great is the power of truth; and at last it prevailed: I became a proselyte to the opinion which I had proposed to confute; and sincerely abjured, in my mind, that which I had ignorantly undertaken to defend."

The Reader is referred to *the Preface* to "the History of the Popes," by Archibald Bower, Esq. in seven vols. 4to.

the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

2. Whereas our head was a man we have this comfort, that every ground of triumphing over us is taken from the devil. He overcame the first Adam, the head and beginning of the human race; but the second Adam, the head of the Church, overcame him. Nay, in Christ, we who are his members conquer, just as in Adam we were conquered. The victory of our head makes us conquerors.

Thus far concerning the first question, viz. In which nature Christ is the head of the CHURCH.

Now, secondly, it is proper to consider in what respects Christ is called the HEAD. But since this mystical head is so called by a metaphor borrowed from the natural head, the appellation will be obscure, unless we understand in what respects this similitude between Christ and the natural head, between the Church and the natural body, consists. Well said the Philosopher, Topic vi. cap. 2, *A metaphor, by similitude, manifests to us the thing treated of; for all who use metaphors draw them on the ground of some resemblance they bear to the point to be illustrated.* Let us then take into consideration the similitude in the text.

A natural head is regarded in a twofold relation to its members, that is to say, of difference and of agreement; so also this mystical head: Aquinas, quæst. disp. de gratia Christi, art. 4.

The head differs and is distinguished from its members in three ways:

1. In way of eminence or dignity. For the head possesses more fully and perfectly all the senses than the subordinate members: so Christ, the mystical head, possesses all spiritual grace much more abundantly than all other men and angels put together: *The Spirit was given to him without measure, John iii. 34.*

2. In way of direction or government. For the head regulates and directs: the members are ruled and directed by the head in their operations: so Christ has the absolute dominion and government over the Church: It obeys his nod, and submits in unreserved conformity to his will.

Thus the Apostle teaches, Ephes. v. 22, 23, *Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: Therefore the Church is subject unto Christ, &c.*

3. In way of causality or influence. For the head imparts and communicates sense and motion to all its members: the members are devoid of all motion and sense if separated from the head: So Christ sends forth spiritual life and the motion of grace into his members which are otherwise insensible, dead, and destitute of all spiritual motion. *Without me ye can do nothing*, John xv. 5; but, on the other hand, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me*, Phil. iv. 13.

Therefore the appellation of *head* is most fitly applied to Christ, in respect of all those particulars in which the head must differ and be distinguished from all the members. Now, then, let us consider those things in which the agreement of the head and the members is perceived: And these are three:

1. The natural head hath a natural conformity with the rest of the members: for as the Poet hath rightly said, it would be monstrous and ridiculous,

*If a painter should form a design of uniting a horse's neck to a human head.**

Thus monstrous would it be, if the head of the Church had not a natural conformity with the Church. But Christ hath this, as is shewn, Heb. ii. *He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.*

2. The head and the members have a conformity in their destination to the same end, viz. the preservation and safety of the whole person: thus Christ, and the members of Christ, which are one person, are ordained to the attainment of one end, viz. eternal glory and happiness; and to the accomplishment of this end both head and members assiduously co-operate. This is the care of the head, to

* Horace, De arte poetica, l. 1: Smart's translation.

lead its members to final blessedness. So spake Christ, John xvii. 12, *Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost.* Hence he is called *the Saviour of his body*, Ephes. v. 23. This also is the object proposed to all the members of Christ, to attain to the participation of this blessedness together with their head. For what was the purpose and sentiment of Paul, the same is that of all the faithful, *One thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark, &c.* Phil. iii. 4.

3. The head and the members of the natural body agree in the circumstance of their having a continuous union with each other, and all of them deriving their motion and intellectuality from the same soul. So this mystical head, and all the members of it, have a certain mutual continuity, and have their spiritual intellectuality and vivifying principle from the same source. For there is between Christ and all the members of Christ, a certain uninterrupted union by means of the Holy Spirit, who, in all its plenitude, dwelling in Christ the head, being one and the same numerically, is shed forth among all his members, quickening each separately and uniting all in one body. Thus most clearly does the Apostle speak, Ephes. iv. 16, *The whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

These are particulars in which there is agreement of the head with the members. And hence it follows that Christ is the true and living head of the whole Church, both in those respects in which the head ought to differ from, as well as in those in which it ought to agree with, its members.

Of the body, the Church.] It remains that we inquire, in the last place, who and what they are, out of whom this body of Christ is composed, which in this place is called *the Church.*

The term *Church* is derived from a word signifying *to call out*; it is therefore an assembly or multitude of those

called out : And this calling is effected by the ministry of the Gospel, and other means which God has appointed for bringing men out of a state of ignorance and misery, and leading them to a state of glory. In this sense we call any assembly of men whatever, professing the doctrine and religion of Christ under legitimate pastors, a church. Such were those seven churches to which John sent his Apocalypse; such the Roman, Corinthian, Colossian, and all other visible and local churches. These assemblies are called churches, and those who live in them are members of those churches, and are to be regarded, in the judgment of charity, as members of the Holy Catholic Church, as well because those means are offered to them on God's part, by which men are called to the participation of eternal life; as because on their part, in outward act and profession, those means are received and employed for salvation.

This external vocation through the proffered grace of the Gospel, and this external adoption and profession of Christianity under legitimate pastors, constitutes the outward and visible Church; and the professors of it are visible members of the Church. But there is also another more effectual vocation joined to this external one, in some persons, namely, by grace implanted and impressed through the power of the Spirit in the hearts of the called; by means of which they not only enter upon the external profession of Christianity, but are joined to Christ himself by the internal bonds of faith and the Spirit: *Many are called, but few chosen*, says the Saviour.

These things being settled and allowed by the opinions of all, as well Papists as of our own communion, we come to what is before us, and comprise our opinion in this proposition;—The Catholic Church, which is called the body of Christ, consists of such as are truly sanctified, and united to Christ by an internal alliance; so that no wicked person, or unbeliever, is a member of this body, solely by the external profession of faith, and participation of the sacraments. We oppose this position to Bellarmin, who, (Lib. 3. De eccles. militant. cap. 2, § atque hoc interest.)

ventures to assert, *For any one to be called absolutely a member of the true Church no internal virtue is required, but only an external profession of faith, and communion of the sacraments, and union with the Roman Church.* Hence he manifestly places among the true members of the body of the Catholic Church, ungodly men, disguised hypocrites, and infidels; provided they abide in outward communion with the Church of Rome. On the other hand, observe what is elsewhere said by this very Bellarmin.

1. They who stand related to the Church as evil humours to the human body, are not true members of the Church. This proposition is manifestly true: for each sound body desires the preservation of its members; but it does not desire to preserve evil humours, but to expel them. *Now they who are void of faith and internal virtues, are, in the Church, as evil humours are in the human body.* Bellarm. De eccles. milit. lib. 3. cap. 2.

2. Nothing is truly and formally that which it is said to be, having a diminutive term annexed to it; as a dead man is not truly a man, a city in a picture is not truly a city. Boys know this who have entered only upon the first steps in logic. But the wicked and infidels are not *living members* of the body of Christ, by Bellarmin's own concession, cap. 9: nay, he expressly calls them *dead members* in the same chapter; where he moreover adds, *I say that as it pertains to the design of a member to be a certain part of a living body; a wicked Bishop and a wicked presbyter are dead members, and therefore not true members of the body of Christ.* But now mark the dullness of this disputant. The question proposed in the beginning was, Whether wicked men and infidels were true members of the Catholic Church which is the body of Christ, on account of their outward communion and profession of faith? The Jesuit undertook to defend the affirmative part; and now he is compelled to confess, that they are not *living* but *dead members*; that *they are not true members so as to answer the purpose of a member.* But what is neither living, nor true, nor answers the purpose of a member, how will Bellarmin maintain to be nevertheless a true member? Hearken; *He*

is not a true member so far as answers the character of a member, but he is a true member as far as regards the character of an instrument. This is mere trifling! For nothing can be understood of which the formal cause is denied; neither does the genus determine the species.

3. Those whom the Church itself would not acknowledge as members or its parts, if it knew what they are, Christ, who knows all things, does not acknowledge. Nay, Bellarmin asserts, cap. 10, *that the Church intends only to collect the faithful, and if she knew the wicked and unbelieving, she either never would admit them, or, if they accidentally were admitted, she would cast them out.* Who, then, in his senses would affirm, that the wicked and unbelieving, whom Christ would condemn, and whom the Church, if she knew them to be such, would cast out, are true members of Christ, and of the Catholic Church?

4. The Church which is the body of Christ, hath no member which doth not receive a vital influx from the head: for (as we have before shewn) the same Spirit is diffused from the head to all the members: *He who hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9. But infidels, and the wicked have not this vitality of grace flowing from the head. That which Bellarmin is compelled to answer is childish; viz. Although they have neither an internal union with the head, nor an influx of grace, yet they have external union, which suffices to constitute them true members of the Church, i. e. of the body of Christ. This subterfuge is vain: for (as Aquinas rightly speaks, quæst. disp. de grat. Christi. art. 7. ad. 11m.) *Christ and his true members are one mystical person, whence the deeds of Christ, the head, are in some manner those of the members:* But that external union neither makes a man one person with Christ, nor a partaker of the obedience and righteousness of Christ; therefore it does not make him a member of Christ.

5. The same man is not at the same time a member of Christ and of the devil: but wicked men are numbered amongst the servants and the children of the devil, John viii. 38 and 44; therefore they are not to be reckoned among the members of Christ.

It is not my purpose to heap together more arguments, or refute those of Bellarmin. I will only add some testimonies extracted from the Fathers and the Schoolmen, that from them ye may be able to see clearly how entirely these novices, the Jesuits, have departed from the truth of the Scriptures, from the authority of the Fathers, and from the doctrine of the ancient Schoolmen.

1. Clemens, Strom. 7, cap. 5, says, that the Church is *ἄθροισμον τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν* the congregation of the elect; and a little after, *The true Church is one, and in its registry all those are inscribed who are just according to God's purpose.*

Cyprian, De dupl. martyr. *In vain does a man mix in the assembly of the saints in the temple made by hands, if he be excluded from the universal mystical body of Christ.* Cyprian is speaking of the wicked.

Augustine, De baptis. contra Donat. lib. 4. cap. 2, *They do not all belong to the Church who are within its pale, but they who are living piously within it.* And cap. 4, *In the body of this beloved dove, neither heretics nor the wicked are reckoned.* Ad Orosium, quæst. 52, *As the ark was constructed of hewn timbers, so the Church is built up of the saints.*

But let us come to the Schoolmen who also coincide with us in this instance.

William of Altissiodorum, lib. 3, says, *As the natural body of Christ consists of the purest members; so the mystical body of Christ, which is the Church, consists of most holy believers: and thus the natural body of Christ is the emblem of his mystical body.*

Hugo de St. Victor, De sacram. lib. 2. par. ii. cap. 2, says, *The holy Church is the body of Christ animated by one spirit, and united in one faith and sanctified: of this body each and all the faithful are members. They are all one body by reason of one Spirit and one faith.*

Hales;* *the wicked are not of the body of the Church, although they are of the Church,* parte 3. quæst. 12. memb. 3. art. 3.

* Alexander Hales, a Scholastic Divine, supposed to have been a native of Gloucestershire, who died in 1245. He was designated the Irrefragable

Gerson, par. 1, *The congregation of the Church is united to Christ the head, by the bond of the Holy Spirit; being joined to him by certain qualifying dispositions which give a lively harmony to this mystical body.*

But enough of testimonies. We conclude, therefore, that this body of the Church, of which Christ himself is the head, does not consist of any unfaithful and wicked members, but of the pious and holy alone; whom God delivers from the power of darkness, and translates into the kingdom of his dear Son. Hence we may learn,

1. It is not sufficient for salvation to be a visible member of any visible church by an outward profession of faith, unless you are a mystical member of the Catholic Church by a true faith and the Spirit dwelling in the heart. *What does a treacherous soul in the house of faith?* says Cyprian.

2. It is not befitting Christians to envy those who are endowed with the more excellent gifts; because they are members of the same body: what, therefore, is conferred on one, *that* should be esteemed as given to all, according to that remark of Augustine in Psalm cxxxix. *Lay aside envy, and what I have is thine; lay aside envy, and what thou hast is mine.*

3. Since godly members are of the same body, it behoves them to be ready to assist each other; and they ought to feel equally affected with the good or evil which fall to others, as with their own. So says the Apostle, 1 Cor. xii. 26, *If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.* Thus far concerning the first title of Christ.

The beginning and the first-born from the dead.] These words are variously read and expounded. In the Greek they stand thus, ἀρχὴ πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν. Some, there-

Doctor, and Fuller stiles him “the first of all Schoolmen,” placing him at the head of eight other distinguished British School Divines, and stating that he was master to Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura. He wrote a ‘Commentary on the four books of Sentences,’ or ‘Sum of Divinity,’ at the command of Pope Innocent IV.; Nuremberg, 1482, and often reprinted. Other works have been attributed to him, but incorrectly. This would seem to be the one from which Davenant has quoted.

fore, expound them, *The beginning, the first-born from the dead.* Others supply the copulative *καί*, *The beginning AND the first-born from the dead*: so Beza. Athanasius, and after him Calvin, interpret them by supplying the causal conjunction, *The beginning, BECAUSE the first-born from the dead.* Chrysostom reads, not *ἀρχη*, as it stands in our copies, but *ἀπαρχη*, *the first fruits and first-born, &c.* But this is of little importance to the main point. For according to all, the Apostle signalizes Christ with these titles to shew that he not only rose first, but that he is to his Church, i. e. to all his members, the beginning and fountain of salvation and of grace in this life; of glory and of blessedness in that which is to come. For the Church hath a twofold state: of grace and of a spiritual resurrection in this life; of glory and of a beatified resurrection in the other: The Apostle, therefore, in this place, declares Christ to be the author of both.

Two things, then, are here to be explained: 1. That Christ himself was the first in the glorious resurrection: 2. that Christ was the first in such manner as to be to all of us the cause, as well of the spiritual resurrection, whereby we rise again from the death of sin, as of the corporeal resurrection, whereby we rise to the life of glory. For Christ was both the first in the order of rising as it respects himself, and the beginning as it respects us.

As to the first point; Christ is rightly called *the beginning and the first-born from the dead*; for he alone hath risen as the beginning of his resurrection, raising his body by the power of his Godhead. He also alone hath risen to spiritual life and glory, no more to die. That he rose by his own power, not by that of another, is clear: John ii. 19, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again,* John x. 18. Although, therefore, we read both in the Old and in the New Testament, that some rose from the dead before Christ, this does not strip Christ of these titles; for no one hath risen as the beginning of his resurrection, but all were quickened by the efficacy of another. Besides, none of those arose to the immediate enjoyment

of glory, but to the present manifestation of the Divine glory. For truly spake Cyprian, in lib. De resurrectione Christi. *These rose indeed, says he, before Christ, but in the name and the faith of Him; one through Elijah when he was living; one by Elisha in his lifetime, and another after his death; but then they again returned to death which they had thus tasted. Lazarus also rose at the command of Christ, and some others; yet all these only enjoyed the gift of life for a time, then again returned to the grave. But Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, as it is said Rom. vi. 9.* The resurrection, therefore, of these few preceding the resurrection of Christ, does not in the least oppose his being called *the beginning and the first-born from the dead*: since they rose neither by their own power, nor to everlasting life; Christ both by his own power and for ever.

2. Now let us come to the second reason of his being called *the beginning and the first-born from the dead*; viz. because he not only, as we have before shewn, quickened himself, and that to life immortal; but because he is the effective beginning and cause of the rising again of all his members; whether we regard the resurrection to grace from the death of sin, or the resurrection to glory from the death of nature. I join them together, because, although Christ never rose from the death of sin, inasmuch as he never was subject to sin, nevertheless this one resurrection of Christ is the cause of both in us; and these two resurrections are so intimately united, that whoever does not rise beforehand by the power of Christ from the death of sin, will never rise to the life of glory. Let us, therefore, first shew that Christ's rising again is the cause of our spiritual resurrection.

Christ is the beginning of our spiritual resurrection, by his death and resurrection, 1. as the *meritorious* cause; for he merited this spiritual quickening of his members: 2. as the *efficient* cause; for, by the same power wherewith he raised himself from the dead, he both raises all that are his from the death of sin, and regenerates them to the new life of grace. So says the Apostle, Rom. vi. 11, *Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God*

through Jesus Christ our Lord. 3. Lastly, as the *exemplary* cause; for the resurrection of Christ is every where proposed to us as a type and pattern of our spiritual resurrection: *Like as Christ was raised up from the dead, so we also should walk in newness of life*, Rom. vi. 4.

If Christ were not in us *the beginning* of this spiritual resurrection, there would be no hope of the blessed and glorious resurrection, as it is written in Rev. xx. 6, *Blessed is he who hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power.* For the Spirit of regeneration is the earnest of the blessed resurrection, giving the commencement of spiritual life, and the right to that resurrection which is unto life eternal. Hence Tertullian (in libro, cap. 47, De resurrectione) beautifully says, *that by regeneration our bodies are inaugu-ated for this resurrection.* And Aquinas, in Epist. ad Rom. upon those words, chap. viii. 11, *If the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by the Spirit that dwelleth in you;* says, *Our bodies shall be quickened for glory on account of the dignity which they have obtained from the circumstance of their having been the temples of the Holy Spirit.*

Thus, then, it appears that Christ is the beginning and the cause of our spiritual resurrection by his corporeal death and resurrection.

Now as to that corporeal resurrection which we expect; of this also Christ is *the beginning*, in all those ways which we have touched upon in the spiritual resurrection. 1. As the meritorious cause: For by his passion and victory he won for his people a glorious resurrection: *He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*, Rom. iv. 25. *But whom he hath justified, he will glorify*, Rom. viii. 30. *Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God*, 1 Pet. iii. 22.*

2. As the efficient cause: For he himself by his Divine power will raise up all his people to glory; John v. 28, *The*

* Our Author's words under this reference are, "Deglutiit mortem, ut vitæ æternæ hæredes efficeremur," which are borrowed from the Vulgate, and seem to be an addition to the text, as an interpretation.

hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, &c. and 1 Cor. xv. 20, *Christ is risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that slept.* Why the first-fruits? Because, like as under the law, the offering of the first-fruits was the cause why the rest of the fruits should be blessed; so the resurrection of Christ is the cause why the rest of the members shall rise again. *I am released from my death; I rise again by the power of Christ,* says Prudentius, in Apoth.

Lastly, As the exemplary cause. For the glorious resurrection of Christ the head, holds out to us an example of our resurrection and future glory: *He shall change our vile body, that he may make it like to his glorious body,* Phil. iii. 21.

It is therefore evident that Christ is most deservedly distinguished with these titles by the Apostle, viz. of *the beginning* and *the first-born from the dead*; as well because he quickened himself to the life of glory, as because he quickens all that are his, both from spiritual and corporeal death.

Observe, 1. From the circumstance of Christ being said to be to us *the beginning* both of the life of grace and of the life of glory, we conclude that they who are not united to this beginning, are neither partakers of grace in the present life, nor will be of glory in the life to come: but this union is effected by faith and the Holy Spirit: they who are destitute of these will also be destitute of the other.

2. Since Christ is called *the first-born from the dead*, we understand that death is not now to be feared by Christians; who are entitled to expect by-and-by a certain new and glorious resurrectional birth. For as Christ, on rising again, is called *the first-born from the dead*; so all we, after rising again, shall obtain a certain new nativity. *He hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance reserved in heaven,* 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. *Death doth not take away life, but renews it,* as spake Prudentius wisely.—Thus much respecting the titles themselves.

That in all things he might have the pre-eminence.] The Apostle is now engaged in shewing that the titles above-mentioned belong to Christ by the best possible claim.

Some refer these words to every thing which had preceded them in his description of Christ the Redeemer: as though the Apostle had said, *He is the image of God, the first-born of every creature, the head of the Church, the beginning and first-born from the dead*, to this end, *that in all things he might have the pre-eminence*, i. e. that it might be proclaimed to the whole world, that he is the Lord of all creatures, and placed above all things which are either in heaven or in earth.

Others refer them to this last clause, in which Christ is declared to be *the first-born from the dead*, in this sense; Not only is Christ the Creator and chief of all things which live, but also, by his death and resurrection, he is *the first-born*, he that again quickens *the dead*: this only was wanting to him; therefore, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence, he chose to die, he chose to rise again *the first-born from the dead*. If any other had overcome death, and quickened us, then Christ would not have had the pre-eminence in all things; for that other would have been the chief in respect of the dead.

Here it is proper to remark the wonderful wisdom of the Apostle in divine things, who, in the death of Christ, which appeared full of infirmity and ignominy, finds an argument for augmenting his glory and majesty. For although this circumstance *of dying*, if considered in itself, is a mark of infirmity; yet for any one *so to die*, as to raise himself again, as to deliver all others from death, by the power of his death and resurrection, i. e. to be *the beginning and the first-born from the dead*, is pre-eminently honourable and glorious.

Verse 19.

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.

The Apostle still proceeds in confirmation of those titles which a little before he had bestowed upon Christ. But in this verse there are two reasons complicated and involved together, which we shall separate for the sake of perspicuity. The first is taken from the efficient, or ordaining cause, in this manner; *it pleased* GOD THE FATHER (for these words must be supplied) that Christ should be *the head of the Church, the first-born from the dead, &c.* therefore, on the best possible ground, we attribute these titles to him. So Peter, Acts ii. 36, said, *Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ: i. e. God the Father himself hath given the Church to Christ, and in turn Christ to the Church, and hath constituted him its head and Saviour, by his eternal ordinance.*

But how was this *good pleasure* of God made evident to Paul, or how can we be assured of it?

1. From the testimony of God himself in his word; for *Moses and the Prophets bear testimony* to Christ the Redeemer. *Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me,* John v. 46, &c. 2. From the whole life of Christ, from his death and resurrection; in all which his Divinity shone forth, and proclaimed to the whole world that he was sent from God the Father, to gather together the Church, and accomplish the salvation of man.

It is not without just reason that the Apostle, in speaking of the Redeemer of the human race and the head of the Church, puts us in mind of the good pleasure of God; because no one could take this honour to himself without the Divine will and decree. For which reason God himself revealed this his good pleasure by the prophets, as in Isaiah xlii. 6, *I the Lord have called thee, and have given thee*

for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. And Christ himself, on every occasion, enforces this decree of God, and this his mission from God the Father, Luke iv. 18, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me, he hath sent me to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, &c.* Isa. lxi. 1. And John iv. 34, *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me.*

Two things are to be noted here :

1. That salvation and grace are not to be sought in any other than in Him in whom it hath pleased God they should be sought. But concerning his will respecting it, we are to judge from the word of revelation. In the whole business, therefore, of our salvation, this thought ought always to be present to Christian minds, What is the good pleasure of God? For if we turn aside from his will, in vain do we expect any good. For example: I desire the remission of sins, or deliverance from some impending evil, or some spiritual grace: I hesitate about what must be done to obtain the object of my desire: The orthodox direct that I should flee immediately to Christ, and plead his intercession alone with the Father; the Papists direct that I should flee to the blessed Virgin, or to other saints. Here, then, what is to be done? You must enquire, What hath been the good pleasure of God the Father? You must obey his will. We easily shew you that it hath pleased God that we should use the intercession of Christ our head: but the whole tribe of Papists never will prove from the Scriptures, that it hath pleased God that we should approach him by the mother of Christ, or through the saints.

2. Since it hath pleased God that Christ should be our perfect and absolute Redeemer, it is manifest that they undermine the eternal purpose of God, who have devised new modes of salvation, of which it cannot be said, that it hath pleased God we should seek remission of sins by them. Hither we may refer human satisfactions, papal indulgences, and whatsoever is blended in the business of salvation without the ordinance of the Divine will. All

these, as much as in them lies, set aside the eternal decree of God respecting human salvation.

2. *All fulness dwell.*] This is that other reason why Christ is most properly called *the head of the Church*; and it is taken from the formal cause, in this manner; God, whom it pleased that Christ should be *the head of the Church*, not only so ordained by decree, but, besides, furnished him with all the gifts which were requisite to render him the *suitable head of the Church*. This title, therefore, most especially befits him.

By *fulness* in this place some understand a fulness of Deity; others, a fulness of habitual grace.* It is certain each fulness dwells in Christ; and perhaps the Apostle desired to comprehend each. For doubtless he asserts, that there is in Christ whatever is requisite to render him the perfect Redeemer of mankind, and *the head of the Church*: but for undertaking these offices, both a fulness of Divinity and a fulness of habitual grace are requisite. Concerning the Deity of Christ we have before spoken: of the fulness of habitual grace we shall only shew these three things briefly.

1. That this fulness of grace was in Christ.

2. Adduce some reasons why it was befitting that a fulness of grace should be in Christ.

3. We will shew that this fulness of grace was the privilege of Christ alone.

1. As to the first; when we say that there was in the man Christ a fulness of habitual grace, we mean not that this grace was infinite: for, since it is a created quality, and is inherent in the soul of Christ, which also was created, it cannot be infinite. But by *the fulness of grace* we understand all those perfections to which the term grace extends itself. For whereas a certain measure of grace is found in other men, so that one man may be endowed with some gift of grace in which another is wanting; in Christ

* Vide our Expositor's other great work, "Dissertatio duo de Justitia actuali et habituali, &c."

there is a concurrence of all the gifts of grace. Besides, whilst other men obtain grace in an inferior measure; Christ not only possesses all grace, but also hath it in the highest degree. Whence some say that this habitual and infused grace of Christ, may in some sense be termed infinite: viz. inasmuch as it is not limited in kind or degree; but contains in itself whatever falls under the term grace: As if any one should say the light of the sun is infinite, not as far as regards the essence of that attribute, but as far as the nature of light alone is considered; because whatever appertains to light is found in the solar light in the highest degree. But this is an incorrect mode of speaking. The Scriptures every where affirm this fulness of grace to be in Christ, John iii. 34, *The Spirit was given to him without measure. In him are all treasures*, Col. ii. 3.

Ye see then that all fulness of grace is in Christ.

2. Now, in the second place, let us consider, Why it was necessary this fulness of grace should be in Christ. First, *the fitness of things* required it, on account of the union of his soul to the Word. For it is just and proper that in proportion as any thing is nearer to the influential cause, so much the more abundantly should it partake of the influence itself: Since, therefore, God himself is the fountain of grace, the soul of Christ, so near to God, cannot but abound in grace. Secondly, *necessity* requires it, from consideration of the end, on account of the relation of Christ himself to the human race. For grace was to be bestowed on him not as on a private person, but as the universal fountain from whom it might be transfused into the rest of men. But in this fountain all the parts ought to be full and combined. The Evangelist shews that grace is shed abroad in us from Christ, John i. 16, *Of his fulness have all we received*. And the Apostle, Ephes. iv. 7, *To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*.

3. It remains that we shew, in the last place, that this fulness of grace is peculiar to Christ alone. To prove

which we employ this one argument. In the saints *militant* here on earth there is not a fulness of grace; for it cannot consist with so many remains of the old man as are found in them: for a fulness of grace leaves no room for sin. But not even in the very saints *triumphant* is there this perfect fulness of all grace which is in Christ: For if one star differeth from another star in light and magnitude, then how much more does it differ from the sun? All the blessed have the greatest measure of grace and glory which the mind of each individual can contain; but the mind of any mere creature hath not that capacity, either of grace or of glory, which Christ hath. There is *fulness* in him alone.

But an objection is raised, that the Virgin Mary, for instance, is said to be *full of grace*, Luke i 28; and Stephen also *full of grace and power*, Acts vi, 8: and that therefore a fulness of grace is not peculiar to Christ.

I answer, the fulness of grace is twofold: One may be regarded on the part of grace itself, when a man hath it in the greatest extent, both as to every kind of grace, and in the greatest perfection as to degree. This is the fulness of Christ alone. The other regards grace on the part of the possessor, when a man hath it as fully and as sufficiently as his state and condition can contain: And thus a fulness of grace is compatible to Mary, Stephen, and others: For the Virgin Mary had full and sufficient grace for that state and condition to which God had chosen her.

And thus briefly have we dispatched those three points which we proposed to explain: That all fulness of grace was in Christ; Why all fulness ought to dwell in Christ; and that this fulness is found in Christ alone.

Hence observe, that God is not accustomed to impose an office upon any one, without at the same time, conferring upon him all those powers which are necessary for the discharge of it: He lays upon Christ the office of *head of the Church*; but he also imparts to him *a fulness of grace*. Therefore, whoever thrust themselves into offices, for the

administration of which they are altogether incompetent, are not called to them by God, but are impelled either by avarice or ambition.

2. For any one to be accounted the *head of the Church*, he must necessarily have a *fulness of grace*. In whom this *fulness* is wanting, it is well with him if he be numbered among the members of the Church; he cannot assume to himself the name and the honour of *head* without the greatest arrogance or folly, as Gregory hath shewn, Epist. lib. i. epist. 82.

3. Since there is a *fulness of grace* in Christ alone, we must expect its streams to flow to us from him alone: they who seek grace elsewhere *commit two evils; they forsake the fountain of living waters, and hew them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water*, Jer. ii. 13.

And now we have gone through the description of Christ our Redeemer.

Verse 20.

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

Our Apostle has, up to this point, been occupied in explaining the doctrine of Redemption. The blessing of redemption itself he has slightly glanced at in verses 12, 13, 14. From that 14th verse to this place, he has described the Redeemer, and dignified him with various titles. Here, in this verse, and the two following, he again returns to the subject of redemption, and more copiously expounds the mode of it, having before but briefly touched upon that topic. But of the work of redemption, or reconciliation, he speaks first, *generally*, as far as it relates to all, in this verse: then, in the two following, *speciallly*, as far as it pertains to the Colossians themselves.

Now in the words before us there are many things to be observed :

1. That the reconciliation is effected.
2. By whose decree and authority it took place.
3. With what it was effected.
4. By whom.
5. In what manner.
6. On whose behalf.

1. The Apostle takes it for granted that the work of reconciliation is accomplished. He does not, therefore, apply himself to prove that mankind *is* reconciled to God, but to present to our view the very method of reconciliation. Now *to reconcile* is nothing else than to renew a friendship broken asunder by some grievous offence, and so to restore the parties at enmity to their former concord. And here we must bear in mind, that, before the fall, all rational creatures were in close familiarity with God ; but by that apostacy there took place, as it were, a violent separation of the creature from God, and a turning away of God from the creature : so that the same God who had loved man, when created, as a son ; hated him, when fallen and corrupted, as a traitor. But notwithstanding this fall of man, and this hatred of sin on God's part, it pleased God to reconcile fallen man to himself.

From this certain persuasion of reconciliation being accomplished, arises our great consolation in that spiritual struggle which the conscience experiences under the horror of sin.* For if we had to treat with a God hostile to us, who, under the load of so many sins, could raise his eyes towards heaven ? who could think think on the Divine Majesty without trembling ? But when we recollect that we have to do with a God propitiated and reconciled, we approach the throne of mercy with great confidence. For he will not deal with us in strict justice, as with enemies ; but, as if treating with friends and children, he will pass

* Vide Note, p. 91.

by our sins, he will call to remembrance his fatherly pity and compassion; and that, indeed, because the reconciliation is accomplished.

2. In the second place it is to be inquired, By whose decree, counsel, and authority this work of reconciliation hath been undertaken and accomplished? We answer at once, that it was done by the authority and appointment of God the Father. This we gather from the connection of this verse with the preceding; *It hath pleased him* (that is to say, the Father) *that in Christ should all fulness dwell; And by him to effect the reconciliation.* Here, therefore, it is also proper to substitute that word *εὐδόκησε*, *it pleased the Father to reconcile*, &c.

In many other places the work of reconciliation is ascribed to God the Father: But that remarkable one, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, contains the sum of them all, *God hath reconciled us unto himself: God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.* Although, therefore, (as we shall presently shew) the work of reconciliation is attributed to Christ, as the proximate and immediate agent; yet it is proper to ascribe it to God the Father; and, by consequence, to the whole Trinity, as the primary cause: For the whole Trinity, which foresaw from eternity the fall of the human race, pre-ordained this way of effecting reconciliation by Christ, and inspired the man Christ Jesus with the will to suffer for the redemption of mankind. So it is said in Isaiah xlii. 6, *I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people*, &c. In which place the prophet teaches us, that Jehovah himself had ordained and called Christ to this work of reconciliation, and strengthened and upheld him during his whole accomplishment of human salvation. It is evident, therefore, that God was the primary author of this reconciliation, and was induced to devise this plan of our redemption entirely from his own good pleasure, and from free love. The Apostle here employs this particular term *εὐδόκησε*, *It pleased him well.* And in Jeremiah xxxi. 3, we read, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love.* And in all parts of Scripture, this gratuitous love of God is de-

clared to be the cause why the Father sent his Son into the world to obtain salvation for us, John iii. 16, *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.* And in Ephes. ii. 4, 5, *For his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, he hath quickened us, &c.* For, as Al-tissiodorensis well observes, *love is the first gift in which all others are given.*

But here a doubt meets us concerning this eternal love of God. For it may be asked, What need was there of reconciliation, if God loved us from eternity? since reconciliation is not needed among friends, where there are no enmities.

We offer an answer from the venerable Bede.* Thus, says he, in Rom. v. *God loved us in a wonderful manner, whilst he hated us: in every one of us he hated what we had done; he loved what he himself had done: i. e. as the Schoolmen say, he loved the human race as far as respects the nature which he himself had made; but he hated it as far as respects the guilt which men had contracted. Therefore the love of God towards the being created by himself, moved him to devise this reconciliation: the hatred of God towards sin, prohibited by him, but committed by us, subjected us to the necessity of reconciliation. Aquinas, therefore, 3 quæst. 49. art. 4, rightly states the matter; We are not said to be reconciled, as though God began to love us anew; for he has loved us with an eternal love: but because by this reconciliation all cause of hatred is removed, as well by the remission of sin, as by the re-payment of a more acceptable good.*

Hence we are taught that our salvation is not the wages of our merit, but the free gift of God. For this original decree of human redemption proceeded from *ευδομία* *Divinâ,*

* In the account of Bede given on page 73, by inadvertence, a remark intended to have been inserted respecting his History, was omitted, and the Translator takes occasion to introduce it in this place. It is, that that work, though drawn from such stores of learning as existed in the cotemporary Italian church, abounds with evidence, that many dogmas which the Papacy has of late years obtruded upon the world, were not known in the Church up to Bede's time.

the good pleasure of God, and from his eternal love, whereby us, who were fallen and sunk in sin, he hath voluntarily saved and reconciled to himself: according to that saying of Ambrose in Epist. 11, *God called us to salvation when we were straying from him, and not even desiring the right way*; and Paul to Titus, ii. 11, *The grace of God which bringeth salvation, appeared unto all men, Ἐπεφάνη ἡ χάρις*; as it were, shone upon us suddenly and unexpectedly, when we were neither seeking or looking for such a thing.

3. Let us proceed, and see, in the third place, to whom we are reconciled. *To himself*, says the Apostle, i. e. to God the Father, and, consequently, to the whole Trinity. So he speaks in many places: Rom. v. 10, *When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*: and in 2 Cor. v. 19, *God was in Christ reconciling the world*: To whom? *To himself*. It is plain we must understand in these places, by the word God, *God the Father*, because of the correlative *Son* which is subjoined.

But here we must beware not so to consider ourselves reconciled to God the Father, as to deny that we are reconciled also to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. For since all sin is committed against the Divine Majesty, it follows of necessity, that the three Persons who possess the same essential Divinity, and were equally offended by the commission of sin, should be equally appeased by the expiation and remission of it.

But two reasons are assigned by Zanchius,* (De trib. Elohim,) why the Scriptures usually teach that we are re-

* Jerome Zanchius, born of an illustrious family at Bergamo, in 1516, became a member of the congregation of canons regular of St. Giovanni di Laterano, when only fifteen years of age, and while in that society formed a close intimacy with the celebrated Peter Martyr, also an associate of their community. The conversation and example of this distinguished convert to the reformed church, made a great impression upon Zanchius, as well as upon many of his brethren, which was farther increased by the lectures which Peter subsequently delivered at Lucca. The result, though not immediate, was decisive; and Zanchius, after having worn the monastic habit nearly twenty years, at length threw it off, in conjunction with eighteen of his companions, and openly seceded from the Romish communion. This abjuration necessarily induced him to quit Italy; and accordingly, in 1550,

conciled to the Father, rather than to the Son or the Holy Spirit. First, Because the Father is the fountain of the whole Godhead, and of all the Divine counsels and operations: on which account also it happens, that he is, in order, the first of those against whom our sin is committed; and, in order, the first of those to whom we are reconciled. Scripture therefore usually states, that we are reconciled to the Father, rather than to the Son, or the Holy Spirit, that it may indicate the fountain whence reconciliation flows, and against whom sin is first committed. The other reason is, Because the Scriptures would point out the peculiar office of each Person. For although the acts of the Trinity are ad extra indivisible, yet certain of them are appropriated to each Person peculiarly. It is, therefore, the property of the Father, as the fountain from whence grace flows, to receive us into favour: and hence the Scrip-

he took refuge at Geneva, where he remained two years; and then, declining an invitation to England to fill a Divinity professorship at Oxford, he proceeded to Strasburg. Here he obtained the Theological professorship, and read lectures both in Divinity and in the Aristotelian philosophy, with great reputation, till 1563, when, owing to the increased annoyance and persecution he had to endure at Strasburg, he removed to Chiavenna, in the Grisons, in the capacity of Pastor to a reformed congregation there. During his residence here, he had to witness the devastation of a dreadful pestilence among his flock, which almost depopulated the place. The Divinity Chair at Heidelberg becoming vacant in 1563, he was induced to accept of it, and settled there under the immediate patronage of Frederic III. Elector Palatine, at whose instigation he composed two celebrated treatises, the one entitled *De Dei naturâ*; the other, the one quoted above, *De tribus Elohim uno eodemque Jehovahâ*. The treatises were directed principally against the Socinian heresy, the advocates for which were exhausting every artifice to degrade the Son, and Spirit of God, to the level of mere creatures. His amiable and enlightened Patron had urged Zanchius to be very particular in canvassing the arguments made use of by the Socinians; and Zanchius gave himself to the work in a truly Christian spirit; producing two treatises fraught with the most solid learning and argument; and breathing, at the same time, genuine candour and sterling piety. The death of the Elector in 1578 occasioned his resignation of the Professorship at Heidelberg: but although he took up his abode after this event at Newstadt, he returned to Heidelberg in 1585, and there passed the remainder of his days, dying in that place in 1590.—He was the author of several other important controversial treatises, of which one “On the Doctrine of Predestination,” has been translated into English.—Vide Middleton and Gorton.

tures are wont to say, that we are *reconciled to the Father*. It is the property of the Son, as Mediator, to intercede, and fully to pay λύτρον, the ransom-price of reconciliation: hence they say that we are reconciled *by the Son*. It is the property of the Spirit to set the seal to this confidence of reconciliation in our hearts. We are reconciled, therefore, to the Father, and we are reconciled also to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, inasmuch as they are one God in three Persons.

But here it is objected: If Christ reconciles us to the whole Trinity, then he reconciles us to himself: but no one is called a Mediator in regard to himself, but with reference to another.

I answer, The Son must be viewed in a twofold light: In one with reference to the Divine essence and nature, in regard to which he also is offended: in the other with reference to the Divine economy, whereby this Person, although offended, was willing to take human flesh, and, by a voluntary engagement, to be the medium of reconciliation between God and men. The same Christ, therefore, *received* the sacrifice of reconciliation, as God offended in his nature; but he *offered* it as Mediator, the God-man, in the Divine economy, or voluntary dispensation of grace.—This is the opinion of Junius.

Ye now understand to whom we are reconciled, viz. to the whole Trinity. Let us then enquire,

4. In the fourth place, by whom this reconciliation is effected. *By him*, says the Apostle; i. e. By him whom he had before called *the image of God, the first-born of every creature, the head of the Church, endowed with all the fulness of grace*; by Christ Jesus, the incarnate Son of God. *There is none other name under heaven whereby we can hope to be saved*, Acts iv. 12. No creature either could or ought to reconcile us to God; not an angel; nor a mere man; but Christ the Θεανθρώπος—the Son of God. An angel could not reconcile us, because the rule of Divine justice required, that satisfaction should be given by the same nature that had sinned and was to be delivered. Neither, indeed, was it fit that man should owe his salvation and re-

redemption to any other than to him to whom he owed his creation. Bernard, *De passione Dom.* cap. 46, gives as a reason, *Because redemption more excites us to love than creation.* If, therefore, we had been redeemed by any other than he who created us, we should have loved him more than our Creator. I even affirm, finally, that an angel could not perform this work. For an angel owes to God whatever he hath, and can do on his own account: he has no superabundant merit, which he can afford to expend for the redemption of man. But if an angel could not effect this work of reconciliation, much less could a mere man, guilty of sin, and obnoxious to Divine wrath. For, as the Apostle says, *Ephes. ii. 3, All are by nature the children of wrath.* Nay, if we could suppose any man entirely free from sin, he nevertheless would not be a fit redeemer and reconciler for mankind. For the redemption and reconciliation of the human race requires a mediator whose obedience is of infinite merit, whose humility is as pleasing to God as the pride of our first parents was displeasing. But the obedience of any mere man, however holy, is due and required by God; is finite, and hath nothing whereby it can answer for and expiate an infinite offence. Therefore Christ alone, the God-man, could and ought to reconcile us to the Father: he alone could, in respect of his Divine nature: he ought, in respect of his human, which he assumed for that very end, that he might deliver man and bring him back to God. Whence the Church, *Acts xx. 28,* is said to be *purchased with the blood of God.*

Hence we infer, that Christ alone is the bond of our union with God; so that, out of him, we are miserable, because not yet reconciled to God.

Hence also we refute their error who seek reconciliation with God either by the aid and intercession, or by the merits of angels or of saints. For since Christ is called *our reconciler*, this title, even as all the former ones, is to be understood exclusively and by way of contrast, as though the Apostle had said, *He, and no one besides him, is the head of the Church; He, and no one besides him, is endowed with a fulness of grace; He, and no one besides him, hath*

the office of *reconciliation* assigned to him by God the Father: By Him, and by Him alone, *it hath pleased God to reconcile all things to himself.*

5. Now let us consider, fifthly, how Christ hath reconciled us to the Father: *Having made peace*, says the Apostle, *through the blood of his cross*, i. e. through the blood shed on the cross; or, through that bitter and bloody death which he endured on the cross.

Two things, then, are here to be discussed:

1. Why God willed peace and reconciliation should be made through the blood and death of his Son; and

2. Why by the death of the cross.

As to the death of Christ considered in itself: Some other possible mode of redeeming mankind was not wanting to God; but no one was more congruous than this, as Augustine writes, *De Trin. lib. 13. cap. 10.* This mode was the most consistent with respect to God, because it accorded as well with the Divine justice as with the Divine mercy. God shewed his justice in exacting a full satisfaction; the death of an infinite person for infinite guilt. He shewed his mercy, in exacting it not from us miserable creatures, who were incapable of paying it, but from Christ, who could pay it. But when we say that another mode of reconciliation was possible, we wish to be understood as speaking of absolute possibility, as it respects the nature of the thing itself: For if it had seemed fit to God, he could have forgiven man all his sins without accepting any ransom; or he might have been content with the least measure of suffering from Christ, although he had not yielded himself to death. But if we regard the eternal decree of God, concerning the deliverance of mankind by the death of his Son, then, upon this hypothesis of the Divine pre-ordination, the death of Christ was necessary to human redemption: for it is impossible either that the Divine fore-knowledge should be deceived, or that the Divine decree should be changed. Hence that prayer of Christ to the Father, *Matth. xxvi. 42, Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done.* The event shewed it could not: not because it was absolutely

impossible, but because God had decreed from eternity, that the benefit of our redemption should arise from the passion and death of Christ; which decree it was impossible to abrogate.

But even as to us, Divines are used to adduce many reasons to prove that this mode of redeeming mankind by the death of Christ was most congruous. And, in the first place, they lay down this principle, That any mode is more suitable and adapted to the attainment of any end, in proportion as there is in it a greater concurrence of expedients to that end. This being admitted, it is easy to shew that in this mode of redemption by the death of Christ, many expedients concur which must altogether contribute to advance our salvation.

1. By this death of Christ, man most clearly discovers the infinite love of God towards him, and is thus inflamed to love God in return, than which nothing more conduces to human salvation. So says the Apostle, Rom. v. 8, *God commendeth his love towards us, in that whilst we were yet sinners Christ died for us.* Now, truly, upon this view of the love of God, ungrateful and inhuman is that man who is unwilling to return that love.

2. By this death of Christ we are constrained both to avoid and to abhor sin. For that must of necessity be deadly which could be healed in no other way than by the death of Christ. Who, then, seriously reflecting that his sins could not have been expiated in any other way than by the blood of the Son of God himself, does not shudder to *trample under foot* this most precious blood by his daily transgression? as the Apostle speaks in Heb. x. 29.

3. By this death of Christ, an example of righteousness, humility, obedience, patience, and of all virtues, is set before us. For the godly rejoice to suffer for righteousness sake, when they reflect that Christ Jesus, the Captain and Author of their salvation, underwent death itself. For as it is honourable of the soldier to drink of that cup which his general had tasted before him; so is it to Christians, to taste of that cup of affliction which Christ himself drank of for them. Therefore this mode was most

suitable, because it especially excites to the love of God, to hatred of sin, and to the practice of godliness.

But now it remains for us to shew why he chose to suffer this ignominious death of the cross; for both in this place, and frequently elsewhere, this is urged by the Apostle, as in Phil. ii 8, *He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* This kind [of death] not only serves to aggravate his sufferings, but also to confirm our faith.

1. This kind of death shews that Christ took upon himself the curse which was due to us, and freed us from the same: for God hath therefore pronounced the death of the cross accursed, Deut. xxi. 23, because he had determined for our deliverance to inflict this shameful kind of death upon his Son. The words of the Apostle, Gal. iii. 13, refer to this; *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: As it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*

2. Because this kind of death corresponded to many types and figures. For the sacrifices which prefigured Christ were placed upon wood, and were raised aloft before they were burnt. The brazen serpent, suspended upon a pole, shadowed forth, according to Christ's own interpretation, his crucifixion; *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,* John iii. 14. *I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me,* John xii. 32.

3. That the pious may understand from thence, that no kind of death for righteousness sake is shameful, or to be dreaded by those subjected thereto. For many who by no means dread death itself, yet shun it when coupled with shame and ignominy: but the cross of Christ arms his disciples against this fear; which was manifest in the martyrs, who avoided not death, however ignominious.

To these reasons we might add others from the Schoolmen; which we shall only name, because they seem partly trifling, and partly too curious.

Because Adam sinned by the fruit of the forbidden tree, therefore this second Adam was willing to suffer punishment upon the tree of the cross.

Because by being lifted up at his death, he seemed to prepare an ascent for us into heaven.

Because being stretched upon the cross, he seemed to call the whole world *to look for* salvation hidden in him.

Because, by his blood running down upon the earth, he would not only purify the earth; but also by his body hanging in the air, he would purify the air.

This, and much more of the same kind, occurs in Aquinas, part. 3. quæst. 46. art. 4.

All things, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.] In this work of redemption it is, in the last place, to be considered, how widely this benefit reaches, how far its virtue and efficacy extend. *It pleased God,* says the Apostle, *by him to reconcile all things, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

This passage is very difficult to be explained: interpreters, therefore, torture it, and are in return themselves tortured by it. In the first place, we must admit that the Apostle is speaking of the efficacy of the reconciliation made by the blood of Christ, as far as this ransom is considered in itself, and in its peculiar value; as far also as the benefit of it is offered to all, by the preaching of the Gospel on the part of God: for he must not be understood as speaking of the actual reconciliation of particular persons; since many are not reconciled to God by the blood of Christ, for want of application.

But yet a doubt remains, on account of the Apostle's distributing his sentence into two members, derived from the places spoken of. He says that God willed to reconcile *all things* to himself by Christ; and then he employs this division, *whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.* It is asked, in what way does reconciliation relate to heavenly things? for where there is no sin, where there is no breach, there needs no reconciliation.

Chrysostom expounds this passage of the angels; whom he states to have been our enemies by reason of the fall and rebellion of man against God their Lord, but to have been made friends and well-disposed towards us after we were reconciled to God by Christ. And in this sense he

supposes Christ to have reconciled the things which are *in earth* and which are *in heaven*. But this interpretation does not remove the difficulty. For although it be true that the angels became more kind towards us from the period when we were redeemed by Christ; yet the Apostle does not speak of *that* in this passage; but he manifestly speaks of a reconciliation of earthly and of heavenly things which is made to God, not which is effected between themselves: *It pleased him to reconcile to himself*, &c.

Others, by *all things which are in heaven*, understand all the faithful who died before Christ's passion; and by the *all things which are in earth*, all the rest of the faithful. But it is not at all likely that the Apostle regarded men alone: for he would then have said, ἔϐϐτε τοὺς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ἔϐϐτε, τοὺς ἐν τοῖς οὐρανῶϊς, *whether they be persons in earth or in heaven*; and would have used παντας, *all persons*, not πάντα, *all things*.

The Apostle, therefore, seems in this distribution to have intended to comprise divers objects, viz. men and angels; nay, the whole fabric of the heavenly and earthly creation; all which in their proper measure participate in this benefit of redemption; according to that expression of this same Apostle, Ephes i. 10, where he says, *That God purposed in the dispensation of the fulness of times, ἀνακεφαλαιῶσασθαι to gather together in one, or to renew all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth.*

When, therefore, the Apostle says, that it pleased God *to reconcile all things to himself, as well things in heaven, as things in earth, by the blood of Christ*, we say this reconciliation, taken *strictly*, refers to men alone. For since *to reconcile* is to renew a friendship broken off by offence, we alone, from among his enemies, are restored unto the love and favour of God, which we had lost by sinning. If we understand it for *effectual* reconciliation, it regards the elect alone, who constitute, as it were, a community: as says Ambrose, De voc. gent. i. 3, *Among the elect there is a certain special universality to be reckoned.* But if we may understand it *analogically*, it may be extended to the blessed angels themselves, and to all creatures.

With respect to angels; as far as they are confirmed in grace and established in the Divine favour through Christ, so that now it is clearly impossible that any enmity should occur between them and God; therefore the establishment of angels in Divine grace through Christ, is the same thing as the reconciliation of men by the same.

Neither may we doubt that the angels themselves need the grace of Christ the Redeemer, that is to say, the grace of *confirmation* and *exaltation*, though not the grace of *reconciliation*. For, as they are creatures, they cannot of their own nature be beyond danger of falling. Moreover, that heavenly and glorious union with God, which the blessed angels enjoy in eternal life, is a benefit which surpasses the deserts of any creature whatever; therefore, not even the angels themselves are admitted into this ineffable bliss of the Divine fruition, but so far forth as they are enrolled under Christ, the head both of angels and men: Whence the Apostle calls the blessed angels *the elect*; 1 Tim. v. 21, *I charge thee before the elect angels*. But the election, whether of men or of angels, out of Christ, cannot be understood. To this, I think, refers that passage of Job (Job xxxviii. 7) where good angels are stiled *sons of God*, not because they are begotten of God (for Christ is the only Son of God) but because they are adopted as sons of God for Christ's sake. Hence, therefore, it is evident, that the grace of Christ the Mediator is necessary for the happiness even of angels; not that by it they should be justified and absolved from sin, but that by it they may be confirmed in the Divine love, and exalted to the glorious and abiding participation of God, which transcends the power and dignity of created nature.

Now, in the last place, as to what pertains to the fabric of the world; it is certain, as all things were created for man, so by the sin of man all things were in a manner overturned, and subjected to vanity and misery. For so the Apostle expressly teaches us, Rom. viii. 19, &c. *The whole world waited for the manifestation of the sons of God: For the creature was made subject to vanity under hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of*

corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. To whom, therefore, will this whole fabric of the world owe its restoration and renovation? Doubtless to Christ the Son of God, our Creator and Restorer, who, dying without sin, won the privilege of being the restorer of all things which were fallen to ruin by sin. It may not, therefore, be improperly said, that Christ hath reconciled *all things to God, as well the things that be in earth, as the things that be in heaven: men peculiarly*, by taking away their sins, and the wrath of God occasioned by sin: angels *analogically*; by taking away the possibility of their falling and of incurring the Divine anger: the fabric of the world *metaphorically*; in delivering it from the bondage of corruption, and restoring it to its native purity and beauty, when the fulness of the time shall come; according to that declaration, 2 Pet. iii. 13. *We look for new heavens and a new earth, according to his promise.*—And thus much concerning the extent of this benefit.

Observe then, Since such is the efficacy of the blood of Christ to establish peace between God and men, we must earnestly labour that we may obtain an interest in the blood of Christ, and partake of that peace which passeth all understanding. The only means of applying to ourselves this quickening and saving blood of Christ, is true faith; *Being justified by faith, we have peace*, Rom. v. 1. Let us seek faith from God, that laying hold on the blood of Christ, thereby, that blood may bring peace to our consciences.

Verses 21, 22.

And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprouable in his sight.

The Apostle descends from the proposition to the particular application of it; and what he had stated generally concerning the reconciliation made by Christ, he applies particularly to the Colossians themselves.

Where we have to observe by the way, That general doctrines are of very little avail to influence the minds of men, unless a special application of them be made to the hearers. For that maxim of the Philosophers, *Every action is accomplished by contact*, especially applies to the sacred action of preaching. Every doctrine proposed generally, is occupied, as it were, in a remote object, nor can it reach to the soul itself; but when it is specifically applied, it comes in a manner into the very interior of the mind, and touches and penetrates it. But let us examine the words of the text.

In these two verses four things are to be taken notice of;

1. The miserable condition of the Colossians under the state of a corrupt nature; *ye were sometime alienated and enemies.*

2. The cause of this misery, viz. their actual wickedness; *the mind being intent upon wicked works.*

3. Deliverance from this misery under a state of grace; *now he hath reconciled you in the body of his flesh.*

4. The end or effect of this deliverance; *to present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprouable, &c.*

1. *And you that were sometime alienated and enemies.]* He begins by a description of their miserable condition under sin, in order that they might entertain a greater gratitude

for the benefit of deliverance. First he says that they were *alienated*. From whom? From God, from Christ, from the Church, from all hope of obtaining salvation. For this was the condition of the Gentiles whilst they sat in the darkness of nature, void of the grace of the gospel; as the Apostle fully shews, Ephes. ii. 11, 12, *Remember that ye, when ye were Gentiles, were without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.* This is the misery of those that are alienated. Such were the Colossians; such all the heathen before they were illuminated by the Gospel.

Observe, 1. Clemens Alexandrinus, therefore, has grievously erred, who writes, that the heathen, by virtue of their philosophy, may please God and obtain salvation, Strom. 6.* Augustine more truly says, *that salvation is to be granted to no one but him to whom the one Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, hath been revealed from heaven.* De Civit. 18. 47. Why is salvation granted to no one without this? Verily because he remains alienated.

2. Certain also of the Papists are deceived, who talk about merit of *congruity*, such as they suppose may be found in persons who are not in a state of grace. But whoever is alienated from God and Christ, merits nothing either of *condignity* or *congruity*, but the wrath of God and hell: *For by nature we are the children of wrath.*

Lastly, we must observe, that the Apostle says of the

* The Translator has often been perplexed, in the progress of his undertaking, by the contradictory opinions of Divines and Historians relative to the Fathers; and it has cost him much toil and painful investigation to trace out the truth. In reference to the work of Clemens here alluded to, Dr. A. Clarke, in his "Succession of Sacred Literature, vol. i. p. 125," most highly extols it, representing Clemens as describing in it the true Christian; and asserting that "the whole book is worthy of serious regard, as it points out the pure manners of the Christians who lived in the second century." It is possible Dr. Clarke may thus speak from a consideration of the facts which the book contains, and Davenant with reference to the doctrines. But it is not often that such a favourable view of differences of opinion can be entertained; too frequently they appear to have arisen from envy and party feeling, and to have been sustained by the malignant passions of prejudice and bigotry.

Colossians, that they were ἀπηλλοτριωμένους, *alienated*. Therefore, both they and all men were united to God according to the law of creation; but they became aliens afterwards by their own fault. Which refutes the foolish notion of Valentinus concerning certain men, whom he calls men of wood and earth, whom he imagined were alienated from God and incapable of salvation, being evil by nature; as Irenæus tells us, lib. i. cap. 1. *But, Isa. lix. 2, says, your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear.*

And enemies.] He proceeds in his description of their former misery: They were not only *alienated* from God as to outward condition, but were *enemies* by internal disagreement. Now they are called *enemies* as well in the active as in the passive signification of the term, i. e. they hated God as *an enemy*, they were hated by God as *His enemies*. This tends very much to augment the misery of the Colossians under that former condition: For if it be the height of felicity to be united to God through love; then is it the depth of misery to be separated from God by hostile enmity.

That men in the state of a corrupt nature hate God, and therefore in this sense are his *enemies*, is plain from Rom. i. 30, where among other characteristics of the heathen, this is reckoned by the Apostle, that they are *haters of God*. The Saviour, John xv. 18, charges the whole world with this crime, *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you*; and a little after he subjoins, *He that hateth me hateth my Father also*.

But here it is asked, Since God is goodness itself, and since it is of the nature of goodness that it be loved and desired by all, how are men called *enemies of God*? and in what sense are they said *to hate God*?

It is answered, first, that as *the peculiarity of friends is to like and dislike the same things*, so that of enemies is to like and dislike contrary things. *By way of interpretation*, therefore, (as the Schoolmen say) he is accounted an enemy whose will is opposed to the will of another in all things. But so is the carnal man towards God; Rom. viii.

7, *The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* Secondly, the heathen and the wicked are said to hate God, even *directly*; not in that they conceive him to be the Creator and Preserver of the universe (for that is impossible), but to be a law-giver, a judge, and an avenger.

But man under sin is said to be *an enemy to God* in another sense, viz. inasmuch as he is odious and hateful to God: *For the ungodly and his ungodliness are both alike hateful unto God,* Wisdom xiv. 9. Therefore, whilst the Colossians were under a state of sin, they were under the divine wrath and hatred. Rightly said Augustine, on those words of our Saviour, John iii. 36, *He that believeth not the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him: not, it will come upon him, but it abideth on him, for long since it fell upon all the children of Adam, the burden of it lies upon them, until it be removed by Christ the Mediator.*

Nor is it wonderful that wicked and unholy men should be accounted *enemies to God*, since God himself is most holy and pure. *We consider one thing friendly to another, which bears a resemblance to it in its virtues,* says Plato, De leg. 8. Since, therefore, after the fall, so great dissimilarity took place between God and men, they were of necessity *alienated and enemies.* Therefore,

1. Since as many as are not yet reconciled to God by Christ, are lying in so miserable and grievous a condition, we should hasten to get out of this state of perdition, and strive with all labour and prayer that we may be translated into a state of salvation.

2. Since God alone hath power to rescue us from this state of condemnation; as many as perceive that they are delivered and received into Divine favour, should give continual thanks and render unceasing obedience to their Deliverer.

Thus much with respect to the misery of the Colossians, and, consequently, of all men under sin.*

* What a powerful argument arises from these observations for Christian Missions to the heathen! But even the good Davenant does not appear to have been alive to this consideration.

2. *The mind being intent upon wicked works, Τῇ διανοίᾳ ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς πονηροῖς*; i. e. *the mind cleaving to, or existing in evil works.* For the mind is said to be in that thing which it always meditates upon, to which it is borne, and inclined by its desire; as the mind of a hungry man is said to be in the dish, so the mind of the wicked is said to be in wicked works. I conceive with the learned Beza, that this is the genuine sense of the words, although they are taken in a different meaning by other interpreters. Here, therefore, the Apostle shews the cause of the enmity between God and men who are not yet called, as the Colossians were aforetime, namely, that corruption and depravity inherent in the mind, and breaking forth and shewing itself in wicked works; according to that declaration of God concerning the fall of man, Gen. vi. 5, *Every thought of his heart is only evil continually.*

This corruption of the human mind is perceived in the understanding, the will, and also in the inferior faculties and the affections.

1. The understanding is *clouded* by the darkness of ignorance. Whence that assertion of the Apostle concerning the Gentiles, Ephes. iv. 18, *Having the understanding darkened, &c.* Hence the worship of devils prevailed for true religion among almost all nations; hence they committed many abominable things without shame, as the Apostle amply states, Rom. i. That this blindness of the understanding is a just cause of Divine hatred, is evident from the Divine nature: for *God is light, and in him is no darkness at all*, 1 John i. 5. And according to the primary law of creation, man was made in the likeness of God.

2. As to the will, it is infected with the poison of wickedness; which was not unknown to philosophers themselves. For Plato, in his Sophists, expressly asserts, that the mind of every man labours under two diseases; *ignorance and wickedness.* Hence that observation in Job xv. 16, *Abominable and filthy is man; he drinketh in iniquity as water.* The many adulteries, thefts, murders, and wickedness of every kind openly committed by men, do but too plainly prove this inward perversion of the will. We have here therefore, in the human mind, another cause of this enmity.

3. The last remains, which is ἀταξία disorder in the affections, and rebellion in the inferior appetites against right reason. Hence that saying of the Poet, *I see and approve the better course; but I follow the worse.* The human mind is so hurried away by corrupt affections, that although it perceives what is good and ought to be done, what is evil and to be avoided, yet it cannot restrain itself from being borne away in a contrary direction. This depravity of the human mind Augustine bewailed and wondered at, Confess. viii. cap. 9, *Whence this strange thing? the mind commands the body and it is obeyed; it commands itself and it is resisted.* And the Apostle to the Romans, vii. 19, *The good that I would, I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do.* Such and so great depravity exists in *the mind*, i. e. in the understanding, the will, and the affections of every man not yet called to Christ Jesus: on which account he is most deservedly reckoned by the Apostle *an enemy of God.* Hence we conclude,

1. That the fault of original sin does not consist alone or chiefly (as some of the Schoolmen would have it) in the inferior faculties of the mind, but has pervaded all the powers of the soul, and fixed its chief seat in the noblest part of it, that is to say, *in the mind itself.* For not in this place only, but in many others also, the Apostle teaches that *the mind* itself is wholly corrupt by sin. Whence, Rom. xii. 2, he says, *Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.* And concerning the whole man under a state of sin he asserts, 1 Cor. ii. 14, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.* Most truly said Parisiensis, De sacram. baptismi, *The human mind not having obtained grace, is nothing better than a dead body.* We are not to suppose, therefore, that sin arises solely, or chiefly, from the motions of the sensitive appetite.

2. Amongst the heathen, or whatever others are not yet sanctified in Christ, although there may be found sometimes those who evince an appearance of holiness, of righteousness, chastity, and other virtues; yet *the mind* of all of them is corrupt and defiled by internal impurity. For, although their hand does it not, yet *the mind* is bent upon

and exercised in wicked works. Or if *the mind* shrinks from adultery, murder, drunkenness, and the like; yet is it full of pride, infidelity, vanity, and many other spiritual sins, which, for the most part, are more *culpable*, although carnal vices are more *infamous*. Well spake Tertullian, *There is no truth in those who are ignorant of God, the Head and Lord of truth*. Augustine also says shrewdly, in his preface to Ps. xxxi. *Although their hands are employed in useful operations and they seem to steer the vessel very well, they are nevertheless hurrying it among the rocks*.

3. That all those are still *enemies to God*, and in a state of enmity, whose *minds are occupied in wicked works*. The minds of the godly are often carried away to many sins, lust drawing them aside; but to cleave to, and, as it were, live in wicked works, this is peculiar to such as are not yet rescued from *the power of darkness*.

Verse 22.

Now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death.

The Apostle, after he had set before the eyes of the Colossians their former misery in being *enemies to God*; and had stated the cause of this misery, and of their enmity, viz. their corrupt *mind*: immediately presents to them the contemplation of their present happiness, in that they were received into the favour of God; and he subjoins the end or effect of this reconciliation, viz. their *sanctification* and newness of life, *that he may present you holy*.

Now hath he reconciled.] That is, after the gospel was preached to you and received by faith; after your mind, which was wholly given to evil works, was purified. And here three things are to be weighed by us.

1. We gather from this place that a twofold reconciliation is to be seen in the Scriptures: The one *general*, accomplished by the sacrifice upon the cross, concerning

which the Apostle speaks in a former verse, *It hath pleased God to reconcile all things to himself by the blood of the cross.* And John i. 29, *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.* This I call *general*, because it is considered according to the value of the sacrifice, which is not only general, but infinite; because also it is considered according to the mode of proposing it, the preaching of the Gospel, which mode is indefinite and general; for this expiatory sacrifice is proposed and offered to all by God, according to that declaration Tit. ii. 11, *The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men.* But besides this reconciliation accomplished upon the cross, and *generally applicable* to all, the Scripture also shews us a *particular* and *applied* reconciliation, effected in the heart and conscience of individuals; that is to say, when that sacrifice of Christ, which hath in itself an universal power of reconciling all¹, is actually applied to reconcile this or that man. Of this the Apostle speaks in saying *You hath he now reconciled.* He had before said, *On the cross he hath reconciled all things to God, both which are in heaven and which are in earth,* i. e. he hath paid an adequate price for the deliverance and reconciliation of all; but *now he hath reconciled you* by this particular and applied reconciliation.

2. We are also taught when, and in what way, men become partakers of this reconciliation, which we call *particular*; viz. by the exhibition of faith in the Gospel. For in the fourth verse, the Apostle gives thanks to God for the faith of the Colossians. This faith, therefore, is the reason why the Apostle asserts that those who were heretofore alienated from God, *are now reconciled.* In Rom. iii. it is clearly taught that this application of the sacrifice of atonement to the reconciliation of every believer, is effected by faith: *The righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ is unto all and upon all them that believe,* verse 22. And a little after, *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.* From which words it is clear, that Christ is proposed to the world by God as an *universal* atonement or propitiation; but that He renders

the Father propitious to this or that man, then only when he is *especially* apprehended by them through faith.*

Lastly, We see from these words how Christians may shew themselves to be of the number of those who are truly and effectually reconciled to God, namely, by the change of their mind, will, and works. For from this the Apostle concludes that they were reconciled to God, because that when they were enemies to God, they had their mind occupied by wicked works; but now they manifest themselves to be the servants of God, whilst they strive to please God in all things, and to bring forth the fruit of every good work, as it is said in verse 10, *Now hath he reconciled you.* The other points which might be noticed concerning this reconciliation, having been explained above, we omit; and pass on to the following words.

In the body of his flesh through death.] That is, *in his fleshly and truly human body.* The Apostle speaks of the material cause of reconciliation and salvation; and shews that this sacrifice of the body of Christ, was that true and only sacrifice which was shadowed forth by those legal sacrifices which did not avail to expiate sin, as Paul plainly declares, Heb. x. 4, *For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.* But what kind of body? *A fleshly*, i. e. a human body, and of the same nature with our bodies. But how was his fleshly body the instrument of our reconciliation? In dying; *through death*, says the Apostle. Vide Iren. lib. iv. cap. 74.*

* For ample elucidation of the doctrine glanced at in this and the preceding Section, see our Expositor's Dissertation on "the Extent of the Death of Christ," appended to the second volume of this work.

* Irenæus:—a Christian Bishop and Martyr of the second century, born in Greece, and educated by Polycarp, who sent him on a mission into Gaul, where he became a distinguished member of the church at Lyons, under Photinus. On the martyrdom of this prelate, Irenæus was appointed his successor in the diocese in 174, and presided in that capacity at two Councils held at Lyons, in one of which the Gnostic heresy was condemned, and in the other the Quartodecimani. He also went to Rome, and disputed

It is not necessary to repeat what we said about the death of Christ when explaining the 20th verse. From these words of the Apostle we shall note only two things subversive of the foolish notions of certain heretics :

1. That the body of Christ was *fleshly*, i. e. truly human, not heavenly, or a phantasm, as Marcion and Valentinus formerly fancied, whom Tertullian clearly refutes, *If the flesh of Christ were a phantasm, then also all his works which he did by the flesh were so. The form of his existence was suppositions; the act was suppositions. He was an imaginary worker, and his works were imaginary.* And what they commonly adduced in support of this error, viz. that a fleshly body is unworthy of God, the same Father well clears away, by answering, *That there is no substance worthy for God to assume; but whatever he shall assume, he himself renders worthy.* Which may be illustrated by the similitude of a king taking a consort to himself from among his subjects.

2. That Christ himself truly suffered and underwent death in this flesh. Which refutes the absurd heresy of Basilides, who taught that Simon the Cyrenian, being transformed into the resemblance of Christ, was crucified by the Jews; but that Christ himself stood by in the likeness of Simon and derided the Jews. Perhaps these extraordinary assertions of heretics do not require a refutation; for they who thus argue that all things are imaginary, are themselves in truth *imaginary Christians*, as Tertullian, cap. 27, learnedly argues against the Valentinians.* Thus much concerning the deli-

there publicly with Valentinus and other heresiarchs. He turned his pen against all the internal and domestic enemies of the Church, by attacking the monstrous errors which were adopted by many of the primitive Christians, as appears by his five books against heresies, which are considered as one of the most precious monuments of ancient erudition; yet, though several editions of them have been given in Greek and Latin, no translation has appeared in our own language. Irenæus suffered death in the fifth persecution of the Christians under Septimus Severus, A.D. 202. He was a very humble, modest man, and amidst all his zealous exertions for Christian truth, evinced that he was, agreeable to his name,—“a lover of peace.”

