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THE
WORKS
OF
SYMON PATRICK, D.D.

SOMETIME BISHOP OF ELY.

INCLUDING HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

EDITED BY
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THE TEXTS EXAMINED

WHICH

PAPISTS CITE OUT OF THE BIBLE,

TO PROVE

THE SUPREMACY OF ST. PETER AND OF THE
POPE OVER THE WHOLE CHURCH.

IMPRIMATUR,

Guil. Needham.

Febr. 14, 1687.

THE TEXTS EXAMINED

WHICH

PAPISTS CITE OUT OF THE BIBLE

TO PROVE

THE SUPREMACY OF ST. PETER AND OF THE
POPE OVER THE WHOLE CHURCH.

PART I.

THE question to be debated in this paper is, WHETHER THE APOSTLE ST. PETER WAS CONSTITUTED BY CHRIST HIMSELF TO BE, IN HIS STEAD, THE HEAD AND SUPREME GOVERNOR OF THE WHOLE CHURCH. This we deny, having undeniable proofs that all the apostles were placed by Christ in equal power and authority over his church. But the doctors of the Roman church affirm this with so much confidence as to say, that to deny it “is not a simple error, but a pernicious heresy.” They are the words of Bellarmine^a, who earnestly contends that “the government of the whole church was committed to Peter, especially about matters of faith.”

Which bold assertion he labours to support three ways.

First, by some places of holy Scriptures.

Secondly, by many privileges and prerogatives of St. Peter.

Thirdly, by testimonies of Greek and Latin fathers.

I am concerned only in the first of these ways ; in which if this cause find no true support, we need not trouble ourselves about the other two : which are so weak, that some ingenuous persons in their communion have acknowledged the preroga-

^a L. i. de Rom. Pontif. c. 10, 11. [tom. i. coll. 542, 548.]

tives are either feigned at pleasure, or no more to the purpose of his supremacy than the pretended testimonies of ancient fathers which are against it.

Now the Scriptures which they allege for the proof of it are two places in the holy Gospels: the one in St. Matthew xvi. 18, 19, the other in St. John xxi. 17. In the former of these this supreme authority, they say, is promised to St. Peter; in the latter it is conferred.

I begin with the first. *And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, &c. And 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*^b. The sense of which words, says Bellarmine, “is plain and obvious; giving us to understand the sovereignty over the whole church to be here promised unto Peter, in two metaphors.” The one is a metaphor of a foundation and a building; the other is a metaphor of keys. “For what a foundation is in the building, that the head is in the body, the governor in the city, the king in his kingdom, and the father of the family in the house: and to whom the keys of a city are delivered, he is appointed the king, or at least the governor of that city, to admit and shut out whom he pleaseth.”

Unto which I have this to say before I give the true sense of these words; that to call this a plain and obvious sense of the words which is wrapt up in a couple of metaphors, is to stumble at the very threshold, and to contradict himself in the terms, as they ordinarily speak. For what is metaphorical is not plain and obvious, but needs explanation by putting it into common words: into which if these metaphors be reduced, we shall find there is no such sense contained in them as is pretended.

I shall explain them distinctly, and begin with the former part of this promise, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church*: which we may call the first proof they bring of St. Peter’s being the monarch of the church.

I. Which sense is so far from being plain and obvious, that having considered both the words and all the ancient expositors upon them, I can find nothing plainer than these two things:

^b Matt. xvi. 18, 19.

first, that there is no certainty *St. Peter* is here meant by the rock upon which Christ saith he will build his church; nor, secondly, if he were, that Christ intended by calling him a rock to make him the lord of his church.

First, I say there is no evidence that *St. Peter* is here meant by the rock; but quite contrary, we are led by the general stream of ancient interpreters to understand, by the *rock* upon which the church is built, that faith concerning Christ which *Peter* had newly confessed. There are more than two that thus expound the words, for one that expounds them otherwise: as may be seen in a sermon lately printed on this subject^c, which shows also that the other expositions do not really differ from this, but even they who apply these words to *St. Peter* had respect (in calling him the rock) to his preaching the doctrine of Christ, and having the honour to be the first preacher of it to the Gentiles. Which is all the privilege that can be thought to be peculiarly intended to him in these words. For, excepting this, whatsoever was said to him was directed to all the apostles; because *Peter*, as their mouth, spake the sense of them all when he said, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God*: and therefore Christ's answer was returned to them all when he said, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church.*

As much as to say, "Thou art what thy name imports, which I have given thee with respect to this solid faith thou hast now confessed; upon which, as upon a rock, I will build my church by your ministry: and particularly by thine who shalt have the honour to lay the first stone of it in the Gentile world." Thus *St. Austin* expounds the words in many places^d, where he observes *Peter* had his name from *petra*, 'the rock,' viz. "that faith which he confessed, upon which Christ told him he would build his church. For he doth not say, *Thou art Peter, and upon thee will I build my church*, but *upon this rock*; which plainly relates to another thing, viz. that immovable foundation confessed by *Peter*, that he was *Christ the Son of God*." Whence those known words of the same father, "I will build thee upon me, not me upon thee."

^c Sermon on *St. Peter's* day, 1686. [See vol. vi. p. 625—630.] part 1. col. 822.] Serm. xiii. de verbis Dom, &c. [Serm. lxxvi. ed. Ben.

^d Tract. cxxiv. in *Joh.* [tom. iii. tom. v. col. 415.]

If it were the intention of this paper to quote testimonies, I could name a great multitude, even the ordinary Gloss, which speak to the same purpose. But it is wholly needless, since the other exposition, which makes St. Peter the rock here spoken of, is against the most unanimous consent of the fathers of the church; which they of the church of Rome are bound to follow both by the doctrine of the council of Trent^e, and by the form of that oath of profession of faith which pope Pius IV. drew up and enjoined, according to the mind of that council. And yet (so vilely are some addicted to regard nothing but their interest) there are those who, to make these words sound as if Christ promised to build his church upon Peter himself, have not blushed thus to translate them; "Thou art Peter, and upon this Peter will I build my church." So Dr. Allen would have had the translation run in the Rhemish Testament; and so Hart alleges them in his conference with Dr. Reynolds^f. And now lately the Catholic Scripturist translates them after this manner, (according to the language which Christ spoke;) "Thou art a rock, and upon this rock will I build my church." As if it were lawful for them to do any thing (even contradict that very council whose decrees they are sworn to observe) that they may make the Scripture seem to be on their side. For the council of Trent hath decreed the old Latin translation to be authentical, with a prohibition that no man dare or presume under any pretence to reject it. Notwithstanding which, here are men that presume to reform it, and to make a new translation of their own heads, as different from that authentic vulgar translation as from ours; for in this ours and that are the same, as everybody may know that understands the Latin tongue.

^e Sess. iv. [*Præterea ad coerenda petulantia ingenia decrevit sacro-sancta synodus, ut nemo suæ prudentiæ innixus in rebus fidei et morum ad edificationem doctrinæ Christianæ pertinentium, sacram Scripturam ad suos sensus contorqueus, contra eum sensum quem tenuit et tenet sancta mater ecclesia, cujus est judicare de vero sensu et interpretatione Scripturarum sacram, aut etiam contra unanimum*

consensum patrum ipsam Scripturam sacram interpretari audeat, etiamsi hujusmodi interpretationes nullo unquam tempore in lucem edendæ forent. Qui contravenerint, per ordinarios declarentur, et pœnis a jure statutis puniantur.—Concil. Trident. per Phil. Labbe, col. 27. fol. Par. 1667.]

^f Chap. ii. divis. 1. [Compare vol. vi. p. 632.]

This is a presumption with a witness, to make their own translation depart so far from the language which Christ spoke, as to put *Tu es Petrus*, instead of *Tu es petra*: for so Christ's words should have been translated, if they signified "Thou art a rock," unless they can show us that *Petrus* in any author is Latin for a rock. Till this be done, we must say that such men, contrary to their faith solemnly sworn, depart not only from antiquity but from themselves.

And when they have done all they can, it will evidently appear that the church was not built by his hands alone, (though he began, as I said, and laid the first stone among the Gentiles,) but by them all, and more especially by St. Paul, who was called late into this office, but *laboured more abundantly than they all*; and as a wise master-builder laid the foundation upon which others built &c. Which foundation, he tells us, is Jesus Christ himself; who, he likewise says, is the *only foundation*, and that no man can lay *other foundation* besides him. Which shows this promise I am treating of had respect to all that had the office of apostles, and wholly ruins the authority of St. Peter upon which they would have the church to be built. For if Jesus Christ be the only foundation that can be laid, then Peter cannot be the foundation; but only as a minister of Jesus Christ who helped to lay the foundation, which is Christ himself and his faith. In which ministry he was no more employed than other apostles; but St. Paul, who came last into this ministry, was as wise a master-builder as himself, and took more pains than he or any of the rest; laying the foundation where neither St. Peter nor anybody else had ever been, *lest he should build upon another man's foundation*, as he tells the Roman church ^h.

Which words utterly overthrow their vain distinction of a first and a secondary foundation, whereby they endeavour to elude those words of St. Paul in the place before named ⁱ. For it appears by this other place that St. Paul was a secondary or ministerial foundation, if we may so speak; that is, speak improperly, meaning thereby one that laid the foundation. Which he did as much as St. Peter, or any other apostle; nay, a great deal more, as he himself tells us, when he saith he laboured more abundantly than they all.

^g 1 Cor. xv. 10, and iii. 10, 11. ^h Rom. xv. 20. ⁱ 1 Cor. iii. 11.

In exact speaking there is no foundation on which the church is built but *Christ alone*, (as St. Paul assures us,) *in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord*^k. But faith in Christ being that whereby we are joined to him, it may be called by the same name: and accordingly the Colossians are said to be *grounded in the faith*^l, as upon a foundation (the Greek word signifies), from which he would have them not to be moved. And the apostles, (as he there saith,) being the preachers of this faith, and the instruments whereby men were brought to believe on Christ, and so joined to him as *living stones*, are called by the name of *foundation* in the place before named^m: *built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, &c.* But then it is evident that Peter alone is not this foundation, but all the apostles. For there are *twelve foundations* (of this sort), as we read in Rev. xxi. 14, by whose ministry the church was built upon Christ; the *sole foundation* (in proper speaking) that was laid for all to build upon.

Finally, the apostles understood no such preeminence as is now pretended to be promised to St. Peter in these words, nor did he himself so understand them when the Holy Ghost was come upon them to lead them into all truth. For then St. Paul could not have said that he came *not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles*, and that he was *behind them in nothing*ⁿ, nor could he have undertaken to correct St. Peter^o, nor would St. Peter have borne his censure, if he had known he was the head of the church; but have bidden St. Paul know his distance, and remember that he ought not to control him, but be controlled by him as his better.

Secondly, after all this that hath been said to show there is nothing here promised to Peter but what belongs to all the apostles, except only that of his being employed in laying the first foundation of faith among the Gentiles; it remains that I show there is nothing in the word *rock* which implies any superiority of power and authority over the rest of his brethren and the whole church; if we should suppose this promise to

^k Eph. ii. 21.

^l Τῇ πίστει τεθεμελιωμένοι. Col. i. 23.

^m Eph. ii. 20.

ⁿ 2 Cor. xi. 5, and xii. 11.

^o Gal. ii. 11, 12, &c.

have been made to him alone : for it denotes nothing of government, but hath respect to the support and stability of that structure which is firmly laid upon it. And therefore the ancient doctors (as may be seen in the sermon before mentioned) give other reasons of his being called a rock, and not this : because to him was committed the government of the whole church, especially about faith. Which is the explanation Bellarmine gives of this word, affirming it to be the signification of this metaphor : “ for it is proper to a fundamental rock to govern and sustain the whole edifice.” This is perfectly new language, never heard of in the world before, that it is proper to a foundation to govern ; for it is altogether improper, and nobody thinks of any such thing when he reads of a foundation. But if it be proper, then all the apostles were governors of the whole church as well as he ; because they were all foundations, as was before observed ; having the very same power given to them by Christ, which we now suppose was here promised to him alone.

Unto which they of the church of Rome have nothing to reply, but only this, (which is merely a bold affirmation, and as absurd as all the rest :) they were indeed “ all of them the heads, governors, and pastors of the church universal ; but not after the same manner as Peter was of P.” Why so ? “ For they had the highest and most ample power, as apostles and ambassadors ; but Peter also as an ordinary pastor.” As much as to say, “ They had indeed the highest power in the church, and as large as he, but not so high a power as his.” Let any man try if he can make any other sense of those words, that is, find any sense at all in them. For was this power of being an ordinary pastor greater than that of the apostles, or no ? If it were greater, then it is not true which he affirms, that “ the apostles had the highest power ^q.” If it were less than the power of the apostles, then they were all greater than he, as he was an ordinary pastor : and then it is nonsense to say, “ they so had a plenitude of power, as that St. Peter was notwithstanding the head of them, and they all depended on him.” For he rather depended on them as an ordinary pastor,

^p Bellarm. l. i. de Pontif. Rom. cap. 11. [col. 549.]

^q Habuerunt summam potestatem.

if that was less than the power of the apostleship: and if it were not, but greater than it, then (as I said) it is false that the apostles had the highest power.

This is sufficient to show into what absurdities men run when they go about to maintain a falsehood; and what wretched shifts they devise to obscure the clear truth which shines in their eyes: which when they have done, they walk on in darkness, and cannot be persuaded to see or acknowledge their error. Nay, one error grows out of another, and having begun to wrest the holy Scripture, they go on to strain it so far as to extend it to any purpose they have to serve by it.

For having presumed that Peter, and he alone, is promised to be made the governor of the whole church by these words of our Saviour, they immediately presume, without the show of a proof, that the bishops of Rome succeed him in this authority. Which is a very large step, or rather leap, from Peter to the popes of Rome; between whom there is such a vast distance, that it is impossible to make out the claim to which they pretend from him. For there is no evidence that St. Peter was bishop of Rome, but only that he founded that church, and settled a bishop there. For if he was bishop of Antioch, it was against all ancient rules to leave that and go to another see. The truth is, he was properly bishop of neither, but planted a church in each: and first at Antioch, before he came to Rome. And who can think he did not settle one to take care of that church of Antioch when he left it; who may be called his successor, as well as he whom he is supposed to have placed afterwards in Rome? Which two things being allowed as unquestionable matters of fact, there is no reason can be given why all the power and jurisdiction which is claimed upon the account of succession should not devolve by the right of primogeniture upon the bishop of Antioch; since it is confessed he first sat there, and sat there seven years, which is more than can be proved he did at Rome, where he was not when St. Paul came thither^r, nor when he first answered before Nero, nor when he was ready to be offered^s; nor can any certain time be assigned when he was there, as we are sure St. Paul was, who is acknowledged to be a founder of that

^r Acts xxviii.

^s 2 Tim. iv. 6, 11, 16.

church, and had as much (or rather more) right to leave a bishop to succeed him there, as St. Peter; who could transfer to nobody, neither there nor any where else, what was personally vested in him, as all the privilege here granted him was. Or, if he was to have any successor in his supposed dominion, there were others had a better title to it than the bishop of Rome; particularly St. John, who it is certain survived St. Peter. Therefore all that Bellarmine dare say in this matter is, “that the apostles being dead, the apostolical authority remained in Peter’s successor alone^s.” For which he gives us not one word of proof, but only this notorious falsehood, that the Roman bishop alone is called by all the apostolical bishop, and his see simply the apostolical see: when all the world knows Jerusalem, Constantinople, and divers other places are called by the same name of apostolical sees or churches, and their bishops called not only apostolical, but catholic, and said to be bishops of the catholic church. The meaning of all which is nothing else but that they held the catholic religion and faith, as Launoy^t most ingenuously confesses, and maintains the Roman bishops themselves intended no more when they subscribed themselves bishops of the catholic church.

Nay, Bellarmine himself, in the place now named, is constrained to acknowledge, “that the supreme ecclesiastical power was given not only to Peter, but to other apostles also.” For they might all say that of St. Paul, *My daily business, the care of all the churches*^u. “But it was given to Peter as an ordinary pastor, who should have perpetual successors; to others as delegates, who should have no successors.” Which is a mere invention, a pure figment of his own brain; without the shadow of a ground for it in the book of God, or any ancient authority; and against his own confession, that all the apostles had the highest power; which includes all power, both ordinary and extraordinary, and a power to appoint their successors in the places they converted.

There have abundance of other things been said by our

^s L. i. de Pont. Rom. c. 9. [col. 538.]

^t Epist. pars i. ad Franciscum

Bonum. [Epist. iv. tom. v. part i. p. 28 sqq.]

^u 2 Cor. xi. 28.

writers to show, that whatsoever may be supposed to have been promised in these words, the bishops of Rome can thence derive no lawful claim to the like authority. And yet (as if there were nothing plainer than that Christ spake to the Roman bishops when he said these words to St. Peter) they have the confidence from hence to entitle the pope to the privilege of infallibility, as well as to a supreme dominion over the church. So Bellarmine, who elsewhere alleges these words to prove that “the chief bishop, (i. e. theirs,) when he teacheth the whole church in things belonging to faith, can in no case err^x.” But this depends upon his former suppositions, that Peter is the rock of the church as its supreme governor, and therefore every one of his successors in like manner is the same; which having no foundation, all his superstructure upon them falls to the ground. And indeed it is so sandy, that honest men among themselves are ashamed to build any thing of this nature upon it: particularly Launoy^y, who, on set purpose, demonstrates that Bellarmine neither obeyed the decree of the Trent council, nor kept the profession of faith enjoined by Pius IV., when he drew this conclusion of the pope’s infallibility from these words, *Thou art Peter*, &c., but was guilty of downright flattery of the court of Rome; for whose sake he, in like manner, falsified in the citations he brings out of the fathers to maintain the same untruth.

But further than this, the same writer presses these words to prove that “general councils cannot err, neither in believing nor teaching^z.” Which is as much as to confess that what Christ said to Peter was intended to all bishops, of whom a general council consists. But here he endeavours to bring off himself by this salvo, “if the council be confirmed by the pope,” as if they received their infallibility from him who turns their doubtful opinions into oracles. Whence it is that from the very same words, *Thou art Peter*, &c., he proves the pope to be above a council^a, “immediately constituted by Christ the pastor and head not only of all particular churches, but also of the whole universal church congregated together.”

^x L. iv. de Rom. Pontific. c. 3. [col. 808.]

^z L. ii. l. Conc. Autor. cap. 1. [tom. ii. col. 54.]

^y Epist. pars v. Gulielmo Voello. [Epist. vi. tom. v. part. 2. p. 99.]

^a Ib. cap. 15. [col. 92.]

If this be to interpret the Scripture, I know not what is setting it upon the rack, and stretching it as far as it pleaseth him who takes it in hand. No heretics ever took so great a liberty as this, which according to their way of reasoning makes it necessary to seal up the Bible quite, that nobody may look into it. For if the danger of wresting the holy Scriptures be a just cause for denying the liberty of reading them to illiterate people, it ought not to be granted to the most learned, who (it appears by this great cardinal) are in as much or more danger of this than any other men: and so farewell the study of the Scriptures, which neither priest nor people must meddle withal.

But, thanks be to God, there is such a thing as honesty and integrity still remaining in the world, which qualifies all men for the wholesome perusal of them, and hath preserved the minds of some in that communion so uncorrupted, as to make them disdain and reject these perverse and arrogant interpretations, or distortions rather, of holy Scripture. There is one hath lately declared his sense of this promise to St. Peter in remarkable words, with which I conclude this part of my discourse^b: “Supposing Christ to have spoken these words, *and upon this rock*, of the person of Peter, he meant nothing else thereby but that Peter should labour very much in the edification of the church, that is, in the conversion of the faithful, and administration of the churches. And therefore the most that can be deduced from hence is, that he should be the first and the chief among those who were to preach the gospel: but it cannot from hence be gathered, with Bellarmine, that the government of the whole church was committed to Peter, especially about faith.”

2. The truth of this will further appear in the explication of the next words, which expound those of which I have now treated; *and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, it shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.*

The sense of which is not so plain and obvious as Bellarmine pretends; but we agree that they are a plain allusion to the

^b Du Pin de antiqua Eccles. Discipl. dissert. iv. cap. 1. sect. 1. [p. 307.]

words of the prophet Isaiah concerning Eliakim^c; *I will give thee the keys of the house of David*: i. e. make thee, not high priest, as he grossly mistakes, but steward of the royal family, to take in and thrust out whom thou shalt think fit. Such was the power here promised to Peter by our Lord, who saith of himself, that *he hath the key of David*^d, i. e. of the house or family of David, which he alone governs by an absolute power; but tells Peter he intended to make him, under himself, his supreme lord and master, such a steward in the church as Eliakim had been in the court.

I say, in the church, for by *the kingdom of heaven*, I think nobody now will dispute, is meant the family of Christ, or the Christian church, in a great many places of the gospel, and most likely is so to be interpreted here. But if anybody be so minded as to understand by *the kingdom of heaven*, not the Christian society here below, but the company of the blessed above, let them consider that the sense will still be the same, because by admission into the one, and abiding in it, we come to the other. And baptism is the key which lets us into the church, out of which such as notoriously break their baptismal vow ought to be shut by the censures of the church, and again received into it upon their hearty repentance, by granting them absolution. Thus the following words expound it, *and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, &c.*

That binding and loosing are one and the same with the power of the keys, is acknowledged by the Roman Catechism^e, and by Bellarmine himself, who confesses the plain sense of these words to be, that “first of all an authority or power is promised, defined by keys; and then the actions or office of this power is explained by those words, *loosing and binding*. So that to loose and to open, to shut and to bind, is altogether the same thing^f.” And we need not further trouble ourselves to inquire how far this power extends, for it is certain there is nothing here promised, though we suppose it never so large, which was intended to him alone, but to them all, except that of opening the door first to let the Gentiles into the church.

This is apparent from what was said before concerning Christ

^c Isaiah xxii. 22.

^d Rev. iii. 7.

^e De Sacrament. Pœnitent. n. 44.

[p. 163. fol. Rom. 1566.]

^f L. I. de Pont. Rom. cap. xii.

‘Verum.’ [tom. i. col. 555.]

speaking to them all in him, as he spake for them all in answer to our Saviour's question propounded to the whole company; which produced this promise from our Saviour, not to him alone, but to all them in whose name he spake. Which is no new interpretation, but as old as the church itself; for "the ancients say with an unanimous consent that these keys were given to the whole church in the person of Peter," as a late writer in the Roman communion honestly confesses^g. St. Austin particularly inculcates this an hundred times, (as his words are,) a proof of which may be seen in another of his brethren^h, who hath made a collection of twenty-six places out of his works, to show that he taught this openly, frequently and constantly, in such plain words as may be understood by themselves without the help of an interpreter. I cannot well forbear to mention one of them, because it affords us many considerable remarks: "As some things," says he, "are spoken, which may seem properly to belong to the apostle Peter, and yet have not a clear sense but when they are referred to the church, (whereof he is acknowledged to have represented the person in a figure, because of the primacy he had among the apostles,) as that is, *I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven*, and if there be any like; so Judas sustains after a certain manner the person of the Jews, the enemies of Christ, &c.ⁱ"

Here they of the church of Rome are very forward to catch at these words, which signify a place of priority that Peter had among the apostles, (which nobody denies,) but are not willing to take any notice of all the rest, which utterly overthrow that primacy which they would advance him unto from this place. For first, he says, some things do but seem to belong to Peter, which in truth ought to be referred to the church. And secondly, that their sense is not clear or evident till they be carried beyond him. Among which things, thirdly, he reckons what our Saviour here saith, *I will give thee the keys, &c.*, which they would now engross to St. Peter, and have us believe this to be the plain and obvious sense of Christ's words, which

^g ["Antiqui unanimi consensu tradunt claves istas in persona Petri toti ecclesie datas."] Du Pin de antiqua Eccles. Disc. dissert. iv. c. 1. sect. 1. [p. 308.]

^h Jo. Launoy, Epist. par. 2. Hadriano Valantio, p. 14, &c. [Epist. 5. tom. v. part. 1. p. 218 sqq.]

ⁱ Aug. Enarratio in Psal. cviii. [tom. iv. col. 1215.]

St. Austin says are not plain unless we refer them to the church. Whose person (fourthly) he says he did bear or represent, not by virtue of his place or any authority he had above the rest, but in a figure; to signify unity, that is, as the ancients interpret it. And it is further remarkable, (fifthly,) that Christ did not promise him the primacy in promising him the keys, for he had the primacy (here spoken of) before; and with respect to that Christ directed to him these words rather than any of the rest, because he was already the first, not in office, but in order, and so the fittest person to be singled out to represent what Christ intended. And to convince every one there is no authoritative primacy meant in these words of St. Austin, he adds, (sixthly,) that Judas sustained the person of Christ's enemies, as Peter did of the church. Will anybody infer from hence that Judas had a jurisdiction over all the wicked, and left it to his successors, one of which hath now the same? Let them forbear then to make such inferences from what is said of St. Peter's primacy, which gave him no right to rule, but only made him stand fairest, being the first to be chosen to represent the rest. If any will be still so perverse as to wrangle because St. Austin doth not mention Judas's primacy as he doth Peter's, let them learn more modesty by knowing that Prosper, one of St. Austin's scholars, upon the very same Psalm, says in express terms that "Judas carried the primacy of Christ's enemies^k." Which if they will not expound to signify a supreme authority to govern Christ's enemies, let them no longer interpret St. Peter's primacy to signify such an authority over his friends. He had none here promised him, is as certain as any thing can be; but the keys to commend unity were promised him, which were in truth given to all the rest. This is the ancient sense, which drew this plain and pertinent observation from another honest writer in the Roman communion, "He said to Peter, I will give thee the keys; but he did not say, I will give them to thee alone^l."

Which is justified to be true by three other passages in the holy Gospels. In the first of which he promises as much to all in the very same words as he had done to him^m. *Verily I say*

^k Judas primatum gessit inimicorum Christi. [col. 408 E.]

[Inter opp. Cypriani, ed. Fell. epist. lxxv. p. 225.]

^l Rigaltius in epist. Firmiliani.

^m Matt. xviii. 18.

unto you, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven* : which is the explication, as you heard before, of the power of the keys, in the same terms (without the least difference but what is between the plural number and the singular) wherein it was delivered to St. Peter. And in the next chapter he repeats it again only in other words, when he saithⁿ, *Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging* (i. e. ruling and governing) *the twelve tribes of Israel*; without any mention of one throne peculiar and higher than the rest to St. Peter. And thus far there is no more than a promise to be met withal in the gospel, but no actual grant, no words whereby our Lord makes a conveyance of this power to them till after his resurrection from the dead; when he gives out a commission to them as large as can be made, wherein there is nothing peculiar reserved to St. Peter, but it runs in general terms to them all^o. For he neither saith, *I send thee*, nor breathed upon him alone, saying, *Receive thou the Holy Ghost ; Whose soever sins thou remittest*, &c. But he saith to them, being all, save Thomas, assembled together, *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost : Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained*. And accordingly it may be added, when the Holy Ghost descended, (of which this breathing on them was an emblem and pledge,) *they were all* (Thomas with the rest) *with one accord in one place*, and it was imparted to each of them alike, without any mark of distinction. For we read of no flame that crowned the head of St. Peter greater and more illustrious than that upon his brethren; but the text saith, the tongues, like as of fire, were divided, and sat upon *every one of them singly*^p, *and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*^q. The *mighty wind* also wherein this flame came (betokening the powerful inspiration which was entering into them) *filled all the house where they were sitting*, and not only that corner where St. Peter was placed. And so this promise was equally performed in common to them all, as it had been made to them all. Nay, this very thing is no less

ⁿ Matt. xix. 28.^o John xx. 21, 22, 23.^p Ἐφ' ἕνα ἕκαστον αὐτῶν^q Acts ii. 2, 5.

than a demonstration that the promise was intended to all, because the performance was to all.

That here his promise was performed, is very manifest to those who are desirous to understand the truth; for no other time can be named when it was performed to Peter, nor any other words found wherein the thing promised was conveyed, but these, *As my Father sent me, so I send you*. And lastly, this is the sense of the church, as appears by St. Cyprian in ancient times; who observes that our Lord, who said to Peter, *Thou art Peter, &c.*, gave to all his apostles equal power after his resurrection^r, when he said, *As the living Father sent me, so I send you, &c.*, concluding from thence that all the apostles were what St. Peter was^s: and by Theophylact in later times, who thus glosses upon Matt. xvi. 19^t: “Though our Lord said only to Peter, *I will give thee*, yet they were given to all the apostles. When? At that time when he said, *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted*. For the word, *I will give*, denotes the future time, that is, after the resurrection.”

Then he said to them all, *As my Father hath sent me, so I send you*. Which are words so large that they contain in them a plenitude of power, and confute the conceit of those who say, that Christ indeed gave the power of remitting and retaining sins to all the apostles, but the power of the keys to Peter alone. Whereby if they meant that to Peter it was given to open the gate first to the Gentiles, it ought to be allowed to be a true sense; though we are not certain it was the thing peculiarly intended by our Saviour in these words. But understanding thereby a distinct power from that of binding and loosing, retaining and remitting, (which St. Peter exercised when he let the Gentiles into the church,) it is certainly false that he gave him such a power, which he did not confer upon the rest. For should we suppose binding and loosing to be distinct from the power of the keys, yet this power of the keys (be it what it will) we may be sure is included in these comprehensive words, *As my Father hath sent me, so I send you*; which were spoken unto them all.

And therefore, as the keys were not promised to him alone,

^r *Parem potestatem.*

^s *Hoc utique erant et cæteri Apostoli quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio præditi et honoris et potes-*

tatis, &c. L. de Unitate Ecclesiæ, [p. 107.] et Epist. lxxiii. ad Jubai-anum. [p. 201.]

^t [Tom. i. p. 85 D.]

so not to him more than any other apostle; but only the use of them first before any other apostle. That is the most (as I have often said) which can reasonably be conceived to be peculiarly promised to Peter in these words, that he should first open the door of faith to the Gentiles, as we read he did^u, and as some think to the Jews also^x. Tertullian seems to be of this mind^y, (and I shall not here dispute it,) who mentioning this place, *I will give thee the keys, &c.*, thus proceeds; "So the event teaches us the church was first built on him; that is, by him. He first handled the key. See what key; *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you^z, &c.* He, in fine, did first by the baptism of Christ unlock the entrance of the heavenly kingdom, &c. He bound Ananias with the bond of death, and he absolved the man lame of his feet from the weakness where-with he laboured. And in the dispute which arose about the obligation of the law, Peter first of all, by the instinct of the Holy Ghost, (having told them how God made choice of him that the Gentiles should hear the word from his mouth,) said, *And now why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? &c.*" Where he plainly makes the power of the keys, and binding and loosing, to be the same thing: and from the scope of his discourse it appears (as Launoy hath observed^a) that they then believed at Rome that in the person of Peter the keys were given to the church; that is, says he, the power of binding and loosing. Which things if the late Catholic Scripturist^b had known, or would have been pleased to mind, how could he have had the confidence to say that our Lord spake these words to Peter to signify that "he was the head and chief in ordinary? For though the power of binding and loosing was afterward given to the other apostles, yet the keys

^u Acts x.^x Acts ii.^y L. de Pudicitia, c. xxi. [p. 573 D.]^z Acts ii. 22, &c.^a Epist. par. ii. Hadriano Valantio. [Epist. 5. tom. v. part. 1. p. 215.]^b [A controversial manual written by James Mumford, a Jesuit priest, entitled "The Catholic Scripturist;

or the Plea of the Roman Catholics: shewing the Scriptures to hold the Roman faith, in above forty of the chief controversies now under debate." In reply to it bishop Bull wrote his "Vindication of the church of England," &c., at the request of the countess of Newburgh, dated Oct. 18, 1671. Works, vol. ii. p. 147 —234.]

of the kingdom of heaven are never in Scripture said to be given to any but to St. Peter^c." By which keys also he saith is signified the plenitude of highest power: for this vain conceit is contrary to the common opinion of the ancient fathers, (whom they are bound by their profession of faith and oath to follow,) contrary to their greatest schoolmen, (such as Scotus, Aquinas, Alex. Alensis,) who affirm that the keys promised to Peter in St. Matt. xvi. were given to all the apostles in St. John xx.; contrary also to their own Catechism, (as I have shown,) according to which he ought to have instructed his followers.

The sum of what hath been said is this :

1. The power which our Lord here promised to Peter was not meant to him alone.

2. For he did but represent and sustain the person of the church, (as the ancients speak,) to whom this promise belongs.

3. And therefore our Lord afterward promises the very same thing in the same words to all the apostles, which he here promises to Peter.

4. And accordingly, when he performed his promise, he gave this power to every one of them equally.

5. But Christ directed this promise at the first singularly to him, that he might commend unity.

6. Or, at the most, he promised him the honour of opening the door of faith first unto the Gentiles.

7. From whence we can only gather that he was the first among the apostles, but not that he was promised any power which the rest had not; for the contrary is apparent.

8. To all which I must add, (repeating briefly what I said upon the foregoing words,) that if we should grant our Saviour to have promised some power to Peter (when he said, *I will give thee the keys*) which the other apostles had not, it would prove a personal prerogative, and cannot be shown to have descended to any successor, much less to the pope of Rome, who, Bellarmine saith, "is a true prince, who hath power to make true laws to bind the whole church." And this he proves from these words, *Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven*^d, &c.

^c The seventh point, n. 6. [p. 75.]

^d L. iv. de Rom. Pontif. c. 16. [col. 859.]

Concerning which it will be thought too sharp perhaps to say, (though they are the words of one in the Roman communion^e), “Simply to relate the words of this author, is simply to confute them; they are so very contrary to truth and equity.” The reader therefore may be pleased briefly to consider what our Lord himself saith to all his apostles, which utterly overturns these proud pretensions^f. *But be not ye called rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.* The repetition of one and the same thing so often, in words of the same import, argues it to be a matter of great moment which ought to be duly weighed. And it is this, that no man, no, not any of his apostles, should take upon him to prescribe that as a part of religion which God our Saviour hath not prescribed by his laws: and that we ought not absolutely to submit to any man’s dictates as children do to the will of their fathers, nor pin our faith, as we speak, upon any man’s sleeve; i. e. let it depend entirely upon his authority: for this is a submission which is due only to God our Saviour, who (in this sense of the words) is our only Father, and Master, and Leader; and therefore we cannot, without the highest injury to him, own any one else to be such, nor give them these names; but as they teach, not their own, but Christ’s doctrine unto men. And in this office all the apostles were equal, and no one of them could claim an authority over the rest of his brethren.

There are many other places wherein we read of *one Shepherd, one Lord, one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy*: from whence we may conclude, that Peter himself had no power to make, but only to declare the laws of his and our Lord and Lawgiver, Jesus Christ. So the words of Christ’s commission run, when he saith, not to him alone, but to them all, *Go ye, and disciple all nations, &c., teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*^g. Here is their authority to publish the commands of their Master, not what they pleased to command themselves. Which Peter was so far from doing, that he went not about the abrogation of the

^e Launoy ubi supra, p. 77. [tom. v. part. 1. p. 240.]

^f Matt. xxiii.

^g Matt. xxviii. 20.

ceremonial law and the calling of the Gentiles till he was authorized by an heavenly vision, which discovered this mystery to him as a part of the counsel of God; but no law, nor so much as a thought, of his own. For being charged afterwards by the Jews for eating with men uncircumcised, he excuses himself by a long apology, wherein he relates how he was commanded to do it by God himself, whom he could not withstand^h; which was not done like a lawgiver. Nay, after this revelation made to him he was so weak as to observe this law, to the great offence of the Gentiles; for which he was reprehended by St. Paul, who had the honour to abrogate the law of Moses among the Gentiles, while St. Peter (who began that work) was the minister of the circumeisionⁱ.

Nor doth the word *bind* import a power to impose laws, but only to tie men to those laws which are already made. Thus it signifies in that very place which Bellarmine alleges to maintain his sense of the word, viz. to make laws, *For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders*^k, &c.; that is, they were rigorous interpreters of the laws of God, which it was their office to expound according to the plain sense and meaning of them, and not according to the traditions of the elders, which had made them intolerable burdens.

But suppose the word to signify what they please, it will do them no service; because this power of binding was not promised to Peter alone, but to them all, as hath been before proved. And consequently, he could do nothing which they could not do as much as he; that is, they were all *ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God*^l. All of them like to Eliakim, to whom the *key of the house of David* is promised, as the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter. For by that very word which we translate *stewards*, or *dispensers*, is that office^m to which Eliakim was advanced in the room of Shebna expressed by the LXX in Isa. xxii. 19, 21; which was not a supreme power in the court, where all the rest of the courtiers did not depend on him as their lord and prince, but the power of a prime minister in the royal family, which he governed not after his own will, but the king's. In

^h Acts xi. 3, 4, &c.ⁱ Gal. ii. 7, 10, 11, &c.^k Matt. xxiii. 4.^l 1 Cor. iv. 1.^m Οἰκονομίαν.

like manner, all the apostles were *ministers* by whom men believed^m, *stewards of the heavenly mysteries*, which they faithfully dispensedⁿ, according to the will of Christ, who *hath the key of David*; that is, is the sole supreme Governor of the church, and gives rules to it; which the apostles delivered, but did not ordain themselves, nor bind upon men by their own authority, but by his. For they were not authors of the divine laws which they taught, but the publishers of them, and equal publishers of one and the same common doctrine: which every bishop in the church hath as much authority to bind upon men as the pope: "they being all of the same merit and priesthood, (as St. Hierom speaks^o,) all successors of the apostles."

There are some other words of St. Hierom (it may not be unfit here to note) which are usually alleged to prove the contrary, viz. that he thought St. Peter had some supremacy of power over the rest of the apostolical college; from whence they hope to derive the like power unto the pope over all bishops. They are in his first book against Jovinian, where he saith, "One among the twelve was therefore chosen, that, an head being constituted, the occasion of schism might be removed^p." But they are unconscionably disingenuous who allege this passage, and do not give us the entire sentence, but only this conclusion of it; which can have no such meaning as they pretend, without making mere nonsense of the words foregoing, which are these: "But thou sayest the church was founded upon Peter, though the very same in another place is done upon all the apostles, and they received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the strength of the church is solidly bottomed upon them equally." And then follow the words now named, "Yet one was therefore chosen among the twelve," &c., which makes it as clear as the sun that he dreamt of no such headship of one over all the rest as signifies a supremacy of power: for what one text, he saith, affirms of Peter, another affirms of them all; they all receiving the keys, (which is the

^m 1 Cor. iii. 5.

ⁿ 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.

^o ["Ejusdem meriti, ejusdem et sacerdotii. . . Cæterum omnes apostolorum successores sunt."] Epist.

ad Evagrium. [Sive Evangelum, epist. cxlvi. tom. i. col. 1076 B, 1077 A.]

^p [§ 26. tom. ii. col. 279 B.]

highest power,) and the stability of the church relying upon them equally.

I conclude this part of my discourse with the observation of a late learned writer of our church⁹. If any power or degree of power was here promised to Peter more than to the rest of the apostles, it must be gathered either from the force of the substance of the promise, or from the circumstances where-with it was delivered.

The substantial part is nothing else but that of a steward in the church, set forth by the emblem of keys, and more explicitly declared by the power of binding and loosing; which carries in it no intimation of such a thing as a supremacy over the whole church, but only of a ruling power in some family; that is, in that part of the universal church where his lot should fall. For this very thing being presently after promised to all the apostles, it makes it evident there was no supremacy here promised, for then there must be not one, but twelve supremes.

As for the circumstances wherein this part and the former of our Saviour's promise was delivered, (which some are pleased to urge as very considerable,) they are of no strength to support so great a weight as they lay upon them. For first, it is very unreasonable that circumstances should be thought of greater force to declare the meaning of this promise than the very substance itself is. And secondly, all these circumstances (save only that of his own name and his father's joined together) are not peculiar to him, but common to others, who confessed Christ's divinity, and had it revealed from God, and were blessed, and designed for stones in the fabric of the church, as well as Peter. And further, even that circumstance of calling him Simon Barjona had a visible reason for it, to distinguish this Simon from Simon Zelotes. So that there is nothing left but the small circumstance of calling him by his name to be the grand foundation of St. Peter's supremacy.

Can any one be satisfied with such poor proofs? Which are no better than if we should argue in this manner: Our Lord said to Peter, *Follow me*, and so he did to the other

⁹ Dr. Hammond's *Dispatcher Dispatched*, p. iii. c. 7. sect. 2. n. 13. [Works, vol. ii. p. 387.]

eleven, and by this made them his disciples in common. But had he said, *Simon Barjona, follow thou me*, (as he might very well if any other Simon were then present,) he alone (according to this way of discoursing) had been taken into discipleship, and none after him enjoyed this honour.

But I have said enough, if not too much, upon these texts; and must here end this paper, for fear of swelling it beyond the intended bulk. The rest shall soon follow.

PART II.

Now we are come to the last reserve of the Roman church for the support of this cause, which lies in those words of Christ to Peter^a, *Feed my lambs*, and *Feed my sheep*. They are sensible of the truth of that which hath been oft repeated, that in neither of the former places Christ gave any thing to Peter, but only promised he would give him such things as are therein mentioned. Now they are hard put to it to find when he did perform this promise, and not find withal that he performed it to all the apostles; and therefore, as I have said, made it to them all. Here is the only place they rely upon, here they would fain find what is no where else to be found, something peculiarly granted to Peter, which was conferred upon none of the rest. Read the words, say they, and observe how they are peculiarly spoken to Peter: *So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*

See, say they, with what solemnity our Lord here speaks to Peter, and to him alone, calling him three times particularly by his name and relation, and bidding him as oft feed his lambs or sheep, whereby he instated him in the office he had promised

^a John xxi. 15, 16, 17.

him, and made him in a particular manner to be a pastor, even the pastor of the whole church, with a supreme power over it.

First, to which we reply, that having seen and considered all this, we can see nothing here that looks like a grant or commission, nothing given to St. Peter by these words, which are a plain charge or command, requiring him to do his office; which was therefore conferred upon him before, together with the rest of the apostles, when our Lord said, *As my Father hath sent me, so I send you, &c. Receive ye the Holy Ghost, &c.*

Secondly, and as here is no commission, no conveyance of any thing made to him, but a bare precept to do his duty; so the duty doth not concern him alone, but belongs to them all as much as him. It is at this time required in a precept directed to him alone, that is true; and Bellarmine might have spared all his labour to prove that these words were spoken to Peter alone. They were so, if we understand thereby that he only by name is now admonished of his duty, (the reason of which we shall see presently;) but the duty of which he was admonished was not peculiar to him, and so the words do not belong to him alone, as appears by many arguments.

1. From St. Peter himself, who seems to have interpreted the mind of Christ in this speech to him, in his words to the elders of the church to whom he wrote^b. *The elders which are among you I exhort, who am,*—what? the monarch of the church? the vicar of Christ? or pastor of pastors? the chief apostle? or supreme bishop? No such thing, but *συμπρεσβύτερος, your fellow elder, &c. Feed the flock of God which is among you, &c.* And from whom did these elders receive their power and authority? From St. Peter? No such matter, but from the chief Shepherd or Pastor, from whom he bids them expect their reward^c.

2. In like manner St. Paul gives the very same charge to the elders of Ephesus, to *take heed to themselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*^d.

3. For Christ, as I said, had given this power unto all his

^b 1 Pet. v. 1.

^c 1 Pet. v. 4.

^d Acts xx. 28.

apostles when he said, *As my Father hath sent me, so I send you*^e, &c. What did he send them to do, but to *gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad*, and to *feed his flock*, as he, the *good Shepherd*, had done^f? And therefore we may say here of these words, as Rigaltius doth of the former; He said to Peter, *Feed my sheep*, but he doth not say, Do thou alone feed them. No. It may be further observed that our Lord in his lifetime sent them all to the *lost sheep of the house of Israel*^g. And a little before this, seeing the people scattered abroad *as sheep having no shepherd*, he bade his disciples pray that the *Lord would send labourers among them*: not one, (who should depute others,) but as many as were needful to gather in his harvest^h.

4. And therefore thus the ancient fathers have expounded these words; particularly the Roman clergy themselves, in their letter to the clergy of Carthage; where, admonishing them of their duty, (in the absence of St. Cyprian by reason of the then persecution,) they press them with these words to Peter, *Feed my sheep*; which, they tell them, the rest of the disciples in like manner did; and accordingly it was now incumbent upon them also, in the room of the pastor, to keep the flockⁱ.