* Basilides, referred to in this Section, was an heresiarch of the second century, the chief of the Egyptian Gnostics; a species of arrogant Philo-

verance. What remains has respect to the end and effect of this deliverance.

To present you holy, and unblamable, and unprovable in his sight.] He thus shews the end of our redemption and reconciliation, viz. the obtaining righteousness and holiness; which in many other places the sacred Scriptures signify. Luke i. 74, 75, *That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life.* And Tit. ii. 14, *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.*

But here the Apostle seems to comprehend a twofold holiness of those that are reconciled; one which consists in the remission of sins, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness; the other which consists in our renovation, and in the fruits of holiness. For in both ways Christ presents all his people holy before God. They are now strictly saints by imputation, because they are regarded as one mystical person with Christ their head; but as to inherent holiness, that is not effected instantly, but increases daily, and acquires not the summit of its perfection before we are translated from this life to the life of glory.

Yet we maintain that this incipient sanctification is real, although not complete. And therefore the Apostle adds these words, *before God.* For he is said to be just and holy before God, who is so in reality, not in appearance only; *in rectitude of intention, not in fictitious imitation,* as Lyra not inaptly remarks on these words.

sophers, who entertained the most extravagant and insane opinions respecting a succession of derivative fountains of being, or existences proceeding from the Deity, through which the stream of life flows onward to the utmost verge of the universe. These they call *Æons*, one of whom they made the Creator of this world. Basilides attempted to blend Christianity with the monstrous absurdities of this system. He wrote twenty-four books upon the Gospel, and in these broached such impieties and blasphemies of the shocking character of which our Expositor has adduced a specimen.—Valentinus, (to whose absurdities reference was made at page 250) was likewise an Egyptian Gnostic of the same period, who, if possible, exceeded Basilides in his insane vagaries and blasphemies—*notions to which one can hardly imagine nothing but the brain of a maniac could have given birth.*

But concerning the distinction of those words which are here brought together, we have forgotten to observe one thing. The expression, then, *to present us holy*, some refer to God, in this sense, to present us such as God may acknowledge for holy and dedicated to him. That next, *unblamable*, they refer to the private conscience; that is to say, that he may present us such as our own conscience does not condemn; according to that word, Rom. viii. J, *There is no condemnation*. Finally, that expression ἀνεγκλητους, *unreprovable*, they refer to others: to wit, that we be such as our neighbours cannot deservedly blame.—But we need not lay much stress on the distinction of the words, since it is the custom of the Holy Scriptures to bring together synonymous words merely for the sake of amplification: and perhaps the Apostle intended nothing else by collecting and uniting these three words, than to make known that Christ the Mediator imparts his perfect righteousness to all his people. But now let us gather some observations:

1. By his saying, that *He may present us holy*, not that *we should present ourselves holy*, it is evident that those who are reconciled and renewed have obtained their holiness from Christ, whether we speak of it as actual, or inherent, or by imputation. For we make no attempts at good, if they be not excited; and they are vain, if they be not assisted. Whence that declaration of Paul, *By the grace of God I am what I am: I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me*. Infused righteousness remains not, neither is operative without Christ: and imputed righteousness covers us only so far as we are accounted in Christ, as members under the head.

2. By his saying that Christ hath reconciled us that *he might present us holy*, we readily understand that they are not yet reconciled to God, who abide in their former impurity; for whomsoever Christ hath delivered from divine wrath, them also hath he freed from the service of sin. We must therefore beware, lest we flatter ourselves with a false hope of reconciliation, without this evidence of sanc-

tification and renewal. This is fully proved from Rom. vi. 18, *Being made free from sin, ye were the servants of righteousness.*

3. Whereas he adds, To present you *holy before God*, he shews that no semblance of piety and religion can profit men, *if by external duties they cover over the secrets of impiety*, as Tertullian says. For he who is commended by men, when blamed by God, shall not be acquitted by men when condemned by God.

And thus far we have explained the benefit of redemption described by the Apostle, as well in general with respect to all, as in particular in regard to the Colossians. The last part of this chapter yet remains, in which he exhorts them to perseverance in this most true doctrine, which recognizes all the means of human salvation as placed in Christ only.

Verse 23.

If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I, Paul, am made a minister.

Our Apostle has before unfolded and applied to the Colossians, the sum of Evangelical doctrine concerning the person of Christ, and the benefit of redemption and reconciliation by Him. From hence to the end of the chapter he exhorts them to perseverance in this most true doctrine, which Epaphras had preached to them, which he, Paul, also had now confirmed by his approbation and concurrence: *Because not that faith which is only received, but that which is retained quickens*, as Cyprian speaks, Epist. lib. i. epist. 5.

In this verse he stirs them up by three arguments to a stedfast faith in this Evangelical doctrine. The first is de-

rived from the utility and necessity of constancy and perseverance in the right faith: for without this no fruit of the redemption by Christ is obtained; *If ye continue in the faith, &c.* The second is derived from the multitude of believers, or from the common consent of all Christians; for this same gospel was preached and received through the whole world; therefore it is folly to leave this and embrace the new doctrine of seducers. The third is derived from Paul's own ministry: Paul, who was an Apostle called of God, and taught the mystery of the faith by the Holy Spirit, had preached this doctrine everywhere; therefore the Colossians ought to abide in this doctrine, and not hearken to those new teachers, who drew them from Christ, and would have them seek salvation elsewhere.

If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye have heard.] This is the first incentive to perseverance in the true faith, derived, as before said, from the utility and necessity of it: From the *utility* in this manner, *If ye continue in the faith, &c.* then *Christ will present you holy, unblamable, and unreprouvable before God*: therefore it is highly useful to continue. From the *necessity* in this manner, *If ye do not continue in the faith*, then ye cannot be partakers of the power of those benefits which are offered in Christ: therefore it is equally necessary to continue. For this verse connects with the former, and unites with it the condition which God imposes upon us, if we would enjoy the redemption and reconciliation procured by Christ. There are many things to be noted in this argument of the Apostle.

1. That by faith we are constituted holy, unblamable, and unreprouvable before God. This is deduced from the very connection of this verse with the foregoing. The Apostle had affirmed in *that*, that *Christ had reconciled the Colossians to God*, in order to *present them holy*: here he adds the condition of *faith*, by which they apply and acquire this holiness to themselves. Therefore, not an incipient renovation, not the works which we do, constitute us righteous and unreprouvable before God; but faith, apprehending Christ and seeking daily the forgiveness of sins.

So it is regarded Rom. iii. 22, *The righteousness of God, by faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all and upon all them that believe.* And Gal. ii. 16, *We know that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.* Whence said Augustine, De civit. lib. 19. cap. 26, *The perfection of our righteousness is placed rather in the remission of our sins than in the perfection of our virtues.* And, Contra duas Epist. Pelag. lib. 3. cap. 5, *Our faith determines that of unjust we are become just, not by the law of works, but by the very law of faith.*

2. The kind of faith of those who are truly reconciled to God which constitutes them holy and unreprouable in his sight, is not an uncertain, temporary, and illusory faith; but a rooted, solid, and stable one. For the Apostle requires us to be *τεθεμελιωμένοι καὶ ἑδραῖοι*, *grounded and settled.* The former of these words is taken from buildings, whose foundations are laid in solid, not in sandy, or miry ground: the other from seats, upon which those who have sat down remain immoveable. This, therefore, the Apostle intends, That the true and living faith which reconciles to God, and constitutes a man just, is not volatile, but, as it were, founded upon a rock, and fixed in a firm place by deep roots. Admirably said Cyprian, Lib. De simpl. prælat., *Let no one account that the good can depart from the Church. The wind does not disperse the wheat; nor the tempest overturn the tree fixed by strong roots. Empty chaff is driven about by the storm; feeble trees are beaten down by the gust of a whirlwind. They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us.* 1 John ii. 19.

3. Upon what foundation this faith rests; even upon the free promises of God which are offered in the Gospel. This the Apostle shews in saying, *and be ye not moved from the hope of the Gospel:* for *the hope of the Gospel* denotes the expectation of those rewards which the Gospel promises to believers. For there is this difference between the Law and the Gospel: the Law puts the hope of eternal life under the condition of works and of perfect obedience; *He that doeth these things shall live in them,* Levit. xviii. 5: but the

Gospel inspires the hope of salvation in us, through the mercy of God alone, on the condition of faith; *He that believeth hath eternal life.*

Therefore the Papists, who find the hope of their salvation in the law, and trust to their own merits for justification, overturn, and, as much as in them lies, extinguish the grace of the Gospel. We do not exclude the pursuit of good works, but the merit thereof; neither do we deny that those who are reconciled should do good works; but we maintain that these works are not such, as can present us holy and unreprouable before God: This is the peculiar province of faith, as it apprehends Christ the Mediator and Redeemer. Although, therefore, we have not a *legal* hope which arises from the special merits and perfect observance of the law; yet we are not moved away from *Evangelical* hope, which is founded on the gratuitous promises of God, and his fatherly compassion by Christ.

Lastly, from all these considerations we conclude, that there are two sorts of men altogether excluded from the benefits of Christ: one, of those who are wholly devoid of faith, of whom it is said, *He that believeth not shall be damned*; the other, of those who have acquired a certain appearance or shadow of faith, yet prove, by falling away, that it was either a loose opinion, or a certain sudden light; not a true and justifying faith, rooted in the recess of the heart, united with sanctification and regeneration. Tertullian, *De præscript. advers. hæret. cap. 3*, says concerning these, *Let the straws of light faith fly away as they will at any blast of temptation; the heap of corn will be laid up the purer in the garner of God.* And a little before, *They are neither to be regarded as prudent or faithful whom heresies have been able to draw aside. He is no Christian unless he persevere even unto the end.* Since, therefore, the utility and the necessity of true and abiding faith is so great, the Apostle, by this consideration, exhorts the Colossians, and all Christians, to continue in the faith and the doctrine of the Gospel.—Thus much as to the first reason.

Which ye have heard, and which was preached to every crea-

ture under heaven.] This is the second reason why it behoved the Colossians to continue in that doctrine of the Gospel which they had learned of Epaphras; namely, because it was the same with that which the Apostles had disseminated through the whole world. For although the truth of the Gospel does not rest upon human authority or approbation, or the number of believers, yet the consent of all the churches in receiving the same doctrine, contributes much to the confirmation of our faith.

But what the Apostle here says, that the Gospel was preached *to every creature*, is taken in various ways by interpreters; yet in this they agree, that under the designation *creature*, should be understood only the rational creature, viz. mankind; because they alone can comprehend and need the doctrine of the Gospel. And so the Saviour himself speaks, Mark xvi. 15, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature*. Therefore this epithet is appropriated in common to the human race by the figure *antonomasia*, because man is the chief of all the creatures. Gregory, in Moral. vi. cap. 7, seems to me to assign a reason for this, more ingenious than solid: *By EVERY CREATURE (says he) man alone is understood, because existence is common to him with stones, life with trees, sensation with animals, discernment with angels: he is, therefore, rightly expressed by a title of universality, under which, in a certain degree, the universe itself is comprehended.*

But it being admitted, that by *every creature* we must understand all men, yet some doubt may arise how the Gospel can be said to have been preached to all men, since it is very probable, that in the time of the Apostles, many existed who were not made partakers of the Gospel.

Some, therefore, reply, that there is a certain hyperbolical synecdoche in these words, nor could the Apostle mean any thing else than that the doctrine of the Gospel was disseminated far and wide. Others think that the preterite is put for the future, which was customary in prophetic predictions, to denote the certainty of future things. Because, therefore, the Gospel was at that time

preached among many nations, and to be preached in due time to all, it is spoken of as preached *then* to every creature.

But they seem to me to explain this passage best, who say, that *every creature*, or *the whole world*, is opposed to the single Jewish nation : so that the sense will be, that the Gospel was proposed not to the Jews alone, as the Mosaic law was ; but also to other nations without distinction. Therefore there is nothing else signified by this kind of expression, than (what Paul sets forth in Galat. iii. 28) that in the Gospel *there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female* ; but that Christ is equally offered to all in the preaching of the Gospel. This Gospel then, in the faith of which he wished the Colossians to continue, is the same as was preached to all other people. But we spake of this universal extension of the Gospel when we explained the sixth verse ; therefore it is not necessary to add more : We only deduce from hence a few observations.

I. We hence infer against the Papists, That it is sufficient for salvation if we yield credence to that Gospel which was openly preached to all, although we may be ignorant of, and reject those doctrines, which they foist upon the faithful under the title of *traditions*. For Paul clearly teaches, that the Colossians would be holy and unblamable, if they continued in the faith and the hope of the Gospel which was preached to every creature. In vain, then, do the Papists cry out, that there are certain traditions not written, but privately committed to certain perfect men, to which, however, they would have the faith of all Christians bound under the pain of anathema. Of this character are those opinions concerning purgatory—indulgences—the adoration of images—the Supremacy of the Pope ; to which if any one does not give credit, he is put as much beyond a state of salvation by them, as if he denied altogether the fundamental articles of the faith. But we affirm with Tertullian, Præscript. Hæret. cap. 22, *It is not to be believed that the Apostles either did not know the fulness of the Gospel, or gave not a complete rule to all*. Nay,

Paul himself deprecates this perfidy which the Papists palm upon all the Apostles: Acts xx. 26, *Ye are my witnesses that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God.*

2. Hence we also infer, That the word of God is not to be withheld from the laity, but that all men are to be invited to the reading, hearing, and meditating on it. For if the Apostles have promulged to all people, all things necessary to salvation; if they committed the same to writing, that from the knowledge thereof *the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work*, 2 Tim. iii. 17, why is that Gospel now pertinaciously denied to a Christian people, which was preached to every creature from the beginning? Whatever they insist upon in opposition to the reading of the Gospel, the same might have been alleged against the preaching of it: For many understood not the Apostolical declarations; many, misunderstanding them, perverted them to establish errors. But notwithstanding these things, the Apostles invited all to hear; therefore, we also ought to call upon all to read. But, on the other hand, the Papists fear lest their people should be injured by reading the Scriptures, though they have no apprehension lest they should be injured by reading foolish and lying fables. The orthodox Fathers have both judged and spoken otherwise about the Scriptures. Chrysostom frequently exhorts the people to read the Scriptures *with all diligence*. Hom. 9. in Epist. ad Coloss. He hath the like in Hom. 3, De Lazaro, and elsewhere. Augustine, De utilitate credendi, ad Honor. cap. 6, says, *The doctrine of Scripture is so adapted, that every one cannot but draw from thence what is sufficient for him, if he only comes to draw devotedly and piously.* It will not be tedious to add to these that most admirable testimony of Damascenus, De fide orthodox. lib. iv. cap. 18: *Κάλλιστον καὶ ψυχοφειλέστατον, &c. The best and most useful thing for the soul, is to search diligently the Scriptures: For as a tree planted besides the running waters, so the soul watered with the divine Scriptures is enriched, and bears perfect fruit, viz. sound faith; and is always adorned with verdant leaves, i. e. deeds pleasing*

to God. But to what purpose are these things? That ye may understand that that wholesome doctrine which God would have to be preached through the whole world, is unjustly withheld from Christian people.

Lastly. When the Apostle directs us to continue in the Gospel which was preached by the Apostles in all the world, he delivers to us the rule of the true and catholic faith, viz. the apostolical preaching, which we now have committed to us in writing. If we can shew the doctrine of our Church to correspond with this, we are Catholics, although we dissent not only from the church of Rome, but from many other churches. For we ought to continue firm and grounded in that faith which was from the first preached to every creature, not in novel dogmas which afterwards crept into the Church. Rightly and wisely said Gerson, *De vit. Spirit. par. 3, The doctrines of the Apostles are of another authority than those of their successors; even as the authority of the primitive Church was greater than that of the present. It is not, therefore, in the power of the Pope, or of councils, to change the doctrines delivered to us by the Apostles: nor have they equal authority with respect to this point, viz. to make any thing to be clearly an article of faith.* Thus testifies Gerson. But Paul himself speaks much more pointedly, *If we, or an angel from heaven, should preach any other Gospel unto you, than that we have preached, let him be accursed, Gal. i. 8.* Since, therefore, our church acknowledges and receives the apostolic doctrine heretofore preached in all the world, let us not regard the railings of Romanists, who call us heretics and schismastics because we continue not stedfast in certain papistical errors.

Thus much concerning the second reason why we should continue in the doctrine of the Gospel.

Whereof I, Paul, am made a minister.] This is the last argument for continuance in the doctrine received. For in these words it is shewn, that the Gospel preached to the Colossians by Epaphras, was the same with that which was every where disseminated by Paul himself. Moreover, Paul, although he was personally unknown to the Colos-

sians, was yet of great celebrity among all the churches : for his wonderful conversion and his call to the Apostleship were matters of great notoriety among them. If, therefore, *every man in his own calling is worthy of credit*, then ought Paul, who was set apart for the preaching of the gospel, to be credited concerning the truth of the Gospel rather than the false Apostles : But this Paul approved the doctrine of Epaphras ; therefore ought the Colossians to continue in it. Three things are here to be observed.

1. Christians must not lend their ears to those who undertake the office of preaching when they have not a legitimate call to it. For the Apostle seems in this place to oppose his lawful ministry to that of those seducers who had crept into the church of the Colossians, relying upon their own temerity not upon the Divine appointment. No wonder, therefore, if those who possessed not lawful authority to teach at all, should teach falsehood. Such were they who wished to lead away the Colossians from the Gospel ; but, nevertheless, they must continue in it.

2. That no one can exercise the public office of the Ministry, unless he can say with Paul, that *he is made a minister of the Gospel*. Therefore a call is to be looked for, *from the authority either of God giving a special revelation, or of a superior giving a mission, or of inevitable necessity* ; as Gerson properly asserts, par. 3. Upon those who act otherwise, that sentence of Jeremiah, xxiii. 21, is deservedly launched, *I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran ; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied*.

Lastly, That legitimate Pastors themselves are to be only *ministers* of the Gospel, not *lords* ; according to that saying of Paul, 2 Cor. i. 24, *We have not dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy*. The true Apostles, *content with ministering only*, left *all authority* in matters of faith to God. But our well known self-erected apostle in sheep's clothing arrogates to himself the authority of creating new doctrines of faith, and of imposing them upon Christian people under anathema : nay more, that whatever he happens to dream when placed in his chair of authority,

must be regarded as oracular through Christendom. But no one is bound to believe a minister, only so far as he proves to us that he speaks according to the mind of the Lord. So Aquinas, quæst. disp. de fide, art. 10, *We do not believe the successors of the Apostles only so far as they announce to us what the Apostles left to them in the Scriptures.* This is the case with all who are made *ministers of the Gospel*; we are not bound to repose faith in them only so far as the testimony of God is considered to be in them. We receive the voice of God himself with undoubting faith; but we prove the doctrine of ministers by judging whether it agrees with divine truth, before we yield credence to it: and for this end, to every believer the faculty of judging is given by the Holy Spirit, as to every man is given by nature and reason the faculty of judging in human affairs.

Thus much concerning these three arguments with which the Colossians are excited to constancy.

Verses 24, 25.

Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the Church:

Whereof I am made a minister according to the dispensation of God, which is given to me for you to fulfil the word of God.

In the preceding verse the Apostle had said, that he was made *a minister of the Gospel* by God: here he expatiates on those afflictions which he underwent on account of *the Gospel* and of *his ministry* therein: and in so doing he seems to anticipate an implied objection. For the Colossians might be inclined to say, *Why do you exhort us to perseverance in the doctrine of the Gospel?* They who profess it are daily oppressed by innumerable calamities. You,

yourself, are now living in bonds in consequence of your professing and preaching the Gospel. The Apostle, therefore, anticipates this objection, and argues, that because he is now enduring persecution on account of the Gospel, they, for that very reason, ought to persevere in it; for unless its doctrines were both true and saving, he never would undergo such numberless inconveniences for the promulgation of it.

Here, therefore, two points are to be considered:—How the Apostle conducts himself under these afflictions; namely, with a placid, and even a joyful mind, *I rejoice in my sufferings for you*. What reasons he had for this joy and for such endurance: and he assigns three,

The Apostle rejoices in these his afflictions, first, because of conformity with Christ; *I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ*.

2. Because of the advantage redounding therefrom to the Church; *for his body the Church*.

3. Because of the nature of the office assigned to him by God, to which these afflictions were subservient; *whereof I am made a minister*, &c.

Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you.] Here he shews how he conducts himself in his afflictions; not only with fortitude, but with joy and cheerfulness. He therefore wishes, by this his example, both to encourage the Colossians to stedfastness in the Gospel, and even to strengthen them to the endurance of any suffering for the Gospel's sake. This personal fortitude, indeed, and promptitude to encounter afflictions of every kind for the benefit of the Church, he professes on all occasions: vid. Acts xxi. 13; 2 Tim. ii. 10; and 2 Cor. xii. 15. *Most willingly will I spend and be spent for your sakes*, i. e. their souls' sakes. Now from this disposition in St. Paul, we infer,

1. That the ministers of the Gospel ought to be ever ready to bear their cross: *The servant is not greater than his Lord; if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you*, John xv. 20. The ministers are leaders, as it were, in this Christian warfare; and the devil is sure to harass the leaders more than the private soldiers. Cyprian speaks

correctly when he says, *De singul. Cleric. The enemy aims more at the officers in an engagement than the men; and the higher the pinnacles of buildings, the more violently are they beaten by the winds and storms.* If, therefore, patience be requisite for all Christians, however humble their station, ministers of the word, who, of course, are exposed to injuries and reproaches of all kinds, and from every quarter, have the more need of it. Christ himself has apprised them of this in these words: *Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But in your patience possess ye your souls,* Luke xxi. 17, 19.

2. It is not enough merely to bear the cross, it must be done without reluctance of spirit, or inward repining; nay it ought to be made our joy and glory when we suffer indignities for the sake of the Gospel, and of our sacred ministry. It is therefore said of the Apostles, *They departed from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus,* Acts v. 41. *That is a bad soldier,* says Prosper, *who follows his General sorrowing. If you have done any good in a reluctant manner, you are rather the sufferer of the action than the agent of it.* We should, therefore, ever place before us the example of Paul, who rejoices in the things which he suffered.

Thus we see how the Apostle behaved in his afflictions: Let us now investigate the causes of such exemplary patience and joy. The first is derived from the conformity which we have to Christ through sufferings and afflictions, conveyed in these words which immediately follow.

And fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my body.] In this place the conjunction serves instead of a causal particle. For the Apostle is giving his reason why he ought to rejoice in his sufferings, viz. because by this means he fills up in his body that which remained of the afflictions of Christ. And here two questions arise for explanation: 1. Why the Apostle assigns his sufferings to Christ himself. 2. Why he says that he *fills up*, ὑστερηματα, *that which is behind, or the remains, or, as it is in the Vulgate, those things which are wanting in the sufferings of*

Christ. For these words seem at first sight to imply that the passion of Christ was imperfect.

Now as to the first question; the sufferings of Paul, and of all other true believers, are called the sufferings of Christ himself on two accounts:

1. Because of the mystical union that subsists between the Head and the members, in respect of which not only the Head, but the whole body of the Church, is comprised under the name of *Christ*. For this statement we have the clearest authority, 1 Cor. xii. 12, *For as the body is one and hath many members; so also is Christ.* In which expression, the term Christ denotes both the Head itself, and the Church united to this Head. Now it is customary for every one to attribute to himself those injuries which are inflicted upon any part of his body. Thus wounds of the hand or foot are properly said to be the wounds of the man himself; and it is usual for him to exclaim that he is wounded in the hand or in the foot. So also, in the same manner, the Apostle, because he is himself a member of the body of Christ, calls his afflictions *the afflictions of Christ*. This, then, is the first reason: Because Christ and all his members constitute one mystic person.

2. The second reason is; because of the sympathy Christ feels in the afflictions of his members, and which is the result of the union before spoken of. For as we are accustomed to consider the privations and sufferings of those with whom we are most intimately connected as our own, because we are as much afflicted with their distresses as we should be by our own; so Christ accounts the sufferings of his brethren as his own, because he is not less affected by them than when he himself suffered. Virgil introduces Mezentius crying out that he was wounded, when his son was slain by the sword of Eneas.

.....*heu, nunc misero mihi demum
Exilium infelix, nunc altè vulnus adactum.**

Æneid. x.

*Ah! now at length
On wretched me my exile lies,
Now the deep wound is driven home.

So Christ himself exclaims from heaven, Acts ix. 4, *Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?* The afflictions of the godly, therefore, are called the afflictions of Christ, by reason of his union and joint sufferings with them.

Now then let us enquire, Why the Apostle not only ascribes his sufferings to Christ, but also adds, that he himself *filled up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ in his body.*

And first of all, we must beware of inferring from hence that the passion of Christ was imperfect, or that any thing was wanting in it for the full liberation of the human race, and satisfaction for their sins. For the whole volume of Scripture declares the contrary. *He was wounded for our transgressions; and by his bruising we are healed, Isa. liii. 5. By one offering of himself he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified, Heb. x. 14.* As far, therefore, as satisfaction for sins is concerned, there is no deficiency in the passion of Christ.

Therefore, that we may clearly understand this subject, we must know that God not only decreed by his eternal counsel what sufferings Christ on his part should in his body undergo for the redemption of the Church; but also what each member of the Church should in his flesh be subject to for the name of Christ: But both these sufferings, as well of the Head as of the members (as we have already shewn), are called *the sufferings of Christ*, and make up, as it were, one body of sufferings; with this distinction, however, that he suffered for the redemption of the Church, which sufferings of his may be called *προτερηματα* the *preceding sufferings*: we suffer on other accounts, and our sufferings should be called *ὑστερηματα*, the *succeeding sufferings*; for we do but slightly taste of that cup of afflictions, which Christ first drank deeply of and commended to us. But all his sufferings he submitted to for the atonement of sins; we are subjected to them for other reasons.

Any Christian, therefore, may be said to *fill up that which remains of the sufferings of Christ*, when he takes up the cross of Christ and bears patiently those afflictions which

God has allotted to be borne by him after the pattern of Christ, though for another purpose. Upon this passage Lyra makes no bad comment: *The sufferings of Christ are taken in a twofold sense; in one, for those which he actually sustained in his own body, in which nothing remains to be completed; in the other, for those which he should sustain in his mystical body, even to the end of the world; and thus there remains the residue of many sufferings still to be completed.*

What has been thus observed upon the sufferings of Paul, and, by parity of reasoning, of all the faithful, viz. that they are accounted the sufferings of Christ himself, tends

1. To strike terror into the ungodly. Whilst they are afflicting the Church, they think that they are only vexing a few pitiful and contemptible men. But the real fact is far otherwise; for they are wounding Christ himself (who is the Head of all believers) in his members. Vengeance, therefore, the most inevitable and bitter, awaits them; seeing that they are provoking the Lord of glory himself, to whom *all power is given in heaven and in earth*, Matth. xxviii. 18.

2. To the honour and dignity of the godly. For surely an honour and dignity it is to be received into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. Therefore we read in Acts v. 41, *They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus*: And in Phil. i. 29, *To you it is given not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake*. Nazianzen says, reason prescribes that we rather honour than despise the afflicted. And why should we not regard them as highly honoured who are preferred above others to a participation of Christ's sufferings, as it were to a participation of the royal cup; and who drink of that cup, indeed, of which Christ drank first?

3. To the great consolation of the pious. Because it confirms their hope of obtaining future blessedness. *This is a faithful saying, If we be dead with Christ we shall also live with him; if we suffer with him we shall also reign together with him*, 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. Whence Gregory remarks; *The more sorely I am borne down by present evils, the*

more assuredly do I anticipate future joys. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven, Matth. v. 10.

And thus much of Paul's first reason for rejoicing in his sufferings, viz. because of his being made like to Christ.

For his body's sake which is the Church.] This is the second reason which the Apostle gives for rejoicing in his sufferings, viz. because great benefit would arise to the Church from them. For so he speaks to the Philippians, i. 12, I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel. And again, 2 Tim. ii. 10, Therefore I endure all things for the elects' sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. But in what sense is Paul said to suffer for the Church, or for the Elect?

He is said to suffer *for them*, not to effect their redemption, or to expiate their sins; but for their edification and confirmation in the doctrine of the Gospel. For he suffered imprisonment and bonds, not for any actual sins of his own, but for preaching the Gospel: hence he says that *he suffered trouble for the word even unto bonds: 2 Tim. ii. 9.* Nor did Paul ever suppose for a moment that his sufferings could purchase remission of other men's punishment; but only that his example might confirm others in a similar constancy. For which reason in a passage above cited he said, that *he endured all things for the elects' sake*; not that they should look for satisfaction to be made for their sins by the merit of his sufferings; but that *they might obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus.* In this very passage also, immediately after mentioning his sufferings for the Church, he adds, *of which I am made a minister*; not, *of which I am made a Mediator, or a Redeemer*: giving us thereby to understand that he did not speak of his sufferings as affording satisfaction, but as tending to edification. For his sufferings had this end in view, the building up of the Church by preaching the word and enduring persecution.

But since the Papists pervert this passage, to ground their doctrine of indulgences, it will not be at all irrele-

vant to my purpose briefly to glance at the controversy on this point.

Cajetan, in his tract, *De indulgent. quæst. 3*, in order to prove that the sufferings of the saints can make satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to the sins of their fellow men, provided they be applied to them by a Papal Indulgence, alleges this passage, and has these words: *That it was the intention of the saints to suffer for us, the Apostle testifies when he says, I fill up those things which are wanting of the sufferings of Christ for his body which is the Church. Whence it appears clearly, that the divine Providence had ordained some sufferings of the saints should have respect to the completion of the sufferings of Christ, for his body; and that the saints did complete this ordinance by the superabundance of their sufferings.* Catharinus takes occasion from this passage to descant upon indulgences copiously. The Rhemish annotators also collect from these words that the sufferings of the saints do make satisfaction for others, and may be communicated to those who need them on the score of that communion which subsists between all the members of the same mystical body; and in this communication consists, as they say, the dispensation of indulgences. Let us, therefore, in a few words, propound what they on the one side, and we on the other, have stated on this point; and then we shall confirm our doctrine, and refute theirs.* Now the Papists, for enabling them to legalize this scandalous trafficking in indulgences, prepare the way by four preliminary deceptions.

* It is scarcely needful to remark that this refers to the Translation of the New Testament, published by the English Papists at Rheims, in opposition to the authorised Protestant Translation in England, and with a regular series of Annotations in defence of their own tenets, and in refutation of those of the Reformed Churches. It was reprinted in this country in 1601, by Dr. Fulke, with the English Version annexed, and a confutation of the above arguments, in a series of counter-annotations; a work which, containing, as it does, almost every thing that has or can be said on both sides, is, perhaps, one of the most valuable volumes of such a nature in the English language. It was reprinted, with considerable additions, in 1617 and in 1633; the reprints are, of course, more valuable than the early copies. Though not scarce, it has of late years much risen in price, and will

First, they pretend that though God does remit all the guilt to the truly penitent, yet that he does it only by commuting the eternal punishment into a temporal one; so that those sins must either be expiated and redeemed by certain satisfactory works, or they must be atoned for in purgatory.

In the second place, they lay it down as a maxim, that some few, as, for instance, the blessed Virgin, John the Baptist, and many of the martyrs, had suffered much heavier punishments than were due to their own individual sins, and had wrought more good works than were necessary for ensuring their own salvation.

Thirdly, they assert, that these superabundant sufferings of theirs, being duly mixed up with those of Christ, are laid up in the common store-house of the Church.

Lastly, they assert, that this treasure is placed by the Almighty in the hands of the Roman Pontiff, to be disposed of at his pleasure; so that he has the power of bestowing these superabundant sufferings of the saints upon any penitent whatever, who shall, by their potency, be released from all temporal punishment due to him, either from ecclesiastical injunctions, or even from the dispensation of divine justice. And upon these deceptions, as upon a

probably ere long become rare. The student, in purchasing it, should take care to procure a copy which contains his able Defence of the English Translation, annexed.

In 1816 an edition of the Rhemish Testament was published in Dublin, under the sanction of Dr. Troy, the titular Archbishop of Dublin; and on some Notes in it being brought forward in the House of Lords in 1824, on the Examination of the Irish Bishops, the question was taken up in the Catholic Association, the book denounced, and the leader of that body threatened to quit the Catholic Church unless it was suppressed. As a specimen of the charitable doctrines inculcated by those zealous Divines, one of the Notes is subjoined; *Ex uno disc omnes.* It is under the text Matth. xiii. 29, in the Parable of the Tares, “ *The good must tolerate the evil, when it is so strong that it cannot be redressed without danger and disturbance of the whole Church, and commit the matter to God’s judgment in the latter day. Otherwise where ill men (be they Heretics or other malefactors) may be punished or suppressed without disturbance and hazard of the good, they may and ought, by public authority, either spiritual or temporal, to be chastised or executed.*”

foundation, is built the whole system of Indulgences so profusely vended by Papal bulls.

We, on the other hand, contend ;

1. First, that to all believers and true penitents, as well the expiatory punishment, as the entire guilt, is remitted, for the sake of the passion and satisfaction of Christ.

2. We deny that any of the saints ever possessed superabundant merits in themselves, or suffered severer punishments than their sins deserved.

3. If we allow that those saints were harassed and afflicted more than their sins deserve, yet we utterly deny that any accumulation of merits can arise from thence, to be drawn upon for the remission of other men's punishments, which they have incurred from divine justice.

Lastly, if there be a store of merits and sufferings attached to the Church (which, as respects the merits and sufferings of Christ, we willingly acknowledge,) yet we deny that it is committed to the Pope's custody, or that he has any power by his bulls of assigning the sufferings of Christ and his saints to men. And now for the proofs of these positions.

1. Christ the Mediator hath taken upon himself both the guilt and the punishment due to us, and, by his passion, hath delivered us from both ; therefore there can be no need either of our own satisfaction, or of those of the saints, to be applied to us by papal bulls. The antecedent is easily substantiated by the clearest Scripture authorities. *My blood is shed for many for the remission of sins*, Matth. xxvi. 28. But *the remission of sin implies nothing more*, as Durandus properly observes, lib. 4, *than that it is not imputed to us for punishment. There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. viii. 1. But condemnation has reference properly to the punishment imposed for guilt in conformity with the sentence of the judge. Whenever, therefore, condign punishment is inflicted, the sentence of condemnation has most assuredly preceded. *Their iniquities will I remember no more*, Jer. xxxi. 34. But he who executes punishment after the guilt has been forgiven,

plainly shews that he keeps the guilt itself in remembrance. Moreover, when the guilt and the punishment are proportioned, as the measure to the thing measured, then, whatever quantity of expiatory punishment is required, the same quantity of sin committed is imputed. Therefore the first proposition, which supposes that Christ hath obtained for us a half remission, is false. *Christ, says Augustine, by imputing to us the punishment which he suffered, without any guilt of his own, hath cancelled both the guilt and the punishment.*

2. None of the saints either had superabundant merits, or bore sufferings greater than their sins deserved. Therefore it is absurd to look to them for a borrowed satisfaction for those punishments which we deserve from the justice of God. They had no superabundant merits, because no man ever yet hath perfectly satisfied the divine law. *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord,* said the Psalmist, cxliii. 2, *for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.* Again, Ps. cxxx. 3, *If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand.* And Bernard, in his comment on Ps. xci. 14, observes, with equal nobleness of sentiment and piety of heart, *The sum total of man's merit is this, to fix all his hopes on him by whom salvation is complete,* Tom. 1. To this you may add, that the merits of even a holy man are in no way equal to the purchase of eternal happiness; and, therefore, most foolishly do the Papists look for a superabundance, in those in whom it is impossible to find an equivalent. Nor, indeed, did any of the godly at any time suffer punishment more extensive than their sins. For God always inflicts punishment *short* of what the Schoolmen call *condignity*; because infinite punishment is due, as the Papists themselves admit, for a single mortal sin, even of the least degree. The second opinion, therefore, of the Papists, which ascribes penal sufferings to the saints, severer than the demerits of their own sins, falls to the ground.

3. The merits and sufferings of the saints cannot be communicated to others in such a manner, either by imputation or application of them, as to free them from the punish-

ment of their offences : In vain, therefore, do the Papists attempt to establish a treasure upon these grounds. And this we prove,

1. Because, by the general consent of Theologians, no man's merits, save those of Christ alone, extend beyond the man himself. To this the Papists readily answer, that the works of the saints, as to their merits, do not extend beyond the individual himself, nor are transferable to other men ; but that in respect of their satisfactory virtue, they may be both imputed and imparted to others. But we shall easily get rid of this distinction. For whatever has been already most highly rewarded in the saints themselves, cannot still remain to be rewarded, or in any way to be imputed to others for their remission ; but both the sufferings and all the good works of the saints, as well meritorious as satisfactory, are most abundantly rewarded by that single gift of bliss eternal. For these works are, (as they maintain) meritorious as far as they originate in love ; and satisfactory as far as they have penalty attached to them ; But whether we consider love, or penalty, or any thing else as the condition of works, that single prize suffices for a most ample remuneration ; nay, further, *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed.* Rom. viii. 18.

2. Secondly, No man can make satisfaction for another in respect of an injury done to a third person, unless by permission of the person to whom the injury is done. Wherefore Aquinas, in commenting upon those words in Rom. iii. *Ye are justified through the Redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth as a propitiation*, has thus expressed himself ; *According to this, the satisfaction made by Christ was effectual both for justification and redemption ; because God had ordained him to this according to his purpose.* But God never ordained, according to his purpose, that any of the saints should make satisfaction for us ; therefore no satisfaction of theirs delivers us from punishment. *No man can deliver his brother,* Psal. xlix. 8. *Was Paul crucified for you ?* 1 Cor. i. 13. *We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; and he is the propitiation*

for our sins, 1 John ii. 1, 2, viz. he himself alone and no other than he. Leo, writing on the sufferings of the martyrs, and all the saints, well observes, *They have received crowns, they have not bestowed them; and their fortitude has afforded examples of patience, not rewards of righteousness.**

* Pope Leo I. surnamed the Great; elected Bishop of Rome in 440, and deservedly reckoned among the Fathers of the Church. He is allowed on all hands to have been a man of great energy of character, and of decided piety; and very strenuous for the authority of his See. He did not, however, claim for it that supremacy over others which was subsequently assumed; yet it was not a little enhanced in its pretensions by the great respect paid to his personal merits. Soon after his elevation his episcopal zeal was called into action against the Manichæans, who, fleeing from those provinces in Africa which were at that time ravaged by the Vandals, repaired to Rome in great numbers, and soon infected many with their strange doctrine, and corrupted others with their more strange practices. And it is worthy of remark, that in opposing their idolatrous worship of the sun as the throne of God's power, and the moon as the seat of his wisdom, Leo was led to aim at suppressing the custom that had long obtained among the Christians, of turning to the east when they prayed. He alleged two reasons why the custom should be suppressed, and both deserving of particular notice: the first, because men may easily pass from worshipping God in the sun, to worship the sun itself; for he supposes some, who in his time used to kneel down to the sun, to have paid that respect, not to the sun, but to God in the brightest work of his hands. The second reason he alleged is, because it is a wicked profanation of the worship of the true God to use the same ceremonies in worshipping him, that are used by the Pagans, when they worship their idols. By the first of these reasons, as Bower in his life of Leo, has justly observed, images ought to be banished from all places of worship, at least for the sake of the gross and ignorant vulgar, who may easily, and commonly do, pass from the worshipping of God, or our Saviour, in an image or statue, to worship the image or statue itself; and it may safely be said, that among the *Roman Catholics* there is scarce one in a thousand, who does not immediately address in his prayers the image itself, which is rank idolatry. By Leo's second reason, the far greater part of the ceremonies used at present by the Church of Rome, are evidently condemned, as a wicked profanation of the worship of the true God; since most of them have been borrowed of the Pagans, as is notorious, and has been demonstrated by Dr. Middleton, in his "*Exact Conformity between Popery and Paganism,*" and more recently in Gray's "*Connection of Sacred and Classical Literature.*" By Leo's exertions some of the Manichæans abjured their errors, and having first performed the due penance, were received by him into the church. Against those who continued obstinate the imperial laws were put into execution, and they were condemned to perpetual banishment. They deserved, says Leo, a more severe punishment; but to punish them more severely was repugnant to the spirit of the Church, and to that lenity

3. Lastly, the intention of the person making satisfaction is required, where the sufficiency or satisfaction of one is to be applied to the remission of another: but it can never be shewn, that either Peter, or Paul, or any other saint suffered with the intention of our receiving remission of our sins (as to punishment) by their sufferings. Therefore the third proposition, which supposes a store of satisfactions of the saints transferable to us, falls to the ground.

Argum. 4. If there were a store of merits and sufferings in the Church, (which, as to the merits and sufferings of Christ, is most true, for *in Christ there are all treasures*) yet

in which she places her chief glory, abhorring to shed the blood even of the most detestable heretics. How different the spirit of that church is now (remarks the Biographer of Leo, from whom we here borrow), those too well know who have ever had the misfortune to be any ways concerned with that tribunal, of all that ever was heard of, the most cruel and sanguinary—the Tribunal of the Inquisition. And, we may remark, what different doctrines appear to have been inculcated, as well as different conduct practised in the church of Rome in Leo's time, to what has been since taught and enforced by the Papal See! At the fourth General Council at Chalcedon, in 451, assembled to condemn the heresy of Eutyches, who, virtually at least, denied the human nature of Christ, the Legate of Leo delivered a letter from him, in which he defended the Scriptural doctrine on the subject, with a perspicuity so extraordinary at that period, that his Epistle was received as a rule of faith, was called emphatically the *Columna Orthodoxæ Fidei*, and constantly read, during Advent, in the Western churches. Leo suppressed the custom of publicly confessing private sins, but recommended auricular Confession, which had been abolished, about 70 years before, by Nectarius, at Constantinople; and which has since been magnified into a Sacrament. But Leo's most material achievement was the stop which his personal interference put to the ravages of Attila in Italy, whom he persuaded, when at the very gates of Rome, to withdraw his forces. With Genseric he was afterwards, in 455, scarcely less successful; as, although he could not prevent that barbarian from taking and plundering Rome, he yet so far prevailed as to divert him from his design of burning it. Du Pin, who seldom loses an opportunity of striking at the arrogance and presumption of the head of his own church, observes, “The church of Rome never had more true grandeur and less pride than in this Pope's time. The Bishop of Rome was never more honoured, more considerable, and more respected than in this Pontiff; and yet never carried himself with more humility, wisdom, sweetness, and charity.” He died in 461, having occupied the papal Chair 21 years: His works, which consist of Sermons and Letters, were published by Father Quesnel, in two vols. folio, in 1700.

it is no privilege of the Pope to distribute and dispense this treasure, by his bulls, to individuals expressly named : and that for the following reasons :—

1. The blood, and the passion of Christ, and the store of his merits, is applied to particular persons by the sole operation of the Holy Spirit producing faith, and by the internal operation of faith laying hold on Christ ; but no papal bulls produce faith, nor stir up a man to apprehend its object ; therefore they apply neither the blood nor the merits of Christ to men, nor are of any service in the remission of sins. The Pope, then, can do no more for the remission of sins than any other priest : but what is the duty of ministers Paul teaches in 2 Cor. v. 19, *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* He did not grant the power of remitting the punishment of men by bulls even to the Apostles themselves ; but he commanded them, by the word and preaching the Gospel, to encourage men to seek for reconciliation and remission in Christ. Indulgences can be of no use to unbelievers, and to believers they are unnecessary ; because their faith applies the merits and sufferings of Christ to their souls.

2. The dispensing of Christ's blood, and the actual application of his saving merits to a particular person, is entrusted to no man who does not know the person to whom those spiritual benefits are to be imparted ; but neither the Pope, nor indeed any other mortal knows this ; for God alone *knows who are his* : therefore God alone bestows indulgences by the application and acceptance of the sufferings of Christ.

3. Real repentance and true contrition of heart, in conjunction with true faith, is more effectual with God in obtaining perfect remission, than any papal indulgence can be ; for God himself is far more bountiful than any Roman Pontiff : but, if we believe the Papists themselves, neither the ordinary penitence of the faithful can obtain, nor is the benevolence of God wont to grant, any other forgiveness than from guilt only : it is not, therefore, very likely, that the Pope by virtue of his indulgences should be able to absolve a man forthwith from the penalty.

4. Whatever a limited agent does, if he exceeds the bounds of his commission, goes for nothing: but the Pope, in pretending to remit by his bulls, those temporal punishments which divine justice requires them to endure, exceeds the bounds of his commission; for God never delegated such authority to him. Punishments of his own imposing for discipline's sake, he may relax; but those which the Divine justice has determined to exact, he cannot.

5. The Pope cannot de facto absolve any man from those penal chastisements which God is pleased, not uncommonly to inflict, after true repentance; again, therefore, he boasts falsely of his power by bulls to free men from the temporal punishment of their sins. For when God has determined to chasten any man by disease of body, death of children, or loss of property, no plenary indulgence of the Pope can deliver him at all from these temporal afflictions.

6. The remission of sins is fully set forth in Holy Scripture; but this remission by means of indulgences is (as the Papists confess) authorised neither by the Scriptures or the ancient Fathers, but has been brought into repute merely by the act of the Roman Pontiffs. *The Scripture does not speak expressly of indulgences*, says Durandus, lib. 4. disp. 20. qu. 3, *nor do the holy Fathers say a word about them*. Silvester Prierias,* the master of the sacred palace

* Silvester Prierias; so called from his birth-place, Prierio, a village in Montserrat: but his proper name was Mazolini (vide Biographie Universelle, tom. xxviii. p. 30). He was a Dominican Monk, who flourished at the beginning of the 16th century. The date of his birth has not been ascertained; but it is known that he embraced the Monastic life while very young. He studied theology, civil and canon law, and geometry; and, for some time, was a Professor at Bologna. Called to Rome to teach theology, he was soon after nominated Master of the Sacred Palace. He was one of the earliest writers against Luther; but, notwithstanding the lavish commendation bestowed upon his labours by most Italian Biographers, he was not equal to contend with the great Reformer, and Leo X. prohibited Mazolini from continuing to write on the points under discussion; a principle upon which the Roman See has often found it convenient to rest, in order to avoid the bringing out of the whole truth. He, however, nominated him one of Luther's judges; an inconsistency which was severely and justly

(as they call it), says, *the system of indulgences is no where set forth in Scripture.* And further, neither Gratian* himself, nor the master of the sentences, makes any mention of these empty bulls of the Roman Pontiffs.

Lastly, the Schoolmen themselves cannot agree as to the intrinsic value of indulgences; wherefore almost all of them advise those who have procured them, to fulfil all the prescribed penances notwithstanding! And they furthermore add, that to render them effectual there must be a

reprehended by the Protestant writers. The time and place of Mazolini's death are equally unknown; but it is asserted his morals were very relaxed. He was the author of 47 works in Latin, or in Italian, on theology, philosophy, and mathematics: these have long since fallen into oblivion. One of the most popular (for it passed through several editions in the 16th century) was his *Summa Silvestrina, seu Summa de Peccatis aut Casuum Conscientiæ, vel Summa Summarum*: Bologna, 1515, 2 vols. 4to. This, most probably, is the work cited by Davenant. With respect to the admission made by the author as adduced above, Craig, in his "Refutation of Popery," has given it with an amplitude which the Translator cannot withhold from his Readers. He introduces it thus: "Sylvester Prierias, in his controversy with Luther, says, That indulgences have not been made known to us by the authority of the Scripture, but by the authority of the Roman Church, and of the Roman Pontiffs, which is greater. *Indulgentiæ auctoritate Romanæ Ecclesiæ, Romanorumque Pontificum quæ est major.* Thereby constituting the authority of the Pope superior to that of revealed Scripture. As his partisans have elevated his personal authority in the Church, far above the authority of revealed Scripture, this has a direct tendency to render Christianity, like Mahometanism, a system of human institution—an invention of man."—Our Expositor might have added farther, in confirmation of the position in his last Section, an admission of Aquinas, *Sum. part. 1. Qu. 1. art. 8 et 10*, "Our faith is founded upon revelations made by prophets and apostles. The church has instituted nothing except such things as are not essentially necessary to salvation."

* Gratian:—a Benedictine Monk of Bononia, in Italy, of the 12th century, was a native of Chiusi, and was the author of the first portion of the "Decretals," or "*Concordantia discordantium Canonum*;" in which he attempts to reconcile those Canons which seem to contradict each other. One mode of doing this was by maintaining the dogma of Infallibility. The following is his doctrine on the subject, *Cap. 6. dist. 40*, "*Si papa infinitas animas secum in infernum traherit, tamen nemo dedit ei dicere, quid facis?* Though the Pope should draw with him innumerable souls to hell, yet no man ought to say to him, What doest thou?" Gratian was, however, guilty of some errors, which Anthony Augustine endeavoured to correct in his work entitled "*De emendatione Gratian.*" Gratian's Decretal forms the first part of the Canon law.

reasonable cause for them : but if they applied to men the merits of Christ, *they* would procure remission of sins, let the cause of their being granted be ever so trifling. Vid. Gerson, par. 2. tract. de indul.

But now let us meet the arguments of our adversaries. And here they discover a singular hardihood ; for though they themselves acknowledge that indulgences cannot be proved from Scripture, yet do they endeavour to wrest many parts of Scripture to this purpose. As for instance,

1. *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*, Matth. xvi. 19. What was given to Peter was given to the Pope ; and from this passage it is evident, that ample powers of absolving, as well from the guilt as the punishment, were given to Peter : Therefore, &c. Cajetan. opusc. tract. 8.

I answer. This power of absolution, if we speak of a man's own conscience, is exercised by ministers, not in dealing out indulgences, but in the preaching of the Gospel ; and that not *authoritatively*, but *declaratively* ; which, indeed, the Papists themselves are forced to confess : for they acknowledge that when a man is truly contrite and penitent, his sins are forgiven him, before the form of absolution has been administered.

2. *For what I myself forgive, if I have forgiven any thing, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ*, 2 Cor. ii. 10. From which passage Aquinas argues thus : *I have forgiven, in the person of Christ*, signifies the same as if Christ had forgiven. But Christ is able to remit the punishment due to sin, independently of any satisfaction of our own by indulgence : therefore, Paul *could*, and therefore, also, the Pope *can*, whose authority in the Church is not a whit less than Paul's was. Aquin. Suppl. 3. part. q. 25. art. 1.

I answer, The Apostle is here speaking of a certain Corinthian who had committed incest ; and he exhorts the Corinthians, who had referred the case to him, to receive him back again into the Church, though he had been excommunicated, because he had professed sincere repen-

tance ; and he encourages them to do so by his own example. But Aquinas here seems to imagine that certain penances had been imposed upon this incestuous person for the satisfaction of divine justice, which Paul by his authority had relaxed ; which is altogether foreign to the plain sense of the passage.

3. *I am a partaker of all them that fear thee*, Ps. cxix. 63. Therefore satisfactory works done by one may be transferred to others for the remission of sins, Thom. 3. in suppl. quæst. 71. art. 1.

I answer, The prophet is here saying nothing more, than that he endeavours to separate himself from the ungodly, and to associate with the godly and faithful : nor did the communication of works of satisfaction enter his mind.—The Schoolmen are in the habit of bringing many other arguments of this sort to confirm this doctrine of indulgences, and of transferring satisfactions from one to another ; but they are adapted so ridiculously to this purpose, that they are not worth the trouble of refutation. Passing over their *testimonies*, therefore, let us come to their *arguments*.

1. The common blessings of the Church are at the disposal of the head of the Church : but the store of merits of Christ and the saints are the common blessings of the Church, and the Pope of Rome is the head of the Church ; therefore, he may dispense those blessings by his indulgences.

I answer, We admit that the spiritual blessings of the Church are dispensable by the ministers of the Church ; but not in any way they please. Therefore they are said to dispense these common blessings by preaching, and by administering the sacraments ; but not by the sale of indulgences. As to the store, or treasure spoken of, we answer, that it consists of the sufferings of Christ alone, and not in the smallest degree of the sufferings of the saints. And as to the Pope, he neither is head of the Church, nor, if he were, can he, by any vested right, dispose of this store or treasure. For what Cajetan here says is very true, *The store of the merits of Christ cannot be interfered with by*

the Pope, unless to be dispensed in a lawful manner. Cajet. de Indulg. tract. 9. quæst. 1. But the dealing them out by bulls is no lawful act, because it is not built upon the command of the Supreme Lord, who directed his Apostles to dispense the merits of Christ to the faithful by preaching the word and administering the sacraments, &c.

2. They who are reconciled to God remain still, after the remission of their guilt, bound to make satisfaction for the remission of the temporal punishment they have deserved; and this we see proved by many convincing examples in the Scriptures. God forgave David the crimes of adultery and homicide, yet he adds, *Because thou hast given much occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, therefore the child shall surely die,* 2 Kings xii. 14. So in Numb. xiv. *I have pardoned the sin of the people: nevertheless not one of them shall see the promised land.* So again, after God had forgiven David the sin of numbering the people, he nevertheless punished him by sending a pestilence to lay waste the kingdom. From this sort of expressions the Papists conclude that the divine justice exacts satisfaction from us for the ends of punishment, after the forgiveness of the guilt itself; and then they add of themselves, that this satisfaction may be fully made, not only by our own sufferings and merits, but by those which are dealt out at the Pope's pleasure, from the common treasury.

In answer to all this; I admit that the faithful do experience much chastisement at the hand of God, after he has forgiven their guilt; but I deny that the intention of these chastisements is to satisfy divine justice. Although God absolves all true penitents from all satisfaction by punishment, for the sake of Christ's death, yet he does not excuse them from all salutary and chastening visitations. There is then a fallacy in the *consequence*, when the Papists draw this inference—The faithful, after their sins are forgiven them, endure temporal punishments; therefore they endure them to satisfy the wrath of God. Another end, therefore, being assigned, this sophism is solved. Augustine specifies three purposes, viz. *The exhibition of the misery due to sin, the amendment of our sinful lives, and the necessary*

trial of our patience; Tractat. in Joan. 124. But now what the Papists have been pleased to set forth in addition, viz. that men may by indulgences be absolved from these temporal punishments, which otherwise, by every rule of divine justice, they ought to have been subjected to, is very plainly refuted from the above cited passages. For the Pontiff, by all the powers of his bulls, can neither defend the true penitent from the death of children, nor from a general pestilence, nor inflict any other chastisement than such as is according to the good pleasure of God.

3. From that communion of saints, which is an article of our Creed, they argue, that the satisfactory works of the saints which were not immediately wanting for their own individual expiation, are laid up in store for the public benefit, and from thence may be dispensed by the Pope, who is appointed treasurer of this fund.

I answer, They assume two false hypotheses; one, of the superabundance of the merits and sufferings of the saints; the other, of the power of the Pope; both of which we have already refuted. As to the foregoing inference from the communion of saints, we assert, that this communion consists in our participation of one God, one Christ, one baptism, one spiritual life, and, finally, of the same mystical union with one Head, and with each other; and not in the communication of satisfactions. And the reason is evident, because to make satisfaction for another, and to liberate him from the punishment which divine justice requires, is a work of mediation, not of simple love. The offices of charity are indeed common amongst all the members of the same body; the offices of a Mediator can be performed by no one member to another, but proceed from the Head alone to all the other parts; for he alone is the Mediator between God and men.

In the last place, to return from our digression, from this passage of Paul which we are now considering, and which was the occasion of my discussing this controversy, Cajetan argues as follows; Holy men suffered with the very view and intention of making satisfaction thereby for

others ; for Paul expressly says, that he was *filling up that which remained of the sufferings of Christ, for his body's sake which is the Church*. And the Rhemish doctors infer from it that the penal works of one member do make satisfaction for others.

I answer, Paul's real meaning we have already explained, viz. that he bore his many afflictions for the Church, not to expiate sins, but for its edification and confirmation in the doctrine of the Gospel. When, therefore, they argue that from the circumstance of Paul having suffered many afflictions for the Church, he did so to make satisfaction to God for the Church, their argument is absurd ; for we have assigned other causes for it. But we will confirm this our interpretation by the testimony of Anselm, and then conclude. *I fill up, says he, those things which are wanting. But to whom (or where) are they wanting? In MY body. For in the body of Christ, to which the Virgin gave birth, no suffering was wanting ; but in my body a part of his sufferings yet remain, which I endure daily in behalf of his universal body, which is the Church. For if I ceased to teach the faithful, I should not sustain these sufferings from those who are without faith : but inasmuch as I am always endeavouring to benefit the Church, I am always forced to endure afflictions.* Such is Anselm's interpretation.* From which it appears

* Anselm ; Archbishop of Canterbury in the eleventh century, who, though distinguished for his anxiety to uphold the power of the Roman Pontiff, deserves to be remembered as a learned and devotional writer, and as one of the principal revivers of literature after the prevalence of profound ignorance for three centuries. He was a native of Piedmont, first Prior and then Abbot of Bee, in Normandy. Invited over to England by Hugh, Earl of Chester, he was made Archbishop of Canterbury in 1092, but soon manifested his high Church predilections by refusing to consecrate bishops invested by the king, denying it to be the king's prerogative. His obstinacy on this and many such points, has laid his memory under much obloquy ; as he was thereby engaged in perpetual broils with William Rufus and Henry II. respecting the affairs of the Church ; and much of his time was spent in travelling backwards and forwards between England and Rome, to obtain the advice and direction of the Pope. He died in 1109, aged 76. His works, with all his faults, bear certain testimony that his piety was sincere and fervent.

that Paul suffered those afflictions for the Church, that he might thereby continually instruct the Church, not that he might make satisfaction for the sins of its faithful members.

But let us leave these Papists to their dreams about human merits, and their delusions of Papal indulgences, and return to the explanation of the context.*

Verse 25.

Of which CHURCH I am made a minister according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you to fulfil the word of God.

This verse is a continuation of the foregoing one, in which the Apostle professed the state of mind in which he endured the afflictions laid on him for preaching the Gos-

* The Translator cannot refrain from adding, in this place, a few remarks to what were made at page 285, on *Indulgences*. The subject is the finest of all those connected with the system, for illustrating one regular Canon in the logic of Romanism—that of assuming that the same word signifies the same thing in the primitive, and in the modern papal use of it; or, in the present instance, that the *relaxation of canonical penance*, as existing to the third century and onwards, is the same thing as—a treasury of merits contributed by the Redeemer and the saints, and at the disposal of the Pope—the release of human souls a *pœna et culpa*—the remission of sins, full, fuller, and fullest—pardons, in particular, for tens, hundreds, and thousands of years—all of them facts, not denied, but explained away, by Romanists who know their own religion, and who have some conscience remaining. Proof enough is in readiness to be produced for all these points; and of the millenary pardons, the brass tablet in the Chapel of St. Michael, Macclesfield, is an existing testimony. But perhaps the most satisfactory is derived from the unwilling admission of R. CHALLONER, Bp. of Debra, and V. A. in his “*Catholic Christian instructed*,” &c. 1788. At page 117, he writes of these elongated Indulgences, “And thus, if it be true that there ever were any Grants of *Indulgences* of a thousand years, or more, they are to be understood with relation to the punishment corresponding to the sins, which, according to the Penitential Canons, would have required a thousand or more years of penance”—“as by their sins they (the sinners) had incurred a Debt of Punishment proportionate to so long a time of Penance, these *Indulgences* of so many years, if ever granted (which some call in question)

pel; viz. that it was composed and cheerful; and for which he assigned two reasons. The former derived from his conformity with Christ; *I fill up in my body that which remains of the sufferings of Christ*; i. e. by suffering I am made like unto Christ: therefore *I rejoice in those things which I suffer*. The other reason is derived from the benefits accruing to the Church by his sufferings, I endure afflictions *for his body the Church*; therefore I must and will rejoice in these my sufferings. Now in this verse 25, he adds a third reason why he should be so ready and willing to bear any thing whatever for the Church; and it is derived from the nature of his office, *I am made a minister of the Church by God's ordinance*; therefore, so long as I can be of use to the Church, I ought to rejoice in my afflictions.

In explanation of this verse there are four points to be considered:

1. The office itself to which Paul was appointed, described in these words, *of which I am made a minister*.

2. Who assigned this office to him; viz. God himself: he was appointed, *κατα τῆν οικονομίαν Θεῶν*, according to the dispensation or arrangement of God.

3. Those whom this office of Paul regarded; viz. the Gentiles, and amongst them the Colossians; *it is given to me for you, &c.*

4. What was the scope and purpose of this appointment, viz. *to fulfil the word of God*.

Of which Church I am made a minister.] Minister, or *διακονος*, is sometimes a general term, designating any person discharging any office; sometimes a particular one, restricted to those who had the care of the revenue of the Church and of the poor committed to them; such were those seven who were set over that business, Acts vi. 3.

were designed to release them from this Debt."—Nothing but conviction of the fact, which it is puerile to dissemble, could have wrung this unwilling testimony from so bigotted a writer. And it may be inferred from his own statement, and on his own principles, that if no such Indulgences had existed hitherto, it is high time they were established, particularly in heretical England.

In this verse it is used in that more extensive signification; yet so as not to express any thing less dignified than the Apostolic ministry: for the office committed to Paul was the apostleship, as appears from the words. For he does not say that he is made a minister of this or that particular Church, but of the Church universal, namely of that which in the foregoing verse he had called *the body of Christ*. Now from this mention of his office, and this title of *minister* which Paul assumes, let us deduce a few observations.

1. The circumstance that Paul, who was constituted an Apostle, should speak of himself as a Minister of the Church, is an excitement to those who have obtained the higher situations in the Church, to activity; and admonishes them to think more of their duties than their honour; and of the task imposed upon them, rather than the dignity attached to it. We, alas! on the contrary, *are more willing to be called pastors, than studious to be such: we avoid the labours of our office, but are eager to obtain its honours*, as Prosper lamented of old, *De vit. contemp. lib. i. cap. 21*. But we should always recollect, that the very term *minister*, is rather a title of labour than of dignity.

2. We also infer hence, that those who have the superiority in the Church, have but a ministry, and not an absolute dominion. *I am made a MINISTER of the Church*, says the Apostle, not, *a lord*. Ministers should not, like earthly potentates, lord it, either over the persons or the consciences of Christians. This Peter forbids in 1 Epis. v. 2, 3, *Feed the flock of God which is among you, not as being lords of the heritage, but being examples to the flock*. And Paul expresses his aversion to it, 2 Cor. i. 24, *Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers, &c.* The Roman Pontiff, therefore, who makes himself, not the *minister*, but *the lord and God* of the Church, is no successor either of Paul or of Peter. For, he desires to rule, at least by an indirect dominion, over both the persons and property of all Christians, and even of kings themselves; and by a direct dominion over their faith and consciences, as far as he imagines that he is constituted a spiritual monarch.

Hence came those extravagances of the Papists, that the Pope is superior to all councils; that the Pope is infallible in matters of faith; that those who do not submit to the Roman Pontiff are not in a state of salvation; that all interpretation of Scripture is to be derived from the repository of his breast; with many other absurdities of this nature. From all which it is clear that he claims not for himself *the pastoral office* in the Church, but assumes *kingly dominion*.

3. Inasmuch as Paul assigned the ministerial office laid upon him, as a reason why he ought to rejoice in his afflictions; he wished to impress upon all ministers of the Gospel, that nothing can be more joyous, or truly honourable, than unjust persecution, whilst they are discharging, and because they do discharge the duties of their calling. For as wounds, and even death itself, are glorious to a soldier in defence of the post in which his commanding officer has stationed him; so is it the glory of a minister, to suffer afflictions, nay even death itself, in the discharge of that ministry which Christ has committed to him.

But here we must always remember that consolation attends upon those afflictions, of which we may say with Paul, *I suffer these things for the Church, and because I am a minister of the Church*. But it is a very different thing indeed, when a man must confess, *I suffer these things from the Church, and because I am a disturber of the Church*. *Let none of you suffer... as an evil-doer, or as a busy body in other men's matters: but if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf*, 1 Pet. iv. 15, 16. And thus far as to the office itself: It next follows as to the Author of the office.

According to the dispensation of God.] The Apostle shews in these words the authority by which he was made a minister of the Church, viz. by the ordinance of God himself. In this place, then, by the words, *the dispensation of God*, he understands a lawful and defined power given to him by God for dispensing and administering the spiritual things pertaining to the Church. For the Church is the household of God; nor has any person a right to interfere in it in any

way ; but all things are to be done *according to the arrangement of God himself*. So the Apostle observes to the Hebrews, v. 4, *No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*. We learn, therefore, from this word *οικονομίας*, that the Church is like a family ; that God is the master of this family ; that the apostles, the bishops, the presbyters, and deacons are the servants and ministers of God in carrying on the business of the family.

Hence observe,

1. Since the Church is the household of God, no one ought to exercise any function in it but by the legitimate calling of God himself. Now a legitimate calling is either extraordinary, such as that of the Apostles was formerly ; or ordinary, such as that of bishops and ministers is now ; and this ordinary calling ought to be given, under some visible sign, by those who have ecclesiastical and rightful jurisdiction, that it may be known to the Church : which is observed by all Churches in the ordination of ministers. They who receive orders in this manner have a right to affirm, that they are made ministers *according to the dispensation of God*. They who have not received this ordination are but intruders into the concerns of another man's family without either the appointment or the approbation of the master.

2. Since ministers are appointed in the Church according to the dispensation of God, we are to understand, that what they both teach and do is not valid from their sole command and mere arbitrary authority, but by the delegated authority and approbation of the supreme Lord, i. e. of God himself. For that which a minister does contrary to the will of the Lord, can never stand good ; for he is bound to dispense such things, and in such a manner as the Lord hath directed.

3. Since in every *arrangement* and the management of any family, it is requisite there should be order, not only with respect to the service itself, but also with respect to the servants themselves, if they are numerous ; it is evident that those are disturbers of the Church of God, and de-

range *this economy* who endeavour to introduce equality of ministers into the Church. For *order*, according to the correct definition of the Schoolmen, *is the distribution of similar and dissimilar things, assigning to each its proper place*; and wherever there is a plurality without order, confusion immediately arises. Now, according to this arrangement and economy of God, one is appointed a bishop, others are ordained priests, others deacons; nor ought those who are placed in inferior situations to assume those functions which belong to their superiors. For the Lord himself of the family *gave some Apostles; and some Evangelists; and others Pastors and teachers*, Ephes. iv. 11; and in place of those, it was his will that ministers should be substituted for ever, distinct in their proper orders.

4. Since God has shewn such care in regulating the administration of the Church, it is the duty of each individual in it, both to know and to do what belongs to his department, by virtue of this divine arrangement. For, as Durandus rightly observes, Lib. 2. disp. 9. quæst. 1, *Without order, action is presumption; without action, order is negligence; but without knowledge, both action is dangerous and order useless*. Hence also that saying of the Saviour, Matt. xxiv. 45, *Who then is that faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, &c.* This dispensation of God committed to his ministers, requires both faithfulness *to will*, and wisdom and knowledge *to perform*, the duties assigned to them in this *economy* of God.

And thus far concerning this ministry, and the Author and Ordainer of it, viz. God himself.

Which is given to me for you.] Now, in the third place, we must explain to whom this ministry, or dispensation, which was delegated to Paul by God himself, had relation. *It is given to me*, he says, *for, or on account of you*; i. e. *you Gentiles*; amongst whom the Colossians are included. The Apostle seems desirous of shewing, that he taught them in his own right, as a part of the Gentile Church, which was particularly entrusted to him. That this ministry of instructing *the Gentiles* was indeed entrusted to Paul, is evident from many passages of Scripture: As Acts xxii. 21,

Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And Rom. i. 5, *We have received the Apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations.* Whence he says, 1 Tim. ii. 7, *that he is ordained a preacher, and an Apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.*

But here it may be questioned how this dispensation of God can be said to be given to Paul towards or for the Gentiles, and not for the Jews also, and so not for all mankind; since the Apostolic office includes plenary and universal power, unbounded and unlimited. For this is assigned by express commands to the Apostles, *Teach all nations; Preach the Gospel to every creature.* This is resolved as follows:

The Apostles were not confined by virtue of their Apostolic vocation to particular districts or nations; but as it was very inconvenient for the same men to traverse all countries; one undertook the management of this, and another of that province, either by Divine intimation, or by a private arrangement among themselves. Thus, in the Epistle to the Galatians, ii. 7, *the Gospel of the uncircumcision is said to have been committed to Paul, the Gospel of the circumcision to Peter;* because Paul was employed in declaring the Gospel to the Gentiles, Peter to the Jews; and that by a certain special appropriation from God.

But here it is necessary also to add, that this *appropriation*, as we call it, did not at all diminish the Apostle's authority, or prevent Paul's preaching to the Jews, or Peter to the Gentiles, if occasion should offer itself. Of Paul, indeed, it is expressly said, that he was *a chosen vessel to bear the name of God before the Gentiles and the children of Israel;* and he taught the Hebrews by an Epistle, as is commonly held.* Nor is there any doubt but that Peter, both at Antioch and in other places, instructed not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles in the doctrine of the Gospel. The general Apostolical power, therefore, respected all nations alike, but the convenience of the Church re-

* Alluding to doubts which some entertain about the genuineness of this Epistle.

quired that particular persons should be assigned to certain provinces.