This Launoy^k proves is the exposition of the church, and most justly condemns Bellarmine (and such like flatterers) as failing in his duty; which required him to expound these words according to the sense of the whole church, which is directly against this exposition, that Christ here gave this power to Peter alone. A great many of the ancient popes of Rome, he there shows, speak otherwise; and one of their neighbours, St. Ambrose, expressly declares, that those sheep and that flock, which Christ bade Peter feed, he did not alone receive, but he both received them with us, and with him we all received them^l. As much as to say, what Christ said to Peter he spake in him to all bishops. Which is the sense of

^e John xx. 21.

^f John x. 11, and xi. 52.

^g Matt. x. 6, 7.

^h Matt. ix. 36, &c.

ⁱ Vice pastoris custodire gregem.

^k Epist. par. ii. ad Raimundum

Formentinum, p. 27, &c. [Opp. tom. v. part. 2. p. 125 sqq.]

^l L. de Sacerd. Dignit. c. 2. [Pseudo-Ambros. tom. ii. append. col. 359 C.]

St. Austin in a great many places, as the same author shows^m, making Peter here also to have represented the whole church; so that when it was said to him, it was said to all, *Lovest thou me? Feed my sheep*ⁿ.

5. But what need any further testimonies? when this preface is sung not only in the feast of St. Peter, but of all the rest of the apostles and evangelists, except St. John, and on their octaves in the Roman church at this very day: "We humbly beseech thee, O Lord, the eternal Pastor, not to forsake thy flock, but preserve it with continued protection, by thy blessed apostles: that it may be governed by the same rulers which, as vicars of thy work, thou didst bestow upon it to be set pastors over it." This is sufficient to show that the Roman church itself hath anciently believed this charge was given to all the apostles, to feed his flock, and be the chief pastors of it^o.

What! will some say, was there nothing here peculiarly spoken to Peter? No mystery in those words thrice repeated, and specially directed to him by name, as you cannot but acknowledge? Yes, no doubt. But it is no more than this, that Peter, of all the rest, had lately thrice denied his Master. This might well have made Peter himself question his love to Christ, and move our Lord to ask him whether he still remained as confident as he was before that he had a greater affection to him than any of his disciples. For so he begins this speech, *Lovest thou me more than these?* As he had fancied he did when he said, *Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended*^p. The vanity of which thoughts he had found by sad experience, he alone denying, nay, abjuring his Master. In this Peter was singular, and did more than any of the rest. For which cause more was to be said to him, and more was to be done by him than any of them. He was to answer thrice to three questions, which were solemnly put to him, that by a threefold confession he might obliterate his threefold denial.

This is all the mystery which the ancient Christians could find in this solemn speech made with particular application to

^m Launoy Epist. pars v. Carolo Magistro. [tom. v. part. 2. p. 18sq.]

[tom. vi. col. 260 C.]

^o Præesse pastores.

ⁿ De Agone Christiano, cap. 30.

^p Matth. xxvi. 33.

Peter, as may be seen in St. Cyril of Alexandria ^q, St. Austin ^r, Gregory Nazianzen ^s, and a long train, which I could set down, of other fathers; which assures us that this was the common and literal exposition of these words, and that they understood no other reason why our Lord addressed himself only to Peter, though other apostles were present, but only this; that he might declare he would have Peter, notwithstanding his denying him thrice, be confident, upon this profession of love to him, he was restored to his favour; and that he would have him, no less than the rest, look upon the care of his flock as belonging to him, who had deserved, by his shamefully repeated denial of him, his fall from that office, more than any other of his apostles. For though they all fled, yet none denied him but Peter alone; and therefore these words were as if our Lord had said, "Though there be cause enough for me to reject thee, yet, because thou didst repent thee of thy sin, and dost now profess thy love to me, feed my sheep, no less than the rest of my apostles to whom I have committed the care of them;" which will sufficiently expose the vanity of the Catholic Scripturist ^t, who bids us (against the sense of all antiquity) to note that our Lord would not have required greater love in Peter rather than in any of the rest, nor have said, *Lovest thou me more than these?* if he had not here intended to give him higher dignity in pastorship than the rest. Note rather, good reader, what hath been said, and these words of St. Cyril, who was a better scripturist and more catholic than this Jesuit. I will not set them down at large, but only the conclusion of them, which are very remarkable, and expressly expound this passage as I have done: "In that speech of our Lord, *Feed my sheep*, there was a kind of renewal ^u of the apostleship formerly bestowed upon him; doing away the infamy of his fall, and blotting out the cowardice of human infirmity." Where a great person of our own hath justly remarked that word *renewal* ^x: "He doth not say that our Lord augmented his dignity,

^q In Johan. xxi. [tom. iv. p. 1119.]

^r Tract. xlvii. in Johan. [tom. iii. part. 2. col. 607.]

^s Orat. xxix. [Lege xxxix. tom. i. 689 E.]

^t Seventh Point, n. 7. [P. 75 of the fourth edition, published in 1767.]

^u 'Ανανέωσις, ὡσπερ τις, &c. l. xii. in Joh. [p. 1120.]

^x Bishop Andrewes, Tortura Torti, p. 51. [4to, Lond. 1609.]

(which is the new doctrine,) but that he renewed it, or restored him to it." Which dignity he had said in the beginning of this discourse Peter was advanced unto when our Lord named him, not *præ aliis*, 'above others,' but *cum aliis* ^γ, 'with other' disciples, to be an apostle; and therefore now did not give him more than the rest, but only declared he did not take the forfeiture he had made of that dignity, but reinstated him in it together with the rest.

This is undoubtedly the ancient sense of Christ's church, to which I know not what to add for the explication of these words, unless it be this, that Peter had, just before this discourse of our Lord's, begun to express his earnest desire to recover his favour; casting himself into the sea (when the other disciples came by the ship) to get to our Saviour; which may be looked upon as a token of excessive love to him, and of a more than ordinary desire to enjoy his company. From hence a very learned writer^z of this church thinks our Lord takes occasion to make this speech to him, (but whether to check or to cherish that desire, he dares not determine,) the import of which he gives in this paraphrase. "Thou hast made profession of more than ordinary love to me, of readiness to lay down thy life for my sake, though all others, even these thy fellows, should forsake me; and art willing, I see, by thy present hazard of it to make good thy former words. But wouldst thou have me yet to show thee a more excellent way? I have told it thee long since: thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. Simon the son of Jona, if thou desirest to prove thyself a Cephas, or testify the sincerity of thy faith and love, (which by the powers of darkness were of late so grievously shaken,) *feed my lambs, feed my sheep*. Yea, seeing thou thrice deniedst the Shepherd of thy soul, I say unto thee the third time, *Feed my sheep*. Let the memory of thy fore-passed threefold sin, also let this my present threefold admonition, excite thee unto triple diligence in thy charge, to show such pity and compassion as I have showed to thee, unto that lost and scattered flock which have denied me, or consented to my crucifying. Let thy faithful performance of

^γ Ὁμοῦ τοῖς ἑτέροις, Cyril. ib.

^z Dr. Jackson, book iii. upon the Creed, c. 7. [Works, vol. ii. p. 244.]

what I request at my farewell be the first testimony of thy love to me, to be lastly testified by the loss of thy life; which thou didst promise me when I gave mine for my sheep^a, but shalt not pay till thou hast fulfilled this my request. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou art old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldst not,*" &c.

These things being well considered, there is no necessity, I think, to dispute about the meaning of the word *feed*, (which is still a metaphor, it is fit to observe, as well as the two former, *rock*, and *keys*,) for whatsoever can be thought to be meant thereby, all the apostles were required to do it as well as Peter, and had the lambs and the sheep committed to their care as much as he. But because there are very great things which many of the Roman doctors draw from this single word *feed*, and there are also very curious observations made about the small word *my*, and about *lambs* and *sheep*, (that is, about every word of this short sentence,) it will not be unprofitable briefly to examine upon what foundation they stand.

I. Now by the word *feed* they understand the highest power^b to have been committed to him, which, if it were true, then all to whom it is said, *Feed the flock*, had the highest power; and so there were many supremes, all the elders of Ephesus (it hath been shown before) being required *to feed the church of God*^c, which includes in it, nobody doubts, authority and rule; but is not the thing principally, much less only intended; and is far from signifying the highest power. For the Greek word for *feed*^d, in the first mention of this charge, *Feed my lambs*^e, and in the last, *Feed my sheep*^f, imports nothing of ruling or governing, nor was ever applied to signify the power of princes; but denotes merely the simple office of leading the flock to their pasture. And accordingly the ancient fathers commonly refer these words to the feeding by word and doctrine, to which they had more regard than to mere rule and power, which is now the only thing that is contended for from this poor word *feed*.

^a John xiii. 37.

^c Acts xx. 28.

^b Summam potestatem. Bellarm.

^d Βόσκει.

l. i. de P. R. c. 15. [tom. i. p. 279.]

^e Ver. 15.

^f Ver. 17.

And that because once our Lord uses a word which is translated to this sense^b. Translated, I say, for it originally signifies no more than the other before named, denoting nothing of dominion or empire. For a man may be a shepherd of the sheep, who is not their lord. But it is applied to kings, and to God himself; not because it is apt to denote the absolute dominion of God over all creatures, or the highest power of kings over their subjects; but to give us to understand how God is affected towards us, and to admonish kings of their duty; which is, to govern their people committed to their charge gently and diligently, as a shepherd doth his flock. There are many places of Scripture that justify this, which I shall not so much as mention, because there is no reason why this word only should be regarded and the other neglected; nor why the otherⁱ should not rather interpret this^k, (being twice repeated, and this used but once,) than this interpret the other: nor why either should signify ruling after the manner of a prince, and not of a pastor; nor (if we allow the utmost that can be made of it) why they should suppose Peter to have had any pre-eminence in this authority over the flock of Christ, which was not grounded upon his eminent affectionate care, and more than ordinary fidelity in feeding it.

And yet such is the desire of dominion in some people, they have not only made Peter universal pastor, with an ordinary power, as they call it, which no other apostle had, but found him a successor also in this power, and without any deed of conveyance, but this one word *feed* made the pope of Rome his sole heir; unto whom they ascribe the most exorbitant power derived to him from St. Peter, sole heir to the great Shepherd of the sheep, Christ Jesus. If you would know what this power is, Bellarmine will inform you; who, here and there in his works, asserts the power of the bishop of Rome to extend unto five great things; for the support of which he alleges these words, *Feed my sheep*.

First, he saith that he is made hereby the supreme judge in controversies of faith^l. "Nothing can be more clearly spoken in the gospel than that which our Lord said to Peter in the presence of the rest of the apostles, *Feed my sheep*: for he

^g John xxi. 16.

^h Ποίμαινε.

ⁱ Βόσκει.

^k Ποίμαινε.

^l L. iv. de Pont. Rom. c. 1. [p. 392.]

spake to Peter only, and he gave him all his sheep to feed, so that he did not exclude the apostles themselves. Now it is indubitable, that it is one of the offices of a pastor to discern good pasture from bad."

Secondly, he proceeds from hence also to make the pope an infallible judge^m, "For in these words," saith he, "*Feed my sheep*, the pope was made the pastor and doctor of the whole church; and if so, then the whole church is bound to hear and to follow him; so that if he err, the whole church will err."

Thirdly, hence also he derives his power to make laws for the whole churchⁿ. "For Christ," says he, "giving Peter what he promised, uses a kingly word, viz. *ποίμαινε*." And therefore,

Fourthly, he proves by this that the pope is absolutely above the whole church, even above a general council^o. "For since Christ, the good Shepherd, hath communicated to Peter his own name in these words, *Feed my sheep*, it is plain the pastor is so above the sheep that he can in no wise be judged by them."

Fifthly, in fine, he proceeds so far as from these words to prove the pope's temporal power over princes^p, whom, if they be heretics, for instance, he may "not only excommunicate, but command the people also not to obey them, and therefore to deprive them of their dominion over their subjects." Wherein he doth but follow some of their popes, viz. Gregory VII., Boniface VIII., and Nicholas IV.; who, in their decretals, allege this place to maintain the power which they challenge to themselves in temporal things.

But these are such far-fetched and absurd inferences from these words, that to name them, as was said before, is to confute them: this being not to interpret the Scripture, but to torture it, and force it to say what they please, though never so much against its meaning; which some in their own communion are so sensible of, that they abhor such violent abuses of God's holy word; and openly declare there are no such things as these to be found therein. One^q more particularly

^m *Ib.* cap. 3. 'Tertio.' [tom. i. p. 396.]

ⁿ *Ib.* cap. 16. [p. 420.]

^o *L. ii. de Conciliis*, c. 17. [tom. ii. p. 47.]

^p *L. v. de Rom. Pontif.* cap. 7. [tom. i. p. 440.]

^q *Launoy Epist.* pars ii. et pars v.

[ubi supra.]

hath demonstrated Bellarmine's arguments to be sophistical, and against the rules of the council of Trent, when he proves from these words, *Feed my sheep*, the pope's superiority over general councils, and his unerring judgment in matters of faith; and shows that forty popes of Rome, by calling every bishop of the church their fellow bishops, have openly declared these words, *Feed my sheep*, are not proper to them alone; and that this is a most certain tradition of the Roman church itself, by its bishops; which he proves from Stephen I. to Innocent III. by near two hundred and twenty testimonies; which, if they be not sufficient to make a tradition, there can never be any sufficient tradition, as he speaks, it being scarce possible there should be any thing better testified.

And another^r also more lately hath overthrown these presumptuous assertions; showing that all the apostles and their successors were pastors of the flock of Christ; who spake to them in the person of Peter, when he said, *Feed my sheep*. And that if these words had been spoken to Peter alone and his successors, they would not have proved them to be infallible^s, or their authority to be above that of a general council^t: much less their authority over kings or their dominions, either directly or indirectly; the church universal having always understood these words to speak of a spiritual power only. And therefore they that are not ashamed to interpret them otherwise depart from the sense of the catholic church; that they may, by any means, defend their unlawful attempts^u.

II. But if the word *feed* alone will not do this great business, Bellarmine hopes the next little word *my* will assist mightily to the establishing St. Peter's universal pastorship. For he saith, it furnishes them with a notable reason why all the flock that called Christ their owner, should be looked upon as his^x. For since Christ adds, without any restriction, the pronoun *my* to the noun *sheep*, it manifestly signifies that all those sheep were committed to Peter which can be called Christ's sheep; and it is certain all are Christ's sheep, none excepted.

^r Lud. El. du Pin.

^u Dissert. 7. [p. 485.]

^s De Antiqua Ecclesiæ Discipl.
Dissert. v. [cap. 2. p. 366 sqq.]

^x L. 1. de Rom. Pontif. cap. 16.
[tom. i. p. 420.]

^t Dissert. vi. [p. 377 sqq.]

Unto which if any one should think fit to reply, (as no mean persons have done,) that our Lord in the word *my*, if any emphasis must be laid upon it, pointed to those who had been his own peculiar charge in his lifetime, when *he was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, I appeal to all men of sense whether it would not be a more reasonable exposition than his; especially when they shall consider that these lost sheep, the Jews, were afterwards the peculiar care of St. Peter, unto whom the gospel of the circumcision was committed, as the gospel of the uncircumcision to St. Paul; for *he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision*, i. e. of the Jews, *the same was mighty in me*, says St. Paul, *towards the Gentiles*^y, &c.

But there is no need of this interpretation, nor do I rely upon it, since our Lord expressly declared in his lifetime, *Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd*^z: all which sheep were committed to the care not of Peter alone, but of all the apostles, every one of which had an equal share in his charge; though Peter, as I have shown, had need to be particularly excited to do his part of this office, and to feed as many as he could possibly, seeing the proof of his love to Christ and of his fidelity, in which he had lamentably failed, did therein consist.

III. After all this they make pleasant work with the words *lambs* and *sheep*, which they say include the whole church, apostles and all: so that they who were pastors no less than Peter are turned into simple sheep who were to be led by him. Which is confuted by the whole history of the Gospel, and by all antiquity; nothing being plainer than that Peter did not so much as nominate a successor to Judas, much less take upon him by his sole authority to appoint one; but the whole college of the apostles appointed two persons to be presented to God, desiring him to show which he had chosen^a. Nor did he ordain St. Stephen and the other six deacons, but the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and bade them look out seven men, &c., *whom we* (not Peter alone) *may appoint over this business*^b. Nay, more than all this, Peter was so far from exercising supreme authority over them, that

^y Gal. ii. 7, 8.^z John x. 16.^a Acts i. 23, 24.^b Acts vi. 3.

the apostles sent him as there was occasion, not he them, to do an apostolical office, and also sent St. John in joint commission with him^c. And I have observed already how St. Paul withstood him to his face, and that publicly, when he was in an error; which can no way consist with the supposition of his being inferior to Peter in order or power. For though an inferior may privately give his advice to a superior, yet to call the supreme governor in question, and to reprove him before all, is intolerable presumption and contempt of authority.

But this conceit is so very dear to them, that the late Catholic Scripturist could not forego it, but is pleased to tell us that if every one of the other apostles be sheep of Christ, St. Peter is here made pastor to every one of them, for he is commanded to feed them. And others are so fond of it as to find a mystery in these words, which, the better to accommodate to their fancies, they turn into three, instead of two only which are in the Greek^d: and by *lambs*^e, and by *little sheep*^f, as they will needs have it read, understand the Jews and the Gentiles; and by *sheep*^g, the bishops of the church; who are, saith Bellarmine^h, as it were, the ewes or mothers of the lambs; and therefore the Lord committed to Peter the care of the lambs, i. e. of the people of the Jews; and of the little sheep, i. e. the people of the Gentiles; and of the sheep, that is, they that brought forth these lambs in Christ, which are apostles and bishops. Or, by lambs, he saith, we may understand mere laics, the people who have no pastoral care, being only children, not fathers in Christ; and by the little sheep, inferior priests, who are so the fathers of the people that they are bishops' sons: and by sheep, the great priests, that is, bishops, who are so set over both lambs and lambkins, that they are notwithstanding subject themselves to Peter. That is, you may understand this mystery how you please, if you but so contrive it that Peter have all under his care, and the apostles themselves be his curates.

But they who can be pleased with such conceits as these have little reverence for the holy Scriptures; and it is a great affront to our understandings to offer us mere imaginations for

^c Acts viii. 14.

^h L. 1. de Rom. Pontif. cap. 16.

^d Ἀρβία and πρόβατα.

[tom. i. p. 420.]

^e Ver. 15. ^f Ver. 16. ^g Ver. 17.

reasons; their own dreams instead of the divine oracles. If it may consist with Christian sobriety to make such a nice distinction between lambs and sheep, as to make them imply different things, (any more than the two several words for *feed*ⁱ, and for *lovest thou me* are thought to do,) it is far more likely that our Lord intended to signify the care that ought to be taken of all Christians, suitable to the diversity of their states; some of which, as a great man of our own church speaks^j, are to be handled tenderly and cherished like lambs; others to be looked unto like elder sheep, and to be fed with stronger meat, but with less personal or assiduous attendance.

This hath some sense in it, which is very useful and agreeable to all men's thoughts; but if we set our fancies on work, they abound with vain conceits of which we can find no end. For if lambs and lambkins and sheep only be St. Peter's walk, and he the shepherd, where are the rams? as a no less learned than ingenious man asks^k: they are excepted, it seems; and rams, as Turrianus fancies, are the apostles or their successors, that is, bishops; or, as cardinal Tolet^l (Bellarmine's

ⁱ Βόσκει and ποίμαινε, ἀγαπᾷς and φιλεῖς.

^j Dr. Jackson, B. iii. c. 7. sect. 10. [Works, vol. ii. p. 247.]

^k Dr. Collin's EPPHATA. p. 51. ["EPPHATA to F. T. or the Defence of the right reverend father in God the lord bishop of Elie, (Lancelot Andrewes,) lord high almoner and privie counsellour to the king's most excellent majestie, concerning his answer to cardinall Bellarmine's Apologie, against the slanderous cavills of a namelesse Ajoiner, entitling his booke in every page of it a discoverie of many foule absurdities, falsities, lyes, &c. wherein these things chiefly are discussed (besides many other incident.)

1. "The popes false Primacie, clayming by Peter.

2. "Invocation of Saints, with worship of creatures, and faith in them.

3. "The supremacie of kings, both in temporall and ecclesiasticall mat-

ters and causes, over all states and persons, &c. within their realmes and dominions.

"By Dr. Collins, chaplaine to his majestie."—4to, Cant. 1617.

"Samuel Collins was a Buckinghamshire man born, provost of King's college in Cambridge, elected the king's professor of divinity of that university Oct. 22, 1617, afterwards made prebendary of Ely, and parson of Somersham. Who in succeeding times, proving a high royalist, was removed from his provostship by order of parliament 1645. Afterwards he lived retiredly in Cambridge, till the time of his death 1651, leaving then behind him the character of a great scholar."—Wood, Athen. Oxon. ii. 663. See also Walker, Sufferings of the Clergy, part ii. p. 150. Andrewes' antagonist, designated by the initials F. T., was the Jesuit Thomas Fitzherbert.]

^l In xv. Joh. Annot. 3. [col. 149.]

equal) will have it, they are kings and princes ; and so these two, apostles and kings, are by this interpretation both shut out ; whom Bellarmine intended by his device to have shut into Peter's fold.

But the graver sort of writers even in the Roman church are ashamed of such mysteries as these, which they see may be invented at pleasure. Maldonate himself^m (to say nothing of Jansenius) bids those who subtilly inquire why Christ calls his disciples lambs, rather than sheep, think again and again what they do, and take heed lest they expose themselves to the laughter of the learned : for the difference is in word, not in sense ; save only that the word *lamb* hath something in it more soft and tender, and might be used to commend them the more to Peter's affection. For this diminutive form of speech is a sign of very tender and ardent love, and more moving than any other ; as appears by the common instance of a dying father, who expresses more of his own affection and works more upon his friends, if he says, I commend to you the care of my little babes, than if he simply says, I commend the care of my children to you. Whence it is our Saviour sometimes used this form just before he parted with his disciples, *Little children, yet a little while I am with you*ⁿ, &c. ; and his apostles also, particularly St. John, who uses it seven times in his first Epistle, to declare the greatness and tenderness of his love, and to excite the like in others.

That writer^o indeed pursues, no less than the other, the pretensions of the church of Rome from these words, though he like not this curiosity ; insisting upon Christ's committing all the sheep, i. e. all Christians, to Peter. Which will not do their business, since they were no otherwise committed to him than they were to the rest of Christ's apostles ; who had the same power given them, and were to take the same care of all Christ's flock that he did. Not that every one of them was to feed or teach all Christians, simply and universally understood ; for that was impossible, and would have made the labours of the rest useless, if one were sufficient ; but all indefinitely, so that among them none should be neglected, but instructed by some or other of them. This must necessarily be the meaning ; for otherwise our Lord bade Peter do that which could not be

^m In Joh. xxi. 15, &c. [col. 1888 sqq.] ⁿ John xiii. 33. ^o Maldonate. *ibid.*

done by one man, or, if it could have been done, would have made all the other apostles idle, and left them nothing to do.

No, say they, we do not mean that Peter alone was to preach the gospel to all nations, so he could not feed all, but this sort of feeding must be allowed to others ; but he alone was to rule and govern in chief, to feed by authority and power over all, whereby he was to prescribe what was to be taught and believed.

But this is to return where we were before, to the signification of the word *feed* ; which cannot mean one thing with respect to Peter, and another with respect to the rest, but signifies the same power, be it what it will, common to them all. If this need any further explication, those words of our Lord, *Go, and teach all nations*^p, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature*^q, will satisfy us that Peter had no peculiar authority conferred on him above the other apostles, for he gave this charge to them all, and it was ushered in with a far more magnificent preface to it than when he spake here particularly to Peter ; for he first acquaints them with his own supreme authority, saying, *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth*, and then adds, *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations*, &c. ; which is a commission as large as could be given to men, including in it all the power that was necessary for the establishing and governing those churches which they should gather unto Christ.

Who can think that they who had this authority given them were themselves to be taught and governed by Peter alone ? Nothing could put such a conceit into men's minds, but an ambitious desire to advance themselves to the highest dominion by raising Peter above all others : who, it is evident, did not take themselves to be all inferior to him, nor to be less able to feed him than he was to feed them. For St. Paul (who was herein inferior that he was called late to be an apostle, as *one born out of due time*) did take upon him to feed Peter, and that with his staff too, if I may so speak, that is, with his reproof ; and this at Antioch, St. Peter's own seat ; where it had been very proper for him, one would think, to have stood upon his peculiar prerogative, if he had known of any belonging to him.

^p Matt. xxviii. 19.

^q Mark xvi. 15.

Which if he could have challenged, we should still be to seek by what right the bishop of Rome claims the same authority that St. Peter had. O, says Boniface VIII.^r, Christ spake to Peter and to his successors when he said, *Feed my sheep*. But how doth he prove that? Why, we must take his bare word for it, both that he spake these words to Peter's successors, and to them alone, and that the bishops of Rome are his sole successors: all this he delivers as an infallible dictator, and it is not good manners to question that the universal flock of Christ is so committed to them, that whether Greeks or others shall say they are not committed to Peter and his successors, they must necessarily confess they are none of the sheep of Christ. But it is worth anybody's while to read on to the end of that Extravagant where he asserts this, whereby they will be infallibly satisfied he was no infallible interpreter, but a gross perverter of the holy Scriptures. For here it is that he proves in the church there is both the spiritual and the temporal power, from those words, *Behold here are two swords*^s, and that *the temporal power is subject to the spiritual*, because *the powers that are are ordained of God*^t; for they would not be in order, unless sword were under sword, and spiritual things are superior to temporal. For the prophecy of Jeremy is verified of the church and the ecclesiastical power, *Behold, I have set thee this day over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root up and pull down*^u, &c. Therefore the temporal power, if it go out of the way, must be judged by the spiritual, but the supreme spiritual power by God alone, not by man, as the apostle bears witness: *He that is spiritual judgeth all things, but he himself is judged of no man*^x. After all which goodly interpretation of holy Scriptures, more like Pasquil than the pope, he concludes most pontifically, "We declare, affirm, define, and pronounce, that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the pope of Rome."

This is his conclusion from *Feed my sheep*, and from other places of Scripture, expounded after the very same fashion as he abuses this; which though it be very presumptuous, yet is not too arrogant for him who could entertain such a monstrous

^r Extravagant. l. 1. tit. 8. de Major. et Obedientia. [coll. 187, 188.]

^s Luke xxii. 38. ^t Rom. xiii. 1.

^u Jer. i. 10. ^x 1 Cor. ii. 15.

conceit as this which we read in one of his decrees ^x. Where he says, Christ made Peter the chief, that from him as from a certain head he might diffuse as it were his gifts into the whole body; for that having taken him in *consortium individue Trinitatis*, 'into the partnership of the undivided Trinity,' he would have him called that which the Lord himself was, saying, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church*. Now if Peter be thus exalted into the consortship of the blessed Trinity, and the pope have a just claim unto all that belongs to Peter, then is the pope no less than our Lord God, as some of the canonists have called him; unto whom Boniface might well conclude all must be subject upon pain of damnation.

I conclude this whole discourse with these three observations, which are better grounded than their proud decrees.

First, it is worth considering, that this lofty structure which they have erected in the church of Rome of the supremacy of their bishop is built barely upon three metaphorical speeches of our Saviour unto Peter, without one word or syllable concerning the bishop of Rome or any other successor. One would have expected that a thing of this mighty moment should have had a stronger foundation, and been delivered in plainer words than *Upon this rock, I will give thee the keys, and Feed my sheep*: and that we should have been told also in downright terms who should inherit the supreme power supposed to be conferred by these metaphorical speeches when he was dead and gone, especially if all Christians in the world must necessarily, upon pain of damnation, be subject to Peter's successor.

And yet so it is, this is all that a wit of such height as Bel-larmine's (who is wont to scrape up all that any way seems to make for his purpose) durst venture to allege out of the holy Scriptures for the proof of so weighty a point.

The Rhemists indeed, in their Annotations upon the New Testament, make bold with two places more which they apply to this business; but with so little reason, (not to say so ridiculously,) that he had the discretion to let them alone.

One is in St. Matthew ^z, where, upon the word *walked* they

^x Sexti Decret. l. 1. tit. 6. cap. 17. decree is 'unitatis.'
 'Fundamenta.' [col. 118.] ^z Matt. xiv. 29. [p. 40. ed. 4to,
^y [The reading of the original per J. Fogy, Rhemes, 1582.]

have this wise note. "Peter," saith St. Bernard, "walking upon the waters as Christ did, declared himself the only vicar of Christ; which should be ruler not over one people, but over all: for many waters are many people^b." And from hence he deduceth the like authority and jurisdiction to his successors the bishops of Rome.

And a goodly deduction it is, for which they are mightily beholden to St. Bernard, who could spy such a notable declaration of St. Peter's sole vicarship, and draw from thence such fine argument for the pope's authority, as no ancient doctor besides himself was able to find in this place. But must his fancies pass for substantial proofs of the bishop of Rome's supremacy, which was raised to a great height in his days? At this rate nobody need want proofs for the most detestable heresies which he shall please to devise, if such conceits as these be allowed for arguments.

And their second annotation is like to this, of which, for ought I know, they may have the honour to be the inventors, without the help of St. Bernard. For because our Saviour, when there were two ships, went in that which was Simon's^a, and thence taught the people, they gravely conclude, that undoubtedly he taught out of that ship and not the other, on purpose to signify the church resembled by Peter's ship, and that in it is the chair of Christ and only true preaching. By which it is evident they intended the reader should understand, that as Peter was owner of that ship, so he and his successors are rulers of the whole church. For upon the following verses^c, they observe how Peter had so much work that he was fain to call for help, and joined those who were in the other ship as co-partners in the preaching of the gospel. As much as to say, the work was committed to him alone, who took in such help as he needed. He was the only pastor, and all the rest, as was said before, his curates. For they tell us, "all this afore-said did properly mean his travails in the conversion of the world, and his prerogative therein before all men; as is evident by Christ's special promise made to him severally and apart in this place, that he should be made the taker of men." What

^a Luke v. 3.

^b ["Inde est quod altera vice instar Domini gradiens super aquas, unicum se Christi vicarium designavit, qui non uni populo sed cunc-

tis præesse deberet."—S. Bernard. de Consid. ad Eugenium, lib. ii. cap. 8. tom. i. col. 422 E.]

^c John xxi. 7, 10.

then became of all the rest? Were they to sit still in their ship and do nothing? O no, by no means; "he giveth to other (say these annotators) the like office, as to Peter's cooperators and coadjutors."

Before they said that Peter called them, and joined them to himself as co-partners in the preaching of the gospel, but now having better, it seems, bethought themselves, they say Christ appointed them to this office; yet still they are but as Peter's cooperators and assistants. He was the *taker of men*, and converted the world; they only came into his help, and brought all the fish into his net. Their ship signified nothing, it was Peter alone that signified all. Their ship stands for a mere cipher, his ship is the figure of the whole church where he governs, and they are but helps in government, mere coadjutors unto him, the great and indeed only bishop over all.

Who can endure such annotations as these, in which men play with the holy Scriptures as they please, and play with them in so saucy a manner, as to interpret them directly against the Scriptures? In which the apostles call themselves *workers together with Christ*^c, employed by him to be his cooperators, not St. Peter's, who was so far from being the converter of the world, that his travails and pains were most bestowed in the least part of it. Which Bellarmine, I suppose, saw well enough, and therefore was so wise as not to mention such allegories: which may serve to entertain the fancies of silly people, but are the just scorn of those that have any measure of spiritual understanding; who have heard perhaps that the fathers sometimes resembled the church of Christ to Peter's ship, but not that they ever dreamed of making him, and the bishop of Rome after him, the governor of the whole church, because he was master of that ship.

There is nothing more unaccountable than such a conclusion, unless it be their pretence to infallibility, who are mere triflers when they meddle with the holy Scriptures; which is the next thing I would have observed.

Secondly, if the danger of wresting the Scriptures be a good reason why the common people should not read them, then nobody at all should look into them, for their most learned priests have wrested them more than the common people. And

^c 2 Cor. vi. 1.

that against their oath, whereby they are bound to interpret Scripture according to the unanimous consent of the fathers, who all agree that what was said to Peter in these three places belonged to all the apostles; whose writings, as the rest of the Scriptures, have by none been more foully abused than by the popes of Rome, whose interpretations and applications of them, should they be collected in a book, would make one of the most shameful pieces that hath been yet extant in the world.

Thirdly, and let the reader observe once more, how ill they of that church are agreed about the interpretation of these three places of Scripture which are the subject of this discourse.

There are four interpretations of the first place, *Thou art Peter, &c.*, (as hath been elsewhere observed,) which have had great authors in the Roman church, as well as others. Some by *rock* understand Peter's faith in the confession he had newly made, (which, by the way, John Eckius^c says, in the age before us, nobody denied to be the sense, and bids Luther name the man that said otherways.) Others Christ himself, whom Peter had confessed to be the Son of God. Others Peter, and others all the apostles: which last is the exposition of Paschasius Radbertus, the famous broacher of transubstantiation, whose words are these^d: "The church of God is built not only upon Peter, but upon all the apostles." Now they who follow the first and second sense, can find no prerogative here for St. Peter above the rest of the apostles; and they that adhere only to the third (in opposition to the other, as they now commonly do) are confuted by those who assert the fourth, that these words were spoken to all the apostles.

And indeed they are all forced to confess that nothing is here promised which is not contained in the next words, *and I will give thee the keys, &c.* But what this is none of them can certainly tell. For one sort, such as Cajetan, hold the *keys* contain more than *binding and loosing*; which Bellarmine says is false, nay, a thing never heard of in the church. And consequently this power of *binding and loosing* being promised to them all^e, the *power of the keys* was promised to them all; and Christ promising nothing but what he performed, he gave

^c L. I. contra Luther. de Petri et lib. viii. col. 672.]
Primatu, c. 13. [fol. 19 B.]

^e Matth. xviii. 18.

^d L. 4. in Matthæum. [col. 380.

therefore the highest power to them all, which is contained in the *keys*.

Here they are at a great loss, and cannot agree how to bring themselves off from this difficulty which strips Peter of his supremacy. Therefore some have devised the above-named conceit, that Peter alone had the keys given him as their ordinary, and they as his legates. But this seems too gross unto others, who acknowledge they all had the *keys* immediately from God, as much as Peter, if they be considered as apostles, but not if they be considered as bishops and pastors; for these two offices they fancy they had, the apostolical and the pastoral dignity; the first immediately from Christ, the other by and under Peter. But this is in a manner the same thing in a little finer dress, which was said before. Therefore others, unsatisfied with this, that the apostles should receive their jurisdiction from Peter, have ordered the matter on this fashion, that Peter might use the *keys* alone, but they not without him.

But Sixtus Senensis cannot digest this, and therefore hath devised a threefold power in Peter, of apostleship, of order, and of the kingdom^f. With respect to the first, he grants Paul was equal to Peter, because he had the office of preaching the gospel not from Peter, but from God, as much as Peter himself had. With respect to the second also, he acknowledges the truth of what St. Jerome writes against Jovinian, that all the apostles equally received the *keys*, (let the Catholic Scripturist mind that,) and firmly laid the foundation of the church: and of what he says to Evagrius, all bishops are equal, because all the apostles were so. But then with respect to the last, viz. the power of the kingdom, and authority over all bishops and churches, Peter was head of all. That is, Peter must some way or other be above all the rest, but how they do not know.

For cardinal Baronius^g will have it that all the apostles had the use of the keys equally with Peter, by the ordinary power of remitting sins, and by this distinction expounds the fore-named words of St. Jerome. But his brother, cardinal Bellarmine, being aware that if Peter had the *keys* more than any of the rest by an extraordinary power, his authority would not descend upon any of his successors, says quite contrary, that the

^f Biblioth. Sanct. l. v. annot. ^g Ad an. xxxiv. n. 205. [tom. i. clxix. [tom. i. p. 924.] p. 187.]

apostles had the power of the keys after an extraordinary manner, and Peter only by an ordinary^h. Thus what one builds up his fellow pulls down. There is a confusion of tongues in this Babel which they labour to erect. They cannot agree so much as about the terms wherein they deliver this new doctrine. For it is a pure invention without any reason or any authority for it; but it must be so, though they know not how, because it is their pleasure.

As all the rest is which they draw from the last place, *Feed my sheep*. In which they say Christ gave the power which he had promised, and therefore since he promised it to all, he gave it to all, if any thing was given here. And yet, against such clear demonstration, they will have this to be a peculiar grant to Peter; nobody knows how or why, but because it seems good to them. For this is so little approved by others, that they fairly grant the ancient opinion was, (and make it theirs,) that these words were not spoken to Peter in a personal, but in a public capacity, as he represented all the apostles. Insomuch that they can find nothing peculiar to him in the word *feed*, because of that of St. Austinⁱ; "When Christ said to Peter, he said to all, *Feed my sheep*:" nor in the word *sheep*, because St. Ambrose saith, in the place before named, "Those sheep not only Peter received, but he received them with us, and we received them with him." Which things are so evident, that it hath brought some in that communion to this conclusion, that out of none of these three places, nor all of them together, can be gathered so much as the bare primacy of St. Peter^k, after that manner which Bellarmine collects it: but it must be gathered thus, that in those places Peter bears the person of the church, speaks for the rest of the apostles, and is himself spoken unto by Christ in their name as the first and principal.

Behold then the unity of which they boast in that church, and how little certainty there is among them even of the main point of their faith, and, as Bellarmine^l makes bold to call it, "the sum of Christian religion."

It stands upon such a tottering foundation, that finding how little these texts in the New Testament avail them, they ransack

^h L. I. de Rom. Pont. c. 12. [p. 276.]

ⁱ De Agone Christi, c. 30. [tom. vi. col. 260.]

^k Du Pin de antiqua Eccles. Discipl. Dissert. 4. [p. 311.]

^l Præfatio de L. de Pontific. Rom. [tom. i. p. 245.]

the Old, to fetch some feeble support unto it from thence. And the late Catholic Scripturist fancies the Old Testament helps them thus far in this point that it teaches^m, “that among the priests of the old law, one was chosen successively to be the highest and chief priest: commanding all such causes as are ecclesiastical causes to be brought to the tribunal of the high priest, and his sentence to be obeyed even under pain of death.” And for this he alleges Deut. xvii. 8.

But this only proves how ignorant such catholics as he are in the holy Scriptures: where it is impossible for him to find that the high priests were chosen successively; for they had that dignity by inheritance in one certain family, and not by election. And as for the power which he ascribes to them, (though he promises us in his Preface to produce loud-speaking texts for all the points we dislike in their religion,) there is not so much as a whisper of it in the place he alleges. The words of which he did wisely not to quote, but only the chapter and verse, which we that have the liberty to read the Bible can easily discern speak loudly against him, and confute that doctrine which he would confirm by them. *If there arise, says Moses, in that text, a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates; then shalt thou arise and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose. And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire, and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment. And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place (which the Lord shall choose) shall show thee, &c.*

I need not recite the rest at large to the end of the twelfth verse; for every understanding reader must evidently see, without going further, that he speaks not a syllable of the power of the high priest, but of the authority of the supreme tribunal or court among the Jews, which consisted of a great number of persons, wherein all controversies which could not be ended in inferior courts were to be finally determined without any appeal.

In which supreme court the high priest was so far from being

^m Seventh point, n. 1, 3. [pp. 68, 69.]

the chief, that he was not so much as admitted to be a member of it, unless he was a wise man.

And then he did not bear an absolute sway there, but the sentence was passed by the whole council, as appears (not merely from the Jewish writers, but) from these repeated admonitions in the very body of this law. *They shall show thee the sentence of judgment^o, and thou shalt do according to that thing which they of that place show thee; and observe to do according to all that they inform thee^p, according to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, according to the judgment which they shall tell thee: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall show thee^q.* Where he must be blind who doth not see six flat contradictions to the assertion of this Catholic Scripturist, in this very place which he produces to prove that Moses here sets up the tribunal of the high priest, and orders his sentence to be obeyed upon pain of death in causes ecclesiastical.

This was neither his court, nor were causes judged by his sentence, nor is there one word here of causes ecclesiastical, but only of civil; between *blood and blood, plea and plea, stroke and stroke*; unless we suppose the word we translate *stroke* relates to the plague of the leprosy, which belonged to the priests to judge of it, but excluded men from all civil as well as sacred society.

And if the utmost be granted that can be supposed, (that there is mention here of something appertaining to spiritual causes,) yet it must also be allowed by all men of sense that this text speaks most of civil causes, and therefore can no more prove an absolute obedience to be due to spiritual than to civil governors.

All which considered, I do not see but Dr. Reynolds had reason to say they might as well call in the help of the first words of Genesis, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*, as this verse in Deuteronomy, to support the pope's supremacy. For there, as pope Boniface VIII. very gravely observes (in the forementioned Extravagant), Moses says, *God created the heavens and the earth, in the beginning*, not in the beginnings, and therefore he who resists the pope's authority resists the ordinance of God; unless (with Mani-

^o Deut. xvii. 9.

^p Verse 10.

^q Verse 11.

chaüs) he feign two beginnings (or principles), which is false and heretical.

And by such fine fetches as this Innocent III.^r proved his power over the whole church from these words in Deuteronomy: but he did not mince the matter, as the Catholic Scripturist doth, but stoutly affirmed that the pope may exercise temporal jurisdiction as well as spiritual, not only in the church's patrimony, but in other countries also in certain causes. For, "Deuteronomy beginning by interpretation a second law, it proves by the very force of the word that what is here decreed in Deut. xvii. 8. ought to be observed in the New Testament. And then *the place which the Lord hath chosen* is the apostolical see, viz., Rome; the Levitical priests are his brethren, the cardinals, the high priest or judge is the pope, the vicar of him who is a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec, appointed by God the judge of quick and dead. The first sort of judgments between *blood and blood* is meant of criminal and civil causes, the last, between *stroke and stroke*, is meant of ecclesiastical and criminal; the middle, between *plea and plea*, belongeth to both ecclesiastical and civil; in which if any one contemn the sentence of the apostolic see, he is doomed to die, that is, to be separated by the sentence of excommunication as a dead man from the communion of the faithful."

Nothing is more evident, than that, according to this catholic exposition of pope Innocent, the bishop of Rome is by the divine law head of all Christians, as well in civil causes as in ecclesiastical. This text in Deuteronomy proves the one as much as the other; that is, it proves just nothing, but that the mystery of iniquity wrought very high, when such mystical senses of holy Scripture were swallowed glibly to confirm the chiefest mystery of the Romish faith.

Perhaps the Catholic Scripturist will say that they now argue from this place only by a parity of reason, that there must be but one high priest among Christians, because there was no more among the Jews. To which they may have an answer when they prove that Judæa was as big as the whole Christian world.

That is as hopeful a task for him to labour in as any he hath

^r Decret. Greg. L. 4. tit. 17. c. 13. 'Per venerabilem.' [col. 1419.]

undertaken. And so I take my leave to him till he hath finished it, for it will be too tedious to follow him to his next text out of the New Testament^s, which he calls an unanswerable text concerning the high priests of the old law : *Upon the chair of Moses have sitten the Scribes and Pharisees ; all therefore whatsoever they shall say unto you, observe and do it.* For nobody but himself can see a syllable here concerning the high priests, who did not sit in Moses's chair, but were the successors of Aaron. And besides that, this place belongs to another head of their doctrine about the pope's infallibility, of which if this be a proof, it likewise proves the infallibility of Annas and Caiaphas, and justifies those that crucified our blessed Lord and Saviour.

^s Matt. xxiii. 22.

The first part of the history is a general account of the state of the world in the year 1700. It is divided into three parts: the first part is a general account of the world in the year 1700; the second part is a general account of the world in the year 1700; and the third part is a general account of the world in the year 1700.

CHAPTER I

The first part of the history is a general account of the state of the world in the year 1700. It is divided into three parts: the first part is a general account of the world in the year 1700; the second part is a general account of the world in the year 1700; and the third part is a general account of the world in the year 1700.

THE
SECOND NOTE OF THE CHURCH
EXAMINED;
VIZ.
ANTIQUITY.