And here let us observe how useful and even necessary is this institution of the Church, that certain ministers be attached to certain places and congregations. For if it pleased God that the Apostles, who, by virtue of their calling, might exercise their pastoral charge equally over the whole world, should nevertheless be especially set over certain particular provinces; how much more proper is it for those pastors who have not the calling which the Apostle had, to be destined to particular churches marked out for them, that they may be able to say, in superintending that flock, *a dispensation is given to me for YOU?*

Those, therefore, who would encourage a vagrant and itinerant ministry, in direct opposition to the canons of the ancient Church, which have decreed that no man shall be ordained without a specific title, outrage all reason. Let every man, therefore, understand towards whom a dispensation of the Gospel is given to him, that he may be able to attend to that flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him an overseer, as we read in Acts xx. 28. And thus much as to the object of the Apostolic ministry.

To fulfil the word of God.] In these words the Apostle states the end or design which God intended in assigning to him this dispensation of the Gospel towards the Gentiles. But these words are explained by interpreters in two ways. Some say, that *to fulfil the speech, or the word of God*, means, fully to expound the whole doctrinal system of salvation, and to promote it to the last moment of life. As if the Apostle had said, *I must not be deterred either by afflictions, or bonds, or even death itself, from preaching the Gospel; for God hath laid on me this charge of the Gospel for the very purpose of my striving unto death in defence of it.* If we adopt this meaning, there are two things to be learnt from it:

1. That a minister is bound not to preach the word vaguely, but *πληρῶσαι τον λογον*, fully to explain and to teach every thing that concerns the salvation of his flock.

2. That to preach the whole counsel of God is not suf-

ficient, without our persevering in the discharge of this duty even to the end. Many are fervent and constant in their preaching at the beginning of their ministry, but afterwards grow cold and self-indulgent; but this is not to fulfil, but only to begin the preaching of the word.

Others explain to fulfil the word of God, to mean the completing those promises concerning Christ and the calling of the Gentiles which the ancient prophets had foretold. As if the Apostle had said, God has made me an Apostle to you Gentiles, that he might fulfil what he had promised by the prophets, to wit, the offer of salvation by Christ. Such was that word of God, Isa. ix. 2, *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon them that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, hath the light shined.* And of the same nature is that passage in Zech. ii. 11, *Many nations shall be joined unto the Lord, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee.* To make good this word of God, a dispensation of the Gospel was given unto Paul for the Gentiles. If we follow this interpretation, we are thence enjoined, that as God, by calling us Gentiles to the knowledge of the Gospel, hath fulfilled his part; so we, in return, are bound to make good our part by believing, by obeying, and by walking in the light of the Gospel.

Verses 26, 27.

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints;

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery amongst the Gentiles, which is Christ, in you the hope of glory.

These verses have the same end in view as the foregoing, viz. to confirm the Colossians in the doctrine of the Gospel; and this the Apostle executes by highly extolling its dignity. In the former of them he magnifies it, and at the

same time excites them to embrace it, by two considerations: 1. By its antiquity and rarity; *the mystery hidden from ages and generations*. 2. By its manifestation and the present opportunity; *but now is made manifest, &c.*

In the latter verse he accomplishes two objects. He shews the cause of this manifestation, viz. *the will of God*. Then he explains more fully what was manifested: first generally; *the riches of this glorious mystery*: then he explains particularly, what are those riches, or, as it is in the Greek, *τίς ὁ πλοῦτος τοῦ μυστηρίου τούτου*; *what is the riches of this mystery*, viz. *Christ himself dwelling in us by faith*; for thus he becomes to us *the hope of glory*.

Let us begin, then, with the former verse.

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations.] Here let us consider, 1. What the Apostle understands by *a mystery*. 2. Where it was *hidden*. 3. From *whom* it was hidden.

1. *A mystery* is a religious secret containing some concealed meaning. And a thing is concealed from us, either by the intervention of some other object, or by its positive distance from us. We must moreover know, that the word *mystery* is sometimes applied, in the Scriptures, to express the summary of our Christian faith in the person, the nature, and the offices of Christ; as, for instance, in 1 Tim. iii. 16, *Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory*. Sometimes also it is used, by the figure synecdoche, to express a part only of this mystery, viz. the calling of the Gentiles, and their incorporation into the Church without either circumcision or the other works of the law. The Apostle is speaking of this, Ephes. iii. 3, 5, 6, *God hath made known to me the mystery, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promises by the Gospel*. In this sense Paul uses the word *mystery* in the passage before us, viz. for the secret counsel of God concerning the salvation of the Gentiles by the grace of the Gospel in Christ: and this is that

mystery for the promulgation of which Paul *was made a minister*.

2. But where and how was this mystery concerning the salvation of mankind by Christ *hidden*? It was hidden, as was slightly touched upon before, in the secret and eternal purpose of God; for God himself decreed, even from all eternity, to conceal and hide from us this mystery, even until the fulness of the time should come. Therefore was it laid up and removed to a great distance from us. For what can be further removed from human sight, than that which is hid in the secret repository of God's will? Hence it is termed by the Apostle, in Rom. xvi. 25, *the mystery kept secret since the world began*. But there was also an interposed veil, as it were, of the legal ceremonies, under which the mystery of future redemption was but darkly intimated even to the Jews themselves.

3. And now, in the third place, if it be enquired *from whom* was this mystery hidden; we do not hesitate to answer, that the clear knowledge of it was hidden, not only from the Gentiles and the Jews, but even from the angels themselves. As to the Gentiles, who, before the coming of Christ, *were sitting in the shadow of death*, there is no doubt but that they neither understood nor expected this eternal life, which Christ brought with him for his people. How indeed could they, when the predictions of the Messiah which was to come, were sealed up from them in the sacred Scriptures, and these divine oracles themselves regarded as the peculiar property of the Jews? David, therefore, says, in Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20, *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel: He hath not dealt so with any nation, and as to his judgments they have not known them*. From the Gentiles, therefore, was this mystery absolutely and totally hidden.

With respect to the Jews also, who lived under the Old Testament, this mystery was *partly* and *comparatively* hidden from them. *Partly*, because, with the exception of the prophets and a few inspired men, the general mass of the Jews, though they did expect the Messiah, expected him only as coming to themselves; they never thought of

his being intended for the Gentiles. The calling of the Gentiles, therefore, was a mystery altogether hidden from the greatest part of the Jews. Then, as to those very prophets and more enlightened Jews, to them also this grace of the Gospel was a hidden mystery, speaking *comparatively*. For those prophetic revelations were but like a candle shining in a dark place, in comparison of the declarations of the Evangelists, which are like the shining of the mid-day sun. They looked to this future calling of the Gentiles, but only, as through the twilight, very indistinctly; we look directly upon it in the clear and open daylight. To this it must be added, that they had only a general notion of the Gentiles receiving some sort of blessing in the promised seed, at some future time; but they had no notion whatever of their being admitted into the covenant of the sons of God in this manner, that is, without circumcision, and without any kind of obedience to the Mosaic ritual. And this we are authorised to conclude from the circumstance of the Apostles themselves not immediately comprehending this great mystery, even after they had received their commission to preach the Gospel to every creature. For Peter would not have ventured to go in to the uncircumcised, unless God had previously communicated this mystery to him, and given him the knowledge of it by a supernatural revelation. For thus he expresses himself, Acts x. 28, *Ye know how it is unlawful for a man that is a Jew to go in to one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.*

In the last place, not even the angels clearly understood this mystery of Gospel grace. *For to the principalities and powers in heavenly places, hath been made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God; according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord; Ephes. iii. 10, 11.* This body of the Church, therefore, composed of Jews and Gentiles, of circumcised and uncircumcised, inasmuch as it was a mystery concealed from all eternity in the secret will of God, was to the very angels a new and wonderful thing.

Observe 1. The doctrine of the Gospel is a sacred mystery ; therefore it ought to be received with reverence and purity both of heart and ears. The Gentiles drive all profane and impure persons from their sacred mysteries ; how much more becoming is it that every kind of impurity should be discarded from these saving mysteries ? *The law commands all men*, says Cicero, 2 De legibus, *to approach the sacrifices with purity* : But the Gospel is, indeed, a sacred secret ; therefore, let both the preacher and all his hearers approach it in purity both of mind and body.

2. The Gospel was a mystery concealed from all eternity ; therefore it had existed from all eternity ; and, consequently, is not a new invention of the Apostles, as the Athenians called it when they took Paul to task for preaching it, saying, Acts xvii. 19, 20, *May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is ? for thou bringest certain strange things to our ears*. The Gospel might indeed sound *new* in the ears of the Athenians ; in itself, however, it was not new, but eternal : for in religion nothing but what is false is new. Wherefore, in the Apocalypse, xiv. 6, it is called *the everlasting Gospel*.

3. Since it pleased God that this saving Gospel should be concealed from the whole world for so many ages, the very novelty of its manifestation ought to stimulate us to a serious contemplation of it ; for if *other jewels derive their value from their rarity only*, as Tertullian observes, surely this jewel of the Gospel, which not a single being had a clear view of during a period of almost four thousand years, is much more valuable.

Thus far, then, as to the Gospel having been a hidden mystery from all eternity : now let us discuss its revelation and manifestation.

But now is made known to his saints.] Three points may here be remarked upon. 1. Why this mystery was manifested. 2. When. 3. To whom.

1. The Apostle says, that this mystery was *manifested*, not discovered, or brought forth to the light by our labour ; to the end that we might understand that no human inge-

nity was ever able to penetrate or gain access to this mystery of human salvation. Unless, therefore, God himself, who at first concealed it, had thought fit spontaneously to reveal it, the whole human race must have lain in endless night; no man could have known, none would have sought, for the Redeemer of the world.

A twofold reason may be assigned for the necessity of this manifestation, arising on the one hand, from the nature of the things revealed, on the other, from the nature of the human understanding. The things revealed, viz. the mysteries of our salvation in Christ, are supernatural, and dependant entirely on the mere will and dispensation of God. As, for instance, the incarnation of God, the atonement made for sin by his death, salvation by grace through faith in this Mediator, are all of a nature that never could have entered into the human mind, unless God himself had manifested his intention of delivering mankind by these means: for they were all dependant on the free will of God, and not upon any connexion of natural causes.

Now, as to the human understanding; so entirely is it obscured in the thick darkness of sin, that it is not merely dim-sighted, but totally blind to all spiritual perceptions. *The natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. There is, therefore, a necessity of a Divine manifestation. Augustine, Hypog. 3, beautifully remarks, *Let no man boast of having engendered faith in his heart by the soundness of his own reasonings; but let him acknowledge that both before the Law, and under the Law, and since the abrogation of the Law, the faith which is in Christ Jesus is savingly revealed to every man by the illumination of grace, which is from God the Father.* For, as Gerson correctly observes, par. 3, *The eye of the soul is become turbid through the infection arising from sensuality, through the cloudiness in the animal faculties, and through blindness in the intellectual.* Therefore, to sum up the whole; The mystery of the Gospel is above nature; it depends on the eternal and secret counsel of God. The human mind, through sin, is deteriorated beneath its natural sphere; its eye is stained,

overclouded, and totally blinded: Therefore this mystery could never have been comprehended by us, unless it had been made manifest by God.

From this I shall draw only one conclusion:

It is the extreme of folly to construct a Christian creed out of philosophical principles; since the doctrine of salvation revealed by the voluntary act of God, could not have been discovered by any acuteness of human intellect. Here, then, the Scholastic doctors, and the Papists who tread in their footsteps, have erred most egregiously, obtruding many dogmas, derived not from divine relation, but from the arguments of blind reason, as articles of the Christian faith. Of this nature are free-will, inherent righteousness, the merits of works, and a great many more, all to be found in the Ethics of the Philosopher; none in the Epistles of Paul. Here, then, that warning of the Apostle, Col. ii. 8, may properly be introduced; *Beware lest any man deceive you through philosophy*. For, as Tertulian, advers. Marc. lib. 1, truly asserts, *All heresies have drawn existence from the brains of Philosophers*.

Thus much, then, as to the manifestation itself: Now let us proceed to notice the time when it was made.

Secondly, the Apostle says, *Now* this mystery is made manifest. By using this adverb of time, the Apostle takes occasion to press upon the Corinthians the present opportunity, which he much wished them to seize; as though he would say, That which was concealed from all the past ages, could neither be known, nor received by them, to their salvation; but being by the free grace of God, manifested and revealed to you, through the Apostles, at the present time, it both ought, and may be, at the present time, acknowledged and received by you.

Observe 1. It is incumbent on all Christians to take advantage of present time and opportunity, according to that exhortation, Heb. iii. 15, *To-day, whilst it is called to-day, if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts*. For if we reject the Gospel, the condemnation which awaits us to whom it has been manifested, will be greater than that of

those who lived in the past times, and from whom it was concealed.

2. Inasmuch as the Apostle says, it is now *made manifest*, he at once stops the objections of all who exclaim that the doctrine of salvation is a difficult and dark doctrine. Time was when the mystery of the Gospel was hidden, but now it is plain to be seen, and even courts observation: *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*, 2 Cor. iv. 3. We admit, indeed, that certain passages of Scripture are difficult of comprehension; but whatever is laid down as necessary to salvation, is plainly and clearly revealed by the Apostles to the whole world. So thought all the Fathers, whatever Sophists may prate to the contrary. We shall select a few testimonies out of many. Clemens Alexandrinus, in Protrept. calls the Scripture, *the sun of the soul*. *The light, says he, is common to all, and the word is hidden from none. There is no Cimmerius in the word.** Augustine, lib. 2, De doctr. Christ. cap. 9, says, *Every thing which pertains to faith and moral practice, is found in those parts of Scripture which are plainly expressed.* Chrysostom, Hom. 3. De Lazaro, says, *The Philosophers wrote with obscurity; but the Apostles and Prophets, on the contrary, set forth all things openly and clearly, and as general teachers of the world, brought them down to the level of all capacities, that every man might be able to learn for himself what was spoken by merely reading them.* To these testimonies of the Fathers we may also add that of Gerson, par. 1: *The literal sense of Scripture expresses plainly enough every thing necessary for salvation.* From these extracts, then, we may collect, what enormous guilt the Popish Prelates bring upon themselves, who, under the lying pretext of obscurity (as if really the mystery of salvation were not laid open) snatch the Evangelical books out of the hands of the people, and thrust their own wild fantasies and traditions into their places. But we assert that the mystery of salvation is now laid open in the doctrine of the Apostles, and that no man

* Vide Note p. 92, for Cimmerius.

has a right either to conceal the Gospel, or to force new mysteries of salvation in its place.

To his saints.] The Apostle in these words points out *to whom* the Gospel was manifested.

Now some understand the word *saints* to mean those whom God decreed to be consecrated in Christ Jesus, i. e. the elect. Others restrict its meaning to the Apostles, the Evangelists, and such like, gifted with the spirit of prophecy; to whom God directly manifested this mystery, that they might be his Ministers in revealing the same to all the world: They suppose that these are called *saints* by way of eminence. If we adopt the first sense and interpretation, we must not apply it to every kind of revelation, but only to that which is effectual, and brings salvation home to the hearts of the hearers; which produces not a mere knowledge of Christ, but, at the same time, a real trust in Christ thus known. For in this way was the Gospel manifested to the saints alone, according to the words of Isaiah, liii. 1, *Who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* Which words are accordant with that declaration of the Saviour, Matth. xiii. 11, *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.* To hear, indeed, is given and granted to all; but to know unto salvation, is given only to the saints and the elect. Hence we may deduce two points of doctrine:

1. It is no disparagement to the dignity or the truth of God, that the numbers of those who really believe, and in their hearts embrace the truth, is small; for though, like seed, it is sown universally, yet it strikes root only in the hearts of the elect, in which the Holy Spirit powerfully operates. For *all men have not faith*, 2 Thess. iii. 2. But *if any man be of God, he heareth God's words*, John viii. 47; because he himself *opens the hearts* of the elect, that *they give heed to the Gospel*, Acts xvi. 14. Gregory says, *Unless the Holy Spirit be in the heart of the hearer, useless are the words of the preacher.* And in the same strain Augustine remarks, *Many hear, but those only are persuaded to whom God speaks inwardly.*

2. Wisdom unto salvation belongs only to the saints and to the godly: the ungodly and the unholy have the mystery of salvation preached to them, but they do not receive it, unto salvation; for hearing they do not hear, and understanding they do not understand. *Wisdom does not enter into a wicked heart, nor will dwell in a body that is subject to sin. For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit,* Wisdom. Ch. i. ver. 4. True wisdom in the mysteries of God is ever accompanied with sanctity, but iniquity with folly.

But, as was before stated, others understand by the word *saints*, the Apostles, &c. to whom that hidden mystery was manifested in some extraordinary manner. If we admit this explanation, we must understand an extraordinary and immediate manifestation by the Holy Spirit; for the Holy Spirit revealed the mystery of salvation to the Apostles immediately, that through the medium of their ministry it might be revealed to all others. *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you.* John xiv. 26.

That we, then, may obtain the full meaning of the Apostle, let us unite these separate interpretations in one, and conclude thus: This mystery is manifested *primarily* to the Holy Apostles, and *secondarily* to other saints; *immediately* to the Apostles, *mediately* to all the servants of God.

Verse 27.

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Having treated in the foregoing verse on the concealed and manifested mystery of salvation, let us now proceed with the Apostle, who does three things in this one verse:

1. He adds the reason why that mystery, hidden from so many ages past, should now be revealed to the saints.

2. He distinguishes this mystery of salvation, as he proceeds, with new encomiums, viz. *riches* and *glory*.

3. He states specifically what are the riches and what is the glory of this saving mystery; namely, *Christ* himself dwelling in us by faith.

As for the first; the Apostle adds the reason of this divine dispensation, for the purpose of answering an implied objection. For it might be asked, If this doctrine of the Gospel be the doctrine of salvation, why was it not made known to the world during so many ages? Why even now is it made known effectually only to the elect and to those who are sanctified by the Spirit? The Apostle gives no other reason for this distinction than the will of God: *This mystery was made manifest to those to whom God was pleased to make it known.* The same will of God, therefore, is the cause both of that *concealment*, by which the Gospel was hidden from the ages gone by; and of that *revelation* by which it is now made manifest to his saints.

Some persons fondly pretend, that that barbarous age was not fit to receive such mysteries; but that in this its more matured period, the world became wiser, and more capable of receiving the doctrine of salvation. But this supposition is grounded on a false hypothesis; for the grace of God does not *find*, but *make* men fit for receiving grace. Others again imagine, that God in mercy refrained from revealing the doctrine of salvation to those ancient times, because he foreknew that they would reject it. But this reasoning also is refuted by experience; for the foreknowledge of human pride and infidelity does not stop the promulgation of the Gospel. Nay more, God suffers it to be preached expressly to many to whom it is *the savour of death unto death*, 2 Cor. ii. 16. So that it is useless to seek for, or to give any reason why the mystery of salvation was so long hidden from so many nations, and why it was afterwards revealed, beyond that of God's will, *Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways*, Acts xiv. 16. Hence then let us learn,

1. How rash is that maxim of the Schools, viz. That it is a part of Divine Providence to provide for every man

the necessary means of salvation. For since the revelation of a Mediator is absolutely necessary for salvation, and yet no provision was made for the revelation or knowledge of this Mediator for so many generations of mankind; either their assertion is false, or the Providence of God defective. For, as Augustine truly observes, *De civit. lib. 18. cap. 47, Salvation is not to be granted to any man except to him to whom has been revealed, by the will of God, the one Mediator between God and man—Christ Jesus.*

2. That notion of the Schools is also of very dubious import, viz. *That there is no man who does the best in his power to whom God will not reveal what is necessary for his salvation*, Durand. lib. 2. As is also this, lib. 3, which is nearly akin to it: *If a man lives well according to the law of nature, God will supply what is necessary for his salvation.* Both these axioms of the Schools are faulty in two respects: First, in the supposition that a man in his natural corrupt state either is able to live well, or to seek after grace. Secondly, in the supposition that a revelation of saving grace is due to those natural works and exertions. Prosper had learnt better things when he said, *Ad capit. Gall. resp. 8, It is the part of impiety to teach that the grace by which we are saved, is conferred upon us as the reward of our good works, or is withheld from us by reason of our bad ones.*

Lastly, as the will of God was the only acknowledged cause why the Gospel, after being concealed for so many ages, was afterwards manifested to the whole world; so the same will of God is the cause of its being known effectually to the saints; and of its striking on the ears of the reprobate without fruit. So Paul states in this very passage, *It is made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make it known.* So also testified the Saviour himself, *Matt. xi. 25, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* This will of God in the effectual illumination of the elect is *operative*, and, as the Schoolmen express it, has respect to his intention; and therefore performs what he approves. But the case is very different

with the unbelieving: for in offering to them the doctrine of salvation, God is also willing that they should receive it; but he wills it with a will *approving*; not with a will *operating* and *producing*. Under this persuasion, Prosper, ad Capit. Gall. respons. 5, observes, *The effect upon those whose outward ears are saluted by a bodily voice, is a different thing from the effect upon those whose inward sense God hath opened, and in whose hearts he has laid the foundation of faith and the fervour of love.*—And thus far as to the cause of concealment and of the manifestation of this mystery of salvation, viz. *the good pleasure of God.*

2. *What is the riches of the glory of this mystery amongst the Gentiles.*] The Apostle here proceeds to set off the mystery of the Gospel now offered to all nations, but effectually made manifest only to the saints, with fresh encomiums, ascribing to it *riches* and *glory*: it is a mystery *rich, abundant, and withal glorious.*

First, as to what pertains to *the riches* of this mystery, God, in this calling of the Gentiles, has unfolded his spiritual treasures, and offered to men the vast and admirable riches of his mercy, his goodness, and his grace; as it is expressed, Ephes. ii. 7, *He shews to the ages to come the exceeding riches of his grace.* Nor are they only offered to us on the part of God; but if we are enrolled amongst his saints, we have actually received those most desirable riches of *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*; 1 Cor. i. 30 Speaking of these riches, Christ says, Rev. iii. 18, *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.* With these riches this mystery of the Gospel is filled.

1. Learn hence, that were it not for this grace of the Gospel, the whole world would be in misery, in want, in beggary. Men, being blind, do not perhaps feel this their spiritual indigence; but that insensibility does not lessen their want; as it is said Rev. iii. 17, *Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* Such is the condition of all those

who have not yet been made partakers of the riches which the Gospel brought to light.

2. Hence we learn what sort of riches we ought to thirst after, and pursue even with insatiable desire; not, forsooth, the dirty ore dug up from the dirty earth, but those heavenly and spiritual treasures sent down from above. For this grace contained in the mystery of the Gospel, is that *pearl of great price*, which a wise merchant, when he has once seen, will immediately sell all he has in the world to buy, Matth. xiii. 46. As, then, we should consider the heir of some king, or other rich man, to be mad, who, thinking nothing of all his hereditary property, employed himself in scraping together the ordure from his father's stable as his riches; so ought a similar suspicion of madness to attach to any man, who can disregard these riches which his heavenly Father has offered him in the Gospel, and give up his whole heart to scraping together gold and silver, which, in comparison with the other, are to be accounted as dung. Phil. iii. 8.

Lastly, from the Gospel mystery containing such great riches, an argument may very seasonably be derived in favour of the dignity of the Gospel ministry: For what office can be conceived more honourable than that of Ministers, who are entrusted with the power of dispensing such great and valuable riches? Whoever, therefore, despises these Ministers, does but too plainly prove his contempt of God himself; and, like swine, trample the Gospel pearl under his feet.

Thus much as to the riches of this mystery.

But, as if this were too little in so great a matter as the mystery of our salvation, the Apostle adds, that it is not only a *very rich*, but also a *very glorious* mystery; *τίς ὁ πλῆθος της δόξης*, &c. *What is the riches of the glory*. Indeed, it is well worthy of observation, that not only in the verses before us, but almost every where else, when he speaks of the riches of this Gospel mystery, he adds something about its *glory*. Thus Rom. ix. 23, *That he might make known the riches of his glory*, &c. And Eph. i. 18, he wishes *the eyes of their understanding to be enlightened, that they might know*

what is the hope of the calling of the Gospel, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

The Apostle introduces the word *glory* that he may obviate the scandal which men pretend arises from the contemptibleness of the Gospel: for in the estimation of carnal men, the doctrine of the Gospel seems contemptible. That all men, therefore, may be assured that there is nothing really contemptible in the Gospel, he employs these splendid eulogies to exalt its dignity; nay more, to shew that it is altogether so glorious as deservedly to claim every kind of honour.

This mystery of salvation, then, contained in the Gospel, is properly called *glorious* for two reasons; one of which may be considered on God's part, the other on ours.

On God's part, because nothing so properly shews forth the divine glory, as does the manifestation of the grace of the Gospel in Christ Jesus. From whence arose that hymn of the angels, Luke ii. 14, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.* For as true glory arises from the manifestation of virtue, all the divine virtue and goodness shone forth in the free calling of the Gentiles to salvation by the Gospel. For in it the truth of God, his compassion, his justice, his wisdom shine forth; as might be abundantly proved were we inclined to descant more at large on this general topic. But let us fix upon only one of these virtues, viz. the divine compassion: of which Cicero has well remarked, De Offic. 2, *It most redounds to our glory, if ever we have opportunity, of helping a man who appears to be surrounded and borne down by a powerful enemy.* To which we may add, that it is more eminently glorious to exert this kindness when neither called upon so to do by the deserts of the individual relieved, nor induced to it by any prospect of remuneration. Now let us apply this observation to the case before us. The whole human race lay prostrate under the tyrannous oppression of that most powerful of all enemies, the devil; but the mystery of the Gospel teaches us, that through the aid of the Divine compassion, and without any previous merit of our own, we are snatched from under the burden of their

oppression and set at liberty ; therefore, it best illustrates the glory of God, and most correctly, in this respect, is it called a *glorious* mystery.

On our part, moreover, it may be called a *glorious mystery*, because it ensures to believers real and eternal glory ; nay more, by the power of faith it puts them into present possession of it. On this account it is preferred to the law of Moses, 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8, *If the ministration of death was glorious, how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?* And in the Epistle to the Hebrews, xii. 18, *Ye are not come to the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest ; but ye are come unto mount Zion, and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.* To this glory the Gospel calls and conducts those who are sanctified and faithful, and, therefore, there is the best of reasons for its being called a *glorious mystery*.

Now there are two sorts of men which stand reproved by this divine attribute : First, they who endeavour so to interpolate and mutilate the doctrine of the Gospel, as well nigh to obliterate *the riches and glory* of the divine compassion contained in it. And here it is that the Papists have sinned most grievously ; ascribing, as they do, the power of washing away sin and procuring salvation, to their own merits and satisfactions, free-will, and other absurdities of this sort, and thus concealing this glory of the compassion and free mercy of God, which constitutes this mystery *glorious*. For this mystery of the Gospel is no longer glorious to God if we may be allowed to boast of our own good works, and to obtain salvation through their merits.

They also are glanced at who, in the profession of the Gospel, neither regard nor look for any thing better than external peace, worldly honours, and temporal accommodations of this kind. This mystery of the Gospel is indeed fruitful, honourable, and glorious ; but it promises fruits of another kind, other honours, and glory of a very different description. It brings with it fruits, not of money, but of righteousness ; honours, not of the world, but of heaven ;

glory, not of fleeting vanity, but of eternal blessedness. It is, therefore, our business to seek for glory in the way of this glorious mystery; according to the exhortation of Christ, Matth. vi. 33, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* Ye see, then, that the treasures of riches and glory are offered to us in the Gospel: And now let us consider in whom these riches and this glory are vested, and how they are derived to us.

Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.] The relative *which* has *riches*, not *mystery*, for its antecedent. For the Apostle had been, in the foregoing verses, celebrating *the riches*, or *the abundance* of this Gospel mystery; and now he adds, by way of explanation, *which riches*, or *abundance is Christ himself*, whose indwelling *in you* produces *the hope of eternal glory*. Here, then, two points arise for consideration:

1. That *Christ* himself is that treasure of spiritual riches which is offered to us in the Gospel.

2. That Christ confers these treasures upon us, as far as *he is in us*; for thus is he *the hope of glory*.

There can be no necessity for our taking much trouble to prove that we have *in Christ* the hidden treasures of all the spiritual goods which are offered us in the Gospel: For in the third chapter of Ephes. vers. 8, they are spoken of under the title of *the unsearchable riches of Christ*. And in Col. ii. 3, the Apostle distinctly asserts, that *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ*. The reason of this is evident; viz. because Christ is the head of the Church; and from the head, as from a fountain, all life and spiritual motion in the inferior members is derived. Nor do we only derive every indwelling grace from Christ, but also the grace of Divine acceptance into life eternal, as far as we are reckoned in Christ the Head, and are found clothed with the garment of his perfect righteousness. In Christ, therefore, all our riches are laid up; in Christ is all our *hope of glory*.

But inasmuch as it is but too clear and evident, that all men are not made partakers of these riches; therefore, in the second place, the Apostle adds how Christ is made the

treasure of the riches of salvation to men; by what means they have in Christ their hope of glory; namely, as far as *he dwells in them*, so far they have the hope of glory. But Christ is said *to be*, or *to dwell* in any man, when he, by the Holy Spirit exciting faith in the heart, attains to a true knowledge of him, and a living trust flowing from that knowledge. He, therefore, who truly believes all the doctrines concerning the natures, and the union of the natures, and the peculiar offices of Christ; his being, for instance, very God and very man, the Mediator and Redeemer of the human race, and the other points which are revealed in the Word; who, by the inspiration of the same Spirit, is fully persuaded that Christ is so to him as he is in himself, i. e. his God, his Mediator, Redeemer and Saviour; the man, I say, who implicitly believes these things, dwells in Christ, and Christ in him, and by the operation of his Spirit and of faith, receives all the riches of Christ. Upon this ground, Christ himself plainly declares, in John xv. that when separated from him we are dead as to spiritual life; *I am the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. He that abideth not in me, is cast forth as a branch, and is withered.* But now, we abide in Christ when bound to him by faith and the Spirit. Now the uses of this are these;

1. Since so long as Christ is not in us we cannot be partakers of his spiritual blessings; let us labour, by faith in him, to induce him to take up his abode with us: for, as Cyprian truly says, *It is by faith, and not by personal contact, we are united to Christ in this life.*

2. Since we can have no hope of obtaining glory, either in ourselves, or in angels, or saints, or any where out of Christ alone; much less let us look for it in our own works. It is an excellent remark of Gerson, in a Poem which he calls "Testamentum Peregrini," part. 2;

Seek not the robe of works:—By blood

And by pollution stained, they will but bring

Confusion too and shame of face.

Let this discussion suffice for those three points which in this verse I proposed to consider; viz. the cause of the

concealment and of the revelation of this mystery which bringeth salvation: the commendations of this mystery; that it is rich, and glorious: and the person by whom and in whom we are made partakers of all spiritual blessings, viz. by Christ, and in Christ, through the agency of the Spirit, and faith the gift of the Spirit.

Verse 28.

Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

The Apostle has already brought forward many arguments to confirm the Colossians in the doctrine of the Gospel which they had received: here he adds another, drawn from his own labour in advancing it: as if he meant to say, That very same Gospel which Epaphras preached among you, I myself am announcing to the whole world; which I should not do, were I not certain that it is the only doctrine of salvation: Take care, therefore, that ye be not driven away from it.—But I proceed to the exposition of the words themselves by observing, that the Apostle effects three objects:

1. He shews the main subject of his preaching; *whom we preach, &c.*
2. He points out the manner of his preaching; *warning every man, &c.*
3. He declares the aim and intention of his preaching; *that we may present every man, &c.*

1. *Whom we preach.*] *Whom*, namely Christ, the image of God, the Head of the Church, the source of all fulness, the only Mediator and Redeemer of mankind, dwelling in you by faith, and ensuring to you the hope of eternal glory; this Christ, I say, we preach to you.

In these words, then, the Apostle marks the distinction between his doctrine and that of false Apostles. They were joining angels with Christ, and the works of the law with faith, in the business of salvation: but Paul was teaching that Christ alone was competent to fulfil every part of the office of a Mediator and Redeemer; and that faith in Christ, not obedience to the law of Moses, procured our salvation. The doctrine, therefore, of this passage is this;

That they only preach Christ aright and as they ought to do, who teach that all hope of salvation for mankind is laid up in him alone, and who acknowledge that we receive the riches of divine grace through him alone. The other Apostles also preached such a Christ: For Peter, Acts iv. 12, says thus; *There is salvation in no other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.* So Paul declares, Gal. v. 4, *Christ is become of none effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*

Hence it appears that the Papists do plainly deviate from the purity of the Gospel doctrine, who unite angels and saints with Christ in the Mediatorial office; intermix their self-righteous works with the perfect righteousness of Christ in the matter of justification; and incorporate masses, indulgences, and satisfactions of their own contriving, with the blood of Christ in the work of reconciliation. He who makes Christ a sort of half-way Saviour and Mediator, does not in fact preach him, but the chimera of his own brain: for this is a fundamental error in the principal subject of Gospel preaching.

2. *Warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom.*] Here the Apostle proceeds to describe the manner of his preaching, upon which we must make three observations.

The *first* is, that the ministry of the Gospel recognises two separate offices, viz. Warning, and Teaching. The word *νουθετεῖν*, which the Apostle adopts in this place, seems to me more extensive in its meaning than the Latin word *admonendi*, *warning* or *admonishing*. For it is literally, *to*

put a good mind into a man; which is effected, not only by warning, but by rebuking, comforting, and many other means. Labour, therefore, and attention of every description in a Minister, which is calculated to regulate the affections, and is found practically conducive to that effect, so that the doctrine of salvation may take deep root in men's hearts, is included under the term *νουθεσιαν*. Whether, therefore, we would correct the transgressor, or rouse the negligent, or cheer the desponding, or in short, work upon the will and the affections in any manner, all is included in this first part of a Minister's duty, viz. *νουθέτησιν*. Wherefore Clemens, Pædag. lib. 1. cap. 8, says, that *νουθετησις* is the prescribed diet for a diseased soul, counselling it to take what is salutary, and cautioning it against what is injurious. This part, therefore, of the ministerial office, is chiefly conversant with the reformation of the morals of men: Nor is it to be despised on the ground of the topics being common and ordinary which are urged by ministers in their exhortations and rebukes. For Seneca wisely observes, *What is the use of shewing that which is evident? Much every way. For sometimes we know but pay no attention. Admonition teaches not; but it warns, it excites, it keeps the memory alive, it prevents the thing from gliding out of sight. We pass by many objects that are before our eyes; to admonish is a kind of advice. The mind often neglects what is plain before it; therefore the notice of things most notorious must be suggested to it.* Senec. Epist. lib. 14. Epist. 94.

Another part of Gospel preaching is observable in teaching. But *διδασκειν*, to teach, relates to the understanding, as *νουθετεῖν*, to warn, does to the will and affections. It is, therefore, a Minister's duty not only to correct depraved affections and bad morals, but also to enlighten the blind understanding. He ought to be both like salt, to dry up the corrupt humours of the affections; and like light, to dispel the darkness of the mind: the one is done by warning and rebuking; the other by teaching and instructing.

The doctrine itself also is twofold; viz. of the law, and of grace: and it belongs to the ministerial office to explain each, and to bring forward all those passages of Scripture

which are essential to the full understanding of each, as well as to refute all conflicting errors. As to the doctrine of *grace*, no one doubts but that it is the special duty of a Minister of the Gospel to unfold all its mysteries; and as to *the law*, it is evident that he ought to instruct the people of God in the true knowledge of it. For the law is the dictate of the Divine mind, and the rule of the human will and operation; and every one is bound to make himself acquainted with that rule to which his life ought to be conformed.

But in teaching on this point it is so easy to err, that some cautions may be useful. We must be careful, then, in setting forth the doctrine of the law, not to suffer men's minds to rest upon it, as if they were to obtain salvation by obeying it; but they must be led to the throne of Christ's mercy by the rigours of the Law: for *the Law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ*.

We must observe also, that the doctrine of the Law is adapted in one way, to those who are faithful and truly penitent, and in another to the reprobate and rebellious. To the godly it should be set forth only as a rule of holy life, by walking in which they obey God; but not that they should justify themselves thereby: to the ungodly it must be set forth not only for the direction of their lives, but to strike terror into their minds, and shew them the justice of their condemnation, unless they repent and flee to Christ their Mediator.—Thus have we considered the twofold duty of *warning* and *teaching*. Now, in the second place, let us see how far this office extends.

Every man.] The Apostle appears to me to reiterate these words for three reasons :

1. To display his Apostolic authority, and the right of which he is possessed, to warn and to teach not only the Colossians themselves, but also those teachers who made it their business to corrupt the purity of the Gospel doctrines.

2. To shew that every distinction between Jew and Gentile was removed, and that the Gospel was open not to one nation only, but to all. Wherefore he says, Rom. i.

14, *I am debtor to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians, to the wise and to the unwise.*

That he might avow his zeal, and declare how his affections were bent upon the salvation not of this or that man, but of all mankind. For as a physician makes it the business of his profession to cure not this or that individual only, but all that he can; so the Physician of souls exerts himself (as much as in him lies) to give relief to all.

This example of Paul must be imitated by all Ministers of the Gospel; who, though not commissioned like him to teach all nations, yet should be animated with the apostolic purpose of bringing to Christ all those who are committed to their superintendance. This very purpose they ought to exhibit in warning and teaching every man placed under their ministry. They are not to think lightly of the poor, nor to be intimidated by the great, so as to shrink from their bounden duty both of teaching and warning. *Whoever, says Augustine, disobeys the commands of God and disregards reproof, is on that very account to be reprov'd, because he will not bear reproof.* De corrept. & grat. cap. 5.

In all wisdom.] This is the last expression we have to consider as to the manner of apostolic preaching; viz. that he had concealed nothing, but had instructed every man in all wisdom. The expression *all wisdom*, however, is not to be stretched beyond the limits of the present subject; but only to be applied to all wisdom of a saving nature, or such as is necessary for salvation. He does not profess to teach worldly wisdom, which is attained by the light of reason; but heavenly and spiritual, which is discerned by the light of faith, and is contained in the doctrine of the Gospel. Whatever, then, was necessary to be understood for obtaining salvation through Christ, that the Apostle openly expounded before all men. That this was Paul's meaning in this passage, is evident from the collation of other places in which he also declares the same persevering zeal in instructing the Church. In Acts xx. 18, &c. *Ye know how I have kept back from you nothing that was profitable to you; but have shewed you and taught you publicly, and from house to house; testifying both to the Jews and also to the Gentiles,*

repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. Immediately after which he adds, *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God;* ver. 26, 27.

Hence many inferences might be deduced.

1. The whole sum of Christian wisdom consists in depending upon Christ alone, and understanding the counsel of God concerning our salvation obtained by him. He who sincerely holds this doctrine is accounted as furnished with all wisdom.

2. The Apostles have publicly set forth every thing which is necessary for obtaining salvation in Christ; the obscure traditions, therefore, of which the Papists have so many fables, are no part of that wisdom which is unto salvation. And the reason is obvious: For the wisdom which is necessary to salvation was preached by the Apostles openly to all men; but these traditions of theirs, according to their own account, were not entrusted to all, but only to their prelates, or other eminent men among them. Therefore the knowledge of them is not necessary for the salvation of a Christian. If we consult the Fathers, though they allow of some traditions as to external ordinances, and the indifferent usages of the Church, yet, in all matters concerning faith and salvation, they, one and all, hold that the doctrines of Scripture which the Apostles preached, and afterwards committed to writing, are sufficient. Tertullian, *De præscript.* says, *Since the coming of Christ, there has been no need for speculation; nor for inquisitiveness since the promulgation of the Gospel.* And Augustine, in his comment upon John xi. tract. 49, observes, *Those things were selected to be written down which seemed sufficient for the salvation of those who believe.* I add no more on this topic now, having touched upon the error before more than once.

3. The man who is not apt to teach, nay more, who is not able to instruct God's people in all spiritual wisdom, is not a fit minister of the Gospel. To this end Paul (Tit. i. 9) requires in a spiritual pastor not only the knowledge

of sound doctrine, but also the holding it fast, that he may be able to instruct others in sound doctrine, and to convince the gainsayers. But let those who neither can nor will do this, see the heavy guilt that they bring upon themselves by withholding the word of instruction from their brethren, and by depriving dying souls of the remedy of life; as Gregory remarks in Pastoralis.

Thus, then, have we discoursed of the primary object, and also of the manner of apostolical preaching; in which the Apostle embraces three things, viz. the *warning* and *doctrine*: the persons who ought to be taught, viz. *all men*: and lastly, the matter which ought to be preached to people, viz. *all saving wisdom*. And now we will pass on from the manner to the aim or purpose of the Gospel Ministry.

[*That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.*] Behold, then, the end and aim of Paul, and so, indeed, of every other Minister of the word; viz. that they may bring all kinds of people to that saving knowledge of Christ in which Christian perfection consists. Now to avoid confusion herein, let us make two separate explanations. The first as to the intention of Paul; the other as to Christian perfection, or the character which constitutes it.

In respect of the first, then, it is asked, Is not this intention of Paul either extravagant or absurd, it being most certain that the greater part of mankind will not be brought to Christ after all the efforts of the Gospel ministry? For though many are called, yet few come, i. e. are chosen. Why, then, does he profess an intention which never can be fulfilled?

I answer, Neither is the Apostle's intention of bringing all men to Christ, though few will in reality be brought, nor are his endeavours to fulfil it extravagant or vain. That it is not extravagant there are two reasons: 1. Because it is in conformity with the rule of Charity, for according to that rule we are to presume favourably of every man until the contrary is shewn: But Ministers have no evidence against any particular man being saved; therefore they are bound to entertain a good hope for every man, and to do every thing they can for promoting his salvation.

2. This desire is not extravagant, because it is in perfect accordance with the revealed will of God. For that revealed will in the promulgation of the Gospel offers salvation to every man without respect of persons; and no man is excluded, unless he exclude himself by his unbelief. Agreeable to this statement is 1 Tim. ii. 4, *God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.* What, therefore, God himself hath declared to be his will in offering the Gospel, the same also ought to be the will of his Ministers in preaching it.

But here another question is raised from the foregoing: If God would have all men to whom he sends the Gospel of salvation to be saved, why are not all saved; since the will of God, neither in itself nor in the means by which it acts, can be hindered in producing the effect intended?

A common answer to this question is taken from Augustine: When God is said to will that all men should be saved, we must make a distribution of individuals into classes, not of classes into individuals; so that the sense will be, God wills that some should be saved of every class of men. But to me the commonly received distinction of the Schoolmen between the will of his *good pleasure* and his *visible will* (*voluntate signi*), is better suited to this passage. We therefore reply, that the will of his *good pleasure* is always effectually fulfilled, because it is formally and essentially in God, and is his practical absolute will, when employed concerning any future good. But his visible will is not always fulfilled, because it is not formally and essentially in God, and is not his absolute and practical will; but, it is his declarative or approbative will (if I may be allowed such a word) towards us. God is, therefore, said to will, by his *visible will*, the salvation of all, to whom he proposes and offers the Gospel, which is the ordinary means of effecting salvation. Moreover, we are not to inquire into the secret will of God; but all our actions must be directed according to his revealed will: and we ought, therefore, to wish and aim at the salvation of all those to whom God vouchsafes to grant the saving Gospel.

Neither is the endeavour of the Ministry, in drawing those to Christ who will never come, vain. In the first place, because, whilst they are performing their duty, they are relieving their own consciences. Secondly, because, though the exertions of the ministry in behalf of the reprobate, fail of their intended effect, they abundantly answer their purpose in all those fore-ordained to salvation. Lastly, because by this means infidels and reprobates will be condemned in the day of judgment, and deprived of every excuse for their sins; having disobeyed the calling through the perverseness of their own evil affections.—And thus far as to Paul's intention.

Now (in the last place) let us consider Christian perfection.

The Schoolmen hold two sorts of perfection; one of the *way*, the other of the *country*, to which the way leads. In this passage the Apostle has the former more particularly in view; and this is the first point to which the Ministers of the Gospel endeavour to lead their people, that by means of it they may be brought to the attainment of the second.

This perfection of the *way* may also be considered in a twofold manner. For a man is called *perfect* who is in possession of every thing which is necessary for a state of salvation; and so every believer is perfect. A man is called *perfect* also, who has attained to every degree of grace and virtue; and in this sense no man is perfect: for every Christian always may be, and ever ought to be, growing and advancing in grace and holiness.

But what constitutes the character of Christian perfection? The Apostle seems to insinuate the answer by adding *in Christ Jesus; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus*. When, confessing our own imperfection and corruption, we take refuge in Christ, and by faith lay hold of his perfection, and are renewed by the Holy Spirit into his likeness, then, and not till then, are we *perfect in Christ Jesus*. The Apostle, therefore, does in effect say, that he labours, by preaching the Gospel, to impress true faith and earnest piety on the hearts of all men.

Hence we infer,

1. That the Ministry is, as it were, the hand of God himself reforming and perfecting men in spiritual life; which, if we speak of the subject of degrees of perfection, is done very gently and gradually. For, as Prosper says, *De vita contempl.* l. 9, *no man is in this life completely perfect; for the infirmities of the godly are not yet healed, though they are under the daily process of healing.* Hence that address of Paul, Gal. iv. 19, *My little children, of whom I travail in birth until Christ be formed in you.*

2. Hence also is shewn the empty pride of the Monks in claiming to themselves alone that state of perfection which is within the reach of every true Christian. For it is quite absurd to suppose that a good Christian cannot be in the way of perfection without turning Franciscan or Dominican; when Paul, who wished to present all men perfect in Christ Jesus, yet never attempted to persuade one to bind himself down by any sort of monastic vows and rules. But let us hear that grave theologian John Gerson, who beats down this pride of the Monks upon all occasions. In his work *Contra assert. Matthæi de Grabbon*,* part. 1, he maintains the following propositions: 1. *The Christian religion may be observed perfectly, yea, most perfectly, independently of any vow obliging to counsels of perfection.* (This he proves by the example of Christ, the Apostles, and the saints in the primitive Church, who were under no vows or monastic discipline whatever). 2. *It is the height of impropriety, perversion, and, I scruple not to add, arrogance, to call these factitious religious institutes, states of perfection, when it is certain the most imperfect men are professors of such obligations.* 3. *The religion of Christ may be and ought to be observed by the prelates of the Church more perfectly than by the Monks.* And in the third part of his work, he brings many arguments to prove that the perfection of a Christian does by no means consist in the vow of

* Grabbon appears to have been a Monk of the 15th century, who maintained some peculiar notions on this subject, which were condemned in the Council of Basil. Vide Du Pin, cap. viii. Cent. xv.

celibacy, and poverty, and obedience to the monkish rules, but in the observance of the Divine precepts. Whence also Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. 7, says, *that there is as much perfection to be found in the conjugal as in the monastic life.** We therefore conclude, that the perfection of which the Apostle is here speaking, does not consist in monastic observances, but in faith, in charity, and in sanctity of life; in all which he who has the greater firmness, ardour, and strength, is to be accounted the most perfect.

Verse 29.

Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

The Apostle amplifies his ministry by a twofold argument: 1. By his great labour, which he intimates under the words *labouring* and *striving*. 2. By the effectual assistance of Christ, which he expresses in adding, *according to his working, which worketh in me mightily*. He employs both these arguments for confirming the Colossians in the doctrine of the Gospel. For if Paul propagated this doctrine with all diligence, it ought also to bind the Colossians with equal constancy: If Christ promoted this doctrine by Divine aid, the Colossians ought to adopt the same as the word of God.

Whereunto I also labour, κοπιῶ.] This Greek word does not simply mean *to labour*, but *to labour vehemently, and even to weariness*. He therefore shews, first, from the labour annexed to it, both the difficulty and the dignity of his ministry: for a difficulty which arises from labour increases its value.

* Clemens in his 3d Strom. refutes the notions of the Marcionites about abstinence from Marriage, from the saying of St. Paul, 1 Tim. iv. 1-3, "that those who forbid marriage propagate the doctrine of devils:" and also by the example of Peter and Philip, who were both married and had children.

How many and how great labours Paul underwent in preaching the Gospel, we may ascertain from the Acts of the Apostles. No one visited more people in preaching; no one contended more strenuously with the enemies of the Gospel in disputation; in short, no one in any work of the ministry exercised himself more earnestly by labour. Whence he did not fear to assert, *that he had laboured more abundantly than all the other Apostles*, 1 Cor. xv. 10. This labour of Paul, then, I refer to all those acts whereby he studied to extend the Gospel. But the Apostle adds, *I labour striving*.

[Ἀγωνιζόμενος.] I conceive that this refers to the dangers and sufferings of Paul, which he was often compelled to sustain in the discharge of his Apostolic office. For the metaphor is derived from those wrestlers who contended in the public games, and underwent many severe and arduous struggles in those contests.

If any one would see a catalogue of those sufferings which Paul sustained, let him look into 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c. where he glories that *he was in stripes, in prisons, in deaths oft: that he was beaten with rods, stoned; was three times shipwrecked: that he was in perils of waters, of robbers, of the Jews, and of the Gentiles: that he passed his life in watchings, in hunger, in thirst, in cold, and nakedness*. Paul contended with all these opponents, and overcame them all by enduring: Whence in 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, he triumphantly exclaims; *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness*.

Here learn,

1. That they who propose to themselves ease, pleasure, riches, or honour, are not suited for the Ministry of the Gospel. For if the pastors of cattle undertake a laborious life, so that Jacob could truly say concerning the pastoral life, *In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes*, Gen. xxxi. 40, then how much more does it behove the pastors of souls, from whom God will require whatever shall be lost through their indolence, to shrink from no labour? *If any one de-*

sire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work, 1 Tim. iii. 1; work, not honour; labour, not pleasure; says Jerome. *They are wicked prelates*, says Gregory, *who retain the chair of government to enjoy pleasure, not to exercise labour*, Moral. lib. xi. cap. 10.

2. That ministers ought to make up their minds, not only to labour in the word, but even to labour for the word under the cross. For the cross is the portion of all the godly, but especially of ministers. Hence said Christ to his Apostles, John xvi. 2, *The time will come that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service*. And in the last verse, *In the world ye shall have tribulation*. A certain one said, *It is princely to have a bad character for doing well*: but I should rather say, *It is priestly to suffer cruelty for doing well*. Hence Paul writing to Timothy unites both, in 2 Epis. iv. 5; *Do the work of an Evangelist*; there is labour in execution! *endure afflictions*; there is firmness in suffering! He who has learnt these two lessons, the same knows with Paul how to labour and strive; to sustain labour *in* the word; afflictions and dangers *for* the word. These cannot be separated: for he is defective in his vocation who dreads to suffer for the truth. *Patience in the things of God is so inculcated*, says Tertullian, in his treatise, *De patient. cap. 1, because he who is a stranger to patience can obey no precept, can perform no work pleasing to the Lord*. For this is the shield of every virtue.—So much concerning the labour: now let us consider the Helper.

According to his working, which worketh in me mightily] i. e. according to the effectual working of Christ. This is that other argument whereby the Apostle enhances his ministry, and shews at the same time his modesty and humility. He had affirmed that he laboured and strove to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Now he adds that he did this not relying upon human strength or his own powers, but upon the divine assistance of Christ, strengthened and aided by his might.

Concerning this *efficacy*, or *might* of Christ, we shall consider three things: the origin of it; the mode, and the effect.

1. Every operation flows from some origin: it is proper to inquire, therefore, in the first place, what is the origin of this most effectual working; according to which Paul says that he laboured and strove with so much constancy and fortitude.

We answer, that Christ himself, or the Spirit of Christ, is the efficient principle of this working: For thus Christ himself promised, Luke, ult. 49, *Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high*, i. e. until the Holy Spirit descends upon you, who will be the fountain and the principle of all might and spiritual strength in you all. Hence that glorying of the Apostle, Philip. iv. 13, *I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.*

2. We must inquire, how the Holy Spirit effects this sufficiency in Ministers to fulfil the work of their ministry. Not only by the concurrence and aid of his might, but by the communication and influence of his grace. For he creates in the minds of godly Ministers certain new and supernatural qualities, whereby they are rendered adequate to do and suffer all those things which devolve upon Ministers of the Gospel. So Paul expressly declares, 1 Cor. xv. 10, *By the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* And in 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6, *Our sufficiency is of God; who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament.* How hath he made them so? By his Spirit as the effective principle; by the grace of the Spirit as the formal principle.

Lastly, we must speak concerning the effects of the Spirit and of his grace strengthening us. Whereas, then, it is required in a Minister that he both do and suffer all those things which are necessary to further the Gospel, we say the effects of this Spirit and grace are of a twofold division. Some are to render the Minister fit for the duties of his calling: of this kind are the illumination of the mind, the sanctification of the will, love and regard for the flock, and many other such endowments, with which the internal

working of Christ, operating in his mind, adorned and enriched Paul. Others are to render a Minister firm and ready to endure any thing for the Gospel: of this kind are fortitude, constancy, patience, zeal for the Divine glory, and all those other virtues with which the soul is upheld and sustained in undergoing afflictions. We are able also to add a third kind of effects, which are to promote the success of the Gospel, and to procure for the Apostles themselves extraordinary authority: namely, the power of working miracles, which some interpreters think to be intended when the Apostle says, *according to his working, which worketh in me mightily*; for this they apply to the power of miracles. From all these things, therefore, it appears that Paul both performed and endured all things for the advancement of the Gospel, not in his own strength, but *according to the power of Christ working in him*.

Hence we infer,

1. That no one should undertake the ministry relying upon his own ability or strength, but suppliantly to seek the aid of Divine grace. For no one is competent by himself for such a duty: but as Cyprian piously remarks, *De nativ. Christi, The Spirit infusing himself into the minds of the humble, enlarges the contractedness of the human intellect, and opens the mental eyes to behold invisible things*. Thus also no one is ready and strong in himself to suffer for the Gospel: but as *it is given to men to believe the Gospel*, so also the ability to *suffer for the Gospel* is derived from God, Phil. i. 29.

2. No one should be deterred from the pastoral office on account of those injuries and reproaches which are wont to be heaped upon Ministers: for the Spirit of Christ will be with them strengthening them to endure all things even with joyfulness. *In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace*, says Christ, John xvi. 33. There shall be from me an inward consolation to revive you, as long as there shall be an outward tyranny from the world to crush you.

3. They are not strengthened by the Spirit of Christ, but hurried along by that of the devil, who, when pressed

by afflictions, do not think upon patience, but seek revenge. And here it will repay our trouble to consider what a difference there is between Paul, Peter, and the rest of the Apostles, and the Roman Pontiffs. The Apostles were armed against the persecutions of tyrants by fortitude from God, constancy of mind, and patience: but the latter proclaim, that they are armed by treachery, sword, and fire. For Bellarmin teaches, that God had not provided all things necessary to his Church unless he had granted power to the Pope of changing kingdoms, deposing kings, and absolving subjects from the oath of allegiance, if it should happen that any king should resist the Church. God, however, is not wanting to the Church, although he granted not to the Pope power of deposing kings, because he has given to the Church the power and the will to suffer for righteousness, and because by these sufferings the religion of Christians is increased; according to that remark of Tertullian, in his Apologet. cap. 50, *The more we are cut down by you, the more we increase; for the blood of Christians is the seed of the Church.*

Lastly, it is hence manifest that all the labour of Ministers is lost, as it respects their hearers, unless the powerful working of Christ produce the effects in the minds of the one as well as of the other. *Paul may plant, and Apollos may water; but God giveth the increase, 1 Cor. iii. 6. It is necessary that the Holy Spirit should work internally, that the remedy may be effectual which is offered externally: Unless he is present in the hearts of the hearers, the word of the speaker is useless, as Augustine has well said.*

We have now completed the first Chapter, in which the foundations of the whole of the Apostolic discussion are laid down, the titles of Christ explained, and the doctrine of our redemption by Him settled and established. In the following Chapter the Apostle encounters those seducers who attempted to withdraw the Colossians from Christ.

EXPOSITION

OF

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

OF this whole Chapter a few things may be premised generally; and then, according to our custom, we shall proceed to a particular elucidation of the text.

In this general dissertation we shall briefly point out three things, viz. the Apostle's object in this Chapter; the state and sum of the controversy to be discussed; and the arrangement or distribution of the whole Chapter in its parts.

As to the design of the Apostle: he aims directly in this whole discussion, to retain the Colossians and all other Christians firm and stedfast in the truth of the Gospel, which places all the ground of our salvation in Christ alone; and to fortify them against the deceptions of all seducers, who would blend with Christ, in the business of salvation, either the doctrine of philosophy, or the Mosaic ceremonies, or even traditions of their own invention. Therefore, as a wise physician, in the preceding Chapter the Apostle had exhibited to them the sustenance of wholesome doctrine; in this he points out the food to be avoided as noxious and dangerous to the souls' health. In the former, as a *good* husbandman, he sowed the good seed in the field of the Colossian Church; in this, as a *provident* husbandman, he warns them, lest, falling asleep, they should admit for wheat the tares sowed meanwhile by impostors. This, then, is the scope of this Chapter, viz. that

the Colossians may be retained and confirmed in the true doctrine, and fortified against novel corruptions.

Now from these remarks it is easy to reduce the sum of the whole controversy to two points. First, that in Christ alone, according to the Gospel doctrine, we have every thing sufficient to salvation. Secondly, whatever traditions, ceremonies, and philosophical speculations are obtruded in the business of salvation, in addition to Christ, are altogether vanity and imposture. These propositions the Apostle so treats through this whole Chapter, that he does not dismiss the one before he proceeds to the other; but indiscriminately and alternately, and often by varied turns, he lays down, proves, and illustrates sometimes the one, and sometimes the other. And it seems to me that the Apostle adopts this method with the design that by frequent discussion and repetition of both, he may fix each of them deeply in the minds of Christians.

Finally, we have to speak of the division of this Chapter into its members; and it seems that the whole may be aptly divided into four parts:

1. The exordium or preface, comprised in the first seven verses.
2. The proposition of the subject to be treated, briefly laid down in the eighth verse.
3. The confirmation of the Apostle's judgment, extended as far as to the seventeenth verse.
4. The conclusion of the question, amplified and illustrated, to the end, as is common in conclusions.

OF THE EXORDIUM.

Let us now enter upon a view of the Exordium, comprehended (as I have stated) in the seven first verses: and that consists of three parts;

1. In a narrative proposition, in which he shews both his conduct and his mind towards the Colossians; in the first verse.
2. The statement of his reasons or the occasion; in which he gives many reasons for his procedure, and proposition; from the first verse to the sixth.

3. An hortatory conclusion; in which he advises them to obey the truth, nor suffer such great solicitude of an Apostle for their salvation to be in vain; in verses six and seven.

From the construction of this Exordium I venture to assert, that there is no rule laid down by Aristotle, Cicero, and other masters of eloquence, concerning the framing of introductions, which is not adhered to in this brief opening. For three things are required by them in a legitimate Exordium: That it be adapted to render the hearer *attentive*, and *docile*, and to *conciliate his affection*. We render our hearers *attentive* when we shew them that we are about to speak of great and unusual things, or which relate to those who hear. The Apostle excels in all these respects; for what is either greater or more excellent than *the mystery of God, the treasures of Christ*? What either to be more wondered at, or more dangerous than the *speeches and deceivings* of impostors and their arts? Lastly, What more properly concerned the Colossians than that spiritual consolation, and *the riches of understanding*, which is promised to them at the threshold of this address? These things, therefore, are sufficient as to *attention*.

Now as to what pertains to *docility*; Rhetoricians direct that in an Exordium, the sum of the subject to be treated, and the points of proof, should, as it were, be scattered by the way: for it ought to be *ὁδοποιησις τῷ ἐπιοντι λόγῳ*, a *paving of the way for the discourse that is to follow*, as Aristotle wisely says in Rhetor. 3. 14. This the Apostle effects in verses 3 and 4. In the former he lays down the ground of his defence; in the latter he confutes the reverse by stigmatizing it with the name of *imposture*.

Concerning the great art of conciliating their *good-will* much need not be said; it abundantly shines forth in every sentence. He conciliates their *good-will* to himself from his own personal character, by relating what labours he had undertaken for them, and what benevolent feelings he always entertained towards them; from the personal character of his adversaries, by reciting their impostures and frauds; and from the personal character of the Colossians

themselves, by declaring their order, their stedfastness in the faith, and by importuning them to constancy and progress in these good qualities; and, lastly, from the facts themselves, by teaching that he strives for the treasures of Christ, but his adversaries for dross instead of gold, i. e. for doating schemes and impostures.

Although these technicalities are not immediately in connexion with our undertaking, I was nevertheless desirous to glance at them by the way for two reasons. One was, lest we should despise the sacred Scriptures and their writers as devoid of eloquence and human literature. For that remark of Ambrose, Epist. lib. 8. ep. 63, is true: *The writers of the divine books, although they did not write them according to the rules of art, but according to grace, which is superior to art; yet they who have written concerning this art, have discovered the rules of it in their writings.* And that also of Augustine, 4 De doct. Christ. cap. 7, *The sacred writings possess, but do not affect eloquence.* For God, who hath formed the voice, the mind, and the tongue, however he would have their discourses to be wanting in disguise, was yet unwilling that they should be in any wise deficient in useful and solid art. Vide Rupert, lib. 7, concerning the works of the Holy Spirit, as largely proving this.*

The other reason why we have just touched the skilful disposition of the Apostle's writing was, lest unskilful and unlearned men, when they write or preach whatever comes uppermost, exhibiting no study or art, should flatter themselves, as though they trod in the steps of the Apostles. They, being extraordinarily assisted by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wanted not the ordinary aid of art; but

* Rupert, Abbot of Duyts or Deutch: he was born at Ypres, in Flanders, in 1091, and died in 1135. He is commonly known and cited as Rupertus Tuitiensis, and is one of the three famous Commentators of the 12th century noticed by Du Pin: but besides his Commentaries on parts of the Bible, he wrote several other Theological Treatises, among which was the one cited above. He was a learned and a pious man. But Bellarmin and other late Roman writers disparage his works, because, forsooth, he entertained opinions about the Eucharist differing from the novel Popish doctrine of Transubstantiation.

us, to whom it is not permitted to expect this full power to work miracles, it behoves to seek aid as well in writing as in preaching, by study, by industry, and every suitable means. But quitting these things, let us proceed to the text.

CHAP. II. Verse 1.

For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh.

In this short verse is contained the first part of the Exordium, viz. the narrative proposition; in which he shews his conduct and his good-will towards the Colossians, Laodiceans, and all others imbued with the Christian faith. These words are connected with the two last verses of the first Chapter, as appears by those words, *for I would*, which look back to the preceding in this manner: He had said that he strove and laboured, that he might teach and present every one perfect in Christ Jesus; now what he had spoken universally concerning all, he applies specially and expressly to the Colossians: As though he had said, 'Ye have heard with what care and solicitude, with what conflicts I have spread the Gospel among others; I have defended it when spread, and have withstood seducers: I wish you to understand, moreover, that you have not been overlooked by me; whom, although I have never seen or visited, yet I have sustained the same conflicts for you also, I have had the like care and solicitude on your account.' This is the connection of these words with the foregoing: In the explication of them we shall have to examine three things:

1. What the Apostle has an eye to in so often repeat-

ing and enforcing his labours and conflicts undertaken for the Churches; viz. their benefit, which he intimates by saying, *For I would that ye knew.*

2. What, and of what sort, was this conflict which the Apostle underwent.

3. For whom this conflict was undertaken: which he shews specially and definitely, *for you; and for the Laodiceans*; and then indefinitely, *and for as many as have not seen my face, &c.*

For I would that ye knew.] The Apostle shews what was his meaning in commemorating this his conflict; viz. he does not seek empty glory to himself from thence, but he regards the gain and utility accruing to the Colossians from this knowledge of his conflicts. And this gain is manifold,

First, When a people understand what labours and conflicts their salvation demands from the Pastor, hence arises the fruit of mutual affection and kindness: for he is truly ungrateful, who does not love that man in return, who loves him and strives with all diligence for his salvation. In order, therefore, that the hearts of a people may be inflamed with love for their Minister, it is useful that they should know, what they do and what they endure for their sakes.

Secondly, hence springs the fruit of mutual solicitude and diligence; for if any spiritual sense exist in them, they are excited to the care of their own salvation, which they perceive to be the subject of such earnest care to another.

Lastly, hence is produced the fruit of like constancy and patience; for loyal soldiers are animated by the example of their leader; and boldly (when occasion offers) they commence that fight which they observe to be bravely and successfully fought by their pastors. Hither, especially, all ecclesiastical histories tend, which propose the deeds and sufferings of the Martyrs to be contemplated by all, that from thence their minds may be prepared to take up the same cross. The Apostle, therefore, regarded these advantages as he intimates in saying, *For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have, &c.*

Hence we derive two lessons :

1. It must not be deemed boasting, if Ministers sometimes freely talk of the labours and toils of their ministry among the people : for Paul very often did this ; it is very proper for the people to know this ; it is done with a view to their spiritual good.

2. They who do not know, or are unwilling to know and acknowledge the labours, watchings, and conflicts of Ministers for their salvation, oppose themselves and their own advantage : for from this knowledge they reap much fruit, as was before shewn.

Thus much concerning the first point.

2. *What great conflict I have.*] Ye have heard why the Apostle wished his conflicts for the Colossians to be known ; now, in the second place, we shall explain what kind, and in what things that conflict consisted. Erasmus and the ancient interpreter* translate ἀγωνα, *solicitude*, with little appositeness : for any one may be solicitous about his own or another's affairs, although there may be no one who opposes and resists him : but no person is said to have a conflict except he who has strife and contention with an adversary. Every conflict requires solicitude ; but all solicitude does not always pre-suppose a conflict. We, therefore, receive the interpretation of Beza.

But what was this conflict ? with whom, and on what account sustained ?

It was a conflict as well of mind as of body ; with Satan, with deceivers—the members of Satan, with various kinds of afflictions ; it was undertaken for the edifying, confirming, and retaining the members of Christ in the faith.

Conflict of *mind* consists either *in affections* or *in actions*. Contrary *affections* strove in the mind of the Apostle, arising from different causes. For sometimes he rejoiced and exulted, and was full of hope, through witnessing the faith, and love, and other virtues of the godly ; Rom. xvi.

* Davenant probably means the Vulgate, for Beza translate^s ἀγωνα *certainem*, with this note, “ Vulg: et Erasmus ἀγωνα vertunt sollicitudinem non satis expresse.”

19. Sometimes he mourned, grieved, and feared by beholding their dissensions, errors, or afflictions. *Who is afflicted, and I am not afflicted?* &c. 2 Cor. xi. 29. *I fear, lest as the serpent beguiled Eve, so,* &c. 2 Cor. xi. 3. As to what relates to *actions*, the mind of the Apostle was scarcely ever free from conflict. He had continual conflicts of prayer against Satan, and his satellites, for the salvation of the faithful, Rom. xvi. 20. And 2 Thess. i. 11, *We pray always for you,* &c. He moreover contended by writing and preaching, with false apostles, detecting and refuting their errors; with all ungodliness of men, restraining, and dispersing it, as appears in 2 Cor. x. 4, &c. Lastly, he contended with the infirmities of the faithful themselves, reproofing, instructing, and consoling them; as is every where to be seen in the writings of Paul. These were the conflicts of *mind* by which Paul was daily distracted. But neither was *the body* of the Apostle free from its own tortures: it had to encounter fatigues, watchings, hunger, thirst, fastings, inclemency of weather, and racks, 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c. Whether, therefore, we regard the labours he sustained, or the griefs he underwent, in each respect the Apostle was distinguished by divers bodily conflicts.

If now it be asked, What advantage could result from this commemoration of so many of the Apostle's conflicts of mind and body? It is answered, That the Apostle proposed to himself no other end than the good of the Church. For that he might bring men to Christ, present them perfect in Christ, keep them stedfast and persevering in the faith of Christ, and lead them at last to the kingdom of Christ, he sustained the conflicts before-mentioned. So he himself declares, 2 Tim. ii. 10, *Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.* From these things various arguments touching Ministers may be gathered.

1. A good Pastor ought to be affected with the good or evil of his flock, as much as with his own. For *the Pastor*, as Cyprian, speaking *De lapsis*, observes, *is wounded by*

the hurt of his flock, and he likewise is revived by the health of his flock. *I draw each to my bosom, I participate of its sorrow and joy by turns*, says the same Father.

2. A good Minister is never less idle than when he is idle. The rude peasant thinks that saying of the Poet may be turned against Ministers, *to the idle it is always a feast*: for they suppose that we make holiday the whole day long; nor have any occupation after we have left the temple; but if we are such as we ought to be, a conflict devolves upon us of praying, meditating, studying—I had almost said unceasingly, certainly daily and assiduously.

3. It behoves Ministers to be of such a mind as not only to pray for their flock, but to be ready to submit to the cross, nay, even to death, if it should be required: 2 Cor. xii. 15, *I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls*.

4. Ministers ought, in all their cares, labours, and conflicts, to have this in view, not that they may gain empty glory, or any earthly advantage; but that the people may obtain salvation. For Clemens well says, *It is the duty of a Theologian to lend his assistance for the preservation of those who desire to be preserved, not to put together the ornaments of elocution*.

All these lessons affecting Ministers arise from the example of Paul.

LESSONS AFFECTING THE PEOPLE.

1. There is that inaptitude in the people to spiritual things, that without great conflicts on the part of Ministers they cannot be brought to God, nor be kept in the true religion; therefore it is proper that they should submit themselves to those who have the care and labour of seeking their salvation.

2. It is fit duly to honour Ministers, who are vexed by so many cares, worn by so many watchings, bruised by so many conflicts for their sakes. For if the leaders of an earthly warfare are honoured among all men, how much more fit is it that the leaders of the spiritual warfare should be honoured! according to that injunction of the

Apostle, 1 Thess. v. 12, *Know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.*

3. They are reprov'd to whom it is a pleasure to contend against, and strive about matters of no moment with their Ministers, who, on their account, undergo so many laborious conflicts: for what is more unworthy than that he should be harassed and wounded by his flock, who daily fights for the flock against their spiritual enemies?

Thus much concerning the Apostle's conflict.

3. *For you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh.*] It has been shewn why the Apostle calls to remembrance his conflict, and what this conflict was; it remains, in the last place, that we consider the persons for whom it was undertaken: and they are described (as hath been said) both definitely and indefinitely.

For you, and for them at Laodicea.] Here the Apostle expressly professes that his afore-mentioned conflicts were undertaken for the Colossians and Laodiceans; where we must explain why he expresses these by name, and why he joins them together.

He mentions them by name that he may anticipate an implied objection; for it might occur to them to say, You have, indeed, sustained heavy labours, you have endured remarkable conflicts; but for the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians; and for others, to whom you have personally preached the Gospel; but your voice *we* never heard; nor have we even beheld your face. Paul anticipates these surmisings, and shews them that he sustained his conflicts of prayer, of solicitude, and of writing also for them, although he had not exercised the office of preaching among them. Yea, he entered the lists for them in this his Epistle, to encounter their seducers.

But why does he unite the Laodiceans also? Because this Epistle (according to his direction Chap. iv. 16) was to be recited publicly in the church of Laodicea; therefore he wished to mention them also, lest they should suspect that they were overlooked by the Apostle; besides, it is

very probable that the Laodicean Church, on account of its vicinity, was assailed and attempted by the seducers in the same manner as that of the Colossian: in order, therefore, that they might understand the doctrine of this Epistle to relate to them in some especial manner, he expressly introduces them.

And as many as have not seen my face in the flesh.] That is, as many as have not seen me present in body, nor have heard me preach by word of mouth: for Paul was well known by reputation, and by his written Epistles to all the Churches. The Apostle adds this indefinite clause (as Œcumenius observes) lest he should seem to insinuate against them a suspicion of carelessness, thus earnestly exciting them to constancy and perseverance in the truth of the doctrine of the Gospel. He does this, not because he doubted of their stedfast faith, but because the nature of lovers is such, that they are more solicitous about absent than present friends: that he, therefore, being absent, might intimate this as the cause of his anxious care, rather than his distrust of their faith, he declares that he was so affected towards all the rest among whom he could not be present. For what the Poet remarks concerning the bird and its young, may much more truly be said of the Pastor and his people: This bird, if she leave her unfledged young ever so little, thinks of, and fears, the approach of serpents much more anxiously than when she sits by them. (Hor. Epod. od. 1.) So the Pastor, if he is compelled to be absent from his flock, is much more solicitous than when he is watching over them, lest they should fall from their faith, be corrupted in their manners, or their salvation should in any measure be endangered.

Hence we learn,

1. There is another sort of aspect that conciliates love among the servants of God, than that of flesh and the eyes; viz. the aspect of the mind. For Christian love does not conceive friendship and affinity to consist in local nearness, but in spiritual unity. There is, therefore, a certain mutual benevolence and solicitude among the godly about their spiritual proficiency, although they have never

beheld, and are absolutely unknown to each other by face.

2. The care and solicitude of a faithful Minister is not lightened, but is increased, if at any time he should be withdrawn from his flock. For he who is absent in body ought always to be present with the flock in spirit, and to help them in the meanwhile by his prayers, and by any other means, with all his might.

3. Also it behoves him, with Paul, to exert himself to the utmost, that from his deeds all should understand that he is neither unmindful or neglectful of the people committed to him.

Let these things suffice concerning the first part of the Exordium, viz. the narrative proposition.

Verse 2.

That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the Mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.

We have now gone through the first part of the Exordium, which consisted of a narrative proposition; for the Apostle relates in it how great a conflict he had sustained, that he might retain the Colossians, Laodiceans, and other Christians whom he had never visited, firm in the truth of the Gospel, against all the machinations and deceptions of seducers.

We now come to the second part of the introduction; a statement of successive reasons of the actions and purposes of the Apostle. For he accumulates many arguments, from which he proves that his advice in persuading them to constancy in the doctrine they had received, was excellent, and that they would best consult their own salvation by following it, i. e. by perseverance, for these have a mutual connexion.

In this verse the argument is drawn from the triple fruit of true and Evangelical doctrine. The Apostle contends that they should persist in it; and that it is expedient for them to persist in it. Why? First, *that their hearts might be comforted*; This is the first fruit. Secondly, *that they might be knit together*, and, as it were, cemented *in love*; this is the second fruit. Thirdly, *that they might attain a more enlarged, more certain, and more evident assurance of understanding*: and here he finally declares, by apposition, what understanding or knowledge he means; not that of worldly things, but of *God the Father and of Christ*.

That their hearts might be comforted.] These words may be referred to the Apostle's conflict for the Colossians, and his earnest persuasions to perseverance in the received doctrine; for from this conflict for them they might receive twofold comfort.

1. Since they saw from it that they were highly regarded, and greatly beloved by the Apostle. For it is the greatest consolation to men in danger to perceive that others care for them, especially those who are able to assist them; which the original word itself shews, for *παρακαλεῖν* is to excite the mind of a person in difficulty by encouraging him, or applauding; as in single combat, or battles, men encourage by their shouts those friends whom they wish should conquer. Thus does the Apostle comfort the Colossians, contending with their seducers, by his good wishes, his advice, his encouragement, and his instruction.

2. They were comforted by this conflict of the Apostle, since they clearly saw from it that the doctrine they had drawn from Epaphras was approved by the Apostle, and its reverse rejected and condemned. For, as Epaphras was not one of the Apostles, they might entertain some doubt respecting the certainty of doctrine delivered by him; especially when many were introducing new doctrines with great appearance of wisdom. This scruple is therefore removed from their hearts; for the Apostle, directly taught of the Holy Spirit, confirms the same doctrine by his suffrage, and contends for retaining it.

But these words may and ought to be referred to the thing itself to which the Apostle endeavours to persuade the Colossians, viz. Perseverance in this true doctrine : for from this perseverance their hearts were about to receive especial comfort :

1. Because the doctrine of salvation by faith alone in Christ Jesus, brings tranquillity and peace to troubled consciences. For as the modulations of harmony are wont to be applied to revive and arouse the mind when sorrowful ; so are the gratuitous promises of God in Christ, to bring fresh warmth and tranquillity to men's hearts and consciences. Hence that saying of the Apostle, Rom. v. 1, *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.* And hence every solid consolation is every where shewn by the Apostle to be founded on the doctrine of grace ; 2 Thess. ii. 16, *Hath given us consolation through grace.* And Phil. ii. 1, *If there be any consolation in Christ.* They, therefore, who embrace this doctrine, thence obtain consolation.

2. They will be comforted from persevering in the doctrine of the Gospel, because the doctrine of innovators (by establishing a necessary observation of ceremonies, by introducing the worship of angels, and other vain and uncertain traditions) harassed men's hearts and minds with various scruples and anxieties. Now to be exempt from these is a great part of spiritual consolation.

Observe 1. When the doctrine of the Gospel is attacked, it behoves a Minister who has any regard for the consolation of the Church, to defend his fellow-soldier, and to repress the audacity of heretics : unless he shall have done this, he will be considered to have failed in his duty, both to the people of God, and to the glory of the Creator. As, therefore, Paul vindicates Epaphras from the calumnies of seducers, and confirms the Colossians in the truth of the Gospel ; so should we do when the same occasion occurs. For when the truth of the Gospel is in danger, it behoves all to assist, as if to extinguish a conflagration.

2. If we would receive consolation from the Gospel in the business of our salvation, we should not mingle the

commentaries and decrees of men with divinely delivered doctrine. For as water mixes not with fire, but fire is extinguished when water is poured upon it; so the doctrines of men cannot coalesce with the saving word of God; but when these are tacked to it, the fervour of the word (i. e. the spiritual efficacy in gladdening the heart) is quenched. Hence the Apostle says to the Galatians, v. 4, in opposition to the teachers of the law, who taught that the works of the law were to be joined to faith in Christ for justification, *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law.*

The Papists snatch from men's hearts every comfort of the Gospel, whilst they tread in the footsteps of these seducers, and mingle with the doctrine of the Gospel their own doctrine of indulgences, expiatory masses, and meritorious works; in which they place the hope of obtaining remission of sins, justification, and glorification; while the grace of Christ is neglected, or retained for form's sake only. It is, however, worthy of remark, that although many, whilst idly disputing, thrust their masses, indulgences, merits, and such like things on God and man; yet, when their consciences contend in earnest with Divine justice, they are constrained to fly to Christ alone, and in very deed confess, that their hearts cannot be comforted, if this doctrine be departed from. Of this we will adduce some testimonies:

Anselm, in his meditations, says, *Place thy whole confidence in the death of Christ alone; commit thyself wholly to this death; with this death cover thyself; and involve thyself entirely in him. If the Lord would judge thee, say, Lord, I place the death of my Jesus between me and thee and thy judgment; otherwise I contend not with thee. I bring forward his merit for my merit, which I ought to have; but, alas! have not.* Parisiensis, in Lib. de Rhetor. divina, says, *Ye must beware, in contending with God, lest you rely on a frail foundation; which he does who confides in his own merits. For as he who strives on his own merits, deprives himself of the aid of God; so he who altogether distrusts himself, and relies on grace alone, attracts to himself the aid of God.* Gerson, in his

Sermon De nuptiis Christi et Ecclesiæ, part. 1, teaches that we must trust in the merits of Christ alone before the Divine tribunal: also, in his treatise De distinctione verarum Visionum à falsis; and in a Sermon De verbo Dom. part. 2; and De consolat. theolog. part. 3. Bellarmin himself, lib. 5. De justific. cap. 7, says, *It is safest to repose our whole confidence in the mercy of God alone, on account of the uncertainty of our own justification.*

But to what purport are these things adduced? That ye may understand, that if we would have our hearts receive true and sound comfort, we must persevere in that doctrine which enjoins us to repose our hope in Christ alone; and that *that* must be exploded which would mingle with it merits, ceremonies, indulgences, &c.

Being knit together in love, Συμβιβασθεντων.] Συμβιβάζω is to knit, to bring to adherence, as carpenters fit together two pieces of wood, so that they adhere in indissoluble union. By this word, therefore, the Apostle shews another fruit budding forth from this perseverance in the truth of the Gospel doctrine which they had learnt from Epaphras; viz. mutual love, and the indissoluble concord of minds. But this concord of minds not only is the fruit of constancy and stability in true faith, but also it is the condition without which the afore-mentioned comfort cannot be possessed: the first cannot, therefore, be had without the second.

1. It is a *fruit*; because the intellect is the leader of the will; as, therefore, discord in the intellect brings with it discord in the will; so concord in the intellect (particularly in matters of faith) brings with it concord in the will. This is every where observable in the Sacred Scriptures. *The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul, Acts iv. 32.* This unity of minds is truly the result of unity of faith; for unity of faith is the firmest bond of unity of mind. This Nazianzen excellently shews, Orat. 10, De reconcil. ad Mon. *Nothing so much conciliates concord among those who have at heart the things of God, as agreement concerning God; and nothing more tends to discord than disagreement concerning Him: since he who in other*

things is most modest, in these becomes most fervent, &c. Love is, therefore, the fruit of unanimity in faith, which so binds the minds of the godly, as it were, in covenant, that though some light offences may intervene, yet, as the boughs of the same tree, driven asunder by the wind, immediately come together again because they are fixed steadily in one and the same root; so something similar takes place as it regards the minds of the faithful, because they are still rooted in the same faith. On this account, therefore, he would have them persevere unanimously in the faith, that they may be united also, *being knit together in love*. Concord of minds is, therefore, the fruit of perseverance in the doctrine of the Gospel.

Yet it is also *a condition* without which the above-named spiritual comfort is not obtained. For comfort is not had out of Christ: if any one lives without love, he is without Christ, as says John, *He who dwelleth in love dwelleth in God*. And, vice versa, he who casts off love is rejected of God. For as no member can be recruited and nourished, if its union with the rest of the body be dissolved; so no one can participate in that full influx of comfort from Christ, if that unanimity which ought to exist between himself and the rest of the brethren be destroyed.

DOGMATICAL THESES.

1. It is folly to hope for any firm union between those who differ on the chief points of religion and fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. When Joram enquired of Jehu, *Is it peace?* he replied, *What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her withcrafts are so many?* So do those of the True Religion reply, and justly too, to such as maintain a false religion, *What peace, &c.* i. e. while the errors and corruptions of the church, which ye acknowledge as your mother, are so many?

2. Pious Princes should endeavour in their dominions to establish the one true religion, if they look forward to the salvation of their subjects, or to peace and public concord, however false politicians may scoff at it. For they cannot have subjects *knit together in love*, unless they have

them of the same opinion in religion. We were very near being taught how true this is, by the extinction of the king, nobles, prelates, and, indeed, the whole government.

3. Those who would in this life enjoy spiritual consolations ought to preserve the bond of love, and agreement of faith with their brethren; for when these are present, all things are full of love, repose, and consolation; let these be removed, every thing abounds with and is debased by suspicion, animosity, and calamity.

So far concerning the second fruit of perseverance and unanimity in the truth received.

And unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding.] This is the third fruit to be participated in by the Colossians, if they should remain in the truth of the Gospel. For not only will they become more firmly bound together in love, but they will more abundantly increase in faith itself: for their faith will be triply augmented; *in richness, in abundance, in intelligence or clear-sightedness.* *Riches* refers to the matter embraced by faith; *full assurance and intelligence*, to the mode of embracing it.

As to the first; the faith of Christians is augmented in *richness* when they who have learnt only the principles and elements, as it were, of salvation (God blessing, and the Divine Spirit enlightening their minds more and more) proceed to farther attainments, and deduce from these principles many other particular propositions, and thus are enriched in a manner with new furniture in the knowledge of religion. For, as in other sciences, the principles are few, but in these few, innumerable conclusions lie virtually hid, which afterwards are drawn out by the intellect when it is employed on these principles; so in this science of Theology, some few principles, absolutely necessary to be known, are presented to tender minds just approaching the Christian faith; and afterwards a rich treasury of sacred knowledge is collected for every purpose of salvation, by assiduous meditation, and by hearing, and chiefly by the internal operation and teaching of the Spirit. They, therefore, who constantly persevere in the doctrine of the Gospel, thence obtain *all riches.* For the Lord, who hath laid

the foundation of this spiritual edifice, in his mercy daily builds it up until he finishes it, August. De præd. sanct. lib. 1. 7. He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it, Phil. i. 6.

Hence spring forth various doctrines.

1. The laity themselves should not be content with an elementary knowledge in religious matters, but ought to press forward from easy principles to a particular and richer knowledge of those things which have more difficult explications and require a deeper research. Thus the Apostle to the Hebrews, vi. 1, says, *Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.*

2. When these riches are sought, it is certain that the means also necessary to their attainment should be sought out. He who would have a treasure must dig in the earth. He who would have riches in the knowledge of divine things, must search the Holy Scriptures, carefully hear Ministers, and perform all those other things ordained by God for the acquirement of these riches. So much of the *riches of faith.*

I come now to the *full assurance* (*πληροφοριαν*): by which word is denoted that firm and certain adherence to what is believed, which springs from the internal operation of the Spirit illuminating the intellect, inclining the will, and, lastly, (if I may so express it) firmly stamping the impress of the things believed upon the mind itself. And this *full assurance* is at length attained by those who remain firm in the doctrine of faith; for as trees as soon as they are planted, are not so firmly fixed in the earth but that they are driven from side to side by the wind; so the faith of the godly at the commencement wavers with many doubts: but as the same trees in course of time fix their roots deeper, so faith also daily shoots its roots deeper into the mind, and at length, by the grace of the Spirit, acquires that steadiness which cannot be overthrown by the craft of seducers, the violence of tyrants, or any other machination of the devil.

I remember to have read a little tale told by Gerson which is well adapted to illustrate this. He relates that he

once knew a pious man, vexed and harassed by doubts, even in the article of faith; who, nevertheless, at the last, was led to such a light of truth and assurance, that no trace of wavering dwelt in his mind; nor, indeed, did he doubt more of that than he did of his own existence. He adds, moreover, that this assurance did not spring from any new reasonings or demonstrations, but from humility, and the captivation of his intellect, and some wonderful illumination of God from the eternal hills. Worldly men do not believe that such illuminations do occur, and that such a *full assurance* is impressed on the minds of the faithful; but the godly, who constantly persevere in the Gospel, have experienced them. The Apostle requires this undoubting persuasion in the doctrine of faith, Ephes. iv. 14. *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about, &c.*

Hence we learn,

1. The faith of a Christian man ought not to depend upon others, but be settled in the believer by the efficacy of the Spirit; so that if prelates and ecclesiastics, nay, even the whole world, should depart from sound faith, yet should every one of the laity hold to the received faith. *If we, or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any other Gospel than that ye have received, let him be accursed: Gal. i. 9.*

2. Hence it is evident how greatly Romanists err, who think that the assurance of our faith lies enshrined in the papal breast of the Pope; not for every one in his own breast. Now it is most certain, that the determination of a Pope cannot give *full assurance* to my heart; but the operation of the Spirit both can, and is accustomed to do so, in the case of true believers. *The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you; as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, 1 John ii. 27.*

3. Their complaint also is unjust, who aver, that we cannot now arrive at assurance in matters of faith, since Christians are separated into different sects, and there are divisions and controversies every where. Notwithstanding

this, the godly have this *full assurance* of Gospel truth. Clemens, Strom 7, rightly says, *Truth is to be found, by those who wish it, from a diligent search of the Scripture.* And Lactantius, Institut. lib. 7. cap. 2, asserts what is very much to our purpose: *We do not attain truth by thinking and disputing, but by hearing and learning from Him who alone can both know and teach; i. e. (as I interpret it) from the Holy Spirit, speaking outwardly in the Scriptures, and inwardly in the heart of each believer.* Thus far of *full assurance.*

Lastly, that we should weigh what the Apostle adds, that they would have not only a *full assurance*, but a *full assurance of understanding*, i. e. *the understanding fully assured.* The mind, therefore, is not only inclined firmly to adhere to what is believed by the power of the will when softened by grace; but the intellect, at the same time, is so brightened by supernatural light, that it can clearly contemplate the certain and indubitable truth of these things. Thus Parisiensis, in his Tractat. de fide. cap. 1. writes, *No power can effect any thing either contrary to or above itself.* Consequently the human intellect cannot believe of itself; and it is therefore necessary that it should be enlightened by a stronger light and greater illumination. It is by this light, then, that the intellect conceives a proposition which is behind, and at the same time sees the formal reason why it is believed. Now this reason is neither a scientific, nor demonstrative medium, but Divine authority. For infused faith shews the intellect that the doctrine it believes is derived from God. Gerson excellently sets forth this in this treatise on errors in regard to faith. *An infused faith is requisite, says he, for every one's assent to Catholic truth, which points out and shews the reason of belief; viz. that God hath delivered this truth.* This is, therefore, to have a full assurance of the understanding, both to perceive the truth itself and its Author. It appears from Scripture that this enlightened understanding is always joined with faith. Thus Ephes. i. 17, *The Father of glory may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being*

enlightened, &c. And 1 Pet. ii. 9, *Who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*

Hence we learn,

1. That that is not a divine but a brutal animal faith, which has no understanding or comprehension of those things which are believed. Such a faith Staphylus extols in the collier who professed that he believed what the church believed, and the church believed what he himself held, whilst he was ignorant all the time what either the church or he himself held.* But the true faith has *full assurance of the understanding*; this implicit and blind faith has not a grain of understanding.

2. Whoever assents to the belief of a doctrine only on account of the authority of its teachers, the multitude of its believers, or some such external motive, while he is in the mean time without that internal light in which the mind beholds the formal reason of its belief; such an one has not the attribute of infused faith, but a light notion in matters of faith. *For no one believes any thing to be true, merely because he wishes to believe it is true.* Picus Mirand. tom. i. p. 94.†

* Fredericus Staphylus, who first broached the above sentiment, afterwards immortalized by Bellarmin, was a native of Osnaburg, born in 1512. He was at first a Lutheran, a Greek Professor at Breslau, and Theological Professor at Konigsberg. He attached himself to the Romish Church in 1553, and was at the Council of Trent in the following year; became Counsellor to the Emperor, and the Duke of Bavaria; but died at Ingoldstadt, the 5th of March, 1564, after having published some works, among which are the following:—*De Desidiis Hæret.* which was translated by Stapleton, and printed at Antwerp, in 1565, in 2 vols. 12mo.; *Apologia de Germano Script. Sac. intellectu, &c.* The Archbishop of Salzburg was commissioned by the Pope to transmit to him a Cardinal's Hat from Rome, to appoint him Doctor in Theology, and elevate him to the Episcopate. Vide Annals of the University of Ingoldstadt, cited in Dictionnaire Universelle, Paris, 1812. Vide also, Aub. Miræi Scriptores, Sæc. xvi., Sect. cxvi. in Fabricii Biblioth. Ecclesiast. Hamburgii. 1718.

† Picus (John) or Giovanni Pico di Mirandola, one of the celebrated Italian literati of the fifteenth century, who contributed to the revival and diffusion of learning in Europe. He was born in 1463, third son of the Prince of Mirandola and Concordia, and almost from his childhood displayed an eager attachment to literature. Deprived of his father when young, his mother paid assiduous attention to his education, and at the age of fourteen

From the whole we gather how disgracefully the Papists err, who say that we cannot believe the doctrine of faith revealed in Scripture, otherwise than because the church confirms it by its suffrage. That blasphemous saying of Hermanus is well known: that the Scriptures were worth just as much as Æsop's fables, unless the testimony of the church were added to them. But if *the full assurance of understanding* arises from internal light and secret persuasion of the Spirit; then all the elect will recognise the

he was sent to the University of Bologna, to study canon law, but after spending two years there, he set out to visit the most celebrated schools in Italy and France. He went to Ferrara, where he was kindly received by his relation Duke Hercules I. and studied under Batista Guarino. He had a great readiness in acquiring languages, and is said to have been master of twenty-two when he was but eighteen years of age. Trithemius, his contemporary, says he was master of all the liberal arts, that he cultivated with success, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew literature, was an admirable poet, and the most learned philosopher and skilful disputant of the age. Settling at Florence, he addressed a panegyric to Lorenzo de Medici, whose patronage he obtained. In 1486 he went to Rome. There he posted up 900 propositions appertaining to dialectics, morals, physics, mathematics, &c. challenging any antagonist whomsoever to dispute with him upon any one of them. But instead of opponents such as he expected, he encountered an accusation of heresy, and thirteen of his propositions being accused before Pope Innocent VIII. he was silenced, and thought proper to leave Rome. He then returned to Florence, where he composed an apology for his opinions; and was at length acquitted of all blame. The effect, however, of the anxiety produced by this business, caused a total change in his course of life; and though young, rich, elegant in person and in manners, and in some degree habituated to pleasure, he gave himself up to devotion, and confined his studies to theological subjects. These induced a most enthusiastic desire to be useful, and he resolved to distribute all his property among the poor, and travel barefooted through the world to preach the Gospel. An early death, at the age of 32, put an end to his projects. His principal works are—"Hexaplus, or an Explanation of the Six Days of the Creation;" a book on the Psalms, another, "Adversus Astrologiam Divinam, & Epistolarum, lib. viii." He also wrote on the Jewish Cabala, which was in great credit in the sixteenth century. He was one of the learned men whom Naudé has thought it necessary to vindicate from the charge of being a Magician. The writings of Picus, it is said, "display an acute genius, and a vast extent of learning." He is admitted on all hands to have been a very extraordinary person, and was denominated the Phoenix among the geniuses of his time. But his works added very little to true science, notwithstanding his attainments and erudition.

voice of Christ in the Scriptures, although the Roman church, or any other visible church disclaim it. Therefore we do not reject the external voice of the church, or consider its ministry at all unnecessary; but we hold that *the full assurance of the understanding* in matters of faith arises from internal light and the testimony of the Spirit, without which, if the church were a thousand times to inculcate the belief of this or that, yet no one should believe it.

To the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.] These words are connected with the former ones by apposition, as it is termed: For they explain what, and of what kind, is that *full assurance of the understanding* which they will acquire: It is not of human things, or philosophical or Jewish fables; but the knowledge of *the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*. Two things are to be examined: What he understands by *mystery*; and why that mystery is called of *God, and of the Father, and of Christ*.

The *mystery* Chrysostom interprets to be our reconciliation and access to God the Father by the incarnate Son, not by angels. Cardinal Hugo says, that this mystery is nothing else but the saving death of Christ. But these interpretations are too restricted. Under the word *mystery* then, the Apostle includes the whole doctrine of the Gospel, which was revealed through the Apostles for the salvation of the human race. The Gospel is with good reason called a *mystery*, since it is impervious to human reason, which never could have formed even the slightest notion of that mode of acquiring salvation which is proposed in the Gospel; but would have wearied itself in vain in seeking salvation in the visionary schemes of the human imagination.

But why is the Gospel, or Evangelical doctrine, called *the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*? On two accounts:

1. Because the triune God was the Author and Framer of the doctrine of the Gospel; and Christ was sent by the Father as a herald and promulgator of the same. It therefore flowed from them as from its efficient causes, and

hence it is appropriately termed the Gospel *of God and of Christ*.

2. . Because God, and the Father, and Christ are the principal objects of the doctrine of the Gospel. For the Gospel lays open to us the majesty, the will, the nature, and, finally, the attributes of God; it teaches, moreover, that this God has a paternal affection for us as adopted for his sons, through and on account of Christ his incarnate Son, Gal. iv. 5. Lastly, it depicts Christ to us as the Mediator uniting and reconciling us to God; together with all his offices, operations, and other functions which relate to the full knowledge of Christ. Therefore, from this threefold doctrine, which respects the nature of God, his paternal affection for the human race, and Christ the Mediator, the Gospel is called, as from its more noble part, *the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*.

Hence we learn,

1. As the law was enacted, not only by the Father, but also by the Son, (for the Apostle says, Gal. iii. 19, *it was ordained in the hand of a Mediator*;) so the Gospel is to be attributed not to the Son alone, but to the Father, nay, and the whole Trinity: for it is the mystery of God, and of Christ *effectively*. It was extreme dotage, therefore, in Marcion to imagine that one God was Author of the law, and another of the Gospel: whom Tertullian thus refutes in lib. 5. vers. Marc. *Distinguish*, says he, *the law for one God, and Christ for another God, if thou canst divide a shadow from its substance*. And again: *The liberty of the Gospel was to be promulgated by the same by whom the servitude of the law was; for no one can emancipate the servants of another*. Joachim the Abbot* was also mad in his conjecture, for he taught that a triple doctrine proceeded from the three per-

* A Cistercian Monk, Abbot of Corazzo, and afterwards of Flora, in Calabria; he was born at Celico, near Cozenza, in 1130; travelled on a pilgrimage to the holy land, and after founding several monasteries, died in 1202. His works were published in folio at Venice, in 1516, and his life was written by Gervaise, a Dominican, in 2 vols. 12mo. 1745. As he advanced many heterodox notions in his works, he wrote a Declaration of his faith two years before his death, in which he desired that they might undergo the revision of the Abbots of his Order, and whatever was censurable

sons; the doctrine of the old law from the Father; the doctrine of the Gospel, as we have it delivered to us in the sacred Scriptures, from the Son; and a third Gospel still to be looked for from the Holy Spirit, which he terms *the eternal Gospel*. But if the Gospel which we have, is the Gospel as well of God as of Christ, either the Holy Spirit is denied to be God, or this Gospel must be ascribed to him, and no new one expected from him.

2. As the Gospel proceeded from God and from Christ; so does it every where discourse of God and of Christ, and of those benefits which we obtain from God the Father through Christ. Whatever doctrines cannot be referred to these heads, such as those of heretics, scholastics, and the like, are not to be accounted Theological mysteries, but human inventions. This should have been considered by those who *have devised a Platonic and Aristotelian Christianity*, as Tertullian somewhere says: who, as Gerson writes, *should justly be called Sophists and Metalogists,* not Evangelists or Theologists*; since, leaving the useful and intelligible instructions concerning God and Christ, they betake themselves to logical, mathematical, metaphysical, and such like speculations. 2 Lect. super Marcum.

Thus far concerning *the mystery of God and of Christ*, the full knowledge of which the Apostle promises to the Colossians abiding in the faith they had received.

might be submitted to the censure of the Church. Agreeably to this declaration, his Commentary on the Proverbs was condemned by Innocent III. and two other works were afterwards condemned by Alexander IV. in 1256, and by the Council of Arles in 1260, without, as is said, reflecting on the orthodoxy of the author. It is, however, not to be wondered at that Joachim's writings should have been thus condemned, he was renowned for learning and piety, and asserted that Antichrist was born in the Roman state, and would be exalted to the Apostolic See. Vide Milner, vol. iii. p. 425.

* *Ματαιοις* from *Ματην*—frustra; meaning teachers of idle vanities; or, as Theodoret explains the word in Psalm cxviii. *that which is useless and without profit.*

Verse 3.

In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

In the last words of the preceding verse the Apostle had mentioned Christ: and seizing this occasion, he runs off into the praises of Christ, yet so that he does not advance beyond the limits of his subject. For this slight digression contains a most weighty reason why they should not depart from the doctrine which Epaphras had preached to them, and derived, in fact, from the completeness of the same, as what was amply sufficient for salvation. Having, therefore, laid this ground-work, he paves the way for the contest with the seducers.

But first it must be observed here, that these words *in whom*, are referred by some to the whole phrase of *the knowledge of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*, in this sense; that in the investigation of this mystery, i. e. of the Gospel, all the treasures of our wisdom and saving knowledge are placed. But they are referred by others to that last word *Christ*; in which Christ—our Master, and the Author of the Gospel (say they)—exists as in the most copious fountain, an inexhaustible store of wisdom and knowledge.

The difference between these two interpretations is great. For the former makes the Apostle speak of our wisdom and knowledge, which we attain, by rightly knowing Christ, or the mystery of Christ: therefore, they would have all these treasures, viz. all the fulness and perfection of our wisdom to be in Christ *objectively*, i. e. in the knowledge of Christ, according to that saying of the Apostle, *I determined not to know any thing save Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. ii. 2. But the latter would have him to speak concerning the wisdom and knowledge residing habitually in Christ; they therefore

conclude from this place, that all wisdom and knowledge reside in Christ *subjectively*. I dare not reject this opinion, since there is neither falsehood in it, nor does it depart from the words themselves: But I think that the Apostle rather had regard to the former, nor spake so much concerning the wisdom with which Christ is wise, as concerning that, by the apprehension of which, we become wise.

2. And it is also to be noted, that these words *wisdom and knowledge* are not explained in the same manner by all. Some would have that there is no difference between them, but that they are introduced and repeated for the sake of amplification only; as if the Apostle had said, that in knowing Christ, we have the most absolute and perfect knowledge. Others say, the term σοφία (wisdom) designated an acquaintance with God, or divine things; γινωσκεις (knowledge) denotes the comprehension of human affairs, or of creatures. But there is a third opinion, which I prefer: it is that which explains the former term (which they render *sapientia*) to mean an acquaintance with those doctrines which relate to faith; but the latter (*scientia*), the understanding of those that relate to the Christian life. *Wisdom*, therefore, embraces the things to be believed; *knowledge*, the things to be done. Both these are known, when Christ, or the mystery of Christ, is properly understood.

In the last place, we must remark, that it is said these treasures are not merely placed or situated in the knowledge of Christ, or the Gospel of Christ, but *hidden*. By which word is intimated, that what is precious and magnificent in Christ, or the Gospel of Christ, is not conspicuous, or directly meets the eyes of carnal men; but is so concealed, that it is discovered only by those to whom God has given a quick sight, i. e. spiritual eyes to see. So Christ himself said, Matt xi. 25, *I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hidden, &c.* And the Apostle, 1 Cor. i. 23, shews that Christ is no treasure to carnal men, but an offence and object of ridicule; *We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, &c.* This opinion, therefore,

being adopted, which would have all these treasures in the mystery of Christ to be understood *objectively*, we hence derive these instructions :

1. He is truly wise, who has learnt the Gospel; he is altogether unwise who seeks saving knowledge elsewhere for here are *all treasures*.

2. He who places secular knowledge, and the things of the world, before this study and sacred knowledge, prefers rubbish to treasure: for the mystery of the Gospel is *treasure*; all else is *dung and dross*.

3. It is not to be wondered at that almost all the world errs both in faith and practice. They err, in things to be believed, because they take not the rule of faith from the Gospel, but from human authority: in things to be done, because they take not the rule of life from hence, but from the custom of the ungodly, But in this both *wisdom* and *knowledge* should be sought.

4. If we would gain saving knowledge from the Gospel, we must attend to it not lazily, and in a perfunctory manner, but we must labour and toil in acquiring this treasure. For this treasure is not placed in open view, it is *hidden*.

5. We must not confide in our industry or discernment; but diligently intreat God, that he would quicken our sight, and permit this hidden treasure to be seen by us: *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law*, Ps. cxix. 18.

Up to this point in the Exposition of these words, *In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, we have followed that opinion which explains them *objectively*, respecting that perfect knowledge which we have in the true knowledge of Christ. But because (as was before said) these words are explained by some, of that perfect wisdom which Christ hath in himself *subjectively*, we will discuss their interpretation and opinion, and refute their erroneous inferences. But both the Schoolmen, as well as the Ubiquitarians, follow this opinion: for from this passage both conclude that omniscience is an attribute of Christ, even in regard to his human nature. But the Schoolmen, although they differ from our Divines *verbally*,

yet they concur with them *virtually*. For what they call omniscience, they nevertheless include within certain limits: whence it is evident they ascribe to the soul of Christ an omniscience, not indeed absolute, which is the property of the Divine nature, but a certain similitude of it, and, as it were, the thing itself in a certain relation. But the Ubiquitarians much more boldly teach that the very Divine omniscience was really communicated to the human nature of Christ, in the same manner as the omnipotence; Jacobus Andreas, Colloq. Mompelg. tract. de persona Christi; where also he brings forward this passage. We shall set forth the opinion of the Schoolmen, and refute that of the Ubiquitarians, but very briefly.

The Schoolmen, besides the uncreated wisdom of Christ, allege a manifold created wisdom to be in him. Alexander Hales, part. 3. qu. 13. memb. 1 et 2, laid down a fourfold knowledge in the soul of Christ: The first he calls a *knowledge by the grace of union*; the second, a *knowledge by the grace of comprehension*; the third, *the knowledge of a perfect nature*; the fourth, *the knowledge of experience*. Aquinas, part. 3. qu. 9. art. 1, omits the first: for he does not think any new species of knowledge ought to be supposed in the soul of Christ on account of union; only he grants that the knowledge of comprehension is much more clear and excellent in the soul of Christ because of this union, than in any of the blessed, whether angels or men. He, therefore, attributes a triple knowledge to the soul of Christ; viz. a *blessed*, an *infused*, and an *acquired* knowledge. But now (to come to the point) they ask, whether the soul of Christ knows all things according to this created wisdom; whether he hath an equal knowledge of all things with God; and they answer in the affirmative. But when they attempt to explain their opinion, they say that the knowledge of God is to be considered in a twofold manner; in respect to *God himself*, and in respect to *creatures*. As to God's knowledge of *himself*, the soul of Christ does not know, neither can it know, all things which God knows; for it does not know all that God can do; because this knowledge would comprehend the divine Godhead, which

is incomprehensible. But as far as regards *the creatures*, they say that Christ in the Word knows all things which are, and which will be, whether things spoken, done, or thought by any mortal; because he is to be the judge of all. They affirm, moreover, that he knows all the essence, and power, and acting of every creature, because he is the Lord of all. They, therefore, conclude, if we speak concerning knowledge as it respects the creatures, that the soul of Christ, as to *the number of the things known*, has a knowledge equal with God; because he knows all the creatures even as God; but as to the *means of knowing*, and *the mode of knowing*, his knowledge is far inferior: For because God knows all things by himself as by the cause; the soul of Christ [knows them] not by himself, but by the Word; God knows all things in a more clear and profound manner. But this universal knowledge of the creatures, is not that omniscience which is the attribute of the Divine nature; because all the creatures taken together, which are, which have been, or shall be, are not in fact infinite. Therefore, according to the Schoolmen, the soul of Christ, or the human nature, is not capable of omniscience, neither likewise of omnipotence.

Now to proceed with the Ubiquitarians; they think that, like as the other attributes of Godhead, so omniscience is really communicated to the human nature of Christ; and they abuse this passage to establish their error, *In whom are hid all the treasures*, &c.

We answer, nothing can be concluded from this passage in favour of that absolute omniscience of the soul of Christ, on many accounts. First, because it is much more likely that the Apostle speaks concerning our saving wisdom, which we have in rightly knowing Christ, than concerning the wisdom of Christ himself. Secondly, because if it be granted that he speaks concerning the wisdom and knowledge with which the soul of Christ is endued, we may interpret this of that highest fulness of created and infused knowledge, in which there is nothing wanting that is required to perfect the soul of Christ, although there may not be omniscience, of which the creature cannot properly

be said to be capable. Thirdly, let us assume the omniscience of Christ to be proved from this passage, yet they will not immediately make out from this that that is in the soul or human nature of Christ: for the Apostle does not say, *in which* soul, or nature; but *in whom*, i. e. Christ, *are all treasures*: they are, therefore, in Christ, because in *the Word*, not because in the human nature. So Ambrose places the treasures of omniscience in the person of Christ, not in the human nature: he says, *it is just that the knowledge of all things should be in the Author of all things*. But the Word, not the human nature of Christ, created all things. So Aquinas in his Commentaries refers this omniscience to the Word, not to the soul: *Whatever*, says he, *can be known concerning God, all THAT the Word has abundant knowledge of in himself; whatever can be known concerning the creature, he knows pre-eminently in himself; and therefore in the Word are all treasures*.

We have thus vindicated this passage from the cavils of the Ubiquitarians: We shall now refute their error by a few arguments; and that from their own principles.

1. They concede that each nature in Christ possesses and retains its own properties, so that the property of one nature can never become the property of the other: thus James Andreas, Colloq. Mompelg.* But what is really communicated to one, that becomes the property of the other: Omniscience, therefore, being really communicated to the human nature of Christ, does not remain the property of the Divine nature alone; because it is found in the other nature.

2. The attributes of the Divine nature are not communicated *essentially* to the human nature; for were this the case,

* Andreas; was a celebrated Lutheran Divine of Wirtemberg, eminent as a Reformer, and distinguished by the part he took in the controversies of his day; being engaged in the public conferences at Worms, Ratisbon, Augsburg, Meming, Torgau, &c. The work above referred to is the discussions at Mompelgard, with Beza, concerning the Lord's supper, the person of Christ, predestination, &c. He was Chancellor to Gustavus Vasa, and employed by that Monarch to translate the Scriptures into the Swedish Language. He died in 1590, strong in the faith, which, through an active life, he had laboured to maintain and defend.

the human nature, upon the acknowledgment of Chemnitz himself, would turn out Divine :* for since the properties of Divinity are not accidents, but the essence of God himself, they cannot belong to, neither are they communicated, i. e. *formally, habitually, or subjectively*. But no other mode besides *the essential and accidental* can be desired : therefore the attributes of Divinity, among which our opponents themselves assign omniscience, are not communicated to the human soul. But they say they are communicated by an hypostatical union. Yet this is nothing to the purpose. For the attributes of the natures are not transferred from one to the other by virtue of the hypostatic union ; but the attribute of one nature is ascribed to the other in the concrete, for the sake of the identity of the thing supposed. As when we say that God suffered, or was crucified, or was born of a virgin ; that the man Christ was omniscient, omnipotent, the Creator of the world : predications of this kind are true, not because the Divine nature in itself in any manner admits the possibility of suffering ; or the human nature the attribute of omnipotence and omniscience : but because that man who suffered was God ; and God who is omnipotent, was also man in unity of person.

3. He who says that the human nature of Christ is omniscient, and is so by that omniscience which is the attribute of the Godhead, he assigns one and the same know-

* Trac. de duabus naturis, cap. 22. Martin Chemnitz was another eminent Lutheran Divine, who flourished about the same time with Andreas, in the Duchy of Brandenburg, to the Prince of which he became Librarian. To the learned Martin Chemnitz's examination of the Decrees of the Council of Trent, the history of Religion, says Mosheim, is more indebted than many are apt to imagine. He died in 1586, at Brunswick, leaving behind him several important works, especially the ground-work and commencement of an elaborate Harmony of the four Evangelists, with a Commentary on the same, which was afterwards completed by other hands, and is held in high repute on the Continent. Of this harmony and his other theological writings, Leigh, in his treatise on learning, asserts, " they are most profitable, especially that excellent work, or rather most rich bibliothèque, which contains both a refutation of the Council of Trent, and also an explication of the whole doctrine of the Church ; to be read daily by all to whom the knowledge of the truth is welcome."

ledge to the human soul and to the Divine nature.* But our opponents themselves condemn the Monothelites,† who ascribe the same will of Deity and humanity in Christ; why are they not also to be condemned, who hold that there is the same knowledge in both ?

4. That rule of Leo which is contained in his tenth Epistle, viz. that either nature can perform what is peculiar to it with the concurrence of the other, is proved by the Ubiquitarians themselves: But if omniscience be communicated to the human nature of Christ, then the human nature performs what exclusively belongs to the Godhead; for it comprehends all things by the infinite power of the communicated omniscience.

In short; There is in the human nature of Christ, all that fulness of infused and created knowledge which is required for the ministration of our salvation; in his Divine nature absolute omniscience is found: and, consequently, *In him are all the treasures of created and uncreated knowledge.*

* Chemnitz, de duabus naturis, cap. 23.

† The opinion of the Monothelites here adverted to had its rise in 630. The Sect were condemned by the sixth general Council in 680, as being supposed to destroy the perfection of the humanity of Jesus Christ, depriving it of will and operation. The account which Milner gives of the rise, spread, and opposition to this heresy by Sophronius Bishop of Jerusalem, is interesting and instructive.

Verses 4, 5.

And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the Spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

In these two verses the Apostle assigns two reasons why he laboured so much in confirming the Colossians. The first is derived from the danger which threatened them; *lest any one should beguile you, &c.* The second from the love dwelling in the Apostle's heart; *For though I be absent, &c.*

And this I say.] These words are referred by some to the verse immediately preceding, concerning all the treasures of wisdom hid in Christ; which the Apostle affirmed with this view, lest being seduced by impostors, they should think that the means of salvation should be sought elsewhere. By others they are referred to all those things which had been before stated in this Chapter; as though the Apostle had said, I would that ye knew my conflict with those false teachers to have been undertaken for this end, lest ye should be beguiled by their sophistical conceits. It is of no importance to the main drift of the subject. For this is the meaning, that the Apostle strenuously defends the true doctrine concerning our salvation reposed in Christ alone, and on this account, lest the Colossians attaching themselves to the vain devices of men, this saving doctrine should be neglected.

Hence we learn,

1. That to preach and fully teach Christ and the benefits of Christ, is to stop the way against all the idle and superstitious inventions of men: for when Christ is rightly known, those beggarly elements are held in contempt.

This is clearly taught in Philip. iii. 8, *I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, &c.*

2. Where the treasures of wisdom laid up in Christ alone are not known, there the people easily fall into errors, into superstitious worship, and finally into the very pit of perdition. For as weak women who lack children, are wont to amuse themselves with lap-dogs and birds; so weak, unhappy souls, destitute of the knowledge of Christ, in vain seek comfort in the silly trifles of human contrivance.

3. Here, then, we see why in the Papacy so much regard is paid to masses, indulgences, pilgrimages, satisfactions, invocations of the dead, and other things of that kind; viz. because, forsooth, they know not that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are laid up in Christ: for this being admitted, that crude mass of superstition falls to the ground, which Christ and his Apostles never contemplated, except with abhorrence.

Lest any one should beguile you with enticing words.] See the danger in which the Colossians were; that is to say, of the circumvention of false teachers! Behold also the instrument with which they endeavoured to create this danger for them; viz. enticing words!

Παραλογιζεσθαι, or *to beguile*, is *by a false reason*, which hath the semblance of truth, to deceive the unskilful. Whence Aristotle draws a parallel between it and spurious gold, or die, which counterfeit the real nature of those things they have not in them. Under this word, therefore, the Apostle would comprehend whatever is introduced in any manner under the appearance of Religion, against the simplicity of the doctrine of the Gospel. For although the impostors seemed by specious reasons to establish the worship of angels, the observance of ceremonies, and certain philosophical vanities; yet they could not effect it by legitimate arguments derived from the word of God, but by paralogisms and sophistical deceptions.

And, indeed, these sophisms of seducers proceed either from *malice*, or of *ignorance*. From malice, when wicked men oppose acknowledged truth, either for their own

glory and advantage, or that they may occasion trouble and dislike to true teachers. So the Scribes and the Pharisees opposed Christ and his doctrine, that they might establish their own vain traditions, and that they might obtain honour among the unthinking multitude. These impostors are the most wretched of all mortals; for, as Cyprian writes, Epist. lib. 2. epist. 1, *the souls of all those to whom by their deceivings they have been the authors and leaders to perdition, will be required at their hands in the day of judgment.*

There are others who deceive the people by their sophisms from ignorance; for their own minds, too, are ensnared by the same devices with which they endeavour to ensnare others. And these sophisms for the most part prevail among those in whom a preposterous zeal, void of knowledge, predominates. In this catalogue we may reckon those who, inflamed with a certain pious affection towards the saints of God and holiness itself, were at length so far carried away by a singular blind zeal, as to imagine and require that the saints should be worshipped and invoked; to contend that even the kingdom of heaven is acquired by the fruit of their good works; and to hawk about these their sophisms every where with the greatest ardour for true doctrine. Among this number even they also are to be accounted, who, burning with a just hatred against all superstitious worship, because God will not be worshipped by the commandments of men, are hurried away with such a zeal as to maintain that all rites, all the ordinances of the Church, even concerning things indifferent, are to be rejected and exterminated. But we should take care not to be imposed upon either by the one or the other: for both attempt to ensnare others, being deceived by their own sophisms. *Honey is good, says Gerson, with the honeycomb; that is to say, the savour of devotion, with the moderation of discretion.* And thus much concerning the danger threatening the Colossians, the repelling of which is the object of the Apostle.

With enticing words, εν πιθανολογια.] This is that instrument or means which the seducers employed in order to

deceive. Under this word the Apostle comprehends rhetorical and flattering insinuations, sophistical and intricate subtleties; with which they endeavoured either to insinuate or force an entrance into the minds of men. In short; whatever is so flattering to human reason, by its specious colouring, as to lead a man from Christ, is to be referred to the pernicious *enticing words*. This deceitful sophistry the Apostle condemns in 1 Cor. ii. 4. Not that *persuasiveness of words* is in itself condemnable, for it is a great excellence of speech; but the abuse of it, when it acts by apparent, but false reasons, and is employed to impose upon men.

Concerning that insinuating *persuasion*, Tertullian, in writing against Valentinus, clearly speaks, *Impostors have the art to persuade before they teach; but truth persuades by teaching, not teaches by persuading*. Concerning that sophistry, Prudentius formerly complained;

Fidem minutis dissecant ambagibus,
 Ut quisque linguâ est nequior;
 Solvunt ligantque quæstionum vincula
 Per syllogismos plectiles,
 Væ captiosis sycophantarum strophis,
 Væ versipelli astutiæ.*

But [it may be said] how can there be such enticement in those in whom there is no truth? For (if we believe the Philosopher) things which are true are *more easily reduced to the shape of argument, and more persuasive*, than false ones are. Rhet. i. 6.

This is the solution: They are so indeed, both in themselves and in their nature; but as it regards the unskilful and external appearance, many false things seem more probable than many true ones. And that happens, because

* Thus attempted—

Faith into nicest subtleties is split,
 As each is furnished with more wicked wit;
 The Casuists' knot alike to tie or loose,
 The tortuous syllogism's found of use:
 Shame on the quibbling turns of arts untrue!
 Shame upon fallacies of varying hue!

false things are connected to true ones by their great likeness: whence it comes to pass that they are not distinguished by the unskilful, especially when aided by the art of impostors, which is accustomed to draw the colour of truth over false things.

DOGMATICAL OBSERVATIONS.

1. In theological subjects it is not proper rashly to give credit to reasonings, however plausible, which are not built upon the word of God as their foundation: for very often they have a wonderful *persuasiveness*, when, nevertheless, they have no truth. That remark of Tertullian [in his treatise] *De anima*, should be borne in mind, *Build up faith from thy foundation.*

2. As the Spirit of Christ is to be acknowledged the inward teacher of those who preach the Gospel uncorruptly; so a crooked serpent is their master who impose upon men by sophistical subtleties and this counterfeit *persuasion*. For that deceiver first employed this *enticing mode* in Paradise, in beguiling the woman.

3. This is the aim of sophists in treating divine things, To put forth their own opinions, not the word of God; to beguile men, not to edify them; to obtain the victory for themselves, not that truth may conquer; according to that remark of Clemens, *Strom. 1, Opiniaticiveness is the beginning of contention, strife the effect of it, victory the end.*

Thus far concerning the impostors and their weapon, viz. false and counterfeit *persuasion*.

Verse 5.

For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying, and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

This is the other reason of the Apostle's solicitude for the Colossians, taken from his inward affection towards them; and contains in it an implied anticipation. For

they might say, You are far distant from us; you are more-over ignorant of our affairs: you are not, therefore, solicitous about us; neither if you would, can you recommend those things which will conduce to the welfare of our church. He removes each objection: the former by a distinction, I am distant from you, but in *body*, not in *mind* and *affection*: the other by a negative, I am *not* ignorant of your affairs, for *I perceive your order and faith*: I am able to advise you therefore, equally as if I were present.

But that we may proceed in order, it will be proper to observe, in the illustration of the words, two things: 1. After what manner he is influenced, or the mode of the Apostle's affection towards the Colossians; 2. Wherefore he is so influenced, or the cause of his affection. The mode consists in two things: as well in unceasing thought about them, and meditation on their affairs, &c. as in rejoicing on their account. But now as to the cause why he so often thinks of them, why he rejoices in this contemplation, he assigns a double one; viz. their order and steadfast faith.

For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit.] Here he shews that he was never so far absent from the Colossians, but that in mind, in care, and thought he was present with them.

1. Because he never put the recollection of them out of his mind. For it is the peculiarity of the lover not to be severed in mind from those whom he loves, although separated by distance of place.

But Ambrose, and some modern interpreters also, explain these words, *I am with you in the Spirit*, not only of that thought and remembrance of them, but of some extraordinary presence of the Spirit granted to the Apostle by Divine power: such as Elisha had, who perceived in his mind those things which were done by his servant, equally as though he had stood before him; which is gathered from those words of the prophet, 2 Kings v. 26, *Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?* The prophet remained in his

house, and yet he says that his heart went with his servant, because he saw as clearly his act, as they who were present when he met them. And these words, *Beholding your order*, &c. favour this interpretation. We do not, therefore, deny, that what was granted to the prophets, could have been granted to an Apostle also: since the care of all the churches was laid upon him, it is very likely the state of all the churches was also known to him, not only from the vague report of men, but from the revelation of the Divine Spirit; to the intent that he might better consult and provide for the necessities of the churches. We, therefore, admit and unite both interpretations, stating that the Apostle was with the Colossians as well in the meditation of his mind, as in the revelation of the Spirit, although absent in body.

Joying and beholding.] That is, joying because I behold: for the conjunction has the force of the causal particle. But this disposition of his mind the Apostle wished to express, lest they should suppose that he doubted their constancy, inasmuch as he so earnestly excited them to perseverance: nay, he does this because he greatly desires that they should continue in the same, that this his joy may likewise continue; like as he does with the Philippians, iv. 1, *My Brethren, dearly beloved, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord.*

Ye see after what manner the mind of the Apostle, being absent, was affected; viz. so, that he always thought about the Colossians, that he beheld their state, that he rejoiced in this contemplation and observation.

Hence we infer,

1. That a faithful Minister never ought to be wholly absent from his flock: therefore, by care, by thought, and by prayer to God he should be present with them, when he cannot be present in body.

2. The true joy of a minister arises from the circumstance that the people continue and increase in spiritual blessings, not from the circumstance of himself being enriched with temporal ones.

3. That state of the people which affords an occasion of joy to the minister, ought likewise to afford occasion of greater solicitude; for Paul, in consequence of his joy at beholding their present state, laboured the more earnestly lest they should be cast down from the same by the deceit of impostors. For he knew the malice of the devil, *who rages mostly when he sees a man liberated from his chains; is then most wrathful, when he is dispossessed.* Tertull. De pœnit. 7.—Thus much concerning the mind and affection of the Apostle towards the Colossians: Now let us proceed to the causes.

Beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.] The first reason why Paul had so much pleasure, rejoiced so exceedingly concerning the Colossians, is their *order*; the second, their *stedfast faith*; on account of which they are deservedly praised. But this, by the way, is to be remembered; that this praise is a most skilful and strong inducement to perseverance in the things praised. For he who praises what you do, declares, first, that it is good; for otherwise it would not be fit to be praised: secondly, he declares that it is easy to you; because you have long effected it: lastly, he intimates that it would be base and disgraceful if you desist; because praise earned is never lost without shame being incurred on the other hand. But let us consider the things themselves.

Your order.] Under the term *order* he seems to me to denote three things: the settled manners of the individuals; the well-appointed discipline of that church; and their agreement and concord. Goodness of manners is constantly included under the term *order* in the Scriptures; just as, on the contrary, they who are of bad manners are said to walk *disorderly*: *Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly*, 2 Thess. iii. 6. When, therefore, he praises their order, he intimates this, that they individually walk soberly, righteously, and godly in their vocation. Moreover, public discipline is also to be included under this term, as what promotes and preserves it; For this teaches prelates to rule well, subjects to obey

duly; and compels the negligent and refractory to perform their duty. Concerning this the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. xiv. 40, *Let all things be done decently and in order.* For this he commends his Timothy, Epis. i. cap. 3. He now, therefore, praises the Colossians because this Church discipline flourished among them, which, if neglected, all things would be in shameful confusion, sedition, errors, and crimes.

Lastly, he comprehends agreement and unity in religion under the word *order*: for *τάξις* is a military term, and denotes a compact body of soldiers marshalled in due order: Thus, then, the Apostle, when he says that he beheld their order, intimates that he regarded them as a well arranged phalanx of soldiers, united and cleaving together in the unity of the faith, and therefore invincible.

Hence we may lay it down,

1. That there is nothing more beautiful or useful than order, nothing more shameful or injurious than confusion. Admirably does Nazianzen write concerning this matter, Orat. 26. *Where order prevails, there beauty shines brightly; where there is want of order, there arise in the air storms, upon the land commotions, by sea inundations, in cities seditions, in bodies distempers, and among souls sins. Order comprehends celestial and terrestrial things; there is order among rational beings, order among irrational ones; order among angels, order in the stars, order in all things.* No wonder, since God himself is not the author of *confusion*, but of *harmony*, and that especially in the churches of the saints, 1 Cor. xiv. 33.

2. Since order is *the arrangement of equals and unequals, distributing their proper places to every one*; they who introduce equality of ecclesiastical ministers subvert order. For it is the polity of Cyclops, not ecclesiastical discipline, where *no one recognizes another*.*

3. Since from that order which flourishes among the people, their pastors derive such joy, it follows that they who despise and trample upon the legitimate orders of the Church, undeservedly vex and injure with great sorrow

the prelates of the Church, in opposition to that direction of the Apostle, Heb. xiii. 17, *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves to them.*

4. Order is as the fence opposed to seducers : therefore, they seldom are plunged into errors who observe the order of obedience due to those set over them ; on the other hand, where the order of commanding and of obeying is neglected, there a breach is easily effected, as through a routed army. So much concerning order.†

And the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.] This is the second cause of joy to the Apostle. He saw the Colossians attacked by the seducers, he saw tares every where scattered by them ; but, at the same time, he perceived that the faith of the Colossians could not be overcome, that those tares were not approved by them for wheat, but were despised and rejected ; hence that joy. *This stedfastness*, or solidity *in the faith*, therefore, denotes two things : first, that they suffered not the true doctrine to be wrested from them, but remained firm and immovable in it, like soldiers at their post : the other, that they did not permit strange and foreign doctrines to be mingled with it ; but filled their minds with sacred doctrine, the inventions of men being excluded from the business of faith. For that is properly said to be *solid*, which is *full of itself alone*, that is, which does not receive any thing heterogeneous into it. That is, therefore, a stedfast faith, which not only embraces the true doctrine, but which admits no mixture of that which is false and foreign to it. Which, also, the Apostle himself afterwards intimates, when he restricts faith to Christ ; as though he would say, What they proclaim for the doctrines of faith without Christ, are to be rejected.

Hence we learn,

1. When the mind wavers and vacillates between various opinions, that is not a stedfast faith, but an empty

* Euripid. There is an allusion in this passage in the play which cannot be preserved in the English Translation.

† May every Reader be duly impressed by the force of these arguments against schisms and divisions !—Translator.

shadow of faith. It is the will of God, therefore, that our assent to the cause of Religion and the faith, be firm, and without any hesitation. For he hath no stedfast faith who inclinés sometimes to one side, sometimes to the contrary. A faith suspended between conflicting opinions is reprovéd 1 Kings xviii. 11, *How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, follow him.*

2. That faith also which, together with the faith of the Gospel, admits the traditions and inventions of men, is not stedfast, but hollow: if it were stedfast, there would not be a void place in it for those heterogeneous things. Tertullian admirably expresses himself in this sentence, *Cum credimus evangelio, nihil desideramus ultrà credere. Hoc enim priùs credimus, non esse quod ultrà credere debeamus.** De præscript.—So much concerning the causes of the Apostle's joy.

We have dispatched the two parts of this preface: that is to say, the narrative proposition, in which the Apostle declared what a conflict he sustained for the Colossians; and the statement of his argument, in which he brings many reasons of the fact itself. The last part remains, which contains the hortatory conclusion.

* See this same passage employed, and translated, p. 95.

Verses 6, 7.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him;

Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

We have said that the Exordium of the Apostle is composed of these three members; a narrative proposition, the statement of his reasons, and an hortatory conclusion. We are arrived at this last, included in these two short verses. In which he shews, first, what is to be done by them; namely, to cleave unto Christ, even as they had received him from Epaphras; ver. 6. Secondly, he teaches them how to cleave unto him. And the mode consists in three things: in the stability of faith; in its fulness; and in gratitude of mind for it.

We commence with the sixth verse; in which he teaches what he wishes to be done by them, 1. by proposing a rule to their observation, *As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord*; 2. by requiring action, or obedience to this rule, *so walk ye in him.*

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord.] The rule of faith and of life which he proposes to the Colossians, is the doctrine of Christ preached by Epaphras, and received by them; to which he would have them adhere constantly. We must, therefore, understand, what doctrine he had promulgated respecting Christ. He had, doubtless, taught, that all the grounds of our salvation are placed in Christ alone; that Christ is the Lord of our faith and of our life; and that both are to be directed towards the Gospel of Christ, as to the brighter polar star; the Mosaic ceremonies must not be joined with the faith of the

Gospel: This rule Epaphras had prescribed to them: to this rule they were bound;

1. Because they received and approved of it: For when the Apostle says, *as ye have received* (as Chrysostom well observes) he binds them, as it were, by their own testimony: for he intimates that it is not his object that they should now receive some new doctrine, but that they should continue in what they had received; that not to do so, argued either folly or levity in them.

2. Because, although they must not of necessity persevere in every doctrine received, as, for instance, in an erroneous one; yet they must remain in this, because, this doctrine being received, Christ Jesus the Lord himself was received; *Ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord*. In this form of speaking there is great force, which it is proper to examine. We must observe, therefore, that he does not say, *As ye have received the doctrine of Christ*, or *concerning Christ*; but, *As ye have received Christ himself*. For we not only perceive the doctrine of Christ by faith, but we receive our quickening Saviour, and we hide him in the heart for our salvation. And, indeed, that saying of the Poet is known and approved by all,

It is more shameful to eject than not to admit a guest.

They could not, therefore, without great baseness reject the doctrine or the faith received, because by that same act they would reject Christ himself.

But that also must be noted, that he affirms they had received *Christ the Lord*: for (as the most learned interpreters will have it) the Apostle lays a stress upon this word. For the false apostles preached Christ, and their disciples received Christ: but *those* neither preached, nor did *these* receive *Christ the Lord*, but the fellow-servant of Moses; therefore they joined his doctrine with the ceremonies prescribed by Moses. But the Colossians, and so all true Christians, received *Christ the Lord*, both of their faith and their life: nor will they suffer rules of faith and Christian life to be imposed upon them by any one else. For the servant cannot manumit himself, or make himself over to a new lord; because he is not his own master: neither

could the Colossians subject themselves either to the Mosaic ceremonies, or the maxims of philosophers, because they had received *Christ the Lord*. From what we have said we may deduce the following instructions :

1. The true faith is not to be changed, although the prelates and doctors of the Church should begin to strike out a new one ; because *as we have received*, so we must persevere. The Romanists, therefore, in vain thrust upon us their novel opinions ; it is sufficient to answer, We have not so received from the Apostles.

2. We must not persevere in every doctrine received from our elders : but if they have received Christ, then we must abide in the same doctrine ; but should they have imbibed the poison of Antichrist, we are not bound to do the same. In vain, therefore, they also heap their old errors upon us : we say with Cyprian, *In things which regard religion it does not behove us to follow the custom of men, but the truth of God*.

3. The Gospel is to be received with the greater reverence, because *that* being received, *Jesus Christ* is received. The doctrines of men, however true, bring nothing else to the mind than knowledge : but the doctrine of the Gospel brings salvation, nay, the Saviour himself.

4. He is a Christian in vain, nay, to his great loss, who resolves not to direct both his faith and his life by the rule of Christ : for it is to mock Christ, if he is not worshipped as *Lord* by those who receive the Gospel.—Thus much concerning the Rule.

So walk ye in him.] He requires from them obedience to the rule proposed. When he says, *we must walk in Christ*, he shews by implication that Christ is the royal way to God and to eternal blessedness ; *I am the way, the truth, and the life*. Chrysostom hath made this observation, who immediately adds, *We must walk in Christ, because He is the way, and not angels, which leads to our heavenly Father*.

To walk in Christ denotes two things : to *persevere* and to *advance* in the doctrine and the faith of Christ ; to live according to this rule and the guidance of the Spirit of Christ. As to the first ; faith hath a progressive motion :

Whence we are said with propriety enough to walk, when we proceed in the faith itself. *They shall go from strength to strength*, says the Psalmist lxxxiv. 7. And Paul, Rom. i. 17, *from faith to faith*. But this term of *walking* is much more often accommodated to progress in a course of holiness. Hence *to walk in the ways*, or *in the commandments of God*, is in frequent use by David; and with Paul, *to walk after the flesh*, or *after the Spirit*; *to walk in newness of life*, or *as children of light*; and in many like passages.

Therefore two things are required: that they should abide and proceed in the faith; that they should conform their life to the rule of faith. Now let us deduce some inferences.

1. As Christians are rightly said *to walk in Christ*, because they regulate both their faith and their life by the rule prescribed by him; so the Monks walk in the respective founders of their sects, who seek perfection in the rule invented by them.

2. Since Christ is the only way to heaven, he who aims at heaven out of Christ, wanders about blind and miserable, and will never arrive thither.

3. He who thinks he can walk in Christ by a solitary faith, attempts to walk with one foot, which is impossible. *To walk in Christ* is to proceed as well in holiness as faith; for the Spirit of Christ stirs up to both or neither.

4. The life of a Christian man is in constant motion. He departs from sin and the world, and advances in holiness of life, and towards the heavenly state, by Christ as by the way, faith and love inclining him to this new motion as inherent qualities; but impelled and directed by the Spirit of Christ as the principal agent and mover, who also himself imparted both faith and love.

And thus we have briefly explained what the Apostle required to be done in this his hortatory conclusion; namely, that they would cleave to Christ; to which he draws them, 1. By proposing the rule itself to their contemplation; 2. by requiring their submission to this rule. Now it follows, that we explain how we are to abide in Christ; which we learn from the following verse.

Verse 7.

Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

That the Colossians should cleave to Christ, the Apostle advises in the foregoing verse: now he shews somewhat more explicitly how they are to cleave to him. And the mode consists,

1. In the stability of that faith which adheres to Christ and the doctrine of the Gospel; *Rooted, and built, and stablished.*

2. In that fulness, or sufficiency, which faith in Christ acknowledges; *abounding therein, &c.*

3. In gratitude for this fulness which we have through the faith of Christ; *with thanksgiving.*

Rooted and built up in him.] The stability of faith is described by two metaphors: The former borrowed from trees; the latter, from buildings. The metaphor *being rooted*, is borrowed from trees. For as trees cannot have stability unless they send forth roots into the earth, and that earth not miry, but firm: so our faith cannot have stedfastness unless it fix its roots in Christ, as in the firmest soil. The other metaphor is borrowed from buildings. For as a house hath no stability unless it be built upon a firm foundation; so neither faith, unless it rest upon Christ alone. Whence, likewise, the Saviour Christ commends his prudence who built his house upon a rock, but reproveth his folly who preferred to erect his upon sand, Matt. vii. 24. By these two metaphors, therefore, the Apostle points out to us that we should cleave to Christ as closely as possible.

And stablished in the faith as ye have been taught.] What he has before represented figuratively, he now expresses in direct terms, as interpreters will have: But he seems to me to do even something more than that. For in those figurative terms he expresses that stedfastness of which our faith partakes from having placed its roots in firm soil,

(viz. in Christ) and resting upon a due foundation : but here he touches on that stability which we are said to have from the strengthening of faith itself, after that it shall have been rooted in this soil, and built upon this foundation. This difference it is easy to observe in trees, which as soon as they are planted have their stability hence only, that they are planted in firm soil : but when they shall have increased in height, they have also other strength in themselves : So a tender faith hath its stability in Christ ; but being increased and advanced, it acquires new strength as to the internal habit itself. The Apostle, therefore, wishes the faith of the Colossians, not only to be built upon a firm foundation, but also to be strengthened and grow in itself daily.

And whereas he joins by a parenthesis (*as ye have been taught*), it tends to the greater caution, so to speak. For he had advised them concerning the same matter before in the foregoing verse ; saying, *As ye have received him, so walk ye in him* : here he again requires stedfastness of faith, and shews in what faith they must continue ; viz. in the very faith which they had been taught by Epaphras, not in the novel faith of false apostles.

He twice inculcates the same counsel, that he may correct a wrong inclination prevailing very much among the common people : For they were wont to grow weary of the received doctrine, and eagerly to desire new teachers, who led them away from the truth to their own dreams. He, therefore, reproves their itching ears, when he bids them remain in the faith as they had heretofore been taught, and forbids them to yield to the new faith of the seducers.

We have explained what stability the Apostle requires in the doctrine of the Gospel. Now from what we have said we may draw these instructive lessons ;

1. It is not enough to be planted in Christ, unless we are so established in him, and cleave so entirely to him, that we neither rest on any other, as the foundation of our faith, nor suffer ourselves to be detached from this by any devices. *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 11.* Those vacillating

persons, therefore, are reprov'd, who, seizing every occasion, flee away from Christ to Antichrist: but, as Chrysostom says, *that which is grounded and rooted, is not easily moved away.* They also are censured who cleave to Christ only externally, when they have their roots in the mean time fixed elsewhere. Among these we may reckon all who retain the name of Christians, yet have their hope placed chiefly upon saints, monastic observations, or other idols of their hearts, but not on Christ. Against such, that rebuke of the prophet Jonah, ii. 8, may be levelled, *They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.*

2. Faith is that which secures our walking in Christ as in the way, without error, our abiding in him as in the root with fruit, our standing upon him as a foundation without being shaken. Therefore, all seducers who labour to injure our faith are to be shunned and avoided; for by that means they attempt to separate us from Christ.

3. Since Paul restricts Christians to that faith which they have been taught by Apostles, we gather, that the rule of Apostolical doctrine, viz. the Holy Scriptures, is not to be removed out of the sight of the people. For it is unjust to demand that any one should act or believe according to a prescribed rule, and yet be unwilling to allow him the knowledge of this rule. But like as wicked boys, when they are bent upon mischief, shut out the schoolmaster; so the Papists, when they would make a traffick of their own trumpery among the people, take special care that the word of God should be withheld from them. But let us proceed.