Secunda nota est antiquitas. Bellar. L. iv. c. 5. de Notis Ecclesiæ.
[tom. ii. col. 169 B.]

IMPRIMATUR.

Jo. Battely.

Apr. 5, 1687.

THE SECOND NOTE OF THE CHURCH

EXAMINED :

VIZ.

ANTIQUITY.

IT is a shrewd sign that a church is in an ill case when the most learned and witty defenders of it commend it to the world by such marks and characters whereby they say it may be known, as are neither proper to it alone, nor in truth belong to it; but more truly and evidently belong to them whom they oppose.

That this is the case of the present church of Rome in that famous note of ANTIQUITY, which Bellarmine and others make a mark of the true church, I will clearly and distinctly demonstrate by showing these three things :

I. That the plea of bare antiquity is not proper to the church, but common to it with other societies of false religion.

II. That true antiquity is not on the side of the present Roman church. But,

III. That it is truly on ours.

I. It is confessed by all, even by them who make antiquity a mark of the church, that the notes of a thing must be proper to that of which they are a note, and not common to it with other things : which quite destroys this note of antiquity upon a double account.

First, because that which is proper to a thing is inseparable from it, and did ever belong to it since it had a being ; and can at no time without the destruction of its being be absent from it. This every freshman in learning knows, and by that may

know that antiquity is not a note proper to the church, because it did not always belong to the church; for there was a time when the church was new. Which was objected to it by the adversaries of our religion: and the defenders of the church answered the very same to them then that we do to the Romanists now; as will appear in the second thing I have to observe.

Secondly, that other societies have laid claim to this note, and it could not be denied them; and therefore it is not a proper note whereby the true church may be certainly known, being common to it with others that are not of the church.

1. For, first, the Samaritans claimed it against the Jews, as appears from the woman's discourse with our Saviour, *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain*^a, &c. They had done so for many ages before they worshipped in Jerusalem. For here God appeared unto Abraham, who here also built an altar when he came first out of Chaldea^b. Here Jacob likewise built an altar when he came out of Mesopotamia^c. Here there was a sanctuary in the days of Joshua, who gave his last charge to Israel, and made a covenant with them in this place^d. Here the patriarchs were buried^e. Nay, hereabouts was Shiloh^f, where, by the order of Joshua, the tabernacle and the ark of God were settled long before it was brought to Jerusalem^g, which was all this time in the hands of the Jebusites. To which plea the Jews could not make an answer but by maintaining this principle: that not the antiquity of place, but the authority of God's precept, was to be their direction in this case. And God, it appeared by the holy books, had chosen Jerusalem to place his name there.

2. Thus the Jews themselves argued against Christ, that he did not follow the tradition of the elders which had been derived to them from ancient times^g; and against Christians, whom they called *the sect of the Nazarenes*^h, as much as to say heretics, newly sprung up from *Jesus of Nazareth*.

3. And thus the Pagans argued against them both, particu-

^a John iv. 20.

^b Gen. xii. 6, 7.

^c Gen. xxxiii. 20.

^d Gen. xxiv. 25, 26.

^e Verse 32.

^f Judges xxi. 19.

^g Joshua xviii. 1, 2.

^h Mark vii. 1, &c.

ⁱ Acts xxiv. 5.

larly against the Christians, saying to St. Paul at Athens, *May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is*ⁱ? And in after-times calling it a novel religion, a novel name; and disputing that their religion was the truer, because they were strengthened and defended by the authority of antiquity.

So we read in Arnobius^k, and in Symmachus^l, and Prudentius^m, and many others whom I omit, contenting myself with St. Austin alone, because he gives a most pertinent answer to this poor pretence, which will as well serve us against the papists as it did him against the pagansⁿ; “who contended that what they held was true because of its antiquity. As if,” saith he, “antiquity or ancient custom should carry it against the truth. Thus murderers, adulterers, and all wicked men may defend their crimes, for they are ancient practices, and began at the beginning of the world. Though from hence they ought rather to understand their error, because that which is reprehensible and filthy is thereby proved to have been ill begun, &c., nor can it be made honest and unreprouvable by having been done long ago.”

But this is a part of the devil's craft and subtlety, (as he excellently observes in the same place,) “who as he invented those false worships, and sprinkled some juggling tricks to draw men into them, so he took such course, that in process of time the fallacy was commended, and the filthy invention was excused by being derived from antiquity; for by long custom that began not to seem filthy which was so in itself. The irrational vulgar began to worship demons or dead men, who appeared to them as if they had been gods; which worship, being drawn down into custom of long continuance, thinks thereby to be

ⁱ Act. xvii. 19.

^k Lib. 2. [Contr. Gent. in Max. Biblioth. vet. Patr. tom. iii. p. 475 G.]

^l Ad Valentin. Theodos. et Arcad. [Lib. x. epist. 61. p. 328; et ad calc. Prudent. tom. ii. p. 102.]

^m In Agone Romani Martyris. [Περὶ στρεφ. hymn. x. 401 sqq. Opp. tom. i. p. 234.]

ⁿ [“Quasi antiquitas aut vetus consuetudo præjudicet veritati. Possent enim homicidæ, aut molles,

aut adulteri, vel cæteri criminosi per hoc illicita sua defendere, quia antiqua sunt, et ab ipso mundi initio cœpta; cum hinc magis intellegere deberent errorem suum; quia quod reprehensibile et turpe est, male cœptum probatur; quod autem honestum et sanctum est, digne colitur; nec posset turpe et reprehensibile ante factum esse honestum et irreprehensibile.”] August. Quæst. ex Vet. et Nov. Test. Q. cxiv. [tom. iii. append. col. 119 A.]

defended as if it were the truth of reason. Whereas the reason of truth is not from custom, (which is from antiquity,) but from God, who is proved to be God, not by long continuance, (or antiquity,) but by eternity."

Let this be applied to our present business, and it is sufficient to show that bare antiquity cannot be a note of truth, for there are very ancient errors; which is so evident, that it is a wonder such a man as Bellarmine was should let this pass the muster among the notes he reckons up of the truth of his church, which he could intend for no more than to make a show, not for any substantial service; of which this is a demonstration, that he had no sooner named antiquity as the second note of the church, but discerning it would stand him in no stead, he immediately sets it aside, and cunningly slides to another thing, with which he endeavours to blend and confound it. For thus he argues, "Without doubt the true church is ancients than the false, as God was before the devil; and consequently we read the good seed was sown first before the tares^o."

But who doth not see that these two things are widely different the one from the other, antiquity and priority, that which is ancient and that which is first? Whatsoever is first is undoubtedly true, but whatsoever is ancient is not always so, unless it be of such antiquity that it be also first. There is a double antiquity therefore, one in respect of us, the other absolute and in itself. This last sort of antiquity is the same with what is first; unto which we are desirous to go, to which we are willing to stand, and by which we would be judged. By the rule which Tertullian lays down in several of his books^p we would fain bring our cause and church to be tried: "That is truest which was first, that first which was from the beginning, that from the beginning which was from the apostles:

^o L. iv. de Ecclesia, c. v. [tom. ii. col. 169 B.]

^p ["Id verius quod prius, id prius quod et ab initio, id ab initio quod ab apostolis; pariter utique constabit id esse ab apostolis traditum quod apud ecclesias apostolorum fuerit sacrosanctum."] *Contra Marcion. lib. iv. cap. 5.* [p. 415 D.]

[*"Id esse verum quodcunque pri-*

um, id esse adulterum quodcunque posterius."] *Adv. Praxeam, cap. 2.* [p. 501 C.]

[*"Ita ex ipso ordine manifestatur, id esse Dominicum et verum quod sit prius traditum, id autem extraneum et falsum quod sit posterius immissum."*] *De Præscript. cap. 31.* [p. 213 B.]

and in like manner, that from the apostles, which in the churches of the apostles was most sacred," viz. that which they read in their holy writings. "This is our antiquity," as he speaks in his famous apology, *præstructa divinæ literaturæ*^q, "built before upon the divine learning." "This is the rule of faith which came from Christ, transmitted to us by his companions, to whom all those who speak other ways will be found to be of later date^r."

But to this they of the church of Rome will by no means agree; they do not like to be tried only by the holy Scriptures, which is the true antiquity, that is, undoubtedly first before all other traditions. A very bad sign this, an infallible note all is not right among them, that they dare not abide by the Scriptures, but cry up other traditions; that is, boast of what is later, not what is first. And what is after the first, though it could be proved to be of great antiquity, cannot certainly be relied on; because there are errors and heresies so ancient that they sprung up presently after the first truth.

Mere antiquity therefore is not a good proof: for though the devil be not first, yet he is of great antiquity, being *the old* (ὁ ἀρχαῖος), that ancient *serpent*, who was a *liar* as well as a *murderer from the beginning*; and was so crafty, as in process of time to make use of this argument to prove he was the *ancient of days*, that is, God. And if there had not been something else whereby he might have been discovered to be a serpent, who could have contradicted him? or confuted his doctrine and worship, if they had been to be tried by bare antiquity? Which is a proof so insufficient, that God himself, as ye heard before out of St. Austin, is not proved to be God by antiquity, but by eternity.

Truth and error were born so near together, that after a long tract of time they could not be distinguished merely by their age. No sooner was man created, but this serpent by his subtlety beguiled Eve. And immediately after our redemption he attempted again *to corrupt men's minds from the simplicity*

^q Apologia, c. xlvii. [p. 36 D.]

^r ["Expedite autem præscribimus adulteris nostris, illam esse regulam veritatis, quæ veniat a Christo, trans-

missa per comites ipsius, quibus aliquanto posteriores diversi isti commentatores probabuntur."—p. 37 B.]

that is in Christ^s. And accordingly, as there was a church of Christ, so there was, together therewith, a *synagogue of Satan*^t. There were *depths of Satan* also, and a *mystery of iniquity* (which wrought even in the apostles' days) as well as a *mystery of godliness* and the *deep things of God*. Which wicked doctrines running down to posterity made use at length of the plea of antiquity to give them countenance and support: nor could it be denied, though it was proved to be a mere deceit; for it was refuted by the fathers in such remarkable words as these, (which give a deadly blow to the like plea of the present Roman church,) "Custom without truth is but the antiquity of error. And there is a short way for religious and simple minds to find out what is truth; for if we return to the beginning and original of divine tradition, human error ceases. Thither let us return, to our Lord's original, the evangelical beginning, the apostolical tradition; and hence let the reason of our act arise, from whence order and the beginning arose.

"If therefore Christ alone is to be heard, we ought not to regard what another before us thought fit to be done, but what Christ, who is before all, first did. For we ought not to follow the custom of man, but the truth of God, since God himself speaks thus by the prophet Isaiah, *In vain do they worship me, teaching the commandments and doctrines of men*. Which very words our Lord again repeats in the Gospel, *Ye reject the commandments of God that ye may establish your own tradition*." Thus St. Cyprian^u.

^s 2 Cor. xi. 3; 1 Thess. iii. 5.

^t Rev. iii. 9.

^u ["*Consuetudo sine veritate vetustas erroris est . . . In compendio est autem apud religiosas et simplices mentes, et errorem deponere, et invenire atque emere veritatem. Nam si ad divinæ traditionis caput et originem revertamur, cessat error humanus . . . Quod et nunc facere oportet Dei sacerdotes præcepta divina servantes, ut si in aliquo nutaverit et vacillaverit veritas, ad originem Dominicam et evangelicam, et apostolicam traditionem revertamur; et inde surgat actus nostri ratio, unde et ordo et origo surrexit.*"]

Cyprian. ad Pompeium, epist. lxxiv. [p. 215.]

["*Quare si solus Christus audiendus est, non debemus attendere quid alius ante nos faciendum putaverit, sed quid, qui ante omnes est, Christus prior fecerit. Neque enim hominis consuetudinem sequi oportet, sed Dei veritatem; cum per Isaiam prophetam Deus loquatur et dicat, 'Sine causa autem colunt me, mandata et doctrinas hominum docentes.'*"] et iterum Dominus in Evangelio hoc idem repetat, dicens, '*Rejicite mandatum Dei, ut traditionem vestram statuatis.*'"] Id. ad Cæcilium fratrem, epist. lxiii. [p. 155.]

With whom Tertullian^x (whom he was wont to call his master) agrees in many memorable sayings. "Nobody can prescribe against the truth, neither space of times, nor the patronages of persons, nor the privilege of countries. For which things indeed custom, having gotten a beginning by ignorance or simplicity, and being grown strong by succession, pleads against truth. But our Lord Christ calls himself *the Truth*, not custom. Nor doth novelty so much confute heresy, as truth. Whatsoever is against truth, that will be heresy, even old custom.

"Truth doth not stand in need of old custom to make it be believed, nor doth heresy fear the charge of novelty. That which is plainly false is made generous by antiquity. For why should I not call that false whose proof is false? Why should I believe Pythagoras, who tells lies that he may be believed^y?"

I omit all the rest, having said enough to show, that if antiquity itself be to be credited, we ought not to depend upon antiquity alone, but seek for ancient truth.

Which leads me to the second thing I undertook to show, that the present church of Rome vainly pretends to true antiquity, i. e. to ancient truth.

II. The antiquity of a church doth not consist in the antiquity of the place where it is seated; for a new worship may come into an ancient place of worship, as the new altar of Ahaz was introduced into the temple at Jerusalem, where he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus^z. Nor doth it consist merely in the antiquity of its founders; for the apostles founded many churches which had all the same title to antiquity in this regard, and yet continued not such churches as they left them, but de-

^x ["Veritatem, cui nemo præscribere potest, non spatium temporum, non patrocinia personarum, non privilegia regionum; ex his enim fere consuetudo initium ab aliqua ignorantia vel simplicitate sortita, in usum per successionem corroboratur, et ita adversus veritatem vindicatur. Sed Dominus noster Christus veritatem se non consuetudinem cognominavit. Si semper Christus, et prior omnibus, æque veritas sempiterna et antiqua res. Viderint ergo quibus novum est quod vetus est. Hæreses non tam novitas quam ve-

ritas revincit. Quodcunque adversus veritatem sapit, hoc erit hæresis, etiam vetus consuetudo."] Lib. de Veland. Virg. cap. i. [p. 172 A.]

^y ["Neque veritas desiderat vetustatem, neque mendacium devitat novellitatem. Teneo plane falsum antiquitate generosum; quidni falsum cujus testimonium quoque ex falso est? Quomodo credam non mentiri Pythagoram qui mentitur ut credam?"]—Lib. de Anima, cap. 28. [P. 285 C.]

^z 2 Kings xvi; 2 Chron. xxviii. 23.

cayed (some of them) so fast, that what truth and goodness remained among them was ready to die, even before all the apostles were dead^a. But its true antiquity consists in the preservation of the ancient truth entire and uncorrupted, which it received from the apostles, and which made it at first to be a church.

Those things are truly ancient which persist in the same state after a long tract of time, wherein they were at their beginning. For if they have suffered any change in that which belongs to their being and constitution, they have lost their antiquity, and become another thing than they were at the first. Now to know this, we must inquire into the nature of the thing itself, and understand (for instance) what it is that makes a society to be the church of God. And all agree it is the Christian truth, in which if it have suffered alteration, (that is, doth not hold the same Christian doctrine it did at the beginning, but hath introduced errors and lies under the pretence of ancient truth,) it is not the same church it was at first, and therefore hath not that mark of true antiquity which will prove it to be such as it pretends.

Now that this is the case of the present church of Rome, is evident by that alteration they have made in the ancient creed; unto which they have added as many more articles as there were at the first, and thereby made such a change in their church (for a change is made by adding, as well as taking away) as makes it not to be the same ancient church which the apostles founded at the beginning.

This charge they have no way to avoid, nor can by any other means maintain that they are such an ancient church as Christ and his apostles settled, but by this ratiocination, as Bellarmine calls it; that in all great changes of religion these six things may be ever shown; 1. The author of that change. 2. The new doctrine that was brought in. 3. The time when it began. 4. The place where. 5. Who opposed it. 6. And who joined themselves to it. None of which can be shown in the church of Rome since the apostles' times, and therefore there hath been no change at all made in it, but it remains the same it was at first, without any alteration.

Which is a reasoning built upon grounds so notoriously

^a Rev. iii. 2.

false, that it scarce deserves the name of a poor piece of sophistry.

1. For first, it is contrary to all history and experience, which shows us there have been great changes, the authors and the beginnings, &c., of which cannot now be known; though no man can doubt there hath been an alteration made. For the body spiritual, and civil too, is like the body natural: in which as there are some diseases which make such a violent and sudden assault, that one may say at what moment they began; so there are other which grow so insensibly and by such slow degrees, that none can tell when the first alteration was made, and by what accident, from a good habit of body to a bad. Thus we are sure a man is in a deep consumption, when we see him worn away to skin and bone, though nobody can tell the precise time when, nor by what means, nor where and in what company his blood began to be tainted. And thus we are sure there is a gangrene, (as St. Paul calls heresy,) when we see it corrode the body of the church; though it crept in so secretly at the first, and so indiscernibly, that it was not suspected, nor can alway be traced to its first occasion and original. No, the tares in the field (which is another example whereby our Lord himself illustrates this matter) had taken root before they were espied; for they were sown in the night while men slept, (and could take no notice of it,) so that all that could be known was this, that his enemy had done it: that is, the tares were not from our Saviour, nor were first sown, but were of a later and quite different original: but by what particular instrument the enemy sowed them, at what hour of the night, by what hand, and when, did not appear; for the matter was carried so secretly and in the dark, that the servants who knew of the sowing of the good seed in the field wondered to see the bad, and asked, *Whence hath it tares?* They did not know, that is, how they came there, no more than we may be able now to know how errors came into the church; but that they were there they knew and were sure, as we are sure there are false doctrines in the church of Rome that were not of our Saviour's planting.

2. Nor do the examples whereby they illustrate this ratiocination serve to any purpose but to show the falseness of it. They can name, they say, the authors and beginnings of all the

ancient heresies; for instance, the heresy which affirmed there were two persons in Christ was begun by Nestorius in the year CDXXXI. Which is not true, for though then it took its name from so great a bishop who maintained it, yet the heresy had been before from an unknown beginning; it being mentioned by St. Ambrose in the foregoing age, in his book *Of the Incarnation*. The like may be said of the Arian heresy, whose beginning they date in the year CCCXXIV, but it was born long before among the Gnostic heretics; and only got reputation by so noted a man as Arius. Nay, some of the learnedest doctors in the present Roman church have taken a great deal of pains to make the world believe that Tertullian and a number of other ancient fathers were infected with it. So uncertain they are in their discourses about these matters.

3. Which, if they were true, would uphold the greatest impieties. For what will become of the Christian religion, if the traditional law of the Jews be true? And according to this way of reasoning, it must pass for truth that it came from Mount Sinai by word of mouth, as the written law did; for none can show its original, much less name the authors of the several traditions, and who opposed them, &c. Nay, the worship of the heathen gods was supported by this argument, as is excellently observed by Clemens Alexandrinus, who tells the Gentiles that “fables and time had advanced dead men into the number of the gods. For though things present being familiar to us are neglected, yet those which are past and gone being out of the reach of confutation *χρόνων ἀδηλεία*, ‘by the obscurity and uncertainty of times,’ have honour invented for them.’ By which means those that are dead long ago, glorying *τῷ πολλῷ τῆς πλάνης χρόνῳ*, ‘in a long time of error,’ are accounted gods by posterity^a.”

The same may be said for the lying oracles among them, the beginnings and first authors of which cannot be traced.

4. But we have an instance of this in the Roman church itself; where there is an acknowledged change, and yet they themselves are not able to tell who first began it, because it crept in by insensible degrees. The communion, I mean, in one kind was not used for above a thousand years, but being begun in some churches (they themselves cannot tell which, nor

^a Admon. ad Gentes, p. 36, 37. [P. 49. ed. Potter.]

when,) grew to be a general custom not long before the council of Constance in these western parts of the world; and there was established as a law. But it did not begin by the decree of any bishop, nor was carried on by any public order; and if you ask them who first set it on foot, they will tell you that doth not appear.

Therefore the second alone of those six things being proved, that new doctrines and practices have been brought in, of which we are very certain; there needs none of the rest: but we are sure there was a time, and authors of them, and people that embraced them, though we should not be able (for want of ancient records that are lost, or because things that come in insensibly cannot in every age be noted and recorded,) to tell the very time, and place and persons, when and where and by whom they were introduced.

All which is not said by us, because we are not able to give an account of the other parts of that ratiocination; but only to show the frivolousness of such discourses as these, in which they of the church of Rome place their main retreat. For we can tell, nay, their own authors have told us, when and by whom many things were brought into their church, which were not there in the beginning. Polydore Vergil, if I had room to insert his words, would furnish us with several instances. But I shall content myself with two, which were at no great distance the one from the other.

The first is their grand article of faith about the papal authority. We know, and have often told them, by what steps it grew to the height wherein now it is or would be, when the bishops of Rome began to exceed their bounds, how they were opposed and snubbed, who (and by whom) was first declared the universal bishop and head of the church. Victor began the dance; Zosimus, after some others, followed it; Boniface continued it; Celestine carried it on: who met with so sharp a rebuke from the African bishops for his intrusion into their affairs, upon the pretence of a forged canon of the Nicene council, as is sufficient to show his ambition and craft was greater than his authority. The attempts of the rest are as notorious, and so is the opposition they met withal, till at last Boniface the Third procured to himself from Phocas the title of universal bishop, and to his church the title of head of

all churches. All this we can justify out of authentic records; but it is not in their power to name so much as one man that owned the universal jurisdiction of the Roman bishop over the whole church till that time; that is, till above six hundred years after our Saviour's birth. For though Bellarmine alleges an epistle of Justinian's, wherein he calls the church of Rome the head of all churches, yet it signifies nothing but that they are at a loss for want of proofs; because, as it is with great reason suspected to be spurious, so it can intend no more than head of the churches of the west; because, in an undoubted edict of his, he calls the church of Constantinople by the same name, the head of all other churches, i. e. chief of those in the east. Which is so certain, that their own pope Gregory, not much above a year before this arrogant title was assumed, most vehemently disdained it, or rather thundered against it. Nor can they name one man in the whole church for so long a time that believed their present definition of the catholic church, much less the power of the pope to depose kings, which none challenged till Gregory VII. that is, till above a thousand years after our blessed Saviour. Insomuch that their forenamed champion, being to prove this deposing power out of ancient authors^b, is able to say no more than this; "I have alleged above seventy famous writers, some of which flourished more than five hundred years ago. A goodly business! a glorious show of antiquity! instead of the first five hundred years after Christ, to refer us to the last five hundred; which is to confess the novelty of their most beloved doctrines, and consequently to quit this note of antiquity: as in truth he plainly doth in that book, where being pressed with this argument, that no such power was claimed in the first times of the church, he answers^c, that "he hath no right conceptions of the church of Christ, who admits nothing but what he reads expressly written or done in the ancient church; for the church of later time hath power not only to explain and declare, but constitute and command those things which belong to faith and manners. Which is as much as to say, they need not trouble themselves about antiquity, for they can make articles of faith now which were not heard of in the beginning.

^b C. Bellarm. tract. de Potestate claium, Opp. tom. vii. col. 843 A.]
Summ. Pontif. p. 27. [Contra Bar-

^c Ib. cap. 3. p. 59. [col. 860 B.]

2. We have often also told them by what steps images crept into the church. For they remained at first only in private houses, for ornament or for commemoration, and not uncensured: there being above three hundred years past before they came into any church, and then not without opposition; and for this end only to be of an historical use, to remind people of things past. Which improved in three hundred years more to a rhetorical use, (as we may call it,) to stir up devotion in the people. For which purpose Gregory the Great fancied they were profitable, and though he by no means allowed them to be worshipped, yet he thought the people might look upon them and worship God before them. And this looking upon them to help devotion was improved in the time of the second Nicene council into a downright worshipping of them, which would not pass in these western parts for good doctrine. And when at last (we know, and have told them by what steps) this new worship advanced hither, and grew to a greater degree of religious respect than that Nicene council admitted, the most zealous defenders of it could not agree about it, nor do they know what to make of it to this day.

We could tell them of other things that are much newer, for it is but a little more than a hundred years since unwritten traditions were decreed to be a part of the rule of faith, that is, of the word of God. But this is sufficient to show that they vainly boast of antiquity; which is only ancient error, and some of it not very ancient neither. As for ancient truth, that is on our side, whom they most injuriously accuse of following novelties.

III. For the religion of the church of England by law established is the true primitive Christianity: in nothing new, unless it be in rejecting all that novelty which hath been brought into the church. But they are the cause of that: for if they had not introduced new articles, we should not have had occasion for such articles of religion as condemn them. Which cannot indeed be old, because the doctrines they condemn are new; though the principle upon which we condemn them is as old as Christianity: we esteeming all to be new which was not from the beginning. For as for our positive doctrine, Polydore himself hath given a true account of it, and makes it the reason why the sect called *Evangelic* (as he speaks) in-

creased so marvellously in a short time; “because they affirmed that no law was to be received which appertains to the salvation of souls, but that which Christ or the apostles had given^d.”

And who dare say that this is a new religion, which is as old as Christ and his apostles? With whom whosoever agree, they are truly ancient churches, though of no longer standing than yesterday: as they that disagree with them are new, though they can run up their pedigree to the very apostles.

Thus Tertullian^e discourses; with whose words, something contracted, I shall conclude: “As the doctrine of a church, when it is diverse from or contrary unto that of the apostles, shows it not to be an apostolic church, though it pretend to be founded by an apostle; so those churches that cannot produce any of the apostles or apostolical men for their founders, (being much later and newly constituted,) yet conspiring in the same faith, are nevertheless to be accounted apostolical churches, because of the consanguinity of doctrine.”

^d L. viii. cap. 4. de Rerum Inventoribus. [p. 471. 8vo, Argent. 1606.]

^e L. de Præscript. c. xxxii. [“Ad hanc itaque formam probabuntur ab illis ecclesiis, quæ licet nullum ex apostolis, vel apostolicis, auctorem

suum proferant, ut multo posteriores, quæ denique quotidie instituuntur; tamen in eadem fide conspirantes, non minus apostolicæ deputantur, pro consanguinitate doctrinæ.”—De Præscr. Hær. cap. 32. [p. 213 C.]

THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF TRUTH.

A T R E A T I S E

S H E W I N G

THAT THE ROMAN CHURCH FALSELY
CLAIMS TO BE THAT CHURCH AND
THE PILLAR OF THAT TRUTH,
MENTIONED BY ST. PAUL IN HIS FIRST EPISTLE
TO TIMOTHY, CHAP. III. VERSE 15.

WHICH IS EXPLAINED IN THREE PARTS.

IMPRIMATUR,

Jo. Battely.

May 9, 1687.

TO THE READER.

AMONG all the places of Scripture which they of the church of Rome are wont to allege for a proof of their pretended infallibility, I find none whereon they more rely than that of St. Paul to Timothy, *That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth* ^a. “Which place,” say the Rhemists, “pincheth the heretics wonderfully, and so it ever did; and therefore they oppose themselves directly against the very letter and confessed sense of the same ^b.”

I have thought it therefore worth my pains to show how unjust this accusation is, by opening the plain and evident meaning, the literal and confessed sense of those words; whereby it will appear that we are far from being heretics, and that they, not we, are pinched by this place; and that there is no ground at all in it for their infallibility; nor for their vain flourishes, that “the very name of Church terrifies us, and makes us pale with fear,” (as Campian insolently vapoured ^c,) and “that we not only fear, but altogether abhor the word *catholic*, so as to leave it clean out of our Bibles,” as the forenamed Rhemists most senselessly misrepresent us ^d.

For, as I have proved in the following book that we, not they, are the true catholics; so there is nothing further from truth, (I have likewise shown,) than that the apostle here speaks with any particular respect to the church of Rome. Which is so far from striking any terror into us when it appropriates to itself the name of Church, that we look upon the pretence to be as ridiculous as the proof is they give us of it. Which is the sole authority of a false St. Am-

^a 1 Tim. iii. 15.

^b [In loc. p. 572. 4to, Rhemes, by John Fogny, 1582.]

^c Ratio III. [“Audito Ecclesie nomine hostis expalluit,”—the opening

words of the third reason; p. 37 of the edition by Peter Alvisius, including his opuscula, 8vo, Antv. 1631.]

^d Preface to Epistle of St. James, [p. 641.]

brose his Commentaries upon this place, who thus glosses: "All the world being God's, yet the church only is his house; the rector (or ruler) whereof at this time is Damasus^e." Where the Rheimists^f desire us to note, "how clear a case it was then that the pope of Rome was not the governor only of one particular see, but of Christ's whole house, which is the universal church," &c.; and further improve this conceit in these words, "The church, which is the house of God, whose rector (saith St. Ambrose) in his time was Damasus, and now Gregory XIII., and in the apostles' time St. Peter, is the pillar of truth, the establishment of verity; and therefore it cannot err."

And truly it is worth our noting how clear a case it is that they were sorely pinched (to use their own word again) for want of proofs, when they betook themselves to such as this. For it is hard to think that men of their education (whom we will not despise, as they do the heretics a little before^g, as "most ignorant of the word of God, not knowing the very principles of divinity,") should not know that St. Ambrose was not the author of those Commentaries; they being acknowledged by the greatest men in their church to be spurious brats of some other writer. Baronius^h, for instance, saith, "The exposition of Ambrose upon all Paul's Epistles began to be wanting in the time of Cassiodorus; but being plainly lost, it is apparent the work of another author was foisted in its room." And their other great cardinal, Bellarmine, confesses as much in several places, but in one more fullyⁱ, where he assoils an objection of Chemnitius^k, (who, following the rule of the civil law^l, "The witness which any man produces for himself, he is bound to receive against himself," quotes this book, as Bellarmine oft had done, in a case of marriage,) by this answer, that the author of these Commentaries is not St. Ambrose, as learned men know: and more than that, who-soever was the author, he was none *ex celebratis patribus*, 'of the famous or eminent fathers.' And indeed there is great reason for what these and many others of that church say; as I might show out of the Commentaries themselves, which contradict the very words of the true St. Ambrose.

But suppose he had been the author, or these the work of some

^e [Pseud-Ambros. tom. ii. append. col. 296 A.]

^f Annot. in 1 Tim. iii. 15. [p. 572.]

^g Annot. in 1 Tim. i. 7. [p. 566.]

^h Annal. tom. v. ad an. 397. [n. 48. tom. vi. p. 245.]

ⁱ L. i. de Matrimonio, cap. 17. [tom. iii. col. 1371.]

^k Exam. can. 7. [p. 436.]

^l Testem quem quis inducit pro se, tenetur recipere contra se. [Vid. Cod. Justin. lib. iv. tit. 20. l. 17.]

celebrated writer, it is a clear case (and I desire it may be noted) that these Rhemist annotators were not so knowing as they would be esteemed, or not so conscientious as they ought to have been, when they gather from these words that Damasus was ruler over more than his own see, even over the universal church, as St. Peter, they say, was in the apostles' times. For St. Ambrose himself saith, in his book *Of the Priestly Dignity*^m, (which priests, one would think, should read,) that when Christ said, *Feed my sheep*, those sheep, and that flock, not only blessed Peter then received, but both he received them with us, and with him we all have received them. And it is not an unusual thing in ancient writers to say the same of other bishops that this writer doth of Damasus, when they mean no more but that they were rulers of that part of the catholic church which was committed to their charge.

Thus Arsenius, for instance, writes to Athanasius, as he himself hath set down his letter, which begins thus: "We loving peace and unity with the catholic church, over which thou, by the grace of God, dost preside or ruleⁿ," &c. And more than this, such great clerks as they should not have been ignorant, being also such lofty censurers of the heretics, that Gregory Nazianzen (called 'the divine,' whom they read, it is to be supposed, to learn the principles of divinity) saith, St. Cyprian was made not only a pastor, but a pastor that had the largest dominion^o; being set over not the church of Carthage only, or Africa, but all the west, and almost all the east itself, and the north and south, unto whom his fame reached. But if these things escaped their observation, or they studiously concealed them, they must have been most ignorant of the word of God, as they say the heretics are, if they did not know that St. Paul saith the same of the elders of Ephesus that this writer doth of Damasus, that the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, *to feed*, that is, to rule and govern *the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*^p. And if they knew this, why were they not so honest as to interpret the latter by the former? for there is no difference between St. Paul's words and the counterfeit St. Ambrose's. St. Paul saith the elders of Ephesus were appointed to *rule the church of God*, (for that is the office of a shepherd that feeds the flock,) the other saith Damasus was the ruler of God's church. If the uni-

^m Pseud-Ambros. tom. iv. de Sacerdotali Dignitate, cap. 2. [tom. ii. append. col. 359 C.]

ⁿ Athan. tom. i. Apolog. ii. p. 786.

^r Ης σὺ κατὰ χάριν Θεοῦ προϊστάσαι.

[ed. Ben. tom. i. p. 185.]

^o Κρατίστος, &c. Orat. xviii. p. 281.

[Orat. xxiv. §. 12. ed. Ben. tom. i. p. 45 A.]

^p Acts xx. 28.

versal church be thereby meant, and not his part of it only, why should it not be so expounded in the words of St. Paul? And then Damasus's title to this office is cracked; for there were rulers then set over the church universal by the Holy Ghost, before he (or his church of Rome, perhaps) was in being. But if St. Paul's words must have a more limited meaning, then with what conscience do they give their St. Ambrose's words an unlimited; and not restrain them, as they must do St. Paul's, to the particular see committed to his government?

And it was not easy for them to be ignorant that St. Paul, in these words to Timothy, speaks of the church of Ephesus, and not of Rome; and was so far from having any thought of St. Peter, (whom these annotators make the ruler at that time of this house of God,) that it is evident Timothy was the person who presided in it, and was the chief *pillar and ground of truth* here spoken of; as I doubt not I have proved in the ensuing discourse. Wherein I have also shown that other succeeding bishops, in other churches, had the same title; nay, many persons in the church that were no bishops, who were far from thinking themselves or being thought by others infallible, as these annotators imagine they must needs be who are the pillar and establishment of the truth. That is an inference from these words, for which they had no more warrant than they had to entitle St. Ambrose to those commentaries.

The author of which also did so little dream of the infallibility of the church when he glossed upon these words, that he doth not so much as make the church the ground or establishment of the truth, but saith in plain terms, *firmamentum* (as the Vulgar Latin translates ἐδραίωμα) *hujus veritatis signa sunt et prodigia*, 'the establishment of this truth (left in the church) are signs and wonders,' which the apostles, that is, wrought to bring men to the firm belief of that truth which they preached. Which doth not rely therefore upon the credit of the church, but upon the credit of the apostles, and of those divine works whereby God bare witness to them, which are recorded in the holy Scriptures.

From whence alone we ought to derive our knowledge of the truth the apostle here speaks of, as is most clearly resolved by St. Cyril of Hierusalem in these memorable words: "Concerning the divine and holy mysteries of the faith, we ought not to deliver any thing, though never so small, without the divine Scriptures, &c.; neither shouldst thou believe me barely saying these things to thee, unless thou receivest the demonstration of the things, published out of the divine Scriptures. For this is the safety or security of our

faith, which depends not upon words that we invent, but upon the demonstration of the divine Scriptures 9."

In which we hear our Lord Christ himself speaking to us: who is more to be believed than the church. "For the church, as St. Paul speaks, is *subject unto Christ*, (they are the words of St. Augustine^r.) and therefore the church ought not to set herself above Christ, so as to think that they who are condemned by him may be baptized, but they that are condemned by the church may not be baptized: when he always judges truly; but ecclesiastical judges, being men, are oft-times deceived."

From them therefore who are fallible, we appeal to him who is infallible, and hath delivered his sentence in the holy Scriptures: or from a church particular we appeal to the church catholic, nay, from the new church of Rome to the old. For we are not, as they would make the world believe, affrighted with the name of the Church; whose judgment we truly honour, as will appear in this treatise; while they dishonour it by confining the church to themselves, and then exalting it above the Scriptures of truth, and making its mere name serve to dazzle the eyes of their own people, and to keep them in profound ignorance; teaching them^s to oppose the name of a "catholic man," and the "catholic church," as a sufficient answer to all that we most reasonably object against them. Thus in their own conceit it is a kind of Gorgon's head, which they fancy will immediately stupify us when it is opposed to us: but, blessed be God, we are still in our wits, and understand very well that this is no better than his old artifice, who invented this cheat (as St. Cyprian^t speaks) of deceiving unwary souls by the very title of the Christian name. For just so they now abuse the name of *church*, and the name of *catholic*; and by good words and fine speeches (as St. Paul writes) *deceive the hearts of the simple*^u.

Whom I have endeavoured in this small treatise to undeceive, and direct in the way of that truth, of which every church ought to be *the pillar and ground*. If any one be not, but, instead of the certain, constant, universally received Christian truth, set up uncertain, nay, false, lately-invented, and particular conceits of its own, it is not to be relied on, but rejected, though it hath been formerly a church of

9 Catech. iv. sect. de Spiritu Sancto. [§. 17. p. 60.]

^r Contra Cresconium Gram. l. ii. c. 21. [tom. ix. col. 422 G.]

^s Rhem. Annot. in Luke xii. 11. [p. 177.]

^t L. de Unitate Ecclesie. [. . . "excogitavit novam fraudem, ut sub ipso Christiani nominis titulo fallat incautos."—p. 105.]

^u Rom. xvi. 18.

never so great authority. Such the church of Rome once was, but now ceases so to be; having, by taking upon her too much, lost that regard which otherwise it might have had in the Christian world. It is not the same church it was in the apostles' times, no, nor in the days of Gregory the Great; as hath been unanswerably demonstrated by bishop Morton heretofore^x, and lately by the author of the Vindication of the Answer to some late Papers^y, to which there will never be an ingenuous reply. Great and many alterations have been made therein, to the manifest prejudice of the Christian faith: of which that church should have been, as well as others, a pillar and establishment; but hath notoriously failed in her duty, by inventing another faith, which undermines and endangers that faith which *was once delivered to the saints*.

Of this I have given so full and so clear an account in these papers, that I fear not to expose them to the examination of them that are of a contrary mind: hoping, though they do not convince them of their errors, yet they will help to establish the people of our church in the present truth. Which, I doubt not, they will see to be the truly catholic, apostolic faith; which they ought not to part withal, but preserve as carefully as they do their life.

And so they cannot fail to do, if they *add to faith virtue*. In order to which, I have endeavoured to make this treatise as practical as I could; that we may not fall into that grand error, of thinking it enough to *hold the truth*, though we *hold it in unrighteousness*.

God of his infinite mercy deliver us all from that damnable delusion, and *establish our hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints* ^z.

^x Catholique Appeal, l. 1. cap. 2. [Pp. 5—52. "A Catholique Appeal for Protestants, out of the confessions of the Roman doctors; particularly answering the misnamed Catholike Apologie for the Romish faith, out of the Protestants; manifesting the antiquitie of our religion, and satisfying all scrupulous objections which have bene urged against it. Written by Thomas Morton, doctor of divinitie."—fol. Lond. 1609. The correct title of the Romish work which he here controverts is "The Protestants Apologie for the Roman Church," &c. 4to, Lond. 1608; written by one Anderdon, under the assumed name of John Brerely, in reply to a previous work of Morton's, Apologia

Catholica, &c., published in 1605.]

^y [Two papers certified to be in the hand-writing of Charles II. and found in his strong box, having been published after his death, together with the duchess of York's (Anne Hyde's) Motives of her conversion to the catholic faith, (written in 1670, reprinted in Dod's Church History, iii. 396—399,) Stillingfleet wrote anonymously in reply "An Answer to three papers lately printed," &c., and in the same year (1687) "A Vindication of the Answer to some late papers concerning the unity and authority of the Catholick Church, and Reformation of the Church of England,"—Works, vol. vi. pp. 641—750.]

^z 1 Thess. iii. 13.

THE
PILLAR AND GROUND OF TRUTH.

PART I.

INTRODUCTION.

It is a pious reflection which Clemens Alexandrinus makes upon a saying of Plato^a, that “if truth could never have been learnt, but either from God himself or from his dependents, then we who have the testimonies of the divine oracles do justly boast that we are taught the truth by the very Son of God.” Which he hath revealed unto us so plainly in all things necessary to our salvation, and transmitted unto us so entirely in the holy Scriptures, that it cannot but be a great trouble to all those who love him and his religion, to see such wranglings about it in his church, as if there were no more certainty among us *what is truth*, than there was among the philosophers.

The contention about this is so sharp and fierce, that while men seek after truth, they are in danger to lose the very aim and scope of it; which is charity, the love of God and of one another. This St. Paul determines to be the very drift of the gospel, when he tells Timothy, *The end of the commandment is charity*^b.

Nay, they have raised so many doubts about this matter, that poor people are many times to seek for truth itself, even in the clearest light thereof. It being some men’s business so

^a L. vi. Stromat. p. 675. [Ἐἴπερ οὖν καὶ κατὰ Πλάτωνα, ἢ παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἢ παρὰ τῶν ἐγγόνων τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐκμανθάνειν μόνως οἷόν τε, εἰκότως παρὰ τῶν θείων λογίων τὰ

μαρτύρια ἐκλεγόμενοι τὴν ἀλήθειαν αὐχοῦμεν ἐκδιδάσκεσθαι διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ.—§ 15. p. 802. ed. Potter.]

^b 1 Tim. i. 5.

to confound their thoughts, that they know it not when they see it, but are still in great trouble about it even when they have it.

And where to seek for it is now grown a great question also. It is to be found, no doubt, in the church; but about that there are so many disputes, that men are to seek as much as before, if they go to find it there. In short, there are no words more abused than these two, *truth* and *church*; and therefore I hope it will do some service to souls, if, for their plain and safe direction in these matters, I rescue those words of St. Paul to Timothy, *the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth*^c, from those false glosses that are put upon them, to the great dishonour of our blessed Lord and of his holy truth.

And for that end I shall distinctly treat of these four things :

First, what that truth is, of which either the church, or Timothy, or both, were the *pillar and ground*.

Secondly, what it is to be a *pillar and ground* of the truth.

Thirdly, who it is to whom this office and honour belongs, of being the *pillar and ground of the truth*; or what we mean when we say, *the church* is intrusted therewith.

Lastly, how it discharges this office.

I.—What is the truth ?

Here we must begin, because we must first know what the truth is, before we can know a society of men to be the church : which is constituted and made by believing and professing the truth.

And this, in effect, is a resolution of that question which Pilate asked our Saviour, but would not stay for an answer, *What is truth ?*

Which though it be made a great difficulty by those whose interest it is to make things intricate and perplexed, yet, in my opinion, it is very easy to give satisfaction to it; and we need not go far neither to seek it. For the apostle himself immediately explains what he means by truth in the words following; *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen*

^c 1 Tim. iii. 15.

of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Where we learn two things in general concerning this matter. First, that the truth here spoken of is that which was formerly a *mystery*, or secret, which lay hidden for many ages and generations in the unknown purpose of God, but now is revealed and manifested by the Son of God and his holy Spirit, to make men godly.

Which is the other thing we learn from thence, that the *truth* which the apostle intends is the *mystery of godliness*, or, as he speaks in chapter vi. 3, *the doctrine which is according to godliness*. And therefore, whatsoever doth not tend to better men's lives by making them do their duties faithfully both towards God and towards men, (to some of which the duties that are owing are in this very epistle called *showing piety* or *godliness*^d.) we are not to reckon it among the truths which were deposited with Timothy to be preferred and upheld in the church. For God did not design by the discovery he made of his mind and will in the gospel, merely to enlarge our knowledge; but to rectify our wills and affections by the right information of our minds, and by acquainting us with such weighty truths, especially such wonderful revelations of his love, as cannot but irresistibly sway us, if we lay them to heart, unto his obedience.

But, that we may not be left to guess at this *truth* or *mystery of godliness*, without any certainty, he sets down a particular of it, and reduces the whole mystery of godliness to these six heads.

I. The principal is this, that the eternal Son of God "came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary, and was made man;" that he might suffer for us, and make himself an offering for our sins. All this I take to be included in these words, *God was manifested in the flesh*. Which cannot be meant of God the Father; for it is expressly said in other places that it was *Jesus Christ who came in the flesh*^e, and is here declared to be God, that is, the eternal Son of God, the *Word made flesh*^f. Which doth not denote merely his being made man, but likewise his suffering for us; he

^d 1 Tim. v. 4.