Abounding therein.] He has described the stedfastness of faith: Now, in the second place, he touches that abundance, or sufficiency, which he requires in the faith of the Colossians, or rather, that which he states to be in the faith of Christ alone. This abundance interpreters refer to that perpetual increase which is required from believers in matters of faith. Therefore, they think that the Apostle exhorted them, that they should not only not abate, but daily grow in the abounding knowledge of evangelical doctrine. Yet I think (which I would say with the permission

of the good), that another sense is included in these words in this place. Therefore I explain *περισσεύοντες ἐν αὐτῇ*, feeling assured that you *abound* in that faith which rests on Christ alone, i. e. that you are rich, overflow, and possess abundantly all things necessary to salvation. It is not, therefore, to the increase of our knowledge I refer this abundance; but to the thing known, viz. the doctrine of the Gospel concerning Christ.

Never ought it to seem wonderful or novel that we explain *abounding*—knowing or determining that ye abound: for, in the Holy Scriptures, words very often denote a supposition of our knowledge of those things which they really signify. As I Cor. iv. 8, *Ye are full, ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us*; i. e. Ye think ye are full, ye are rich, ye have reigned, &c. And in Rom. v. 20, *The law entered that sin might abound*; i. e. that ye might know the magnitude of sin. Therefore, I so explain *abounding*, in this place, knowing, or determining with certainty that ye abound.

I follow this interpretation, because it especially agrees with the purpose of the Apostle's exhortation. For he wishes them to remain rooted in the faith of Christ alone: but that which especially conduces to their doing so is, that they should make up their minds that by this faith in Christ they *abound*, i. e. that they had all things which are necessary to be known for salvation.

Moreover, this especially opposes the opinion of the false teachers. For they thought that they had discovered poverty, and defects, in faith and the doctrine of the Gospel, and therefore they patched upon it philosophical speculations, and Mosaic ceremonies, and innumerable other traditions: but, on the contrary, the Apostle says, we *abound in it*, we have in that doctrine all abundance of saving knowledge.

Lastly, this best connects with the following words, *with thanksgiving*. For this ought especially to excite us to gratitude, because in Christ alone God hath administered to us abundantly all things necessary to salvation.

This sense of the words being granted, we learn that the

tales of the Monks, about the perfection of the monastic state, are mere folly; as though the doctrine of the Gospel had not prescribed to all the most perfect instruction as to the attainment of life eternal, but that this had been delegated to Dominic and Francis. But if in this doctrine we are abundantly supplied with all things necessary to salvation, it follows, that what is added, to what is already abundant, must be vain and superfluous.

With thanksgiving.] This is the last thing to be observed in the mode in which we cleave to the doctrine of the Gospel. We ought to cleave to it firmly, that is to say, being rooted in Christ himself; we ought to cleave to him in such a manner as to acknowledge that in Him is all-sufficiency to salvation: now, in the last place, we ought so to cleave, that we may shew gratitude of mind for this abundance of saving grace opened and offered to us in the Gospel and in Christ. And that is rightly required from us,

1. Because the magnitude of the benefit claimed it. For in the Gospel a store and accumulation of the benefits of God, nay, the whole treasure of Divine munificence is set forth and offered to us; it ought, therefore, especially to excite us to gratitude.

2. Because the danger of its contrary—ingratitude, urges it. For God is wont to withdraw his benefits from the ungrateful: unless, therefore, we wish to be deprived of the Gospel of salvation, we ought to accept it with all thanksgiving.

3. Because the nature of true faith impels to it. For true faith, embracing Christ as the Saviour, is wont to warm the heart itself with gratitude towards God, and to melt the icyness which is found in the hearts of unbelievers.

Hence we learn,

1. True faith does not consist with ingratitude. For he who, through faith, sees himself delivered from the jaws of hell, and designed for the glory of heaven, cannot but be grateful to the Author of his felicity.

2. They who make no account of the Gospel, are not

as yet partakers of the benefits of Christ: if they were, surely they would break forth into thanksgiving for this saving light so mercifully communicated by God.

3. God justly withdraws this benefit from those who do not receive it with thanksgiving. For this gratitude is as a certain tribute, and special service, which God requires in acknowledgment of his supreme dominion from all his feudal subjects: they who refuse to pay this are rightly expelled from their heritage. And these things concerning thanksgiving.

We have now dismissed this exordium of the Apostle. He proposes the question itself in the verse next following; then confirms his own opinion, and refutes the contrary.

Verse 8.

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

The Exordium now dispatched, the second part of this Chapter follows: In which is proposed the state of the question to be discussed, which he had lightly touched in verses 3 and 4. And if it be reduced to a logical proposition it stands thus:—In the business of salvation, neither philosophical speculations, nor traditions of human invention, nor Mosaical ceremonies; but the pure, genuine doctrine of the Gospel is to be received. This is the Apostle's judgment. But in order that he might produce more effect upon the minds of the Colossians, he preferred, instead of proposing it in that mode, to direct his discourse to them by the figure apostrophe, and converse as it were with them. And so in this verse the Apostle effects three things. 1. He excites them to beware of impostures. 2. He reduces these impostures to three kinds. 3. He lays

down a general reason or rule whereby it may be understood that they are to be rejected.

Beware lest any man spoil you.] Here he directs his discourse to the Colossians, and endeavours to render them cautious in a twofold manner:

1. By this particle of attention, *Beware lest*. For this strikes the mind much more pointedly than if he had said, All the patches of men which are woven upon the Gospel are to be rejected by Christians: For he who so speaks seems to treat with the understanding alone; but he who, with the Apostle, calls upon his hearer to take care that he be not deceived by these fictions of men, he not only instructs the understanding, but moves the will and affections to hatred of the false doctrine. For by this form of speaking he points out, as with a finger, the plots laid for them, and the approaching deceiver: and thus sentinels, when they have discovered the enemy, exclaim, Beware! Take care; the enemy is upon you!

2. He excites them to the greatest caution by the elegant metaphor of spoliation. For *συλαγωγῆιν* is *to drive away the booty*; as robbers are accustomed to carry away men and cattle with them, when they have prevailed in fight: So the Amalekites, having plundered Ziklag, bore away the men and all their goods, 1 Sam. xxx. By this word, therefore, he shews the great danger that threatened them from the seducers, who attacked them with the design to bring them into bondage, as spoil taken in war; viz. whilst they led them from the Gospel to their impostures. This mode of speaking, therefore, is very powerful to excite their minds to attention and caution.

Hence we derive some observations;

1. We are not to believe all who undertake to teach in the Church: but must take care, and weigh with serious examination, whether their doctrine be sound or not. This the Popish teachers forbid, because they doubt of their doctrine. This Apelles the heretic* heretofore forbade, as it is stated in Euseb. lib. v. cap. 13, for he said, *it was not*

* He broached his opinions about the middle of the second century.

proper to inquire into doctrine; but that every one should ho'd fast that which he received and believed. But the Apostle in this place speaks otherwise; and in 1 Thess. v. 21, and Acts xvii. 11.

2. It pertains to the duty of the pastor, not only to instruct his flock in sound doctrine, but to prepare and arm them against the designs of seducers. For he holds the place of a sentinel; he ought, therefore, to admonish them of the approach of the enemy; he ought to point out the snares laid for them: which, unless he shall have done, *whatsoever through indolence is left unguarded, will be required from the pastor,* Cyprian, De sing. cler.

3. The doctrine of the Gospel is as the sheepfold of Christ. The sheep are safe whilst they abide within this fence: but when they wander to new and strange doctrines, as straggling sheep, they fall a prey to robbers, i. e. to heretics and seducers. By this treachery the papacy hath spoiled so many churches; for it hath withdrawn them from the doctrine of the Gospel; then it hath led them whither it would, as its own slaves.

Through philosophy and vain deceit.] After the Apostle had forewarned the Colossians to beware of impostures, he enumerates the various kinds of impostures. The first is what he has designated by the name *philosophy*: then terms are subjoined in apposition, which explain what philosophy he intends, namely, *fa'se and vain*. But since inquiry is often instituted among theologians concerning the use of human reason and philosophy in the matter of religion: and since also mutual criminations arise hence between us and the papists, whilst we charge upon them the crime of corrupt theology, because, in the article of justification, free-will, and many other things, they follow Aristotle, rather than Paul; they, on the other hand, saying, that we, in the question of the presence of the body of Christ in the Lord's supper, cleave to philosophical principles, and reject the manifest word of God; on these accounts, I say, we shall treat somewhat more largely of this matter; and shall bring all those points which we are about to mention under these heads:

1. We shall shew that true philosophy is not condemned by the Apostle.

2. We shall explain what we ought to understand under the word *philosophy* in this place.

3. We shall shew wherein the use, wherein the abuse of philosophy consists, as far as relates to divine matters.

1. As to the first ; Whether we speak concerning moral or natural philosophy, whether concerning any other branch of philosophy, or of the whole as a certain entire body ; it is certain that that cannot be condemned, lest God himself be called into judgment. For philosophy is the offspring of right reason : and this light of reason is infused into the human mind by God himself, according to that remark of Tertullian, *Reason is of God*. We, therefore, judge, not the discipline of the Stoicks, nor Platonists, nor Aristotelians, to be true philosophy : but whatever among all these, or others, shall have been discovered, spoken, or written, by the light of right reason ; all this taken together we call *philosophy*. Therefore, not the dreams of philosophers constitute philosophy, but the principles of every one, which agree with truth and good morals. For as the errors of Theologians do not pertain to theology as parts of it, but as disease ; so neither do those of Philosophers pertain to philosophy. We scruple not, therefore, to call philosophy, with Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. 1, *a morsel of eternal truth*. They, therefore, who desire philosophy itself to be exploded from the schools of Christians, are either altogether ignorant, and have it in view to hide their ignorance among the common ignorance of all ; or they are wicked, and desire to expose us stripped of all advantage from learning, untaught and defenceless, to artful and armed enemies ; which wicked purpose of Julian, Nazianzen discovers and reproves, Orat. 1. in Julianum.

I might in this place speak of the various advantages of physics, ethics, and logic. For not only does common life derive assistance from all these, but even divine Theology, by the admission of Tertullian, a bitter enemy of philosophers ; *In what way could any one be trained to human prudence, or to any action whatever, without learning, since*

literature is an help to every department in life! How will you reject secular studies, without which there cannot be divine ones? Tertul. De idol. If, therefore, the Apostle had condemned and rejected philosophy, he would verily have rejected the light of reason, and would have cast great injury upon God, the author of it. As often, then, as what relates to human and eternal affairs is slighted and rejected by divines, it is to be understood, not of true and genuine philosophy, but of the errors and fancies of philosophers. For tares are sown in philosophy as they are in our religion: and truth is nearly excluded from it by the pernicious things diffused in it. To conclude then, in a word, If the errors of philosophers, or their crabbed subtilties, are marked out under the term *philosophy*, then we are free to reject and condemn *such* philosophy: but if we may call the knowledge of the truth, discovered by the light of natural reason, by this term, we judge that is not to be condemned, but to be cultivated.

2. It is clear that true and genuine philosophy is not condemned. Let us enquire, in the second place, of what kind that is which is excluded by the Apostle; viz. that of *vain deceit*, to which he affixes the ignominious brand of *κενῆς ἀπάτης*. This philosophy condemned is, then, both *vain* and *deceitful*.

Now, truly, philosophy, or human reason which is the mother of philosophy, is always found *vain* and *deceitful* when carried beyond its proper bounds, that is, when it attempts to determine concerning those things which cannot be judged of by *the criterion* of natural reason; and of this kind are those which concern the worship of God and the salvation of men. Philosophy is, therefore, to be listened to when it pronounces about things subject to itself, according to the light of right reason: but when it would determine concerning human justification, reconciliation with God, the mode of Divine worship, or of other matters relating to faith, it is to be exploded; because, in those things which are beyond the grasp of reason, and depend wholly on the revealed will of God, it brings nothing solid or true, but betrays itself to be altogether *vain* and *deceit-*

ful. The Apostle hath elsewhere alleged the cause of this; viz. Because the *natural man receiveth not the things which are of God; for they only are discerned by the Spirit of God; 1 Cor. ii. 14.* But a philosopher, considered as a philosopher, is nothing more than a natural man; and reason itself, not illuminated by faith, pertains to this natural condition: it cannot, therefore, extend to the knowledge of salvation; and, if it should attempt, it miserably spends itself in vain. Here, then, we renounce philosophy and human reason, and confess with Justin Martyr, a theologian and philosopher, *Paræn. ad Græcos*, that *Neither poets nor philosophers are fit authors for instituting a Religion, but God alone by revelation.* Which also Prudentius has expressed in very elegant verse, which it will not be irksome to annex. In lib. 2. cont. Symmach. he is shewing that reason cannot but fail if it intrude itself into divine things;

Quippe minor natura aciem si intendere tentet
 Acriùs, ac penetrare Dei secreta supremi;
 Quis dubitet victo fragilem lassescere visu,
 Vimque fatigatæ mentis sub pectore parvo
 Turbari, invalidisque hebetem succumbere curis?
 Sed facilis fidei via, &c.*

Vide Hilar. l. de Trinit.

Neither ought this to seem wonderful. For if brute animals can judge very well concerning things which relate to sense, such as their meat and drink, yet cannot judge of human affairs: then, by a parity of reason, neither can men pronounce by natural light respecting heavenly doctrine and Divine worship, although they may determine by the aid of it, what is good and right in human concerns.

* Thus translated for his friend, by Mr. J. F. Pennie, of Lulworth, author of the "Royal Minstrel, Rogvald, Scenes in Palestine," &c. &c.

"Should man, inferior in his nature, strive
 Into the secrets of his God to dive,
 O, who can doubt his feeble sight would fail,
 And his weak pow'rs of mind confounded quail
 Beneath the vain attempt! 'Tis faith alone
 Can easy make her way—"

to mysteries yet unknown.

That we may, therefore, accommodate these points to the matter in hand ; The false Apostles, under the pretext of a certain secret wisdom, endeavoured to obtrude upon the Colossians certain new doctrines about the worship of angels, the expiation of souls, and other things of that kind, drawn, no doubt, from the writings of the Platonists. What says Paul to these things ? Believe not ; he replies : fallacious and vain is philosophy when it prescribes about religion. It behoves you to learn how God the Father would be approached, how your sin can be expiated, not from Plato and human reason, but from God and his word. Let us explode, therefore, and condemn philosophy promulgating directions concerning these things.

But it is objected, that divine and spiritual things are known to human reason, and that by the natural light of the same : for thus says the Apostle, Rom. i. 19, 20, *That which may be known of God is manifest in them ;—The invisible things of him from the creation of the world, being understood, &c.* If reason comprehends divine things, then may it determine respecting them, neither will it, therefore, be called *vain*.

It is answered ; The natural knowledge of spiritual things is obscure and feeble, extending only to the *existence* of those things. As, for instance, that there is a God, that there is a worship of God, that there is a blessedness for souls, reason and philosophy perceives ; but how God is to be worshipped, how happiness is to be obtained, it discovers not : whilst, therefore, it attempts to determine respecting these things and the like, it is *vain* and *deceitful*. This knowledge may render a man *inexcusable*, but it cannot render him a competent teacher, unless knowledge infused by grace be added.

3. Let us approach to what we proposed to treat of in the last place, viz. to shew the abuse and use of reason or philosophy in the business of religion. For they who perpetually cry out for the exclusion of human reason from treating of sacred things, without discrimination, seem to require that men should engage in the greatest affairs without reason ; when, indeed, they cannot rightly manage the least, if that natural light of reason be extinguished.

The abuse of natural reason, or philosophy, in the cause of religion is manifold.

1. When it attempts to deduce the fundamentals themselves of religion from its principles. For although the principles of right reason are true in themselves, nevertheless there cannot be elicited from them what is to be determined concerning the mystery of the Trinity, the incarnation of Christ, the justification of a sinner, invocation of God, and his worship; all which things are to be deduced from higher principles, namely, from the will of God revealed in the Word. Reason is *the discursive power which proceeds from principles to conclusions*: but it does not possess in itself the principles of those things which are apprehended by faith; therefore, it daringly builds conclusions upon the sand of its own opinions.

2. When it opposes its own principles, which are true in the order of nature, to theological principles, which are far above the order of nature. For example; it is true, that *out of nothing, nothing can be made*; it is true that *dissimilar species cannot be predicated of each other, and cannot unite in the same subject*; it is true *there is no return from privation to possession*: but all these things are to be understood according to the course of nature and the power of a finite agent. Philosophers therefore err, when they think that they can hence conclude against the creation of the world, the incarnation of God, and the resurrection of the dead; all which the Scriptures teach as done, or to be done, not by virtue of natural causes, but by the Almighty power of God. Here, therefore, that rule of Aquinas, *Quæst. disp. de fide, art. 10*, is to be retained, *Theology can never contradict true natural reason, but often rises above it, and thus APPEARS to oppose it*. For true reason does not affirm that those superior things cannot be effected absolutely; but cannot be effected by any finite power; and this theology likewise confesses. In those matters, therefore, which are of this kind, *philosophy*, as says Clemens, *Strom. 1*, *should submit itself to theology, as Agar to Sarah; should allow itself to be advised and corrected: but if it be unwilling to become obedient, cast out the handmaid*.

3. When it obtrudes for legitimate conclusions its er-

rors, drawn sometimes by false consequences from true premises. Thus the Stoics, Epicureans, Aristotelians, and as many as come under the denomination of philosophers, do not always teach the dictates of right reason, but the dreams of their own fancy. But, truly, if any one should attempt, under the name of philosophy, to introduce these errors into theology, he commits a double sin: first, inasmuch as he resolves the corruptions of philosophers into the dogmas of philosophy itself; next, because he even thinks to subject theology to the rules of philosophy. And the Fathers appear to me strictly to have reproved this abuse in the antient heretics, and sometimes to have declaimed severely, on that account, against true philosophy and philosophers. Nothing is more frequent in Tertullian: *A philosopher is the creature of boasting. They affect truth, and in affecting it they mar it. Every heresy is engendered by the devices of philosophers. All heresies consist of the maxims of philosophers. All the dogmas of heretics, when they grow frigid and stiff, and therefore cannot take wing, find a place of settlement and repose among the thorns of Aristotle.* Nor is Lactantius more mild towards them; for in Institut. lib. 3. cap. 2, and in many subsequent places, he continually attacks philosophy and philosophers. But, as I have said, these respect not true and sober philosophy, keeping within its bounds; but that bold and deceitful counterfeit, which dares to mingle itself with things beyond its reach, or which publishes the opinions of private men for the decrees of truth itself. You perceive the abuse; now let us shew the use of true philosophy: And this is manifold.

1. The knowledge of philosophy is useful, nay, necessary to the clear understanding and perspicuous elucidation of many passages which every where occur in the sacred Scriptures. For although the principles of our Religion are derived from God, not from human reason, or any philosophical science; yet many forms of speaking occur in the books of holy Scripture, many examples and illustrations, which cannot fully be understood and stated with perspicuity, without the aids of human literature. Of this kind are those passages which speak of the motion, the

influences, the obscuration of the heavenly bodies, which, to be understood rightly, require the knowledge of astronomy. Of this kind also are those which allude to the properties of certain animals, as of the wolf, sheep, lions, bears, doves, and eagles; all which need the light of natural philosophy. To this also may be referred those which relate to the nature and temperature of countries; as when forms of speech are derived from heat or drought, when from shade, or water, or cooling winds, and are often applied to illustrate spiritual things: for these are not rightly explained unless by him who shall have well investigated and examined the nature of those places; but this he shall not be able to do without the knowledge of geography. Lest our discourse should become too diffuse by an enumeration of particulars, we may truly say, there is no part of philosophy, or of human learning, which may not at times, be called in to his aid, by the interpreter of sacred literature, in order to contribute what falls within its province. This, therefore, is the first use of philosophy.

2. Philosophy, especially that which teaches the rules and the art of reasoning rightly, is particularly necessary, and to be employed by all, in discriminating between, and treating all controversies relating to religion. For although reason receives the principles of religion by the light of faith, yet this light, proceeding first from these principles, according to the laws of good and necessary consequence impressed by God himself upon a rational creature, is both wont, and ought to judge, how the parts of heavenly doctrine cohere together and mutually establish each other; what is consistent, what inconsistent with them. Our faith ascends above reason; but yet not rashly or irrationally. For reason herself is aware that the object of our faith is deduced from the principles of sacred Scripture. For instance; I believe the resurrection of the dead. How? Because reason itself proves this doctrine to be delivered in the Holy Scriptures: for I should not believe it unless I understood it to be founded in the Scriptures. On the other hand; I do not believe purgatory. Why? Because reason can collect from no part of Scripture, according to

the rules of good and sound logic, the truth of this doctrine. This use of reason and logic in sacred things, God is so far from condemning, that he requires it of all: nay, for this end he plants in human minds certain laws of judging, and of discerning truth from falsehood, certainty from uncertainty, consequential from inconsequential reasoning, that we may use this light of reason in all things, and especially in Divine matters. Ephes. v. 17, *Be not unskilful, but understanding what the will of the Lord is:* and iv. 14, *That we should be no longer children, carried about with every wind of doctrine, &c.;* and 1 Thess. v. 21, *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.* This is commended in the Bereans, who, on hearing Paul preach, *Searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so or not,* Acts xvii. 11: But there cannot be this investigation and examination of doctrines, unless the judgment of men be employed, which determines of the truth of conclusions by its own principles, and of the truth of things, not by relying upon principles known to it without the word of God, but delivered in the sacred Scriptures, as was before said. Tertullian, *De resurrect. carnis,* has well spoken in regard to this opinion: *It is the part indeed of common sense to be wise in the things of God, but for testimony of what is true, not in aid of what is false; this is not contrary, but according to the Divine economy.*

3. The knowledge of philosophy is necessary, as well for the instruction of those who have not yet enrolled themselves under Christ, as for resistance, if they should obstinately oppose our Religion. He who has been born and constantly educated in darkness, is not directly to be drawn into the clear light of the sun, lest it should happen that by so much light he should be overpowered rather than enlightened: so they who have been educated from childhood in the darkness of Paganism, cannot immediately bear the light of the Gospel, but are first to be awakened by reasons drawn from natural light, to contemplate this light. So Paul acted with the Athenians, Acts xvii. 24. Clemens Alexandrinus, *Strom.* 1, illustrates the reason of this

by a happy similitude: *As they who would address the people do this most commonly by a public crier, that the things which are said, may be heard by all; so when discourse is to be held with men ignorant of the Christian Religion, the opinions and expressions of nature itself, which may be perceived and understood by them, are to be employed.*

But now as to what belongs to the conflict with philosophers speaking against Religion, who does not see that it is necessary to be armed with philosophy? For it is like a trench and rampart against their inroads; it is a sword wherewith to thrust them: which, although it renders the truth in no ways more powerful, yet it is very useful in this respect, that it repels sophistry, and weakens its force against it. The saying of Julian the Apostate is remarkable, *We are caught by our own wings.* He uttered this lament when he saw the Gentile philosophers and their errors overthrown and routed by Christians through the advantages of human learning and philosophy itself. And truly this was very honourable to the teachers of the Church, because the enemy were cut off by them in their own camps, and *overcome by those weapons in which they were wont to delight and confide*, as says Lactantius, lib. 3. cap. 1.

4. The use of philosophy and of literature is also valuable among Christians; since men's minds are prepared and rendered more acute by these studies for the treatment and reception of a more sublime science; because we are able to adorn and enrich our dissertations on sacred things with the good sayings of philosophers. *For the good sayings of philosophers*, says Justin Mart. Apolog. 1, *are the heritage of Christians.* For I agree not with those who think that not only the remarks of philosophers, but of the most holy Fathers, should be altogether withheld from sacred discourses. Prosper, in Præfat. ad 2, lib. de vita contemplativa, seems to me to decide much better: *Truth*, says he, *from what quarter soever it shines, is not to be ascribed to human wit, but to God; neither ought it to be believed to be the property of some, but of all, which is such and so great of*

itself, that it is not then great when the great shall have taught it, but rather itself makes them great by whom it could have been taught or learned.

5. In the last place, I also add this ; that it may even be employed to the moderate and useful delight of the hearers, as a certain seasoning, as it were, drawn from polite literature. For, if the Divine benignity shall have granted us bodily food, not only necessary to repel hunger, but sweet and pleasant to delight the taste ; why should we not also account this same to be granted us in regard to spiritual food ? especially since this delight hath usefulness joined with it. For it occasions those things which are pre-eminently the doctrines of faith to flow into the mind more easily and pleasantly. Hence says Clemens ; *The truth which is sought from the holy Scriptures is as necessary to life as bread ; but that which is sought from other instruction, is but as sauces and sweetmeats.* I would not by this be understood to approve the affected vanity of those who crowd their discourses with short sentences collected from all quarters, in the meanwhile being altogether unmindful of the Scriptures ; but I wish to shew that philosophy, and, therefore, all polite literature, hath its place and use, even in sacred things, if employed with address.

After the tradition of men.] The Apostle has reduced all the impostures of false teachers to three kinds. The first was placed in the curious speculations of the conclusions of philosophers concerning the worship and the will of God, drawn from the judgment of reason not from the revealed word : This philosophy, although it wears the appearance of secret and sublime wisdom, yet Paul condemned and exploded it as *vain* and *deceitful*. Now he censures a second sort of false doctrine, which he calls *the tradition of men*. But he does not intend those curious and abstruse speculations which he has before glanced at under the name of philosophy (for those doctrines had a certain shadow of wisdom), but superstitious and foolish observances, founded in external things, which rested upon custom and antiquity alone, but were confirmed very much either by the pretended visions of impostors, or by the

stratagems and power of dæmons themselves. Of this kind were those traditions of the Pharisees about trifling matters, as the washing of cups, and many other such like things; in which, however, they would have that great sanctity consisted. Of this kind were the rites and observances of the Gentiles in sacrifices, marriages, and funeral solemnities. Hither also appertained the observances and modes of averting of all presages, of hours, days, and of things of invention; all which abounded in the most vain and foolish traditions and rites. Lastly, it is proper to refer hither the ridiculous ceremonies and superstitious rites of the Papists, which they have transplanted from the Heathen themselves into the Christian Religion, by the acknowledgment of Gerson, part. 3, De direct. cor. *The Church*, says he, *hath changed many rites of the Gentiles, not by the abolition of them, but directing the attentions of the faithful about things of this kind to a good end.* Neither will it be beside the matter to give some examples of these superstitious traditions, and that upon the authority of this Romanist, lest we should seem to charge the Papists falsely. *The worship of saints seems to abound with superstition: for instance, the offering such a gift to such a saint; as a cock for boys, a hen for girls; the invoking one saint in preference to others for the cure of some particular disease; the thinking that in one church more than another, the virtue of some one saint will be found more powerful and more prompt.* He labours much that he may free these rites from superstition. The same writer, in his book *De erroribus circa artem magicam*, says, *Magicians charge us likewise, and weary themselves to draw us into the same case. Are not such things, say they, done or tolerated by the Church, in certain pilgrimages, in the worship of images, in blessing of candles and water, in exorcisms? Is it not said daily, If any one should remain nine days in this church, If he should be sprinkled with that water, If he should devote himself to such an image, he shall be healed forthwith?* These things he acknowledges to be practised by the Papists, and that under the pretence of Divine worship, and to be approved, or at least tolerated by their prelates. But it is worth while to hear how he endeavours to

excuse this manifest superstition; *They are endured*, says he, *because they cannot be utterly eradicated, and because the faith of the common people is regulated, and preserved by the faith of their superiors.* But what is that regulated faith of their superiors concerning these things? Hear ye, *This is the intention of the church, that such things be done, not as necessarily efficacious, or as though the chief hope were placed in such things, preferring them to their obligations to God; but that the piety of faith may be nourished and increased by these things.* But we shall refer both these, and monastical observations also, and all external rites, which are obtruded upon God as parts of Divine worship, to those condemned traditions of men, upon the authority of Paul, and of Christ: *In vain they worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*, Matth. xv. 9. For in the cause of Religion, that rule of Tertullian is ever to be retained, *It is not permitted us to follow any thing from our own humour, nay, not even to choose what any one shall have introduced of his fancy.*

But here it may be asked, Whether it behoves us to reject and abolish all traditions and external rites adopted by men, as condemned by the Apostle, or not?

We answer, Nothing less: For it behoves us to yield the power of instituting rites, to be observed for the sake of good order and decorum, to the rulers of the Church, upon the authority of the Apostle himself, *Let all things be done decently and in order*, 1 Cor. xiv. 40. And elsewhere, *Obey them that have the rule over you.* Concerning rites or traditions of this kind, the rule of Augustine is to be commended; *In these matters there is no better discipline for a grave and prudent Christian, than to demean himself after that manner in which he sees the church, whatever church it be to which he has conformed himself, demean herself.* For whatever is enjoined that does not violate faith nor morals, is to be accounted as indifferent. Epist. 118. ad Januar. cap. 2. To this may be referred ecclesiastical laws respecting the time of fasts and festivals, the difference of garments, and, in fine, the whole external order which is observed in performing sacred offices. Whoever rejects rites and traditions of men of this kind, when they do not oppose the word of

God, is a disturber of public order, and a despiser of the power ordained of God. But here it is fit to add certain cautions.

1. That men should not prescribe any rites or external works with the design of obtaining by them righteousness, the remission of sins, or acceptance with God without a Mediator: for, as to what pertains to all these matters, Christ is sufficient, nor does he require any additions of human invention. Traditions of this kind (and such are almost all those of the Papists) are overthrown by that denunciation of the Apostle, Gal. v. 4, *Whosoever of you are justified by the law ye are fallen from Christ.* How much more are they fallen from Christ, who seek justification and salvation in human commands? Prosper hath well decided concerning these observances: *Fastings, abstinences, vigils, almsdeeds, and other things of this kind, are not to be offered for righteousness, but with righteousness to God,* De vita contempl. lib. 3. cap. 10.

2. We should take care that these traditions concerning things indifferent in their nature, should not be so enjoined as to bind the conscience equally with the laws of God; i. e. so that this guilt of condemnation should be incurred by any violation of them, although that should happen without contempt of those who enforce them, or scandal to any. Wisely and truly says Gerson, part. 3, *They abuse their power who wish that all their ordinances should have their validity under the sanction of eternal punishment.* And part. 1, in conclus. Matth. Grabb. *That every one who does any thing contrary to the canonical injunctions sins mortally, is in error.*

3. We should take care lest traditions concerning things indifferent should be so multiplied as thereby to impose a servile yoke upon Christians, and bring them again, as it were, under a Jewish bondage. For this the Apostles themselves carefully avoided, Acts xv. 10, *Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?* Augustine, Epist. 119, says, *this exuberant abundance of ceremonies is to be retrenched, because they load Religion with servile burdens.* And reason necessarily requires that. For this superfluous occu-

pation about human traditions always begets ignorance and contempt of the Divine precepts, Matth. xv. 6. It might be proper here, therefore, to discuss this sink of Papistical traditions; but I had rather ye should hear an inquiry concerning this matter from some one among themselves than from me. Gerson, part. 1, De nuptiis Christi et Eccl. asks, *What means such a multitude of constitutions whilst the Gospel is neither known nor regarded? Let the Gospel be in the first place known and maintained.* And, De vita spirit. coral. 14. part. 3, *Such is the multitude of this kind of constitutions, that if they were kept in their rigour, the greatest part of the Church would be damned.*

And thus ye have what the Apostle would understand under the name of *traditions*; how far they may be approved, how far rejected. Now let us proceed to the third kind of false doctrine which is here reproved by the Apostle.

After the rudiments of the world.] This is that last species of imposture, or of false doctrine of which the Apostle advises us to beware. Some refer these words to that idolatrous worship of the sun, the moon, the sea, the earth, fountains, and floods, which the Gentile philosophers taught. For they divided the power of the one God into the particular virtues of the elements and creatures; and assigned a certain portion of the Divinity to each of these, and, consequently, a part of the Divine worship. Therefore, both Augustine, in Epist ad Galat., and some from among modern interpreters, think the doctrine of the worship of creatures to be glanced at in this passage. But I rather embrace the interpretation of those who understand by *the rudiments of the world*, those introductory lessons by which God instructed the Jewish church; namely, the Mosaic rites, the legal ceremonies, and the shadows of Christ to come: for the Divine wisdom was pleased to imbue the infancy of his Church with these, as with certain first principles of Religion, and to prepare it to receive Christ, and the perfection of the doctrine of the Gospel, when it should arrive at full age. I come over to this opinion the more willingly because Paul himself, Gal. iv. 3. by

elements of the world designs that ceremonial worship which was in force under the old Testament, *Even we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.* And in verse 9, *How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, &c.* But Paul contends in this Chapter and the following, with those who attempted to bring circumcision and the other Mosaic rites into the Church, and to mix them with the doctrine of the Gospel. This, therefore, the Apostle says, that they are to be avoided as impostors who, though the ceremonies enjoined by God himself under the Old Testament are now abrogated by the coming of Christ and the Gospel, would, nevertheless, force them upon Christians. *For the old law had a shadow of good things to come, not the express image of the things,* Heb. x. 1. In this text, therefore, we may see an intimation of the doctrine of the abolition of ceremonies.

The Schoolmen are accustomed to adduce a threefold cause why it is proper that the legal ceremonies should cease after the coming of Christ; because they were *obscure* as to their signification, *imperfect* as to their efficacy, and *burdensome* as to their observance: for in all these points they opposed the grace of the Gospel. But this reason seems to me most valid, That the legal ceremonies had a certain profession of faith annexed respecting the Messiah who was to come, and expiate the sin of the human race. As therefore, he would sin greatly who should declare his belief that Christ is to come and to suffer, by professing it in words; so he sins who does it by his deeds, i. e. who by those legal observances professes the same. This Augustine shews in his treatise *contra Faustum*, lib. 19. cap. 16,* *Christ is not now promised to be born, to suffer, to rise again; which the sacraments of the old law typified: but he is announced as born, as having suffered, and risen again; which these sacraments that are observed by Christians now typify.* Therefore the practice of the Jewish ceremonies now would be a profession of a false faith.

* Faustus was an Englishman, first a Monk of the Monastery of Levins, then Abbot of the same, and afterwards Bishop of Ries. Vide Milner, vol. ii. A.D. 594, p. 546.

But it is objected, that the Apostles after the passion of Christ observed, and directed to be observed, some legal institutions. Paul circumcised Timothy, Acts xvi. 3. By the decree of the Apostles it was ordained that the Gentiles should abstain from blood, and from things strangled, Acts xv. 29, and this abstinence related to the observance of a ceremonial law. By what right, therefore, are they who lay upon Christians *the rudiments of the world*, i. e. the ceremonial law, accounted as impostors?

We have one sufficient answer to both objections. As to what pertains to the observance of ceremonies, it is proper to distinguish with Augustine, Epist. 19, ad Hieron. three periods. One was before the passion of Christ, in which the legal ceremonies were *alive*: the other, after his passion, but before the full developement of the Gospel, in which they were *dead*: the third, after that the truth of the Gospel shone clearly, in which they were *dead and buried*. We say, therefore, that Paul circumcised Timothy, and the Apostles put forth that decree in the intermediate time in which the legal institutions were *not buried*. But it is meet to add two other points: First, that the Apostles in this intermediate time observed and retained these legal ceremonies, not, however, as parts of the Divine worship, not as figures of spiritual things; (for as to faith and conscience, they were abrogated by the passion of Christ) but only in a manner for public utility, and for the sake of avoiding offence, they observed those, as any other ceremonies whatever, left at the discretion of the godly. For so we see Timothy was circumcised by Paul, because he thought it of advantage to the Church; Titus was not circumcised, because he judged it not expedient. Timothy received circumcision, therefore, not as a necessary Sacrament (as Isaac, Jacob, and others had aforetime) but as an indifferent ceremony. The same was the case with the Apostolical decree about abstaining from blood and things strangled; which was not imposed upon Christians as a certain matter established by the Divine law, but as suited to those times, namely, that the Jewish and Gentile

churches might coalesce more easily with each other. But it is proper to add that other point also, That the case was not the same with all the legal ceremonies. For whereas they are divided by the ancient Schoolmen into sacrifices, sacraments, sacred things, and observances; it was not lawful after the passion of Christ to call in the aid of sacrifices for propitiating God, nor sacraments for spiritual sanctification, nor those legal rites for the worship of God without a Mediator; but it was lawful for a time (especially to Jews embracing the Christian religion) that they should retain certain of these observances for this end, lest they should give offence to their weak brethren, Acts xxi. 26. Now then from these things which have been stated, we may collect the difference between the Apostle's retaining certain legal institutions, and seducers urging the Mosaic law. The Apostle did that from respect to the weak before the Gospel was fully published; the seducers urged it to be done for a continuance: The Apostles allowed certain things to be observed with freedom of conscience, for the sake of charity, and of avoiding offence; the seducers recalled the whole Mosaic law, and that as necessary to justification and salvation. Thus much may suffice respecting these three forms of impostures; viz. philosophical speculations, human traditions, and legal rudiments.

And not after Christ.] In these last words is contained the general reason why the three aforementioned doctrines of the seducers are to be avoided and rejected; viz. because neither those curious speculations, nor those superstitious traditions, nor those abrogated ceremonies, are after Christ.

1. All these things are denied to be after Christ, because they are not after the doctrine made known by Christ himself, and his Apostles by the inspiration of the Spirit of Christ.

Where we must observe, that this is the strongest of all ways of concluding that this is not after Christ, i. e. not made known in the Gospel of Christ, therefore not to be admitted in the business of our justification and salvation.

Thus the Apostle exploded the doctrines of seducers; thus we explode the traditions of Papists, which they urge as necessary to salvation.

2. These things are denied to be after Christ, not only because they did not proceed from him, but because they lead Christians off from him. And they lead them off in two modes :

1. By exercising and detaining the mind elsewhere. For through its innate curiosity, the human mind more readily engages in these new and strange doctrines than in Evangelical simplicity, especially when they are obtruded under the pretext of Religion. He, therefore, who shall have brought his mind to these new doctrines, begins forthwith to grow weary of the Gospel; according to that saying of the Apostle, 1 Cor. i. 23, *We preach Christ crucified, to the Greeks foolishness.*

2. They also lead it off by offering a hope of salvation in other things. For because it is much more easy to perform some external works than to believe truly in Christ, and as soon as a hope is afforded of obtaining justification, the remission of sins, and eternal salvation in these works of human tradition, Christ is forthwith forsaken, and the greater part agree to run to these external aids. This is too clearly perceived in the papacy, where almost all hasten to saints, to indulgences, to expiatory masses, to personal satisfactions, whilst there are few who flee to sincere penitence and faith, i. e. to God in Christ; for these traditions, which are not after Christ, have led almost all from Christ.

Verse 9.

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

In a foregoing verse you have understood the state of the controversy, namely this,—The doctrine of Christ made known in the Gospel is sufficient for salvation; neither is it needful to join thereto either the maxims of philosophers, or the inventions of any men whatever, or even the Jewish ceremonies (formerly enjoined by God himself). Paul undertook to demonstrate this against the false apostles; and he proves it by several arguments.

The first is drawn from the perfection which is in Christ, and, by consequence, in his doctrine. Now thus the case stands: Additions are needed to supply some defect or imperfection; but He in whom *dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, is not an imperfect Mediator, Saviour, or Teacher of the Church; therefore, in the business or doctrine of salvation we ought not to join any thing to Christ or his doctrine. As though he had said, Perfect Deity dwells in Christ our Saviour and Teacher, with all Divine attributes, wisdom, power, mercy, &c.: what need is there, then, to seek other means or helps to salvation out of Him? Will Philosophers instruct thee better than Wisdom itself? Will Angels lead thee sooner to God than Mercy itself? Will those ceremonies and legal shadows justify thee better than Christ himself, the scope and fulfilment of those ceremonies? Rest thyself in him alone, therefore, in whom alone *dwel's all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*.

But the better to understand the force of this argument and also the signification of those words, because the reason is drawn from the indwelling Divinity, let us consider these three things; the dwelling, *In him*; the inhabitant, *all the fulness of the Godhead*; the mode of inhabiting, *bodily*.

In him dwelt.] That is, in the man Christ, or in that human nature in which he undertook and administered the business of our salvation: In that human nature, I say, so mean and despicable in the eyes of unbelieving men, all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt and perpetually dwells; Phil. ii. 6, 7. The Apostle employs this metaphorical term *indwelling*, to shew that the Deity abode in the man Christ, not separately, but as in a fixed and proper residence. We must beware, therefore, not to push this metaphor beyond the design of the Apostle: For that rule of the Schoolmen is true, *In metaphorical statements it is not proper to take the similitude in all points.*

But here it is worth while to enquire why God himself chose to himself this dwelling of human nature, when he would promulgate the doctrine of the Gospel and procure our salvation? As to the preaching of the doctrine of salvation, it behoved that not a mere man, but God inhabiting human nature, should promulge the Gospel;

1. Because the Gospel could not be carried on without the abrogation of the Mosaic law and the Levitical priesthood: But it was not equitable for this to be abrogated except by him who was far superior to Moses; viz. by the Son of God, not by any fellow-servant of Moses himself. This is demonstrated in the third Chapter to the Hebrews, where a comparison is made between Moses and Christ. Moses is said to be *a servant in the house of God*; Christ, *a Son and constituted Lord over the house of God*. It is not therefore wonderful if Moses yield to Christ, and the law to the Gospel; since *in Christ dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead*.

2. It was requisite for the Gospel to enter as an eternal doctrine, never to be changed; but it mostly conduces to this, when we understand that it was promulgated by the eternal God himself. For if Deity itself had not dwelt in Christ in some special manner, what should hinder, but that as the Mosaic law gave way to the Gospel, so the Gospel should give way to some other third doctrine? But when it appears that Christ was the Author of the Gospel, and that he assumed human nature to make known this

doctrine to men, no one may dare to think of its abrogation.

3. The Gospel is to be received by all the faithful, not only as perpetual doctrine, but as certain, as perfect, as saving; but as soon as it is known that in him who brought the Gospel into the world the Godhead dwelt in that mode in which it is here asserted, it is immediately understood that in the doctrine of such a person, certainty, perfection, and salvation are found. For they who receive the rule of faith directly from truth itself, can in no wise be deceived. Well said Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. 6, *Men, speaking as men about God and divine things, are not worthy of credit; but the voice of the Lord is more worthy of credit than any demonstration.* Neither can the doctrine fall under the suspicion of imperfection, which He, all whose works are perfect, would not divulge by his Ministers, but by himself. Lastly, that must necessarily be saving, which He taught who is the only way to salvation.

It was fit that the doctrine of salvation (as you see) should be promulgated not by a mere man, but by God dwelling in human nature. We will now also shew that the very work of our salvation required this indwelling of God in our nature.

1. Because human nature being severed from God, and alienated from the life and communion of God through sin, is most suitably restored to the communion of God, and most firmly preserved in the same, by this mode. The Fathers commonly assign this reason. Iræneus, lib. 4. cap. 59, says, *How can the Ebionites be saved, if he be not God who wrought out their salvation upon earth? and how shall man pass over unto God, if God pass not over unto man?**

* Ebionites, the followers of Ebion, an Heresiarch of the first Century, who, though he rejected, with Cerinthus, that portion of the Gospel of St. Matthew containing an account of the miraculous conception, yet invented a modification of Cerinthus's error, that Christ was born of human parents in the ordinary way; but still considering him no more than a mere man. Against this heresy Iræneus particularly wrote: and in what a dangerous case he viewed those who imbibed the heresy, under any form, may be judged from the quotation adduced above. Dr. Priestley attempted to set aside the force of Iræneus's testimony against it; with what grounds for his

Athanasius, Orat. 3, says, *Unless Christ be the real Son of God, man is not firmly united to God: For what a mere man hath received may be lost, as was the case with Adam. Therefore, that grace and the gift might remain firm, God assumed our nature; that thereby all spiritual good might be delivered to us in firm possession.* Cyril, De Incarn. Verbi, cap. 1, says, *The Word was made man, that in him, and in him alone, the nature of man being crowned with the endowments of innocence, might be enriched with the Holy Spirit, not to depart now, as was the case with Adam, but to remain therein.*

2. God chose to dwell in our nature, that thereby we might be sure that all his merits pertained to us as brethren and co-heirs. So says Athanasius; *The Son of God took our nature upon him, that henceforth we, being constituted of earth only, should not come to the earth; but being joined to heaven by the Word, should be conducted to heaven by him.* Fulgentius observes, *God hath saved that in us which he assumed for us; and made that nature a partaker of salvation, which he joined to his own;* ad Thrasimund, lib. 1.*

efforts let the Reader decide from Dr. Burton's Bampton Lectures, lect. 7, and from his "Testimonies of the Ante Nicene Fathers." Horseley's Tracts against Priestley may also be well referred to; and Townsend's New Testament Harmony, in his Notes on the commencement of St. John's Gospel.

* Fulgentius was an ecclesiastical writer of some eminence in the early part of the sixth century, and equally deserving of notice for his distinguished humility and piety. Du Pin gives an interesting account of his parentage, the remarkable events of his early years, the distinctions he gained, and his singular self-denial and devotedness to a religious life; his being made Bishop of Ruspa, and brought under the notice of Thrasimond, King of the Vandals, at whose instigation he wrote a Treatise in three books against the Arian heresy, from which the above quotation is probably derived. Through the influence of the Arians, Fulgentius, with all the other Catholic Bishops of Africa, was banished into Sardinia; and in that retirement he wrote several other pieces, the orthodox sentiments maintained in which, as well as in the afore-mentioned, as reported by Du Pin, are deserving the consideration of all who regard such sentiments when held and enforced in the present day to be novelties. On Thrasimond's death, Fulgentius and his companions in exile were recalled by his successor, on which he returned to his Bishopric, and spent his remaining years in the duties thereof as an exemplar of all that was excellent, dying in the year 533.

3. It behoved the Divine nature to be joined with the human, that men might have access to God with confidence, and that Divine grace might have a channel by which it should be derived to men. For since God assumed a nature allied to, and consubstantial with us, we can approach him with boldness; *For no man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*, Ephes. v. 29. We can also draw grace from this our mystical Head, as the members of the natural body receive sense and motion from the natural head.

All the fulness of the Godhead.] That is, not some portion of the Divinity, which the Gentiles had an erroneous persuasion of concerning their false gods; neither excellent endowments of Divine grace and munificence only, which are common to angels, and prophets, and other holy men: but the Λόγος itself—true and perfect God, with all his Divine attributes, namely, infinite wisdom, power, goodness, dwells in this human nature of Christ. And the Apostle seems to allude to the ark of the covenant: for God promised that he would dwell there, hear them from thence, and be propitious to them: and, furthermore, the Apostle intimates, that the ark and the propitiatory, or mercy-seat, were types of Christ, and that the Deity dwelt in a much more excellent way in his human nature, than he did formerly in the tabernacle, concerning which it is written, Exod. xxix. 44, 45, *I will sanctify the tabernacle of the testimony, and I will dwell among the children of Israel*, &c. As, therefore, the Jews, who had an appointed place whence God uttered his oracles, and made known his will, could not, without sin, enquire elsewhere about things pertaining to God; so we, who have the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in the body of Christ, cannot seek either the will of God or our salvation elsewhere, without the greatest folly and impiety.

Hence we learn,

1. As often as seducers endeavour to lead us away from the Gospel and from Christ, to their traditions and inventions, we must seriously reflect what kind of Saviour and Teacher Christ Jesus was; viz. one in whom dwelt *all the*

fulness of the Godhead; and it is the height of madness to require new teachers after him.

2. Whoever, therefore, wanders out of Christ, or mixes any other thing with his doctrine as necessary to salvation, he accuses Christ of imperfection, and denies the fact that *all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him*.

3. This we observe in the Turks and Jews, who are not content with the Gospel doctrine, because they do not believe that *all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him* who proclaimed the Gospel. As to Papists, who, being fascinated with novel and marvellous error, acknowledge that *all the fulness of the Godhead is in Christ*, yet deny that all the fulness of salvation is contained in his doctrine, I know not what to say.

Before we proceed to the *mode* of this indwelling, let us briefly resolve a doubt which may arise in the mind of some, from the Apostle's words. For when he asserts that all the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ, he seems to say that the entire essence of the Deity assumed to itself this habitation of the flesh of Christ, and, therefore, that not only the Son, i. e. the second person in the Trinity, but the Father also, and the Spirit, were incarnate.

The Samosatensians,* who deny a Trinity of persons, think that they can drive us to this difficulty, viz. that if we affirm a Trinity, we shall be also compelled to admit that the three Persons were incarnate, because the fulness of the Godhead, i. e. the entire and perfect Divine essence, dwelt in Christ incarnate.

* Samosatensians, or Paulianists, so named from Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch in the latter part of the third century. These heretics maintained that the Son and Holy Ghost exist in God as the faculties of reason and activity in men; that Christ was born a mere man; but the Reason of the Father descending into him caused him to be called the Son of God, and did by him work miracles and instruct the people. Alas! how many Heretics of this cast, or of the grades mentioned in the two preceding Notes, exist among us and distract the Church in the present day. The theological Student, however, would do well to ascertain the way in which these heresies were met at the time of their first rise, by consulting Dr. Burton's invaluable work before referred to, "The Testimonies of the Ante-Nicene Fathers to the Divinity of Christ."

I answer, that the whole Divine nature was incarnate, not because it is incarnate in all the Persons, but because none of the perfection of the Divine nature is wanting to the Person of the Son. For since the Divine nature, or essence, is spiritual, it can neither be supposed nor allowed to have parts; but wherever the Divine nature is found, there it is found entire and perfect. The whole Divine nature, therefore, was incarnate, but not as considered absolutely and in itself common to all the Persons, but as it is considered in its personal properties, or mode of being, limited in the person of the Son. *God entire, is one person*, says Luther, tom. 2.

But against this, that saying of Augustine, in Enchir. cap. 38, is urged; *The works of the Trinity are indivisible*: therefore, if the second person assumed and adapted the human nature to himself for a dwelling, then both the Father and the Holy Spirit did the same, and, by consequence, not the Son alone, but the three persons are incarnate.

I answer, to assume flesh imports two things: the act itself, or the uniting of this flesh; and the end of this act, viz. the person to whom this flesh is united and adapted. As regards the act, it is common to the three persons; for the Father and the Holy Spirit jointly effected the incarnation of Christ. But as regards the end, it is peculiar to the Son alone. As, for instance, if a father gives a wife to his son, but the son himself marries her, both are rightly said to have contracted the marriage; yet with this difference, that the father married the bride to the son, and the son married her to himself; so, in the incarnation of Christ, both effected this conjunction of the human nature with the Divine; but yet so, that God the Father joined this flesh to his Son, the Son took it to himself. As, therefore, in the former example, not the father, but the son is said to be married, although the will and the action of both concurred in choosing and taking that wife: so in this latter, not the Father, but the Son only is said to be incarnate, although both concurred in creating and uniting this body. And what is affirmed respecting the

Father, must also be understood of the Holy Spirit. It would be easy to shew this from the Scriptures. For *the Word* alone is said *to be made flesh*, i. e. to be incarnate, John i. Yet the work of incarnation is ascribed to the whole Trinity: to the Father, who is said *to have prepared this his salvation*, Luke ii. 31, and Heb. x. 5: to the Son himself, who is said to have taken the seed of Abraham, Heb. ii. 16: and, lastly, to the Holy Spirit, who in the conception of Christ, is said to have *overshadowed the Virgin*, Luke i. 35. Thus far concerning the dwelling, viz. the human nature of Christ; and the inhabitant, viz. the *Logos*, or the Son of God: Now let us enquire about the *mode* of inhabiting.

Bodily, σωματικῶς.] Because God is said to be present with his creatures in many ways, the Apostle shews that he dwelt in the human nature of Christ in a certain special manner. For God, by his universal presence, is at hand with all things, so as to preserve and uphold them; he is, moreover, present with the saints and faithful by the special efficacy of his Spirit, so as to sanctify and enrich them with the endowments of his grace: but God is not only present in these ways with the human nature of Christ, the fulness of the Godhead besides, i. e. the *Λόγος*, the full, true, and perfect God, dwelt in it bodily; not that the spiritual and incorporeal nature of the Word is changed (for that is immutable), but that the manner of existing was new, although the nature of the Word existing remained the same. By *bodily*, therefore, we ought to understand *personally*; i. e. not by efficacy or assistance alone, but by hypostatical union: so that the *Logos* inhabiting or assuming, and the nature inhabited or assumed, should be one person, or one *ὑφίσταμενον*, *one substance*. Whence it happens that the Word is declared incarnate; and *that man is not a mere man*, sanctified and upheld by the Divine Spirit, but *the God-man*. This Augustine briefly and perspicuously explains in these words, *God took the temporal substance of the flesh into the Eternal person of the Divinity*. What is *he took it in person*, but that he united it personally to himself, so that what is assumed becomes one with the person assum-

ing? In this place, then, *to dwell bodily*, is nothing else than to join to himself *personally*.

Neither should it seem a strange interpretation, when we explain this word *σωματικῶς, υποστατικῶς, bodily, personally*: for as the Hebrews put *souls* for *persons* (Gen. xiv. 21, *Give me the souls, and take the goods to thyself*; Acts vii. 14, *Jacob with three score and fifteen souls went down into Egypt*. And Ezek. xviii. 20, *The soul which sinneth it shall die*; i. e. the person) so, among the Greeks, *σῶμα* signifies *person*. Thucydides, lib. 1, says, *many poor persons are more ready σωμασιν ἢ χρημασι πολεμεῖν*, i. e. *to go to war in their own persons, (as they say) than to contribute money for the war*. So Demosthenes said, *σωμάτων καὶ χρημάτων πλοῦτος*, abundance of bodies, i. e. of *men, or persons*, was on the side of the Athenians, when he wished to excite them to war. And so this word is used in the well-known epigram,

Σώματα πολλὰ τρέφειν, καὶ δώματα πολλὰ ἀνεγείρειν, &c. to nourish many bodies, and raise up many houses, &c.

The Apostle, therefore, when he says that the Godhead *dwells* in Christ *bodily*, means, that the eternal Son of God united the human nature to himself, so that the person of the Word, which subsisted in the Divine nature alone, now also subsists in the human nature, and imparts personality to it, which the human nature possessed not in itself. There are not, therefore, two persons in Christ, one of man, and the other of the Son of God; but the Divine nature is so united to the human, that it subsists in it *σωματικῶς*, i. e. *σεσαρκῶμενος καὶ ὑποστατικῶς, incarnate and personally*. Hence the sacred Scriptures call the Son of Mary *the Son of the Highest*, Luke i. 32; and it is affirmed, verse 35, *that Holy thing which was born of Mary, was the Son of God*. On account of this personal union, *the Branch of David* is called *Jehovah*, Jerem. xxiii. 5, 6; and *the blessed God*, Rom. ix. 5. Hence Hugo de St. Victor, Erud. theol. de Verb. incarn. collat. 2, says, *The Son of God did not take the person man, but took man into the person*. The personal Word assumed man; not a person, but the nature. It is said he assumed man, because a human soul and body were assumed. It is not said that he assumed the person of man

(or a human person), because that soul and body which he assumed, were not previously united together personally, but they derive their personality from the Word dwelling bodily in that human nature.

And this may suffice as to the mode of this hypostatical union; for the human mind is not able to fathom the whole depth of this mystery. If any doubt remain, *Apply faith*, as Justin Martyr speaks, *which will render the solution easy*. Piously and modestly does Chrysostom remark on this matter: *I know that the Word was made flesh, but how he was made so I know not. Do you wonder because I know it not? Every creature is ignorant of it.* We are not, however, so entirely ignorant of the mode, but that we can, out of the Scripture, stop the mouths of heretics who deny it. Let us, therefore, briefly solve the objections which they are wont to allege against this personal union. And those objections are advanced either as to the Divine, or as to the human nature.

1. As to the Divine nature they object: The Son of God or the person of the *Logos*, was a perfect substance from all eternity: but nothing can be added to a perfect substance; therefore the human nature was not taken into personal union with the Word.

We answer, Nothing can be added *to the constitution* of the essence of a perfect substance; as to *communion* with its complete essence somewhat may be added. For although the hypostasis of the Word was perfect by reason of his *nature*, yet for the perfection of *the end*, which is to redeem the Church, there could, nay there must be something added to this perfect substance, namely, the human nature, in which the Son of God by his blood might purchase the Church to himself. But here we must beware not to think that the human nature is so added to the Divine hypostasis, as to be an equal part of it, by a mutual union constituting this hypostasis, but that it is *ενυποστατον*, i. e. *subsisting in the person*, not as an equal part, but as *an instrument pertaining to the unity of the hypostasis*, as Damascenus expresses it; or as a thing subsisting in its principal. And from this it appears how we should receive what is contend-

ed for by the Schoolmen, viz. that the hypostasis, or person of Christ was compounded after the incarnation. For this is asserted by them, not with respect to *parts*, as though the person of the Word were compounded of the human nature and the Divine, as of parts; but with respect to *number*, because *that* now subsists in two natures, which, before the incarnation, subsisted solely in the Divine. Thus Aquinas 3. part. qu. 2. art. 4, says, *The person of Christ is considered either according to what it is in itself, and so it is simple; or according to the natures in which it subsists, and so it is said to be compound, inasmuch as that simple person subsists in two natures.* Thus much as to the first objection.

2. It is objected, that to become incarnate, or to take to itself human nature, is to be changed: but the eternal Deity cannot be the subject of any change: therefore he could not become incarnate, and, therefore, he does not dwell *bodily* in the human nature of Christ.

We answer, That to be incarnate, as also to become man, occurred to the Word not by transmutation, but by union; which is a species of relation: but what is predicated anew of any subject relatively, does not, therefore, presuppose a change of the thing to which it is ascribed, but of the other which it connects with it. For instance; God, who was not a Creator from all eternity, became a Creator in time; but yet this new appellation does not imply a change in God, but in the creature, which is brought into being by God from nothing: So the Son of God, who was not man, neither incarnate from all eternity, is made man, and becomes incarnate; yet is not changed in himself, because a change takes place in the human nature which is assumed, and not in the Divine which assumes. The Son of God was not man, or incarnate, when he did not impart personality to the human nature; he is pronounced man, and incarnate, when he did impart personality to that nature; but this he did, not by changing his Divine nature, but by uniting this human nature to himself. To be made man, imports absolutely a real change in the subject acquiring human nature, as when man is made from the earth or seed; because here the subject which is made man loses

its former nature : but when the person of the Son of God is incarnate and made man, that is not understood to be done by transmutation, but (if it may be permitted to frame a word) by a new personation of human nature. And thus the Word was made flesh *substantially, not by conjunction*, yet without a change of his nature ; by creating and uniting the human nature to himself, not by changing the Divine nature.

With respect to the human nature, it is objected,

1. If the human nature of Christ subsists in the person of the *Logos*, not in its own proper personality, then the man Christ will be more imperfect than all other men : because all others have human personality, and are subjects existing in that nature ; Christ alone, in as far as he is man, hath not this personality, but subsists in the Divine person of the *Logos* by the hypostatic union.

I answer ; Proper personality is not wanting to the human nature, on account of the defect of any thing which is required to its perfection, but on account of the addition of something which far excels its nature, viz. its union to a Divine person. Christ, therefore, is not more imperfect, but more eminent than other men ; because our human nature subsists in us in its proper personality, but it subsists in Christ in that which is Divine ; and it is much more noble and honourable to subsist in God by hypostatic union than to subsist by itself. For if we say the sensitive part is more noble in man than in a brute, because it is joined to a more noble *form*, although in a brute the *form* is complete, and in man it is not, but is joined to what is complete : then, by parity of reason, the human nature is more worthy and more excellent in Christ, on account of its union with the Divinity, than in us, although in us it subsists in proper personality, in Christ otherwise.

2. It is objected, If the human nature of Christ subsists in the person of the *Logos*, then he hath two personalities : for since *a person is an individual substance of a rational nature* (according to the definition of Boethius) and Christ, in as far as he is man, is a single rational being ; it

follows that there are two persons in Christ; and so we fall again into the Nestorian heresy.

I answer; For personality more is required than to be constituted an individual or single being: for a person supposes not only a singular and rational substance, but, moreover, one existing by itself, and not joined to another more worthy. We, therefore, admit that the human nature of Christ, or Christ as far as he is man, is an individual or singular; but we deny that he is a person. And the reason is obvious; because in the moment in which the soul of Christ was created, and his flesh conceived, in that same moment they were united to the Divinity. If they had existed apart from the Logos, they would have had their own personality: but because they began to exist together, and to be united to the Word at the same time, there was a necessity that this human nature should draw its personality from the Word. For any thing is called a person from what it hath of the greatest excellence: Since, therefore, the Divinity is incomparably more excellent than the humanity, the human nature deservedly takes its personality from thence.*

* It may be permitted the Translator to observe here, that Pope Gelasius, the fiftieth Bishop of Rome, in defending the true doctrine of the Union of the two natures in one person, against the Eutychians, employed an argument which, whilst establishing the truth here contended for, at once overturns the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and proves that it was unknown to the Church up to his time—the close of the fifth century. The Eutychians were supposed to believe the human nature in Christ to have been, by its union with the Divinity, absorbed by, and transformed into the Divinity; so that Christ could not be said to have two Natures after the union. Against these, Gelasius undertakes to prove the *reality* of the two natures in Christ, notwithstanding the union; and he argues thus:—“ *The Sacraments of the Body and Blood of Christ, which we receive, are certainly a divine thing, and by them we are made partakers of the Divine nature; but yet THE SUBSTANCE OR NATURE OF BREAD AND WINE DO NOT CEASE TO BE IN THEM. Indeed, THE IMAGE and SIMILITUDE of the body and blood of Christ is celebrated in the mysterious action: we are, therefore, to believe the same thing in our Lord Christ, as we profess, celebrate, and take in his IMAGE, viz. That, as by the perfecting virtue of the Holy Ghost the elements pass into a Divine Substance, while their nature still remains in its own propriety; so in that principal mystery (the union between the Divine and human natures), whose efficacy and power these represent, there remains one true*

3. It is objected; If the human nature of Christ be hypostatically united to the Divine, then each is united with the other entirely; because it is without parts: but if this be granted it follows, that wherever the Divine nature is, there is also the human; and so we pass into the camp of the Ubiquitarians.

We answer; the consequence is denied; because it is a personal union with the properties of both natures preserved. Since, therefore, it is a property of the human nature to be circumscribed by certain limits; it loses not this property by virtue of this union to the infinite nature. For as the natures united are not analogous, they are not made so by the personal union; since the union only joins together, but does not change the natures. Since, therefore, the finite nature and the infinite are not analogous, the Divine is not circumscribed by this personal union, nor the human extended to the infinite. We, therefore, confess, that the human nature is inseparably and indivisibly united to the Divine, and that the Divine is in no place separated from the human: not that the humanity is in all places where the Divinity is, by local position; but that by a real and hypostatical union it is joined to the Divinity wherever existing. The union, or conjunction, is circumscribed by no distance of place, because it consists in this, that the Deity sustains the humanity as its own and peculiar pro-

and perfect Christ; and both natures, of which he consists, remain in their properties unchangeable.—We may well unite, in the words of Bower, who gives us this Specimen of the Theology of the early part of the Church, in his life of Gelasius, “He must be quite blind, who does not see that the whole strength of the Pope’s argument rests upon this, That the bread and wine in the Eucharist retain the nature and substance of the bread and wine, notwithstanding their sacramental union with the body and blood of Christ. This he does not prove, but supposes as a truth, not questioned either by the *Eutychians* or the Catholics, and from thence argues the human nature in Christ, to retain, in the same manner, its own substance, though united with the Divinity. Should we suppose the bread and wine in the Eucharist to be changed into the body and blood of Christ, this argument had been of no force against the *Eutychians*, but might have been by them unanswerably retorted against the Catholics.” See also ‘The History of Transubstantiation by Bishop Cosins, 1657, in which Treatise the above passage from Gelasius is adduced in Cap. 5. This fact has given much exercise to the Jesuitic screw of Roman criticism.

perty, and yields subsistence to it; and thus the Word, omnipresent in heaven, earth, and every where, sustains the humanity existing in the heavens alone: But the actual position of the body of Christ is included in certain space, because the nature of a body requires it. Some illustrate this by the example of the Sun and the solar Sphere. For as the Sun is inseparably united to its orb, yet the property of the sphere, to be in East and West at the same time, does not accord to the globe of the sun; so the humanity is inseparably united to the Divinity, but will not be, on that account, wherever the Divinity is. But some perhaps may say, that the sun is not united to his orb as a whole, but as a part only; but humanity is united to the entire Word. We acknowledge a dissimilarity of the similitude in this respect; but it tends more to confirm our opinion. For every spiritual nature, wherever it is, is a whole; because it is without parts, or indivisible, and its entireness is considered in the perfection of its essence, not in the extension of quantity. The Word, therefore, as far as it is a spiritual substance, is whole, and entirely in the human nature united to it, for it cannot be detached from it: and the same Word, as far as it is an infinite substance, is equally whole and entire without the human nature, for its immensity cannot be included in such narrow limits: But whether considered in the body united to itself, or out of the human nature of Christ, it no where exists disunited from the human nature, because every where it sustains it as its own.

Verse 10.

And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.

That we must adhere to Christ and his doctrine alone, is concluded in the foregoing verse from the infinite perfection of Christ; which neither requires nor admits any additions of philosophy, or traditions, or ceremonies. The Apostle now shews that same thing by two other arguments.

The first is drawn from the effect; *Ye are complete, or consummate, or perfect in him*; i. e. Christ himself is not only perfect in himself, inasmuch as *in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead*; but he brings it to pass that we are *complete* through him, namely, having all things in him, and his doctrine, which are necessary to our salvation: Therefore it is not needful to seek salvation apart from Christ and the Gospel.

The second is taken from the office of Christ. Christ is *the head*, not only of men, but of angels also; by him, therefore, both men and angels have their perfection. Men ought not to seek or expect salvation from angels, but both should depend upon Christ, who is *the head* of both. Now let us examine these reasons separately.

And ye are complete in him.] Two things are here to be noticed: 1. What it is to be *complete*, or in what things our completeness, consummation, or perfection consist. 2. How this perfection may be obtained or held by us; which the Apostle intimates when he says, *in him*.

As to the first; *To be complete* is nothing else than to be furnished with all things necessary to salvation: which we may severally refer to these three heads; 1. perfect wisdom, or saving knowledge: 2. righteousness: 3. sanctification: possessing which things in this life, happiness and glory will follow in the life to come.

1. In Christ we have perfect wisdom; because by the right knowledge of him, according to the doctrine of the Gospel, what is sufficient to salvation is known: *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*, John xvii 3. Hence the Apostle (1 Cor. ii. 2) desired *to know nothing but Christ and him crucified*. For that which is full admits nothing beyond. Hence the mind filled with Evangelical knowledge, desires not any new knowledge in order to salvation; because this is consummate, full, and perfect doctrine. *I admire the fulness of Scripture*, says Tertullian, *adversus Hermogenem*. HEAR HIM! *I will hear thoroughly; nor will I hear any one besides Him*, says Hilary, *De Trinit.* 6.*

2. In Christ we have complete righteousness; because he has fully satisfied both the Divine law, and even God himself for our sins: according to that declaration of Isaiah (liii. 11) *By the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities*; and of the Apostle, Rom. iii. 22, *The righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ is unto all and upon all them that believe*; and Rom. x. 4, *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*. In this respect, therefore, principally, we are *complete*, because being destitute of any righteousness of our own, Christ enriches and adorns us with his. Chrysostom, Hom. 17. in 10 ad Rom. observes, *That if thou shalt believe in Christ, thou hast both fulfilled the law, and much more than the things which it had commanded; forasmuch as thou hast truly received much greater righteous-*

* Hilary, a Christian prelate of the fourth century, one of the early fathers of the Church, born at Poitiers, of which city, after his conversion from heathenism, he eventually became the Bishop in 355. His zeal in favour of the Athanasian doctrine respecting the Trinity, which he defended with much energy at Beziers, drew on him the persecution of the Arian party, with Saturninus at its head, who prevailed on the Emperor Constantius to exile him into Phrygia. After four years spent in banishment, he was permitted to return to his See, where he occupied himself in committing the arguments for his side of the question to writing, and produced a work on the Trinity in 12 books, which has been much celebrated. He continued to distinguish himself as an active servant of the Church till his death, in 367.

ness. More briefly and explicitly says Bernard, Serm. ad milit. temp. 11, *Death is put to flight by the death of Christ ; and the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us ;* and Epist. 190, *The righteousness of another is assigned to man, because he had none of his own.* We have saving righteousness, therefore, in Christ.

3. In Christ we have sanctification, or indwelling righteousness. For what else is sanctification than a cleansing from sins and iniquities, whereby we were separated far from God ; and a reception of gifts and graces, whereby we are brought nigh to him to serve him ? Truly it is now manifest, that we are daily both cleansed from the pollution of our sins, and adorned and enriched with all the fulness of Divine gifts, so far as, being united to Christ, we are quickened by his Spirit ; by whose efficacy the remains of the flesh are mortified, the image of holiness is restored, and our life is directed towards the attainment of happiness. Whence this Spirit is called *the Spirit of holiness*, Rom. i. 4. No one hath Christ, but he hath together with him, this Spirit of Christ ; the Apostle affirming, *If any one hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9. No one hath this Spirit but he is strengthened by his aid to serve God in good works, to resist the world and the lusts of the flesh. For as the needle, being touched by the magnet, turns itself to the arctic pole ; so the human heart being touched and quickened by this Spirit of Christ, turns itself to God and the commands of God, and rests in them.