^e 1 John iv. 2.

^f John i. 14.

taking our flesh on purpose for this very end, that therein he might by his death make an atonement for sin. And so the very phrase *flesh and blood* signifies in Scripture (as it doth commonly in the Hebrew writers) this weak, frail, mortal, suffering state, wherein we are at present; into which our blessed Lord put himself when he manifested himself in our flesh. So we read expressly, Heb. ii. 14, where to take part with us in our *flesh and blood*, is to make himself liable to sufferings and death. In these few words therefore are contained many principles of Christian truths, viz. that Jesus Christ was really God, (not God the Father, whose being is here supposed, but God the Son,) and that he was incarnate and really made man, of the substance of his mother; being perfect God, and perfect man: and as really *suffered for us in the flesh*, as St. Peter speaks^g. Which were the doctrines that were first assaulted by the devil and his agents in the beginning of our religion, (such as Simon Magus and the rest of that tribe,) but proved to be undoubtedly true by the mighty power of his Spirit.

II. Which is the second part of this mystery, *justified in, or by the Spirit*. Which sufficiently convinced all gainsayers that he was no less than the Son of God, *though in the likeness of sinful flesh*, and that by a *sacrifice for sin he condemned sin in the flesh*^h. For as he was conceived in his mother's womb by the Holy Ghostⁱ, so at his baptism he was *anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power*^k; there being then a visible descent of the Spirit of God in a glorious manner upon him, together with a voice from heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*^l. And as it then *lighted on him*, so it *abode, and remained on him*^m; as appeared by the power of such miracles as neither men nor devils could work, but only the Spirit of God. Which was so evidently true, that to ascribe them to the devil was *the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*ⁿ, by whose power not only devils were cast out, but even the dead were raised: whereby he was manifested to be *the resurrection and the life*^o. By the same Spirit he himself also was raised from the dead, and

^g 1 Pet. iv. 1. ^h Rom. viii. 3. ⁿ Matt. xii. 28, 31, 32; Mark iii.

^l Luke i. 35. ^k Acts x. 38. 29, 30.

^l Matt. iii. 17. ^m John i. 32, 33. ^o John xi. 25.

declared again the Son of God with power^p; and having all power in heaven and earth given him, he sent the Holy Ghost upon his apostles on the day of Pentecost, as a further justification of him^q. Nay, more than this, by the laying on of their hands poured it out upon others, who believed on his name^r: which was the *unction from the Holy One*, whereby they *knew all things*, as St. John calls it^s; i. e. were assured of all the Christian truth revealed unto them. For all these were illustrious witnesses unto Christ, and justified this grand truth that he was *God manifested in the flesh*, (for such ends and purposes as he pretended,) against all opposers who accused it of falsity.

And who is there that doth not see several other principles of God's holy truth contained in this? Particularly that the Holy Ghost is God, the third person in the holy Trinity, being the *Spirit of God*; which *knows the things of God* (as the *spirit of man doth what is in him*^t: and led or guided the apostles *into all truth*^u, and dwells in the whole body of the church as his *temple*^x, (which no created spirit can do,) and gave such a divine testimony to our Saviour, that to speak against it was unpardonable blasphemy.

That other great article of our faith also is included in this, which St. Paul declares in these terms; *Though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God*.

III. This was a thing notorious to the angels themselves, which is the third particular in this mystery; *was seen of angels*: both at his birth^z, and in several passages of his life^a, and at his death^b, and at and after his resurrection^c, and also at his ascension^d, when they testified to the apostles that *this same Jesus who was taken up from them into heaven, shall so come in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven*. Where when he came, they all *worshipped him*^e, and admired at the wonderful wisdom of God which was made known to them by the church^f; especially this *mystery of Christ*, as the

^p Rom. i. 4. ^q John xv. 26;
Acts v. 32.

^r Acts ii. 38; viii. 17.

^s 1 John ii. 20. ^t 1 Cor. ii. 11.

^u John xvi. 13. ^x 1 Cor. vi. 19.

^y 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

^z Luke iii. 9, 10, 13.

^a Matt. iv. 11, xvii. 5; John i. 51.

^b Luke xxii. 43.

^c Matt. xxviii. 2; John xx. 20.

^d Acts i. 10, 11. ^e Heb. i. 6.

^f 1 Pet. i. 12.

Scripture calls it, which is the fourth particular in this catalogue of Christian truths.

IV. That this doctrine, thus confirmed and attested, was *preached unto the Gentiles*; who were assured that they should be made *fellow heirs* with the Jews, and *partakers of God's promise in Christ by the gospel*, as St. Paul speaks, *unto whom this grace was given, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men know what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world was hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ*^f.

An astonishing grace this was; declaring the infinite love and kindness of God, that they who thought not of it, who had no promises to make them expect it, who were strangers to God and the covenant of promise, were on a sudden surprised with the revelation of God's good will to them in Christ; and by belief of it were made *fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*. That is, the church was made truly catholic, all the world being taken into fellowship with the apostles, *whose fellowship was with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*^g.

V. And another great wonder was, that notwithstanding all the opposition which was made by the potentates, by the philosophers and disputers of the world, by the devil also and his angels, (who thought they also saw him, and could not but confess him, yet set themselves against him with their whole power,) and notwithstanding all the strong prejudices that were in people's minds against it, this whole mystery of godliness was entertained and received with great joy every where. Which is the fifth particular, *seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed*, as St. Luke speaks^h. The reason was, because Christ, the head of the church, being raised from the dead, was exalted at God's right hand, *far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, either in this world, or in the other*: so that neither men nor devils could hinder the propagation of the gospel, by the working of that *mighty power which he wrought in Christ*

^f Eph. iii. 6.

^g 1 John i. 3.

^h Acts xix. 20.

when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

VI. For that is the last part of this mystery of godliness, he was *received up into, or in glory*: that is, in a glorious manner received up into heaven. And being *gone into the heavens*, (as St. Peter writesⁱ,) *is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to him*. So subject, that *from henceforth he expects, till all his enemies be made his footstool*^k: and having vanquished death, which is the last enemy, and raised men out of their graves, he will judge them according to their works. For he was received up into glory to be the Judge of quick and dead.

These are the principal points of that truth which ought to be supported and maintained in the Christian church; being the substantial and necessary articles of our faith, without the belief of which we cannot be Christians.

For the fuller explication of which I shall make six observations: the first of which the apostle himself here suggests, and the rest will fairly follow from thence.

I. First, the apostle notes them to be such truths as were *without controversy*; about which there was no dispute among serious Christians.

II. And therefore these are the truly catholic doctrines, and these alone.

III. The fundamental truths upon which our religion and the church itself is built.

IV. And therefore he that holds close to these cannot be a heretic.

V. But they that call men so because they believe not other things which they have made necessary, have rent the Christian church, and are guilty of that sin of which they falsely accuse others.

VI. Which guilt is the greater, because the best and most learned men among them have confessed those doctrines, which they have superadded to the ancient truth, to be doubtful, superfluous, and unknown to the first ages of the church: that is, not truly catholic doctrines.

The first of these ought to be well weighed: that the truth

ⁱ 1 Peter iii. ult.

^k Heb. x 13.

which is to be supported and maintained in the church is so evident and so abundantly attested that it is confessed by all Christians. Thus that word *ὁμολογουμένως*, ‘without controversy,’ or confessedly, signifies, as we may learn from the use of it among the ancient Greeks, one of which, Diodorus Sinopensis, speaks of their supreme God just as the apostle doth of the *mystery of godliness*.

—————‘Ο Ζεὺς ὁ φίλιος,
‘Ο τῶν Θεῶν μέγιστος ὁμολογουμένως¹.

‘Jupiter the friendly is, without controversy, or by common consent, agreed to be the greatest of the gods.’ In like manner the apostle is to be understood, when he saith the same of these great and venerable doctrines of godliness: which are such as are confessed by all by a common agreement, and doubted of by none. For they are no other than those which are contained in the Apostles’ Creed; about which there is no question among Christians, but they all consent unto it, being baptized into the belief of those truths; in which the whole church hath agreed, every where, in all times, down from the apostles’ days to this present age.

“For the church,” saith Irenæus^m, “though dispersed throughout the world, to the ends of the earth, received from the apostles and their disciples the faith which is in one God the Father Almighty, who made the heaven, and the earth, and sea, and all that is in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Ghost, who preached by the prophets the dispensations and approaches of God, and the birth of the virgin, and the suffering, the resurrection from the dead, and the bodily ascension of our dear Lord Christ Jesus into the heavens; and his coming from thence in the glory of the Father, to gather together all things, and to raise all human flesh; that, according to the good pleasure of the Father invisible, every knee of things in heaven, or earth, or things under the earth, may bow to Christ Jesus, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King, and every tongue may confess him, and he may do righteous

¹ [In Ἐπικλήρω.] Apud Athenæum, lib. vi. [cap. 36, tom. ii. p. 417.]

^m L. i. contra Hæres. c. 2. [cap. 10. ed. Ben. p. 48.]

judgment upon all; and send the spirits of wickedness, and the angels that transgressed and apostatized, together with ungodly, unjust, lawless, and blasphemous men, into eternal fire; but to the just, and the holy, and such as observe his commandments, and persevere in his love, either always or by repentance, graciously bestow life, give immortality, and put them in possession of eternal glory."

This is *σωμάτιον τῆς ἀληθείας*, (as he calls itⁿ.) a "little body of truth;" the rule of faith, (as Tertullian often speaks,) instituted by Christ; which *nullas habet apud nos quæstiones*^o, "is not doubted of, nor hath any questions about it among Christians, but such as heresies have brought in, and which make men heretics."

And therefore this is the truth, of which the church ought to be the *pillar and ground* to the end of the world: but not presume, as I shall show anon, to bind all Christians, upon pain of perishing everlastingly, to believe what is not contained in this rule of belief. For it alone is sufficient, as appears by this, that into it all the articles or parts (as a learned man of the Roman church speaks^p) "of which a Christian consists are digested, as it were, into one body."

II. From whence it follows that these are the true catholic, and the only catholic doctrines. Catholic they are, because spread every where: and the only catholic, because none besides these, till very lately, were received as part of the Christian truth, which must necessarily be believed if we hope to be saved.

Hear how Irenæus^q proclaims this, immediately after the foregoing words: which Epiphanius^r thought so considerable, that he hath transcribed both these chapters into his book against heresies.

"The church, as we have said, having received this preaching (or doctrine) and this faith, preserves it most carefully, as if it inhabited but one house, though it be dispersed through the whole world. And with unanimous consent

ⁿ [Cap. 9. p. 47.]

^q L. 1. cap. 3. [al. cap. 10. p. 49.]

^o L. de Præscript. cap. xiv. [p. 207 A.]

^r Hæres. xxxi. n. 30, 31. [tom. i. p. 202.]

^p Rigaltius, ib. [p. 206.]

preaches, and teaches, and delivers these things, as having but one mouth. For though there be different languages in the world, yet the force of that which is delivered is one and the same. So that neither the churches situated in Germany believe otherwise, or have any other tradition, nor those in Spain, nor those in France, nor those in the East, nor those in Egypt, nor those in Lybia, nor those in the midst of the world: but as the sun, that creature of God, is one and the same in the whole world, so the *τὸ κήρυγμα τῆς ἀληθείας*, 'the preaching or doctrine of the truth,' shines every where, and enlightens all men who are willing to come to the knowledge of the truth.

“And neither he, among the governors of the church, who is most powerful in speech, teaches different things than these, (for no man is above his master,) nor he that is weak in speech diminishes the tradition. For there being one and the same faith, neither he that is able to speak a great deal concerning it doth enlarge or exceed, nor he that can say but a little doth take away, or make it less.”

Which is such a plain declaration that the creed contains the whole apostolical tradition, (or faith, for they are the same in his language,) and the only catholic doctrine, that if we were at this day to contrive words on purpose for the asserting this truth, we could not invent any more full or express than these. Which show us that this faith is sufficient not only for the ignorant, the catechumens, and beginners in religion; but for the most improved in Christian knowledge, for those that instructed and ruled the church, who had no authority to preach or impose any other belief.

This is a thing that runs through his whole book; for he repeats it again in fewer words in the latter end of the next chapter^s, that “the true church hath but that one and the same faith (before mentioned) throughout the whole world.” Which in the nineteenth chapter^t he calls the “rule of truth, by which all error was discovered: for holding this rule, though they speak very various and many things, we easily evince that they have deviated from the truth.”

And again, in the third book^u, he hath recourse to the same

^s [P. 51.]

^t [Cap. 22. ed. Ben. p. 98.]

^u L. iii. chap. 3. [p. 175.]

rule of truth, "unto which whosoever will hearken may see what is the tradition of the apostles manifested in the whole world, in every church." Where he saith they were able to tell what bishops were settled by the apostles and their successors until his time; who neither taught nor thought of any thing like to the dotages of the heretics of those days. And because it would have been too long to reckon up all the churches, he instances in the church of Rome, (to which all had occasion to go upon some business or other, because it was the imperial city,) by whose bishop he saith, "that tradition, and that preaching or doctrine of truth which was from the apostles in the church, is come to us; and is a most full proof that one and the same lifegiving faith which was from the apostles in the church, is conferred to this time and delivered in truth. The very same which Polycarp wrote to the Philippians (mark these words, which they of the present Roman church are wont to conceal, that they may make the world believe Irenæus thought the tradition of the apostles, that is, the Christian faith, was to be sought only in their church) and which was in the church of Ephesus, founded by Paul, and having John continuing in it till the time of Trajan; which church is a true witness of the tradition of the apostles."

And that there may be no mistake about this tradition, he repeats it again in the next chapter^x, and informs us (in very remarkable words) it was nothing else but the doctrine contained in the Creed.

"Since these things are so plain, we ought not to seek further among others for truth; which we may easily find in the church: for the apostles left most fully in it, as in a rich repository, all things that belong to truth; so that every one who will may take from thence the *water of life*, &c. (out of the holy Scriptures he means, as appears by what follows:) and suppose the apostles had not left us the Scriptures, shall we not follow the order of the tradition, (or rule of faith,) which they delivered to those unto whom they committed the churches? To which ordination many barbarous nations who believe on Christ assent, having the doctrine of salvation without paper and ink written by the Spirit in their heart, and diligently

^x L. iii. cap. 4. [p. 178.]

preserving the ancient tradition: believing in one God the Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things which are therein, by Christ Jesus the Son of God; who out of his most eminent love to his creature vouchsafed to be born of the virgin, uniting man to God by himself, and suffering under Pontius Pilate, and rising again, and being illustriously received in glory, shall come again the Saviour of those that are saved, and the Judge of those that are judged: sending into eternal fire the misshapers of truth and the contemners of his Father, and of his coming. Those that have believed this faith without letters, we in our language call barbarous; but as to their opinion, and custom, and conversation, they please God because of their faith, by which they are most wise; living in all righteousness, chastity, and wisdom. Unto whom if any one should speak in their language those things which heretics have invented, they would presently stop their ears and run away, not enduring to hear the blasphemy. Thus by that old tradition of the apostles, (*viz.* the Creed,) they do not so much as admit into their thoughts the portentous talk of those heretics in his days."

These things I have thought fit to set down the more largely, because they are an evident demonstration what the old tradition of the apostles is, which is nothing else but that summary of Christian truth contained in the Creed; unto which they would suffer no other tradition to be added, but contented themselves with this, as fully sufficient; and by this judged of all other things that pretended to come from the apostles; and were every where so well instructed in this, that in those churches which as yet had not received the apostolical writings, (the holy Scriptures of the N. T.,) they had this doctrine as the contents of those Scriptures; and were thought most wise (being wise enough to salvation) in this faith alone, without any other.

But because this is such a very important truth, I shall take a little more pains to set down the sense of the church in all ages concerning it; that the reader may be satisfied there is no other truth but this alone, which is absolutely necessary to his salvation. Which they sometime comprehend in fewer words, but never add any one article beyond those in the Creed.

If we had the letters of Ignatius entire and sincere, wo

should be able to tell what he took for truth immediately after the apostles were dead. And thus much is evident from them as they now are, that they, or he who contrived the Epistle to the Philippians under his name, (for it is not thought to be his,) took this to be the doctrine of that second age : when, after the mention of the doctrine of the Trinity, and that the Son of God was truly made man, truly born, and truly crucified, dead, and rose again, (not seemingly, not in appearance only, but in truth,) they make him conclude *ὁ ταῦτα πιστεύσας, μακάριος ὕ*, “He that believes these things as they are, and were really done, is a blessed man.” Which is an undoubted testimony they took this Creed to be sufficient to salvation ; which Ignatius, in an unquestioned epistle of his to the church of Smyrna, calls the “unmovable faith^z,” wherein he blessed God they were perfected or knit together ; mentioning no other articles but those before named.

Polycarp also in the same age wrote an epistle to the Philippians^a, wherein they that had a mind and took care of their salvation might learn the “character of his faith and the doctrine of truth :” which was the very same as Irenæus^b relates in the forenamed chapter with that set down by him, which he calls that “one and only truth which he received from the apostles and delivered to the church.”

And what they taught in Asia, and Irenæus in France, that Tertullian in the latter end of the same age taught in Afric ; that there is but “one only immovable, irreformable rule of faith^c, (that is, there is no other form of believing but this, as De la Cerda honestly interprets the word *irreformabilis*,) in one God, Almighty, the Creator of the world, and in his Son Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, raised the third day from the dead, received up into heaven, and sitting now at the right hand of the Father, and shall come to judge the quick and the dead, by the resurrection also of the flesh.”

This he calls in that place the “law of faith :” which he sets down in more words in another book ; where he prefaces

^y [§ 3. Coteler. Patr. Apost. tom. ii. p. 113.]

^z [§ 1. *ibid.* p. 34.]

^a [Coteler. tom. ii. p. 187.]

^b L. iii. cap. 3, 4. [p. 177.] et Euseb. Hist. l. iv. c. 14.

^c L. de Velandis Virg. c. 1. [p. 173 A.]

to it by this remarkable proposition, as he calls it^d, that “there is one and the same certain doctrine instituted by Christ which all people ought to believe, and consequently to seek, that when they have found it they may believe. Now the inquisition of one certain appointment cannot be infinite; which is an encouragement to seek till one find, and believe when he hath found; because there remains, saith he, “nothing more but to preserve and keep what thou hast believed. For thou believest this also, that there is nothing else to be believed. And therefore no further inquiry to be made when thou hast found and believed that which was appointed by him, who did not command thee to inquire after any thing but what he appointed.”

Upon which principle having a little further enlarged, he proceeds to lay down the ‘rule of faith^e,’ (that one certain appointment, which if one believe there is nothing else to be believed,) “whereby we believe there is one God alone, and no other but the Creator of the world, who made all things of nothing by his Word, emitted before all things. That Word called his Son, seen variously in the name of God by the patriarchs, heard in the prophets, and at last brought down by the Spirit and power of God the Father into the virgin Mary, made flesh in her womb and born of her, became Jesus Christ; and thereupon preached the new law, and the new promise of the kingdom of heaven, wrought miracles, was crucified, rose the third day, was taken up into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, sent the vicarious power of the Holy Spirit who works in believers; shall come in glory to take holy persons to the enjoyment of eternal life and the celestial promises, and to condemn the profane to everlasting fire; both parties being raised up again with the restoring of the flesh.”

This is the rule about which he there saith there are no questions; the rule in which faith entirely consists, that faith which will save a man; unto which curiosity ought to yield: for to know nothing against the rule is to know all things^f. And beyond this rule he there expressly argues there is nothing to be believed^g; for if we still be to seek for faith,

^d L. de Præscription. c. 9. [p. 205 D.]

^e Ib. chap. xiii. [p. 206 D.]

^f [Cap. 14. p. 206 B.]

^g Ib. cap. x. Ubi enim erit finis quærendi? Ubi statio credendi, &c. [p. 206 A.]

where shall we rest? Where shall we make an end of seeking? Where shall we make a stand and stay our believing? Or where shall a full stop be put to finding?

And that this was the constant doctrine of those times and places it appears from hence, that as Irenæus often repeats this rule and this alone, so doth he a third time insist upon this, even after he became a Montanist, as the only rule that had run down to their times from the beginning of the gospel; which he had always professed, and now much more, being more fully (as he fancied) instructed by the Paraclete, the leader into all truth. Who durst not (it seems), though he pretended to revelations, adventure to alter this rule; which Tertullian recites again in the same terms^h, without any enlargements as he had done in his former books.

And thereby satisfies us that he did not casually make this the rule of faith, but that it was his constant sense: which though he do not express in the very same words and syllables, it only shows they had no other sense but this in their minds. And, as Vigiliusⁱ speaks about this very matter, *nec præjudicant verba, ubi sensus incolumis permanet*, ‘the words do not make a wrong opinion where the sense remains safe and sound.’ Which may be applied to all the forms of belief which were in the church of Rome, of Aquileia, and in the churches of the east, before the great council of Nice; none of which differ in sense, (though in some words they do,) nor have one article of faith more than the Creed now contains: which Tertullian^k once more calls the rule of truth, which comes transmitted from Christ by his companions or apostles; and in another place most significantly that one edict of God, which hangs up (as the edicts of the emperor did in a table) to be read by all^l.

Nor was there any other faith in the next age to this, (in the third century,) as we may be satisfied from Origen, who in his preface to his books *περὶ Ἀρχῶν*^m, thinking it necessary first to lay down “a certain line, and manifest rule,” by which to inquire concerning other things, and having distinguished be-

^h Adv. Praxeam, cap. 2. [p. 501 B.]

ⁱ L. iv. adv. Eutychnianos. [cap. 1. in Max. Bibl. Vet. Patr. tom. viii. p. 730 H.]

^k Apolog. cap. 47. [p. 37 B.]

^l De Resurrect. Carnis, cap. 18.

[p. 335 D.]

^m [Tom. i. p. 47.]

tween things necessary to be believed, and those which are not necessary, he gives the sum of those things which were “manifestly delivered by the apostolical preaching:” and it is nothing else but the present Creed, about which, he saith, “there is one sense of the whole church.”

And in his first book against Celsus, who said the Christian religion was *κρύφιον δόγμα*, ‘a clancular doctrine,’ which they hid and concealed, he avows that the Christian doctrine was as well known in the world as the opinions of philosophers. “For who doth not know that we believe Jesus was born of a virgin, was crucified, rose again from the dead, will come to judgment, and punish sinners and reward the righteous according to their deeds? Nay, the mystery of the future resurrection is divulged, though laughed at by unbelievers.” These were the great things which were commonly taught, and all obliged to believe; as for others, which were not common, the philosophers, he tells him, had their abstruse doctrines as well as Christians. To this purpose we meet with a notable passage in Epiphanius, (in the succeeding age,) which shows that the substance of the Christian faith concerning our Saviour was commonly known, even by those who did not profess it, and understood to be this which Origen mentions. For a Jew, coming to see an eminent man of his nation who was sick, whispered this in his ear when they despaired of his life, “Believe in Jesus, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate the governor, being the Son of God, and afterward born of Mary, the Christ of God, and raised from the dead, and that he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.”

St. Cyprian^a also plainly shows there was no other faith in his church, when he answers those who said the Novatians held the same law that the catholic church held, and baptized into the same creed, believing the same God the Father, the same Christ the Son, the same Holy Ghost; that this would not avail them (for Corah and Dathan and Abiram believed the same God with Moses and Aaron); and besides, they did not believe remission of sins and eternal life by the holy church, since they had left the church.

^y [§ 7. tom. i. p. 325 D.]

^z Hæres. xxx. n. 9. [tom. i. p. 133 A.]

^a [Epist. ad Magnum de Bapt. Novat. edit. Rig. p. 152. [Epist. lxi. ed. Fell. p. 183.]

Lucianus also, a famous presbyter of the church of Antioch, and a martyr for the faith of Christ, left a form of believing, written with his own hand^b, if we may believe the bishops assembled at Antioch, who sent it about in the time of the Arian controversy, to prove they were none of his followers, but held *τὴν πίστιν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐκτεθειῖσθαι*, ‘the faith which had been set forth from the beginning:’ and it is this, as Socrates reports it; “We have learnt from the beginning to believe in one God of the whole world, the maker and preserver of all things intelligible and sensible; and in one only begotten Son of God, subsisting before all worlds, and being together with the Father who begot him; by whom all things were made, whether visible or invisible; who in the last days came down, by the good pleasure of the Father, and took flesh of the holy Virgin, and having fulfilled the whole will of his Father, suffered and rose again, and returned to heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and shall come to judge the quick and dead, and remaineth King and God for ever. And if it be needful to add it, we believe the resurrection of the flesh and life everlasting^c.”

I will not trouble the reader with a larger creed of theirs which there follows, more fully explaining the doctrine of the Trinity, because it belongs to the following age, cent. IV.

In which it is known the Nicene fathers met to settle the controversy about the Son of God; but did not make any new creed, or add one article to what had been believed before, but only explained one article, the sense of which the Arians perverted. No, they were so far from enlarging the Christian faith, that when they met together they recited no other creed but that of the apostles; as Laurentius Valla affirms he had read in some ancient books of Isidore, who collected the canons of old councils. And accordingly when they had drawn up that Creed which they published, they did not think they had made the least change in the matter of faith, but declared that this^d was the Creed delivered by the holy apostles. Which St. Ambrose^e in that age calls *clavem*, ‘the key;’ St. Hierom

^b Sozomen. l. iii. c. 5.

tom. ii. p. 122.]

^c Lib. ii. Eccles. Hist. c. 10.

^e Serm. 38. [ed Ben. Serm. 33.

^d Epiphanius in Anchorat. [§ 119.

in append. tom. ii. col. 435 F.] Hi-

indicium, the ‘mark or sign of faith;’ in which, after the confession of the Trinity, and of the unity of the church, the whole mystery of the Christian religion is concluded in the resurrection of the flesh : and which Greg. Nazianzen, in his second letter to Cledonius, calls *σύντομον ὄρον τινα καὶ κανόνα τοῦ ἡμετέρου φρονήματος*^f, ‘a short boundary and rule of our sense or judgment,’ i. e. of the faith of Christians.

St. Austin especially in a great number of places declares that this is the only faith required to make a man a Christian. Particularly in his book^g he wrote on purpose about this matter, which he begins thus, “Since the just live by faith, the greater care must be taken that faith be not corrupted;” and then adds, “Now the catholic faith is made known to the faithful in the Creed.” Which having explained, he concludes his book in these words; “which few words are known to the faithful, that believing they may be subdued to God; and being brought under his yoke may live aright; and living aright, may cleanse their heart; and their heart being cleansed, they may understand what they believe.”

In like manner, before he begins the explication of the book of Genesis^h, he sets down what the catholic faith is; because heretics were wont to draw the Scriptures to their own sense against the catholic faith. And the catholic faith, by which he considers all things, is nothing else but that in the Nicene Creed; beginning with the belief of God the Father Almighty, and concluding with the belief of eternal life, and the promise of the heavenly kingdom.

Which is agreeable to the direction he gives to others in his book of Christian doctrineⁱ; that in all ambiguous things the rule of faith be consulted, lest any sense that is contrary thereunto be admitted. Which, he elsewhere saith^k, is “the rule of faith common to little and great in the church.”

It is needless to add any more out of that father; and I shall but briefly mention the Creed of pope Damasus in the

eron. Epist. ad Pammach. [Al. Contr. Ruffin. lib. i. § 28. tom. ii. col. 435 E.]

^f Orat. lib. ii. beginning. [ed. Ben. Epist. cii. tom. ii. p. 93 D.]

^g Lib. de Fide et Symbolo. [cap. i. tom. vi. col. 151.]

^h De Genesi ad literam, L. imperfectus. [tom. iii. part. 1. col. 93.]

ⁱ Lib. iii. c. 2. [tom. iii. col. 45 A.]

^k Epist. lvii. [Epist. clxxxvii. ed. Ben. cap. 8. tom. ii. col. 687 F.]

same age, (among St. Hierom's works¹), which is only a confession of the blessed Trinity, with the rest of the articles concerning the conception, birth, death, resurrection, ascension, exaltation, and coming again of our blessed Saviour to raise us from the dead, and to give to every man according to his works: concluding with these observable words; "Read these things, believe these things, retain these things; subjugate thy soul to this belief, and thou shalt obtain life and reward from Christ."

But the words of the great Athanasius alone are sufficient to this purpose, in the letter which he, and the bishops with him, sent to the emperor Jovinian^m, where they tell him the faith confessed by the Nicene fathers is that which was preached *ἐξ ἀλώματος*, 'from the very beginning;' unto which all the churches every where consent, whether they be in Spain, or Britain, or France, or all Italy: with those in Dalmatia, Dacia, Mysia, Macedonia, and all Greece, all Afric, Sardinia, Cyprus, Crete, Pamphylia, Lycia, Isauria, Egypt, Libya, Pontus, Cappadocia, and their next neighbours, with all the churches of the East, (a few excepted who were Arians,) whose minds they knew, and whose writings they had to produce. And then having set down the Nicene Creed, they conclude, "In this faith it is necessary for all to remain, as divine and apostolical, and not to change it." For which he gives this reason, in another account of it, to Epictetusⁿ bishop of Corinth: "because it is sufficient for the overthrow of all ungodliness, and for the establishment of a pious faith in Christ."

Which is a plain declaration that this faith is not defective; and that in the Creed commonly ascribed to him there was no intention to add any new article of faith, but only to explain the old. For a whole synod (viz. that at Sardis) forbade, he tells us in another place^o, any other faith to be written but this, with which all should rest contented, *διὰ τὸ μηδὲν αὐτῆ ἰλείπειν*, &c., "because there was nothing wanting in it, but it was full of godliness:" and that there ought no new faith to be

¹ Tom. iv. [tom. xi. ed. Ben. col. 145.]

^m Tom. i. p. 245. [tom. i. p. 781 B. ed. Ben.] et Theodoret. lib. iv. Eccles. Hist. c. 3.

ⁿ Tom. i. p. 582. [p. 901 A. ed. Ben.]

^o Epist. ad Antioch. p. 576. [p. 772 E. ed. Ben.]

set forth, “lest this should seem to be imperfect, and occasion should be given to them that had a mind, to be often writing and defining concerning faith.”

I omit that confession of faith which St. Basil makes in his book of the true faith ^p; and two others in Epiphanius, of both which he saith, that “the faith of the holy church ^q,” and that “they were delivered by the apostles.” Which is a further confirmation, that though they added many more words to the Apostles’ Creed, yet they added no new article of faith; but only expounded more largely the meaning of some part of it, upon the occasion of some heresies which troubled the church in those times. When it was so far from their thoughts to add any new thing to the first Creed, that among the numerous creeds we find in Athanasius ^r, in Eusebius, and others, there is not one of them that makes any such attempt.

Nor did the second general council of Constantinople design any more; but only *κρατύναι*, ‘to strengthen and confirm’ the Nicene faith, as Socrates speaks ^s. Which Constantinopolitan Creed, or one very like, Cyril of Hierusalem expounded in his church; and saith it was “the only faith delivered by the church, and fortified by all the Scripture ^t.” “For since all are not able to read the Scriptures, and some by their want of understanding, others by their business, are hindered in acquiring that knowledge, therefore, lest men’s souls should be lost by ignorance, we have comprehended, in a few sentences, τὸ πᾶν δόγμα τῆς πίστεως, ‘the whole doctrine of faith.’ Which he earnestly presses them to have written, not in paper, but in their heart, and to carry it about with them as their *viaticum* in the whole course of their life: and besides this to receive no other. No, saith he, if I should change my mind, and teach the contrary, do not believe me; no, nor an angel from heaven, as the apostle speaks, if he should preach any other gospel but that you have received. For these articles of faith were not, as it seems, composed by men; but the principal things being gathered together out of the Scripture, they fill up one doctrine of faith.”

^p Tom. ii. p. 354. [tom. ii. ed. leuciae. [tom. i. p. 735 sqq.]
Ben. p. 227.]

^q In Anchor. [capp. 120, 1. tom. ii. p. 122, 3.]

^r Epist. de Synodis Arim. et Se-

^s Lib. v. cap. 8.]

^t Cateches. v. p. 44. [§ 12. ed. Ben. pp. 77, 8.]

But it is more than time to proceed to the fifth age, in which we find them so steadfast in this persuasion, (that the ancient creed contained all things necessary to be believed,) that the fathers assembled in the third general council^u at Ephesus expressly decreed, that “it should not be lawful for any man to produce, or write, or compose *ἑτέραν πίστιν*, any other faith besides that defined by the Nicene fathers.”

And that, “if any durst be so bold as either to compose or offer any other faith to those that would be converted from heathenism, or Judaism, or whatsoever heresy; if they were bishops or clergymen, they should be deposed; if laymen, they should be anathematized.” By which we may learn what would have become of the pope himself, if he had attempted then what his successors in these latter times have done.

For so sacredly did they keep to this, that St. Cyril of Alexandria^x tells John Antiochenus, they could not endure that the faith defined at Nice, or the symbol of faith there made, should by any means be shaken: “nor do we suffer ourselves or others to change one word of what is there, or to go besides it so much as in one syllable, remembering him that said, *Remove not the ancient landmarks* which thy fathers have set thee; for it was not they that spake, but the Spirit itself of God and the Father.” Which he confirms by the forementioned letter of Athanasius to Epictetus: which some, he saith, had set forth adulterated and depraved, and therefore he transmits it to him sincere and uncorrupted out of ancient copies. And he had the greater reason to say they could not alter one word of it, because the council of Ephesus itself, though it decreed against Nestorius, that the blessed virgin was *Θεοτόκος*, ‘the mother of God,’ yet they would not add that word to the ancient Creed; but thought it sufficient to determine the point against him. This Cyril further declares,

^u Can. vii. [In the earlier editions of the councils the definition of faith drawn up by the council of Ephesus is inserted as the seventh canon of that synod. It commences in the following terms: *Τούτων τοίνυν ἀναγνωσθέντων, ὤρισεν ἡ ἁγία συνόδος, ἑτέραν πίστιν μηδεὶ ἐξείναι προφέ-*

ρειν, ἢ γοὺν συγγράφειν, ἢ συντιθέναι, παρὰ τὴν ὀρισθείσαν παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων τῶν ἐν τῇ Νικαέων συνελθόντων σὺν ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι.—Mansi, Concill. tom. iv. col. 1361 D; Labbe, tom. iii. col. 1220 D.]

^x Tom. v. pars 2. p. 108. [ed. Aubert. fol. Par. 1638.]

in an epistle to Acacius *y*, where he confutes those who accused him of receiving a new creed, in these words: “None ever required of us a new exposition of faith, nor do we admit of any from others: ἀπόχρη γὰρ ἡμῖν ἡ θεόπνευστος γραφή, &c., ‘for the divinely inspired Scripture sufficeth us,’ and the vigilance of the ancient fathers, and the symbol of faith; which is exactly conformed to all right opinions.”

And it is well known that the next general council at Chalcedon renewed this canon of the council of Ephesus: decreeing in the very same words, with very little alteration, that “no man should produce or write any other faith, nor think or teach otherwise,” under the penalties before mentioned; only with this difference, that to laymen are added monks, against whom the synod decreed an anathema if they presumed to teach any other faith.

In the sixth age the same was again repeated in the fifth general council at Constantinople under the emperor Justinian: they solemnly professing in their third session^z, that they embraced all the four foregoing general councils; which is renewed in their eighth session^a, and all their decrees confirmed, with a particular defence of the last council at Chalcedon, concluding with the same solemn decree, that none should dare to teach or write any thing contrary to those constitutions, but if he were a bishop or clergyman he should be deposed, if a monk or laic, anathematized.

Justinian himself also in his epistle to the bishops at Constantinople^b takes special notice how the fathers in the council at Chalcedon anathematized those who had delivered or do deliver “any other creed but that which was expounded by the 318 holy fathers, and explained by the 150 fathers;” that is, the Apostles’ Creed, expounded by the two first general councils at Nice and Constantinople. “For we would have you know (saith he) that those things which were expounded and defined by the four holy councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus the first, and Chalcedon, concerning one and the same faith, we keep and defend and follow them, and all that are consonant to them. And whatsoever is not consonant to this, or may be found by any person written against those things which were defined

^y Ibid. p. 112.

^z [Mansi, tom. ix. col. 201.]

^a [Can. 14. col. 388.]

^b In collatione I. quintæ Syn. tom. v. Labb. edit. p. 422. [Mansi, tom. ix. coll. 179, 183.]

concerning one and the same faith in those four councils, or in one of them, that we execrate as altogether abhorrent from Christian piety." And this emperor was no mean divine, (though Baronius is pleased to slander him as illiterate, and presumptuous for meddling in matters of faith,) for pope Agatho himself, and the whole sixth general council who approved of Agatho's letter^c, put him in the rank of the most excellent fathers and ecclesiastic writers. For, to prove out of the fathers two natures in Christ, he tells Constantine Pogonatus that St. Cyril, St. Chrysostom, and a great many other bishops, whom he names, taught this; *et præ omnibus*, &c., "and above all these, that zealous defender of the true and apostolic faith, Justinian the emperor of pious memory, whose integrity of faith did as much exalt the Christian commonwealth as by the sincerity thereof it was pleasing to God," &c.; which is enough to make the defenders of the present Roman church blush at the insincerity of their great annalist, who makes this emperor to have been a perfect block, not past his A B C^d, whom one of their own popes (who lived in the next age to him, and is sainted by them) makes equal (to say no more) unto St. Chrysostom, and the greatest bishops that have been in the church.

I might add the praises which pope Gregory the Great gives of him in many places: but I shall rather observe how he in the latter end of this age concurs with him and with the forenamed councils in this opinion, that no other faith but this was to be admitted. For giving an account of his faith^e, as the manner was, upon his advancement to the papacy, and speaking of the four first general councils in so high a style, that he professed to receive and reverence them as the four books of the holy Gospel, he gives this reason for it: "because on these, as on a square stone, the structure of the holy faith ariseth, and the rule of every one's life and action consists: so that whosoever doth not hold this solid ground, although he appear a stone, yet he lies out of the building:" after which words he also professes his veneration of the fifth council, and approves of all that they ordained.

^c Conc. vi. act. 4. [Mansi, tom. xi. col. 270.]

^d Ad. an. 528. n. 2. [tom. ix. p. 390.] 551. n. 2. [tom. x. p. 64.] and

many other places.

^e L. i. epist. 24. [ed. Ben. epist. 25. tom. ii. col. 515.]

This custom (in the Roman church particularly) of giving an account of their faith to their brethren when they were newly advanced to the priesthood, is mentioned by pope Gelasius^g, and seems to have been begun upon occasion of the great factions which were raised against the council of Chalcedon. Whereupon Childerick, king of France, as soon as Pelagius was advanced to the see of Rome upon the death of Vigilius, (whose sentence had been condemned as heretical in the fifth council,) desired to know if he held the definition of the council of Chalcedon, (which contained the Nicene, Constantinopolitan, and Ephesine faith.) Unto which he answered, in a letter which is in the body of the canon law^h, that he received the definitions of the four general councils concerning the catholic faith; and then having rehearsed the Creed, “I believe in one Lord, Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, viz. the Father Almighty,” &c., he thus concludes: “This therefore is my faith, and the hope which is in me by the gift of the mercy of God; of which St. Peter commands us to be ready to answer to every one who asks a reason or an account of us.”

From which it appears sufficiently that they had no other account to give of their faith in those days than that which we now give in our church; who believe all that they did then, and believe, as they did, that nothing more is necessary to be believed.

But it will be useful if I give a brief account also of the sense of the following ages in this matter. And in the seventh age pope Agatho, before mentioned, sent a synodical epistle (from himself and 125 bishops assembled at Rome) to the sixth general council, held also at Constantinople, in which there is a confession of their faith, (which they say they were taught by the apostolical and evangelical tradition,) which consists of no more articles than are in the foregoing creeds. It is inserted into the acts of that general councilⁱ, wherein those

^g Epist. 2. ad Laurentium episc. [Mansi, Concill. tom. viii. col. 10.]

^h Decret. pars 2. causa xxv. q. 1. c. x. [The preliminary letter alone to Childeric or Childebert is given in the Decretum of Gratian, (col. 1567.) The profession of faith

which follows it is contained among the letters and decrees of pope Pelagius in the Concilia.—Mansi, tom. ix. col. 728. Labbe, tom. vi. col. 480.]

ⁱ Sess. iv. Sextæ Syn. [Mansi, tom. xi. col. 989.]

creeds were again recited and confirmed in the same words and under the same penalties as in the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon : with a severe prohibition of so much as a *καινοφωνία*, ‘ a new manner of speech,’ or invention of a word, to the subversion of what was then determined.

Which was done more largely in the council immediately following, called *Πενθέκτη*^k, (being a kind of supplement to the former sitting in the same place,) where it was decreed, in the very first canon, that the faith delivered by the ministers of the word, *τῶν θεοκρίτων ἀποστόλων*, ‘ the divinely chosen apostles,’ who were eyewitnesses to him, should be preserved *ἀκαινοτόμητον*, ‘ without any innovation, immutably and inviolably.’ And then they ratify distinctly the decrees of the Nicene council, and the other five following general councils, which they name in order, with the occasion of them : and conclude with these words ; “ We neither intend to add any thing at all to what was formerly defined, nor to take away any thing ; nor can we by any means do it^l.”

In these two councils pope Honorius was condemned as an heretic : which I mention only for this reason ; that the ground of his condemnation was, because he had consented to the defiling of the “ undefiled rule of apostolical tradition,” viz. the Creed. They are the words of pope Leo the Second^m, who, receiving the acts of the sixth synod, which were transmitted to him, anathematized Honorius, because he “ had not adorned that apostolical church with the doctrine of apostolical tradition.”

In the next age (which was the eighth after Christ) the second council at Nice, which set up the worship of images, passed the same condemnation upon him : and making mention of the six foregoing councilsⁿ, they confirm and establish all that had been delivered from the beginning ; only they fraudulently add, to bring in their image worship, “ whether written or unwritten.” Which made the first alteration in the doctrine of

^k [Sive Quinisext. in Trullo, ibid. col. 936.]

^l [Col. 940.]

^m [Ad Ervigium, regem Hispaniæ.— Mansi, tom. xi. col. 1057. The epistle is proved unquestionably

spurious, even by its own testimony.

See the note of the editor of the Concilia, and Baronius, A. D. 683, n. 21. tom. xii. p. 63.]

ⁿ Act. vii. [Mansi, tom. xiii. col. 729.]

the church; all the foregoing councils having derived their faith wholly from the Scriptures. As the following council at Frankfort did, where, as the worshipping of images was condemned^o, so the holy Scriptures were highly extolled, in words which signified they thought them their only safe directors. The thirtieth chapter of the second book of the *Capitulare* of Charles the Great abounds with such expressions as these, “The Scripture is a treasure that wants no good, but is redundant in all that good is.” And in the beginning of the third book, he and the fathers there assembled give an account of their faith in a creed, which they entitle, “A confession of the catholic faith which we have received from the holy fathers, which we hold and believe with a pure heart.” It is that in St. Hierom’s works, inscribed *Symboli explanatio ad Damasum I. p.*, which they thus subscribe, “This is the true integrity of the catholic tradition of faith, which we believe and confess with a sincere heart, &c. This is the true faith, this confession we preserve and hold; which whosoever keeps whole and undefiled, he shall have everlasting salvation.”

Thus far therefore they were not got beyond the first creed, of which this is the explanation. Nor was John Damascene himself advanced any further, but confined his belief to what is contained in the law and the prophets, apostles and evangelists, οὐδὲν περαιτέρω τούτων ἐπιζητοῦντες^q, ‘seeking for nothing beyond these.’ For since God is good and envies nobody, he concludes “that he hath revealed there all that is profitable for us, and concealed only those things we are not able to bear. And therefore let us love,” saith he, “these things, let us abide in them; not removing the eternal boundaries, nor going beyond the divine tradition.”

Which they seem to have preserved without exceeding the ancient limits in the beginning of the ninth age. For in a council at Mentz^r care is taken for teaching the people the Creed (which they call *signaculum fidei*, ‘the seal of faith’) and the Lord’s Prayer; for which end they are required to send their children to school, or to the monasteries, or their parish

^o [Can. 2. Mansi, tom. xiii. col. 909.]

^p [Opp. Hieron. tom. xi. col. 145.]

^q L. I. Orthod. Fid. cap. 1. [tom. i. p. 124 A.]