Ye now perceive how much the Apostle comprehends in saying that we *are complete* in Christ : for by this one word he shews that we have in Christ whatever is required for saving knowledge, justification, and sanctification : And by the same means he crushes all the errors of false Apostles : For if we have complete wisdom in Christ, there is no need of philosophical additions ; if complete righteousness, there is no need of legal ceremonies ; if sanctification, there is as little need of angels for purifiers or enlighteners of our souls. Ye observe in what things this

completeness consists ; let us enquire how it is obtained and held.

In him.] We are declared to be complete not *from him*, or *by him* only, but *in him* : that we may understand that we have that aforesaid wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, not as far as we look to Christ, as though he were distant from us ; but as far as we are incorporated into Christ, as far as we have Christ dwelling and abiding in us. For although it is most certain, that all the fulness of the Godhead and of saving grace is in Christ, so that he is like a copious fountain whence abundance of living water flows, yet this is the difference between him, the spiritual fountain, and a natural one : There is no necessity that they who wish to drink of a fountain should enter the fountain itself ; because, standing without that, they may draw from thence to quench their thirst : but it is not so with Christ, who is the fountain of grace and righteousness to us, for we cannot receive of his fulness unless we are in him. For, as the old Adam in us is the cause of corruption and death ; so this new Adam dwelling in us is the cause of righteousness and salvation. And it is the same whether we affirm that Christ dwells in us, or that we dwell in Christ ; for these are united : *John xv. 4, 5, Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine ; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches : he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.* Whatever, therefore, men hope concerning grace, righteousness, and sanctification, for obtaining eternal life and glory, it will be found mere dreaming and delusion, if they are not in Christ, and Christ in them. And, indeed, Christ is in us, and we are in him, when, by the power of the Spirit, and of faith wrought in our hearts by the Spirit, we are united to this our Head, and are grafted in him as branches in the vine. Concerning the Spirit, the Apostle, *Rom. viii. 9, declares, If any one have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Concerning faith, it is said, *John iii. 36, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life ; because life*

is in this Sou, 1 John v. 11. Upon this Durandus well observes, lib. 4. qu. 8. dist. 1, *No one can be justified unless through union with Christ; but the first union with Christ is through the Spirit.* And Cyprian, *De cardin. oper. Christi; By faith, not contact, we are joined to the Spouse.*

Thus we have explained these two things: what it is to be complete; and that no one is complete or perfected by Christ, but he who is in Christ. Let us deduce some instruction thence.

1. Since we have complete justification in Christ, it is plain they know not Christ, or at least treat him with contumely, who, not contented with him, seek higher righteousness and perfection in their own works and inventions. From this error flowed the superstition of the Monks, and presumption about the merit of works.

2. All the godly derive great consolation on account of their being complete in Christ: For when they regard themselves, they find that many corruptions still lie concealed within them; that in many things they daily fall and sin; but that, notwithstanding these things, they are acceptable to God, they are justified before God, because they are united to Christ by faith and the Spirit: *There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. viii. 1.

3. The wicked and unbelieving are excluded from the benefits of Christ, because they are separated from Christ himself, inasmuch as they are void of the Spirit and of faith, without which no one is in Christ, and Christ abideth in no one. And thus much for the first reason derived from the effect: I proceed to the other.

Which is the head of all principality and power.] This argument is drawn from the office of Christ, and his prerogative above all angels, whom the Apostle intends under the words *principality and power*, as in the 16th verse of the preceding Chapter. The false apostles threw out many things respecting these angelic principalities and powers: The Apostle, therefore, inculcates that Christ is not only *the Head* of the Church with respect to men, but of the angels also; and that men and angels are the fellow-ser-

vants of this our Lord Jesus Christ. Whether, therefore, we consider the angels in reference to Christ, or in reference to ourselves, from either consideration the doctrine of the false Apostles is overturned. For they taught, 1. That angels are to be worshipped; 2. That by them access to God is opened for us; 3. That by them we derive spiritual blessings.

1. Now, that the angels are not to be worshipped, is evident from their relation to Christ: because worship is due to God alone; but the angels are not only inferior to God, but even to Christ as man, inasmuch as he is *the Head* and Lord of all angels. Hence, Heb. i. 6, it is said, *When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels worship him.* Hence we perceive that the angels are nothing more than creatures, although lofty and noble; But *the Catholic Church directs that God alone is to be worshipped; it advises us that no creature is to be worshipped; says Augustin, De morib. Eccl. lib. 1. cap. 30.*

2. Hence also it is inferred, that the angels are not mediators between God and the human race: For if Christ be *the Head* of angels, then they cannot invade the office of Christ, nor make themselves equal to him in this respect. But *there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus: who is the Head, not the colleague of angels.*

3. Whereas the angels are, under Christ *the head*, united to the rest of the Church, we readily understand that saving grace, and those excellent gifts of faith, of love, and the like, are not impressed upon human souls by the power of angels, but of Christ himself. For the more noble members do not impart a vital stream to the inferior ones; but the head emits sense and motion equally to these as to the other.

All these things will be equally evident, if we consider the relation of angels to ourselves. For they are our brethren, and fellow-servants; they are members of one and the same Church; because the same Christ is *the head* both of men and angels.

1. If, then, they are our fellow-servants, and members of the Church together with us, they are not to be worship-

ped or adored by us, upon the confession of an angel himself; Rev. xxii. 8, 9, *I fell down*, says John, *to worship before the feet of the angel: but he said unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren: Worship God.* That saying of Augustine to this effect is well known; *We honour them by love, not servitude*, De vera relig. cap. 55. And that of Parisiensis, De legib. to the same purport; *The angels are to be honoured, but with honour due to the servant, not the lord.*

2. Whereas we and the angels are fellow-citizens, and members of the same body, it is inferred that angels are not mediators between us and God. For the whole Church is accepted of God on account of one and the same Mediator: but to attribute it to one member, that the rest are accepted on his account, is contrary to reason and the Scriptures. Whence says Augustine, Contr. Epist. Parm. lib. 2. cap. 8, that *he alone is a Mediator for whom no one interposes, but he himself for all.* And the Apostle, Rom. viii. 34, places the hope of our salvation in him, not because we have an angel our fellow-servant, but the Son of God seated at the right hand of the Father, an intercessor for us: *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

3. Since the angels are members of the same Church, it follows from this relation of angels to men, that faith, love, and holiness, are not gifts of the angels, but of Christ. For as in corporeal generation, one part does not form and frame another, but all are formed by one and the same power: so, *in spiritual regeneration*, as Albert properly observes, *our mind, in the formation of grace is not fashioned by the angels, but by the Spirit of Christ.** But here two things may be objected against what is said respecting Christ as the head of angels, and men as fellow-servants with the angels.

1. If Christ be the head of the angels, and angels be-

* It appears there were men worthy to be heard among the Papists, who could exalt Divine grace, and give the proper place to angels. Oh! si sic omnes. Vide p. 169, Note.

long to the body of the Church, then he is also the Saviour of the angels; for he is *the Saviour of the body*, Ephes. v. 23: But the angels need not the benefit of a Saviour or Mediator; therefore it does not seem that Christ is the head of angels, as to this procuring of salvation and eternal happiness.

I answer; the angels had no need of Christ as a Saviour to deliver them from sins committed, for they stood steadfast in obedience to God; neither did they need the favour of a Mediator to snatch them from a state of wrath, for they never had God for their enemy: but they needed Christ the Saviour, they needed the favour of Christ the Mediator, that they might retain fixed their condition in righteousness, that they might have sure and inviolable peace with God, that they might be accounted worthy of the eternal and glorious fruition of God; which beatific vision of God surpasses the nature and desert of any creature. This Augustine intimates, *De fide ad Petrum d'ac. cap. 23*; *This very thing*, says he, *that the holy angels can by no means be changed from that state of happiness in which they are fixed to a lower, is not naturally implanted in them: but after they were created, they were placed in it by the bounty of Divine grace.* But grace is bestowed on no creature except through the Mediation of Christ, who is the channel of grace. Here seems to apply the Apostle in 1 Tim. v. 21, in calling the blessed angels *the elect angels*. But election, whether of men or angels, shews that the salvation of those who are elected is to be attributed alone to God in Christ. For this also Christ is said, as in Ephes. i. 10, *ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι*, *to have gathered all things together*; and in Colossians i. 20, *αποκαταλλάξαι*, *to have reconciled all things to God the Father, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.* The most learned interpreters expound each of these texts to relate to this benefit of Christ the head which is derived to the angels: and although that word *to reconcile*, in its proper and primary signification, cannot apply to the angels, yet in its broader and analogical application, they have shewn that it may be extended even to them. In which they follow Bernard, who, in Serm.

22, in Cantica, after he had proved that *Christ was made to men, as he had been before to the angels, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*, objects as to the angels in this manner, *How there could have been redemption for the angels I do not see: for Scripture does not teach us that they were captives through sin, or obnoxious to death so as to render redemption necessary to them.* He then answers, *He who raised fallen man, granted to the standing angel that he should not fall; thus delivering the one out of captivity as he defended the other from captivity: And on this ground there was redemption to both, liberating the one, and preserving the other.* From these considerations, therefore, the first objection is done away, and it is proved that Christ is truly called *the head of the angels*, not only by reason of his ruling power; but on the score of saving grace, although the angels never were in a condition of sin and condemnation.

2. Since because Christ is *the head* of the angels, we affirm that the angels are our fellow-servants, not mediators, or dispensers of grace; it is objected that we rob the angels of their dignity, and snatch from them the ministry delegated to them by God: for they are *ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation*, Heb. i. 14. And in Psalm civ. 4, it is said, *He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.* By which terms they suppose that some angelic virtue for the illumination of the human mind, and for exciting the will to the love of God, is intended.

I answer; We confess that God employs the ministry of angels for many things; but especially in guarding the elect and promoting their spiritual safety. For as the bodily as well as the spiritual welfare of men is attacked by evil spirits; so it is clear from the Scriptures that in both respects we are defended and assisted by good angels. To omit examples which might be drawn from the old Testament; we read that the Apostles were brought out of prison by the ministry of angels, Acts v. 19, and xii. 17. And Christ himself impresses terror upon those who shall offend one of his little ones, by this argument, that they have angels assigned to them by God the Father, Matt. xviii. But as

to our souls, it may also be granted; because, although to pour the light of faith and the fire of love into human minds, is the prerogative of God; yet, as he employs the external ministry of men to enlighten the minds of the elect, and excite their wills to piety; so likewise he employs the invisible and internal ministry of angels. Whence the Schoolmen admit, that the angels cannot create or infuse, yet they can enkindle, and excite spiritual knowledge, good thoughts, and pious affections in the mind and will. And they say that this is done in a threefold manner: 1. by removing impediments, driving away evil spirits, and bad illusions; 2. by exciting and directing visions, by representing to the mind good thoughts; 3. by moving the passions duly in the sensitive appetite, in inclining the will to its proper office. But to what purpose do we urge so many of these things? That it may be understood that we do not disparage the office delegated to the angels by God, as to the *promotion* of the salvation of the elect: and that it may also be understood, that the ministry of the angels in bringing about our salvation being admitted, yet they are not to be worshipped by us, but to be acknowledged for ministers of Christ, and our fellow servants, although somewhat more honourable. For the same Christ who is the head of the elect, is also *the head of all principality and power*, i. e. of all angels. Therefore, as we are not to worship with religious adoration, either earthly kings or ministers of the word, although those protect our goods and our bodies by their external rule, and these direct our souls in the way of salvation by their ministry: so neither ought we to worship the angels, although they render the same offices in a secret and invisible manner. But there will be occasion to treat concerning the worship of angels when we come to the 18th verse; now let it suffice that we hold ourselves *complete in Christ, who is the head of all principality and power*.

Verse 11.

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.

Hitherto the perfection of Christ having been the subject of consideration, the Apostle taught in general that there was no need for the additions of the seducers: Here he withstands those particularly who imposed the Judaical ceremonies upon Christians. Now, among the Mosaic rites, circumcision held the primary place; because by submitting to this, men bound themselves to observe the rest, Gal. v. 3, *I testify to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.* Therefore this being done away, it follows that Christians are also delivered from all the rest. On this account, then, he insists on circumcision, since it is his intention to shew, and to conclude, that all the Mosaic rites are now abrogated. And this verse is so connected with the foregoing, that it aptly meets the objection which those teachers of the ceremonies doubtless urged. For the Apostle had affirmed in the preceding verse, that Christians are *complete in Christ*; 'But, nay,' says some Jewish doctor, 'you are mistaken, Paul, and you would endeavour to mislead Christians: they are not yet complete, because they are not yet circumcised: and without circumcision they are not accounted the holy people of God, they are not received into the covenant which was entered into with Abraham and his posterity.' Therefore that he might crush this objection, after that he had stated that we *are complete in Christ*, he subjoins, *In whom also ye are circumcised.*

With respect to the interpretation of the words; those alone seem to contain any difficulty, *in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh.* Beza translates them thus, corpore

peccatis carnis exuto, *the body of the flesh being freed from sins.* He, therefore, takes the word *body* properly, and says, this our body is freed from the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. But Erasmus, and almost all other interpreters thus; *whilst ye have put off the body of the sins of the flesh; or, in the putting away of the body of the sins of the flesh.* They, therefore, take the word *body* metaphorically, for that mass of native corruption in which we are involved: and they think the word *flesh* is added that he might signify whence that body of sins hath its origin and motion; namely, from carnal generation, and from the carnal part of man, that is to say, from that part which is not yet regenerated. This interpretation, as it is less forced, I rather embrace: which the Apostle himself elsewhere favours; Rom. vi. 6, *that the body of sin might be destroyed;* so likewise in the 3d Chapter of this Epist. ver. 5, he calls particular sins, *members.* He, therefore, seems to use the same metaphor in this place also.

Let us dismiss words, and proceed to the point. The argument of the Apostle is this, They who now have circumcision, even that which is more excellent than the Mosaic, are not to be compelled to the latter: but Christians are circumcised with a circumcision far more excellent and efficacious, &c. This he shews in a threefold manner; 1. From the Author of our circumcision: They were formerly circumcised by Moses, or by other men inferior to Moses; but we are circumcised *in Christ, or by Christ:* for *in* and *by* have the same meaning. 2. From the mode of the Jewish circumcision and of ours: *they* had a circumcision made by hand; *we, the circumcision of Christ.* What is this? An inward circumcision wrought by the Spirit of Christ. These two clauses are, therefore, to be joined, *the circumcision made without hands, and the circumcision of Christ;* and both are to be referred to the mode of our circumcision. 3. From the different effect: the Jewish circumcision cut off the foreskin of the flesh; ours, the whole *body of sin.*

In whom also ye are circumcised.] The Apostle lays a stress upon it, to teach the Colossians they had no need of

the Mosaic circumcision. The reason is drawn from the excellence of our circumcision, which he shews first from its Author: *in Christ*, i. e. by Christ, or by the efficacy and virtue of Christ, *ye are circumcised*; in vain, therefore, would ye receive the Mosaic circumcision. The force of this argument is clear, if we recal what has been said by the Apostle about Christ. For he has extolled Christ as the only begotten of God, the Head of the Church, the storehouse of grace, and, finally, as enriched with the fulness of the Godhead itself: it would, therefore, tend to bring reproach upon Christ, if any one being circumcised by him, should desire to be circumcised by any one else; for the desire of another indicates that there was some defect in the circumcision of Christ himself. For as it would be both injurious to himself and to his king, should any one, being adorned with the dignity of a knight by the king himself, desire to receive the same honour after another manner by some inferior minister: so he who is circumcised by Christ, our King and Lord, proceeds to diminish his majesty, if in this same thing he should desire the ministry of another. Thus much concerning the Author: I pass on to the manner.

With the circumcision made without hands, by the circumcision of Christ.] I unite these, because both may be referred to the manner of this circumcision which we have obtained in Christ, or by Christ. For it might be said, that Christ circumcised no one. Nay, says the Apostle, we are circumcised in him. But in what way? *With the circumcision made without hands*, i. e. not bodily and sensibly; but *with the circumcision of Christ*, i. e. spiritually, inwardly, and invisibly, such as it behoves us to expect from our heavenly Priest. The mode of this circumcision is described then, 1. Negatively: It is *not wrought manually*, for it is *made without hands*. By this he opposes the Mosaic circumcision, which consisted in an external operation administered by the hands of men. 2. It is also described positively; since it is called *the circumcision of Christ*, i. e. a certain internal circumcision effected by the power of the Spirit of Christ himself. And by this it is far preferred to

the Mosaic circumcision : which, if it be compared to this, is plainly a thing of no worth, Rom. ii. 28, and Phil. iii. 3. But here it is to be observed by the way ; that the Apostle, when he disputes about circumcision and the other Mosaic rites, speaks of them, for the most part, as they are considered in themselves, apart from Christ, and not related to Gospel grace ; because they were so urged by the false apostles with whom he disputed. For they sought righteousness and sanctification in the ceremonies themselves, neither did they acknowledge that there was concealed in them the shadows of Christ to come ; on that account they would not allow them to be abrogated by the advent of Christ : The Apostle, on the contrary, argues, We have that spiritual circumcision which the bodily one shadowed forth ; therefore, that ought now to cease, lest, while we would retain the shadow, we deny that the body itself is come.

It is objected, The Apostle's reason does not seem solid : for he thus concludes, Ye are circumcised with the circumcision *made without hands*, therefore ye need not that which is made with hands : Any one from among those teachers of the ceremonies might rejoin, Nay, we need both : for Abraham was circumcised in heart by faith and the Spirit, yet he did not decline to undergo external circumcision besides.

We answer ; The case is not the same. For Abraham by virtue of the Divine command was bound to corporeal circumcision ; Christians are not bound : Abraham by submitting to this sign declared and confirmed his faith concerning Christ, to be born of his seed, free from all sin ; but we do not look for Christ to be born, but believe that he is born : finally, Abraham had no other sign of the covenant entered into with God ; we have, namely, baptism, substituted by God himself in the place of circumcision. From what, then, has been said concerning the Author and the mode of our circumcision, we may derive some instructions.

1. Christ being taken away, there remains nothing in the sacraments but an empty shew, and a ceremony strip-

ped of all salutary efficacy: for Christ is the substance of the sacraments; the virtue and operation of Christ is the very life of the sacraments. That saying of the schools is, therefore, a sensible and sound one, *Sacraments represent by similitude; signify by institution; but sanctify by the virtue of Christ.*

2. If, as an outward administration of the sacraments is made by the hands of men, so an inward operation is wrought by the sole power of Christ; then it is vain to seek grace as though it were hidden in the signs themselves, or attached to the performance of them, i. e. to the outward administration of the sacraments: for it is to Christ alone, not to those external rites. Parisiensis has learnedly written on this matter in Tract de sacram. bapt. cap. 2, where he shews that the external solemnity of the visible signs is nothing more than a book, in which is read the virtue and grace which proceed from God himself. This Prosper also teaches in Epist. ad Demetriadem; *That which is visibly performed in the sacraments is one thing, what is invisibly celebrated is another: nor is the form in the sacrament the same thing with the virtue: since the form is applied by the assistance of a human ministry, but the virtue proceeds through the efficacy of a Divine work.* More succinctly does Cyprian state it, De bapt. *The Spirit alone imparts the reality of the sacrament to us.*

3. We must not glory because we are made partakers of the external sacrament, unless we obtain besides the internal and quickening work of Christ: for if this be wanting, as it was heretofore said to the Jews, Acts vii. 51, *O ye uncircumcised in heart*, so it may be justly said to us, *O ye unbaptized in heart.*

4. The external administration of the sacraments is not to be despised, although the quickening and saving effect is to be expected neither from the human ministry, nor from the external signs, but from the Spirit of Christ: because Christ concurs with his institution, nor wills us to seek that grace from him which he promised, if we despise the sacraments of grace which he has directed to be used by us.—And thus much concerning the mode or qua-

lity of the circumcision which we have in Christ; namely, that it is not outward and bodily; but inward and spiritual.

In putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, or in spoiling, &c.] The last thing which we proposed to be considered in the circumcision of Christ, was the remarkable effect of this circumcision, viz. *the putting away of the body of the sins of the flesh.* See how the spiritual circumcision which we have in Christ excels the bodily and manual circumcision! That external rite cut off a small portion of the body: this internal operation is wont to abolish the whole body of sin, not the body itself, or the flesh itself, but *the body of the sins of the flesh*, i. e. the mass of vices and sins which spring from the flesh, that is to say, from our inbred and original corruption, with which flesh the soul of every one is no less surrounded than with its natural flesh.

We have here, then, a brief and perspicuous description of inward, i. e. of true circumcision: It is a *putting off the old Adam with his deeds*, or the corrupt likeness derived to us from our parents, infected with sin; or, as Origen remarks in Epist. ad Rom. cap. 2. lib. 2, *It is the cleansing the soul, and casting away the vices.*

Neither is it to be wondered at that this spiritual circumcision should have a different effect from that corporeal one, since it has a different agent, and different instruments. For the Agent in this spiritual circumcision is our Lord God himself; Deut. xxx. 6, *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, that thou mayest live.* Behold the Agent, God; the effect, new motions in the heart itself, even spiritual life. But in corporeal circumcision the agents were men: Abraham circumcised Isaac the eighth day, Gen. xxi. 4; so Joshua circumcised the children of Israel, Josh. v. 3. But will you expect from men any thing beyond man? Yet further, the instruments also are far different: for men perform corporeal circumcision with corporeal instruments; according to what is said Josh. v. 2, *Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise the children of Israel:* But God circumcises the heart

with the sword of the Spirit and the word; for *the word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, &c.* Heb. iv. 12. It is quite reasonable, therefore, that the effect of this circumcision should be the putting away of the body of the sins of the flesh, i. e. the cleansing of the soul, not the impressing of a bodily sign.

Hence we learn,

1. That Christ is a Saviour not only by the merits of his passion, but also by the efficacy of his internal operation; for he has not only expiated our sins by his blood; but he hath renewed our hearts, and washes away the body of sins which cleave to our souls, by his Spirit.

2. Since this spoiling of the body of sins is the work of the Spirit of Christ, we ought not to resist this Spirit, but commit our whole selves to be renewed and directed by the same. The reins of the flesh are, therefore, not to be loosened, but we must walk in the Spirit. *Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh,* Gal. v. 16.

3. It is not sufficient for the Christian, as it were, to cut off one or other member of this body of corruption; but he must needs prune, strip off, and cast away the whole: for this spiritual circumcision does not pertain to one member only, but to all. Ears, tongues, eyes, heart, mind, in short, the whole man must be circumcised, because the whole is defiled by sin. Rightly says Parisiensis, *De virtut. cap. 22: He is not cleansed, except he hath renounced all sin. For who will call a man clean that rolls in one sewer only?*

But here a doubt arises concerning the effect of this internal circumcision: For it seems that that whole body of sins is not put away from regenerate Christians, as well because they perceive in themselves yet the motions and lusts of indwelling sin, as because Scripture commands the spiritually circumcised, i. e. the truly renewed, daily to mortify more and more the old Adam, to put off the old man, and to put on the new: Ephes. iv. 22, 24.

I answer; the whole body of sins is put away and abolished totally from all the regenerate, 1. As to its guilt; for *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. viii. 1. 2. As to its dominion; for as many as are in Christ Jesus are ruled not by the desires of sin, but by the Spirit of Christ: 3. As to the Sacrament itself of regeneration; for in it, not this or that, but all our sins are washed away and mortified sacramentally. In these modes, therefore, sin is deposed and abolished in this life. Yet, again, *sin* is not totally put away; 1. As to the nature of sin: whence that injunction of the Apostle, Rom. vi. 12, *Let not sin reign*; He does not say, *Let it not lie hid, let it not cleave*; but *let it not reign in your mortal body*. 2. It is not put away as to its motion and act: whence that saying of the Apostle, Rom. vii. 23, *I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind*. The act, therefore, of the laying aside of sin, or of natural corruption, if it be referred to the very nature of the thing, is not perfected in a moment, but is continued in all the godly until the last breath.

Verse 12.

Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

It has been proved in the foregoing verse, that circumcision is by no means necessary to Christians, inasmuch as they are circumcised in Christ with an inward and spiritual circumcision. But as yet room is left for doubt: for some one might perhaps say, The outward sign by which the minds of the godly may be confirmed and persuaded that they are truly made partakers of the spiritual benefits in Christ is wanting. The Apostle, therefore, shews, that

not even that is wanting; nay, that Christians have a more excellent and express sacrament than circumcision, viz. baptism; *Buried with him in baptism.*

Three things are to be noted, 1. The spiritual benefits which are received in baptism: viz. the burial of the old man, which we usually call mortification; the raising again of the new man, which we term vivification. 2. From what fountain these benefits flow, viz. from the death and resurrection of Christ; which is intimated in those words, *With him, in him, or by him.* 3. By what instrument these benefits are applied to us; viz. *by faith.*

Buried in baptism.] This burial of the body of sins, or of the old Adam, is signified in baptism, when the person to be baptised is let down into the water; like as the resurrection is when he is raised out: For in the ancient Church they not only sprinkled, but immersed in the water those whom they baptised.

But in what sense are we said to be *συνταφεντες, buried together?* For the natural body of Christ was truly buried, but is it to be thought that our bodies are buried in the same manner in the administration of baptism? The Apostle does not assert that: but, as Chrysostom has rightly observed in Rom. vi. *That which is done in Christ by nature, is understood to be done in us by analogy and comparison.* The body of sin, then, is buried, when its power is weakened, repressed, overwhelmed, and, as a corpse buried in the earth, can move no more and impel the man whithersoever it would, or hinder our salvation. And this is said to be done in baptism in a twofold respect:

1. In respect to Christ; in whom, when we are engrafted by baptism, the benefits of the death of Christ are conferred upon and sealed to us: but he being dead and buried, it is clear that our sins were also dead and buried with him; because *he bare them in his own body*, 1 Pet. ii. 24. This is what is urged by the Apostle in Rom. vi. 3, *As many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death.* In looking back, then, to the person of Christ our Head, our sins are rightly said to be indeed dead and buried in his death and burial; and we are said to be buried in bap-

tism as to the body of sin, because we are endowed with this benefit obtained through the death of Christ: and thence it comes to pass that our sins are not imputed to us, but are accounted as dead and buried.

2. Not only in the person of our Head, but even in our ourselves our sins are said to be buried in baptism: because that mortification and burial of sin is not only performed sacramentally in one moment in the act of baptism; but really also is carried on by the spirit of grace received in baptism, through the whole life of a Christian. For the case of bodily death and burial is different from that which is spiritual. The former hath no degrees, because it is pure privation; he, therefore, who is dead, cannot daily die more and more. But the latter is in process, not in act past: therefore it hath degrees, so that he who is dead to sin, may die more; he who is buried may be buried more, inasmuch as the work itself is to be perfected in man, although as to the sacramental representation and sealing of it it wanted nothing.

Ye are also risen.] This is the second effect of baptism, which is shadowed forth when the baptized person, after immersion in the water, is drawn out of it. But the Apostle, under this word *resurrection*, comprehends that new life which the regenerate began to live after they were dead and buried with Christ. And I call it new, because it hath both a new beginning, and new motions, or operations. The new beginning is not a soul living, but a spirit sanctifying; not desire innate, but grace imparted. The new fruits are, not those *works of the flesh*, Gal. v. 19, &c. *adulteries, strifes, envyings, murders, drunkenness, and the like*; but *love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, &c.* These two benefits are always linked and joined together. For as Christ himself did not abide in death, but rose again; so, by virtue of his death and resurrection, we not only die to sin, but also so rise again, that we *live unto righteousness*, 1 Pet. ii. 24. Thus it is in Rom. vi. 5, *If we have been planted together with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.*

Hence we may infer,

1. A Christian living in sin and serving his lusts, is a horrible sight, nay, is deemed a monster before God. For the dead to walk or move is plainly a prodigy: But a Christian either is, or ought to be, not only dead, but buried, as to the old man.

2. A Christian growing torpid in indolence, i. e. not bearing the fruits of righteousness, nor aiming at newness of life, although he abstain from acts of sin, yet shews that he is forgetful of his baptism. For baptism is *a covenant of a more pure life with God* :* care should, therefore, be taken, that what hath been once done in baptism sacramentally, should always be carried on in life really.

3. External washing cannot yield solid comfort to a Christian, unless he discovers besides, these internal effects of mortification and vivification. For baptism, considered as the mere washing of the body, conduces nothing to salvation, unless it is also made to us *the washing of regeneration*, Tit. iii. 5. For rightly said Cyprian, *De zelo, To put on the name of Christ, and not to proceed by the way of Christ, what else is it than a forgery of the Divine name?* We put on the name of Christ when we undergo external baptism; but we enter the way of Christ, when we die to the world that we may live to God.

4. They who walk after the lusts of the flesh, can neither accuse God nor the inefficacy of baptism; but themselves, who resist the Spirit; whom, if they would obey, sin would be weakened in them daily, the image of righteousness would be renewed, and, finally, that would be accomplished in reality which in baptism was done sacramentally.

And thus far concerning the two effects of baptism; namely, our spiritual burial and resurrection: It remains that we enquire into the cause and fountain of these benefits: which the Apostle briefly indicated in these particles, *With him, In whom.*

We are said to be buried *with Christ* in baptism, and also to have risen *in Christ, or by Christ*, that we may not attri-

* Vide page 22.

bute these supernatural effects either to the external element, or to our own strength. Therefore, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is the cause of our mortification and spiritual vivification. 1. It is the cause *meritoriously*, as was before contended for by us at the 18th verse of the first Chapter; because, by his death and resurrection, he merited for us this mortification and spiritual rising again, as it is said Isaiah liii. 10, *If he shall lay down his soul for sin, he shall see a lasting seed.** For because he laid down his natural life, he merited to raise up a spiritual seed to himself, and to communicate spiritual life to them. 2. The death and resurrection of Christ is also the cause *effectively* of our mortification and resurrection; inasmuch as rising again from death, by that same power with which he effected his own bodily resurrection, he effects also this our spiritual. For, as by the power of the Word he raised from death the humanity united to the Word; so also by the same power he quickens us, who are united to and planted in him, to a new life of grace. Rom. vi. 11, *Reckon yourselves to be alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* 3. Lastly; the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, is the cause of this our death, burial, and resurrection by way of *example*: For thus it is every where propounded to us by this Apostle; *Like as Christ was raised from the dead, so we also should walk in newness of life*, Rom. vi. 4. On these accounts, then, the Apostle rightly affirmed, that we were dead and risen again *with him, and in him*; because, *by the merit, efficacy, and example* of his death and resurrection, we have obtained mortification and spiritual resurrection.

Hence we observe,

1. Christ is not dead, buried, and raised again for himself alone; but for us: for in his death and burial he hath mortified and buried our sins, and in his resurrection he

* Davenant gives the Vulgate version of this passage; *Si possierit pro peccato animam suam, videbit semen longævum.* Bishop Lowth, whose translation of Isaiah liii. was the result of close critical examination, thus renders the quotation from the aforementioned text, "*If his soul shall make a propitiatory sacrifice, he shall see a seed which shall prolong their days.*"

hath raised us up together with himself, as though he had taken us by his hand. When, therefore, you meditate on the death and resurrection of Christ, contemplate not only what was done in him, but likewise what is done in thyself. For as the Apostle divinely speaks, Ephes. ii. 5, 6, *When we were dead in sins, he quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in him.*

2. It is incumbent upon every Christian, not only to believe the death and resurrection of Christ, but to have and perceive them in himself, that he may exhibit also to others a real and lively testimony of the same; and this he does who renounces sin and lives to God. Nearly to this effect Origen wrote, In Genes. xvii. hom. 3, *What does it profit if I believe that Christ came in that flesh only which he received from Mary, and do not shew that he also came in this my flesh?* We may add; What does it profit if I believe that Christ died and rose again in the flesh which he received from Mary, and do not shew in my flesh that he is dead and raised again, i. e. that I am dead and raised again in him and with him? All the godly may gather from hence that they are true and living members of Christ; namely, if they aim with their whole soul at mortification and newness of life. For whoever does this, does it not in his own strength; but he is buried with Christ, he is risen again in Christ; and, therefore, he is planted in Christ, and quickened by the Spirit of Christ. Thus much may suffice respecting the cause, or fountain of our mortification and vivification. It follows that we notice the medium or instrument by which these benefits are apprehended.

Through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.] We come now to that instrument by the help and assistance of which the above-named benefits of baptism are apprehended and possessed. For if this faith be wanting, although the treasures of grace in the sacrament are offered on God's part, yet they are not received on our part, but repelled by infidelity. But the sense of the words must be considered before we inquire into their subject matter. These words, then, *through the*

faith of the operation of God, are used to be explained by interpreters in two ways. Some give the meaning thus; *through the faith of the operation of God*, i. e. by the faith which God works in every one of the faithful, by the faith which springs from the Divine operation. But others explain them thus; *through the faith of the operation of God*, i. e. by that faith which is directed to that wonderful operation of God which raised Christ again for our justification. Whether we follow this latter or the former interpretation, three things are to be noticed in these words of the Apostle: The instrument by which we apprehend the treasures of grace offered in baptism; viz. *faith*: the Giver or the worker of this faith, *God*, or *the operation of God*; the particular object which faith most especially regards in this business, *the power of God raising Christ again from the dead* for our salvation.

Through faith.] As to this first; it is not in vain that faith is required by the Apostle, that we may obtain the benefit of spiritual resurrection. For, as in the baptism of adults previous faith is required, according to that declaration of our Saviour, Mar. xxi. 16, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned*; so, from those who are baptized in infancy, subsequent faith is required; which if they do not exhibit afterwards, they retain only the outward sanctification of baptism, the internal effect of sanctification they have not. Whence says Augustine, Quæst. ex N. Test. qu. 59. *He who imagines baptism to consist in the carnal form, is not spiritual; neither can he obtain the celestial gift, who trusts that he can be changed by water, not by faith.* We have a strong and perspicuous reason for this; viz. because the substance of the sacraments is Christ himself; all the virtue and vitality of them is from Christ: but, indeed, Christ is not approached by unbelievers; for men of this kind, whilst they receive the sacraments, because *their hearts are dry and their minds barren, they indeed lick the rock, but suck thence neither honey nor oil*, as Cyprian somewhere says.

By way of profit, let us learn not to confide with Papists in the *opus operatum*; but enquire farther, whether we

possess all the other things without which the inward effects of baptism are not secured. So much concerning the instrument of faith.

Of the operation of God.] The Apostle points out the Author or Giver of faith; namely, God himself. For since the salutary efficacy of baptism depends upon faith, it is proper that faith itself should be expected from God alone, lest we should have some occasion of glorying in ourselves. Hence that affirmation of the Apostle, Ephes. ii. 8, *By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.* We ought not, therefore, as the Pelagians would wish, to allege that faith springs from the human will; nor that it is natural, as Basilides thought, according to the statement of Clemens, Strom. 2; but as Augustine has stated, that it is bestowed upon us by the free gift of God: for although *good works are done by man, yet faith is wrought in man*, Epist. 105, ad Sixtum.

Who hath raised him from the dead.] Some contend that this clause is added by the way, to intimate that God stirs up faith in the human heart by that same infinite power with which he raised up Christ from the dead. For since our hearts are dead in sins and unbelief, there is need of the same Almighty power to quicken them which shewed itself in the revival of Christ, as it is said in Ephes. i. 19, 20. Let us not reject this sense: But we also add this; that the Apostle here wished to point out, as with the finger, what kind of faith he required from us; viz. that whereby we believe in God, who, by his wonderful operation, raised Jesus from the dead for our justification, as it is in Rom. iv. 24, 25. Therefore, lest our faith should wander in any confused and indefinite speculation about God, he, as it were, moderates this infinite object to us, since he would have faith not contemplate the efficacy of God simply, but as far as it raised up Christ; for thus it became a saving efficacy to us.

And very suitably in this place, where he treats of faith united with our spiritual resurrection, he directs it to look at that power of God which raised up Christ from the dead; viz. for two causes, which we have before touched

upon : 1. Because that same power which raised up Christ from the dead, infuses strength into us for this spiritual resurrection. 2. Because this resurrection of Christ is the cause of ours, as also was before shewn. But now two things remain to be cleared up which yield occasion for doubt.

1. The first arises from hence, that in these last words Christ is supposed to be raised by the power of another ; whereas it is certain that he raised himself by his own power ; according to that prediction of his, John ii. 19, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* Christ speaks concerning the temple of his body, by the interpretation of John himself.

I answer, In statements of this kind, in which divine operations are referred to God the Father, neither the Spirit nor the Son is excluded, but the order of operation is noted. For that saying of Christ is most true, John v. 19, *Whatsoever the Father doeth, those things also doeth the Son likewise.* Therefore, both by the Father's power and his own, was he raised up ; because the power of both is the same. Whence says Hilary, De Patr. and Fil. unitat. *He himself performs the works of God the Father by a nature not differing from God.*

2. The other doubt, which is strongly urged by the Anabaptists, is somewhat more difficult. For since in this whole disputation of the Apostle, mortification, newness of life, and, finally, faith itself, is connected with baptism ; but infants can neither mortify the flesh, nor produce the fruits of a new life, nor, in short, believe ; they conclude that those of that age should not be baptised.

We answer ; If they speak of actual faith, of actual desire, and the profession of mortification and vivification, we say those places of Scripture which require these things in baptized persons should be restricted to adults : But with respect to infants, because they are sinners not by their own proper act, but by hereditary habit, it is sufficient that they have mortification and faith, not exerting itself by a proper act, but included in an habitual principle of grace. But that the Spirit of Christ can, and is wout

to effect this habitual principle of grace in them, no sane person will deny. Moreover, it is not necessary that the sacraments, in that very moment in which they are administered, should effect all those things which they represent; nay, upon the concessions of the Schoolmen themselves, *A covenant admitting of delays is allowable when a bar is placed in the very act of undertaking it.* But now the very defect of reason in infants as to acting, is an impediment to their possessing actual faith, or actual desire of mortification. Besides, although faith and actual penitence are required from an adult before he receives the sign of the covenant, yet it is not required as to the act from the infants of believers; because to be in covenant is a sufficient reason for receiving the sign of the covenant: but infants are included in the same covenant with their parents; *I will be the God of thee and of thy seed,* Gen. xvii. 7. This we see in Abraham, who first believed and afterwards was circumcised; but his Son Isaac, inasmuch as he was already in covenant, he circumcised before he was of age to believe. This, in the case of the infants of Christians, is done duly and after the example of the Apostles, who did not baptize adults except they made a profession of faith; but when the parents embraced Christianity, then they baptized their whole families, and no one is ignorant that (in the Epistles) infants are also comprised under the name of a *family*. The passages are manifest; Acts xvi. 15 and 33, 1 Cor. i. 16.

Let it suffice to have noticed these things about infant baptism against the Anabaptists.

Verse 13.

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

A new reason is propounded to shew them that we have no need of circumcision, and those other legal rites; because in Christ we have not only sanctification, or regeneration, but perfect justification from sins, and that by gratuitous remission. But that this benefit may be recognized with more glorious evidence, he does three things:

1. He places before our eyes the miserable condition of our nature; *And you being dead, &c.*

2. He points out our deliverer; namely, God by Christ; *he hath quickened together with him.*

3. He declares the mode of deliverance, by the gratuitous remission of sins; *having forgiven, &c.*

And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh.] In these words the state of man in corrupt nature is depicted, by shewing both the evil and its cause. The evil with which he is afflicted, death itself; *and you being dead.* The twofold cause of the evil: actual sins, which are here termed *παραπτώματα*, or offences, and original corruption, which is signified by the epithet *uncircumcision.*

With respect to the evil itself; All the children of Adam are reckoned as dead, 1. Because they lie under the state of spiritual death, having lost the image of God in which they were created; and Divine grace, which was, as it were, the soul of the soul, being withdrawn, and a polluting mass of deadly vices succeeding in their room. 2. Because they lie under the sentence of eternal death, having become obnoxious to Divine wrath, and to that punishment which must be expected from an incensed

God : for *we are by nature the children of wrath*, Ephes. ii. 3. Death, therefore (as you see) hath seized upon us all ; spiritual death, actually ; eternal death, by sentence ; and in each respect we are justly said to be altogether undone.

In sins] i. e. In actual transgressions of the Divine law : This is one, and a clear cause of our death. For *the wages of sin is death* by the Divine ordination. *The soul that sinneth it shall die ; the death of grace*, inasmuch as sin, by its impurity, dissolves that gracious union of the soul to God, in which our spiritual life consists ; according to that declaration of the prophet, Isa. lix. 2, *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, &c.* : and *the death of hell*, inasmuch as Divine justice requires that a punishment adequate to the offence should be imposed on sinners ; but an offence against infinite Majesty deserves infinite punishment : *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil* ; Rom. ii. 9. Whoever, therefore, lives in sin, is in death.

And the uncircumcision of your flesh.] This is the other cause of our death. Some take these words literally, and think that there is denoted not the cause itself of death, but the sign of the cause. For as circumcision by itself did not avail to life ; so neither did uncircumcision by itself extend to death ; but they are said to be *dead in uncircumcision*, inasmuch as that was a symbol of alienation from the Divine covenant, out of which they could expect nothing but the curse and destruction, as is concluded by the Apostle, Ephes. ii. 11, 12. But I incline to their opinion who take this word figuratively, and by *uncircumcision of the flesh* understand that original sin which is derived to all by carnal propagation, and renders the very soul itself as though it were carnal. For although this word may properly signify a particular part of the body, yet, figuratively, it may be transferred to many other things : Sometimes it denotes the Gentiles themselves, as circumcision does the Jews, as in Rom. iii. 30, *It is God who justifies the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith*. Sometimes it denotes Heathenism, or the condition of the Gentiles, as in Ephes. ii. 11, 12. But in this place (as it has

been said) it signifies that natural depravity which adheres to all the children of Adam from their mother's womb. Neither is this signification of the word unusual. Thus it is said in Deut. x. 16, *Circumcise the foreskin of your heart*. But more plainly in Jerem. ix. 25, *Behold the days come that I will punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised*, i. e. every one who, though outwardly circumcised, yet bears within him the native depravity of the heart.

Retaining, then, this signification of the word, we say that every natural man is dead in this his native corruption; as well because no part of the soul can exercise any vital action in spiritual things, as because, on account of this corrupt nature, it is subject to Divine wrath and the punishment of eternal death.

1. The understanding, which is the eye of the soul, is darkened and wholly blinded as to spiritual things; *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. But another evil also arises out of this darkness: For the mind which cannot receive spiritual things on account of this darkness, rushes also headlong into vain speculations, into errors, heresies, and finally into innumerable deceivings. Hence heresies are reckoned among the fruits of the flesh, Gal. v. 20. In this condition, then, of corrupt nature, the understanding lies dead; deprived of its spiritual and salutary light; corroded, moreover, by vanity and error, as though it were preyed upon by worms.

2. The will also is most sadly depraved; so that it has lost all the desire of a good man, and burns with the constant thirst for vain, nay, for unlawful things. Hence that complaint of God, Gen. vi. 5, *Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually*; and of David, repeated by the Apostle, Rom. iii. *There is none righteous, no not one: there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable*.

3. The inferior powers of the soul are disordered, so that they refuse to obey the mind, nay, endeavour to govern it: *I see a law in my members warring against the law of my mind*, Rom. vii. 23. Hence all the affections follow not

the controul of reason in depraved man; they restrain it, they bind it, and lead it captive whithersoever they are inclined..

Now let us sum these points together. The mind has lost its light, and is buried in darkness; the will has lost its rectitude, and is filled with perversity; the affections have lost their subjection, and are pleased with rebellion: and all these evils derive their origin from the uncircumcision of our flesh, i. e. from the infection of corrupt nature: we are, therefore, rightly affirmed by the Apostle to be dead in the uncircumcision of our flesh. To all which it must also be added, that this original sin involves us in the condemnation of eternal death, equally as that actual guilt concerning which we have before spoken. For thus says the Apostle, Rom. v. 12, *Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

Ye perceive the miserable condition of the human race without Christ, and the causes of the misery. Let us now also deduce some additional lessons from the parts discussed about this our spiritual death and its cause.

1. Since every man in the state of corrupt nature is spiritually dead, it is not in the power of free-will, by its own strength, to prepare himself for his conversion; even as a dead man cannot dispose himself for his resurrection. Admirably spake Gerson, part. 2. in Serm. de Spiritu sancto, *It is the most foolish presumption for any one to think that he can anticipate God, as though he were like a slave to follow the will of man.* And Parisiensis is of the same opinion in his treatise De virtut. *God first bestows efforts and preparations, that afterwards he may confer more.* Each of these divines had been taught by the prophet, who denies that conversion is in the corrupt will of man, but depends upon the Divine compassion: *Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned,* Lament. v. 21.

2. Since every man is spiritually dead, he not only cannot dispose himself to quicken his own soul, but he cannot dispose himself to any motion to quicken and convert himself either external or internal, unless his mind be

formed to the life of grace by God. For as every natural motion and operation presupposes a natural power; so every spiritual motion (such as is conversion to God) presupposes a spiritual power. That opinion of Bellarmin, therefore, *De grat. et lib. arbitr.* i. 12, and iv. 11, is not to be borne, who would have the efficacious grace of God to be nothing else than the implanting of such a perception, whereby the human will is rendered apt to be persuaded to obedience. The prophet Ezekiel, xi. 19, speaks otherwise, *I will give them a new heart; I will take away the heart of stone.* And Augustine, *De spirit. et lit.* cap. 30, *The healing of the soul is by grace: the freedom of the will by the healthiness of the soul.* And Aquinas himself, *quæst. disp. de virtut. art. 10*, says, *For performing actions suited to the attainment of eternal life, grace is first divinely imparted, by which the soul hath as it were something of spirituality.*

3. Since the cause of death both spiritual and eternal is the transgression of the Divine law (for he says that the Colossians *were dead* in their sins) the madness of almost all men is discovered, who have delight in that which is a deadly poison to the soul. He who should give poison to another, is deservedly adjudged guilty of murder; what shall we say of him who causes the death of his own soul by this poison of sin? I would say with Lactantius, *Institut. 3. 18*, *If a murderer is base, because he is the destroyer of man; he lies under the same wickedness who kills himself, because he kills a man.* But I will affirm that he has more truly slain a man who has destroyed his own soul in sinning with delight, than if he had only taken away bodily life from himself.

4. Since *the uncircumcision of the flesh*, i. e. original corruption, has pervaded and extinguished the spiritual life of the soul, and all its spiritual faculties, we infer that Bellarmin (*lib. 5. cap. 6, de grat. et lib. arb.*) and the rest of the Jesuits, who assert that human nature is not absolutely less healthy than it would be if created in natural holiness, too much extenuate this evil. They draw this notion from Durandus, who, *lib. 3. dist. 3, quæst. 1*, thinks nothing more was done to human nature by the first sin, except that

it was deprived of original righteousness ; and now, left to itself, follows the principles of nature. But, on the contrary : The darkness of the understanding, the depravity of the will, the rebellion of the inferior passions, are not the dispositions of the nature ordained by God : not of *the nature*, I say ; for although God had not added supernatural grace to nature, yet it would not have been without natural order and beauty, of which, through sin, it is now destitute. Whence Parisiensis, in tract. de vitiis et virtut. cap. 5, says, that they undoubtedly err, who determine original sin to be nothing else than a defect of grace : And he says that it is a positive brutality innate in us, and the cleaving of pollutions alien to our souls and not belonging to them. What else does the Psalmist confess in Psal. li. 5, *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me?* I believe these words will not bear that Jesuitical comment, *I was conceived in pure nature, and in no worse a condition than Adam in his state of innocence would have been, if God had not further conferred upon him the supernatural gift of righteousness.*

Last of all, the very words themselves on which we are occupied, *dead in the uncircumcision of your flesh*, denote more than a mere withdrawing of supernatural grace. For be it that original righteousness was an armour, put upon our first parents by God, for resisting all the darts of temptation ; this being withdrawn, they would indeed be unarmed and exposed to danger ; but not immediately wounded or diseased, much less dead. But what has been said is enough concerning this condition of death, and its cause. Let us proceed to the notice of the Deliverer.

Hath he quickened together with him.] That is, God the Father who raised Christ from the dead, hath also quickened us likewise with spiritual life, on account of his death. Here, then, we see our Deliverer, namely, God in Christ, by Christ, and with Christ. Nor must we wonder that this work is to be attributed to God and Christ : for it is the work both of Almighty power and goodness to quicken man dead in sins ; and it surpasses the power of all

creatures. God alone could impart animal or corporeal life to this fragment of earth; he alone, therefore, can impart spiritual life to earthly and carnal man. It is a greater work to quicken an ungodly man dead in sins, than to create heaven and earth. For whether we are quickened by the forming again of the image which we have lost, or by the removal of the guilt which we have incurred, either operation is the work of God. He quickens the soul by renewing it, and by cleansing away the filth of sin: *For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, Ephes. ii. 10. He also quickens the soul (which the Apostle has especial respect to in this place) by taking away the deadly guilt of our sin. For we were *dead*, inasmuch as the sentence of death was passed against us by reason of our sins: we are said to be *quicken*d, inasmuch as this sentence is done away through the death of Christ, and we are delivered from the guilt of punishment, and reconciled to God. Hence,

1. We may learn the eternal love of God the Father towards us, who is not so averse to us wretched mortals dead in sins, but that he vouchsafes to quicken and revive us from the death of sin. We shudder to touch the dead bodies of our friends: but God is not only ready to touch our dead souls, but to embrace them; and not only that, but would even restore them to life. This should inflame us with mutual love towards God.

2. Let us consider the infinite guilt of sin, which could not be acquitted, except by the death of the Son of God for our sins, and his being raised again for our justification. For this the Apostle intimates, when he says, *he hath quickened us together with Christ*. He delivered Christ to death, then he quickened him, that he being quickened, we, through, and on his account, might be restored to spiritual life. That was, doubtless, deadly sin, which could not be expiated but by the death of Christ: we were dead indeed, who could not be quickened otherwise than by the life of the Son of God. This should excite us to hatred of and avoiding sin.

You see our Deliverer, God in Christ, or with Christ; now let us consider the mode of this deliverance from the most wretched condition of sin and death.

Having forgiven you all trespasses.] He now explains what was stated in the preceding words, that God had quickened the Colossians together with Christ, by shewing how it was done; viz. by the free forgiveness of all their sins. But we must also add; that with this forgiveness of sins which quickens the soul, there must be understood to be always united at the same time, the infusion of sanctifying grace, which also quickens in another sense: as is evident from the foregoing verse. For when sin is remitted, guilt is not only taken away, but the will, disordered and marred through sin, is quickened and restored through grace. Therefore the infusion of grace is always joined with this forgiveness of sin.

In this forgiveness of sins two things are to be noticed: that it is *gratuitous*, and that it is *universal*.

That it is *gratuitous* the word *χαρισμαμενος* shews, being derived from the word *gratia*—*grace* itself. But we are to understand that it is *gratuitous* on our part: for we are absolved without any price paid by ourselves; but on the part of Christ we are redeemed with a price, namely his most precious blood. This the Schoolmen themselves acknowledge; *Remission of sin*, says Durandus, lib. 4. dist. 1. quæst. 7, *is nothing else than the not imputing it as to punishment*. This the Apostle teaches, Rom. iii. 24, when he affirms that we are *justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*: then Chap. iv. verses 7 and 8, he shews that this grace consists in this, that God is willing to remit, and unwilling to impute, sin to us. And, indeed, if we seriously examine the matter itself, either a gratuitous remission, or no remission at all, must be admitted. As to ourselves, we are not able to pay; since the debt is infinite, and we, and all that belongs to us, finite. We cannot make any satisfaction by doing; because our good deeds are gifts of God, are due to God, are few and imperfect: nor can we blot out our sins by suffering, because no punishment of guilty man is deletive of

sin ; therefore, he who, notwithstanding punishment, remains a sinner for ever, will remain to be punished for ever. Therefore, the mode of gratuitous remission alone remains for our deliverance ; according to that parable of Christ, Luke vii. 41, *There were two debtors, the one owed fifty pence, the other five hundred.* How were they liberated ? It immediately follows, *When they had nothing to pay, he frankly, or freely and gratuitously, forgave them both.*

All trespasses.] Remission is not only *gratuitous*, but *universal*. For it does not accord with the Divine majesty and goodness, freely to remit some part of our debts, and to require the other part from us ;

1. Because he remits to no one even a single sin, unless on the account that he has received the blood of Christ as a *ransom* : but this being received, he would be unjust if he did not remit all things, because it outweighs all.

2. Because to forgive is an act of paternal love, which cannot dwell with hostile enmity : but enmity does remain whilst any sins remain unremitted ; they, therefore, who admit of a partial and half-remission, make God at once a father and an enemy, reconciled and hostile.

3. Because, unless we reckon upon an entire and full remission of sins, remission would be in vain, nor comprise its primary object ; but nature does nothing in vain, much less the Author of nature. And this is evident, because the end of remission is the attainment of life eternal ; but a partial remission cannot yield the hope of life eternal, because death is the wages even of one sin.

If we consult the Scriptures, we shall find that remission of sins is either entire and universal, or none is given and promised. Jer. xxxiii. 8, *I will cleanse them from all their sins ; and I will pardon all their iniquities.* Mic. vii. 19, *He will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.* 1 John i. 9, *He will forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Ye see, then, that remission of sins is *gratuitous* and *universal*. Hence we derive these Corollaries.

1. To forgive sins is the property of God alone : for who can forgive another his debt, whilst the will of the creditor is not yet understood ? *I, even I, am he that blot-*

teth out thy sins for my name's sake, Isa. xliiii. 25, Now, forgivenesses of sins which are said to be made by men, are either remissions of injuries, or abatement of satisfaction, or of other things which are in the power of man, or evangelical promises of the remission of sins on the previous supposition of faith and true penitence: but forgiveness of eternal punishment is not in human power. The papal priests may sprinkle holy water upon sinners, but (as Parisiensis learnedly remarks, de Universo 2. 2. cap. 148) *they have not the water of divine grace in their power, by which alone the washing away of sins is effected.* The ministers of the Gospel also may use their keys to absolve men from their sins: but how? Hear Durandus, out of Lombard, lib. 4. dist. 18, *God puts away sin by himself, by washing the soul from its stain of guilt, and by relaxing the debt of punishment; priests absolve, by shewing that the remission is made or not made.* The sacerdotal absolution, therefore, hath then force, when it is made by the *unerring key*, as the Schoolmen rightly observe.

2. The Papists err, who would have the punishments due to sin, according to the Divine righteousness, to be expiated either by the proper satisfactions of the individuals, or to be relaxed by papal indulgences: for these devices oppose gratuitous remission. For, if *to remit* be not to charge with punishment, gratuitous remission is not granted us where just punishment or satisfaction is required from us. These additions of human satisfactions also oppose the dignity of the satisfaction exhibited by Christ; for Christ, by submitting to punishment without any fault, hath delivered us both from the guilt and the punishment.

3. As universal remission of sins is always granted on God's part, so also there ought to be in us an universal detestation of sin. And, doubtless, that is most true, that there is always found in every truly reconciled man an hatred of all his sins, and also a purpose and aim henceforward to abstain from all. For he who hath received remission of all, hath received at the same time the infusion of grace, which arms and fortifies him against all. He, therefore, who cherishes, as it were, in the bottom of his

heart, the love of any sin, and resolves to continue in the same, flatters himself in vain about his sins being remitted.

4. Troubled consciences have here wherewith they may sustain themselves; for the Apostle said not, You hath he quickened, *having destroyed* all sins, but *having forgiven*. Therefore, although we may perceive sin lurking in us, and opposing the Spirit; yet, if it is not pleasing to and ruling us, it does not exclude this spiritual quickening. For the universal remission of sins takes away the guilt of all our sins; and the infusion of grace joined to this takes away the dominion of them all: but neither remission nor grace, whilst we bear this mortal body, takes away the nature, or the motion of indwelling sin.

Verse 14.

Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.

The Apostle illustrates the benefit of the remission of sins, concerning which we have discoursed above; and in doing so he teaches that Christians are not now, after all their sins are remitted, to be brought again under the obligation of the law, especially of the ceremonial law. And the reason is derived from the removal *of the thing* to the removal *of the sign*, for the legal rites were as so many hand-writings, or appendixes to hand-writings, to signify the guilt of the human race; therefore, guilt being taken away by the blood of Christ, it is right this hand-writing also should be abolished.

But that we may the better arrive at the meaning of the Apostle, we shall lay down three points to be explained, which being explained, we shall perceive both the sense of the words, and the matter contained in them.

1. What the Apostle understands by *the hand-writing in ordinances, or decrees.*

2. How this hand-writing was *contrary to us, and against us.*

3. How it is now *made void*: Which *making void* he amplifies by three words; it is *blotted out.* it is *taken out of the way,* it is *nailed to his cross.*

1. Concerning *the hand-writing of ordinances,* or confirmed and sealed as it were *in ordinances,* the opinions of interpreters are various; yet all agree in this, that they suppose something to be intended under this word, which may, by force of testimony, prove us guilty before God. And indeed, rightly: for this is the use of a hand-writing or bond, that to this the creditor may appeal, and convict the debtor, if he attempt to evade or disavow the debt: the very purport, therefore, of the metaphor, compels us to find out some such meaning.

Some of the Fathers assert that this *hand-writing* is nothing else than that covenant of God with Adam, Gen. ii. 17, *Of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou mayest not eat; for in the day in which thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;* for this being violated, both Adam himself and his posterity were held guilty of death as by a bond. Others refer it to that stipulation of the Jewish people, promising that they would perform all things which God commanded by Moses: for so it is written, Exod. xix. 7, 8, *When Moses had laid before them all the words which the Lord commanded him, all the people answered together and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.* By this promise, therefore, they bound themselves, as by a hand-writing, to the perfect obedience of the law; which, nevertheless, they performed not; and, therefore, might be justly condemned from this their own hand.—Some, by *the hand-writing,* understand the remembrance of our sins, written, as it were, in the Divine mind and each one's own conscience; whereto the prophet alludes, saying, *I will blot out thy transgressions, and will not remember thy sins,* Isa. xliii. 25. When, therefore, they are not blotted out, we may be convicted, as by a bond, from the testimony

either of the Divine knowledge, or of our own conscience. Melancthon interprets *the hand-writing* to be that sentence of condemnation which, from the decrees of the Divine law, conscience infers against itself: for instance; The Divine law hath decreed, *Thou shalt love God with all thy heart: Thou shalt not covet, &c. If thou continuest not in these things, thou shalt be cursed.* These are the decrees of the law. Now conscience suggests, I have not loved God with all my heart; I have coveted: therefore, I am cursed. He calls this conclusion, arising out of the decree of the law, *the hand-writing*: he says this is *blotted out*, when the law loses its power of condemning; but, as will be hereafter shewed, it loses this upon our sins being forgiven through the death of Christ. Some modern writers understand the ceremonial rites; which they would have to be called a *hand-writing*, because they were the testimonies of human guilt: for circumcision testified innate depravity; the purifications admitted the filthiness of sin; sacrifices indicated the heinousness of the guilt of the offerer. And this is, indeed, truly asserted: for the ceremonies, as far as they are considered not as sacraments of Gospel grace, but as appendages of the law, were nothing else, as Beza properly remarks, than a public confession of human misery. Those words, *τοῖς δόγμασι ordinances*, seem to confirm this opinion, (for by *ordinances* the Apostle was wont to denote the Jewish rites; as in Ephes. ii. 15;) also the very design of the Apostle in this place; because he here contends against those who endeavoured to restore Judaism, as is plain from the inference in verses 16 and 20. According to the opinion of those, then, *the hand-writing* is said *to be blotted out*, i. e. the ceremonial rites are now abrogated, because the debt itself being paid by Christ, it is not just that the bond should remain, which would testify that we are still debtors, and that the guilt of our sin is not yet done away.

The two last opinions come nearest to the mind of the Apostle: but both these and the former also seem to me to be defective in this, that they restrict this *hand-writing* too much, the one to the *moral law* alone, the other to the *cere-*

monial ; whereas the Apostle wished to comprehend both. For the benefit of the hand-writing being blotted out has respect to all, as well Gentiles as Jews : therefore it is proper to understand the hand-writing to be of that kind, whereby, in some measure, all are bound : but the Gentiles were never bound to the ceremonial law.

I therefore explain *the hand-writing in ordinances* to mean the force of the moral law binding to perfect obedience, and condemning for any defect thereof ; laden with the ceremonial rites as skirts and appendages. The Apostle, then, states two things ; viz. that the law itself as to the power of binding and condemning, is abrogated ; and the rites or ceremonies, in which was founded, as it were, a public confession and confirmation of this obligation and merited condemnation, are, at the same time, abolished. And this best agrees with the Apostle's design : For he here contends against those who urged the Mosaic rites, and especially circumcision : and he concludes, that that hand-writing being done away, the rites also in which the acknowledgment of the debt was contained, ought likewise to be done away. Thus much concerning *the hand-writing in ordinances*.

2. We must explain how this *hand-writing in ordinances* is said to be *against us* ; and a little after, to be *contrary to us* : And since as we have interpreted *the hand-writing in ordinances*, of both laws, the moral and ceremonial, these things are also to be applied to each.

As to the moral law ; that is, indeed, in itself *holy, just, and good* ; nevertheless, by accident it is become hostile and *deadly* to us, namely, by the introduction of sin and our corruption ; (as the Apostle shews, Rom. vii. 12, 13.)

1. Because the law propounds decrees plainly contrary to human nature : for that is spiritual, but we *are carnal, sold under sin*, Rom. vii. 14.
2. Because it arraigned, and convicts, and brings us in guilty of sin : for to summon to judgment, and to arraign of guilt, is the office of an adversary ; and this the law does in the tribunal of every man's conscience : *For by the law is the knowledge of sin*,

Rom. iii. 20. 3. Because, after it hath proved us guilty of sin, it denounces against us the sentence of condemnation and of malediction: For this is the sentence of the law, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. Therefore, on all these accounts, the law of God considered in its rigour, and as far as it hath the power of binding to perfect obedience, and of condemning, is hostile to mankind, and, as it were, a bond attesting our infinite debt, and giving power to the creditor of condemning us, and of casting us into prison, whenever it shall be his pleasure.

Now, with respect to ordinances, or the ceremonial law, which were annexed to this hand-writing, those legal institutions were also contrary to men:

1. Because they were almost infinite as to number, and most burdensome as to the observance. Whence that remark of Tertullian, advers. Marcion, 2. cap. 19, *God louded the Jews with those legal disciplines, that he might subdue their obstinacy, and mould them by toilsome duties*. And on this account we are admonished in Gal. v. 1, to stand fast in our liberty, and not to be again entangled with that yoke of bondage.

2. They were also contrary to men by their signification and testimony. For although they seemed to promise the destruction of sin, yet there entered into them a confession rather than an expiation thereof; especially if any one regard them not as *seals* of Gospel grace, but as appendages of the law itself, and parts of legal righteousness. But in this sense they were pressed by the false apostles with whom Paul contends; as manifestly appears from this, that they would not allow they were abrogated by the coming of Christ and the fulness of the grace of the Gospel.

Ye perceive, therefore, in what sense those ceremonies were contrary to us; viz. because they were both burdensome, and also signified and admitted that the hand-writing of the law had been violated by us. On these accounts it was the height of folly to impose those ceremonies

upon Christians, and, after the debt was paid and the guilt expiated by Christ, to compel them to a public confession of it, as though it yet remained due.

3. Lastly, it remains that we consider, How this *hand-writing in ordinances is made void*; which is expressed in these three forms of speaking, *it is blotted out, it is taken out of the way, it is nailed to his cross*; By all which expressions this one thing is shewn, That by virtue of the passion of Christ dying upon the cross, the condemning force of the moral law was taken away, and all the rites of the ceremonial law were likewise abrogated. For the hand-writing of the law bound us to obedience, and to the penalty of disobedience. Christ, therefore, our Surety, by yielding the exact obedience which the law demanded, and undergoing the punishment which was required from violators of the law, did that to which *we were bound by this hand-writing, and so blotted out the hand writing itself*. For, as says Augustine, *shedding his blood without sin, he blotted out the hand-writing of all sin. Christ was made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law*, Gal. iv. 4, 5.

But it must be observed, that this hand-writing may be said to be blotted out in two ways: First, *universally* and *sufficiently* as it respects God: because by the blood of Christ such satisfaction is made to God, that he cannot require that hand-writing of the law from any debtors, when they flee by faith to this Deliverer; but according to the order of his own justice is necessarily engaged to acquit them. Secondly, *particularly* and *efficaciously*, when, in fact, it is blotted from the conscience of all believers who lay hold on Christ by faith; according to that declaration of the Apostle, *Being justified by faith we have peace with God*. But, truly, he cannot have peace who sees himself overwhelmed with debt, and, moreover, entangled by a bond: but as soon as any one takes hold of Christ by faith, thenceforth this hand-writing is blotted out, and his conscience enjoys a blessed peace. And Paul in the most admirable manner hath provided for trembling consciences by a certain beautiful gradation. For, not content with

having asserted in the foregoing verse, that *all our sins are forgiven us*; he subjoins, that *the hand-writing itself is blotted out*: but lest any one should think that it is not so blotted out, but that a new charge may be raised, he therefore adds, it is moreover *taken out of the way*: and lest it should be thought to be preserved hidden somewhere, and may be preferred against us hereafter; nay, says he, *it is nailed to his cross*, i. e. it is torn and rent in pieces by those nails wherewith Christ was affixed, and lacerated upon the cross. And, indeed, the guilt of our sins being expiated, and the condemning power of the moral law ceasing, the ceremonies must necessarily be abolished which proclaimed human guilt, and shadowed forth that expiation which was to be made: And thus *the hand-writing of ordinances is blotted out*. I add no more concerning this abrogation of rites, because we have treated the same matter in verse 8. From what has been said about the hand-writing itself, and its contrariety to us, and its abrogation, it remains that we elicit some instructions.

We learn, from the hand-writing itself;

1. Since every mortal man is, through the hand-writing of the law, guilty of death, how dreadful is the condition of the ungodly and unholy, who trample under foot that blood of the Son of God whereby alone this deadly hand-writing can be blotted out. They will fall, therefore, into the hands of the living God, who will at last require from them the uttermost farthing of the debt.

2. We here see the insane pride of Pharisees and Papists, who think that they themselves can satisfy God when he deals with them according to this hand-writing of the law; yea, pay more than is due to him from the hand-writing, by counting up works of supererogation, as they call them: but what need, then, for the blotting out of the hand-writing by the cross of Christ?

From its contrariety, we learn,

1. Since this hand-writing is said to be contrary to, and against us: we gather from hence, that our nature is depraved and corrupted: for, according to the terms of the first institution, the law of God was not contrary to us, but

friendly and wholesome. Let us, therefore, acknowledge, that it is not by the fault of the law, or of the Lawgiver, but our own, that this hand-writing is rendered deadly to us.

2. As to the rites and ceremonies : Since the Apostle pronounces them to be contrary to us, they are reprov'd who would restore Judaism, and burden the Church with useless and unprofitable ceremonies, and beguile Christians of the liberty acquired by the cross of Christ.

From the abolition, we learn,

1. Since this hand-writing of the law is abrogated and blotted out as to its condemnatory power, we infer, that it yet retains its directing force. We may not, therefore, take from hence a licence of sinning, but alacrity in serving God ; for we are delivered from all our sins, and from all our enemies by the death of Christ, not that we may grow wanton in sin, but that we may *serve God without fear in holiness and righteousness all our days*, Luke i. 74, 75.

2. Since the comfort of a troubled conscience consists in the blotting out of this hand-writing ; we must labour to maintain, by a sure faith, not only that Christ has procur'd the blotting out of this hand-writing, but, moreover, that in fact it is blotted out as respects ourselves. Since, as in a case of debt, no one thinks himself sufficiently safe until he sees with his own eyes, or, at least, knows for certain, that his bond is cancelled : so, in this case of sin, we shall not be at peace, till we see by the eyes of faith that the hand-writing of our sins is blotted out by the blood of Christ.

Verse 15.

*And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it, or in himself,** i. e. by the power of himself alone.

The Apostle proceeds to amplify the foregoing benefit ; and shews not only that all our sins are forgiven, and the hand-writing blotted out by the blood of Christ, but moreover that all our spiritual enemies who could have done us any injury, are trodden under foot, triumphed over, and stripped of all their arms, strong holds, and forces, by Christ dying upon the cross. But to render this illustrious victory of Christ apparent to our mental view, he employs remarkable metaphors, taken from the custom of commanders in their triumphs. For that word *having spoiled*, alludes to that custom whereby conquerors were wont to deprive the conquered of their arms, and to fix them for a trophy of the same in the spot where their enemies had been put to flight. And what he adds of *making a shew*, and *triumphing over them*, has respect to that pomp of victors in which they were accustomed to lead their captives ignominiously chained together before their triumphal chariot, in the view and amidst the shouts of the populace. Cicero, Orat. in Pisonem, describes this manner of the antient triumphs in these words, *What is there in that chariot? in those princes led before it in chains? in those representations of towns? What is there in that gold? in that silver? in those lieutenants and tribunes on horseback? in those shouts of soldiers? What in all that pomp, &c.* And now, as to those last words, *ἐν αὐτῷ*, *in it*, or (as some copies have it) *ἐν αὐτῷ*, *in himself*, they set forth that Christ con-

* "In semitipso." Vulgate.

quered and triumphed, not by the valour and the exertions of others, as earthly conquerors do; but by his passion alone, or in his own individual power.

Let us proceed, however, to a more explicit treatment of the words themselves; in which these two things may be considered: 1. Who were these enemies, whom the Apostle asserts, were *spoiled, made a shew of, and triumphed over? Principalities and powers.* 2. Of what kind this *spoiling, making a shew, and triumph* were. For since these words are figurative, they must be reduced to some proper and perspicuous sense.

1. *Principalities and powers.*] By these two titles he designates the enemies conquered by Christ, namely, wicked dæmons, enemies of our salvation. And they are termed *principalities and powers*, because they have usurped the chief power and rule over men; as appears from Ephes. vi. 12, where they are called *the rulers of this world.* And 2 Tim. ii. 26, *the devil is said to hold men ensnared and captive at his will.* Hence he is compared in Luke xi. 21, to a strong man armed, who, having expelled another from his house, holds whatsoever he finds there by force. They are denominated *principalities and powers*, therefore, in this place, for this reason in particular, because mankind are held, afflicted, and harassed under their tyrannical rule. But inasmuch as commanders and generals are never conquered alone, but we understand by *their* being conquered, that their army was likewise overcome and put to flight: as when we say that Hannibal was vanquished by Scipio, or Pompey by Cæsar, we should be understood to mean not them alone; but that with them the Carthaginians and the forces of Pompey were all vanquished. These spiritual principalities and powers, therefore, being subdued, whatever with them militated against human salvation is likewise laid prostrate; the old Adam, death, hell, the world, and our sins; for all these were enemies to us, being troops confederate with the devil. The Scriptures, then, affirm, that not the devil alone was vanquished by Christ, but also all those other foes who supported his kingdom, and were accustomed to promote our bondage under him. Concern-

ing the Prince himself being vanquished, we may, to omit other places, advert to the passage before us, and to Heb. ii. 14; Christ *by his death destroyed him who had the power of death, i. e. the devil*. Respecting the slaughter and conquest of the army of the devil, Hosea prophesied, Chap. xiii. 14, *O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction*. And Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 55—57, triumphs in the fulfilment of this by Christ, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*. You see among the enemies subdued by Christ were death, the grave, the law, and sin. Therefore, to sum up all in a word; this our chief adversary the devil, together with whatever held man in bondage, or opposed human salvation, was conquered and overthrown also. And thus is it briefly shewn who were the enemies spoiled by Christ, made a shew of, and triumphed over; viz. the devil, with all his satellites. Now let us examine what this *spoiling of principalities and powers*, what this *making a shew, and triumphing over* them, might be.

I find three opinions about this matter. The first is that of Liranus, Aquinas, and many Romanists: who explain this place thus; *spoiling principalities*, i. e. the infernal powers or dæmons; by leading Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the Old Testament fathers from the place which they call *Limbus*, he *led them*, viz. the same fathers, to heaven; *triumphing over them in himself*, i. e. making them triumphant. But every thing by this interpretation is distorted; here is nothing accordant either to the mind of the Apostle, or to truth: we reject this opinion, therefore, as palpably false. The interpretation does not agree with the context, because the Apostle asserts that they who were led, and triumphed over, were those who were spoiled: if, therefore, they account that the dæmons were spoiled, they ought also to account that they were led and triumphed over. Add to this that the word *ἔδειγμάτισε*, does not denote a glorious leading to heaven, but an ignominious leading, such as of captives in triumphal pomp, as was before

shewn. But neither does the exposition agree with the truth of things itself; because that *limbus*, placed at the borders and brink of hell, in which they think the fathers were kept, as in a dark dungeon, till the death of Christ, is a mere fiction. For howsoever the Schoolmen, in 3. Sent. dist. 22. obstinately maintain, that the ancient fathers were excluded from heaven, and thrust into *limbus*; and Bellarmin, De Christi anim. cap. 16, asserts, that Christ by his descent into hell conferred upon the fathers that *bringing them forth out of that prison, and leading them to heaven*; nevertheless we, relying upon truth itself, deny this fictitious place; we deny the devil to have been spoiled in this sense, viz. that the patriarchs were translated out of his dominion to heaven by Christ after his passion.

Although I would not rashly affirm that *the bosom of Abraham* (which they likewise call *limbus*) was the very seat of the blessed, to which the souls of the pious pass, since Christ by his blood hath consecrated *a new way*, Heb. x. 19, 20; yet that it was not a part of hell, but a celestial place, and full of blessedness, is gathered from Luke xvi.—1. Because the good angels are said to have *carried* the soul of Lazarus into this place, ver. 22. But it is more likely that a pious soul was carried to some part of heaven, than thrust down to the borders of hell. 2. Because it is said, *Dives being tormented in hell lift up his eyes, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom*, ver. 23. It was, therefore, a place situated above, not beneath. 3. Because it was a place most full of consolation: for thus Abraham addressed the rich man, ver. 25, *Remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented*. But *limbus* is affirmed by the Papists to be a dismal place, most remote from essential blessedness. Lastly, because *a great gulph is fixed* between this place and hell, ver. 26; but between hell and *limbus*, i. e. the mouth, and, as it were, the nearest part of hell, there cannot be said to be a great gulph fixed.

The passion of Christ had the eternal fruit of salvation as to all believers: therefore, the patriarchs, who believed

that Christ was to suffer, were saved from hell and the devil by the virtue and merit of his death, like as we also are who now believe Christ to have suffered. *They looked, therefore, after this life, not for limbus, but for that city which hath foundations, Heb. xi. 10, an heavenly country, ver. 16, even already prepared for them.*

Although Christ himself died in the fulness of time, yet he first became a Surety to his Father that he would die for the deliverance of the human race: therefore, this security being accepted of the Father, there was no impediment why the patriarchs, being freed from their debts, should not be put in possession of salvation, before the price itself was actually paid. For if among men, culprits and debtors are accustomed to be liberated upon just satisfaction being made, why should we not think God the Father to have done the same of his goodness? Not any reason, therefore, obliges us to determine that the patriarchs were shut up in the prison of limbus, and were brought out and delivered a long time after upon the coming of Christ.

Moreover, although the fathers speak doubtfully concerning this thing, yet testimonies are not wanting from among them whereby this papistical limbus may be overturned. Tertullian, *advers. Marcion*, 4, cap. 34, says; *The mouth of hell is one thing, the bosom of Abraham another.* And a little after; *There is a temporary receptacle for the souls of the faithful, where they have a foretaste of happiness till the resurrection.* This father differs from the Papists in two things; 1. Because, although he does not think the bosom of Abraham to be the celestial place, yet he thinks it to be elevated far above hell: 2. Because he thinks the souls of the pious to be preserved there till the resurrection; whereas the Papists acknowledge their limbus to be long since spoiled.* Augustine, in *lib. quæst. super Genes. qu. 168*, explaining those words written of Jacob, *Gen. xlix. 33, He died and was gathered to his people*, refers them to

* The inquisitive reader may find the opinions of Tertullian on this subject, and the other notions here adverted to, more fully stated in Bishop Kaye's interesting "*Ecclesiastical History illustrated from Tertullian.*" But the most copious and learned view of the whole question will be found in Archbishop Usher's answer to the Jesuit.

the people of the blessed angels, viz. of that city which is called by St. Paul *mount Zion, the city of God, and the heavenly Jerusalem*, Heb. xii. 22. Augustine follows up the same opinion in lib. 2. contra Pelag. & Cœlest. cap. 30. Here, then, he placed the fathers, immediately after death, among the angels, although elsewhere he determines otherwise about this matter; as *De civit. Dei*. lib. 20, cap. 15. But let us dismiss these architects of limbus,* who suppose Christ to have spoiled the dæmons in this sense, that he had emptied limbus, and taken the patriarchs away.

The second opinion is that of Jerome Zanchius; who thinks these words may be explained of a real and visible spoliation, exhibition, and triumph celebrated over the dæmons, in the presence of God, the angels, and blessed spirits. For although Christ might earn a triumph upon the Cross, yet he conceives that it was completed when the conqueror penetrated by his Spirit into the infernal kingdom, and brought out the dæmons thence, and led them through the air; all the angels, and souls of the pious dead, being witnesses: and he imagines that this triumph was afterwards continued from the resurrection to the ascension of Christ. It is my intention neither to confirm nor oppose this opinion: but, as it is doubtful, and cannot be corroborated by manifest testimonies of Scripture, I pass it by.

The third opinion, and which pleases me best, is that of Origen, Œcumenius, and of almost all of our time; who interpret this whole passage of a spiritual spoliation, a leading forth, and triumphing openly accomplished upon the Cross. He spoiled dæmons then, he made a shew of them, and also triumphed over them upon the Cross, when, to carnal eyes, he seemed to be conquered and triumphed over by them: For, as the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, neither sensible; so the victory and triumph of Christ over our enemies, is not proposed to be surveyed by the eye, but to be contemplated by the mind by faith.

* " Now had they brought the work by wond'rous art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendant rock
 Over the vex'd abyss."

Now faith easily conceives that the devil was *spoiled* by the death of Christ; because mankind are plucked from his jaws, and his dominion is broken and diminished. For he held us bound *with the chain of our sins*: his bonds, therefore, being broken asunder, he is stripped of his prey, and we are delivered. Hence Augustin, De Trinit. lib. 4, says, *From whence the devil received the power of externally wounding the flesh of the Lord, from thence his inward power, which held us captive, was slain.* So also we in like manner say, that he was *made a shew of*, i. e. treated with the completest shame and ignominy, as captives are wont. Neither is he without reason said to be *made a shew of*, i. e. to be overwhelmed with shame like those who are led captive: for when he hoped utterly to have devoured Christ, he himself beyond all expectation was devoured by the death of Christ. Therefore, as when gladiators engage, if he who has laid the other prostrate, and almost dispatched him by wounds, should receive a deadly thrust, and be overcome by him who was wounded, and just ready to die, becomes loaded with the greatest dishonour; so Christ loads the devil with the greatest ignominy, because, being crucified and dead, he, notwithstanding, in like manner overcame and subdued him. And this he is said to have done *εν παρρησία*, i. e. as some translate it, *openly*; because Christ died openly upon the Cross, and thus, as in the sight of the whole world, conquered the devil: or, as others translate it, *boldly*; because he intrepidly engaged with the devil, and subdued him by his death, knowing for certain that he, by this mode, should overturn the kingdom of the devil.

To come now to the last words, he is also said *to have triumphed over the devil* 'εν 'αυτώ, *in it*, i. e. upon his cross; because, as Origen very properly remarks, *two are understood to have been affixed to the cross; Christ visibly, of his own will, for a time; the devil invisibly, against his will, and for ever.* The eye of faith, therefore, regards Christ, sitting on the summit of the cross, as in a triumphal chariot; the devil bound to the lowest part of the same cross, and trodden under the feet of Christ. Or, if we read 'εν αὐτῷ, *in himself*, it must mean, *by his own power*, with no military

aid, as commanders are accustomed to conquer in battles; according to what is said in the prophet Isaiah lxiii. 3, *I have trodden the wine-press alone*. Thus you see how Christ, by his death upon the cross, spoiled the devil, made a shew of him, and finally triumphed over him most gloriously, *accomplishing a noble triumph*, as Œcumenius aptly remarks on this passage.

But it may be asked, How are the dæmons said to be spoiled, disarmed, and led in triumph, when it appears by the declaration of the Apostle, Ephes. vi. 12, that they are yet exceedingly powerful to attack the faithful themselves; *for we wrestle even now against principalities and powers*, so that we need the strongest armour.

I answer, they are spoiled and disarmed of all power whereby they could deprive the elect of salvation; but for the exercise of these, and that they also may triumph over them after the example of their Leader, they are permitted to tempt and oppose believers, but they shall never overcome them. For he who *bruised Satan* under his own feet, *shall also bruise him under ours*, Rom. xvi. 20.*

We may add:

1. Since Christ hath spoiled and taken away the powers hostile to us, we have an argument whereby afflicted consciences may be comforted in the conflict: For although the devil, sin, and our other foes, may appear to press upon us; yet they cannot conquer, because they are restrained by the authority of Christ our Leader; they lie crushed and trodden under his feet.

2. We are animated, therefore, to the spiritual warfare against these enemies, who are already overcome and routed, nay, triumphed over by our Captain: for those who are vanquished are always more angry than powerful. He, therefore, who despairs of being able to overcome the devil and all his satellites, seems to deny the victory of Christ, who, through his triumphing, causes us to triumph.

* Some important remarks and useful criticisms on the subject which has been discussed in the few last pages, and well worth the Student's consideration, will be found in Horne's Critical Introduction, vol. iii, p. 216, et ubi.

3. Since Christ hath obtained this splendid victory by dying upon the cross, this glorious effect of the cross ought ever to be revolved in our mind against the scandal of the cross. For it was heretofore objected by the heathen that Christians were the most foolish of all mortals, inasmuch as they expect salvation from him who was nailed to the cross, and cut off with an ignominious death by his enemies. But we who, by the eye of faith, see the devil trodden under foot and spoiled by this death of Christ, can say with the Apostle, Gal. vi. 14, *God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

4. Since Christ hath overcome not only the devil, but all his satellites, as death, sin, and the rest of our foes, upon the cross; we must beware lest we so live, that they may appear not broken, but reigning over us. *The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world,* says the Apostle, Gal. vi. 14. We may truly say this, if we despise the pleasures of the world, and sin; but if not, that word will be applicable to us, *Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction; whose God is their belly; and whose glory is their shame: who mind earthly things;* Phil. iii. 18, 19. Epicureans are rightly called *enemies of the cross of Christ*, for they seem to wish to restore their kingdom unto those whom Christ spoiled on the cross.

Verses 16, 17.

Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days,

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

We have finished the third part of this Chapter, viz the confirmation of the Apostolic sentence, which Paul has proved and supported by many and cogent arguments; the heads of which it is proper now to repeat, that it may be evident how aptly this conclusion is drawn from those premises.

The proposition to be confirmed, as is manifest from verse 8, was this: In the business of salvation neither philosophical speculations, nor Mosaical ceremonies, nor any traditions of human invention are to be received; but the doctrine of the Gospel alone is abundantly sufficient for the salvation of every believer. This is proved first, from the excellence of Christ our Saviour and Teacher; verse 9. Secondly, from the perfection which we obtain in Christ alone; as also from the office of Christ; verse 10. Thirdly, from the benefits which Christ, by his Spirit and his death, confers upon us; verses 11, 12, &c. And the spiritual benefits are, circumcision (i. e. regeneration), remission of sins, the blotting out the hand-writing of the law, and the spoiling of all our enemies. Since we obtain all these benefits by Christ, this conclusion admirably follows, *Let no man, therefore, judge you; &c.*

We come now, then, to the fourth and last part of this Chapter, viz. the conclusion or inference arising from the preceding argument: which consists of three particulars, according to the three kinds of impostures which the

Apostle in the eighth verse advised us to beware of; for against all these respectively he draws the conclusion;

1. Against the Mosaic ceremonies, which were urged by the Judaizers; verses 16, 17.

2. Against curious and superstitious doctrines about angels; which were propounded by philosophizers; verses 18, 19.

3. Against rites and human traditions, which were devised by dotting men, verse 20, &c.

Let us begin with the Mosaic ceremonies; against which he places a conclusion in verse 16, and annexes the reason of the conclusion in verse 17.

Let no man judge you] i. e. Do not regard, fear not, the judgments of those persons who condemn you for neglecting ceremonies, since Christ himself hath delivered you from them. For the seducers assumed to themselves judicial authority, and, as judges, praised and absolved those who observed the Mosaic rites; on the other hand, they condemned as guilty all who neglected these ceremonies. The Apostle, therefore, advised the Colossians, that although they could not avoid these preposterous judgments, they would, nevertheless, cease to regard them. For, as lawyers say, *A sentence given by any but its proper judge is no sentence in law*: but these men had not the power of recalling ceremonies abrogated by Christ, and of imposing them as necessary to salvation upon Christians, who were now delivered from this yoke by the death of Christ: *Let no man therefore judge you*, i. e. acknowledge no man to have this power.

In meat or in drink.] He instances in certain particular rites, in the observance of which the Jews placed a great part of their holiness; but since there is a like reason for those which are here named by the Apostle, and for all others, he would have us understand that all were abrogated together. As to *meats*; it is certain from Levit. xi. that there was a distinction of meats to the Jews under a precept, so that by virtue of the Divine appointment they were compelled to abstain from some. In *drink* also, they

had their rites and observances : for they who wished to be accounted more holy, were accustomed to abstain from wine and all manner of strong drink ; as we see among the Nazarites, Numb. vi. 3, and in the mother of Samson, Judg. xiii. 4. If any one also should drink out of a cup to which there was not a cover, he was considered unclean, Numb. xix. 15. These and other things of this kind the Apostle concluded were of no importance to salvation, nor were Christians to be condemned for the neglect thereof.

Or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days.] With the Jewish abstinence from meats he joins the observation of stated times. But the Jews had many festivals, as you may read in Levit. xxiii. and Exod. xxiii. &c. It was necessary to celebrate some yearly ; as the feasts of the Passover, of Pentecost, and of Tabernacles : some at the beginning of every month ; as of the new moons, Num. xxviii. : some every seven years ; as of the sabbaths. All these are noticed by the Apostle in this place ; from these he wished a judgment to be formed respecting the rest. But what he says *in part of an holy day*,* some explain *in regard of an holy day* ; some *of holy days by turns* ; others simply *in part of a holy day*, i. e. on account of some part of a festival being violated ; for some festivals lasted many days, and with many ceremonies : All these no one was permitted to violate in any part : but the Apostle on the contrary concludes that no one is necessarily to be observed in any part. This, therefore, is the sense of the Apostle's conclusion ; namely, that Christians are not to be condemned as though they were transgressors of the Divine law, or guilty of the violation of conscience, because from henceforth they did not abstain from meat or drink forbidden by the ceremonial law, or because they did not observe the feasts enjoined by the same law, whatever false apostles had superstitiously determined to the contrary. From these things the following observations arise :

1. It is the peculiar character of seducers to load the

* *In parte diei festi* ; the Bishop here, as usual, follows the Vulgate.

consciences of men with ceremonies, as things necessary to salvation, and to condemn them for the omission thereof: thus did the false apostles heretofore; thus do false Catholics of the present day, who make the chief worship of God consist in the observance of their traditions, and the omission of the same to be the damnable guilt of eternal death. A grave author, Gerson, Chancellor of Paris, continually complains of this tyranny of the Popish Prelates, and torturing of consciences. Part. 3, De vita spirit. anim. lect. 4, he says, *They abuse their power, who wish whatever they ordain to have force by an obligation to eternal punishment.* And a little after; *No law is to be enacted as necessary to eternal salvation, which is not in some degree after the Divine law.*

2. It is the duty of Christians, when ceremonial rites are imposed upon them under the plea of necessity, of righteousness, or of merit, to reject the same, and to despise those masters of ceremonies: For so the Apostle directs, both in this place and in Gal. v. 1, *Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage.* But those are entangled with the yoke of bondage upon whom any ceremonies whatever are imposed as necessary, and meritorious, and saving. As, therefore, Christian modesty enjoins us to obey prelates, when they prescribe decorous rites for the sake of order; so Christian liberty enjoins us to withstand the same when they obtrude their traditions under the plea of worship, or of necessity for salvation. For here that saying of Cyprian, De hæret. baptizandis, ought to have weight, *It is dangerous for any one to surrender his right in Divine things.*

3. Distinction of meats or of days is not now to be retained by Christians upon the opinion of necessity, of holiness, of righteousness, or merit. *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, &c.* Rom. xiv. 17. *Whatsoever is so'd in the shambles, eat, &c.* 1 Cor. x. 25. *Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years,* Gal. iv. 10. *Every creature of God is good and nothing to be rejected if it be received with thanksgiving,* 1 Tim. iv. 4. *Meats have not profited them that*

have been exercised therein, Heb. xiii. 9. Well spake Prosper, De vita contempl. lib. 3, cap. 19, *It is a miserable thing to condemn others for receiving meat or drink, or to arrogate sanctity to ourselves for abstinence.* And Tertullian, De cib. Judaic. *Evangelical liberty has taken away the observances of meats. The true and pure meat is a conscience undefiled.*

Here, therefore, we blame a double error of the Papists. First, in this they grievously err, and approach very near the Tatians* and Manichæans, because they forbid certain meats at certain times, on the ground that they think them more cursed and less holy than others. For when they would assign a reason why it is not lawful to eat flesh at the time of fasting, although it is permitted to feed upon fish; they pretend that the earth is cursed by God, and, as a consequence, all earthly animals are so; that the water, with the fish, was not put under the curse; that Christ was accustomed to eat fish, not flesh; by which arguments they affirm that they believe fishes to be in themselves more holy and clean than flesh. Secondly, they further err in this, that they place the merit of I know not what extraordinary perfection in abstinence from meat: whence it comes to pass that to the Carthusian monks, who would be accounted more perfect and holy than the rest, the use of flesh is forbidden for ever, and to all others during Lent. That remark of Augustine, Serm. De tempore 157, may fitly be brought against them, *There are certain observers of Lent more delicate than religious; seeking rather new delicacies, than chastising old lusts. They shudder at the vessels in which flesh is cooked, as though these were unclean; but they dread not the luxury of the appetite and gluttony.*

* The disciples of Tatian, a heretic of the second century. Regarding matter as the source of all evil, he contended, that the body ought to be severely mortified; and urged his disciples to abstain from wine and animal food. They acted upon his notions to such a degree, as to reject with a sort of horror all the comforts and conveniences of life, and abstained from wine with such a rigorous obstinacy as to use nothing but water even at the celebration of the Lord's supper! Hence they were also denominated Encratites, or Temperate; Hydroparastates, or Water-drinkers; and Apotactites, or Renouncers.—The Manichæans held some similar notions, vide art. Note, p. 226.

For if we look into the Schoolmen they place the whole argument of ecclesiastical fasting in a difference and choice of meats, not in abstinence and moderation. Hence Hales, part. 4. quæst. 28. memb. 3. art. 2, contends, that we are to abstain in the time of fasting not so much from *quantity* as from *quality*: for he asserts, that during the time of fasting, it is a greater sin to eat a little flesh, than to devour much fish. And Durandus, lib. 4. dist. 7. quæst 4, writes, *That a Popish fast is not broken by one meal, however great, provided they abstain from the meats prohibited, i. e. from flesh, eggs, and milk.* Hence it comes to pass that the Papists feel no scruple to taste wine or fish, however delicate, during Lent, or figs, dates, and almost all other articles which are accounted delicacies, provided they religiously take care not to eat flesh. No wonder fasts are so pleasing to them to whom it is holiness to fast in this manner.

But now let us meet certain doubts, which may arise from this apostolic doctrine, concerning the abrogated difference of meats and days.

1. It is objected that Christian magistrates have commanded abstinence from meats at certain times; and on this account, those who violate this command are criminal, and may be judged: therefore, Christians are judged on account of meats; which seems to oppose the apostolic conclusion, *Let no man therefore judge you, &c.*

It is to be answered, first, that the Apostle blames those who introduce a difference of meats for the cause of sanctity; viz. that so they may condemn as transgressors of the law, those who do not observe this choice of meats: but he blames not those who decide that, for the sake of public utility, the one may be taken at this time, or the other at that: so that they may offer no scruple to men's consciences, as if it were a thing unlawful in itself to do otherwise. Secondly, we say that the magistrates themselves wish that laws of this kind, in which the fate of the commonwealth is not involved, may be accepted and observed *after the manner of citizens*, not rigorously; that is, they would have subjects to be bound not to contravene statutes of this kind with contempt or scandal; but they

are unwilling so to bind their consciences, that if by accident, or infirmity, or any other reasonable cause, they should act contrary, they should be accounted despisers of the magistracy, much less violaters of the Divine law. Gerson, in *Regulis moralibus*, observes, *No man is bound by the fasts of the Church when under known infirmity of body, scandal being excluded.* And Erasmus, in *Tract. De amibili ecclesiæ concordia*, says, *The constitution of the Church by no means binds those who incur danger from eating fish, or who find that fasting injures the health of the body, or the vigour of the mind.* In fine; it accords not with ecclesiastical or magisterial polity, to prescribe choice of meats at certain times, upon the plea of necessity, or sanctity, or merit; but because it is consistent either with public good, or reason, or the example of the saints, that certain persons should abstain at certain times. With respect to public utility, politicians may see to that: but I affirm it is consistent with reason and the examples of Scripture. For as it is allowable and accordant with reason, that in festivities of public joy, we use more dainty food and allowable gratifications; according to that direction of the prophet, *Nehem. viii. 10, Eat the fat and drink the sweet; for this day is holy unto our Lord:* so also is it lawful and decorous, when there is cause of signifying public grief or penitence, to abstain from delicate food, and from those other things whereby the body is wont to be cherished and delighted. This we find observed by Daniel, chap. x. verses 2, 3; *I was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth.* This also was the use in the primitive Church, yet so that, as Augustine testifies, *no one should be urged to severities which he could not bear; nor that be imposed upon any one which he refused,* *De morib. eccl. lib. 1. cap. 33.*

Let these things suffice for resolving the first doubt.

2. As to festival days; it is objected that the Jews were even bound to the observance of them after they had embraced Christianity, because God commanded the festivals instituted under the old Testament to be observed for ever. It is expressly said concerning the Passover, *Ye shall keep it*

as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations for ever, Exod. xii. 14. The same command is given concerning the Sabbath, Exod. xxxi. 16. And of every other feast it is said, Levit. xxiii. 21, *It shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.*

I answer, That Hebrew word, *Gnolam*, which interpreters sometimes render *eternal*, sometimes *everlasting*, and sometimes *an age*, denotes perpetuity either *absolute*, or for *a period*; i. e. limited according to the nature of the thing. It denotes an *absolute* eternity, when it is predicated of God, or of other eternal things: as when it is said, *The truth of God abideth for ever*, or when God himself is called *eternal*. It denotes *a period*, or *a circumscribed* perpetuity, in regard to the condition of the subject, when it is predicated of things in their nature frail and mutable: As in Deut. xv. 17, concerning a servant who did not wish to go free, *Thou shalt take an awl and thrust it through his ear, and he shall be thy servant for ever.* So 1 Sam. xxvii. 12, Achish said concerning David, *He hath made his people utterly to abhor him, therefore he shall be my servant for ever.* Latin authors speak after the same manner. Thus Horace,

“ Who sells his freedom in exchange for gold,
(Freedom, for mines of wealth too cheaply sold,)
Shall make *eternal* servitude his fate,
And feel a haughty master's galling weight.”

Francis's Hor. Ep. x. L. 1.

Thus the Schoolmen are accustomed to affirm that ungodly men are justly punished in *the eternity of God*, because they have sinned *in suo æterno, in their own eternity*. In all these places by the word *eternal* we are to understand nothing else than the longest duration of a thing according to its nature and condition. So, then, with respect to the feasts and other Jewish ceremonies, which God enjoined to be observed for ever, that the eternity was not absolute, but is to be received in a limited sense, according to the condition of the subjects. And this limitation extended to the advent of Christ and the revelation of the Gospel. This Jeremiah foretold, Chap. xxxi. 31, *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with*

the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. So Moses himself, Deut. xviii. foretels the coming of a new prophet. St. Paul, in Heb. ix. 10, asserts that those legal ceremonies were *imposed until the time of reformation*: and in Galat. iii. 24, 25, he says, that the law was *a Schoolmaster to lead to Christ*, after whose coming we were to be no longer under this School discipline. Since, therefore, holy days and other ceremonies had a limited condition, in the purpose of God, their eternity (as it is called) is for a period, and limited.

Lastly, it is objected, that Christians are not yet freed from the observation of days: For in the Church we celebrate the feast of Easter, of the Nativity of Christ, Pentecost, and some others: we appear, therefore, not yet to have shaken off the yoke of Jewish ceremonies.

We answer; In the Jewish festivals there was something moral, something ceremonial. In that they had a certain portion of time set apart for the public worship of God, and for the solemn testifying of gratitude for benefits received; this was moral, and natural, and common to them with all other nations: but as to their being bound to observe this or that special season, and the peculiar ceremonies which were significative of things to come, this rested on the obligation of a Divine command: and these and the other things of the same kind were ritual, temporary, and belonged to the Jews alone, in reference to their times. We, then, are delivered from the *ceremonial* observance of days, but not from the *moral*. Whatever, therefore, some are wont to adduce to the contrary, it was piously and prudently provided by the ancient fathers, that those great benefits of the Incarnation, the Passion, the Resurrection, and Ascension of the Son of God, and the Descent of the Holy Spirit, should be celebrated annually in the Church: the remembrance of all which we consecrate by stated anniversaries; lest, as Augustine says, *in the rolling wheel of time an ungrateful forgetfulness creep upon us.* De Civit. Dei, lib. 10. cap. 4.

First, the duty of gratitude towards God demands it: for public benefits are to be acknowledged publicly, and

to be celebrated by a public offering of thanks: which cannot be conveniently done, unless they who govern the Church or the State prescribe appointed days in which we may assemble; See Joel ii. 15.

Secondly, Reason admonishes us, that to render the remembrance of past benefits more efficacious, they should be recollected (if it can be commodiously done) at that very time in which they were originally bestowed: for a recollection of the day itself excites the mind to a more attentive consideration of the benefit. Hence that injunction of God to the Jews, Exod. xiii. 3, 4, *Remember this day in which ye came out of Egypt, &c. This day, I say, came ye out, in the month Abib.*

Thirdly, the interest of the people recommends it; By occasion of these festivals, the chief mysteries of our salvation are opened to them; which we may see in the sermons of the Fathers, who always treated those subjects which were connected with the institution of the feasts themselves. Thus Nazianzen, in sanct. Pentecost. says, *Our feasts are celebrated in a spiritual manner; for each solemnity hath its peculiar tendency; as the word hath to those who attend upon the word: but that is the most powerful out of the word, which is best suited to the time.*

Fourthly, the examples of the pious confirm it. For in the old Testament besides the festivals appointed by God, we read that others were introduced on occasion of new mercies: the feast of Purim, or *of lots*, instituted by Mordecai, and approved by the Church, Esth. ix. 27: the feast of Dedication, in memory of the reparation of the temple, and of the deliverance from the tyranny of Antiochus, 1 Maccab. iv. 59. Which feast Christ himself honoured by his presence, John x. 22; and, doubtless, he never would have done that, if he had considered a feast appointed by man for the recognition of Divine benefits to be unlawful. Therefore the Church, relying upon these reasons and examples, hath rightly judged that certain holy days should be appointed for the public worship of God, and for the public celebration and acknowledgment of benefits received from God.

But here, that all superstition may be avoided, we must apply certain cautions.

1. We must not think that there is more of holiness in one day than another; but must understand that, on account of the order and regulation of the Church, and for the other reasons above-mentioned, we assemble upon one day rather than another for these exercises of holiness.

2. We must not think that the Christian Church is bound by any necessity to the constant observance of holy days; but must conclude that these days appointed by human authority, may be done away and changed by the same authority if the advantage or necessity of the Church should require it: For (by the rule of law) *Any thing may be dissolved by the causes which may originate it, be they what they may.*

3. Neither must we conclude that private Christians are bound by such necessity to the celebration of festivals, but that they may omit the public solemnization of them, if either necessity or charity require it: but let them take heed lest, upon a false pretext of necessity or charity, they violate the order of the Church, and abuse their Christian liberty. Hostiensis, De feriis.

4. Although certain festival days are distinguished by the names of Apostles or Martyrs, yet we must not think that they are appointed for the worship of them, or are to terminate in the honour of these. For that error of Bellarmine is to be exploded, who, lib. 3, De cultu sanct. cap. 16, asserts that the honour of feast days immediately and determinately pertains to the saints. The holy Fathers judged otherwise: Eusebius, in lib. 4. cap. 15, observes, *We do not worship the Martyrs, but we love them as followers of Christ, of whom we also wish to become followers.* Basil, in Asceticis, cap. 40, says, *It is not proper that Christians should appear together in remembrance of the Martyrs for any other cause than to pray, and by a rehearsal of the constancy of the Martyrs be stirred up to an imitation of like zeal.* These festivals, then, are referred to the remembrance of the saints, by whom Christ hath edified his Church for our own benefit; but for the worship and honour of God alone,

who bestowed upon Apostles and Martyrs whatever they either had or did, or endured, worthy of praise. This is clear by the practice of our Church. For in those festivals which are distinguished by the names of the Apostles, we do not worship the Apostles, or offer incense to them, or, finally, invoke them; but we invoke God alone, and offer thanksgivings to God for those benefits which we have received by the ministry of the Apostles.

5. We must not imagine that the outward performance is a worship acceptable to God, so that nothing else is required by the law of feasts than to cease *from daily works*, and *attend the sacred rites*; as Bellarmin, *De cultu sanct.* lib. 3. cap. 10, would have it; but we must much rather consider that internal operations are required; namely, cessation from the works of sin, elevation of the mind to God, grateful recollection and consideration of those benefits in remembrance of which festivals were instituted: If these things be wanting, we mock God by the outward solemnity of a holy day. Thus spake Ambrose, *De natal. Dom.* ser. 14, *Whatever polluted character be present at the festival, although he may be there in body, he is separated in mind; and whilst he would be serviceable, he is really injurious.*

Lastly, we must beware, lest we pervert holy days to idleness, luxury, and base pleasures altogether unbecoming Christians. For although in publicly observing sacred rites, it is not unlawful to relax the mind, yet we must take heed that that saying of Tertullian, in *Apologet.* be not rightly applied to us; *Is public rejoicing to be thus expressed by public disgrace? Do these things become solemn days, which are unbecoming other days? Shall license in evil be piety? Shall an occasion of luxury be accounted religion?*

Verse 17.

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

The Apostle concluded in the preceding verse, that Christians are not to be judged or condemned because they do not observe the ceremonial law concerning the difference of meats and appointed festivals. Lest this should seem impious to the Jews, who knew that these ceremonies had been sanctioned by God himself, he meets their secret thoughts, and demonstrates the afore-mentioned conclusion by the most solid reason. His reason is derived from analogy: As the shadow hath relation to its body, so have the ceremonies of the law to Christ and the Gospel: but where the body is, it is ridiculous to catch at and embrace its shadow: therefore, since we have Christ and the Gospel, it is foolish to retain ceremonies. But to proceed in order we shall here consider three things:

1. That the rites of the Mosaic law concerning meats, holy days, and other matters were shadows of future things; *they are shadows of things to come.*

2. That the things shadowed out are exhibited and clearly manifested to us in Christ and the Gospel; *but the body is of Christ.*

3. That since it is so, it is meet that these shadows should be abolished; which the Apostle intended to shew by this contrast.

1. *Which are a shadow of things to come.*] That is, Which ceremonies obscurely delineate the offices and benefits of Christ, and the doctrine of the Gospel; for these are those things to come of which the Apostle speaks. Whence Augustine (*contra Faustum*) calls the Mosaic ceremonies *preunciative observations*. And Paul says that *they are*, not that they were, shadows of things to come,

although Christ had then been exhibited, and the Gospel laid open; because he speaks of them as considered in their nature, abstracted from the circumstances of time: for this is the custom of disputants. So that if any one should now be asked, What the legal ceremonies were? he might answer, They are shadows of things to come; not that they now actually exist, or did shadow forth things to come, but that this may be the definition and nature of the ceremonies considered in themselves.

But it may be shewn that the things to come, viz. Christ, and grace, and the doctrine of the Gospel, were shadowed forth in all: but we shall only insist upon those that are particularized by the Apostle in this place, namely, meats and holy days. Concerning meats, that saying of Christ appears most true; *Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but those things which come out of the mouth, and the heart, they defile the man; Matth. xv.* Therefore, that certain meats are forbidden as unclean, is not to be referred to the nature of the things, but to the signification, and to the shadowing forth obscurely of the moral doctrine, which now is clearly taught by the Gospel. The law forbid leavened bread to be eaten, in the seven first days of the Passover, Exod. xii. 15; but what was shadowed forth by this ceremony St. Paul shews, 1 Cor. v. 7, *Purge out the old leaven that ye may be a new lump, &c.* In Levit. xi. various kinds of animals are prohibited as unclean; but it is the fixed opinion of all Divines, that that was done, not on account of any natural uncleanness, but either on account of a moral signification, or for an express distinction of the Jewish church from other nations. The antients for the most part follow that moral signification in their commentaries; and shew in the several animals prohibited, the depraved affections and habits that are to be avoided. Thus Origen, Hom. 7, in Levit. So Tertullian, *De cibis Judaic, from whom it will not be wearisome to quote a few words; That men might be cleansed, beasts are branded: viz. that men who possess the same vices, might be accounted on a level with cattle.* And a little after, *Human habits, actions, and desires are depicted in animals: they are clean if they chew the cud,*

i. e. if they always have the divine precepts in their mouth, &c. When the law forbids swine to be eaten, it reproves a life filthy, and polluted, and delighting in the impurity of vice. Tertulian makes these and many more such remarks. Theodoret follows the same argument, quæst. 11, in Levit. and Augustine embraces the whole matter in these few words, *The meats, says he, which the Jews avoided in cattle, it behoves us to avoid in morals.* More recent commentators think that God had not respect to the particular properties of the animals in those prohibitions; but rather wished to distinguish the body of the Jewish Church by this ceremonial from the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and all other nations. By these rites, therefore, they publicly professed themselves to be the peculiar people of God, both washed and sanctified; whereas all other nations were deemed unclean. The vision of St. Peter, and the application of it, contained in Acts x. verses 11 and 23, favours this opinion. From which it is easy to gather, that by that distinction of animals was shadowed forth the distinction of the Jews from other nations, which is done away through Christ. Whether, therefore, we follow the antient or the more recent opinion, or (which may fitly be done) join them together, it is plain that those distinctions of meats were only shadows of things to come, which are made manifest to all by the Advent of Christ.

Now, as to holy days, the argument is the same. For although they were instituted as a memorial of past benefits; as the Passover, in commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt; the feast of Pentecost, in remembrance of the benefit of the giving of the law; the feast of Tabernacles, in memory of the Divine protection in the wilderness; the Sabbath, in memory of the creation; and so of the rest: yet there was conjoined with them, a shadowing forth and promise of the spiritual benefits to be exhibited in Christ. The deliverance from Egypt, and the Passover of the Jews, shadowed forth our deliverance from the powers of hell, and the death of Christ: the feast of Pentecost, and that celebration of the giving of the law shadowed forth the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the writing of

the law in the tables of the heart by the same Spirit. The feast of Tabernacles delineated the pilgrimage of a pious man through the desert of this world to the heavenly country; the Sabbath represented the spiritual gladness and rest imparted to the conscience by Christ; and the feast of the New Moon, the enlightening of the Church by Christ, *the Sun of righteousness*, or the sanctification of a new life. Not to trace every instance, we may say with the Apostle, Heb. x. 1, *This ceremonial law was a shadow of good things to come, not the very image of the things.* But the substantial benefits themselves are now bestowed upon us Christians, the shadows being taken away.

But here it may be asked whether the pious under the old Testament, before the appearance of Christ and the revelation of the grace of the Gospel, enjoyed only these empty shadows; or were also made partakers of Christ and his substantial blessings. For since in these ceremonies there was not salvation, righteousness, or the remission of sins, they were the most miserable of mortals if their salvation depended upon these alone. *For it was impossible that the blood of bulls or of goats, or any external ceremonies, should take away sins,* Heb. x. 4.

We answer, that they used these shadows according to the Divine command; but they penetrated by faith even to the substance itself, viz. to Christ veiled under these ceremonies. They were, therefore, partakers of spiritual good things like as we; but those good things which were proposed obscurely and sparingly under the old Testament, are exhibited clearly and fully under the New. Whence Clemens, in Strom. 6, observes, *There is one Testament of salvation from the beginning of the world, although there seems a difference in the mode of bestowing it.* And Augustine, in Evang. John tract. 25, remarks, *To the antients temporal things were promised; spiritual things were figured. They waited for the promises by Moses, and they waited for the promises by Christ.* And more plainly, contra Adimant. cap. 16, *Types and shadows did not impart salvation; but those things which were signified thereby.* And upon those things the Patriarchs fixed the eye of faith: as is expressly said

of Abraham, John viii. 56, *He saw the day of Christ and was glad*; and it is shewn of all, Heb. xi. 13, *These all died in faith, not having received the promises; but having seen them afar off*.

2. *But the body is of Christ.*] That is, In Christ we have those true and solid benefits which were shadowed forth and figured in the aforesaid ceremonies. It will not be necessary to run through the ceremonies minutely: For whether they shadowed forth moral purity, this Christ clearly taught, perfectly exhibited; whether they engaged for the expiation of sin, this Christ merited for us upon the Cross; or promised the participation of heavenly blessings, this also Christ communicated to all his people by the Gospel: to sum up all in a word; Whatever good was concealed in the legal shadows, that we have revealed and held forth by Christ and the Gospel. Upon this, Tertulian, *De Trinit.* remarks, *The authority of the Old Testament totters not, whilst it is upheld by the revelation of the New; nor is the power of the New Testament cut off, whilst it is rooted on the Old.* And Lactantius, in *Instit.* 4, cap. 20, says, *The Testaments are not different; for the New is nothing else than the completion of the Old, and in each there is the same Testator—Christ.* The time, therefore, of the Old Testament was the time of signifying; but this, of manifesting: that was a time in which the good things to be exhibited were prefigured by shadows; this is the time in which the truth itself, and the body of things so prefigured, is exhibited, according to that word of John, *The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*, John i. 17. On many accounts, therefore, the Mosaic rites are compared to shadows; but Christ, and the grace of the Gospel exhibited with Christ, to the body:

1. Because as the body is the cause of the shadow, not vice versa; so Christ was the cause of the Mosaic rites; and he, therefore, had power to abolish the same by his coming.

2. Because as the shadow is the sign of the body; so the types and figures were the signs of Christ to be exhibited.

3. Because as the shadow represents the body very obscurely and imperfectly ; so those legal ceremonies represented Christ.

4. Because as the shadow by itself avails nothing, neither can ; but it is the property of the body to act, and to exert its own power : so those ceremonies by themselves could avail nothing to the remission of sins, sanctification, and salvation ; but all the efficacy of salvation is from Christ.

These things being established, viz. that the ceremonies were shadows, it remains, in the last place, to shew, that Christ having exhibited the body of these shadows, it is right that they should now be done away :

First, Because, as Augustine properly remarks, *The method to be observed in our obedience towards God, is, that whatever God directs in appointing particular times, is so to be observed as he directs it.* Now God, in his wisdom, so directed times, that he would have shadows, and the discipline of a tutor, to prevail until the coming of Christ ; but when Christ, the Sun of righteousness, arose, he would have those shadows to flee, and the meridian light of the Gospel every where to shine. So the Apostle argues in Gal. iv. ; *When we were children, we lived under those elements as under tutors : but since God hath sent his Son to deliver us, we ought not to recur to these weak and beggarly elements.* Therefore, as it would have been contemptuous, not to use these ceremonies under the Old Testament, when enjoined by God himself, so it is folly to desire to use the same now under the Gospel, when they are done away by Christ himself.

Secondly, because means are used in order to an end ; and the end of the ceremonies was the utility of the signification, which has now ceased and that for two reasons : first, because the things which were signified as future, are no longer future, but accomplished : therefore, they would be false shadows, since they would assume that to be future, which is past. Secondly, because the doctrine of the Gospel now clearly propounds all those mysteries which were only obscurely suggested by the ceremonies. Let the

carnal celebration, therefore, now end, when the spiritual signification shines forth: for what need is there of a little lamp in the splendour of the sun?

Thirdly, it is not now proper to retain the ceremonies, because far better things are substituted in their places. For Christ hath abrogated the ancient rites, not by condemning them, but fulfilling them: for he so removed the shadows and representations, as to exhibit to men the substantial and real body in their room. Whence that declaration of Augustine, *Advers. Judæos, The people of Christ are not now compelled to observe what they observed in the times of the prophets, not because those things are condemned, but because they are changed for the better.*

And here just occasion presents itself for reproving those who, notwithstanding this abrogation of the ceremonies, are so delighted with shadows, that they place more holiness in following rites and human traditions than in obeying the Gospel. But of this superstition we shall have occasion to treat hereafter. Let it now suffice to have spoken thus much concerning the argument of the Apostle derived from analogy, or the relation of the body to the shadow.

Verse 18.

Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels; intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.

We shall inquire first into the sense of these words, and then proceed to the subject matter.

Let no man beguile you of your reward.] This word *καταβραβεύετω*, which is here translated *beguile you of your reward*, is taken from the gymnastic contests, in which the judge and umpire of the contest is called *βραβευς*, or *βραβευτης*: hence *βραβευειν* means *to regulate the contest, to dispense the rewards, &c.* But from this special signification it is transferred to a general one, and denotes him who regulates and defines any act or matter in that mode in which those umpires were accustomed to do. But *καταβραβευειν*, as here used, means to discharge this office perversely, and unjustly to decide, not on the ground of right, but according to his own will, to withdraw and take away the prize. Hence Beza translates it, *Let no umpire determine concerning you.* Erasmus, *Let no one intercept the prize from you*; others, *Let no one defraud you of your reward.* But to confess the truth, that Greek word cannot be expressed in a single Latin one: Every interpreter, therefore, adopts what best pleases him, since, indeed, by this one word, all those things are denoted which different interpreters adduce.

The participle *θελων* *willing* some join with the preceding words, and take it to be the same with *'εθελοντης*, *voluntary*, in that sense in which Cicero, in his Philippics, called *Asinus a voluntary Senator*, and *chosen by himself*: so these seducers were umpires, but *voluntarily*, and chosen by themselves; for this power of judging and dispensing they

arrogated to themselves without any right. *Let no one be a voluntary umpire*, says Beza. Others think that this word *θέλων* is placed with an ellipsis, and supply the words *to do this*, i. e. *to defraud you*, or *exercise the authority of a judge over you*. So the Greek Scholiast, and Calvin. Tremellius follows the Syriac, as though it were to be read, *Μηδεις ὑμᾶς καταβραβεύειν θέλοι*, translating it, *Let no one be willing to render you blamable*. I embrace the first interpretation; because the second is forced to supply something by conjecture, and the third is opposed to the Greek manuscripts.

In worship of angels,] Some take this to be spoken of a certain new worship, or of new articles of religion, which the seducers boasted that they had received by extraordinary visions from angels: by *the worship of angels*, therefore, they understand the worship delivered or revealed by angels. But others apply it to the doctrine of the seducers concerning angels being worshipped: which opinion appears to me the more probable, as well because Paul himself, at the beginning of the Epistle, so studiously made angels subordinate, and subjected them to Christ as their Creator; as because it is evident from history, that the worship of angels prevailed in those regions of Phrygia, and on that account was afterwards condemned in the Laodicean council, as Theodoret writes.

Intruding into those things which he hath not seen.] Erasmus thinks that the original term *ἐμβάλειν*, means to walk in a stately manner, as the gods and kings were accustomed to do in tragedies; for the buskins worn by tragedians, were called *εμβάδες*; from which he would derive *ἐμβάλειν*. But Budæus,* with more truth, and more according to the use of the Greek language, shews that the word means

* Budæus, or William Bude, a Frenchman; celebrated for his acquaintance with classical literature in the sixteenth century. He was a native of Paris, the son of John Bude, lord of Yere and Villiers, and studied at Orleans to qualify himself for the legal profession, when, after a while, conceiving an ardent desire for literature, he devoted himself to it with such ardour, that he became one of the most learned men of his time. His first

nothing else than *to place the foot upon, or to enter into possession of* any thing: For thus did the false apostles thrust themselves into things the most unknown and obscure, as into a house very familiar to them, or in their own possessions, where they governed and determined as they pleased, and imposed upon Christians according to their own will.

Those last words, *vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind*, are explained in different modes, but with no difference of sense. For whether we render it by *the sense of his flesh*, or by *the mind of his flesh*, or by *his fleshly mind*, or, lastly, by *the persuasion of his flesh*; it speaks the same thing, viz. that the seducers drew their doctrine, not from the revelation of the Divine Spirit, but from the presumption of human reason. But we dismiss the explanation of the words and proceed to the matter itself.

In these 18th and 19th verses is contained the second part of the Apostle's conclusion, which is an inference from the discussion already considered. And here he rejects that corruption of religion which had its origin from a deceitful philosophy. For as the Jews (whom he had refuted in the two preceding verses) obtruded the Mosaic ceremonies; so others introduced curious speculations from the schools of the philosophers, and particularly the worshipping of angels, which is found among the dogmas of the Platonists. For Plato, in 4. De legibus, prescribes, that, after the tutelary gods, dæmons are to be worshipped. And in Epinomide, he says, *that dæmons ought to be worshipped because they hold the middle place between the gods and men; and discharge the office of interpreters: they are therefore to be worshipped* *χάριν τῆς εὐθήμεου διαπορείας*, *for their propitious and happy intercession between God and men.*

work was a translation of some treatises of Plutarch; and in 1508, he published notes on the Pandects. But his great reputation as a critic depends on his treatise "De Asse," relating to the weights, coins, and measures of the antients; and his "Commentarii Linguæ Græcæ," a rich treasure of Philological science. He was employed on embassies by Louis XII. and by Francis I., the latter of whom made him his Secretary and Librarian. He died in 1540, in the 73d year of his age.

In this verse the Apostle does three things.

1. He deeply brands those seducers, and concludes that no regard is to be paid to them; and that on two accounts: First, because they usurp the authority of judges to themselves; secondly, because they abuse the same to defraud the people. Both these are intimated in the words, *Let no man beguile you of your reward, according to his will.*

2. He shews in what instance they abused the authority usurped, and endeavoured to deceive the people, viz. whilst they suggest to them a foolish humility, and the worship of angels; *in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels.*

3. He reproves this erroneous doctrine on a double charge, viz. that of ignorance and pride. It arises from ignorance; for *they intruded into those things which they had not seen*; and from pride, for these things they prated about, not being taught of the Spirit, but relying upon their own wit, *vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind.*

Let no man beguile you of your reward.] He rebukes those seducers, and shews they were not to be accounted of: 1. Because in sacred things which had respect to the worship of God, and the salvation of men, they arrogate to themselves, by no right whatever, an imperious power of determining and decreeing, even as the judges were accustomed in contests. For these voluntary umpires decreed the reward of eternal life to be granted to no one who was unwilling to subscribe to their novel doctrines. But whence did they derive this authority of defining? Who made them lords over the faith of Christians? Who gave them the power of framing new doctrines? They truly usurped to themselves this office, and became voluntary judges by their own suffrages. Therefore, inasmuch as the Apostle strikes at this usurped authority of seducers, we must understand that such power is granted to no mortal man, that he should determine any thing in matters of faith and religion of his own will; but is bound to judge according to the rule of law, i. e. according to the sacred Scriptures: *If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, Isa. viii. 20. Prating without the authority of*

Scripture is of no credit, says Jerom, in Cap. 1. ad Titum. And Lactantius, Instit. lib. 3. cap. 13, observes, *A man, be he who he may, if he trusts in himself, that is, in a man, is certainly arrogant, since he presumes to claim for himself what human condition does not admit.* It is, then, above the condition of man to be an absolute judge in matters of faith. Hence estimate Romish tyranny, which has claimed to itself for a long time this very power over all Christians. What pleases them, either must forthwith be believed, or they brandish their anathemas. If you require the testimonies of Scripture to support the faith, they say that they are judges of all controversies, and of the Scriptures themselves; nay, that they can prescribe articles of faith from unwritten traditions. But what else is this than to rule over the churches, and the consciences of men in the same manner in which umpires were accustomed to do in the games and contests?—Thus far concerning the first mark of seducers, which they possess in common with our Papists.

Secondly, those seducers are reprehended and rejected, not only because they usurped to themselves undue and illegal power, but also because they abused the same to deceive Christians. How? Namely, whilst they exercised them in vain worship and toil, from which they could derive no profit; and whilst they led them from the straight course, and from the mark set before them in the word, to their own inventions. For as a director of the games, if he should order any one to run (as they say) without the course, would defraud him of his prize; because he never would arrive by that way at the goal: so they who direct Christians to seek salvation apart from Christ, endeavour to *beguile them of their reward*; because they never could gain the prize of their high calling: For *we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end*, Heb. iii. 14. Therefore, be it established, that whoever endeavour to lead us from the simplicity of the Gospel and from Christ, do, by the same effort, endeavour to beguile us of our reward. Therefore, let them be despised and withstood; for they are *voluntary judges*, they are

deceitful impostors.—Thus much concerning the two marks which are branded on these seducers.

In humility and worshipping of angels.] Some explain these words of the pretended humility of the seducers themselves, and of a certain new worship which they feigned to have been made known to them by angelic revelations. But (as we noted at the beginning) the opinion of the antients is the more probable, which most of our own writers, and even of the Papists, follow; viz. that the Apostle spake of a certain preposterous humility, and worship of the angels themselves, to which they attempted to persuade Christians.

But these words, *in a humility and worshipping of angels*, are connected; because, under the pretext of humility, they introduced that worship. For they argued, that we were unworthy to approach God directly; therefore, the intercession of angels was to be solicited, and that they were to be invoked to conduct us to God. As to the *humility*, then, or *lowliness of mind*, we must understand that it was not a true and laudable, but a preposterous and superstitious humility, forced upon the minds of Christians, by those seducers. Now I call that preposterous which makes a man dejected in what he ought to be joyful; or which diminishes and lessens his confidence in those things in which it is laudable to have the greatest confidence. Such a humility, then, they induce, who wish us on account of our unworthiness, not to implore forthwith the power and assistance of our *God-man* Mediator, but to go first to angels or saints.

But this foolish lowliness of mind is rightly reprov'd, because Christ himself is more united to us both by nature and love than the angels; and the Scriptures command us to go unto him with boldness, and to no other Mediator: Rom. v. 2, *By whom we have access*; and Ephes. iii. 12, *In whom we have boldness, and access with confidence by the faith of him*; and Heb. iv. 16, *Let us come with boldness unto the throne of grace*. For he, therefore, humbled himself, and took our nature, that we might approach him the more boldly as our elder brother: *I can speak more safely*, says

Augustine, and more cheerfully to my Jesus, than to any of the holy spirits of God, De vis. infirm. lib. 2. cap. 2. That humility, then, which leads us from Christ the Mediator is to be renounced: *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins, &c.* 1 John ii. 1, 2.

And worshipping of angels.] That improper lowliness of mind begets superstitious worship. The Latin word *colo*, commonly used for *worship*, is of a general signification; and we are rightly said *colere*—to *revere*, not only God, but parents, or any other superiors. Thus speaks Cicero: *Duty is that by which we reverence, and colimus, worship superiors*; and elsewhere, *Thy Father, whom colui—I worshipped and loved.* But the Greek word, *θρησκείας*, which the Apostle uses, is wont to be referred to religious or Divine worship: For it is derived (as Plutarch writes) from the Thracians, among whom Orpheus first taught the worship of the gods. Therefore, the Colossians in this place are admonished, lest, being deceived by impostors, they should give Divine or religious worship to angels.

But because, from this and similar places, there arises between us and the Papists a great controversy about the worship of angels, and deceased saints, who are *ισαγγελοι*, *equal to the angels*, Luke xx. 36; in order that it may be seen with whom the truth lies, we shall briefly dispatch these three points. First, we shall shew a distinction of worship: Secondly, demonstrate that religious worship is due to God alone: Thirdly, prove that this worship rendered formerly by these seducers to angels and saints, and now by the Papists, is forbidden.

1. As to the first; *Worship is obedience rendered to any one on account of his excellence.* But under the word obedience I include the act of the mind, whereby we apprehend the excellence of the person, or of the thing honoured; the act of the will, whereby we submit inwardly to him, and are ready to acknowledge it by suitable offices; and the act of the body, whereby we shew the outward sign of our humility. But now this worship is exercised with a threefold difference, according to a threefold excel-

lency of the things which are worshipped. There is a certain worship of civil subjection which is offered to a person by reason of a particular eminence and dominion which he hath over another; with this civil worship we worship magistrates, parents, preceptors, &c. There is another worship of moral reverence, which is offered to persons or things on account of their excellence considered in themselves, by reason of virtue, station, or any dignity apart from authority in the person honoured, or subservience in the person honouring. We worship learned, pious, and wise men with this moral worship, although we are not subject to them by any political subordination: we venerate saints and angels with this same worship, yet in a higher degree, because they are endowed with more excellent gifts, virtues, and graces: *We honour them with love, not with service.* August. De vera relig. cap. 55. And, lastly, there is the worship of sacred religion, or *latria*, which is rendered to him alone whom we apprehend as the author of creation and of our blessedness. Thus much concerning the difference of worship.

2. Now let us shew that religious worship, whether it be called *latria* or *dulia*, is to be given to God alone, not to angels or saints.*

It is shewn, first, from the interpretation of the word itself, and that by the concurrence of the Heathen, the Fathers, and Schoolmen. *Religion*, says the Orator, is that which produces regard and service to some superior nature, which he calls *divine*; and elsewhere; *Religion is that which is comprised in the pious worship of the gods.* Lactantius, in his Instit. lib. 4. cap. 29, remarks, *We are tied and bound to God, by the bond of piety, whence Religion itself derives its name.* So Augustine, De civit. Dei, lib. 10. cap. 1. *If we merely call it worship, it does not appear due to God alone; but if we more distinctly call it Religion, it signifies not any worship, but that of God.* So Aquinas, Q. 2. qu. 81. art. 1,

* For some readers it may perhaps be well to observe, that *latria* and *dulia* are terms adopted by the Romish Church in reference to divine worship; that *latria* means the highest kind of religious invocation, and *dulia* is intended to designate what they regard of an inferior character.

Religion hath reference to God: and art. 8, Religion is a virtue exhibiting service to God in those things which especially pertain to God. Hilary, 8 De Trinit. says, *Religion paid to the creature is accursed.* From all these testimonies it is plain that religious worship is to be paid to God alone.

Secondly, the same is evident from clear testimonies of Scripture. From Deut. vi. 13. *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* From Gal. iv. 8, *Ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods; εδουλοσατε.* Religious service δουλεια *dulia*, therefore, is due only to him who by nature is God. In Rev. xix. 10, the angel would not be adored by John: *See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant. Worship God.*

Thirdly, the same is proved by reason. For the foundation of religious worship, whether you call it *latria* or *dulia*, is infinite excellence apprehended under the consideration of our first cause and chief good: it is not a sufficient reason, therefore, for offering to them, that angels and saints are endowed with supernatural gifts, or procure for us many good things, unless they are the first and chief cause to us, and of our chief good: So says Augustine, tract. 23, in Evang. John, *This is the Christian religion, to worship but one God; because only the one God renders the soul happy:* and lib. 22, contr. Faust. *We worship the martyrs with the worship of fellowship and love, whereby they also in this life worshipped holy men,* Where it is to be observed, that dead saints are worshipped with the same worship with which they were whilst alive, and, therefore, not religious worship.

3. In the third place we must shew, that the Papists ascribe to angels, and even to saints, supreme religious worship, no less than these seducers, who are censured for introducing the *worshipping*, θρησκεια, of angels. For Bellarmin says, that the heresy of Simon Magus is reprov'd in this place, who taught that certain angels were to be adored as lesser gods, because they made the world; and prescribed sacrifices to be offered to the same, and, in fact, paid to the angels the highest worship of adoration; but that this does not affect the Papists, who only render to them *dulia*,

i. e. worship inferior to that which is Divine. But this jesuitical tergiversation avails nothing. For the Apostle forbids not this or that, but *all worshipping* of angels, i. e. all religious worship not founded in the word of God, whether that used by the followers of Magus, or the Papists. It is, then, ridiculously said, That he forbids that religious worship which Simon Magus paid to angels, therefore, not that which the Papists render: for he forbid both. Moreover the Platonists themselves, or the heretics did not worship the angels as in their apprehension first causes, but as ministers under God; they, therefore, might use that distinction of *latría* and *dulia*, as well as our Papists. Lastly, the Fathers in this place testify that the same worship is forbidden which the Papists daily render, viz. the worship of invocation, whereby they acknowledged the angels as Mediators between God and man. For so Theodoret and Chrysostom assert; the former of whom declares that oratories were built to the angel Michael by those idolatrous worshippers of angels; which every one knows is also done by the Papists.

But since the Papists, whatever worship they pay to angels or saints, always escape through this loop-hole, viz. That they do not render it with the intent of worshipping them with *latría*, as the first cause and authors of good, but with *dulia*, as servants most pleasing to God, by whose assistance they more easily obtain whatever they require from God, the fountain of all good;—we shall clearly shew, that they do render that to angels and saints, which pertains to that highest worship of *latría*. Laying aside, therefore, all that tacit mind and intention of theirs, which God alone knows, we shall deliver our judgment upon this point from the external actions, which meet our eyes and ears.

1. Prayer, or religious invocation, is an act of *latría*, or of the highest worship: for when we pray religiously, we acknowledge that he upon whom we call can hear us, that he can deliver us, that he can give us those good things which we ask; Whence that declaration in the Psalms, Psal. l. 15, *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver*

thee, and thou shalt glorify me. But the Papists call upon angels and saints; they think that they can be delivered by their aid; and, finally, they honour them for their deliverance. Now, truly, all these things are proper to God alone; to be every where present, and to hear the prayers of all that call upon him, to deliver supplicants from impending evils, to bestow gifts, and, lastly, to be adored with religious honours for this his compassion. Since, therefore, in the very act of invocation, these things are ascribed to saints and angels, *latria*, or Divine worship, is paid to them. Upon this, Tertullian, *De orat.* cap. 1, writes, *that Christ taught us that our religious intreaties should be offered to him alone whom we believe every where to hear and to see us.* And advers. Marcion, 4, *They who supplicate another god, and not the Creator, do not pray to him, but dishonour him.*

2. To make a vow to another, is an act of *latria*, due to God alone. Isa. xix. 21, and Psal. l. 14, *Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High;* and Psa. lxxvi. 11, *Vow and pay unto the Lord your God.* Aquinas himself, Q. 2. quæst. 88. art. 1, thus defines a vow, *A vow is a promise made to God, by which we dedicate the things promised to the Divine service.* But now the Papists cannot deny that they *may* make vows to angels and saints. Whence, in the profession of the Friars Predate, that formula of vowing is customary, *I vow to God, and to the blessed Mary, and to all the saints, &c.* Nay, when in any danger, they utter some vow to the saint whose aid they implore. What does Bellarmin say to all this? *The vow is made to God for a token of gratitude towards the first cause of all good things; but to saints or angels, as a token of gratitude towards the intercessors by whom we receive benefits from God.* But this does not excuse the idolatry; because, whatever be the intention or reference, an act of *latria* cannot be offered to creatures. For what Bellarmin says of vows, might be said of sacrifices under the Old Testament, viz. That sacrifice was to be made to God alone, in token of gratitude and obedience towards the First Cause;

but that sacrifices might be offered to angels or departed patriarchs in token of gratitude and obedience towards mediators and intercessors.

3. To erect a temple (i. e. a house of prayer and of religious worship), to raise altars, and offer incense in honour of any one, is to pay Divine honour to him. Concerning temples, Augustine, *Contra Max. Arian*, remarks, *If we were to erect a temple to an angel, we should be anathematized from the truth of Christ and the Church of God.* So concerning altars; *An altar is that which testifies that he to whom it is erected is accounted a God.* Concerning incense it is evident as well among the heathen as the Jews, that it was a token of Divine honour ordained for his own worship by God, *Exod. xxx. 37.* All these the antient heretics assigned to angels; these the Papists assign to angels and saints. Concerning temples, Bellarmin says, *De cultu sanct. lib. 3. cap. 4, Sacred houses are rightly erected and dedicated, not only to God, but also to the saints: and this that there he may be worshipped and invoked as a patron to whom it is dedicated, for instance, Peter or Paul.* But God claims this honour to himself, *My house shall be called the house of prayer, Matth. xxi. 13.* Concerning altars, the same author confesses, they are dedicated to saints, but not with the purport of an altar, but of a monument or sepulchre. But what madness is this to refer those things to other respects and inferior worship which God himself in his word, hath confined to the worship of latria? Lastly, concerning incense, the same Bellarmin concedes, that sweet odours are burnt to the images whether of angels or of saints: But these ceremonies (as hath been said) refer to the outward acts of latria. We conclude, therefore, with the Apostle, as well against antient heretics as these new ones, *Let no man beguile you into the worshipping of angels or of saints;* for what is peculiar to God is rendered to creatures by both. Let us proceed, and dismiss the rest briefly.

Intruding into those things which he hath not seen.] He rejects this doctrine of the worshipping of angels on a two-

fold account. First (as ye perceive) because it proceeded from those who are accustomed rashly to invent and boldly to speak about matters altogether unknown to them. For when he says *intruding into those things which he hath not seen*, his meaning is, *Determining or decreeing concerning those things the certainty of which he neither sees to be revealed in the word of God to the eye of faith, nor has investigated by the judgment of a sound reason, nor comprehended in a way of certain knowledge.* Towards these, that remark of the Apostle, 1 Tim. i. 7, applies, *Desiring to be teachers, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.* For if you ask those who would have angels and saints to be worshipped by us with invocations, dedications of temples and altars, promising of vows, and other religious ceremonies, whence they learn that this worship is to be paid them; they cannot say that they learn it from the word of God, or from the example of prophets or apostles, or from any certain ground, but that they only so determine of their own will concerning things altogether unknown to them. Proceed and ask them, since they would have saints and angels to be invoked by us, how they can persuade us that they hear always and receive the prayers of all those who supplicate them: Some will answer, that angels and saints, from the beginning of their happiness, see all things which are performed by us, in the mirror of the Divinity; others think that our prayers are revealed by God himself to those whom we invoke, from the very instant we utter our prayers; some suppose that the saints know the prayers of men from the relation of angels. But of these things they have nothing established by sound reason. So Cajetan, in Qu. 2. qu. 88. art. 5, ingenuously confesses, *We are not certain that the saints hear our prayers, though we piously believe it.* They intrude themselves, therefore, into those things which they know not.

Hence we may infer:

1. That their bold curiosity is not to be endured who intrude themselves into the determining of things the investigation of which surpasses human wit. For, as the

Apostle prudently advises, Rom. xii. 3, *Let no one think more highly than he ought to think; but let him think soberly. Where an obscure matter exceeds our measure, and the holy Scripture does not clearly help us, human conjecture rashly presumes to determine anything.* August. ad Optat. Epist. 157.

2. Concerning things relating to religion, nothing should be determined without a sure foundation; but that foundation is the word of God; for whatever things we see relating to our salvation we see in this. He who obtrudes any thing which he did not find there, hath not seen it, but imagined, as in a dream, that he hath seen it.

3. Our Church is not to be condemned because she does not receive those dogmas about purgatory, indulgences, the worship of saints, and other things of the same sort: since (if we should allow, which, however, we cannot allow, that they are not repugnant to the word of God,) it is certain, neither the Fathers nor the Papists found any of these in the Scriptures. And we are not bound to believe men when they intrude upon us those things which they have not seen.

4. They, therefore, exercise tyranny over the Church, who pronounce as heretics, and anathematize, all who will not hold those comments of men for articles of faith.

Thus far concerning the defect of certain knowledge in these seducers.

Vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.] Here again the Apostle reprehends the aforementioned doctrine; because, not only do the authors of it labour ignorantly, but, moreover, are puffed up with pride, and thence presume that their inventions are the dictates of truth itself. For *the fleshly mind* denotes the reason of the animal man, or perspicacity not enlightened by the Divine Spirit. Therefore, they rashly think that they can discover truth in the business of religion by their own acuteness of understanding, whereas *the natural man cannot receive the things which are of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Whence Athenagoras, in his apology for Christians, rightly observes, *Although the philosophers did as much as reason could, yet they found not out*

*the truth concerning God, because they would know it, not from God, but each for himself.**

Three properties of impostors may, therefore, be observed in this place.

1. In Divine things to have confidence in the acuteness of their reason, and to think that they can find out the mysteries of religion by the light of nature. This was the fault of the antient heretics, this is the fault of the Papists, who in matters of Religion and faith hold as many dogmas derived from human reason, as from the Scriptures.

2. To love these inventions of their own brain with a certain foolish self-complacency, and to exhibit, like apes, this most deformed offspring of their own conceit, for the highest and fairest wisdom. This was the custom of all heretics, who despised, in comparison of these their inventions, the doctrines clearly delivered in the Scriptures, as things placed before their feet.