^r An. 813. can. xlv. [Mansi, tom. xiv. col. 74.]

priests, that they might rightly learn the catholic faith and the Lord's Prayer.

Hitherto therefore the catholic faith was contained in the common creed, which had been from the beginning. But towards the latter end of that age, the council of Constantinople^s (which the Roman church calls the eighth general council) began to talk of the *regulæ patrum*, the 'rules of the fathers,' (instead of the ancient word *regula fidei*, the 'rule of faith,' which is the Apostles' Creed,) and called them the secondary oracles^t: and therefore professed not only to "hold all that the catholic church received from the apostles and the general councils, but from any father or great doctor in the church." Which was the ready way to change the faith of the church, and to turn particular men's opinions into matter of common belief; though no new article was as yet put into the ancient creed.

The two next ages are acknowledged to be so barbarous by the writers of the Roman church, that they are ashamed of them; and in some collections they have made of the councils there is not so much as one mentioned in the tenth age.

And in the following there were so many frivolous things debated, and such corruptions crept into the Christian doctrine, that they run on very fast to the introducing a new creed into the church.

Yet this is remarkable, that in the time of Thomas Aquinas, who flourished in the thirteenth century, the Scripture still continued the only rule of faith, and the Apostles' Creed a sufficient summary of the faith therein contained. For in the resolution of this doubt, why should articles of faith be put in the Creed, since the Scripture is "the rule of faith, to which it is not lawful to add, or from it to subtract;" his answer is^u, that the truth of faith is diffusely, and after divers manners, and sometimes obscurely, contained in Scripture; so that long study and exercise is required to find out the truth of faith there, which they that have abundance of business have not leisure to use. "And therefore it was necessary that out of the sentences of holy Scripture something manifest and clear

^s An. 869. Act. 10. Can. i. [Mansi, tom. xvi. col. 160.]

^t ["Secunda eloquia."]

^u Secunda 2dæ. Q. 1. Art. 9. ad primum. [tom. xxii. p. 9.]

should be summarily gathered, which should be propounded unto all to be believed: which truly is not added to the holy Scripture, but rather taken out of the holy Scripture."

And resolving next of all that doubt, "there is one faith, (as the apostle saith ^x,) but many creeds," his answer is *is*, that in all the creeds the same truth of faith is taught. "But it was necessary the people should there be instructed more diligently in the truth of faith where errors sprung up, lest the faith of the simple should be corrupted by heretics. And this was the cause why it was needful to set forth more creeds; which differ in no other thing but this, that those things are explained more fully in one which are contained implicitly in another."

To the same purpose many other of that sort of writers declare their sense in the following ages.

And this also is worthy of great remark, that no longer ago than at the council of Florence, begun 1438, (which the Greeks call the eighth general council,) the authority of the above named Ephesine canon, about holding to the Nicene Creed, was pressed with great earnestness by the Greeks upon the Latins there assembled. For they said it was by no means lawful to add *μήτε συλλαβήν, μήτε λέξιν, μήτε ῥήμα*^z, 'not so much as a syllable, nor a phrase, nor a word:' and laid such a weight upon it as to affirm, "No man will accuse that faith of imperfection unless he be mad^a." And they likewise backed it with a passage in a letter of pope Celestine to Nestorius^b, where he saith, "Who is not to be judged worthy of an anathema, that either adds or takes away? *καὶ γὰρ ἡ πίστις ἡ παραδοθεῖσα παρὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων, οὔτε πρόσθήκη, οὔτε μείωσις ἀπαιτεῖ*: 'for that faith which was delivered by the apostles requires neither addition nor diminution.'"

Unto which the Roman bishops had nothing to reply, but that the canon did not forbid another exposition *σύμφωνον τῇ ἀληθείᾳ*, 'consonant to the truth' in that Creed; but only *διαφορὰν καὶ ἐναντιότητα*, 'any thing that was different or contrary to it^c.' Both these they acknowledge to be prohibited in those words, "No man shall bring in another faith than that at Nice,

^x Ephes. iv.

^y Ib. ad Secundum. [p. 9.]

^z Tom. xiii. Lab. Sess. x. p. 162.

^a Ib. p. 163. [col. 637 C.]

^b Ib. p. 167. [col. 641 E.]

^c Ib. p. 167. [col. 641 D.]

δηλονότι ἐναντίαν, ἢ μαχομένην, ἢ διαφέρουσαν, ἢ ἀλλοτρίαν ἢ ξένην ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθοῦς πίστεως, that is, ‘contrary, or opposite, or different, or diverse, or strange from the true faith.’” Where, it is remarkable, a different, another faith is acknowledged to be forbidden, as well as a contrary. Nay, they acknowledge that none but a general council could make so much as *ἑτέραν ἔκθεσιν*, ‘another explication’ of the articles of that Creed, though not different from it.

In the Creed of the Apostles, that is, there are some things contained implicitly (as Thomas Aquinas you heard speaks), and being virtually there, either in the letter or the sense, may be drawn from thence by evident consequence, (such as the Deity of Christ, his two natures, the catholic church, which was included in those words, “I believe the holy church,” as this article is expressed in the old Roman Creed and the like,) and yet such an explication these fathers confessed could by no man, no assembly of men, less than an œcumenical council, be lawfully made and imposed upon the church. For which they quote Aquinas, (whom they call *ὁ ἅγιος Θωμάς*^d.) that there never was *ἀνάπτυξις ἐν τῷ συμβόλῳ*, an ‘explication of the Creed,’ but in an œcumenical council: and he speaks of any Creed whatsoever which was common in the church.”

And therefore, in conclusion, they absolutely deny that the Latin church had added any thing to the creed. “For the Nicene and the Constantinopolitan Creed are both one: so that the one being read, the other is understood: for though they differ in words, they agree in sense and in truth.” And the like they affirm of all other creeds; and thereby answer the objection that they had added a word to the creed about the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son: which is true, they confessed, with respect to the words, but not with respect to the sense. For still the creed remains *ἐν καὶ ταυτόν, εἰ καὶ διαφέρει τοῖς ῥήμασιν*^e. ‘one and the same, though it differ in the words.’ And therefore it follows it was not properly an addition, but one and the same thing, *ἢ τῆς ταυτότητος ἔκθεσις*, ‘or the exposition of the very selfsame thing.’

All which I have set down thus largely, to show that thus

^d Ib. p. 163. [col. 637 A.]

^e Ib. p. 170. [col. 644.]

far therefore all things continued as they had done from the beginning ; that is, notwithstanding the new opinions there were in the church, there was no new creed made, no new article added to the creed ; nothing but what had been so at the first made necessary to salvation.

Which is the last thing I observe, that till the conclusion of the council of Trent, that is, till a little more than an hundred years ago, there were no other creeds but those which we confess and believe in this church ; which are the Apostles' Creed expounded, not enlarged by any new articles. But then indeed pope Pius IV., in pursuance of the council's order, framed another confession of faith, consisting of no less than twelve new articles added to the old, never heard of in any creed throughout the whole church till this time. And it must be called and esteemed a new faith : and it makes that to be a new church which falsely calls itself the ancient catholic apostolic church of Christ. For it is none of these, neither ancient, nor catholic, nor apostolic ; but new, Roman, Tridentine church, derived, I mean, from the Roman bishops at Trent.

It will be fit, I think, to set down this new creed, that the reader may compare it with those I have shown were hitherto the entire faith of the catholic church. It may be found in several of our writers, but I wish it were in everybody's hand, and therefore take the pains to transcribe it for the benefit of those into whose hands this book shall come.

POPE PIUS'S CREED.

“ I, *N.* believe and profess with a firm faith all and every thing contained in the symbol of faith which the holy Roman church uses ; viz. I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, &c., to the end of that we call the Nicene Creed.” After which immediately follow the new articles in these words :

“ The apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and the rest of the observations and constitutions of the same church, I most firmly admit and embrace.

“ I also admit (or receive) the holy Scripture according to that sense which the holy mother church (to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense) hath held and doth hold : nor will I

ever understand and interpret it otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the fathers.

“ I profess also that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the new law instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary to the salvation of mankind, though not all of them necessary to every man ; viz. baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony ; and that they confer grace : and that of these, baptism, confirmation, and orders, cannot be repeated without sacrilege.

“ I likewise receive and admit all the received and approved rites of the catholic church in the solemn administration of all the abovesaid sacraments.

“ All and every thing which was defined and declared about original sin and justification by the most holy council of Trent I embrace and receive.

“ I profess likewise, that in the mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and dead : and that in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ : and that there is a conversion made of the whole substance of bread into his body, and of the whole substance of wine into his blood ; which conversion the catholic church calls Transubstantiation.

“ I confess also, that under either kind (or species) only whole and entire Christ and the true sacrament is received.

“ I constantly hold there is a purgatory, and that the souls there detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful.

“ As also that the saints who reign together with Christ are to be worshipped and invocated, and that they offer prayers to God for us ; and that their relics are to be venerated.

“ I most firmly assert that the images of Christ and the mother of God, the always-virgin, as also of other saints, are to be had and retained ; and due honour and veneration to be bestowed on them.

“ I affirm also that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in his church, and that their use is most wholesome to Christian people.

“ I acknowledge the holy catholic and apostolic Roman church to be the mother and mistress of all churches : and I promise

and swear true obedience to the bishop of Rome, successor of St. Peter the prince of apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ.

“All the rest also, delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and œcumenical councils, especially by the most holy synod of Trent, I receive and profess without doubt: and likewise all things contrary, and whatsoever heresies condemned, rejected, and anathematized by the church, I in like manner condemn, reject, and anathematize.

“This true catholic faith, without which no man can be saved, which at present I freely profess and truly hold, I will most constantly retain and confess entire and inviolable (by God’s help) to my last breath; and take care, as much as lies in me, that it be held, taught, and preached by my subjects, or those whose care belongs to me in my office.

“I the aforesaid *N.* promise, vow, and swear; so help me God and these holy Gospels.”

This bull (as they call it) bears date on the ides of November, 1564, and concludes in the usual manner, with threats of the indignation of God, and of his blessed apostles St. Peter and Paul, against all that shall infringe or oppose it^f.

And every reader, I suppose, discerns that this is not merely a confession of faith, but likewise a solemn oath. And so the title of it bears, “A bull concerning a form of an oath of profession of faith.” Which oath all ecclesiastical persons, whether secular or regular, as they distinguish them, and all military orders are bound to take.

And it is as easy to observe that this is perfectly new, both as an oath and as a profession of faith. Never was there any such creed imposed before, or so much as framed, much less tied upon men by an oath. For when these fathers met at Trent, and were to make a profession of faith by rehearsing the creed which the Roman church uses^g, (so the words are,) they could find none to profess but the Nicene Creed; no larger creed was in use, no, not there in the Roman church: but these very men who afterwards turned new creed-makers were forced to be content with that.

And therefore this new profession is most impudently pre-

^f [Bull. Rom. tom. iv. part 2. pp. 203, 204. Cherubini, tom. ii. p. 128.]

^g Sess. iii. [Concil. Trident. per Phil. Labbe, al. 24. et inter Concill. tom. xiv. col. 744.]

tended to be the true catholic faith : being in no sense catholic, neither as to place nor time. For it was nowhere used till they made it, no, not there ; nor is now every where believed : and was not all believed in any church for above 1500 years, nor now used in that church itself when they admit members into the catholic church by baptism ; but they are put into a state of salvation by believing, as before, the old Nicene Creed alone.

Which is a direct contradiction to their new creed, which they make necessary to salvation, but can never show to be contained implicitly in the old. For it is as impossible to draw water out of a pumice, as to extract out of the Apostles' Creed the doctrine of transubstantiation, worshipping of images, seven sacraments, the traditions and other constitutions used in the Roman church. Which was never so much as thought to be the mother and mistress of all churches, or to have power to impose new articles upon the whole church : especially such large ones as take in all the definitions of that council of Trent, which they themselves are not agreed to this day how to expound.

Nor had that synod, if these articles could have been shown to be contained in the old Creed, any power to explain it, and declare them, (according to what they confessed at the Florentine council,) being far from a general council ; no, not of these western parts of the world.

And clearly showed itself to be but a factious party in the church, by that very explication which they made of this article, "the holy catholic church ;" which they thus expound, "the holy catholic apostolic Roman church, the mother and mistress of all churches." For it is certain the apostles could not intend the Roman church should be comprehended under the catholic church, any more than every other church which was then or should be hereafter, because it was not in being ; there was no Roman church at all, when notwithstanding the church was catholic.

And hereby salvation is impiously confined to the Roman church alone, by making the catholic church of no larger extent than that.

And this against the resolution of their greatest doctors, who think it no matter of faith to be persuaded that the apostolic

see is fixed to Rome. Which Bellarmine^h proves from hence, because neither Scripture nor tradition affirm it. Nay, if Christ had bidden Peter to place his see at Rome, he doth not think it would follow that he placed it there immovably. And therefore no man, according to their own sense, is bound to believe the apostolical church cannot be separated from the Roman; which if it should happen, and the apostolical see be removed, suppose to Paris, the creed must be altered again, and it must run thus: "I believe the holy catholic and apostolic Parisian church, the mother and mistress of all churches."

In which latter part of the exposition to this article, they force men to swear to a downright falsehood. For if the Roman church be the mother of all churches, she must be the mother of her grandmother the church of Jerusalem. And it is no truer that she is the mistress of all churches; for all churches were not taught the faith by her, nor do they own her authority over them.

But it is time to draw to an end of this matter.

We in this church of England have always professed and preserved a true reverence to the four first general councils. One, or rather two, of which hath forbidden under the greatest penalties any man to produce, or compose, or offer, any other faith besides that established by the fathers at Nice: which Theodoretⁱ in innumerable places calls *ἐκθεσις*, 'the exposition of faith,' and *πίστις ἐκτεθεισα*, 'the faith expounded,' the apostolical faith explained.

And therefore, even for this reason alone, we cannot receive the creed of this council at Trent, which is manifestly *another faith*, added to the confession of the Nicene Creed: which old creed it is madness (as the Greeks at Florence said) to think insufficient. For it is to think they were all damned for 1500 years and more, who knew nothing beyond this necessary to be believed; which no man in his wits can believe.

For it is contrary to the very faith itself, which teaches us, as Tertullian speaks, "to believe this in the first place, that there is nothing to be believed beyond this." And we believe so with the greatest reason, because to admit any other ar-

^h L. iv. de Pont. Romano, cap. 4.
[tom. ii. col. 812.]

ⁱ L. i. Hist. Eccles. c. 7; l. ii. c. 22; l. iv. c. 2.

icles of faith is to make endless schisms in the church, as to believe contrary articles is to fall into dangerous heresies. We know not where to stay, if we rest not here; for by the same authority that made these, more additions may be made continually without end.

There is therefore no such authority in the church that can do this; but that church which pretends to it hath thereby forfeited the authority which otherwise it might have had. As the church of Rome hath done: which in the conclusion of that council contradicted what it asserted in the beginning. For there, in its entrance, as I observed ^k, they thinking it necessary, according to the example of the fathers, to make in the very first place a confession of their faith, and pretending to arm themselves thereby, as with a shield, against all heresies, they repeat the creed, *quo sancta Romana ecclesia utitur*, 'which the holy Roman church useth,' as "that principle in which all that profess the faith of Christ necessarily agree, and the firm and only foundation against which the gates of hell shall not prevail." And they think fit to express it *totidem verbis*, 'in so many words,' as it is read in all churches; and then they say the Nicene Creed, and not one word more.

Which is a plain confession that this was the faith of all Christians, and no more, till that time; that it was the only firm foundation; that which was read in all churches; in which all agree; the shield against all heresies; the whole faith then used in the Roman church. And therefore with what conscience could they make such a division and miserable destruction in the Christian world as they have done, by a vast number of new articles, in which all Christians neither do nor can agree, and which were not to be found in their own creed before?

No reason can be given of this but the immense ambition of that church to give law to all others. Unto which we cannot with a good conscience submit; especially when they impose such a heavy yoke as this belief. Which is the true makebate between them and us, the manifest cause of that fearful schism, which they, not we, have made, by altering the true catholic faith, and church, and communion into a Roman.

^k Sess. iii. Decretum de Symbolo fidei. [Labbe, tom. xiv. col. 744.]

This is the true distinction between them and us. We are catholics, they are Romans. We believe the catholic faith of all Christians, they (as distinguished from us) believe the Roman faith, which none believe but themselves. We believe that which hath been ever believed, they believe that which was never believed till yesterday, in comparison with the ancient faith. Ours is the belief of the whole body of Christian people, theirs the belief of a sect.

For the truth I have shown, which ought to be supported in the church, is nothing else but those uncontroverted mysteries of godliness contained in the Apostles' Creed; which I have proved to be the only catholic doctrines embraced by all churches whatsoever. They being not the doctrines of a sect merely, but in which we, the Roman, the Greek, the Ethiopian, the Syrian, and all other Christians are perfectly agreed.

There are particular men, and some small companies of them here and there, who understand some few of these doctrines otherwise than they ought; but there is no national church of any country but entertains all these entirely and sincerely as they have been expounded from the beginning, according to the Nicene Creed, (which by the way is the only creed the Abassines have, that Creed called the Apostles' being not found among them¹;) and thereby are members of Christ's body, though they do not believe other doctrines, which are only boldly called catholic by the Roman church, but are not truly so, but only particular doctrines of their own church, in which the catholic faith and church is not concerned: as they themselves confess by admitting persons into the catholic church (which I noted before) unto remission of sins, and eternal life, without any other belief but that which we profess.

Which makes us think that we might more safely swear they themselves believe this to be sufficient, than they swear, as they do, that none can be saved without the new faith, which they have added to the ancient Creed.

I have been the larger in this second observation, because it is of great moment for the settling of our minds in peace about right belief; and this being settled, I may sooner dispatch those that follow.

¹ Ludolph. *Hist. Æthiop.* l. 3. c. 5. num. 20. [P. 272. of the English translation, fol. 1684.]

III. And the next is, that these therefore, and these alone, are the fundamental truths upon which our religion and the very church itself is built.

By fundamental truths or doctrines, we mean such catholic principles as are necessarily to be distinctly believed by every Christian; whereby they being built as it were upon them become a church.

Such truths no doubt there are, for the church being called here the *house of God* must have a foundation; which foundation is either personal or doctrinal. The personal foundation is Christ, the chief corner stone, and the apostles and prophets as ministers of his, who laid this foundation^m. The doctrinal are those grand truths taught by them, which make up our faith in Christ. That *common faith*, as it is calledⁿ, that faith which is *alike precious in all*^o, the *first principles of the oracles of God*^p, (or as it is literally in the Greek, “the elements of the beginning of the oracles of God,”) the *principles of the doctrine of Christ*, or “the word of the beginning of Christ^q, the form or draught, the breviary or summary” (as it may be translated) of *sound words or doctrines*^r, *the faith once*, or at once, *delivered to the saints*^s, and particularly *committed to the trust*^t of those who were to instruct others in the *common salvation*.

And what can those truths be, but those great doctrines contained in the creed, which it appears from what I have said the apostles left in all the churches which they planted? For we find these were in every church, as Irenæus assures us; and these altogether one, as Tertullian speaks, and the immovable, un-reformable rule of faith: and therefore may thence conclude they were that *παρακαταθηκῆ* which St. Paul deposited with^u Timothy, that *good* or that *fair*, most excellent *thing deposited* with him, or commended (as an ancient writer translates it) to his trust, to be preserved by him; the Creed, as Cyril^x of Hierusalem pithily speaks, being *ἀνακεφαλαίωσις σύντομος τῶν ἀναγκαίων δογμάτων*, ‘a brief sum of necessary doctrines.’

In some sense it is true there is nothing revealed in holy

^m Ephes. ii. 20.

ⁿ Titus i. 4.

^t 1 Tim. vi. 20.

^o 2 Pet. i. 1.

^p Heb. v. 12.

^u 1 Tim. vi. 20.

^q Heb. vi. 1.

^r 2 Tim. i. 13.

^x Catech. iv. p. 24. edit. Paris.

^s Jude 3.

1640. [§ 3. p. 52 D.]

Scripture but it may be called fundamental, if we respect only the divine authority by which it comes unto us; upon which account nothing there delivered may be denied, but ought to be believed with all humility, when the knowledge of it is offered to us. But if we respect the matter and moment of all things contained therein, we cannot but see there is a great difference, and that the knowledge of every thing there is not equally necessary; but we may be truly pious, though we should be ignorant of some of them. For who can think, for instance, that it is of the same necessity to be able to give an account of the genealogy of our Saviour, (mentioned Matt. i. Luke iii.) and to believe that he is the *Son of God made flesh* for our salvation?

That foundation therefore which was laid in every church, (as it was at Corinth, 1 Cor. iii. 11.) were such doctrines concerning Jesus Christ, as every Christian was bound to learn, and actually believe: in other points it sufficed, if they had a pious preparation of mind to learn and believe any thing revealed in the Scriptures, when it was sufficiently cleared to them.

Now these two things, that there are such fundamental truths or first principles, and that they are no other than those contained in the Creed, ought to be asserted and maintained for the honour and glory of God our Saviour, which is much concerned herein. For it tends much to the glory of the Almighty Lover of souls, that it should be believed he doth not lay equal weight upon all truths, nor made them alike necessary to be received for the obtaining his favour and grace; and that it should be certainly known, and be without controversy and question, what those truths are which he expects should be received and heartily embraced in order to our salvation. For otherwise the most of Christian people must necessarily perish, who either are not capable of knowing more than these great things, or have not the means of knowing more, or not with any certainty, but must be content to rest here. As well they may, for why was the Creed called by the name of the Symbol of Faith, but because it was the mark or sign which might serve to distinguish true Christians who embraced it from infidels or misbelievers who did not receive it, or were defective in it?

This is the true reason of the name of *symbol*, which is as

much as *tessera et signaculum, quo inter fideles et perfidos discernitur*, ‘the token, mark or badge, whereby the faithful were known and distinguished from the perfidious.’ And therefore it comprehends briefly all the fundamental points of faith, else it could not be a distinctive note or character, sufficient to sever right believers from infidels, heretics, and apostates.

But so it was, that they who owned this Creed were owned for Christians, they who did not confess it were rejected; for by a man’s answer to this, who was examined, he was discovered (just as a soldier is by the word) *si hostis sit, an socius*, (as both Isidore and Ruffinus before him speaks,) ‘whether he were an enemy, or a fellow-soldier of Jesus Christ.’ To this test alone every one was brought, by this touchstone he was tried, whether he were a Christian of the right stamp, or a false adulterate coin, (as the ancients speak,) which is a demonstration that they looked upon this as a perfect summary of the catholic faith; “sufficient of itself (as you heard Athanasius^z speaks) for the overthrow of all impiety, and for the establishment of piety in Christ.” Nay, this sense of the word *symbol* is owned by the Roman Catechism itself, *cap. 1. quæst. 3.*

IV. From whence it necessarily follows, that no man can justly be called a heretic who heartily embraces and steadfastly holds to this faith. How should he, when there is no catholic or fundamental article of Christian truth but he is persuaded of it, and professes it? no part of that Creed, which is the sign, the mark, and note, as you have heard, whereby Christians are approved and discerned from misbelievers, as well as unbelievers, which he doubts of, and doth not acknowledge?

It is a very lamentable thing that the imputation of heresy should be so frequent and familiar among Christians upon the account of different opinions only, which they are passionately in love withal, though no parts of the catholic faith. They of the church of Rome especially are so foully guilty of this, and so strangely fiery, that they not only account us heretics, but look upon us as little better than infidels, nay, seem to have more kindness for Jews, which they tolerate among them when they will not suffer us; who believe all the creeds that were

^y Maximus Taur. de Trad. Symb. ^z Epist. ad Epictetum. [See
[Max. Bibl. vet. Patr. tom. vi. p. above, p. 97.]
42 C.]

known in the church for above 1500 years. For they call themselves catholics in distinction from us, whom they will not allow to be members of the catholic church, though we have a clearer title to it than themselves. For I have shown that we unfeignedly believe whatsoever is truly catholic, and reject nothing but what is merely Roman.

We embrace that form of faith which they themselves say^b was composed by the apostles for this very end, that all might “think and speak the very same thing, and that there might be no schisms among them whom they had called to the unity of faith; but they might be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

It is not our fault then that there is not this unity and perfect agreement, for we steadfastly hold that which should thus link us all together: but it is their fault who have forsaken this apostolical method, by making another form of faith, which, instead of uniting, hath broken Christians all in pieces. For we cannot agree to that, because it doth not contain catholic truths, which, according to Vincentius’s rule, have been held “every where, always, and by all;” but are the tenents only of a particular church, which hath no power to lay any other foundation than that which was long ago laid in the truly catholic church.

Which catholic church we believe better than themselves, who appropriate the name of catholics to their own party, and thereby restrain the catholic church to those of their opinion. This certainly was the heresy of the Donatists, who esteemed all other Christians to be no better than pagans^c, and were reprobated by the true catholics, just as we now answer for ourselves, in such words as these, “Do you call one a pagan after the profession of the faith? Can he be a pagan who hath believed in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?” For that is a short creed which comprehends all the articles of the Christian faith, as St. Hilary^d discourses, who not only calls this *forma fidei certa*, ‘the certain form of faith,’ but (having mentioned those words, *Go, baptize them in the name of the*

^b Catech. Rom. pars 1. cap. 1. q. 2. [Præfat. Catechismi ad parochos, ex decreto concilii Tridentini editi, § 11. p. 9. 8vo, Par. 1671.]

^c Optatus l. iii. Paris. 1631. [cap. xi. p. 68. ed. Dupin, fol. Par. 1702.]

^d L. 2. de Trinitate. [§ 5. tom. ii. col. 29.]

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,) asks this question, "What is there that is not contained in that same sacrament of human salvation? or what is there that remains or is obscure? All things are full and perfect, as coming from him that is full and perfect." And thus he concludes all his books on that subject with this prayer^e: "I beseech thee, preserve this undefiled religion of my faith, and grant me this voice of my conscience to the last breath, that what I professed in the symbol of my regeneration, being baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, I may always obtain, viz. I may adore thee our Father, and thy Son together with thee, and do honour to thy holy Spirit, who is of thee by thine only begotten. For he is a sufficient witness to faith, who said, *Father, all mine are thine, and thine are mine*, my Lord Jesus Christ, who remains in thee, and from thee, and with thee always God, who is blessed for ever and ever."

Which I the rather mention, because it serves to illustrate the prudence and charity of St. Austin and the rest of the Christian bishops of those days, who though they looked upon the Donatists as heretics, (in denying the church to be catholic by confining it to themselves,) yet distinguished them from such heretics as erred in the prime and most fundamental truths of our religion, about the divinity and the incarnation of our Christ, and such like. That is, they made a difference even in the articles of faith, and looked upon some as more fundamental than others; being of more importance, and of greater weight and moment; and therefore judged more mildly of them than they did of such as denied the Holy Trinity, or held any doctrines which impeached the glory of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost. And therefore they still called these Donatists brethren; they pitied them as men seduced by their guides, and professed sincere love and affection to them, whether they accepted it or no. Though such was the peevishness of that sect, that they abused this charity of good catholic Christians towards them, just as they of the church of Rome do our charity now. For from thence they took occasion to argue that they were in the right, even

^e Lib. xii. de Trin. [§ 57. col. 444.]

by the concessions of their adversaries; which justified both them and their heretical schism. "For you," said they, "can find no faults in our baptism, nor consequently in our faith, into which we baptize; for if you could, you would baptize those over again who come from us to you, as we baptize those again who come from you to us^f." Which is as much as to say, You allow there is a church and salvation among us, but we allow no church, no salvation among you; therefore it is safest for all to join with us, not with you.

Which is the very charm whereby they of the church of Rome endeavour now to work upon the spirits of simple people among us: though no wiser than this argument of a company of mad men would be, if they had so much cunning remaining as to say to us, We deny you to be men, but you allow us to be men; therefore we are fit for all men's society, not you, who are but a herd of beasts. And what St. Austin answers to the Donatists is a full answer to the present Romanists; which is this in short^g, (for it is besides my business to do more than mention these things,) "When we speak favourably of you, it is for the sake of what you have of ours, not for what you have of your own: let that which you have of ours be set aside, and we approve of nothing at all among you."

But I will not further enlarge upon this, nor say much of the next; which is very plain.

V. They therefore who condemn those as heretics, who excommunicate them, and pronounce anathemas against them that believe the whole catholic faith, are the great disturbers of the Christian world, and the true cause of the divisions and breaches that are in the body of Christ. And who they are that do thus is visible to every eye: the church of Rome having thought fit not to rest satisfied with the simplicity of those often mentioned catholic fundamental truths, which are without controversy and unquestionable; but, as if that faith which the old Christians thought complete they take to be defective, have adjoined as many more new articles to the old body, and that under the pain of damnation if we do not believe them.

^f August. lib. ii. contra lit. Petilian, cap. ult. [tom. ix. col. 296.] Donatistas, cap. 10. [tom. ix. col. 87 B.]

^g Lib. i. de Baptismo contra

I have told you what they are, and if you look them over again, you will find that upon those have all the contests risen between us and them. The necessary fundamental truths which constitute the church (which was built upon no other for many ages) are on both sides unquestioned: but because we question, or rather deny those which they would impose, which we are certain are no part of the Christian doctrine, they call us heretics. That is, because we will not yield obedience to their usurped authority, because we cannot believe their new inventions to be catholic and fundamental doctrines. Here is the true reason of all the miserable ruptures that are in this part of the world: nay, this is the just grievance and complaint of all Christians (who know any thing of these matters) but themselves alone.

VI. And their guilt is herein the greater, because the best learned among themselves have confessed these additions to the Creed to be doubtful opinions; unnecessary and superfluous doctrines; novelties unknown to the ancient church. Concerning every one of which (three things) our authors have given the clearest evidence.

I. The first of them (the doubtfulness of those doctrines) appears in this, that there is not only variety, but contrariety of judgment about them, in their own church: which argues plainly great perplexity and uncertainty. Of which there needs no other proof (as Dr. Potter^h observes) but the famous books of Bellarmine; who in the entrance upon every question there stated gives an account of the contentions and contradictions of those who have written upon it among themselves. And at this day they are not better agreed in the explication of several points in difference between usⁱ, particularly about

^h Answer to Charity mistaken, p. 69. ["Want of charitie justly charged on all such Romanists as dare (without truth or modesty) affirme, that Protestancie destroyeth salvation: or An answer to a late Popish pamphlet intituled Charity mistaken, &c.: by Christopher Potter, D. D., Chaplaine to his Ma^{ty} in ordinarie, and Provost of Queens Colledge in Oxford,—the second

edition revised and enlarged," p. 70. 8vo, Lond. 1634.]

ⁱ See the late Answer to the bishop of Meaux's Exposition of Faith. ["An Exposition of the doctrine of the Church of England, in the several articles proposed by M. de Meaux (Bossuet), late bishop of Condom," &c. arts. 2 and 4. Written by William Wake, subsequently archbishop of Canterbury, but first

the worship given to images, and the invocation of saints; which some of their greatest doctors mollify and sweeten (as they do other points) into downright heresy, as such explanations are accounted by others.

2. The very same may be clearly shown out of their own authors, and hath been demonstrated by our divines concerning the second thing, that those doctrines are not necessary, but superfluous. For the Roman Catechism^j itself having observed that their ancestors had most wisely distributed all that belongs to saving doctrine into these four heads, (for the help of the people's understanding and memory,) the Apostles' Creed, the sacraments, the Decalogue and the Lord's Prayer, immediately confesses, concerning the first, "that all things which are to be held by the discipline of the Christian faith, whether they have respect to the knowledge of God, or to the creation and government of the world, or to the redemption of mankind, or belong to the rewards of the good, and the punishments of the bad, are contained in the doctrine of the Creed." From whence this question naturally arises, how come so many new articles to be made necessary, if all things belonging to the Christian faith be contained in the Apostles' Creed? I can see no reason for it, but only to maintain the grandeur of the Roman church: for there is no more simply necessary for all to be believed, (as Bellarmine himself confesses^k;) but the articles of that Creed; and therefore the rest are superfluous, and ought to be discarded, as not so needful but that men may be saved without them.

3. And for the third, that they are mere novelties unknown to those in old time, there are the like confessions of ingenuous men amongst them. Æneas Sylvius, afterward pope Pius II., confesses^l, that before the time of the council of Nice little regard was had to the Roman church. Which is a plain contradiction to pope Pius the Fourth's article of new belief, that she is the mother and mistress of all churches: for none can

published anonymously in 4to, Lond. 1686; reprinted in Gibson's *Preservative*, vol. iii. p. 3-48. ed. fol. Lond. 1738. and vol. xii. p. 47. 8vo, Lond. 1848.]

^j Præfat. sect. 12.

^k Lib. iv. de Verbo Dei, cap. 11. [tom. i. col. 201.]

^l Epist. 288. ["Ante Concilium Nicænum, dum sibi quisque vivebat, et ad Romanam ecclesiam parvus habebatur respectus."—p. 802.]

doubt but they understood their duty in those days, and practised it also, to their betters, especially to a parent.

The same may be said of the doctrine of transubstantiation, which some schoolmen have said not to be very ancient: among which are Scotus^m and Gabriel Bielⁿ. They are the words of Suarez^o, unto whom many other testimonies may be added of the doctors of that church: particularly Alphonsus à Castro, who saith “the ancient writers spake very seldom of transubstantiation:” he should have said, not at all, for Cassander honestly acknowledges it to be a novelty^p.

The like is acknowledged of the sacrifice of the mass: which neither Thomas Aquinas, nor Gabriel Biel, long after him, believed to be proper or propitiatory; but give the same account that we do why the celebration of the sacrament is called a sacrament of Christ, viz. because the images of things are called by the names of the things which they represent, (for which St. Austin is quoted^q.) and because by this sacrament we are made partakers of the benefits of Christ's passion^r.

That purgatory was for a good while unknown, and but lately known to the whole church, is confessed by our bishop Fisher^s: who by the whole church means only the Latin church; for in the same place he saith, “To this day it is not believed by the Greeks.” The same he saith of indulgences; “which began with men's fears of purgatory.”

The same I might observe of the seven sacraments, and the

^m [In 4 Sent. Dist. 10. Quæst. 1. § ‘Quantum ergo,’ tom. viii. p. 501. et Dist. 11. Quæst. 3. p. 604.]

ⁿ [Lect. 41. in can. Miss. 4to, Lugd. 1542.]

^o Disput. tom. iii. [in part. 3. Summæ divi Thomæ, Disp. 50. Quæst. lxxv. Art. 5. p. 594.]

^p See a late Treatise of Transubstantiation, by an author of the Roman communion, part i. [“An historical Treatise written by an author of the communion of the church of Rome, touching Transubstantiation: wherein is made appear, that according to the principles of that church this doctrine cannot be an

article of faith.” 4to, Lond. 1687. Attributed to abp. Wake in Gee's Catalogue of works written against popery, p. 13.]

^q [“Solent imagines rerum earum nominibus appellari, quarum imagines sunt: sicut . . . cum intuentes tabulam aut parietem pictum dicimus, Ille Cicero est, et ille Salustius,” &c.—S. Aug. de Divers. ad Simpl. lib. ii. Quæst. 3. tom. vi. col. 116 C.]

^r Summæ par. iii. Quæst. 83. Artic. 1. ‘Respondeo.’ [Opp. tom. xxiv. p. 450.]

^s Roff. contra Luth. Art. 18. [col. 496. fol. Wiceb. 1597.]

rest of their articles ; but I will only observe the contradiction to which they swear in the very first new article, wherein they declare that they embrace apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and yet consent at the same time (by swearing to all that is decreed in the council of Trent) to administer the holy communion but in one kind; which for a thousand years and more (in some places for thirteen hundred years) was administered in both kinds every where, even in the Roman church, by an undoubted apostolical tradition, and ecclesiastical custom and practice: which continues in all other churches to this day.

Which observation evidently convinces them to be guilty of the most fearful sin, in cursing and damning those who do not receive these novel doctrines: though they faithfully embrace all the doctrines of the truly catholic faith, and had rather die than deny any part thereof.

But let us be of good comfort; we are safe enough, notwithstanding all these anathemas which they thunder out against us: for I have proved, that were these doctrines true, as they are certainly false, which they press upon us, yet we should not be heretics if we did not believe them; and so not fall, upon this account, under the sentence of damnation. Because it is only the denial of the great and fundamental truths that can make us incur such a danger: other truths there are of which we may be ignorant without danger of perishing, provided we still hold the foundation, and *keep the faith*, as the apostle speaks, with a life according to it.

They themselves therefore knew that these terrible anathemas are but bugbear words which they use to affright children withal; for they who can read what the wisest and best of them write will find that they confess these new articles to be superfluous, while they plainly say the Apostles' Creed contains all things necessary to salvation.

Thus Gregory of Valentia^t, “The articles of faith contained in the Creed are as it were the first principles of Christian faith—in which are comprised the sum of evangelical doctrine, which all are bound explicitly to believe.—Thus the fathers judge when they affirm this Creed was composed by the apostles, that all might have a short summary of those things which are

^t In secunda secundæ Disp. 2. Q. 7. [Opp. tom. iii. col. 96 sqq.]

to be believed, and are scatteredly contained in the Scriptures." Thus also writes Filiucius^u and a great many more, even the Trent Catechism itself, as I have shown before. So that we have nothing to do but to hold fast that which we have been taught from the beginning, and to make it the rule of our lives as well as of our faith.

And that now, I must tell you for a conclusion of this part of my discourse, is the grand truth of all, the main point of the Christian belief, that the intention of all divine truths and of faith itself is to make us truly godly. They can do us no service if they do not produce this effect.

Whence it is that in this very epistle of St. Paul he calls Christianity *the doctrine that is according unto godliness*^x, and a little after calls it *godliness*^y. *But godliness*, that is, the Christian religion, *with contentment is great gain*. And indeed we may well be contented with the Christian faith and hope, and think ourselves happy in such glorious expectations hereafter; nay, look upon ourselves as exceeding great gainers, whatsoever we lose here upon this account, if we lose not the hope of immortal life.

In the Epistle to Titus also, in the very first verse, he calls it *the truth which is after godliness*, which is the very truth that is the subject of my discourse, as appears by what follows when the apostle saith it is *a mystery of godliness*. Not a cunning device to get money to advance our worldly grandeur and pomp, much less a crafty artifice to excuse us from living well, or to palliate wickedness, and show us a way how to be saved though we live ungodly, (which is the great drift of too many doctrines wherewith the world is troubled,) but a wonderful contrivance of the wisdom of heaven, effectually to root out all impiety, to plant all manner of virtue in our hearts, and to take all kind of excuse from us if we do not become truly good.

Whence it is that the apostle describes Christian women in this Epistle to Timothy ii. 10, by this character, that they profess godliness. *Let them be adorned*, saith he, *as becomes women professing godliness, with good works*. Not merely professing the truth, or the faith, but *godliness*; which com-

^u [Quæst. moral. tract. xxii. cap. 1. § 12. tom. ii. p. 50.]

^x 1 Tim. vi. 3.

^y Verse 6.

prehends all Christian virtue; though if he had said professing *the truth*, it had been of the same import, because *that truth is godliness*.

Hence all the truths I have mentioned are called fundamental, not only because the church is built upon them, but because they are the foundation of all Christian practice, which ought to be superstructed upon them. And therefore let us neither be ignorant of this, nor let our knowledge of it be empty and idle, without effect. That is,

First, let us not be so foolish as to imagine we shall obtain salvation merely by being of a right belief, and holding the right faith. Which is not an unnecessary caution, for this seems to be the very business of a great many men in the world, to put men in hope of life eternal, if they do but quit that which they call heresy, and embrace the faith they propound unto them, though their hearts and lives remain just as they were before, without any real amendment. This is certainly not a *mystery of godliness*, but the very *mystery of iniquity*; not the wisdom of God, but the witchcraft of the flesh, the world, and the devil, to lead them securely into destruction.

But *we have not thus learned Christ*, as the same apostle speaks elsewhere^z; *if so be we have heard, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that we put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and that we be renewed in the spirit of our minds; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of truth*. Mark here what the truth is, *as it is in Jesus*, (that we may not be deceived by our own or others' lusts,) that is, in the Christian religion: it is that which teaches us to abandon all wickedness, and not to think of throwing a covering over it to hide it, but to put it off: that which renews us in the very spirit of our minds, which makes us new creatures, and really restores the divine image in us, in righteousness and sincere holiness.

Thus we have learned Christ, thus we are constantly taught in this church. And therefore,

Secondly, if the truth hath not this effect upon us, in vain do we pride ourselves in the name of orthodox believers. Upon

^z Ephes. iv. 20, 21.

such St. John hath passed this censure^a: *If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.* Where you may observe, by the way, there is a doing of the truth expected from us, and not merely believing it.

It was expected from the very heathen proportionable to what they knew, for they are accused by St. Paul upon this score, that they *held the truth of God in unrighteousness*^b. Some truth they knew, and it taught them to do better than they did, and their not doing so was their condemnation. And if natural truth taught them righteousness of life, much more doth this divine revelation which God hath made in Christ Jesus instruct us therein; and if they were found guilty for holding that truth in unrighteousness, much more shall we be found so for holding in the like wickedness these supernatural truths which we know only by a special grace of God, which hath revealed them unto us for this very purpose, to *teach us that denying ungodliness and all worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world*^c.

Which if we do not, mark the consequence; either we shall not *hold the truth*, or if we do, the truth will not save us, but only serve to condemn us.

Sometimes by living wickedly men lose the very truth, either in whole or in part, as the heathen, St. Paul there shows, did^d. Read the words, and you will not wonder if the same sad fate attend men's impiety now, which the truths of the gospel so directly oppose, that if they cannot prevail with men to leave their wickedness, their wickedness will prevail with them to leave the truth.

This belief, for instance, that Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God, who died for us, and rose again, will come to judge us, (which is the sum of Christianity,) is so manifestly against those sins which men commit against his laws, that if they be persuaded they shall be judged according to his gospel, it must needs make them very uneasy in their sins. Which therefore if they will not quit, their sins will tempt them to be rid of this belief, which disquiets and disturbs them in the enjoyment of those lusts on which they have set their heart.

^a 1 John i. 6.^b Rom. i. 18.^c 2 Tit. ii. 12.^d Rom. i. 21, 22, 23.

Or if it have not this effect, to make them wholly disbelieve the life and judgment to come, yet it tempts them to adulterate the Christian faith, (as too many Christians have done,) and to devise easier terms of happiness than the gospel propounds, inventing such a religion as will favour them in their sins, and comply with their inclinations to follow their foul lusts, and yet not perish eternally. And it is not hard to show, if this were a proper place for it, that abundance of false notions, if not all, which men have about faith, have sprung from this cause.

But suppose men do still hold the truth, though in unrighteousness, what will they get by it? since it will not save them, but only serve to condemn them. For this is a part of the evangelical truth, as you read in the place now named^e, that *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness*. And again we read in the next chapter of *the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, (or will not yield to evident convictions,) and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil^f, &c.*

Where you see there is an obedience to the truth expected from us, unto which if we will not submit, but *obey unrighteousness*, then that very truth tells us we must expect nothing but the inexpressible displeasure of the Almighty against every such refractory opposer of the truth which he should obey. There is no exception from this rule, for (as it there follows, verse 11) *there is no respect of persons with God*.

Would to God they would seriously lay this to heart, who now seem to be possessed with a mighty zeal for truth and for a right faith; that they be not so deceived by this warm zeal, as to miss the *end of faith, the salvation of their souls*, which can by no means be obtained, no, not by faith itself, without an holy life.

^e Rom. i. 18.

^f Verses 6—9.