3. Not only to love and to extol these doctrines springing from their fleshly mind, but, moreover, to be so puffed up as to account these their dreams for the revelations of the Holy Spirit himself. They, therefore, imagine, that they are filled with the Spirit, when they are inflated and puffed up with empty wind. I might confirm all these things by examples from the antient heretics; but it is not needful to repeat old things: consider the Papists, who in all those points which they thrust upon Christian people without the authority of the word, blush not to usurp that affirmation of the Apostles, *It seemed good to the Holy Spirit*

* Athenagoras:—This Author was an Athenian Philosopher of the second century. Removing from Athens to Alexandria, he was there converted to Christianity, and some time afterwards made master of the Christian Catechetical School in that city, and became equally remarkable for his zeal for Christianity, as for his great learning; both which are apparent from the Apology above-mentioned, which he addressed to the Emperor Aurelius and his son Commodus. He distinguished himself also by another work upon the Resurrection. These pieces are written in a style truly Classical, and have been several times printed together: the last and best edition is that of Dehair, in Greek and Latin, with the Notes of various Critics, published at Oxford, in 1706.—Clement of Alexandria and Pantænus were among the Scholars of Athenagoras.

and to us.—Thus much concerning the second species of impostures, which hath its foundation in the cunning of human wit.

Verse 19.

And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

The Apostle proceeds in refuting the doctrine of the seducers concerning the worship of angels; and does it by a new argument, and the weightiest of all: But thus his instruction would run: Those are not to be heard by you who endeavour to draw you away from Christ your Head: but this they do who intrude the worship of angels; therefore both they and their doctrine are to be rejected. He omits the major proposition because it is clear of itself: He expresses the minor in deep terms, *Not holding the Head.* For these words must be connected with the preceding, in which those who introduce the worship of angels are censured because they intrude themselves into unknown things; because they are puffed up by an opinion of their wisdom; and now he adds, in the last place, because they hold not Christ the Head. Then he joins an amplification of this argument, borrowed from the effects of the head, and their fruit. Two effects are touched upon: The first; this Head supplies all things necessary to its members. The second, it binds and knits together the same as well to itself, as to each other. Lastly, he notes the fruit; the spiritual augmentation of the Church itself. Therefore, we must not depart from such a Head.

And not holding the head.] This is that capital crime of seducers; Whilst they would have angels to be worshipped, they proceed to diminish the dignity of Christ; for they take away from him the prerogative of the Head. They

hold not the Head, because they themselves neither rightly judge of the virtue and sufficiency of this Head, nor preach it to others. For Christ, *the God-man*, is the Head of the Church : If they acknowledged him to be *God*, they would seek from him alone grace and salvation ; if to be *man*, they would not solicit angels or other men to intercede with God for them ; since they have Christ our elder brother, sitting continually at the right hand of God. Although, therefore, as far as words go, they concede the name of the Head of the Church to Christ, yet they take away from him the reality and the prerogative itself of the Head, whilst they hope more easily to obtain mercy, grace, righteousness, and remission of sins by the meditation of saints or angels, than of Christ ; and, therefore, they offer the worship of invocation to them more frequently and more earnestly than to Christ.

Hence we may infer,

1. The primary object of Satan is, by seducers, who are his ministers, to withdraw Christians from Christ the Head, and to persuade them to rest for salvation upon other aids, not upon Christ alone.

2. They who feel concern for their salvation ought never to turn their eyes from their Head : for if they are plucked away from him by the wiles of seducers, there is an end of salvation.

3. Christians are plucked away, and do not hold the Head, whenever they embrace new doctrines, new worship, new means of salvation, never prescribed or delivered by Christ and his Apostles. *If any man teach any other doctrine, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is proud, knowing nothing.* 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4. Thus far concerning the crime of seducers, viz. that *they do not hold the Head* ; by which argument the Apostle proves that they are to be rejected.

Now, if it be enquired, *Why* they are to be avoided who hold not the Head, or *Why* it is so necessary for us to adhere to the Head ; the Apostle shews it from the effects which flow from the Head, and the fruit of the same ; which are comprehended in these words,

From which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.] He illustrates the effects of Christ the Head by metaphors borrowed from the natural head and body. For as the members, whilst they are joined to the Head, receive life, motion, and sense from it, by arteries, veins, and nerves, and are also connected with each other by certain ligaments: so, whilst Christians cleave to Christ the Head, they receive and draw from him spiritual life by spiritual joints and bands, and, moreover, are united to each other by the strongest ties.

All those things which bind us to Christ, and by which celestial benefits are supplied to us, are called *commissuræ*, or *ᾠφιά*, *joints*; and all those things by which the members cohere together under this Head, and communicate mutual advantages to each other, are termed *juncturæ*, or *σύνδεσμοι*, *bands*. The phrase *nourishment ministered*, must, therefore, be connected with *joints*; and *knit together*, with *bands*. The former has respect to the union of the members with Christ; the latter to the union and binding together of the members with each other; and from both the increase of the Church results. Which two things, for the sake of perspicuity, we shall consider apart.

First, then, the effect which is obtained from cleaving to Christ our Head is this, that *the whole body*, cleaving indeed to him, hath *by joints nourishment ministered*.

Now, truly, the joints by which we are united to Christ the Head, and by which the influence of Christ is derived to us, are the Spirit of Christ, and the gifts of the same Spirit, especially faith, which is the hand whereby spiritual benefits are apprehended. Without the Spirit of Christ, no one is joined to Christ: *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9. Therefore, that we may be quickened and united to Christ, first of all God pours into us the Spirit of Christ. For as that member is not truly united to the head which is not animated with the same essence as the head itself; so neither is that Christian united to Christ who lacks the Spirit of Christ. This Spirit, therefore, is the primary *joint* by which we

touch Christ, Christ us, and one another mutually, and by whom all gifts are derived to us. And among these gifts faith obtains the primary place, by which, as a secondary mean, we are united to Christ, and by which we receive the righteousness of Christ, the remission of sins, and all the grace promised in the Gospel by Christ. *I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst*, John vi. 35. Faith, therefore, is that other *joint* by which we are united to Christ, and by the operation of which the grace of the Gospel is derived to us. For the whole body which thus adheres to Christ the Head by the Spirit and by faith, *hath nourishment ministered*, as we translate *ἐπιχορηγείται*. What is the force of this term? The Greeks call him *χορηγόν* who supplied all the apparatus to the leaders of the antient sacred dances. By a metaphor derived from this, he is said *χορηγεῖν*, to supply the expenditure, who furnishes to another the things necessary for any particular object: and *ἐπιχορηγεῖν*, the word used by the Apostle, signifies the doing of this copiously and abundantly. When, therefore, it is said, that the whole body of the Church hath, by the *joints* afore-mentioned, *nourishment ministered*, the Apostle intends that all things necessary to its salvation are by Christ abundantly supplied to his Church cleaving to him. For whether (to use the terms of the Schools) we regard grace making grateful, or grace gratuitously given, Christ abundantly communicates both to his Church by his Spirit; so that every thing is supplied to it by its Head which it can even wish in order to life eternal. Of that grace which has respect to the justification and sanctification of any particular person, the Apostle testifies, in Rom. viii. 10, and 2 Cor. viii. 9, that it is ministered to all his members by Christ. As to that which relates to the edification of the Church, those gifts of grace are likewise abundantly ministered to the Church; 1 Cor. xii. 7, &c. and Ephes. iv. 11, 12. Thus much as to the prior effect. We may here observe,

1. In the whole body of the Church is not found a single dry member, but all are watered by the streams of grace flowing from Christ the Head.

2. To adhere to the Roman Pontiff as a visible head, does not constitute a true member of the Church; but to adhere to Christ the Head. Therefore, hypocrites, and the ungodly, are not true members of the Catholic Church, to whatever visible church they may join themselves, unless by the joints of the Spirit and of faith they are united to Christ.

3. As to doctrine and saving grace, the whole body of the Church is supplied from its head, not one member by another. Whence Theodoret, on this text, says, *The Church receives both the fountains of doctrine, and the matter of salvation from Christ the Lord.*

4. The Papists err, who will have the Church to draw the doctrine of salvation, not alone from Christ the Head, but from human traditions; who will have her also to receive the matter of salvation, viz. holiness, merit, and satisfactions, not from Christ alone, and the passion of Christ, but from angels, from saints, and the sufferings of saints. If this be true, this statement of the Apostle is not true, that his whole body *hath nourishment ministered*, i. e. is abundantly supplied and furnished for the attainment of salvation by Christ the Head. Thus much concerning the first effect, which is obtained by those who cleave to Christ the Head.

The second effect of the Head is, that by virtue of it *the whole body is by bands knit together.* These words, as hath been said, respect the union and binding of the members not only to their Head, but to one another: for, as it is said in Rom. xii. 5, *We being many are one body in Christ,* &c. And the bands, or *σύνδεσμοι*, by whose power we are knit together in one body, are the same of which we have before spoken; the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit. For the same Spirit which unites us to Christ, is that principal band by which we are united to one another: for *by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body*, 1 Cor. xii. 13. Now after this Spirit is infused into all the ligaments of the Church, it enkindles in every one that excellent gift of charity which is also the firmest bond of cohesion. There are also other ties by which the members of the Church are

bound to one another, viz. the diversity of gifts and callings emanating from the same Spirit: for *God gave some, Apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*; Ephes. iv. 11, 12. These, then, are those eminent effects which are found by all who cleave to Christ the Head; but which are lost by those who do not obtain the Head; for to those who are separated and plucked away, there is no place in this body, where all things are knit together.

It remains now that we speak of the fruit which springs from this union of the members to the Head, and their being knit with one another, and the consequent effects: He expresses this in these words;

Increaseth with the increase of God.] Whilst they continue united to Christ the Head by true faith, and knit together by love, the whole body of the Church *increaseth*, &c. He calls the spiritual growth of a Christian in faith, love, holiness, and all saving grace, *the increase of God*. This growth is said to be *of God*, as well because it is from God, as the primary agent; (*for Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but God giveth the increase*, 1 Cor. iii. 6) as because it tends to the glory of God, as its ultimate end; and as a certain divine and spiritual increase, not carnal or earthly.

We may observe of this increase of the Church,

1. As there is a growth in the natural body in all its parts; so in the mystical body of the Church, all and every member of it increaseth spiritually: Therefore, that is not a living member of this body which does not increase.

2. Not every increase is approved, but that which proceeds from God. For as a member of the natural body is not properly said to increase when it is inflated with any bad humour: so the faith or piety of a Christian man is not increased when his mind is filled with human traditions and will-worship; because those things are not from the Spirit, but from the empty wind of ignorance and pride.

3. Hence we learn not to be deceived by that incongruous mass of opinions of the Romish Church. That kingdom of the Pope may be increased, extended, and spread in every part of the earth; yet it is not proved to be the body of Christ. Why? Because it is increased by an external increase of splendour and temporal things; it is increased by a heap of traditions, and by an accession of many superstitions; not by the true knowledge of God, not by sincere piety; in a word, it is not *the increase of God*. That which the Poet spake of Cyclops may, therefore, be truly said of this Church:

Monstrum, horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen
ademptum,

The light, I say, of the Divine word, by being deprived of which, churches do not increase, but are puffed up.

And thus much for this second member of the Apostle's conclusion, in which he rejects and condemns curious speculations and doctrines, springing from the force of natural reason, not from the revelation of the Divine word.

Verses 20, 21.

*Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of
the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye
subject to ordinances;*

Touch not, taste not, handle not?

From this twentieth verse to the end of the Chapter, the Apostle concludes against the last appearance of false religion, or imposture, which consists in those external ordinances that are imposed upon the consciences of men under the plea of necessity, of worship, or of righteousness. We must observe the order itself of the refutation: For first he concluded that the Jewish ceremonies instituted by God himself, did not bind Christians: he began with these

as the more noble, because they had the appearance of Divine authority: Secondly, he rejected those new doctrines which derived their origin from philosophical subtilty: now, in the last place, he contends against those superstitious observances which, being invented by men, are obtruded, not under the plea of a Divine command, but of supererogation, humility, mortification, &c. as appears from the last verse As to this third and last part of the Apostle's conclusion, it seems to consist of four parts:

1. A general argument against these ordinances introduced by men is proposed; verse 20.

2. What ordinances are here condemned by the Apostle is shewn in particular instances; verse 21.

3. Two arguments against the same ordinances are comprised: one derived from the nature of the things themselves about which these prohibitions are made; the other from the origin of the prohibitions; vers. 22.

4. Under what colour seducers are accustomed to gloss over these their mandates is exposed; and notwithstanding these, it is concluded that there is nothing of true wisdom or piety in these ordinances; vers. 23.

If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, &c.] To be dead in this place, is to be delivered from the rudiments of the world, so that they may have no more authority over you than worldly laws over the dead.

Why as living in the world, &c.] That is, why, as though subject to these worldly rudiments, do ye seek the worship of God and righteousness by things of this kind? For men are subject to the laws of that place in which they live; but they are free from the laws of those countries in which they have ceased to live.

Are ye subject to ordinances.] That is, to new ordinances devised by men, or to old ones revived by human authority. For the original word, *δογματίζεσθαι*, means to be held or bound by the decrees of our masters: as the Academics were bound to adopt the dogmas of Plato: the Peripatetics, of Aristotle; and all the rest, the opinions of those to whose sects they join themselves. Paul, therefore, would have the Colossians, in the business of salvation,

whether in faith or practice, not *be bound* in this manner. This is the verbal meaning: let us next examine the force of the argument itself. The argument, then, proceeds from the less to the greater; Ye have been delivered from those ordinances which God himself prescribed: therefore, ye must be delivered from the burthen of traditions invented by men. Let us consider two things; the cause of this deliverance, and from what we are delivered.

If ye be dead with Christ.] The death of Christ delivers us from the ceremonial worship: which was before expressed by the Apostle in other words, when he said that by this death *the hand-writing of ordinances was blotted out*. For first, the death of Christ merited that all his people should be freed from the bonds of ceremonies: Secondly, he not only merited that, but, a new covenant being confirmed, he actually abolished the old with its appendages, viz. the Mosaic ceremonies: Thirdly, he brought to believers those very blessings which were shadowed forth by the rites; namely, the expiation of sin, righteousness, holiness, and all others: we ought not, therefore, to grasp the shadow in ceremonies, when we have the very substance in the death of Christ. But we have often treated of this point; therefore, it may suffice lightly to glance at it.

Let us, then, consider, from what Christians are delivered. First, they are delivered, by the death of Christ, from the rudiments of the world, i. e. from those ordinances, or from that school discipline by which God himself formerly instructed the world by Moses, and which consisted in weak and elementary matters: This is now supposed, because it was proved above. Secondly, they are delivered from the bondage of rites and human decrees: This is gathered and inferred from the former deliverance: for that interrogation, *Why as living in the world are ye subject to ordinances?* is as if he had said, It is most unjust to impose this yoke upon you; and ye will be most foolish if ye submit to it; for God would not have abrogated the ceremonial worship instituted by himself, that a new one should be devised by men.

From the foregoing remarks these observations arise :

1. They who have given their names to Christ are bound to follow the doctrine of the Gospel alone as to righteousness and salvation. For Ambrose on this passage rightly says ; *Every one who is baptized into Christ, renounces all superstitions, that he may exercise faith alone in Christ.*

2. They who force Christians to Jewish ceremonies, exercise tyranny over the people of God, and require tribute, as it were, from the dead : for the dead are not more delivered from the sway of magistrates, than Christians from the law of Moses. Whence holy Scripture sometimes says, that *we are dead, and delivered from these rudiments* ; sometimes, that *the law itself is made void and dead* ; that it may be understood by all, that the consciences of Christians ought in no way to be subject to them.

3. If not to those, then much less are consciences to be ensnared by ordinances of human invention, so as to be driven to seek holiness, righteousness, and salvation in them. For if they are obtruded for this end, they are crushed by that bolt, *In vain do they worship me by the commandments of men.*

4. Therefore, not only do they sin who invent new decrees in religion, but they who subject themselves to the same, and suffer the liberty procured by the blood of Christ, to be snatched from them. Why are ye subject to ordinances ? says the Apostle : As though he had said, It is your duty to refuse this yoke, and *to walk in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free*, as he advises, Gal. v. 1.

But here, by the way, it is proper to give this admonition ; that all these things are to be understood of those rites and ceremonies which are obtruded as parts of Divine worship, as necessary duties of sanctification and righteousness, as obligatory upon the conscience in themselves. For if ordinances are instituted by those who preside over the Church, for the sake of order ; as about the becoming apparel of ministers, the time of public fasts or festivals, and, finally, of all that external discipline which ought to

be observed in the performance of sacred offices; these do not pertain to superstition, but to the legitimate authority of those who are set over the Church, and for avoiding confusion.—Thus much concerning the general argument, whereby it is proved that Christians are freed from rites.

Verse 21.

Touch not, taste not, handle not.

The Apostle had condemned the audacity of the seducers, who, when God himself would have us to be freed from the ceremonial law, yet dared to load the consciences of Christians with human rites and traditions. He now shews, by particular instances, what those rites were for which the false apostles contended: and this he does in the way of mimicry, by introducing their very words and decrees, *Touch not, taste not, handle not.* Ambrose explains this passage, as though Paul were speaking in his own person, and deterring Christians from all desire after the things of the world. But without doubt the figure of speech escaped him: for these things are brought forward by the Apostle *mimically*, or *by way of recitation*, not *dogmatically*; as Augustine and all the later interpreters acknowledge. But among these, likewise, there is a disagreement about the sense of the words. Some refer them to different things, in this manner: *Touch not*, for instance, a dead body, because it is unclean; *taste not* this or that food, because it is forbidden; *Handle not*, for instance, sacred vessels, because they are consecrated. But some refer all these things to meats, in this sense; Μη^αψη, *Eat not*, i. e. however slightly; (for this Greek signifies not only *to touch*, but *to eat of*). *Taste not*, i. e. Put not either this or that food to the mouth, although ye swallow not any of it; Lastly, *handle not*, i. e. touch it not, even with the hands, although all desire of tasting be absent. The

progress of the false apostles in their ordinances is, therefore, described by this gradation. For as soon as they had ensnared the consciences of men, they always proceeded to more rigid things. First, they forbade them to eat of certain meats; then, if they succeed in this, they forbid them even to taste; and, if here you resist them not, then, lastly, they will enjoin you not even to touch.

And the Apostle rather insists upon these ordinances of the difference of meats, than upon others, because in this point has the superstition of misemployed men exerted itself: always in this abstinence from particular meats have they imagined that some sanctity consists. This may even be inferred from the Apostle attacking it in so many places; *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. xiv. 17. *Meat commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse*, 1 Cor. viii. 8. *In the latter times, some shall depart from the faith; commanding to abstain from meats*, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3. Unless this error had taken deep roots in the minds of men, the Apostle would not have been compelled so frequently to strive at eradicating it.

But here it may be asked, what difference is there between this imposture, and that which he had reprov'd above at verse the 16th? for in each place, they who wished a difference of meats to be observed by Christians are reprov'd.

I answer, The former urg'd a choice of meats by virtue of the Divine command and the law of Moses, which they supposed not yet abrogated: but these latter employ'd another pretence, as will be evident when we arrive at the last verse. Both, then, urg'd the same thing; both would ensnare the consciences of men; both sought holiness and righteousness in these external rites: but the former would have this abstinence from certain meats to be a thing commanded by God; the latter, to be a voluntary worship, and therefore of greater merit with God. That the Apostle, then, might the better expose their folly, he employs irony;

intimating, in this manner, that that in which those hypocrites would have the all in all of holiness to consist, was altogether a thing ridiculous.

From what hath been said these instructions follow :

1. There is no end of ceremonies and traditions, if once they are admitted with an opinion of merit and holiness : for the authority of seducers always will proceed to the imposition of severer matters. Wittily said Calvin, *They tie you up at the beginning, that they may strangle you afterwards.*

2. We must resist the ordinances of hypocrites of this sort, not only because they are full of error in themselves, but also on account of the dangerous consequence. For God hath prescribed certain and fixed things in his worship : but if you allow men this power to prescribe their traditions, under the notion of worship, they will daily heap on more and heavier ; neither is there any end of their burden.

3. They who make holiness to consist in difference of meats, or in external observations of this kind, however they may seem to themselves to philosophize wisely, are, nevertheless, contemptible, and to be derided for their pains.

4. Seducers for the most part prohibit, by their authority, things allowed by God, and very necessary, as meat, drink, marriage ; they impose and enjoin superfluous and ridiculous matters, as the worship of images, long pilgrimages, muttering of prayers not understood, according to a certain calculation, and other charms, not only abhorrent from all religion, but even reason itself.

We conclude, therefore, that the consciences of Christians are not to be burdened either by these rites, which relate to differences of meats, or by any which consist in the observance of external things, as though they were parts of sacred worship or religion.

Verse 22.

Which all are to perish with the using ; after the commandments and doctrines of men.

The Apostle proves by two other reasons, that neither the true worship of God, nor the justification or sanctification of a Christian man is placed in the observance of rites, regarding the choice of meats, or any other external things. The former is derived from the very nature and condition of these things; *which all are to perish with the using.* The other from the origin or authority of such rites; *after the commandments and doctrines of men.*

Which all are to perish with the using.] We have in these words a clear and solid reason why it behoves us not to make the worship of God, or our holiness, to consist in these external rites. First, because the very nature and condition of these things oppose it. For godliness, righteousness, holiness, are spiritual things lighted up in the human heart by the aid of the Holy Spirit. The choice of meats, therefore, neither begets holiness and righteousness in the soul, nor evinces it. For whether you eat flesh, or fish, or fruits, you use earthly and transient things, in which there is no spiritual power to purify or defile the soul. Secondly, because the end or use of meats is designed by God himself for bodily sustenance, not for the sanctification of souls; for it was his pleasure that they should be consumed in the very use, not that we should expect from them the spiritual fruits of righteousness, holiness, merit, &c. Hence the sacred Scriptures every where disprove the false opinion of those who thought that men become more holy by abstinence from certain kinds of meats, or worse by the indifferent use of meats of whatever kind. Christ himself, in Matth. xv. blamed the Pharisees for this error, and admonishes his disciples, in ver

11, lest they also should be deceived by the same; *Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.* And when the Pharisees, having heard this discourse, were offended, Christ confirmed his opinion from the very condition and corruptible nature of all meats; *Do ye not yet understand, said he, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?* ver. 17. As though he had said, It is foolish to seek holiness or righteousness in those frail, earthly, and corruptible things, or to fear any pollution and contamination of sin from them: for all things of this kind are neither good nor evil in themselves, but are to men just as are the minds of those who use them. This, then, is the sentence of Christ himself concerning meats. Moreover, Paul, not only in this place but many others, invalidates their opinion, who thought that some religion consisted in a difference of meats; and, for the most part, he uses this very argument, taken from their earthly and corruptible nature. Thus, 1 Cor. vi. 13, *Meats are intended for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them.* He does not say that meats are intended for sanctifying the mind; but for filling the belly. And Rom. xiv. 17, 18 (which passage we have before cited), *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost: For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God.* He, therefore, who imagines that he serves Christ, inasmuch as he abstains from certain kinds of meats, or because he binds himself to the observance of certain rites as to external things, deceives himself, neither does he on these accounts become more acceptable to God; but if he cherishes peace and righteousness in the Holy Spirit, then he will at length be acceptable to God. Well spake Prosper, *De vit. contempl. 3. 10, Fasts, abstinences, and other things of this kind, are not to be offered to God for righteousness, but with righteousness.* If, then, there is no righteousness in fasting, how much less in abstaining from this or that sort of meat, when, meanwhile, other meats are taken, and that perhaps with no very strict moderation?

The instructions are these :

1. When any thing is proposed to us for observance, the nature of the thing itself is to be considered : if the observation consist in bodily and transitory things, such as in food, raiment, or the like, we ought not to suppose that the immediate worship of God, righteousness, or holiness consists therein.

2. Commandments of this kind, therefore, if they are prescribed by those who have legitimate authority, and that in a legitimate manner, they must be received in that sense, that they wish them to be observed, either for the sake of external order, or as far as they may be referred and directed to some useful end : not that they are parts of Divine worship in themselves, or that by the performance of the work itself, they add to our righteousness, holiness, or merit with God.

3. If sometimes those observances which consist in these transitory things are violated, provided contempt and scandal be shunned, the soul is not defiled by the mere act of omission, or involved in deadly guilt ; because (as we have before shewn) the nature of these things is not of a kind to reach to the sanctification or defilement of the soul.

4. Hence we gather the error and folly of the Monks, who think that they are more perfect and holy than all other mortals, because they have bound themselves to abstain from certain external things which they could lawfully use, as, for instance, from meats, from elegant clothing, from the private possession of goods, &c. ; whereas, all these are of the number of earthly and corruptible things, by the use of which, in itself, no one can be defiled or rendered worse ; and by the abstaining from which, no one can be made more righteous or holy.

5. Whatever is worthy of praise in abstaining from these indifferent things, or in the use of the same, when they are prescribed by men endowed with authority, the whole depends, not on the nature of the things themselves (for they are earthly and corruptible), neither on the work or action itself, but upon the mind of the person obeying,

and the useful end to which these observations are referred.

Thus much concerning the former reason, derived from the nature and condition of the things themselves.

After the commandments and doctrines of men.] This is that other reason why the religion, righteousness, or salvation of Christians is not placed in those decrees, *Touch not, taste not, handle not*, and such trifles; viz. because they derive not their origin from God, but from men. For although God himself imposed upon the Jews, under the old Testament, ceremonial ordinances of this kind, that they might possess in them shadows of spiritual and future things; yet, under the Gospel, he commanded the same to be abrogated. so that now they are imposed by the commandments of men, not by the authority of God. It is, therefore, rightly said, that all those things are now *after the commandments and doctrines of men*.

But let us weigh the force of this argument; This is after the commandments and doctrines of men: therefore, it is not one of the things necessary to salvation, or to the worship of God, or for the acquiring of righteousness and holiness; for the following reasons:

1. Because God retains to himself alone this honour of appointing what he will have directly and immediately to pertain to Religion and his worship. *Ye shall not do every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes: but what thing soever shall be commanded you of the Lord, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it; Deut. xii. 8, 32.* Hence that remark of Christ, Matth. xv. 9, *In vain ye worship me, teaching the doctrines and commandments of men.*

2. Because if these commandments of men pertained to the worship of God as parts of it, it would follow that the worship of God might be abrogated by human authority: for all these decrees may be either taken away or changed by the authority of those by whom they were ordained from the beginning: but that men have this power over the worship of God is most absurd.

3. Because if it be conceded that the observance of human decrees is a necessary part of worship or holiness

in itself; it would thence follow, that God may be worshipped in ways not only different, but plainly contrary to one another, according to the will of men. For these human commandments are not only different, but sometimes opposed to each other. You may see this in the different orders of Monks among the Papists, on whom different commandments are imposed, such as relate to food, and raiment, and almost all other external observances. You may observe it also in the different rites of churches: for, in administering the sacraments, in ordaining ministers, in fasts, in feasts, and in almost all external rites, the ceremonies of different churches are different. And, as Irenæus is quoted in Eusebius, lib. 5. cap. 23, *The very difference of churches in these things, the more illustrates the harmony of the faith.* But if these observances and ceremonies of human command pertained in themselves to the worship of God, and to holiness, there could not be any difference in them, they could not bind some, and not bind others, according to diversity of places, but would be the same among all, and would equally bind all. For that rule of Parisiensis, De fide, cap. 2, is most true: *The worship due to God is not a worship which may be refused to him without injury, by any person who is capable of worshipping him: for the Religion by which God is worshipped, and by which he is pleased and served by men is uniform and universal.* From these things it is clearly evident, that the commands and traditions of men are not to be obtruded upon the Church under the notion of *worship* and *righteousness*, because they are the commandments of men and not of God.

Hence we derive the following Instructions:

1. That alone immediately and properly concerns Religion and the worship of God, which hath the testimony of the Divine will. *It so behoves us to worship God in the way in which he himself has prescribed that he is to be worshipped,* Augustine, lib. 1. De consensu Evang. cap. 18.

2. They who would have religion, righteousness, and holiness to consist in observing their commands and traditions, arrogate that to themselves, and their inventions, which is peculiar to God and the Divine commands. *Meu*

as men, speaking concerning God, are not worthy of credit; Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. 6.

3. Since salvation and righteousness is not placed in the commands of men, they grievously err who so multiply these burdens of human traditions as thereby to hinder Christians in the exercises of true righteousness and godliness: For, *it commonly happens, that when a thing is paid where it is not due, it is neglected where it is due, Tertull. De pœnit.* This Christ himself complained of, that the people of God were drawn away from the observance of the Divine commands, whilst they were entirely employed upon the traditions of the Pharisees, Matth. xv. 6. Gerson, *De vita Spirit.* part. 3, reprehends this in that heap of ceremonies and traditions of the Papists; *Unnecessary occupation in human traditions begets ignorance of the Divine precepts.*—Thus much concerning the second argument from the origin of these commands.

Verse 23.

Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

In these words of the Apostle we have a censure of human rites and traditions which are obtruded upon Christians under the notion of necessity, righteousness, or the Divine worship. The passage is well worthy of being diligently considered. For hence we may perceive that the Papists can allege nothing for their traditions, which was not alleged by antient impostors, and refuted by Apostles; that we do nothing else, when we oppose the same, than what Christ himself, what his Apostles before us have done, and what they would have us to do for the sake of retaining Christian liberty.

In this verse, therefore, which puts a conclusion to the refutation, there are three things to be observed and explained, as to those rites prescribed by men:

1. We must observe the Apostle's concession: for he concedes to them *λόγον σοφίας*. *Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom.*

2. Three pretences are to be noted, by which for the most part human traditions are covered to wear the appearance of wisdom: These are, *will-worship, humility, and neglecting of the body.*

3. We may observe the censure of the Apostle, who, notwithstanding these pretences so fair, accounts these commandments of men for things of nought: *not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.*

Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom.] The Greek word *λόγον*, some translate *reason*, some *shew*, and others *pretence*; with little difference of sense. For the Apostle means this: The aforesaid commandments of men have a shew, or external appearance of wisdom, they have not the reality and truth. There is, then, in these words, a prolepsis, or anticipation, which, whilst it concedes to the adversaries what they could allege in pretence, at the same time would have them understand that it was of no value. But when the Apostle says, these doctrines of men *have a shew of wisdom*, he means, they have the appearance of some excellent doctrine, rather brought from heaven than excogitated by human counsel: for thus the word *wisdom* is used by Paul, as Beza hath rightly observed.

1. And they have this shew or pretence, First, on the part of the impostors. For these, for the most part, pretend, that they do not bring forward any thing of their own mind, but promulgate those things, being enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom himself. Under this pretence, Montanus formerly vaunted his prophecies, and imposed upon many: for thus Tertullian, *De præscript.* before he was a Montanist himself, writes, *They assert that the Paraclete spake more things to Montanus than Christ delivered in the Gospel; and not only more, but even better and greater.* Those who are a little more modest, venture not to pre-

tend immediate revelations of the Holy Spirit; yet, that their notions may not appear destitute of a shew of Divine wisdom, they are wont to affirm, as it is stated in Irenæus, lib. 3. cap. 2, *that their doctrines were not indeed consigned in writing by the Apostles, but delivered to them viva voce; according to that saying, 'We speak wisdom among the perfect:' and their own fictions every one asserts to be this wisdom.* Thus says Irenæus. Therefore human traditions have this shew of wisdom on the part of the impostors.

2. On the part of superstitious and carnal men, they have a shew of wisdom, because carnal things are suited to the taste of carnal men, but spiritual things are not esteemed. Whence that saying of the Apostle, Rom. viii. 7, *The wisdom of the flesh* is enmity against God;* and 1 Cor. ii. 5, *Your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* For that seems full of wisdom to a carnal man, which accords with the nature and disposition of the flesh; and nothing is more pleasing to the carnal mind, than to have salvation, righteousness, and holiness in rites and external things. You see, therefore, how human traditions *have a shew of wisdom;* namely, 1. From the fraud of impostors, who always boast that they flowed from the Spirit of wisdom: 2. From the carnal nature of superstitious men, whom it always pleases to seek salvation and righteousness in rites and external exercises. But, nevertheless, we must hold, that they have the shew only, and, as it were, a vain shadow of wisdom, not the reality. For, as Lactantius has truly said, Instit. lib. 4. cap. 1, *where the repute of foolishness appears, there wisdom is chiefly to be sought;* so we may truly affirm, where to the carnal man the repute of wisdom appears, there folly is always to be found. *For this wisdom descendeth not from the Father of lights, but is earthly, sensual, devilish;* James iii. 15.

Instructions :

1. They are to be accounted for impostors who, in the business of salvation, obtrude upon us doctrines under the pretence of revelation or tradition, without the testimony

* " Sapiencia carnis." Vulgate.

of the word. For whatsoever shew, or rather shadow of wisdom there might be in these human inventions, yet true and saving wisdom will never be found in them.

2. In the worship of God we ought not to run after and embrace those things which are most approved by human reason; for if we use this guide, we shall, instead of true wisdom, embrace some shew, and painted shadow of wisdom.

3. Hence infer what you ought to conclude about popery, viz. whether it possesses that genuine wisdom, or only *the shew of wisdom*. It obtrudes its doctrines, and its innumerable commandments, as necessary to salvation: but under what pretence? The same with all impostors; viz. that all its decrees flow from the Holy Spirit directing and inspiring the Church; that they do not bring in human commandments, but those unwritten traditions which the Apostles left as a deposit to Rome. Behold a wonderful shew of Divine wisdom! But if I further ask, How will it be proved to me that these your ordinances have flowed from the Spirit of God and from the Apostles? Forthwith they retort against you, Either believe, or be accursed: but in the mean time they produce no testimony from the word of God. They who thus confirm their dogmas, may display among the unskilful *a shew of wisdom*, but among the sober, and the prudent, they will be accounted to have lost the thing itself.

Thus much concerning the Apostle's concession, that there is only a *shew* of Divine wisdom in the doctrines and commandments of seducers.

In will-worship, εν εθελοθρησκεια.] He begins to shew with what colours seducers were wont to paint this false wisdom. The first is, as you may call it, *voluntary worship*; i. e. not commanded or prescribed by God himself, but offered to him by human will and choice. This, then, is urged by impostors, He who performs only those things which are bidden and commanded by God himself, does nothing but what is common; but he who goes beyond those precepts, and worships God by certain voluntary works, to which he is not bound, he becomes as an angel

among men, he lays up to himself merits of supererogation; he finally makes God a debtor to him. And this *will-worship* is very pleasing to human nature. For since there is a double will-worship; one, when a person of his own accord chooses any creature to whom he offers the worship due to God; the other, when he worships the true God, but not in that manner, neither by those acts whereby he hath defined his worship, but by others, chosen of his own will: the former species of *will-worship* is condemned by almost all, because it clearly detracts from God what is his own, and transfers it to the creature; but this other is commended by many because it seems to offer to God what is his own, and something beyond it; it has, therefore, as it were, the appearance of a certain free-will offering. This colour imposed upon the Monks, who think that they, inasmuch as they worship God by certain works not commanded by God himself, are in a higher and more perfect condition than other men who endeavour to perform only those things which are enjoined. Hence, also, they have dreamed, that they so overflow with merits, that they hesitate not daily to bestow out of their great treasure upon others. Hence, also, the ignorant multitude are not only accustomed to beg, but to purchase at any price the superabundant merits of the Monks. Nay, for this end, they say monasteries are instituted, *that they may make satisfaction for the sins of their founders, and of all in general*, Gerson, part. 2. serm. De abstinent. Carthus. But lest we should be deceived by this same pretext, we ought to remember, That God, indeed, loves the willing worshipper, i. e. him who joyfully and willingly does that which he hath commanded to be done; but that he hates will-worship, i. e. those acts which are offered to him as the immediate worship of God, when they were not prescribed and commanded by him for this end: for this is *to go a whoring with their own inventions*, Psalm cvi. 39. We must also know; that abstinence from certain meats, celibacy, voluntary poverty, and other things of that kind, in which impostors place this voluntary worship of God, and I know not what merit of supererogation, are nothing else than

things and actions indifferent, which, to certain persons at certain times, may be instruments, or means availing in the worship of God, as also their contraries may be: But, neither in the one nor the other, ought we to imagine, that there is any worship or merit.

And so far as to the first pretext, wherewith seducers are wont to gloss over their commandments.

And humility.] This is the second colour with which the commandments and doctrines of men are painted. For all seducers endeavour to persuade the people, that there is nothing more pleasing to God than humility, and devoted *submission of mind*; which they would have to consist in this, that Christians should submit themselves simply and absolutely to those who are set over them, and to their traditions and commandments, believe whatever they propose to be believed, and do whatever they direct to be done. This humility they babble about as being of the greatest merit with God, because he has enjoined all, *Obey them that have the rule over you*, Heb. xiii. 17; because he himself has plainly said concerning this matter, *He that heareth you, heareth me*, &c. Luke x. 16. They, moreover, add, that this especially conduces to the salvation of Christians, that they should not discuss the commands of those who are set over them (such as the worship and faith recommended by them to the Church), but receive and observe them; because it is most safe for the ignorant to follow the opinion of the more wise. When, by this artifice, they have procured for their rites and doctrines an authority plainly Divine, the submission and obedience of Christian people seems to have a *shew of wisdom*, so that by this their subjection, they think not only thus to act piously, but prudently. Ignatius Loyola, the father of the Jesuits,* deceived by this pretence, advises in that Epistle

* The history of the Founder of the Sect here adverted to, though highly curious and interesting, is too extensive, even in its more important features, to be entered upon in the limits of a biographical Note. From distinction as a Spanish officer, in the wars between Charles and Francis, in the early part of the sixteenth century, he became as distinguished as a Religious devotee, and for the origin of that body which emerged at this

which is read at table in the College of the Jesuits every month, and seriously commands, that those things which the Superior enjoins, they should simply perform with a blind obedience, not considering whether what is

eventful æra. The change in his views which led to this, resulted on his pondering over the lives of some of the Romish Saints, during a long confinement under wounds, received at the siege of Pampeluna, against the French, in 1521. On his recovery, he hung up his arms in the Church of Montserrat, and dedicated himself to the blessed Virgin. The character of the man, and the circumstance which so affected his subsequent proceedings, by his mind taking a direction for Religion, was thus described by the celebrated Vieira (one of his Order), in a Sermon which he preached in Lisbon in reference to him some years after. "The Cids, the Pelayos, the Geryons, the Hercules who had figured in Spain, roused his spirit to covet an heroic resemblance. Their celebrity stimulated him. Navarre seemed a small point of defence; the Pyrenees but inferior walls; and all France but a petty conquest. He considered that he was a captain, a Spaniard, and had been conquered. Weary with combating thoughts so vast, he called for a book of chivalry to amuse himself, but he could only find a volume of the lives of saints. If it had been what he wished, it would have led him to be a famous knight; but, being what it was, it made him a great saint. Instead of being a cavalier of a flaming sword, he became the saint of a burning torch. At first the contents displeased him, but he became astonished, as he read, to find that there was in the world another scene of soldiership, quite new, and unknown to him before: and he resolved to become one of its most zealous members. He took off his noble collar, he laid down his helmet, he stripped off his armour, and offered up the sword which he had valued above all things, as the first tribute of his new feelings, on the altar of Montserrat. After passing through various scenes as a mendicant, a student, and a preacher, he became at last the founder of that sect which assumed the name of the Company of Jesus; a sect which arose to uphold the Popedom, till its final consummation of iniquity, just at the time that the temporal power of the Pope received a blow, from which it has never recovered, by the attack of the Duke of Bourbon upon Rome, and the sacking of the great City, in 1527, by his Colleague in arms, and successor in that extraordinary event—the Prince of Orange. The Order was organized about 1530, and on its resolving upon a vow of submission to Pope Paul III., he, in 1540, established it by a Papal Bull, under the title of "the Society of Jesus." Hence they received the epithet of Jesuits; and thus was created an Order, when, as Hume justly remarks, "the Court of Rome perceived that the lazy Monks and Mendicant Friars, who sufficed in times of ignorance, were no longer able to defend the ramparts of the Church, assailed on every side; and that the inquisitive spirit of the age required a Society more active and more learned to oppose its dangerous progress." The Papacy was not disappointed; for the Society has been proverbial for their intrigues in nearly every State on the face of the Globe.

enjoined is good or useful, since every thought of the kind takes away the merit and weight of obedience. It is also the common opinion of the Romanists that there ought to be such a humility among Christians, that they should not

The able corrector of Mr. Dallas, in his history of the Order, has well summed up their extensive operations. "The Jesuits," says he, p. 374, "had no sooner appeared, than they overran the universe with surprising rapidity: they became the Instructors of Youth; the Masters of Seminaries; the Confessors of Kings; the distributors of favours; and the nominators to every office, civil and ecclesiastical, and sometimes even to crowns; in a word, the arbiters of every great event: they acquired immense wealth in freehold estates, and in the benefices which they procured for their houses: they formed the most substantial and brilliant establishments; and laid the foundations of a monarchy, calculated to resist the most powerful princes."—All this was effected, to use the appropriate terms of Sharon Turner, "through a remarkable combination of ability, enthusiasm, benevolence, intelligence, craft, ambition, piety, and superstition." Under the semblance of vows of poverty and chastity, together with that **IMPLICIT OBEEDIENCE TO THE CHIEF OF THE ORDER**, as above-mentioned by Davenant, it has always been taught among them, that *oaths might be falsified!* Their statutes, in fact, have been denounced as "a complete code of perfidy, immorality, and revolt;" and, wherever they have gained a footing, this body has established itself as an arbitrary power over the legal and regular authorities of the State. Loyola lived to see the diffusion of his Order over the greatest part of the Old and New worlds; and its attainment of a new spiritual empire for the Popedom, in Asia and South America especially. In less than twenty years, owing to its Missionary activity, it included twelve large provinces possessed of one hundred Colleges. Within two centuries after, their number was found to amount to 20,000. This was ascertained in consequence of the inquiries instituted about them owing to the Provincial Letters of Pascal, laying open their detestable casuistry and diabolical intrigues. In 1554, long before Pascal's time, and only fourteen years after their establishment by Paul III., the Faculty of Theology in Paris, whose advice the Parliament had sought, pronounced, that "the Society, withdrawn from the obedience and submission due to authorities, unjustly deprived both temporal and spiritual lords of their rights: brought discord into every form of government, and occasioned among the people many subjects of complaint, many law-suits, altercations, schisms, and jealousies; that it appeared dangerous to all that concerned the Faith; calculated to disturb the peace of the Church; to overturn the Monastic orders; and more fit to destroy than to build up." The formidable body, however, proceeded in its career of iniquity, till, in 1773, Pope Clement XIV. pronounced its extinction in a Bull dated July 21 of that year. Since the restoration of the Monarchy in France, the Order has been revived, and in 1830, at the breaking up of the Jesuit Establishment at Montrouge, among their archives was found the following statement re-

have the least doubt about those things which are set forth by the Romish Church, as to faith or practice in Religion and the worship of God. But we, notwithstanding, may truly assert, that this blind obedience and humility is not only foolish, but impious and irreligious. And the grounds for this are,

1. Because we are bound to obey superiors only in cases in which they are *our* superiors. Now, as to the framing doctrines of faith, or instituting the worship of God, God alone is our Superior: if, therefore, men attempt to devise doctrines of faith, or to introduce a new worship, they step beyond the limits of the power granted them, and are not to be acknowledged as superiors in this matter.

2. Because the command of an inferior authority does not oblige to obedience when it is contrary to the command of a superior. Hence that remark of the Apostle, Acts v. 29, *It is meet to obey God rather than man*: and of Cyprian, De sing. cler. *It is not allowable to please men where the will of men includes not the will of God*. But admonitions of this kind would be vain, if a blind obedience in all things was due to our superiors.

3. Because no one subjects himself knowingly to the peril of mortal sin, but he thereby sins mortally, as the Schoolmen say: but whoever vows, or performs absolute subjection and blind obedience to men, subjects himself to manifest peril; for every man may err, as well in command-

specting the Society: The Government is divided into 5 assistances, which comprehend 39 provinces, 24 professed houses, 669 colleges, 61 noviciates, 176 seminaries, 335 residences, 223 missions, 22,787 Jesuits, of which 11,010 are priests.—In England, 19 noviciates, 299 Jesuits, 28 priests. For specimens of Popish intrigue, and influence, by means of this body, so devotedly submissive to the Chief of their Order, the Reader may consult Sharon Turner's Modern History of England. As evincing itself more recently, let him consider the late Records of Ireland, and the investigations in our houses of Parliament; let him bear in mind the late Revolution in France (vide Note, p. 76): above all, let him reflect on the well-known boast of Cardinal Gousalvi, that *they* (the Papists) had such influence with the Turkish Court, as to suppress the further spread of Heresy there: This was manifested by the Papacy succeeding in procuring a Firman against the proceedings of the agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the progress of the Protestant Missionaries in Turkey!!

ing to do things which are evil, as in prescribing to believe things which are false.

4. Because to attribute to men what is the peculiar right of God, is great impiety: but absolute dominion over our bodies and our minds, is the property of God alone. The human will owes absolute obedience to him; the understanding owes to him prompt assent in all things: but to yield to any mortal such subjection of the will, and of the understanding, incurs the crime of treason against the Divine Majesty. For that saying of Tertullian concerning God and the Divine commands is true, *I esteem it audacity to dispute about the goodness of a Divine precept: for we ought to obey it, not because it is good, but because God hath commanded it*; De pœnit. And that is no less true of the Apostle, when men order us to do or to believe any thing, *Prove all things; hold fast that which is good*, 1 Thess. v. 21.

But they who require this preposterous humility and blind obedience from the people, are wont to object, That it is not the duty of subjects to judge of the doctrines or commands of their superiors; but it rather pertains to the prelates and superiors, to judge of the faith and actions of subjects: therefore, they seem to recede from their duty, when they doubt whether those things are true and lawful which are promulgated and confirmed by the authority of those who are set over them.

I answer, Subjects neither ought, nor can judge of the decrees of superiors by a judgment of authority; but they can, and ought to judge of those things with a judgment of discretion, as far as they concern themselves. Aquinas very well explains the reason of this, Quæst. disp. de consens. art. 5. *Every one, says he, is bound to examine his own actions according to the knowledge he has from God, whether it be natural, or acquired, or infused; for every man ought to act according to reason.* Thus speaks Aquinas. This is confirmed by the example of all the pious; who, although they arrogated not to themselves a judgment of authority over their prelates or magistrates, yet they used a judgment of discretion about the things proposed to

them. We see this done by Daniel, who judged that the edict of Darius, concerning not praying to God, was not to be observed by him. We see it in the Apostles, who judged that they could not, consistently with piety, obey the commands of the priests, Acts iv. 20. Finally, this was done in the reign of Mary, by all our martyrs; who judged rightly that they ought neither to believe those things which were then proposed by the prelates to be believed, nor to do what they commanded to be done.

From these things, then, it is evident, that even the second colour also of submission and meritorious humility, whereby human decrees are commended to the people, is vain, and has nothing of true wisdom in it.

And neglecting of the body, ἀφειδία σωματος, not sparing the body, or severity to the body.] Behold the third colour with which human decrees being painted and glossed over, wear the appearance of piety and wisdom. For since carnal men are mostly employed in an inordinate care of the flesh, they who afflict by fasting, waste by watchings, or subdue by flagellating this frail body, which others unduly cherish, are supposed to be spiritually wise, and careful of their salvation above others. Therefore, all those decrees which have for their object this subduing of the flesh, so strike the eyes of the ignorant by that mask of sanctity and mortification, that they do not meanwhile observe the poisonous errors which are customarily concealed under them. For in all these, impostors always present an outward mortification of the flesh, but cherish within, mental pride and hypocrisy. But for the better understanding of this whole matter, we will bring forward, first, a few examples of those who exercised this *severity to the body*: secondly, we will expose the errors which usually lurk under decrees and exercises of this kind: finally, we will shew what is to be determined concerning these exercises of carnal mortification.

1. Evagrius, *Historiæ eccl. lib. 1. cap. 21*, reports, that the Monks of Palestine sometimes fasted for more than five days together, and afflicted themselves with such labours and watchings, that they seemed to be dead, and

lying unburied upon the earth, and relates many other extraordinary things about them; yet so as to exalt them to heaven, account this plan of life, and term it, *a most holy and divine kind of life*. The same author, lib. 3. cap. 49, writes that others, on account of their continued watchings, were called ἀκοιμητους, the sleepless.* Bernard, Serm. 6. cap. 49, in Psalm xci. writes, that certain Monks, by various exercises of the body, and abstinences, were worn down beyond their strength, beyond nature, beyond custom. Jerome, in his epitaph on Paula, relates, that when she had recovered from a burning fever, she was altogether unwilling to use the weakest and smallest quantity of wine, although her Physician, and Jerome himself, earnestly advised her to it, and shewed her the imminent danger of a dropsy from continually drinking water. But the most celebrated of all for this mortifying of the body were, the Flagellantes, *whose order arose in the year 1260, at Perusia, in Tuscauy, when the whole world suffered from a dreadful famine. These men, wandering about, beat themselves publicly almost to death, and exercised these bloody rites for thirty-three days; then they thought that they had expiated their sins and were reconciled to God, and at length they returned to their homes.* Hospin. pag. 271.* It would be easy to collect more examples of those who exercised this *severity to the body*; but these may suffice.

2. We will now, in the second place, lay open the

* Our Expositor here refers, I presume, to the work De Monachatu, of a distinguished Swiss divine, Rodolph Hospinian, who flourished towards the latter part of the sixteenth century, being born at Altdorf, in the Canton of Zurich, in 1547. Having received a liberal education at Zurich, Marpurg, and Heidelberg, he entered the Church in 1568, and three years afterwards obtained the freedom of the city of Zurich, and the superintendance of the Abbey School there. He was considered the only Scholar capable of refuting the Annals of Baronius, then Confessor to Clement VIII. and afterwards Cardinal, and very near succeeding to the Popedom in 1605, a celebrated, but partial historian of the Church, whose work, though of vast learning, is entirely perverted to the interests of Rome. Hospinian gained universal applause by the portions of his work against Baronius, printed occasionally under the title of "the History of the errors of Popery." Besides this elaborate work, he wrote a history of the Jesuits, and several other pieces.

errors to which they, who are wont either to order or to practise these things, are commonly obnoxious.

1. They err as to the very nature of Christian mortification: for they consider the afflicting and injuring of the body to be true mortification; whereas, that pertains chiefly not to the flesh, or the inferior part of the soul, but chiefly to the mind and will: for the mind and will of a man not yet renewed are carnal. They foolishly dream, therefore, that they are mortified persons, through the body being weakened and almost destroyed, when, in the meanwhile, the soul, which is the seat of sin, is filled with incredulity, pride, envy, and other spiritual vices. See Mirandulanus, *De fide et ord. credendi*; and in *Exposit. orat. Dom.*

2. They err as to the means themselves, or, at least, as to the mode of applying these means. For it is one thing to subdue the flesh by moderate fasts and watchings, lest it should rebel against the spirit; another, so to afflict and wear down the natural powers, that they cannot advantageously serve the spirit. For *whilst the flesh is unduly restrained, it is enervated for the exercise of good works: and whilst they endeavour to stifle entirely the incentives to vice, it is rendered too feeble to preach or pray*, Gregor. Moral. 30. cap. 28. Whence Aquinas, in xii. ad Rom. writes, that *he loses the dignity of a rational man, who prefers fasting or watching, to the full use of his senses*. And Gerson, part. 3, remarks, *There have been many who, to merit the fame of contemplation, have endeavoured to imitate Elias, or Daniel, or John the Baptist; but who, by this abstinence, have become, not prophets, but fanatics*.

3. They err, because they bind themselves to these external services by the notion of a necessity so absolute, as not to allow the violation of them even for the sake of health. We see this in the example of Paula;* we see it

* This person, before alluded to, was a learned Roman Lady, of a noble family, who added to the brightest qualities of the mind, the virtues of Christianity. But superstition corrupts the fairest things; and under its influence, this Lady, with others of her time, became famous in Papal history, by countenancing and promoting the monastic life. She was well versed in the Hebrew Scriptures, and the intimate friend of Jerome, dying a few years before him, A.D. 407.

in the Carthusian Monks, who dare not even taste flesh, though bodily infirmity demand it; we see it in all who are brought under the government of the Church of Rome, who imagine that they commit mortal sin, if they do not fast according to the Papal statutes. But since it was just that the ceremonial law itself should yield to the love of God, how unjust is it that human mandates should refuse the same subjection in things indifferent?

4. They err because they judge that the worship of God, the merit of salvation, and the expiation of sins, stand in these outward exercises. Thus says Peter Soto,* *To deny that fasting is a work by which we merit eternal life, and make satisfaction for our sins, is a most manifest error.* Alensis, part. 4. quæst. 28, tells us, *A fast, whether enjoined or assumed, is satisfactory for sins.* Thomas, Q. 2. quæst. 147, *A fast is assumed for three things: to repress the lusts of the flesh, to raise the mind of man to higher things; and to make satisfaction for sins.*—These are the errors in which almost all are implicated who exercise this *neglecting of, or not sparing,* the body.

Now, in the last place, that we may not appear to reject outward exercises of mortification, we shall briefly shew what is the opinion of our church respecting these things.

We very much approve the remark of Athanasius, *That these bodily exercises are praiseworthy, if they are united with knowledge and moderation.* Fastings, then, and watchings, and other things of this kind, we confess, have their utility, if we understand their use and end; i. e. if they are referred to the chastening of the body, lest by excess, or sloth, it should be excited to sin; if they are referred to the external testifying of internal penitence; if, lastly, they are referred to this, that being assisted by those helps, we may more ardently call upon God. For rightly spake

* More commonly called Dominic Soto, was a learned Spanish Dominican, born at Segovia, in 1494, where his father was a gardener. He distinguished himself as a Theologian, and was one of the most active and esteemed members of the Council of Trent; proving himself there, as well as in his writings, a true Romanist. He was appointed Confessor to Charles V., and died in 1560, aged 66. His works were numerous.

Tertullian, advers. Psychicos, *When fasting, we possess a stronger mind, and a heart more active to these spiritual things, than when that mansion of the inner man is glutted up with food, or drenched with wine.* But if we think there is any merit of satisfaction or justification in these external exercises, then they are not used *with knowledge*, and, therefore, are rejected by God; as we may see Isa. lviii. 3, where they obtruded upon God this very opus operatum in these words, *Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?* God answers, *It is not such a fast as I have chosen,* &c. So Zech. vii. 5, 6, he denies that they fast for him who place holiness and the worship of God in an external work. But the Apostle most clearly distinguishes in I Tim. iv. 8, between *bodily exercise* and *godliness*, or true worship. We, therefore, ought to know, that all these things come under the head of external discipline, not of works of divine worship.

Besides this knowledge, there is also required a due moderation in all these things; for that abstinence or chastening of the body, which hath no regard to its peculiar infirmity, is foolish. Hence we read in Eusebius, lib. 5. cap. 3. that Alcibiades was reprehended because he would not use the creatures of God, but took only bread and water for the sustenance of his body. We see also Timothy himself advised by Paul, I Tim. v. 23, no longer to be too abstemious, but to *use a little wine for his stomach's sake and his often infirmities.* These free and moderate fasts were in use in the primitive Church: but those necessary and rigid ones beyond the strength of the body, were always condemned by the wiser men. Thus Augustine, I De mor. eccl. cath. cap. 33. testifies, *No one is compelled to severe things which he cannot endure; nothing is imposed upon any one which he refuses.* Prudentius, I Cathemer. hymn. post jejun. says, *An open and free mode of abstinence is set before all; neither are we impelled by severe terror: it is his own will binds every one.* Prosper, De vita contempl. lib. 2. cap. 24, says, *We ought so to fast that we may not be subject to the necessity of fasting, lest, not with devotion, but un-*

willingly, we perform an act that is really voluntary. And thus you find that *neglecting* or *chastising* of the body, which is full of superstition, is to be exploded, although that chastising of the body which is joined with true knowledge and due moderation, is to be retained. And thus much of the three pretences whereby impostors are accustomed to gloss over their commands and superstitious doctrines. Now let us hear what is the Apostolic censure of mandates and things of this kind.

Yet *they are of no value*, since they respect *those things with which the flesh is filled.*] Thus Beza. [*Not in any honour* (supply, *do they hold the body*) *to the satisfying* or *contenting of the flesh.*] Thus others.

They who approve this latter interpretation, think that the Apostle, in these words, explains what is that *neglecting* of the body which he reprehends; namely, when the body is had in no honour to satisfy or fill it. In this place, therefore, they interpret the word *honour* by *care*; as I Tim. v. 3, *Honour widows*, i. e. have a care and consideration of them: therefore *not to have the body in honour*, is to bestow no due care upon it. But by what is added—*to the satisfying of the flesh*—they mean *the filling of it*, which is opposed to that inanition whereby the strength of the body is lessened and impaired; and they think that the Apostle used this fuller word to reprove those hypocrites who defrauded the bodies of their necessary food, as if it were a fault to satisfy the body; whereas surfeiting and gluttony are vices, not sufficiency. But the care of just sustentation is due to this earthly body, not only because it is the necessary organ of the soul, but because it is the temple of the Holy Spirit, because it is a member of the body of Christ; nay, if it be esteemed in the place of a beast of burden, still it is proved that sufficient aliment is due to it: for *a righteous man regardeth the life of his beast*, Prov. xii. 10.

We ought, then, to understand, that the care of the body is twofold: one which tends to the fulfilling its unlawful desires, which is evil and forbidden, Rom. xiii. 14; the other, good and lawful, which has the more concern to afford the body food and necessaries for life, lest strength

and health should fail it to undergo the duties which devolve upon us in our vocation. He who rejects this latter care, holds his body in no honour; and some think that this kind of person is reprov'd in this place.

This is a probable interpretation: But neither do I think the interpretation of Beza is to be despised; who refers those words, *not in any honour*, to the very rites and commandments of abstaining from and choosing meats, and thinks they are answered from the contrary. *Which indeed have a shew of wisdom, yet are not of any worth.* Beza supplies the word *yet*, because it is usual with those who adopt the Hebrew idiom (as Paul occasionally does), to understand the adversative particle. But now, if it be asked, Why are not those commandments of men of any value, the Apostle gives the cause, *for the satisfying of the flesh*, they refer, *ὄντα* or *συντείνοντα*, *to the satisfying of the flesh*, i. e. they rest in meat and drink, and things earthly and vain, in which the kingdom of God does not consist, but in those which relate to spiritual sustenance and life eternal; as was shewn in the foregoing verse. But the Apostle asserts commandments of this kind to be of no value or moment, not because they are void of all utility, if proposed and observed *with knowledge and moderation*, as Athanasius advises; but they are in themselves of no value and moment for justification, sanctification, satisfaction for sins, and the worship of God, as the seducers would contend they were.

It is not needful to add more concerning this censure of the Apostle, which relates to these ordinances referring to external things; for we have often treated sufficiently of this matter. The fourth part of this Epistle yet remains; which contains instruction in morals, roots out vices, inculcates virtues, and, finally, forms the life of Christians, as well in respect to their common duties, as to their social relations.

THE END OF THE SECOND CHAPTER.

ADDENDA TO VOL. I.

*For Note *, p. 14.*

It was probably Stephen, the 22d Bishop of Rome, raised to that See on the Martyrdom of Lucius, in 253, who was intended; and to whom, as well as to Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, in consequence of Marcion, Bishop of Arles, having embraced the Novatian heresy, the rest of the Gallican Bishops wrote, for their mutual advice on the subject. Stephen was, on this occasion, backward to interfere; but afterwards, in a similar case of Basilides, interposed with such arrogance, as would have involved the churches in Spain in endless calamities, had not Cyprian and the other Bishops of Africa zealously interposed also to counteract his assumption. Cyprian, perceiving his disposition to usurp undue authority, advanced the following five arguments against appeals to the See of Rome:—

First, Such appeal was contrary to an Ecclesiastical Canon.

Second, Unjust; because it prejudiced the rights of particular Bishops.

Third, Because the Clergy and people should not be compelled to leave their own homes and go beyond sea.

Fourth, Causes could be better decided on the spot, when the proper witnesses were at hand, and could be easily produced.

Fifth, Because there is a competent authority every where in the Church.

Vide *Craig's Refutation of Popery*, Vol. ii. Dissert. v. p. 18.

The insolence, ambition, and arrogance now *beginning* to work in the See of Rome, led to the decisions subsequently adopted at the Council of Nice, as adverted to in the Sixth Canon of that Council, given below on the same page to which this refers. In what light Cyprian, and his Bishopric, ought to be regarded in contradistinction to the church of Rome, let the enquiring Reader examine and judge from Bower's History of the Popes, vol. i. under "Stephen."

Note to close of Section at top of page 16.

This (the voluntary concession of other churches) took place in the Council of Chalcedon, in 451, and the decree which embodied it was signed by 630 Fathers; and, as hath been well observed by Craig, the arguments used by this great Council, demonstrate, as plainly and clearly as such a proposition admits of demonstration, that neither Constantinople, nor Rome, nor any other See, had, or ought to have, any superior authority

whatever by Divine right, but merely from Ecclesiastical Constitution, founded on political reasons of State, according to the relative dignity of the Sees in the Empire.

The words used by the Fathers are these following :

“ Whereas the See of old Rome had been, not undeservedly, distinguished by the Fathers with certain privileges, *because that city was the seat of the Empire*—the Fathers of Constantinople were induced, by the same reason, to distinguish the most holy See of new Rome with *equal privileges*, thinking it FIT that the *City* which they saw *honoured* with the *Emperor and Senate*, and *equalled in every civil privilege* with *old Rome*, should likewise be equalled to her in Ecclesiastical matters.”

If there were no other document but this to confute the pretended supremacy of the See of Rome, by Divine right, surely this Canon of so great a Council as 630 Fathers composed, held not till the middle of the fifth century, with the reasons alleged for its enactment, ought, of itself, to be sufficient. In this there is no mention made of, nor any reference to St. Peter;—no allusion to any supposed dignity derivable from him;—every thing connected with rank, or pre-eminence, depends on civil or political considerations, because (as the Fathers allege) the two imperial cities enjoyed equal civil rights, they should enjoy equal Ecclesiastical privileges. Hence it incontrovertibly follows, that in the Church of Christ, as every thing originally was equality, whatever pre-eminence subsequently was possessed by any particular church, or see, it was derived from a civil source; i. e. from human institution; for, according to the ordinance of the Messiah, all his *Apostles* were equal; none, according to Him, was to be Master.—Vide Craig’s Refutation.

For Note p. 26.

Cyprian’s works, edited by Bishops Fell and Pearson, are among the prohibited books in Pope Benedict’s Index Expurgatorium. The reason is obvious; those Editions contained passages which the papal Inquisitors had blotted out, or omitted, in former editions, as standing in honest array against the prerogatives and usurpations of Rome, and excluded such as they had obtruded into the Text to maintain her assumed supremacy. Those Editions were printed, in fact, from genuine copies of Cyprian’s works; but the diffusion of them would not suffice for that Church which had the power of accomplishing *its* ends by other means.

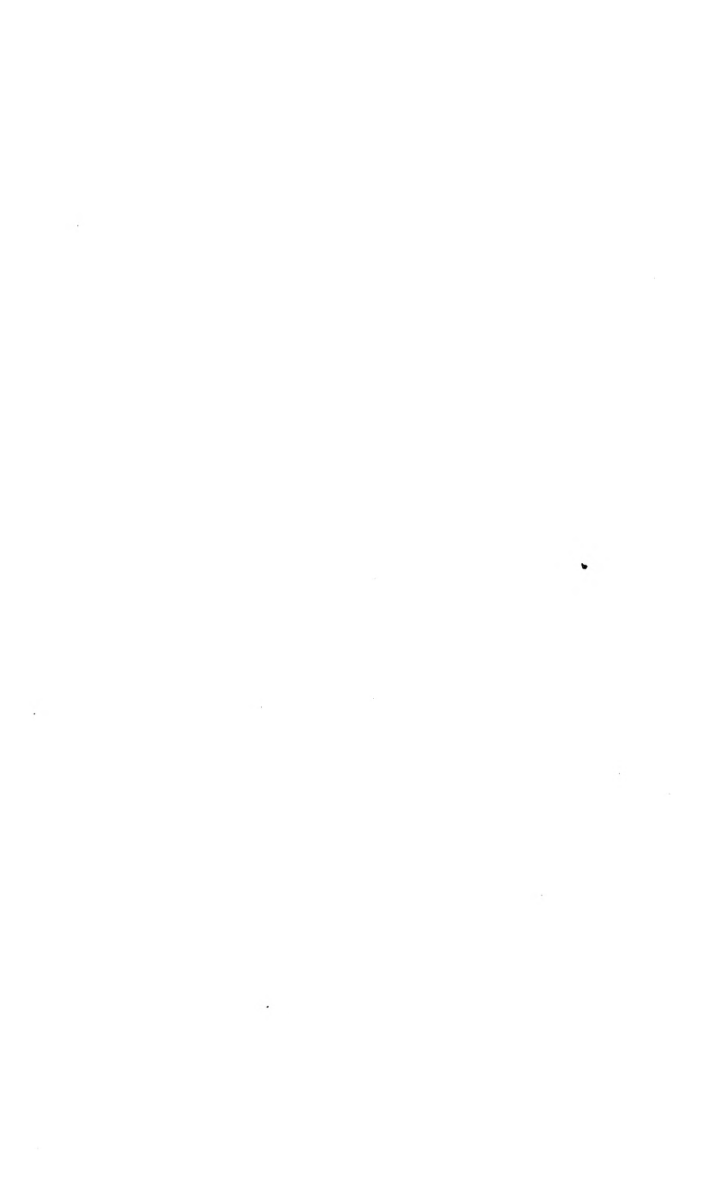
For Note p. 53.

Since the Note in this page went through the press, the writer has observed the work there referred to, among the prohibited books in the Index of Benedict XIV. dated 1708, under the Latin title.—The Divines of Cologne were esteemed by ours, in the seventeenth century, to have been most clear on the doctrine of Justification and the imputation of Christ’s Righteousness.—Vide “Morning Exercises” at Southwark, edited by Vitucnt, in 1675.

For Note p. 93.

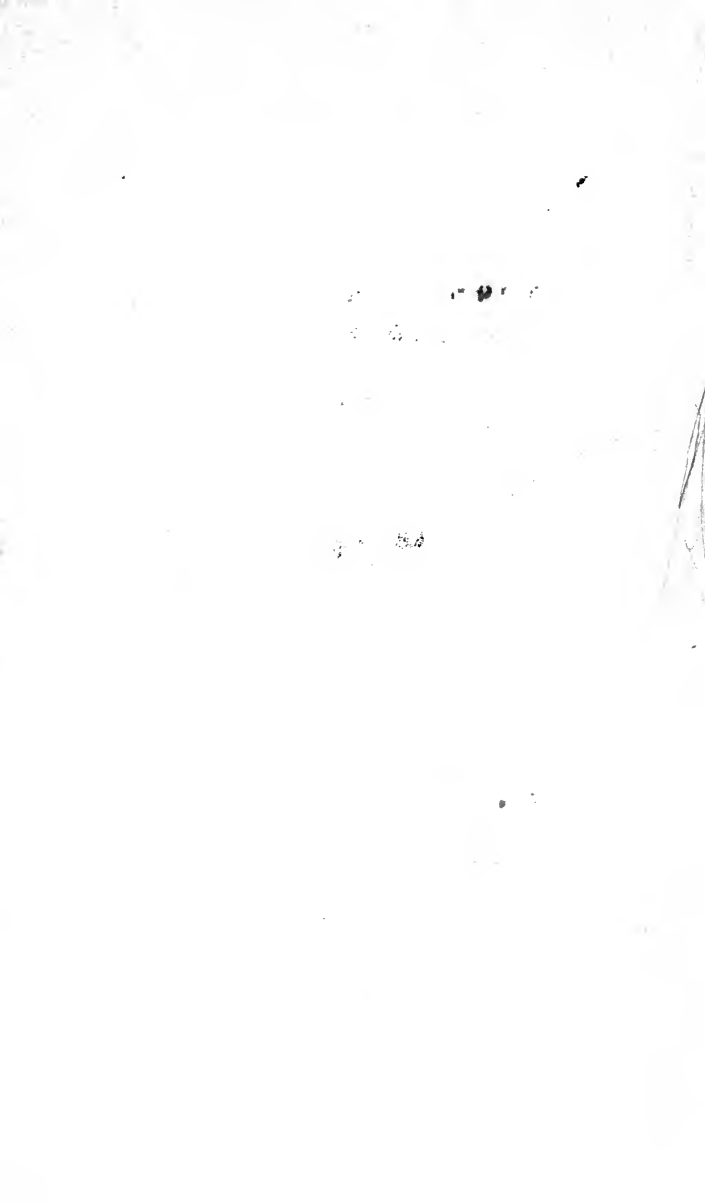
The persecution there alluded to arose from the great aversion of the Britons, the Scots, and the Picts to the Anti-Christian rites which Austin wished to introduce among them. They were so shocked at the many Pagan superstitions and ceremonies introduced by him into the Saxon worship, that they looked upon it as no better than Paganism, and avoided the communion of those who came from Rome to establish it, as they avoided the Pagans; nay, so great was the aversion, which the Scots in particular bore to all the *Roman* Missionaries, that Dagamus, a Bishop of that nation, not only declined sitting with them at the same table, but would not even lodge with them under the same roof. Popery soon resented this in its well known manner.—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.* l. 2. c. 4.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.









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An exposition of the Epistle of St. Paul

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