But this only shows that they are hard put to it to find proofs for their high pretences. For it will appear in the process of this discourse, first, that it can never be proved the words *pillar and ground* have respect to the church, and not rather to Timothy: for which there is good authority as well as reason. I shall let the authority alone till its proper place, and only note, secondly, that there is good reason not to refer this to the church; for having called the church a house, it doth not seem a congruous speech immediately to call the same church a *pillar*: as on the other side, it is very agreeable to call Timothy a *pillar* in that house, and to wish him to behave himself therein like other great persons, to whom, in other places, he gives the name of *pillars*. But, thirdly, if it do relate to the church, it no more concerns the church of Rome than any other church; and immediately relates to the church of Ephesus, in which Timothy presided. Which church of Ephesus^c, with other churches of the east, condemned this

^c Concil. Florent. sess. ult. [In the last session of the council of Florence, A.D. 1439, a hollow and transient compromise was effected between the representatives of the eastern and western churches. The Greek bishops, fearful of the results of isolation on political even more than religious grounds, and influenced by the emperor John Emmanuel Palæologus, who, pressed by the Turks, had urgent reasons for conciliating the powers of the west, were easily induced by the arts of cardinal Bessarion not only to concur in the western doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son, but by admitting the article of the supremacy of the pope to surrender the primitive independency for which the eastern communion had for so many ages contended. Mark, patriarch of Ephesus, alone refused to subscribe the definition of the council, which laid down the doctrine in the following terms: "Item diffinimus sanctam apostolicam sedem et Romanum pontifi-

cem in universum orbem tenere principatum, et ipsum pontificem Romanum successorem esse beati Petri principis apostolorum, et verum Christi vicarium, totiusque ecclesiæ caput, et omnium Christianorum patrem ac doctorem existere; et ipsi in beato Petro pascendi, regendi, ac gubernandi universalem ecclesiam a Domino nostro Jesu Christo plenam potestatem traditam esse; quemadmodum etiam in gestis œcumenicorum conciliorum, et in sacris canonibus continetur.

"Renovantes insuper ordinem traditum in canonibus cæterorum venerabilium patriarcharum, ut patriarcha Constantinopolitanus secundus sit post sanctissimum Romanum pontificem, tertius vero Alexandrinus, quartus autem Antiochenus, et quintus Hierosolymitanus, salvus videlicet privilegiis omnibus et juribus eorum.

"Datum Florentiæ in sessione publica synodali solenniter in ecclesia majori celebrata, anno incarnationis Dom. 1439. prid. Non. Julii."—

headship of the bishop of Rome upon which they build a sovereignty over our faith. And further, if we should suppose, fourthly, that the apostle respects the church universal, and likewise that it is not only bound in duty to be, but also actually is the *pillar and ground of truth*; yet, lastly, it can never be proved that he speaks of any other truth but those grand fundamental articles of faith, those catholic doctrines which were once delivered to the saints, and which, blessed be God, are maintained in every church to this day: not of all truth whatsoever, much less of an absolute freedom from all manner of error.

For, letting these things alone at present, I shall show that this is all that can be meant by the *pillar and ground of truth*, if it refer to the church, (as I am content to admit:) not that the church (as they absurdly affirm) is the very foundation of our faith upon which it relies; but that it firmly retains, upholds, and professes the Christian truth against all the force, violence, and opposition of earth and hell, of men and devils that endeavour to overthrow it.

That this is the natural import of the phrase I will manifest, first, from the propriety of the words; secondly, from clear reason and the holy Scripture.

I. First, from the propriety of the words in the Greek language. In which *στυλος* frequently signifies such a pillar as stood before their common halls and courts of judicature; upon which the decrees and orders of the court were wont to hang or be fixed. Unto which Tertullian alludes when, speaking of an article of the creed, (in the place above named^d.) he saith, *Unum opinor apud omnes edictum Dei pendet*, 'I suppose one edict of God hangs up among all,' viz. to be read by them: having just asked before, *Quonam titulo spes ista proscripta est?* 'by what title this hope (viz. of the resurrection) is proposed and held forth to all?' And the word *ἔδραϊωμα*, 'ground,' signifies not the 'foundation,' but the 'seat' where any thing is

Labbe, Concill. tom. xiii. col. 516.
Mansi, tom. xxxi. col. 1031.

For the history of the council see Fleury, livr. 108. tom. xxii. p. 251, &c.; Johan. Plusiad. in Græcia Orthodox. per Leon. Allat. tom. i. pp. 612, 619; Collier, vol. iii. p. 371;

and especially the elaborate work of Leo Allatius, *De Ecclesiæ occidentalis et orientalis perpetua consensione*, lib. i. 4to, Colon. Agripp. 1648.]

^d L. de Resurrect. Carnis, c. 18. [p. 335 D.]

placed; so as to be settled and laid up to remain and abide there: and, at the most, can mean no more than the stay or establishment, the seat or settlement of truth. Βεβαίωσις Œcumenius renders it, 'the confirmation' of truth: or if we will have these words allude to a building, because the church is here called the *house of the living God*, as elsewhere the *temple of God*, (which is the same,) they signify no more but supporters and upholders, without which the edifice would fall to the ground. And the most we can make of them when they are applied to the church with respect to the truth, is this; that the church sustains and keeps it from sinking or falling, as a pillar firmly settled upon a *basis* sustains and upholds the fabric laid upon it. This consists in these three things, which I shall distinctly, though but briefly, mention; for the reader's clear information in this matter.

First, the church is that body of men which preserves and keeps, which maintains and holds up the Christian faith; which God hath committed to its care, as he did to the Jews the divine oracles, delivered in old times. And as the church will answer it to God, and not be guilty of betraying its trust, it must constantly preserve the truth committed to it, that it be not lost and do not perish. This might be divided into two, that the church is the keeper and conservator of all the holy Scriptures, and the divine truths contained therein; and that by faithful keeping them it upholds and supports the truth as a pillar doth the building which rests upon it. But this is sufficiently included in what follows.

Secondly, the church is not only to preserve the truth, but to profess it, and to give attestation to it; that is, to bear witness that this is the truth of God, and this alone, which he hath revealed for the salvation of mankind. By which means it doth not only hold up the truth, but hold it out to others, as the sacred edict or decree of God, which all are to take notice of and observe. And so,

Thirdly, it is by this means to promote and propagate the truth, and not let it fall to the ground: as a building doth when the pillars that supported it are removed.

In brief: as heretical churches were the pillars and stays of falsehood, they maintained and defended it, they testified to it, and endeavoured to continue it, and leave it to posterity; just

so is the church of Christ the pillar and ground of truth. It professes the Christian faith, it maintains it as the truth of God; and notwithstanding all the persecutions, troubles, losses, torments, whereby its enemies would shake the constancy of those who maintain the truth, they testify to it, and declare to future generations that *this*, as St. Peter speaks, *is the true grace of God wherein we stand.*

This is the first consideration, to assure us of the true meaning of these words.

II. The second is as strong; for plain reason makes it evident that this, not the other, is the sense of them. The church, that is, cannot be the very foundation upon which the truth is built, not that which gives it authority, and makes it to be truth: for the quite contrary is declared by Truth itself, that the truth is the foundation upon which the church is built, and which makes it to be a church. So St. Paul instructs this very church of Ephesus, who were *built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*^e. It was therefore a church of Christ, because it held the truth which he and his apostles taught. And so a great number of the ancient fathers expound those words of Christ to St. Peter, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock* (i. e. upon the confession of faith which thou hast made, upon that truth thou hast confessed) *I will build my church*^f.

We can own no society of men to be a church of Christ, unless they profess the true faith of Christ. And therefore the true faith must be known before we can know whether they be a true church or no, who call themselves by that name; and consequently, they do not give authority to the truth, but the truth to them; because the truth must be supposed before they can have any authority.

Observe the above recited words, I beseech you, which say the church is *built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, &c.*; i. e. upon the truth revealed by them in the Gospel. It is a church by holding and believing this; for if

^e Eph. ii. 20—22.

^f Matt. xvi. 18.

this be not the thing which makes a company of men to be a *church of the living God*, tell me why the Mahometans are not his church. They are a society of men professing some belief, and having some truth and devotion, and being governed by laws as well as we. There is no reason why they belong not to the church of Christ, but because they have not *the truth as it is in Christ*. Therefore the church doth not make the truth, but the truth makes the church: the truth doth not rely upon the church, because it is before the church which relies upon it.

Which was the doctrine of the church itself in after-ages; as it were easy to show if I intended to write a great book. I will content myself with two testimonies in ancient times. The one is of St. Chrysostom, who thus expounds these very words, *the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth*. “Not like that Judaical temple, (saith he ^g,) for this is it which keeps together and contains the faith and the preaching (or doctrine.)” *Ἡ γὰρ ἀλήθεια ἐστὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ στύλος καὶ ἐδραίωμα* for the truth is both the pillar and the ground, or foundation of the church.” The other is St. Austin, in his third book upon the Creed, to the catechumens^h, which begins thus: “You know this (viz. the Creed) to be the foundation of the catholic faith, upon which the edifice of the church arose, being built by the hands of the apostles and prophets.” And with this of Gabriel Biel in later agesⁱ, “Catholic truths, without any approbation of the church, are in the nature of the thing immutable, and immutably true; and so are to be accounted unchangeably catholic.” Which brings to mind another remarkable saying of St. Austin, who, after he had produced, in his first and second books against Julian the Pelagian, the testimonies of eleven great doctors, viz. Irenæus, Cyprian, Reticius, Olympius, Hilarius, Ambrosius, Innocentius, (where, by the way, it is observable he mentions the bishop of Rome only as one of the eminent bishops, not as head of them all,) Gregory Nyssen, Basil of Cæsarea, John Chrysostom, Hierom, makes this reflection upon their consent^k, (which he looked upon as the voice of the catholic church,) *Qui tamen veritati aucto-*

^g [Tom. xi. p. 605 E.]

3. [p. 253.]

^h Tom. ix. [tom. vi. ed. Ben. col. 568 G.]

^k [Lib. ii. § 37. tom. ix. col. 551 B.]

ⁱ L. 3. in Sentent. Dist. 25. dub.

ritatem non suo tribuere consensu, &c.; “who, notwithstanding did not give authority to the truth by their consent, but received testimony and glory by partaking of the truth.”

They endeavour indeed to put by such evident conviction as this by a little distinction, that though in itself the church is built upon the truth, yet in respect to us the truth is built upon the church. Which appears already to be a vain conceit unto those who consider, that the church cannot be the foundation of truth to us, unless we first know it to be the true church of Christ, and endued with this privilege from God to be the ground of truth, in this sense which I am now confuting. But whence should we know this? If it be said, from the truth which it professes, then the church is not the foundation of the truth to us, for we must know the truth before we can know that to be the true church which calls itself the foundation. If we say from the church, then the church is the *pillar and ground* of itself; and we believe it to be the true church because it says it is. Which is so absurd and dangerous, that the Mahometans, as I said, will be as true a church as any else; they may boldly put in for their share of this privilege; nay, if confidence and power can carry it, engross it wholly to themselves.

It remains therefore that this is the true sense of the words which I have given. The church keeps the truth, and keeps it up; it is the conservator of it, and preserves it from falling to the ground: it proclaims it, and holds it forth to others: it continues the truth in the world, and settles it in men's minds: but itself is built upon this truth, not the truth upon it. Which derives its authority from God, who sent Jesus Christ into the world to teach us his will, and gave him power to send his apostles as he had sent him: *God bearing them witness with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.*

This will be the more plainly laid open, if I spend a little time in showing what is here meant by *the church*, which is commonly thought to be the *pillar and ground of truth*; and was the third thing propounded in the beginning to be explained.

III.

The *church* or *house of God* signifies every where a com-

pany of Christians united under their pastors unto Christ their head by a sincere faith; and joined one to another by brotherly love and communion. Wherever we find such a society of men and women, there is a church; and all the societies of this kind throughout the world make up that which we call the catholic or universal church; the whole body of Christ, or Christian church. Of which the church of Ephesus here spoken of was a part; one eminent company of Christians professing the truly catholic faith, and joined to Timothy as their chief pastor for the worship and service of Christ, and for to be *the pillar and ground of truth*; as these words must be interpreted, if they relate unto the church.

They indeed who are now of the Roman communion understand by the *church*, only the pastors of the church. And some of them, this church representative, as it may be called; that is, the whole assembly of Christian bishops, as many as can meet together, representing all the churches under their care. But others understand only one bishop alone, the pope of Rome; who is then the church virtual, in whom all the power of all the bishops in the world is united. But as there are no such notions of the word *church* in Scripture, so if they be applied to this place, they will appear very wild fancies unto any man who will soberly consider the scope of it. For it is very evident that the *church* is here mentioned as distinct from Timothy, who was the prime pastor of it, and who is directed how to behave himself in it. Therefore, if this church was the *pillar of truth*, the whole multitude of believers at Ephesus united under him and the rest of their pastors must be looked upon as having an interest in this great privilege and honour, as well as duty, to be the conservators and supporters of the Christian faith which they had received. For St. Paul, as I said, is instructing Timothy how to demean himself in this society, which he calls the *house* or family of God; that is, among true believers in Christ, formed into a society under the government of their guides: who were to take the greater care that every one in the church was well taught, instructed, and ordered, because they were the *pillar and ground of truth*.

This made St. Paul very solicitous that Timothy should carry himself well, and be a good pastor in that church of

which the Holy Ghost had made him chief overseer. And not knowing when he might have opportunity to see him, and give him personal instruction by word of mouth, he wrote this letter to him for his direction, that he might fully understand how to discharge this office. And therefore these words, it appears by the verse foregoing^m, relate partly to what went before, and partly to what follows. *These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth. And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, &c.* Which whole paragraph is to be understood as if he had said in more words, “Though I hope shortly to discourse with thee face to face, yet not knowing what may hinder and retard my hopes, I have sent the above written instructions to thee; not to trouble the church with vain disputations about the rites of the law, and such idle questions as the Jews are apt to raise; but to remember (as I have said in the beginning of this letter, ver. 4, 5, of the first chapter) that *the end of the commandment is charity*, the love of God and of our neighbour. This therefore teach them, and instruct them also to *make prayers, supplications, and intercession, with giving of thanks for all men; for kings, and all that are in authority*ⁿ: teach them all likewise how to pray^o, and instruct the bishops and the deacons and all the rest in their office and duty; for it is of great concernment that they be well informed, because this church over which thou art set is the very seat of truth, which is not to be found in any other place but in such a company of believers. Who ought to uphold and defend it when thou art dead and gone, and therefore had need be well settled and established in it: especially in the great mystery of godliness, wherein all Christians agree, and about which there is no controversy. That so the church may never let it go, and this truth may not die and fall to the ground when we are laid in our graves, but be delivered to those that come after as the very oracles of God.”

Who now is there so blind as not to be able to see, that by the *church* is meant not merely the supreme governor of the

^m 1 Tim. iii. 14—16.ⁿ Chap. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.^o Ver. 8.

church, which was Timothy, but all that company of Christian people under their several bishops and teachers who belonged to Ephesus? All of which St. Paul left Timothy, when he himself went into Macedonia, to take care of, and to charge that they *taught no other doctrine*, (as you read^p;) and in this house or family he was when St. Paul wrote this epistle to him; not in a general council, for there was none in three hundred year after this time. Therefore he doth not speak of the church representative, as it is called, much less of the church virtual, as they term it; that is, the pope. For then, mark what sense the words will make; "I have wrote to thee (not knowing when I shall see thee) how to behave thyself in the bishop of Rome:" as if he would have us fancy Timothy in the pope's belly, and himself gravely instructing him how to carry himself with great circumspection and discretion there.

I do not love to use such words; but there are no other I can find so apt to represent the gross absurdity of their doctrines, who take upon them to give infallible interpretations of holy Scripture from the universal bishop, the grand and only oracle of Christendom, as they would have him esteemed; or from such councils as they are pleased to call general, and can obtain their approbation. You see what godly ones we are like to have if we give up our faith to them; how they will pervert the plain words of God to serve their own interest, and wrest them from their natural and easy sense to another, which is so forced, that there is no man so rude but would readily discern the absurdness of it, if he were permitted to read and did consider the holy Scripture. For their great cardinal Bellarmine alleges these very words to prove that general councils confirmed by the pope cannot err^q; nay, that particular councils approved by the pope have the same privilege^r: where it is evident to the weakest understanding, that the whole company of Christians that were at Ephesus united to their pastors (without which they could not be a society or company) are the church here spoken of; and therefore are the *pillar and ground of truth*, (if this relate to the church,) and not merely some particular person in that church; much

^p 1 Tim. i. 3.

c. 2. class. 2da. [col. 55.]

^q Lib. ii. de Concil. Auctoritate,

^r Ib. cap. 6. 'Denique.' [col. 60.]

less a general council of all the bishops in the world, and least of all one bishop, in whom Timothy could not be said in any sense to be; as he is here said to be in that church which is the *pillar and ground of truth*, viz. in that church whereof he was the chief governor: which was the *pillar and ground of truth* in that part of the world. For this is not an office appropriated to any particular church, but belonging to the catholic church, and to every single church as it is a member of the whole.

And here it will be very profitable, I think, to note these six things, for the full explication of this place of Scripture.

I. The first of them is that which I now mentioned; that every particular church, one as well and as much as another, is a *pillar and ground of truth*, in that sense which I have declared. This is not a prerogative which belongs to some one church, but a privilege appertaining to the universal, and to every particular as a part of it. For if the church of Ephesus was a pillar of truth, as St. Paul here affirms, then by the same reason the church of Antioch, the church of Corinth, the church of Rome, and the church of Jerusalem, had the same authority. For that which made any one of them a church made the other so, viz. the true faith of Christ there professed, and union with their pastors for the divine service: and therefore that honour or office which belonged to one of them must of necessity belong to another, because they were but so many members of one and the same body. That is, every one of them, in their several countries wherein they were planted, had the truth of God committed to them, which they were to maintain and support unto the very death; and endeavour that every one who was a stranger to the *words of eternal life* might by their means know and believe them.

And accordingly every church hath contributed unto this, and no one church could ever with any reason pretend to be the sole supporter or defender of the Christian truth. Of which there is this plain demonstration, that then the church is most of all the *pillar and ground*, or buttress, as some translate it, *of truth*, when it is assaulted by heresies; and not only beats them off, but beats them down and suppresses them. Now all heresies were not quashed and confounded by

St. Peter and his successors in the church of Rome, but by other apostles and evangelists, and their successors in other churches. This is demonstrated by a learned man of the Roman communion^s, by twelve famous instances, out of a far greater number. St. John, for example, not Peter, or any of his successors, struck down the Nicolaitans, St. Paul the Nazarenes and Cerinthians, St. Luke the Ebionites, as he proves out of good authors, particularly Hyginus; who relates how the bishops of other sees (not the bishops of Rome) quashed the Ptolemites, the Noetians, and divers other heretics: as the synod of Antioch did Paulus Samosatenus^t, and the first general council of Constantinople (where Damasus bishop of Rome was not present, either by himself or his legates) did Eunomius and other heretics. Which leads to the second thing I would have observed.

II. That every eminent pastor in the church who *laboured in the word and doctrine*, as St. Paul speaks in this Epistle, ver. 17, had these very titles anciently bestowed upon him, of the *pillar and ground of truth*: because the bishops were the principal trustees with whom the faith was deposited, (as may be observed in the words of Irenæus before mentioned, and many other ancient writers, and in St. Paul's words to Timothy, when he bids him to keep the *depositum* he had committed to him, and *commit the same* to other *faithful* or trusty persons, who should be able to teach it to others^u;) and because they were principal instruments in defending the truth against opposers, in propagating the Christian faith to those who were ignorant of it, and in preserving the rest of the church in the belief of the truth which they had entertained, by their constant instructions and zealous exhortation to *hold fast what they had received*.

Nay, we shall rarely, if at all, find any bishop of Rome called the *pillar and ground of truth*: but several other bishops are frequently called by this name. St. Basil for instance^x, writing of the bishop of Neocæsarea newly dead,

^s Joh. Launoii Epist. pars quinta Antonio Varillao, p. 35, &c. [Epist. ii. tom. v. part. 2. p. 37.]

^t Euseb. lib. vii. Eccles. Hist. c. 22.

^u 2 Tim. i. 14; ii. 2.

^x Epist. lxii. tom. ii. [Epist. xxviii. ed. Ben. tom. iii. p. 106 D.]

bewails his loss very much, because he was ἐκκλησίῳν κόσμος, 'the ornament of the churches,' στύλος καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἐκκλησίας (the very words of the apostle here in this place), 'the pillar and ground of truth;' στερέωμα τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως, 'a strong and firm establishment of faith in Christ,' &c. And upon the same occasion writing to the church of Ancyra^y, whose bishop was called Athanasius, it appears by some of the foregoing epistles, he saith, Πέπτωκεν ἀνὴρ, στύλος τῷ ὄντι καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἐκκλησίας, 'a man is fallen, who was indeed a pillar and ground of the church.' And complaining in another epistle^z of the miserable estate of their churches, he says, among other things, Οἱ στύλοι καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας ἐν διασπορᾷ, 'the pillars and ground of the truth are dispersed:' the bishops, he means, were banished from their flocks. Which he bewails in another place in the very same language, only putting both the foregoing parts of their character together, Οὓς ἐγὼ στύλους καὶ ἐδραίωμα^a, &c., "whom I account the pillars and ground, both of the truth and of the church; and honour them so much the more, the further off they are banished from their churches, and account that separation the greatest punishment."

In the very same language S. Gregory Nazianzen addresses himself to St. Basil^b, whom he calls στύλον καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἐκκλησίας, πίστεως ἔρεισμα, καὶ Πνεύματος καταγώγιον, 'the pillar and ground of the church, the prop of faith, the habitation of the Spirit.' And so he calls Athanasius στύλος τῆς ἐκκλησίας^c, 'the pillar of the church:' and in another place^d, τὸ τῆς πίστεως ἔρεισμα, 'the prop or stay of the faith.' And writing to Eusebius, bishop of Samosat^e, he thus begins, "What shall I call thee," στύλον καὶ ἐδραίωμα; &c., "Shall I call thee the pillar and ground of the church, or a light in the world, &c., or the stay of thy country, or the rule of faith, or ambassador of the truth, or all these together, and more than all these?"

^y Epist. lxvii. [Epist. xxix. p. 109 B.] xviii. ed. Ben. § 1. tom. i. p. 330.]

^c Orat. xxi. [§ 26. p. 402.]

^z Epist. lxx. [Ad Episcopos Italos et Gallos, Epist. ccxliii. p. 375 A.]

^d Orat. xxiii. [Orat. xxv. § 11. p. 462.]

^a Epist. cccxlix. [Terentio comiti, Epist. ccxiv. p. 323 A.]

^e Epist. xxix. [Epist. xliv. ed. Ben. tom. ii. p. 39.]

^b Orat. xix. beginning. [Orat.

But that which is most worthy to be noted under this head is, that S. Gregory Nyssen^f expounds this very text of Timothy, and makes him, not the church, the *pillar and ground of truth*. For discoursing concerning the ministers of the divine mysteries, as pillars of the house of God, he saith, τὸν Τιμόθεον καλὸν στύλον, &c., ‘St. Paul wrought and fashioned Timothy to be a goodly pillar, making him’ (as he speaks with his own voice) στύλον καὶ ἐδραῖωμα τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἀληθείας, ‘the pillar and ground of the church and of truth.’ As if he took the sense of these words to be this, “But if I tarry long, that thou, who art the pillar and ground of truth, mayest know how to behave thyself in the church,” &c. And indeed the apostles are called στύλοι, *pillars*, in Gal. ii. 9; not only St. Peter, but James and John also. And here we are taught, as he truly observes, that not only Peter, James and John were pillars, not only John the Baptist was a burning lamp: ἀλλὰ πάντες οἱ δι’ ἑαυτῶν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἐρείδοντες, ‘but all that by themselves support the church, all that by their work are shining lights, are called both pillars and lamps.’

Which names were afterward applied to Christian bishops by the most eminent persons in the church: who hereby plainly declared what they understood by these words of St. Paul; and that they looked not upon this as a privilege peculiar to any one bishop, or any one church, but common to all churches, and especially to the principal persons in the church; who were the leaders and guides of the rest: and so more peculiarly entrusted with the preservation of divine truth, and the chief pillars and supporters of the faith. And thus Origen (or whosoever he was that wrote the Homilies upon the Song of Songs^g) seems to have understood this place; for having observed from hence that the church is God’s house, and applied these words to the explication of the last verse of the first chapter of the Canticles, where it is said, *The beams of our house are cedar*, he concludes that hereby are meant those who are *validiores*, ‘of greatest strength’ in the church: *Et puto quod convenienter hi qui episcopatum bene ministrant in ecclesia*, &c.: ‘and I think that they who well discharge the

^f De Vita Mosis, tom. i. [p. 226.]

^g Hom. iii. Basil. p. 598. [lib. iii. tom. iii. ed. Ben. p. 69 E.]

office of a bishop in the church may conveniently be called beams, by which the whole building is borne up,' &c., viz. by supporting and defending the Christian faith, upon which the church is built. And thus the Abyssine Christians at this day call not only St. Mark, but their great doctor St. Cyril by the name of *columnæ ecclesiæ Alexandrinæ*^h, 'the pillars of the church of Alexandria:' because Cyril was a mighty asserter and defender of the truth against the assaults of heretics. Upon which account Rupertus Tuitiensisⁱ calls St. Austin by the same name that St. Paul here calls Timothy, *columna et firmamentum veritatis*, 'the pillar and ground, or strong stay, of truth.' Which language is common among the Jews, who call Abraham, for instance, 'the pillar of the world^k,' with respect to the true religion which he maintained: which is the very language of Ignatius concerning the apostles, of whom he thus speaks, *Οἱ στύλοι τοῦ κόσμου οἱ ἀπόστολοι*^l, 'the pillars of the world, the apostles;' mentioning together with them the spouse of Christ, viz. the church.

I have been the more copious in this, because it shows that the ancient doctors thought all bishops to be equally concerned in this office and honour: it never entering into their minds that any one had an interest in it more than the rest; much less that one (the bishop of Rome) had it solely to himself.

III. But further I observe, that the martyrs, though not bishops, are frequently called by this name. So the churches of Vienne and Lyons, in their letter to the churches of Asia and Phrygia, concerning the blessed martyrs who had suffered among them, say that God delivered the weaker sort, and opposed to the fury of the enemy *στύλους ἐδραίους*, those who were 'firm and steady pillars, able by their patience to draw all the violent assaults of the devil upon them^m.' Among whom they mention Sanchis a deacon, and Maturus a mere novice, and Attalus, born at Pergamus, *στύλον καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῶν*

^h Ludolphi Histor. Æthiop. lib. iii. c. 12. n. 51. [p. 358. Engl. transl.]

ⁱ Lib. vii. Oper. de Sp. Sancto, cap. 19. [tom. i. p. 632.]

^k Maimon. de Cultu Stell. c. 1. n. 5; et More Nevochim, pars iii. c.

29. ["Columna illa mundi,"—vers. J. Buxtorf. filii, p. 423.]

^l Epist. ad Philadelph. [Epist. interpol. § 9. Coteler. Patr. Apost. tom. ii. p. 81.]

^m Apud. Euseb. lib. v. Histor. Eccles. cap. 1. p. 155. edit. Vales.

ἐνταῦθα ἀεὶ γέγονοτα^m, ‘who had always been the pillar and ground (or stay and strength) of Christians in this place;’ that is, settled and sustained others in the Christian belief. And so Eusebius speaks of other martyrs at Alexandria in the time of Decius, Οἱ στερροὶ καὶ μακάριοι στύλοι τοῦ Κυρίουⁿ, &c., “firm and blessed pillars of the Lord, who, strengthened by him, and having might and power answerable to the strength of their faith, became admirable witnesses of his kingdom.” For they could not be shaken with the fear of death and torment; and so by their steadfastness confirmed and established others in the Christian faith, and were eminent instruments likewise of converting strangers to our religion; who saw their pious and meek constancy under the greatest sufferings, joined with the greatest charity, bowels of mercy and compassion towards their bloody persecutors. For whom they begged pardon and forgiveness of God, desiring nothing more than they might come to that heavenly kingdom, which they testified to them by parting with life itself for the sake of it.

Neither is this merely the ecclesiastical language; but the holy Scripture itself gives those this honourable title, who constantly endured tribulation for the gospel sake, though it did not cost them their lives. Thus our blessed Lord speaks to the church of Philadelphia, *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God*^o. Which signifies partly that he should be an eminent instrument of upholding the church, and preserving many in the profession of Christianity, by his constancy and firmness in it: and partly that he should be so established himself by the grace and power of God, that he should never fall, (according to that of St. Peter^p, *But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you:*) and partly that he should be made in the highest sense a *pillar*, that is, an apostolical man, who should be advanced to the most eminent employment in the church; of teaching and instructing, of governing and ruling, as a principal pastor in the temple of God. In one word, be an *angel of the church*, (as he speaks in the beginning of this letter, ver. 7, and in all the rest,) an illustrious

^m Apud Euseb. &c., p. 157.

^o Rev. iii. 12.

ⁿ Lib. vi. Eccles. Hist. cap. 41.

^p I Pet. v. 10.

minister and messenger of God, to publish the glad tidings of salvation to the world.

Such the apostles were whom Theodoret calls the “pillars of the truth,” with peculiar respect to their sufferings. Behold, saith he^q, Peter and John, *τοὺς πύργους τῆς εὐσεβείας, τοὺς στύλους τῆς ἀληθείας, &c.*, “the towers or bulwarks of godliness, the pillars of truth, supporting the structure of the church: being scourged by the Jews, but *rejoicing and glorying*^r that they were counted worthy to suffer shame, or to be disgraced, for his name.” And such-like were these victorious souls, as Arethas^s expounds our Saviour’s words to this church; “For he that conquers,” saith he, “the adverse powers *στήλησ καὶ ἑδραῖωμα καθίσταται τῆς ἀληθείας*, ‘is constituted a pillar and ground of the truth,’ rejoicing himself immutably, (so he interprets *in the temple of my God*,) and establishing others in goodness, that they may not fall from their steadfastness.”

IV. Any eminent person also in the church, though not a martyr, is sometime called by this name in ecclesiastical writers. For instance, Jo. Damascene thus addresses himself to Jordanes the Archimandrite, *ὦ πάτερ θειότατε, στήλε καὶ ἑδραῖωμα τῆς ἀληθείας*^t, ‘O most divine father, the pillar and ground, or stay, of truth!’ Nay, thus zealous persons in the laity, especially if they were of great quality, contributed to the support of the faith by supporting these pillars of it. So St. Basil, in one of the forenamed epistles, having bewailed the banishment of their bishops, whom he calls the “pillars and ground of truth,” prays Terentius (a count of the empire) to preserve himself safe, that they might have some to rest upon; “God having graciously made him *ἐν πᾶσι ἡμῖν βακτηρίαν καὶ ἔρεισμα*^u, a support and a prop in all things to us.” But they of the clergy more particularly, though of the order below bishops, were looked upon as having no small share in this office. For St. Cyril of Alexandria^x having mentioned Christ as the foundation, and believers in him as precious stones built upon him, unto a holy temple, compares their instructors in the mysteries

^q Orat. x. de Providentia. [tom. iv. p. 657.]

^r Acts v. 41.

^s Comment. in Rev. iii. 12. [ad calc. Œcum. tom. ii. p. 683 B.]

^t Epist. ad eum de Trisagio. [cap.

26. tom. i. p. 495 D.]

^u Epist. 349. [ed. Ben. epist. ccciv. tom. iii. p. 323 B.]

^x Lib. v. in Esaiam, tom. ii. [p. 768.]

of religion to the most precious stones (such as those mentioned Isaiah liv. 11, 12,) which God uses, some in laying the foundation, others as buttresses, some for the gates, others for the walls of the holy city, that is, the church; that *all her children may be taught of God.*

V. Nay, one of the forenamed great doctors of the church warrants me to add that every pious member of the church, in his place and calling, hath his share in this great trust. “For who-soever,” saith St. Gregory Nyssen^y, “is perfected in these two great commandments, “to love God, and to love his neighbour, he is framed to be *στύλος καὶ ἐδραῖωμα τῆς ἀληθείας, a pillar and ground of truth*, according to the language of the apostle. By both these we may become such pillars as Peter, and James, and John; or if there be any other since them, that hath been or shall be worthy of this name.” And he doth, in effect, say the same in the place before named^z, where he observes the apostle requires others to be pillars as well as himself, when he saith, ‘*Ἐδραῖοι γίνεσθε, ἀμετακίνητοι^a, Be ye steadfast, (or stable,) immovable, abounding always in the work of the Lord.* For he that is thus firmly fixed and settled (as the word *ἐδραῖος* signifies,) and diligent in well doing, whatsoever trials he hath to shake him, he supports religion, he maintains the credit of it in the world, he doth great service to the truth, by showing how good, how useful, how laborious, it makes those that embrace it.

And I am sure it lies upon every one of us as an indispensable duty to hold fast the truth, and to profess it and practise it, and, notwithstanding any danger or trouble unto which it may expose us, to testify unto it, if need be, by constant, patient, peaceable suffering for Christ’s sake. And he that doth thus is according to his measure, though never so mean a person in the church, a *pillar and ground of truth*. And thus Theodoret expounds these words^b: “He calls *σύλλογον*, ‘the assembly’ or congregation of those that believe, the house of God and the church: and these, he saith, are the pillar and support of truth. For being founded upon the rock, they both remain unshaken, and preach by their deeds the truth of their doctrine.” And

^y Hom. xiv. in Cant. Canticorum. 226 C.]

[tom. i. p. 684 D.]

^a 1 Cor. xv. 58.

^z De vita Mosis. [tom. i. p.

^b [In loc. tom. iii. p. 657.]

Theophylact also^c, 'Ἡ δὲ ἐκκλησία τῆς ἀληθείας σύστασις' 'the church is a constitution or an assembly of truth, for all things that are done in it are true, nothing shadowy, as under the law,' &c.

VI. I have but one thing^f further to add, that the more and the better they are who join in this work, the greater support they give to the truth.

First, I say, the more, the greater number there are of those who maintain the truth by preaching, writing, suffering, or well-doing, and the^g greater credit they have in the world, the stronger pillars they are, and the surer doth the truth seem to be in the eyes of those to whom they represent it. Upon which account the doctrine of St. Paul and Barnabas, which he had received^h by revelation as well as other apostles, yet being communicated to James and Cephas and John, who were eminent *pillars*, and been approved by them, received the more strength by their concurrent testimony^d. And it was still more confirmed by the whole council of apostles and elders at Jerusalem^e, so that it was received joyfully at Antioch^f, and the churches in other cities *were established in the faith, and increased in number daily*^g. For which reason the testimony of a great assembly of bishops was a greater support and strengthening to the faith than the testimony of single persons. They were the principal trustees, as I observed before, to whose fidelity the truth was committed; and when they met together in a council to discharge this trust, it gave great force to the truth declared by them. Which they knew so well, that in ancient times such councils were wont to desire the consent of other bishops who were not there, for the greater establishment and confirmation of the faith, as Theodoret^h relates of the council of Sardica, whose letter he hath set down to all the bishops in the world, desiring them, *ὡς τῷ πνεύματι παρόντες*, 'as present in spirit with them,' to consent to their synod, and by their subscription to decree that concord might be preserved among all their fellow bishops every where. Nay, the great and first general council of Nice itselfⁱ wrote to the church of Alexandria, and

^c [In loc. tom. ii. p. 569 D.]

^d Gal. ii. 2, 5, 9.

^e Acts xv. 2, 25.

^f Acts v. 31.

^g Acts xvi. 4, 5.

^h L. 2. Hist. Eccles. c. 6.

ⁱ Theodoret. l. i. Eccles. Hist. cap. 8, 9.

the rest throughout Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, to give them an account of their decrees. And Constantine also certified all absent bishops, who could not come to the council, of their proceedings: "that there might be one faith, (as his words are,) and sincere charity, and a concording religion or piety preserved among them all."

It was upon the same score that sometime they sent particularly to the bishop of Rome for his concurrence, (as the council of Carthage^k and others did in the business of Pelagius,) not because they imagined their decrees would be of no force without his consent, (that is an ungrounded fancy,) but because he was an eminent bishop in the church of Christ, by whose concurrent testimony the truth would be still more confirmed, and their churches would have the greater comfort *de communi participatione unius gratiæ*, 'from the common participation of one grace;' by knowing, that is, that they were of the same belief.

The like may be said of the martyrs, who, when they suffered in great numbers, gave the more amazing testimony to the truth, which terrified the devil himself, and staggered their very judges; as St. Basil speaks^l of the forty martyrs, who all together, as if they had but one mouth, cried out when they were examined, "I am a Christian." By such resolution as this our religion was not only upheld, but mightily increased: and the more the number of Christians increased, the more was truth spread abroad, till it grew to be the prevailing religion, and *the kingdoms of the world became the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.*

2. But it was not mere numbers that did the business, for their extraordinary piety and purity in those early days had the greatest hand in it. Which was the second thing I desired to be noted under this last head, that the better the pastors and the people are, the greater service they do to the truth, and the more prevalent their testimony is, when it appears by their lives that they have no other interest to serve but that of truth and godliness.

And when all is done, it will be found that the sanctity of

^k August. Epist. xc. xci. xcvi. [ed. Ben. epist. clxxv. clxxxi. clxxvii. tom. ii. coll. 617, 635, 622.]

^l Tom. I. hom. xx. [hom. xix. de Divers. ed. Ben. tom. ii. p. 151.]

those who assert God's holy truth, their *pure and undefiled religion* which keeps them from being *spotted by the world*, is that which will be the most powerful to move men's minds, and will make the easiest way for its entertainment in men's hearts. Nothing can give a church such authority, and make its testimony so credible, as its integrity and sincere devotion, its study of purity in heart and life, its designing clearly the good of souls, and not worldly advantages, its universal charity and kindness, which invites even strangers to attend unto it, and much more its own members.

And therefore I must note for a conclusion of this part of my discourse, that when we speak of the *church*, i. e. the whole company of believers, and say that it is the *pillar and ground*, or establishment of truth, it is meant principally of those whose faith brings forth fruit and works by love. These are the main supporters of the Christian religion, who do not merely profess it, but are acted and live by their faith, in all holy obedience to Christ. For they are *living stones* built upon him, the foundation of all, the true living *body of Christ*, who are animated by his Spirit, and with whom he hath promised to make his abode; and consequently are the only persons who to purpose support, and maintain, and defend the truth. Which would in a little time be suppressed or obscured, depraved or varied, concealed or misinterpreted, if the wicked only had the conduct of it. Who are no more to be accounted pillars of the truth, i. e. can no more alone support and uphold it, than a reed, a straw, or a rotten stick, can support a building. This is the ancient doctrine of the church itself, as appears by what St. Austin says in his Preface to the Exposition of Psalm xlviij.^m Where taking the *firmament*, which was made the second day, to be an emblem of the church, he saith, by the church we ought to understand *ecclesiam Christi in sanctis*, &c. "the church of Christ in his saints; the church of Christ in those whose names are written in heaven, the church of Christ in those who do not yield to the temptations of this world. *Ipsi enim digni sunt nomine firmamenti*, 'for these are worthy the name of firmament or strength.' Therefore the church of Christ in those *qui firmi sunt*, 'who are strong' (concerning whom the apostle speaks, *We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities*

^m Tom. viii. Enarratio in Psal. xlvii. [tom. iv. ed. Ben. col. 415.]

of the weak,) is called the *firmament*. For hearken and acknowledge how this church is called by this name in the apostolical writings, (and then he quotes this place to Timothy,) which is *the church of the living God, columna et firmamentum veritatis, the pillar and support of truth.*”

By these principally the truth is maintained: for it is most plainly delivered by the apostles themselves, that men and women, by their wicked lives, did turn apostates from the faith. And we find by experience, as well as their instructions, that nothing doth more quench the Spirit of God, nothing is more contrary to true wisdom, than filthiness and impurity: which we must abandon therefore, and not think we can do very considerable service to the truth by the bare profession of it; but upon the foundation Christ Jesus we must seriously endeavour to raise the superstructure of a holy life, whereby we shall adorn, recommend, and effectually promote our religion.

It must not be denied indeed, that a multitude professing true faith in Christ, though their lives be not so regular as they ought to be, are not unserviceable to our religion: nay, in some cases, by their steadiness in the truth, give no small support unto it. Especially when they likewise continue united together, by partaking constantly of the same sacraments. Whereby they are joined to those who are truly good, and remain a part of the Christian society; till their lives be so bad that they are thrown out of the church, as not fit to have communion with it. And therefore out of such a church, consisting of those that profess the faith of Christ entirely, and worship him purely, without any dangerous mixtures, no man ought to depart merely because every one therein is not knit to Christ by such hearty love and obedience as that faith ought to produce. For they that are only in outward communion with such a church are in a good way to something more; and therefore ought not to be rejected as no Christians. For by external communion the inward lively communion with God our Saviour is produced, set forward, and promoted: and it is something to own Christ, and acknowledge him for our Lord and Master; and receive constant instructions from his ministers, whereby we are convinced of our duty. Which though it doth not at present make them good and faithful servants,

yet they may be so in time : and the way to make them so is not to leave them to themselves, by separating from them, but to admonish, reprove and exhort them to become living members of Christ's body, that they may do him greater service, by recommending his religion effectually to the world. As all those do who separate from the wickedness of the world, though they continue mixed with the wicked that are in the church, till they can in an orderly manner, and after regular proceedings, be thrown out of it. Whereas, on the contrary, they who upon pretence of the wicked being mixed with the godly, depart from the external communion of the church, have very much dishonoured religion, and help to destroy the church by endless separations.

For when they have so departed from the church, they are not sure they depart from the wicked ; though it be sure they have left the communion of a great many good men and women, who are mingled in common with the bad. And what advantage can such men propound unto themselves, or unto true religion and godliness, when they certainly forsake the society of a great many truly good men, for an imaginary departure from the wicked ? Because after all the care they can take, they cannot be sure there are no wicked among them : but they leave a church in which it is notorious there are a great number of holy people, and erect congregations, for ought they can certainly know, of such as conceit themselves religious merely from this separation.

This is not the means therefore of upholding truth and of promoting godliness. But if we be seriously bent on that, the apostle hath shown us the way in the next Epistle, *Let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity*^m. Whosoever doth so, he is an excellent servant of Jesus Christ and of his truth : which was promoted by nothing more, I might say by nothing so much, as by the eminent piety and virtue of the first preachers of Christianity, and of the generality of those who were called by Christ's name. Some bad people there were among them (as we learn by the church of Corinth) ; which did not unchurch them, nor make them unfit for communion with them. *For in a great house* (as the apostle

there speaks in the next verseⁿ) *there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, some to dishonour. But if a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for his Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.* Thus the apostle writes immediately after these words, *Let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.* Whatsoever becomes of others, he shall become an useful servant of his Master Christ, *a vessel of honour*, or an instrument to do him honour, by being *fitted to every good work.*

There are eminent testimonies of this, not only in Christian, but in pagan writers also, that hereby the truth of Christ prevailed, and got the upper hand in the world. For Julian^o himself upbraids the priests of his religion with the marvellous piety of the Galilæans, (as he calls Christians,) whose singular humanity and charity even to strangers, nay to pagans, when those of their own religion neglected them, together with the gravity of their manners and composed behaviour, (though he call it feigned,) had such great effect, that by this means, as he acknowledges, Christianity so increased, that its growth could no way be hindered, but by their outdoing Christians in these worthy qualities.

And such an eminent virtue it must be, and that alone, which can restore our religion to its primitive lustre: nay, that which will preserve it from being lost where it is planted. For as fast as true piety and virtue decays, so fast doth the church go to ruin. And therefore, if we have an hearty love to our own church, and the saving truth of God which is there professed and asserted, we must study to uphold it by this means. Not by seeking for a purer church, (which is impossible as to faith and worship, and manners too, to be found,) but by endeavouring to amend one another, by purifying ourselves in the first place from all filthiness both of the flesh and of the spirit; and then by admonishing others that do not live as they ought of the error of their ways, and calling them to repentance.

Which course I wish all they who have separated from our communion would consider whether they ever took! Did they not first forsake us, and then say, before they tried, that we

ⁿ 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21.

^o Epist. xlix. ad Arsacium. [p. 429.] et in fragm. p. 557. [p. 305. ed. Spanheim.]

have people incorrigibly wicked among us? This is not the way (to say nothing of what sort of people they have among themselves) of saving us all from perishing: but as it proceeds commonly from too much pride and conceitedness, and from great want of charity, so it produces lamentable effects. For under a pretence of making the church more holy, it destroys both holiness and the church, by breaking the unity of it, by disgracing religion, by turning it into disputes and vain jangling, by endless separations under the notion of greater and more refined purity, till the church be crumbled into so many little bits and fractions, that little more than the name of a church remains.

Let us therefore preserve union among ourselves as much as is possible, that we may preserve the church and truth. And then there may be the more hope of reclaiming the ungodly: who will receive an admonition or reproof far better from one of their society, who calls them brethren, than from one that separates from them as mere strangers and foreigners, with whom they have nothing to do in matters of religion.

Would to God this were more seriously practised among us; that we would be as forward charitably to reprove men for their wickedness, as we are even to reproach them, perhaps uncharitably, for their false opinions! It might be a means of their cure, an effectual remedy for their amendment, when piously and prudently administered; and a means of bringing those back who are gone astray from us, that there *may be no divisions among us, but we may be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.*

PART III.

How the church discharges this office, of a pillar and ground of truth.

WHAT the Psalmist saith concerning Jerusalem, or the church of the Jews which was wont there to assemble, is more fully verified in the Christian church: *Great and glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou city of God^a*. This great city St. John saw descending out of heaven, *having the glory of God^b*; and in the verse before calls this church *the bride, the Lamb's wife*. There is a special presence, that is, of God in it, and a special love of the Lord Jesus to it. For it is *the body of Christ, and the fulness of him that fills all things*: to this, St. John saith, *they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations*; against this, our Saviour promises, *the gates of hell shall not prevail*. *The pure water of life, clear as crystal*, runs therein; here grows the *tree of life^c*, and it is as it were the *paradise and garden of God*.

Which things show what an honour, what an happiness it is, to be a citizen of this holy Jerusalem. Whosoever they be, that by a cordial faith in Christ and sincere love to him join themselves to this body, are made members of Christ, children of God, companions of angels, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. They are under the protection of the Almighty, under the guidance of his holy Spirit, under the care and tender love of that great and glorious Lord who is the *prince of all the kings of the earth*, and hath *all power in heaven as well as earth* invested in him. For the church is the *house and family of God*, nay, the *temple of the living God^d*: for he hath said, as it there follows, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and will be their God, and they shall be my people: I*

^a Ps. lxxxvii. 3.^b Rev. xxi. 10, 11.^c Rev. xxii. 1, 2.^d 2 Cor. vi. 16—18.

will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty.

These things are great indeed, and exceeding glorious.

But not content with these privileges, which are as a royal diadem and crown of glory on the head of the church, there are those who would adorn her with prouder titles, and set her forth in an adulterous dress, and a presumptuous glory : making her in a manner equal to her Head, the Lord Christ. For they have snatched one of the incommunicable properties of God, and fixed it as a jewel on the top of the church's crown ; telling us that she is an infallible guide who cannot mislead us. That is, though she may go astray and play the harlot in life and practice, yet she cannot err nor mistake in her judgment ; so that if we listen to what she says, we shall never wander, but always be in the right.

For the proof of this, they first suppose themselves to be the church of Christ, and they alone : and then they abuse this place of holy Scripture to assert this divine prerogative to be in his church, that is, in themselves. But I have exposed the bold folly of these pretences, by showing that the church here spoken of is the church of Ephesus ; and that Timothy was the principal *pillar and ground of truth* in this church. Which doth not signify, I have shown, that either the church or Timothy were the very foundation of the Christian faith, upon whose credit the authority, the truth, and certainty of all religion depends ; but the supporters of the truth, who testified, maintained, upheld, and propagated the faith of Christ.

For the more full understanding of which, I shall briefly show, (before I proceed to the last thing propounded,) first, what power it is that we herein ascribe to the church, particularly to the bishops and governors thereof ; secondly, what power it cannot pretend unto, nor ought to be yielded to any church or person whatsoever.

I. As for the first of these, what the power is we allow the church when we say it upholds, maintains, and testifies to the truth, it is as much as to inquire of what authority the testimony of the church is, how much it ought to weigh with us, and how far we ought to yield to it : to the testimony, for instance, of the present church of which we are members, (for

it hath as much authority as any other,) when it propounds truth to us and presses it upon our belief. Are we to believe it merely because the church saith it?

In answer to which we affirm, that the testimony of the church is that whereby we are both informed of the truth, and induced as by the first external motive to faith in Christ. Mr. Hooker calls it the key, as others do the door, which lets us into the knowledge of the great mystery of godliness, which is preserved in this house of God.

If we allow it not this, we allow it nothing; nor can it, or any person in it, be said to be a *pillar and ground of truth*, unless it do something to the bringing us acquainted with the truth: which it propounds and sets before us, and testifies to be that which Christ hath left with his church to be delivered down to all generations. For it conveys the holy Scriptures to us, and calls upon us to consider and study them: that therein, by the help of the pastors of the church, (to whom this office, I have [shown, principally belongs,) we may find all necessary truths in order to our salvation. Which testimony, being the testimony of men that profess faithfulness, honesty, and a good conscience, as the great thing in their religion, is the highest of all human testimonies: and cannot but work very strongly and powerfully upon men's minds, when Christians are such as they profess to be; and as they are, it ought to work thus far upon all sorts of men, even upon those who are out of the church, as to incline them to have a reverend regard to that faith and those Scriptures, and to look into them and consider them; which they see such multitudes of people, and some of them very wise as well as devout, constantly esteem as the very truth of God transmitted to them from his Son by the apostles, who attended on him from his first appearing till he went to heaven.

This moved St. Austin, when he was yet in part an infidel, being a Manichee, to believe the gospel, according to that famous discourse of his in answer to the epistle of Manichæus, which contained in a manner the whole belief of that party; *Ego non crederem evangelio, nisi me ecclesiæ catholicæ autoritas commoveret*^e: which is to be thus translated accord-

^e Tom. vi. contra Epistolam Fundamenti, cap. 5. [tom. viii. col. 154 A.]

ing to the phrase of the Africans, 'I had not believed the gospel, unless the authority of the catholic church had moved me thereunto.' For it is evident (as hath been shown by our writers since the beginning of the Reformation^f) he speaks of himself when a Manichee, as the words immediately following declare; "Those whom I obeyed when they said, Believe the gospel, why should I not obey when they say, Do not believe Manichæus?" Which doth not signify that the credit of the gospel is founded upon the church's authority, but that this was the first motive to incline him to look into the gospel, and consider it as a divine book which would inform him in the way of salvation. Thus he explains himself in the very foregoing chapter, where setting aside the sincere wisdom taught in the church, which they would not believe, he reckons up abundance of other things which might serve to keep him in the catholic church, viz. the consent of people and nations, &c., and then thus concludes: "These numerous and great and most dear ties of the Christian name may very well hold a man that believes in the catholic church; although by reason of the slowness of his understanding, or the defects of his life, the truth do not yet show itself most openly unto him." Whereas among the Manichees there were none of these things to invite or to hold him, but a bare promise of truth wherewith they made a noise; which if they could have shown so manifestly that it could not be doubted, he confesses it was to be preferred before all those things, whereby he was held in the catholic church.

Which words are an evident proof that he speaks of the authority of the church, as only moving and inducing him to believe the Scriptures, and to join himself to their society before the *truth* was manifested to him; which he was to find there (in the Scriptures), and which he preferred before the authority of the church. Which he elsewhere tells the Donatists was not to be believed upon its own credit; "but whether they hold the church, let them not show but from the canonical books of the divine Scriptures: for we neither do not say that we ought to be believed because we are in Christ's church,

^f D. Whitakerum de sacra Script. Epist. contr. Donat. cap. 19. tom. ix. q. 3. cap. 8. [Opp. tom. i. p. 325.] col. 373.]

^g L. de Unitate Ecclesiæ. [al.

because that church which we hold was commended to us by Optatus or Ambrose, or other innumerable bishops of our communion, or because it is approved by councils, or because miracles are every where wrought in it: these and such like things are therefore to be approved, because they are done in the catholic church; but it is not therefore manifested to be the catholic church because these things are done in it. Our Lord Jesus himself, when he rose from the dead, and offered his body to be touched as well as seen by his disciples, lest they should think there was any fallacy in it, judged it meet rather to confirm them by the testimonies of the law, and the prophets, and Psalms; showing how all things were fulfilled which were predicted. And so he commanded his church, saying, that *repentance and remission of sin should be preached in his name, beginning at Hierusalem.* This he testified was written in the law, the prophets, and Psalms; this we hold commended from his mouth. These are the documents, these the foundations, these the strong grounds of our cause. We read in the Acts of the Apostles of some believers, that *they sought the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.* What Scriptures but the canonical books of the law and the prophets? to which are added the Gospels, the apostolical Epistles, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Revelation of St. John. Search all these, and bring forth something manifest, whereby ye may demonstrate the church either to have remained only in Africa, or to be to come out of Africa," &c. This is an illustrious testimony he thought the church itself was to be warranted by the Scriptures, which did not therefore receive their authority from the church, but give it all the authority it hath. And after all, it was not the authority of the present church barely that moved him when he was a Manichee, but of the catholic church from the beginning. Oeccham^h thinks he speaks of the church in the apostles' times alone, which moved him to believeⁱ. And others (as Gabriel Biel) confess he speaks of the authority of the church *a tempore Christi et apostolorum*, &c. 'from the time of Christ and of the apostles down to his days.'

^h [Dialog. part. iii. tract. i. lib. iii. cap. 24. Apud Goldast. Monach. Sacr. Rom. Imp. tom. ii. p. 842.]

ⁱ Fr. White's Answer to Fisher's Second Conference, p. 24. [Opp. fol. Lond. 1624.]

Such authority cannot but weigh very much, even with those that do not yet believe, if it be seriously pondered: but much more with those that are already Christians. Whether they be novices and weaklings, who are as yet doubtful in the faith, though in the church: the testimony and authority of it ought to confirm and quiet their minds, (as it did St. Austin's, it appears by the place before named,) and keep them close to the Christian society, till they may themselves become better acquainted with the truth, and more fully understand the holy Scriptures, which the church delivers to them and puts into their hands as the word of God. Or whether they be more grown Christians, (and indeed all sorts of persons in the church,) who ought to be so far wrought upon even by its authority, as to be persuaded thereby to read constantly, to consider and ponder seriously, and to practise those plain lessons faithfully, which the holy Scripture teaches them, till it work effectually upon their hearts, and purge them so thoroughly from all bad affections that they may more perfectly understand the truth.

Thus much is indisputable; for God hath appointed outward means for the conveying divine truth to our belief; and this means is ordinarily the church: to which we ascribe these two great things in this business^j. First, the office of a witness, testifying the authority of holy Scripture to us: secondly, of an instrument in God's hand to lead us into the understanding of the Scriptures, and by its ministry in preaching and expounding them to beget a divine faith in us.

But further than this we cannot, we must not go. For the last resolution of our faith is not into the testimony of the church, but into the testimony of God himself, which we find recorded in the holy Scripture delivered by the church unto us. Thus St. Austin most admirably discourses in that very book against Manichæus's letter^k, from whence the forenamed saying, "I had not believed the gospel, unless the church's authority had moved me to it^l," is wont at every turn to be objected to us by those of the Romish persuasion. "Thou dost nothing but praise what thou believest, and deride what I be-

^j Answer to Charity Mistaken, sect. v. [p. 143. see above, p. 119.]

^k Cap. xiv. contra Epist. quam

vocant Fundamenti. [tom. viii. col. 160 D.]

^l [Ibid. cap. 5. col. 154 A.]

lieve. Now, since I can be even with thee, and do the very same, praise what I believe, and deride what thou believest; what is to be done, but that we leave and relinquish those who invite us to know things certain, and afterwards require us to believe things uncertain, (let those of the Roman church mark this,) and that we follow them who invite us first to believe that which we cannot yet see into: that being made stronger in the faith itself, we may come to understand what we believe; not men now, but God himself inwardly establishing and illuminating our mind?"

It is impossible to read this passage and not see that this father thought our faith is not ultimately resolved into the testimony of the church: but by that being invited to believe the holy Scriptures we are established (upon the serious reading of them) in the Christian faith and knowledge of the truth by God himself. Upon whose word in the holy Scripture, and not upon men, we bottom our faith: upon the testimony and authority of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and the testimony of divine men inspired by them; who by miracles, and signs, and mighty deeds, and a prophetic spirit proved themselves to be sent from God; and have left his mind and will upon record in the Scriptures of truth. Which the church indeed in all parts of the world hath kept and preserved, and faithfully transmitted down to us, and now propounds to our faith: but it is not merely what the church saith that makes us believe, but what God himself saith in the holy Scriptures concerning his Son Jesus Christ; and what Jesus Christ saith concerning his rising from the dead and sending the Holy Ghost upon the apostles. Which being fulfilled evidently proved him to be the Son of God, the Saviour of the world; and them to be his apostles and ministers who declared to men the true way of salvation.

So the church directs and guides us to the Scriptures of truth, but they resolve and assure our faith, being the very word of God. The authority of God's church is the first motive which leads us to esteem the Scriptures; but being led thither, we find in the matter of them that which gives us full satisfaction, by bestowing our pains in reading, or hearing, and considering the mysteries contained therein. The church holds out this light to us, but it is by this light that we see what is

the mind and will of God. To this the church points us, and bids us attend to it; for this it disposes and prepares us; it leads us by the hand to this as the only sure foundation of our faith, (because herein we find God himself speaking to us;) and moreover by the ministry of the church we are assisted in understanding the sense of the holy Scriptures: but they contain in themselves that divine authority and truth whereby we come to a certain faith. The church tells us such and such things are true, and we find them to be so by examining the Scriptures; which the Bereans *sought daily, whether those things were so* which the apostles preached: *and therefore many of them believed*; not merely because the apostles told them they ought so to do, but because they found what they said in the holy Scriptures^m. And so far as any church speaks according to the truth contained therein, it is to be believed and followed. But if it bring no divine word for its warrant, if it propound other doctrines which are not there, it hath no authority to make such doctrines the matter of our faith: much less to set up its own authority above the Scriptures; as they do who say the Scriptures receive their authority from the church. Which is the doctrine of no less men than Baronius and Bellarmine, to name no more.

The former of which arguesⁿ, that because we receive these holy books to be writings of the apostles and evangelists, and not forged under their names, upon the testimony of the church; therefore all the writings of the New Testament received their authority from the church's tradition; which is *fundamentum Scripturarum*, as he ventures to say, the 'foundation of the Scriptures.' The other is no less positive^o, that if we take away the authority of the present church and the present council, we call in doubt the whole Christian faith. For the firmness of all ancient councils and of all doctrines depends upon the authority of the present church.

This is very presumptuous talk: for by the church they mean themselves, and then by the testimony of the church (that is, their own testimony) they mean such a divine witness as assures us by its own authority, without any other

^m Acts xvii. 11, 12.

^o L. 2. de Sacrament. c. 25.

ⁿ Ad annum 53. n. 10, 11. [tom. 'Tertium.' [tom. iii. col. 202.]
i. p. 389.]

proof. Which are the great points of difference between us in this matter. For we assert, first, that the office of leading men to the holy Scriptures, and so to faith, belongs to every church as much as to them : and, secondly, that no church can bring people to faith by its own testimony and authority, but by the doctrine of the holy Scriptures : nor is any church whatsoever to be heard in matters of divine truth further than it can prove its doctrines by the authority of God's word, and teaches things agreeable thereunto.

II. Which leads to the second thing : briefly to show what power and authority the church cannot pretend unto in matters of faith.

1. And first, it appears by what hath been said, that it hath not a sovereign, absolute, prophetic authority, independent upon the rule of the holy Scriptures : so that we must take whatsoever it saith for true, without consulting them. This is the ambitious pretence of the great doctors of the Roman church, who give the church (meaning thereby the present Roman church) an authority over all things not depending on the Scriptures, but upon which the Scriptures themselves depend : so that without the authority of this church all truth is doubtful. Which is a manifest principle of infidelity ; making all religion stand to the courtesy of a company of men, who in such matters are the least to be trusted of all other Christians that we are acquainted withal.

2. The church hath no authority to propound any doctrine as necessary to salvation which is not delivered in the holy Scriptures, but depends solely on the authority of its own tradition. This is another of their ambitious attempts, who, having arrogated to themselves alone the whole power of the church, make that power so unlimited that it can supply the defects of the Scripture, and make things unwritten to become matters of faith. Which is such an unbounded prerogative, that we may have a new faith as often as they please to pretend a tradition for it, though they cannot prove it. For we must rest in the authority of the present church which affirms it ; and that against the very Scripture itself, which tells us it is able to *make a man of God perfect* ; and against the testimony of the universal church, which, I have shown, forbids the producing

of any other faith but that which was evidently delivered by the apostles there.

3. We cannot allow the church an infallible authority, that is, such an assistance in her doctrines and proposals that she cannot err in any thing she defines. In controversies indeed arising about matters of faith, we own and reverence the authority of the church^p, so as not to contest the public judgment, but to prefer it before our own private conceits in doubtful things. But as it ought to proceed in its determinations by the rule of God's word, so we think it possible it may mistake in the application of this rule: and therefore we do not blindly resign ourselves to its authority without all regard to the holy Scriptures; unto which the church ought to have a respect in all its determinations. No, that is another proud pretence of the present Roman church, that they cannot mistake in their definitions; and therefore we must submit unto them without examination. From whence this intolerable mischief hath issued, that it hath made them both insensible of their errors, and careless to seek any cure of them, nay, utterly incapable of a remedy. For, as one of our own divines excellently speaks^q, (whose words those are,) this conceit of their infallibility is to them "both a sufficient reason for that which is most unreasonable, and a sufficient answer to that which is most unanswerable." To this they retreat upon all occasions when they are not able to maintain their ground: they have no other way to defend their errors when they are plainly set before their eyes, but to tell us confidently they cannot err. Which is a very strange boldness, for we demonstrate in many instances that they have erred; erred most grossly: particularly in this, that they have added new articles to the old creed, to be believed under pain of damnation; and added a new canon of Scripture to the Old Testament, against the clearest evidence in the records of the universal church, that the books they have newly received were never acknowledged for canonical Scripture.

If by the *church* indeed they would understand the church truly catholic, the whole body of Christ in all times, places and ages; and if by matters of faith, they would understand those

^p Article xx.
sect. 5. [p. 148.]

^q Dr. Potter's Answer to Charity Mistaken,

grand articles which I have mentioned in the first part of this discourse; and if by being infallible, they would understand not an absolute impossibility of erring, (which human nature is not capable of,) but not actual error: there are none of us make any question but the church is infallible. That is, the whole church hath not erred, nor shall not err in the whole faith, or in any necessary part thereof; for such error would cut men off from Christ the head, and so leave him no church at all, which is impossible. It hath been the very scope of my first discourse, to show that the church hath always kept the great fundamental truths of our religion, and not erred in them, but transmitted them down to us whole and undefiled; till the church of Rome in the council of Trent corrupted the faith by their errors which they have mixed with it.

For to a particular church, such as that of Rome is, we cannot allow this privilege of not erring, because we know they have erred, even in fundamental truths, and thereby ceased to be churches. Witness those glorious churches to which Christ himself sent his letters by St. John the apostle.

These prerogatives therefore not belonging to any church, every one must be content with these two offices being mentioned, which are sufficient. First, the office of a witness testifying the authority of the holy Scriptures unto its members. Secondly, of God's instrument, by whose ministry, in opening, expounding, and urging the holy Scriptures, the Holy Ghost begets a divine faith in us. And by performing these offices, it supports and continues and propagates the truth, and so may be called the *pillar and ground* thereof.

The meaning of which I shall now distinctly set before the reader's eyes, that I may give a short account of the fourth and last thing propounded in the beginning.

IV. *How the church may appropriate to itself this title.*

1. First, every church and every person in it, especially the bishops and pastors, are the *pillar and ground of truth, officio*, 'by duty and office;' whereby they are obliged to keep, maintain and uphold the truth. This always was, and always will be incumbent on them, which is sufficient to fill up the sense of such attributes as these, which do not always note performance of duty, but only obligation to it. As when our Saviour

saith to his disciples, *Ye are the salt of the earth*, it doth not signify that they were necessarily so, (for he supposes immediately the *salt might lose its savour*,) but that they ought to be so, and if they were not so, would be *good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot*^h.

2. But secondly, the first churches of Christ in the apostles' times were *actu et effectu*, 'actually and effectually' the *pillar of truth*: that is, they faithfully discharged this office, and performed their duty, constantly maintaining the truth as it is in Christ in its purity and simplicity. For the apostles were a part of those churches whom God *led into all truth*, which they taught sincerely and entirely while they lived, and do at this day instruct us in the holy Scriptures, in the whole truth necessary to our salvation.

3. But we cannot say the same of all succeeding churches, that they did faithfully perform this office, though in duty they also were bound so to do. No, some of them were so far from being *pillars of the truth*, that they let it fall to the ground. We have strange instances of it, with which I shall not fill these papers, in the history of the church, which show us that if we take not heed to ourselves, and the doctrine that is delivered to us, we have no security that we or any other particular church shall continue firm and steadfast supporters of the truth. For pillars themselves may decay, and if they be not well looked after, will go to ruin and fall to the earth.

4. Even this very church of Ephesus, which was a *pillar and ground of truth* while Timothy presided in it, afterward began, before all the apostles were dead, to remit its *first love* and zeal for the truthⁱ, and now is utterly subverted and not to be found. Which is a demonstration the apostle did not in these words intend to teach that the church cannot err, but that (as I said) it is in duty bound by its calling and office to preserve the truth pure and entire. For he himself foresaw this church would be haunted with *grievous wolves* after his departure^k, who no doubt came in sheep's clothing, as they also among themselves did, who he foretold would arise *speaking perverse things to draw disciples after them*. And immediately after he had here called the church or Timothy the *pillar of truth*, he admonishes

^h Matt. v. 13.

ⁱ Rev. ii. 4.

^k Acts xx. 29, 30.

him (in the beginning of the next chapter¹), that there would be an *apostasy from the faith*, as the Spirit expressly declared. For according to what our Saviour predicted, there was scarce any church but the enemy sowed tares among the wheat, which very much hindered the growth thereof. So we are informed by Hegeſippus^m, a very ancient Christian historian, who ſaith that as ſoon as the ſacred quire of apoſtles were dead, and that generation was gone who had heard the inſpired wiſdom with their own ears, then begun ἡ ſύſτασις τῆς ἀθέου πλάνης, ‘a conſpiracy or combination of impious or atheiſtical error,’ by the deceit of falſe teachers, who make a barefaced oppoſition to the truth of the goſpel.

And yet for all this the ſpeech of the apoſtle is proper enough; for a church or its paſtor may be the *pillar of truth* in regard of their duty, as I have often ſaid, though they prove negligent in their office. Juſt as the prieſt among the Jews was called *the meſſenger of the Lord of hoſts*, whoſe *lips ſhould ſo preſerve knowledge* that the people *ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth*, becauſe this was the end of his office, for which he was ordained; though at the ſame time the prophet complains that *they were departed out of the way, and cauſed many to ſtumble at the law, and had corrupted the covenant of Levi*ⁿ. The like we read in other places of the holy book, that the prophets were not true to their truſt, but declared the viſions of their own heart, not the word of the Lord, and led the people into error and falſehood, feeding them with lies inſtead of truth.

5. Further I muſt obſerve, that there is no promiſe made to any particular church that it ſhall always be a *pillar of truth*, no, not to the church of Rome, which now ſo boldly lays claim, and that ſolely, to this privilege. But quite contrary, there is a terrible threatening to this very church included in that admonition which this very apoſtle gives them. Which is ſufficient to ſhow that Chriſt gave no ſuch privilege to this church, as that it ſhould never err, but directly contrary, ſuppoſed it might err, and err even to apoſtaſy, when he bids them take heed leſt they were cut off by unbelief, as the Jews were, from the fellowſhip of the ſaints. Read Rom. xi. 20, 21, 22. *They*

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. ^m Euseb. l. iii. Eccles. Hist. c. 32. ⁿ Mal. ii. 7, 8.

(speaking of the Jews) *were broken off by unbelief: and thou* (speaking to the Roman Christians) *standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear; (hearken to this, O ye of the present Roman church!) for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*

From whence we may thus argue: If God had granted to the Roman church the privilege of being a *pillar of truth*, infallibly and immutably unto all generations, all these suppositions were vain, and these exhortations utterly needless and frivolous; for it would have been absolutely impossible it should be cut off, and absolutely necessary it should continue. And yet the apostle plainly supposes otherwise, and took it for granted it might fail. For these two are directly opposite, to stand and to fall; to continue and to be cut off; to be an everlasting *pillar* and to be broken off. For it is proper to a pillar to stand and support; but to be cut off, (as he supposes they might be,) is to fall to the ground, and not to be able to support oneself, much less others.

Now that they of that church have gone far towards this condition, (according to the apostle's supposition,) by falsifying the truth of Christ, even part of the apostolical faith, (and so have not continued a firm and steadfast pillar of truth, but maintained and supported dangerous errors and heresies,) is apparent from this alone, if there were no more: that they limit and confine the catholic church to themselves alone, and exclude all other Christians from it, who will not submit to their bishop and decrees. The impiety of which is so great, that it is not easy to be expressed, for it is in truth to make the church not catholic, but particular. How new false, sacrilegious, scandalous, schismatical and heretical, this one article of the Roman Creed is, one of our own bishops hath demonstrated evidently in a book on purpose, (to which I refer the reader,) which he had reason to call the "Grand Imposture °."

° ["The Grand Imposture of the (now) Church of Rome, manifested in this one article of the new Romane Creede; viz. the holy, catho-

like and apostolike Romane Church, mother and mistresse of all other churches, without which there is no salvation, proved to be a new, false,

It would enlarge this treatise too much beyond my intention, or else it would be easy to show both when they began to let truth fall to the ground, and how they proceeded to fail in their duty, and to betray their trust, till they quite altered the ancient catholic faith, in the council of Trent. Which now they cry up as the *great pillar of truth*, when it did nothing but lend a lame support to the most notorious falsehoods, which it established as doctrines of faith, when they were before but erroneous opinions in that church. I call it lame, because of the numerous flaws that there were, both in the constitution and in the proceedings of that council, which make it of no authority. For in the very beginning of it^p they decreed that “no man should wrest the Scripture to a sense contrary to that which the holy mother church (i. e. themselves) hath held and holds:” and so established all the tenents of that church before they examined them by the Scripture, and engaged themselves to contradict their own decree, by wresting the Scriptures to their own sense, for the maintenance of what their church then held. All the bishops likewise there assembled were sworn to support the papacy of the Roman church, and the rules of the holy fathers; whereby they were obliged to maintain the usurpations of that see upon all the bishops in the world, (whose authority was thrown down, and thereby the *pillars of the truth*, (as I have shown them to be trampled under foot when Boniface was declared universal bishop,) and upon kings and princes, whom Hildebrand trod under foot: yea, upon the whole church, over which pope Leo exalted himself, when he got it declared in the Lateran council that he was above a general council, and the universal church^q; being blasphemously called by his flatterers,

sacrilegious, scandalous, schismaticall, heretical, and blasphemous article (respectively) and everie way damnable, by the B. of Coventrie and Lichfield;” (Thomas Morton.) 4to, Lond. 1628.]

^p [“Præterea, ad coercenda petulantia ingenia, decernit, ut nemo suæ prudentiæ innixus in rebus fidei et morum ad ædificationem doctrinæ Christianæ pertinentium sacram Scripturam ad suos sensus contorqueus, contra eum sensum quem

tenuit et tenet sancta mater ecclesia, cujus est judicare de vero sensu et interpretatione scripturarum, aut etiam contra unanimum consensum patrum ipsum Scripturam sacram interpretari audeat, etiamsi hujusmodi interpretationes nullo unquam tempore in lucem edendæ forent.”] Sess. iv. [Labbe, tom. xiv. col. 747.]

^q [“Solum Romanum pontificem, pro tempore existentem, tanquam auctoritatem super omnia concilia habentem, conciliorum indicendorum,

“the spouse of the church, the lion of the tribe of Judah.” From which very phrase of “spouse,” no less man than Bellarmine⁹ himself labours to prove the pope to be absolutely above the universal church, and above a general council, because it is contrary to the apostle, and to the order of nature, that the wife should be above the husband.

This is sufficient to show what we ought to think of the present Roman church, which is so far from being infallible, that it hath erred more than any other church.

6. But though there be no promise either to that or any other particular church of being preserved from error, yet the universal church in some part or other of it, we are sure, will always be a *pillar and ground* of the whole truth necessary to salvation; because our Saviour hath promised the *gates of hell shall not prevail against it*. That is, the church shall be perpetual: which it cannot be, unless it hold the truth entirely whereby it is joined to Christ its head. And thus one of their own cardinals understood the infallibility of the church^s, with which they now make so much noise. “When we say, ‘The church cannot err in faith or manners,’ it must be thus taken, according to the doctrine of the fathers, that God doth so assist his church to the end of the world, that the true faith shall never fail out of the same. For to the world’s end there shall be no time wherein some, though all, shall not have true faith working by love.” Unto this exposition we heartily submit: but that the present church of Rome, or indeed any other particular church, cannot degenerate and depart from the right faith, we can by no means allow; but think ourselves bound by the most sacred ties to oppose these arrogant pretences, that the church is infallible, and that they are the church. They are no more the church than any other company of men professing the Christian faith; nor so much neither, for there are truer believers than they. I have proved also that other churches have erred, and therefore so

transferendorum, ac dissolvendorum plenum jus et potestatem habere, nedum ex Sacræ Scripturæ testimonio, dictis sanctorum patrum, ac aliorum Romanorum pontificum, sed propria etiam eorundem conci-

liorum confessione, manifeste constat.”—Labbe, tom. xiv. col. 311 E.]

^s Turrecremata, Sum. de Eccles. l. ii. c. 91. [fol. 224.] et l. iii. c. 60. [fol. 347.]

may they : nay, they have erred, and that so grossly, as to be able by no other means to maintain their errors but by pretending they cannot err.

And therefore let no man be so forgetful of these things as to trust them to be his guides, fancying they cannot mislead him. They have misled those that rely upon them, and have led them into a maze or labyrinth, in which it is impossible for them to find their way, and know what is the truth. For if we should grant them their church cannot err, they are not agreed, nor ever will, what they mean by the church. Whether the whole body of Christian people, (which is the new heresy among them, as some of themselves call it,) or a general council, (which the learnedest and best men among them maintain,) or the pope : who hath a great many on his side, but they cannot agree about the manner of his definition, (whether alone, or in a general council,) nor about the time, (whether at any time, or only when he resolves to publish doctrines as matter of faith,) nor about the matter, (whether all things, even matters of fact, or only matters of faith ;) and after all, nobody can tell when there is a true pope. So that all their faith falls to the ground, and they cannot be certain of any thing they believe, because they cannot be certain of the very ground and foundation of their faith ; which is their church.

These things I have only briefly touched, (which are more largely handled in other books,) that the readers may be sensible how happy they are who are freed from these impostures. And that our people may know their duty in this church of England, whereof by the grace of God they are members, I shall conclude this treatise with six considerations more ; whereby the whole, I hope, will be made more useful.

I. First, I desire every one to consider from what I have said, that this church in which we are is certainly as much a *pillar and ground of truth* as any other ; nay, more than many other churches. For we openly profess and recite twice a day in our own language, that every one may understand it, the whole Christian faith comprised in the Apostles' Creed ; with the explication of some part of this faith by the Nicene fathers, once every week or more ; and a more distinct expli-

cation of the same articles by Athanasius once a month. That is, we hold, and assert, and maintain, all those things which have always been and are confessed by all Christians; the true, ancient, catholic and apostolic faith, and the holy Scriptures wherein this faith is originally contained. And if we knew any thing else to be the mind of God, delivered to us from Christ and his apostles by the universal church, we are prepared to receive it; and, did it appear, would immediately embrace and propagate it. But the universal church, as I have shown, hath declared this to be sufficient, nay, full and perfect; and moreover, forbidden any other faith to be either composed or offered to those who would become Christians. To all which (that I have said in the first part) this memorable saying of pope Leo the Great may be added^t: “The short and perfect confession of the catholic symbol (or creed) itself, which is sealed in as many sentences as there were apostles, (i. e. twelve articles,) is so instructed with celestial munition (or defence), that all the opinions of heretics with this sword alone may be cut in pieces.”

II. And therefore, secondly, every one of us is bound, unless we will betray our trust, and as we will answer it to our Lord Christ the author of our faith, to hold fast this faith, to preserve it entire, and to defend it: not suffering any of it to be lost, or any addition to be made to it, as if this were not sufficient to salvation. *Take fast hold of instruction*, (of those great substantial, unquestionable truths, mentioned in the beginning,) *let them not go, keep them, for they are your life*; as Solomon speaks of wisdom^u. They are the wisdom of God our Saviour, “the rule which the apostles preached equally among all nations,” (as Venantius Fortunatus^x speaks,) “the comprehension and perfection of our faith,” (as St. Austin^y, or an ancient author under his name,) “the test (as I have shown) and mark, whereby the faithful are distinguished from unbelievers and heretics.” And having this note of a Christian,

^t Epist. ad Pulcheriam Augustam. [Epist. xxxi. cap. 4. tom. i. col. 857, 8.]

^u Prov. iv. 13.

^x Præfat. in Symbol. [Max.

Bibl. vet. Patr. tom. x. p. 592 F.]

^y [“Comprehensio fidei nostræ atque perfectio.”] Serm. cxv. de Temp. [al. Serm. ccxli. in append. tom. v. col. 395 F.]

you ought neither to seek for nor to admit of any other. Being endued with this wisdom, you ought to think yourselves wise unto salvation; and not be in the least moved with the bugbear name of heretics, or the empty noise of damnation which they of the church of Rome thunder out against you. For they signify nothing but the wrath of those who would drive you into the belief of that by frights and terrors, into which they cannot draw you by solid proofs and arguments. Turn away your ears both from the one and the other; for as the former is an insignificant sound, so the latter (all their arguments) are but confident sophistry. Which hath been, and is at this day, so evidently demonstrated by our writers, that they can have no excuse who are deceived by them.

III. And thus every one is bound to teach his children diligently, instructing and confirming them in these main points of Christianity; that so the truth may live when we are gone.

Consider, I beseech you, what a necessary duty this is. How should the truth be preserved and supported but by those that believe it? And how should they believe it who do not understand it? And how should they understand it, unless they be taught and instructed in it? And who so much concerned to instruct their children, as they that brought them into the world? Their godfathers and godmothers indeed are engaged to see this done, but their parents have a further, even a natural obligation to it; and therefore ought first of all diligently to inform themselves, and by attending to all the means of instruction which they have in this church, to increase in true Christian knowledge: that they may be able to teach those who are committed to their care, and prepare them to be catechised and further instructed by those whom God hath set over them.

We are not pillars and supporters of the truth, but the betrayers of it, if we take no care about this. Which is one great reason why some have easily forsaken the true religion here taught and professed, and condemned this church (an horrid crime, if you seriously weigh the consequence of it) by renouncing communion with it, as no part of the body of Christ. Men may be soon persuaded by confident talkers to part with that which they do not understand; especially if they appre-

hend any danger in keeping it, or hope to gain by letting it go. Why should they hazard the least hair of their head for they know not what? Nay, why should they be at all concerned for it, any more than a man is for the seed that is scattered in the highway, from which he expects no crop? To that, you know, our blessed Lord compared him that *heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not: for then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his hearty.*

IV. You must endeavour therefore to profit by all such instructions as these; and to grow in the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, where God hath revealed his whole mind and will to you, and plainly published all those truths which belong to the *great mystery of godliness.* You ought, for instance, to take heed how you wantonly and loosely interpret or apply them, according to your own sudden or careless fancies, (that is a great profanation of the sacred books;) and yet you must not, for fear of this, be persuaded to throw them out of your hands, but rather with the more solemn, humble, and reverend awe of God upon your souls, ponder and weigh what you read therein: especially those things which are plain and evident to every understanding, that by the help of them, and of those whom God hath set over you to guide and direct your minds, you may either inform your understanding in what appears to have difficulty in it, or satisfy yourselves that it is not necessary you should understand it.

For they that would drive you from this hold of the holy Scriptures intend to deceive you; and would have you depend on that which is far more uncertain than the meaning of any place of Scripture can be. There is no firm ground for us to stand upon but only this; which all acknowledge is the very word of God, and delivers that which hath been ever accounted the substance of Christian doctrines, in such words as every one may understand them.

And therefore this is, as I have said, the very foundation upon which the church is built. Which is the *pillar of truth*, as it defends the truth out of the Scriptures, and by the Scriptures, against all heretics and other opposers; and as it

establishes and supports it in the hearts of men by this means, that it may be continued to posterity. This must be added for the explication of all that hath been said; that the church, and every person in it, great or small, are pillars, not by themselves, but by the holy Scriptures. “For we know those things that belong to our salvation (as Irenæus^z begins his third book) by no other persons than those by whom the gospel came to us: which then truly they preached, but afterwards, by the will of God, delivered to us in the Scriptures, *fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futurum*, ‘to be the foundation and pillar of our faith.’ Upon these our faith rests and relies: so that they who take the Scriptures from you take away the foundation and pillar of that truth which is or ought to be taught in the church, and that alone.” They contain the mind and will of our Lord Christ: who himself being the first foundation and chief pillar of all, Epiphanius^a applies these words to him, when he saith our Lord is called the *door*, because by him we enter in; and the *way*, because by him we walk; and the *pillar*, because *αὐτός ἐστιν ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας*, (the very words of St. Paul in this place,) ‘the *ground*, or settlement, and stay of truth.’ And in like manner St. Cyril^b of Alexandria saith the pillar of a cloud, and the pillar of fire, each of them represented Christ; because first of all *στυλος καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας ἐστιν*, ‘he is the *pillar and ground of truth*,’ and then because he cannot be shaken or disturbed, &c.: which he repeats again upon another occasion, speaking of the pillars which supported the curtains of the tabernacle; “Christ is to be understood,” saith he^c, “in each pillar, *τὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἔρεισμα, τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐδραίωμα*, &c., ‘the prop of the church, the ground of truth,’ according to the words of Paul.” And in the next book^d, speaking of the four pillars which supported the veil before the holy place, he saith that veil was a figure of Christ, who was lifted up on high by the preaching of the evangelists: and therefore, he saith, the four evangelists were typified by those four pillars; being equally eminent and precious, more valuable than gold and silver.

^z Adv. Hæreses, lib. iii. c. 1. [p. 173.]

^a Hæres. lxi. num. 35. [tom. i. p. 75⁸ C.]

^b Lib. iii. de Adorat. in Sp. et

Veritate. [tom. i. p. 84 B; et lib. x. p. 329 D.]

^c Ibid. lib. ix. [p. 317 C.]

^d Lib. x. [p. 334 D.]

Which shows that the ancient Christians looked upon the church as the *pillar and ground of truth* no other ways, but as it professes, preaches, establishes, and keeps up the doctrine of Christ and of his apostles recorded in the holy Scriptures: unto all which they indifferently apply these words of St. Paul, which are thought immediately to speak of the church; which supports the truth delivered in the holy Scriptures from Christ and from his apostles.

Upon which account the Creed also, which is a comprehensive breviary of the great Scripture doctrines, is wont to have the same attribute given to it. Particularly by Epiphanius^e, who calls it τὸ ἔρεισμα τῆς ἀληθείας, “‘the pillar (as the Greek word signifies in good authors) or prop of truth,’ &c., our life, our hope, and the assurance of immortality.” And by St. Austin^f, who tells the catechumens in his exposition of the Creed to them, that it is *fidei catholicæ fundamentum*, &c., ‘the foundation of the catholic faith, upon which the edifice of the church arose, built by the hands of the apostles and prophets.’ Which hath made some learned men^g refer these words of St. Paul, not to what goes before, but to the words following; making a full stop at *God*, and then beginning a new sentence in this manner: *The pillar and ground of the truth, and without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, &c.* Which reading is countenanced by a Greek edition of the New Testament at Basil, 1540, where the words are so pointed, as if the sense were this: “God incarnate, and the great truths depending thereupon, ought to be the very foundation of the doctrine thou preachest.” The doctrines of the Creed, that is, are the very foundation and pillars of the Christian faith: as the Jews, it is known, call the great principles of their religion “the foundation of the foundation, the pillar of wisdom,” as Maimon speaks when he treats of this matter^h.

Stick close therefore to the holy Scriptures, and to these articles of the faith in the Apostles’ Creed, which are the fun-

^e In *Exposit. Fidei Cathol.* n. 19. [tom. i. p. 1101 D.]

[inter *Critic. sacr. ad loc. coll.* 474, 7.]

^f *De Symbolo ad Catechum.* 1. iii. c. 1. [tom. vi. col. 568 G.]

^h [In *Mischnam*, apud *Cameron.* *ibid.*]

^g *Jo. Cameron, Jac. Capellus.*

damental truths of Christianity (it appears by what I have now said), by which the church maintains and defends the truth, and the truth upholds the church, and we defend both.

Hold this fast, as the ground of all ; and likewise lay up the word of God in your heart, that it may settle there, and take root, and bring forth fruit unto holiness, that your end may be everlasting life.

Make the holy Scriptures your rule, and trust to them, according to what the son of Sirach saith of its ancient books : *A man of understanding trusts in the law ; and the law is faithful to him as an oracle, or as the asking of Urim*ⁱ. That is, here he may inquire, and have a certain answer which will not deceive him.

Show yourselves such men of understanding as to inquire nowhere else. And if any church or person would have you inquire of them only, take that for an undoubted proof they are not to be trusted. If they would not guide you by the holy Scriptures, (that is, by Christ the way, as you have seen, who hath shown us no where else, that we know of, what we ought to believe,) if they would have you follow their ungrounded traditions, whereby they would enlarge your creed beyond the ancient bounds, know that you ought not to follow them, nor be led by them. For such may soon cease to be the pillars and supporters of the truth ; because they leave that whereby they should support it, and place themselves (whom they call the church) in the stead of it.

An evident sign they are not what they pretend : for the church itself ought to be demonstrated by the Scriptures. So St. Austin^k tells the Donatists in those known words, which are worthy to be preserved in remembrance. “Setting aside all such things as these, (which he had said they could likewise allege,) let them demonstrate their church if they can, not in the discourses and rumours of the Africans, not in the councils of their bishops, not in the letters of any disputers whatsoever, not in signs and fallacious wonders, (for we are prepared and rendered cautious against these by the word of the Lord,) but in the prescript of the law, in the predictions of the prophets,

ⁱ Eccclus. xxxiii. 3.

^k L. de Unitate Ecclesiæ. [al. Epist. contr. Donat. cap. 18. tom. ix. col. 371 B.]

in the songs of the Psalms, in the words of the Shepherd himself, (i. e. Christ,) in the preachings and labours of the evangelists; that is, in all the canonical authorities of the holy books. Let this be done so as not to gather and relate those things, which are obscurely, or ambiguously, or figuratively spoken there; which every one may interpret as he pleases, according to his own sense. For such things cannot be rightly understood and expounded, unless those things which are most clearly spoken be first held by a firm faith."

This is the very sense of the Church of England; which teaches all her members, first to hold by a firm faith those things which are clearly revealed in the holy Scriptures, and by them to understand and expound those things that are more obscurely delivered; believing nothing to be necessary "which is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby;" nor receiving the doctrines and decrees of any church, unless it may be declared that they be taken from thence. For *hæc sunt causæ nostræ documenta, hæc fundamenta, hæc firmamenta*, (as he there speaks^l, you heard before,) 'these are the proofs of our cause, these are its foundations, these are its supports.' And therefore, as he also speaks in another chapter of the same book^m, which he begins thus: "Let us not hear such speeches as these, These things say I, Those things sayest thou: but let us hear, These things saith the Lord. These are certainly books of the Lord, to whose authority we both consent, we both believe, we both obey. There let us seek the church, there let us discuss our cause." And let us not so much as think of looking after any other articles of faith but those which were from the beginning, which our church firmly believes, in the three Creeds, Nice Creed, Athanasius, and that commonly called the Apostles', because "they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scriptureⁿ." For "after the faith confessed and sworn in baptism, (as St. Hilary^o speaks,) we ought not *quicquam aliud vel ambigere, vel innovare*, 'either to doubt or innovate any other thing.'" It is absurd, that is, to doubt whether this be sufficient, or to add any other to it, as if this were not enough. So he interprets it a little

^l [Cap. 19. col. 373 F.]

ⁿ Article viii.

^m Cap. 3. de Unitate Ecclesiæ.
[col. 341 G.]

^o Ad Constantium August. [lib.
ii. tom. ii. coll. 544, b.]

after. "Faith is still inquired after, as if there were no faith already: faith is to be written, as if it were not in the heart. Being regenerated by faith, we are now taught what to believe, as if that regeneration were without faith. We learn Christ after baptism, as if there could be any baptism without the faith of Christ. It is most safe for us (as it follows a little after) to retain that first and only evangelical faith confessed and understood in baptism."

V. And that a good and righteous cause may have good defenders and supporters, let us read the holy Scriptures wherein this faith is contained chiefly for this end, that we may order our steps, that is, our lives and conversation, according to the rule of God's word. Let us always remember that our religion is a *mystery of godliness*, as was shown before; in which we are not well instructed, if it do not teach us to *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in the world*. Which is the best way also to *continue in the faith, τεθεμελιωμένοι καὶ ἑδραῖοι*, (as the apostle speaks, most agreeable to these words which he writes to Timothy,) *grounded and settled*, or stable and steadfast^p. For *they are the good ground*, in the church, *who in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience*^q. As much as to say, if we would stand fast in the faith, and not *fall away*, (as our Saviour saith others would do *in time of trial*^r.) we must, first, come to hear and read the word of God with unprejudiced minds and upright hearts; desiring to know the truth, and resolved to receive it, though never so contrary to our present inclinations and interests.

This is the honest and good heart, which (secondly) must keep and preserve in mind and heart what it hath thus received; and not presently let it slip, or lay it aside as a thing never to be thought of more, after we have heard it. And, (lastly,) we must not only in a warm fit of zeal begin to put in practice what we learn, but *bring forth fruit with patience* or continuance.

This is the way both to draw others into the church, and to

^p Col. i. 23.

^q Luke viii. 15.

^r Verse 13.

continue ourselves in it, and to make us constant defenders of the Christian faith : that is, to do our part in this great office, of being the *pillar and ground of truth*. Which is a thing incumbent upon the whole church, and consequently upon every one of us who are members of it. And therefore remember that the Christian religion, for which we are to be zealous, is the *acknowledgment of the truth after godliness*^s, as I said before. It is the doctrine of piety ; to the study of which if we seriously and heartily apply ourselves, it will be our best security against all impostures, and preserve us from the subtle and crafty insinuations of those who corrupt or pervert the Christian doctrine ; and finally be the most powerful means to make Christianity prevail in the world.

Remember the advice of St. Paul to this church of Ephesus^t, where you may find the true way to continue firm and steadfast, and not to be tossed about as children with every blast of doctrine, &c., and that is ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, by *speaking*, or rather following *the truth in love* ; or (according to the Hebrew dialect) *being fixed and established* in the love of God and of one another. For the Hebrew word *Aman* (to which ἀληθεύω answers) signifies not only to *speaking truth*, but likewise to be *firm and constant, fixed and established* : which if we be, we shall have a settled, unmovable confidence of God's love and favour towards us. For he that heartily loves God and his neighbour will never be startled, much less shaken, by their bold *anathemas*, though all the world should tell him he shall be damned if he do not believe this or that proposition, which they say is absolutely necessary to his salvation : because there is something within him that gives them the lie, and assures him there is no truth in them who say that God hates and will reject him who believes all the ancient faith which *works by love*. God himself testifies the contrary, by making the truth efficacious in his heart to purge him from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit ; and by changing him into his own likeness in holiness, love, and goodness. And the more thoroughly any man is renewed in the spirit of his mind, the more perfectly will he be assured that they pronounce a false judgment upon him ; and consequently be the more heartily re-

^s Tit. i. 1.^t Eph. iv. 14, 15.

solved against that religion which makes men so liberal in pouring out curses upon all them that do not embrace its novel opinions.

Which brings me to the last thing I would have considered, that,

VI. We do not perform our duty, (I may safely affirm, nay confidently aver,) we are not the *pillar and stay of truth* as we ought to be, unless every one of us in our several places and stations oppose, with a becoming zeal, the errors, innovations, and encroachments of the church of Rome; who are the men that are, of all other, most guilty of the just now named uncharitableness, or rather pride and cruelty. For they utterly un-church us, and, as much as in them lies, cut us off from the body of Christ, and bar the gates of the kingdom of heaven against us. By this alone, if there were nothing else, we are sure they have grossly erred, and live in error, that they deny us to be a part of Christ's church; who believe and confess with heart and mouth the whole catholic faith: every thing that is *ὁμολογουμένως*, 'confessedly, and by universal consent,' the ancient Christian belief; in which the apostles and martyrs died, by which alone righteous souls for many ages went to heaven; knowing nothing of the pope's supremacy, of transubstantiation, of the propitiatory sacrifice of the mass for quick and dead, and the rest of their new inventions.

We deserve not the name of Christians, no, nor of men, if we stand not up resolutely against such usurpations and corruptions of the Christian doctrine, and maintain that faith which we profess, and wherein we stand, to be *the true grace of God, the faith once delivered to the saints*. Which is incumbent chiefly upon the bishops and pastors of the church, who, I have shown, are the principal *pillars of the truth*, (as Timothy was in the church of Ephesus,) and therefore ought to appear with all their might for the support of God's true religion here established; instructing, teaching, exhorting all committed to their charge to be steadfast and immovable in it to the death. And every honest-hearted Christian ought to do the same in his rank and condition, by following those instructions, by fortifying himself against Romish delusions, by endeavouring to understand the truth, and to detect their errors.

Which are the more earnestly to be opposed, because the new articles of their creed are not a mystery of godliness, but tend, many of them, to nurse men up securely in their sins : such as the doctrines of purgatory, of indulgences, of penances, and (to name no more) of infallibility ; which, being presumed as an unquestionable principle, is apt to lead men in the most dangerous errors, and the foulest sins, without any remedy or possibility of recovery, whensoever the infallible guide shall propound them.

This pernicious doctrine, I may add, seems also to be deeply rooted in all their minds, that an orthodox belief will save them. For this they make the great business of Christianity, to bring men, as they think, to such a faith : as appears by this, that let men be never so bad, their labour is not bestowed to make them quit their sins, but to bring them to their belief ; where, for any thing I can see or hear, they may quietly enjoy them. Nay, there are a number of little devices to put them in hope of heaven without reforming their lives, provided they believe as the church believes.

And in this let me beseech all that read these papers to take a special care that they do not imitate them. Let us be watchful that we do not put a greater cheat upon ourselves than they would do, by imagining ourselves good Christians, merely because we zealously oppose the errors of popery. That we ought to do, but not leave the great thing, the amending of our lives, undone. For may we not destroy and pull down by a wicked life as much as we build up by contending for the faith ? How can others think that we are so much concerned as we seem to be for truth, when we make no use of it, but let it lie dead in our minds ? What pity is it that their hearts should not love that which is good, whose minds are enlightened to discern that which is true : that their understandings being convinced, their wills should not also be converted ! It is a lamentable thing to profess that we know God, but in our works deny him. This makes us look as if we were of a faction rather than of the faithful : who oppose others rather as our enemies than as Christ's ; as those that differ from us, rather than as those that differ from the truth.

For if it be the truth that we reverence, why do we not let it rule and govern us ? Why do we not love to have it nearer

to us than in our brains? even in our hearts and affections? For there is no greater truth than this, that “ungodliness is the worst of heresies;” a wicked life the most opposite of all other things to the Christian faith.

Let us never forget therefore that admonition of the apostle in the first chapter of this Epistle to Timothy, *Hold faith and a good conscience*^u: which he repeats again in the third chapter to the deacons, whom he exhorts to *hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience*^x. For if we put away a *good conscience* we may easily *make shipwreck even of our faith*. Which we have just cause to think is the reason why some have fallen from this truly apostolic church of ours. Concerning which and concerning whom I may say, as Epiphanius^y (putting this place I have been expounding and some others together) makes the apostle speak to Timothy: “It is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth: which many forsaking, are turned *εἰς μύθους καὶ μωρολογίας*, ‘to fables and foolish babblings;’ neither understanding what they say nor whereof they affirm.”

^u 1 Timothy v. 19.
p. 298 D.]

^x Ver. 9,

^y Hæres. xl. num. 8. [tom. i.

AN ANSWER

TO A BOOK

SPREAD ABROAD BY THE ROMISH PRIESTS,

INTITULED, THE

TOUCHSTONE OF THE REFORMED GOSPEL,

WHEREIN

THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND

MANY TEXTS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE

ARE FAITHFULLY EXPLAINED.

IMPRIMATUR,

Jo. Cant.

April 14, 1692.

TO THE READER.

I MUST let the reader understand, that the book which I answer first appeared in the latter end of the reign of king James I., under the name of *A Gag for the New Gospel*^a. When it was immediately

^a [The exact title of this publication is, "The Gage of the reformed Gospel, briefly discovering the errors of our time, with the refutation by expresse textes of their owne approved English Bible; the second edition, augmented throughout the whole, by the author of the first, with permission, anno 1263." (A palpable misprint for 1623.) It is anonymous, but is attributed to Matthew Kellison by Dod (Ch. Hist. ii. 91.), who states it to have been the cause of the conversion of many protestants.

Strype endeavours to establish an earlier existence of the same work under the name of "*Bristow's Motives*," but without sufficient grounds.

"About this year (1574) R. Bristow, of the English college at Doway, set forth his *Motives* unto the catholic faith, to the number of forty-eight; a book of great vogue with the papists: which Dr. Fulk of Cambridge now answered in a treatise called the '*Retentive*.' In the year 1599 it was printed again at Antwerp. And again the next year, 1600, one Dr. Hill put it forth at Antwerp, entitled then, '*Reasons for the Catholic Religion*,' in number twenty five, as a new book of his own: but containing much of the form and manner and all the matter for the ground thereof, taken out of *Bristow*:' which was fully and learnedly answered

by George Abbot, D. D. master of University college, Oxon, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury. And in our time came out '*Bristow's Motives*' again, with a new name, viz. '*The Touchstone of the New Gospel*:' which Dr. Simon Patrick, afterwards bishop of Ely, briefly and effectually answered. Thus had this book been made use of by those of that religion, even to our days, as a doughty piece to persuade to the Roman catholic religion."—Strype, *Annals*, vol. ii. part 2. p. 498.

The title of the original work alluded to in this extract is as follows: "A Briefe Treatise of diverse plaine and sure wayes to finde out the truthe in this doubtful and dangerous time of Heresie: contayning sundry worthy Motiues unto the Catholic faith, or considerations to move a man to beleve the Catholikes, and not the Heretics. Sette out by Richard Bristow, priest, licentiat in divinitie, Antwerpiae, apud Iohannem Foulcerum Anglum; 1574, (8vo,) cum privilegio."

A second edition was put forth at Antwerp, without printer's name, in 8vo, 1599.

The *Motives* or arguments of which it consists are distributed under 47 heads, but by no means correspond with those of the work with which Strype would identify it. It has pre-

so exposed to the scorn of all men by Mr. R. Montague, (afterward bishop of Chichester, and at last of Norwich^b), that for many years it sculked and durst not show its head, till they imagined that baffle was forgot, and then out it came again in the reign of king Charles II., as if it had never been seen before, with this new title, *The Touch-Stone of the Reformed Gospel*^c. And the better to disguise the cheat, they begin the book with a new chapter (or section), and have quite left out that which was formerly the last chapter, transposing also the order of some of the rest, making amendments, as they imagine, in several places, and adding several whole chapters. For there were but forty-seven points, (one of which, as I said, they now have wholly omitted,) which they charged upon us, and undertook to confute in the first edition; but now they are improved to two and fifty, and set out as formerly with a long Preface of the very same stamp with the book, full, that is, of broad-faced untruths.

Of which it may be expected I should here give some account, but my answer to the book itself is grown so much bigger than I designed, that it must be omitted. For the great reason which was

fixed to it a lengthy preface by the author, and the approval of Cardinal Allen, dated Douay, 30 Apr. 1574. In the year 1608, some years after Bristow's death, a posthumous volume was published by Thomas Worthington, with a life of the author, &c., entitled, "Richardi Bristoi, Vigorniensis, eximii suo tempore sacrae theologiae doctoris et professoris Motiva, omnibus catholicae doctrinae orthodoxis cultoribus pernecessaria, ut quae singulas omnium aetatum ac praesentis maximae temporis haereses funditus extirpet: Romanae autem ecclesiae auctoritatem fidemque firmissimis argumentis stabiliat."—4to, Atrebat. 1608.

This work consists for the most part of the same materials as the former, but re-arranged and amplified: the number of heads or Motives being at the same time condensed into seventeen. The same preface translated and somewhat enlarged is prefixed to it.

Bristow was answered by Fulk a few years after the first appearance of his work, in "A Retentive to stay good Christians in true faith and religion, against the motives of Richard Bristow, &c. imprinted at London by Thomas

Vautrouillier, for George Bishop."—8vo, 1580.]

^b [Montague's answer bore the still more quaint designation, "A Gag for the New Gospel?—No, a New Gag for an old Goose, who would undertake to stop all Protestant mouths for ever with 276 places out of their own English Bibles," &c. (1625.) Some account of the controversy will be found in Heylin's *Life of Laud*, p. 119, and Fuller, vi. 18. Another reply was put forth about the same time by Dr. Richard Bernard: "The Removing the Gagg of the New Gospell," &c.—4to, Lond. 1626.]

^c ["The Touchstone of the Reformed Gospell: wherein the principal heads and tenents of the Protestant doctrine (objected against catholics) are briefly refuted. By the express texts of the Protestants Bible, set forth and approved by the Church of England: with the ancient fathers judgements thereon, in confirmation of the catholick doctrine. Luke xix. 22. *Out of thy own mouth will I judge thee.* Permissu superiorum." First published in the year 1675, and "the last edition exactly corrected" in 1677.]

urged by those who had power to persuade me to undertake a new answer to it was, because bishop Montague's was so large, that few could purchase it. And therefore they thought it needful there should be a more compendious confutation of the book, though now it be enlarged, especially since they found it in every parish of this great city, and in the very prisons where the Romish priests could meet with any entertainment.

For which reason the same persons have persuaded me, that what I composed at their desire in the latter end of the late reign ought now to be published, because the priests of that church, they assure me, are still very busy, and make account this little book which I answer will do their business; for they put it into the hands of all those whom they hope to make their proselytes, and desire them to read it as an unanswerable piece.

Let the reader judge of that when he hath seriously considered what I have said to discover both the weakness and the dishonesty of its author; who understood neither the Scriptures nor fathers he quotes, or hath so perverted them, that as it cost me more time, so I have been forced to use more words than I intended to employ, to represent his unskilful or false dealing. But I hope I shall neither tire the reader nor entertain him unprofitably, but increase his knowledge by a right understanding of a considerable part of the Bible and of the Christian doctrine. Especially if he will be pleased to turn to the texts of Scripture which I have explained, but not quoted at length, for fear of swelling this answer into too great a bulk.

Feb. 22, 1690.

AN ANSWER
TO THE
TOUCHSTONE OF THE REFORMED GOSPEL.

I.

The protestants, he saith, affirm that there is not in the church one, and that an infallible rule, for understanding the holy Scriptures, and conserving unity in matters of faith^a.

ANSWER.

THIS proposition is drawn up deceitfully. For neither we maintain this, nor they maintain the contrary universally and without limitation. No papist dare say there is one, and that an infallible rule, for understanding all the holy Scripture. For then, why have we not an infallible comment upon the whole Bible? Why do their doctors disagree in the interpretation of a thousand places? He ought therefore to have said, that we hold there is not in the church one, and that an infallible rule, for understanding as much as is necessary to salvation, &c. And then he belies us; for we believe the Scripture itself gives us infallible directions for the understanding of its sense in all things necessary; which if all would follow, there would be unity in matters of necessary belief: but God will not force men to follow those directions. They may err, and they may quarrel, when they have an infallible rule to prevent both.

The Scriptures therefore whereby he proves what he charges upon us must needs be impertinent. But it is something strange, that in the very first of them he should be so

^a ["Touchstone," &c. p. 1.]

senseless as to give himself the lie. For he pretends to refute our errors, as his words are, by the express words of our own Bibles, and immediately puts in a word of his own instead of that in our Bibles, which say quite another thing. For instead of *according to the proportion of faith*^b, (which are the words of our translation^c;) he says, “according to the rule of faith.” What is this but that chopping and changing which he falsely charges us withal in the end of his preface? And it is a change not only of the words of our Bible, (which he promised to quote expressly,) but of the sense of that Scripture as it is expounded by the ancient doctors; particularly St. Chrysostom^d and his followers, who, by *proportion*, understand the same with *measure* in the foregoing^e. And thus Menochius, one of their own interpreters, and a Jesuit; *Secundum proportionem et mensuram fidei*, i. e. ‘according to the measure of understanding and wisdom which God hath bestowed^f.’

Now what can you expect from a man who falsifies in this manner at the very first dash? In the next Scripture, indeed, he finds the word *rules*^g, and presently imagines it is a rule for the interpreting of Scripture infallibly, &c. Whereas it is manifest to all who are not blinded with prejudice, that the apostle supposes in the words before^h they were not all of a mind in some things: for there were those among them that believed in Christ, who thought the observation of Moses’s law to be necessary also to salvation; which was a dangerous error, to mix legal and evangelical things together, as Theodoret here expounds itⁱ; but might possibly be cured, if Christian communion were not broken on either side by reason of this difference; but every one, both the perfect, who understood their freedom from the obligation of that law, and the imperfect, who fancied it still lay upon them, walked by the same rule, &c., that is, preserved Christian communion one with another in the bond of peace: for he speaks here, saith Theodoret, of concord, and the rule is, the evangelical preaching or doctrine; by

^b [His words are “according to the proportion (or Rule) of faith.”]

^c Rom. xii. 6.

^d In Rom. xii. 6. [tom. ix. p. 664.]

^e Ver. 3.

^f [“Id est, intelligentiæ et sapientiæ a Deo nobis concessæ,”—in loc. tom. ii. p. 125.]

^g Philip. iii. 16. ^h Ver. 15.

ⁱ [Τὰ νομικὰ τῶ ἐὺαγγελίῳ παραμικγύναι,—in loc. tom. iii. p. 464.]

which if we walked, it would help to procure agreement in matters of faith. But they of the church of Rome are so far from this, that they have broken all communion by their tyrannical impositions, and making other rules besides the evangelical doctrine.

The next place evidently speaks of the selfsame thing^k, that there is no necessity of being circumcised and observing the law, but if we be regenerated by the Christian faith, we are sure of the Divine favour. In short, the rule here spoken of is that of the *new creature* mentioned in the foregoing words^l.

But the fourth text more fully shows this man to be a mere trifler with words without their sense. For in 2 Cor. x. 15, there is not a syllable of the rule or line of faith, as he dreams; but only of the bounds and limits of those countries in which the apostle had preached the gospel, as Menochius himself interprets itⁿ. This he might have learnt, if he had pleased, by the very next words, where the apostle saith, he did not boast in another man's line, or rule, of things made ready to his hand; i. e. those countries and provinces which had been cultivated by other apostles; glorying (as Menochius^o well glosses) in other men's labours, as if they had been his own. Now this is a pretty infallible rule of interpreting Scriptures, by the regions in which the apostles preached. An excellent proof that there is one rule of interpreting Scripture, because St. Paul had his own rule, and others had their rule: that is, not one and the same, for he took care not to preach the gospel in another man's line, i. e. in those places where others had done it already. Are these Romish emissaries in their wits when they write on this fashion? Either they have no understanding of what they write, or hope their writings will fall into the hands of readers who understand nothing, else they would be ashamed of such wretched stuff.

From hence he carries us back to the first Epistle unto the Corinthians xi. 16, which no doubt he would have put before the second, could he have found the word *rule* there, which was all he sought for, not regarding the sense. But alas, he could find

^k Gal. vi. 16.

^l Ver. 15.

ⁿ ["Scilicet mensuram nostram, regiones nobis attributæ ad prædi-

candum,"—in loc. tom. ii. p. 149.]

^o ["Alienis laboribus glorians quasi meis,"—ibid.]

only the word *custom* in that place, which he hoped his foolish reader would be content to take for the same with *rule*. And what is this *rule* (as he will needs have it) of which the apostle is there speaking? Is it about any matter of faith? No, only about women's praying barefaced without a covering over them, which the apostle says was against the *custom* of the church. So the same Menochius, whom alone I mention of later writers in their church, because he saith, in his preface, he hath gathered his commentaries out of all the best writers. And what church doth St. Paul here mean? only one church, or all that he had planted? He himself answers, *We have no such custom, nor other churches of God neither*^q; "therefore you not only cross us, but the whole church," as Theophylact^r expounds the words: and to the same effect Theodoret^s: "He shows that these things did not seem so to him only, but to all *the churches of God*." Let the Romanists show us any such authority as this, of *all the churches*, for any thing wherein we differ, and see whether we will be *contentious*; though I must tell them, that there are a vast many differences between the decrees of the pastors of late times, though never so many hundreds, and the authority of those few pastors (as this man calls them) which had the prescription only of twenty or thirty years after Christ. For these few pastors were the apostles themselves, infallible men, and other apostolical persons who were guided by their directions.

And now he comes to tell us by what other titles this rule of faith is called in Scripture, instead of telling us by what names the infallible rule for understanding Scripture is called; for the good man when he had gone thus far had forgotten what he was about.

The *form of doctrine* mentioned^t will do him no service, for it is, saith Theophylact^u, "to live aright, and with an excellent conversation." Or "that form of doctrine," saith Menochius^x, "which the apostles had impressed upon the Romans by their preaching:" unto which is there opposed, not disunion and disorder, &c. (as this scribbler pretends,) but their serving sin.

^q [In loc. tom. ii. p. 137.]

^r [In loc. tom. ii. p. 188 E.]

^s [In loc. tom. iii. p. 235.]

^t Rom. vi. 17.

^u [Τίς δὲ ὁ τύπος τῆς διδαχῆς; Τὸ ὀρθῶς ζῆν, καὶ μετὰ πολιτείας ἀρίστης, —in loc. tom. ii. p. 44 C.]

^x [In loc. tom. ii. p. 118.]

But he hoped his credulous readers would never trouble themselves to look into the places he alleges, else he would not have had the impudence (if it were not mere ignorance and folly that betrayed him into it) to mention the next place of Scripture: *A thing made ready to hand*.

He should have said, *things made ready*, if he would have stood to his promise of quoting express words of our Bible. For so it is both in our translation and in the original, and even in the Latin translation itself. By which is meant, as the same Menochius judiciously observes^z, “provinces or countries already cultivated by the preaching of the apostles, and prepared thereby to bring forth fruit.” And so Theodoret^a: “He reproves those,” saith he, “who would not preach the gospel among unbelievers, &c.” Let the reader here again look about and see if he can spy a word about disunion, discord, disobedience, &c. in this place, of which this man saith there always is mention in the very text which he alleges.

In the next indeed there is mention of *vain babbling, and opposition of science falsely so called*^b; where he bids Timothy keep that which is committed unto his trust, (not the church’s trust, as this man again shamefully corrupts both our translation and the text.) And what is this *depositum* or trust, but the plain doctrine of the gospel? unto which he opposes the new phrases and the new doctrines which the school of Simon Magus had brought in, as Menochius^c interprets it out of Theodoret, whose words are these^d; “They that had their original from Simon were called Gnostics, as much as to say ‘men endued with knowledge;’ for those things in which the holy Scriptures were silent, they said God had revealed to them.” This the apostle calls a *false knowledge*; from whence I think it clearly follows, that Theodoret thought true Christian knowledge to be contained only in the holy Scriptures: which is the doctrine, he saith, (let the Romanists mind this,) which “all that have the dignity of priesthood ought carefully to keep and propose to themselves as a certain rule, and by this square all that they say, all that they do.” In short, Tertullian (*de Præscript. c. 25*^e)

^y 2 Cor. x. 16.

^z [Tom. ii. p. 149.]

^a [In loc. tom. iii. p. 340.]

^b 1 Tim. vi. 20.

^c [In loc. p. 180.]

^d [In loc. tom. iii. p. 673.]

^e [P. 210 D.]

understands by the *thing committed unto him*, that doctrine which the apostle delivered in this epistle. To which Theodoret adds, “the grace of the Holy Ghost, which he received at his ordination:” that is, his office committed unto him, and all the gifts of the Spirit bestowed on him to qualify him for this office.

He bids us see more in several other places of Scripture, whose words he is not pleased to recite, and therefore I shall pass them by; because if there had been any thing to be seen in them to his purpose, he would have set them forth at large.

And there is as little to be seen in the fathers whom he mentions to confirm his pretended catholic doctrine. And therefore he doth no more than name Irenæus^f, and Tertullian^g, without alleging their words. But he adventures to set down some words out of Vincentius Lirinensis^h, though he doth not tell us where to find them. We need not go far indeed to seek for them, they being in the beginning of his book; where he that is able to read it may find a full confutation of the Roman pretences. For having said that the way to preserve our faith sound is, first by the authority of the divine law, secondly by the tradition of the catholic church; he raises this objection, (which shows how much the first of these is above the other,) “Since the rule of the Scripture is perfect, and abundantly sufficient unto itself for all purposes, (mark this, which cuts the throat of the Roman cause,) what need is there to join unto this the authority of the catholic sense?” To which he answers, that the Scriptures being a great depth are not understood by all in the same sense; but Novatian understands them one way, Photinus another, Sabellius, Donatus, Arius, &c. another. And therefore, because of the windings and turnings of error, the line of prophetic and apostolical interpretation should be directed according to the rule of ecclesiastical and catholic sense. Thus he ends his book as he begins itⁱ: “We have not recourse to ecclesiastical tradition, because the Scripture is not sufficient to itself for all things, but because of various interpretations.”

^f [Lib. iv. cap. 45. al. 27. tom. i. p. 263.]

^g [De Præscr. Hæer. capp. 15, 19. pp. 207, 208.]

^h [Commonit. i. capp. 1, 2. in Max. bibl. vet. patr. tom. vii. p. 250.]

ⁱ [Commonit. cap. antep. ibid. p. 262.]

But then he immediately subjoins in the entrance of his book, what that catholic sense is (chap. iii.^k), viz. "That which is believed every where, and always, and by all." Which is a rule by which we in this church guide ourselves, and from which the church of Rome hath departed. For which I refer the reader to king James I.'s Admonition, page 331^l, and the letter written in his name to cardinal Perron, where he expressly owns this rule, p. 22, edit. Lond. 1612^m.

And yet even this rule hath its limitations given it by Vincentius himself, which this writer should have been so honest as to have confessed. For in conclusion (cap. xxxix.ⁿ) he saith, that "the ancient consent of fathers is to be studiously sought and followed, not in all the little questions of the divine law or Scripture, (for alas! there is no consent,) but only or chiefly in the rule of faith:" that is, in those questions (as he explains it, cap. xli.^o.) on which the "foundations of the whole catholic faith rely." And further he observes, that "all heresies cannot always be confuted this way, but only those which are newly invented as soon as they arise, before they have falsified the rules of the ancient faith, and before they have endeavoured to corrupt the books of the ancients by the spreading of their poison. For inveterate heretics, and such as have spread themselves, must not be impugned this way, but only by the authority of holy Scripture, or at leastwise by the universal councils of catholic priests, wherein they have been convinced and condemned."

I have been the longer in this, because he is a "most worthy witness," as this man calls him, by whom we are willing to be tried. And so we are by Tertullian, some of whose words he also at last adventures to allege, out of two chapters of his book Of Prescriptions against Heretics. But as he jumbles together words far distant one from another, so he durst not take notice of a chapter between the xvth and the sixth, which would have explained the reason why sometimes they disputed not with heretics out of the Scripture; because that heresy of which he there treats did not receive some Scripture, and if it did receive some, "it did not receive them entire, but perverted them by

^k [P. 250.]

^l [Præmonition to all Christian monarches, &c., p. 331. Works, fol. Lond. 1616.]

^m [Defence of the right of kings, &c. Works, p. 398.]

ⁿ [P. 261.]

^o [P. 262.]

additions and detractions, as served its purpose^p," &c. In short, "they would not acknowledge these things," that is, the Scriptures, "by which they should have been convinced." To what purpose then had it been to talk to them of the Scriptures? No, "let them believe (saith he, cap. xxiii.^q) without the Scripture, that they may believe against the Scripture," just as the present Romanists now do. From whence it is that he calls heretics *lucifuga Scripturarum*, 'men that fly from the light of the Scriptures.' Insomuch that he lays down this for a rule in the same book (cap. iii.^r); "Take from heretics those things which they have learnt from the heathen, that they may state their questions out of the Scriptures alone, and they cannot stand." Unto which rule if the papists will yield, their cause is gone. Let all doctrines be examined by the Scripture, and we desire no more: unto which it is manifest Tertullian appeals in other places so plainly, that there is no way to evade it; particularly in his book *Of the Flesh of Christ*, cap. vi.^s "Let them prove the angels took flesh from the stars; if they cannot prove it, because it is not written, then Christ's flesh was not from thence," &c. And again in the same chapter, "There is no evidence of this, because the Scripture doth not say it." And plainest of all in the next chapter, "I do not receive what thou inferrest of thy own, without Scripture."

Let these men blush, if they can, who thus shamelessly pervert all things to a wrong sense; as they do these two words, *rule*, and *form of faith*; which this man hath the confidence to say is "the knowledge of tradition^t." But how we should know any tradition to be true which is not contained in the Scripture, is the question; especially since there have been so many false traditions, as is confessed by all sides. Besides, it is so far from being true, that the two forenamed fathers lay down tradition for the rule of faith, or put it before the Scripture, that Vincentius expressly puts the divine Scripture in the first place as our guide, and then the ecclesiastical sense, as a means, in some cases, to find the sense of Scriptures. And Tertullian^u as expressly in that very book which he quotes,

^p Cap. xvii. [p. 208 A.]

^q [P. 210 A.]

^r L. de Resur. Carn. cap. xlvi.
[p. 354 B.]

^s [P. 312 A.]

^t [P. 5.]

^u [De Præser. Hær.] Cap. xiii.
[p. 206 D.]

and in the chapter preceding, makes the Apostles' Creed the rule of faith ; which is all contained in the Scripture, and needs the help of no tradition but that to prove it.

But after all I must ask, what is all this which he babbles in the conclusion of this chapter to that which he pretends to prove in the beginning, that there is one infallible rule for understanding the holy Scripture? Which, if he would have spoken sense, he should have shown is tradition : but not a syllable of this ; he only endeavours to lose his reader in a mist of words. He knew, if he understood any thing, there is no traditive interpretation of Scripture : for if there be, why is there such difference among their own interpreters in the exposition of it? Nay, why do they reject ancient interpretations of Scripture, for which there is some tradition? As Maldonate, a famous Jesuit, doth upon Matt. xix. 11. Where he confesses^y, that almost all expound these words, as if the sense of them was, that all men cannot live single, because all have not the gift of continency : (and among these almost all, he himself mentions Origen, Greg. Nazianzen, St. Ambrose :) “but I cannot persuade myself,” saith he, “to follow this interpretation.” A most remarkable instance of the partiality of these men, who would tie us to receive the sense of one or two, and miscall us if we will not be bound up by them ; but take the liberty to themselves of rejecting almost all when it serves their interest.

II.

The protestants, he saith, affirm that in matters of faith we must not rely upon the judgment of the church and her pastors, but only upon the written word^z.

ANSWER.

OUR doctrine is, that the written word is the only rule of our faith : and therefore we cannot rely barely upon the judgment of the church and of her pastors, (as papists do,) but must have what they deliver proved out of the word of God.

This is not contrary to our Bibles, but conformable to them :

^y [Col. 402.]

^z [Touchstone, &c. p. 6.]

for they call us *to the law and to the testimony*^a. And the apostles themselves we find, nay, our blessed Lord and Saviour, did not desire to be believed, unless they spake according to the Scriptures, unto which they appealed^b. Whose “express words” if we contradict, we are void of all sense; but if we do not, it must be confessed he is void of all shame, in charging us with affirming that which is contrary to the express words of our own Bibles, particularly Matt. xxiii. 2, *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do.*

Let the reader here seriously consider what a front this man hath, who talks of “express words,” when there is not an express syllable in this place, either of church, or of pastors, or of their judgment, or of faith. O! but he speaks of *Scribes and Pharisees*, which is the same. But doth this answer his pretensions of giving us express words, and not words tantamount? And if *Scribes and Pharisees* be equivalent to church and pastors, it must be his own church and pastors, (for they are not our patterns,) which is not much to their honour to be the successors of the Scribes and Pharisees. Whose authority, sure, was not such that our Saviour here required his disciples to rely upon it in matters of faith. For if they had they must have rejected their Lord and Master, and denied him to be the Christ. Into this ditch those blind guides at last plunged those who blindly followed them. Therefore all that our Saviour here meant is, (as wiser men than this, and Jesuits too, acknowledge,) that they should obey them, being teachers, “in all things not repugnant to the law and the divine commandments.” So the before-named Menochius^c upon the place, to say nothing of the ancients, who would have thrust out of the church such a man as this, who maintains that Christ taught his disciples “to obey those pastors, not only in some principal matters, but in all whatsoever, without distinction or limitation.” Which I may truly say is a doctrine of the devil.

Nor is there any thing express in the next place^d, and therefore he only makes his inference from it, which should have been this, if he had known how to discourse; that the apostles

^a Isa. viii. 20.

^b Luke xxiv. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

^c [“Omnia quæ legi et mandatis

divinis non repugnant,” — in loc. tom. ii. p. 25.]

^d Luke x. 16.

were the legates and interpreters of Christ, as Christ was of God. Therefore he that *despised* the apostles *despised* Christ, as he that despised Christ despised God. But what then? Truly nothing to this man's purpose. For the church and the pastors now have not the authority of apostles. If they had, they would not desire, no more than the apostles did, to be believed without proof from the Scriptures.

Upon the next place, which is as impertinent, he passes a very wise note; that our Saviour doth not say *whosoever*, but *whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth*^d, &c. Whereby he shuts out St. Peter and his successors (to whom they commonly apply this text) from all jurisdiction over persons, and confine it unto things only. Let his church reward him for this service, for we are not at all concerned in his note; but rather note how far he is still from bringing express texts to his purpose: here being as little express mention of faith, and of pastors, and of the church, and their judgment, as in the former places. And if you will believe Menochius^e, (a better interpreter than this,) our Saviour speaks of "the supreme power of remitting or retaining sins, of excommunicating and absolving," not a word that he could see of "untying knots and difficulties in matters of faith."

He bids us "see more places in Deut. xvii. 8," &c.^f But would advise the reader not to trouble himself to turn to them. For the first and two last are nothing to his purpose, and the second is directly against him. For the prophet doth not bid them go and ask the priests their opinion, but ask them what the law of God was in the case propounded.

And there is as little to be found in the fathers^g, the last of which is no father. For he lived in the time of our king Henry I., and was a stickler for his master, pope Urban, who,

^d Matt. xvi. 19.

^e ["Suprema potestas remittendi aut retinendi peccata, excommunicandi et absolvendi."]

^f [These passages are: Deut. xvii. 8; Hagg. ii. 11; 2 Chron. xix. 8. unto the end; 2 Thess. ii. 15.]

^g [He cites S. Greg. Naz. in Orat. excusat. (orat. ii. ed. Ben. vid. p. 48.)

Tertull. lib. de Præscript. S. Cyprian. lib. i. epist. 3. (59. ed. Fell. p. 121.) S. Aug. lib. i. contr. Cresc. cap. 33. (tom. ix. col. 408.) et contr. Faust. cap. 5. (tom. viii. col. 154 A.) Vincent. Lyr. in suo Commonit.; and S. Anselm. lib. de Incar. cap. 1. (al. cap. 2. tom. i. p. 60.).]

in this man's logic, is become the church and her pastors, upon whose judgment we must rely. In good time they will be judges in their own cause, and then the business is done.

III.

His next charge is, that we affirm, the Scriptures are easy to be understood, and that therefore none ought to be restrained from reading of them g.

ANSWER.

This is neither our position, nor is the contrary theirs. For no protestant will say that all Scriptures are easy to be understood, nor will any papist say they are all hard to be understood. Some are easy; as much, that is, as is necessary to our salvation. Which is the express affirmation of St. Chrysostom in many places: Πάντα ἀναγκαῖα δῆλα, 'all things necessary are manifest^h.'

Now let us see what there is expressly contrary to this in our Bible. First, St. Peter doth not say that *the Scriptures* are hard to be understood, but that there are *some things* therein *hard to be understood*ⁱ; and those things in St. Paul's epistles. The rest of the Scripture, notwithstanding this, may be easy; and the hard places he doth not say wrested by everybody, but only by such as are *unlearned and unstable*. Let us but learn and be steadfastly fixed in the principles of religion, and practise accordingly; then we shall not be in that danger, but may read the Revelation itself without hazarding our salvation. Nothing will be in danger of destruction by reading the Scriptures humbly and piously, (as they themselves teach us to do;) but only men's vices, and the Roman church; which it is easy to see, in that hard book the Revelation, is doomed in due time unto destruction. For, without understanding every particular passage, one may easily see in general, with a little help, that Rome is there intended; and not pagan Rome, but

g [Touchstone, &c. p. 9.]

^h Hom. 3. in 2 Thess. [tom. xi. p. 528 B.] ⁱ 2 Pet. iii. 16.

Christian ; which is degenerated into an idolatrous and tyrannical state.

The following text^k is like to this, which doth not say that the eunuch could understand nothing in the Scriptures, (for then he would not have troubled himself to read them,) but that he could not understand that place of the prophet which he was reading when Philip met with him. Which was obscure to him only in part, not in the whole, before he was converted to Christianity ; but is not so to us, who enjoy the glorious light of the gospel. In which there are some things we cannot understand, neither with a guide nor without ; but other things, as I said, are so plain that we cannot mistake them unless we do it wilfully. Against which there is no help, though we had the most infallible guide that ever was.

The next place speaks not one word of the difficulty of the Scriptures, but rather supposes them to be easy enough, even in those matters of which Christ was speaking, if the apostles had not been then *fools, and slow of heart*^l. Which names they had not deserved, if the Scriptures had been so hard that it was not their fault they could not understand them before he expounded them. The things they read there were not in themselves difficult, but the disciples did not at that time sufficiently attend to what was written. For if they “ could not” (as this man affirms) have understood them, I do not see how they could be justly blamed by our Saviour, much less so severely reprehended. Besides, it is to be observed both of this place and the former, that they speak of the prophetic writings, in which there are greater obscurities than in other parts of Scriptures ; and yet even these, if they had not been *fools*, might have been understood without putting our Saviour to the pains of expounding them.

One would be tempted to think the man distracted, when he set down the next place^m to prove his position. For the *sealed book* which the angel said *no man could read* was not the Bible, but the ensuing prophecy ; which our Saviour presently after opened, and hath in some measure let us into its meaning. I beseech the reader to mark what a dolt this man is, who makes the book of Scripture to be “ shut with so many

^k Acts viii. 30.

^l Luke xxiv. 25.

^m Rev. v. 1.

seals, that even in St. John's and the apostles' times, none could be found either in heaven or earth able to open the same, or look therein." For what is the consequence of this, if it be true, but that the Bible must be quite thrown away, and neither priest, nor bishop, nor pope, nor council look therein? For they cannot be more able than St. John and the rest of the apostles. O that all people would see by what sottish guides they are led on in darkness!

If he had thought that heap of texts which followⁿ would have done him any service, we should have had their words, no doubt, and not merely the chapter and verse; but they are set down only for show, and the Rev. v. is reckoned again to make up the tale. The holy fathers are mentioned for no other end, their words being so full and so numerous on our side, that it would fill a bigger book than this if I should muster them up. Particularly those very fathers whom he quotes, and in the very books he mentions, are of our minds^o. But it is sufficient for the ordinary reader to observe, that at this man's rate of proving nobody must read the Scriptures, no, not such as St. Ambrose, if the Scriptures be such a sea as he speaks of, a depth of prophetic riddles. But the truth is, St. Ambrose doth not say what this man makes him speak; not that "it is a depth," &c., but that "it hath in it profound senses, and a depth of prophetic riddles." It hath so, and it hath also plain places in it, which are not so deep but they may be fathomed by ordinary, even by shallow capacities. St. Austin saith nothing contrary to this^p, but must be supposed to know enough, though much less than what he did not know. And so must the rest of the fathers be understood, or else the Scripture is good for nothing, even if such men as Dionysius^q, Gregory the Great^r, &c. could understand little or nothing of it. If what they say be to his purpose, it is concerning themselves, and not others; and therefore they

ⁿ [2 Pet. i. 20; Matt. xiii. 11, 36; Luke xxiv. 45; 1 Cor. xii. 10; Luke viii. 10, 54, and ii. 50; 2 Tim. iii. 7; 1 John iv. 6; John v. 35; Psalm cxix. 18, 34; Rev. v. 1, 5.]

^o [S. Ambr. epist. 44. ad Constant. (epist. ii. ed. Ben. tom. ii.

col. 755 C.]

^p [S. Aug. epist. 119. (ed. Ben. epist. lv.) cap. 21. tom. ii. col. 143 D.]

^q [Apud Euseb. H. E. vii. 20.]

^r [Hom. 6. in Ezech. tom. i. col. 1213 sqq.]

ought to have refrained from reading the Scripture as well as the vulgar. What then will become of the common people, if their greatest guides could know so little of the mind of God?

His last author he took upon trust, or else is an egregious falsifier. For there is nothing to that purpose in the chapter he quotes, l. vii. cap. 20. There are words to that effect in the 25th chapter, where Irenæus^s writing against those who denied the Revelation of St. John to be a divine book, saith, "Though I do not understand it, yet I suppose there is a deeper sense in the words: and not measuring those things, nor judging of them by my reasonings, but giving more to faith, I esteem them to be higher than to be comprehended by me; but I do not reject that which I cannot understand, but admire it the more, because I am not able to understand it." Now, with what face could this man apply that to the whole Scripture, which is spoken only of the Book of the Revelation? Let the reader judge by this, what honesty he is to expect in other quotations.

IV.

He makes us say next, that apostolical traditions, and ancient customs of the church, (not found in the written word,) are not to be received, nor do oblige us^t.

ANSWER.

THIS is a downright calumny; for we have ever owned that apostolical traditions, if we knew where to find them in any place but the Bible, are to be received and followed, if delivered by them as of necessary obligation. But we do likewise say, that we know no such traditions; for those which have been called so have been rejected even by the Roman church itself; or having received them, they have laid them aside again. In short, they sometimes pretend to traditions where there are none, and where there are, they have forsaken them, and in several cases they pervert them and turn them into another

^s [An error of the author or p. 352.]

printer for Dionysius, quoted by ^t [Touchstone, &c., p. 11.]
Eusebius, Eccles. Hist. vii. 25.

thing. As they have done, for instance, with purgatory-fire, which the ancients thought would be at the day of judgment, and not till then; but they have kindled already, and would have us believe souls are now frying therein.

As for ancient customs, sometimes called also traditions, they have not been always alike, nor in all places one and the same. But the church of England declares, that “whosoever through his private judgment willingly and purposely doth openly break the traditions (i. e. customs) and ceremonies of the church, which be not repugnant to the word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly,” &c. They are the very words of our xxxivth Article of Religion. Which teaches withal, that “every particular or national church hath authority to change and abolish such ceremonies or rites as were ordained by man’s authority,” &c.

And now what hath this babbler to allege out of our Bible against this? Truly nothing at all, but only the word *tradition*, which he is very ignorant if he do not know that we own. For we affirm that the doctrines of the holy Scripture are traditions. And of such the apostle speaks in 2 Thess. ii. 15, which is thus expounded by Theodoret^x; “Keep the rule of doctrine, the words delivered to you by us, which we both preached when we were present with you, and wrote when we were absent.” So that the things which were spoken were not different from those which were written, but the very same. He spoke when he was with them what he wrote when he was gone from them. Whence it is clear indeed, that the traditions delivered by word of mouth were of equal authority with what was written, (as this man gravely saith,) for they were the same. And it is also certain, as he adds, “that before the New Testament was written all was delivered by word of mouth.” But what then? “therefore apostolical traditions are to be received.” Yes, because what was delivered by word of mouth was the very same which afterwards was written. But here is no shadow of proof that we are bound to receive traditions which were never written.

Nor is there more in the next place^y, but much less; for there is not a syllable of word of mouth, and Theodoret expressly

^x [In loc. tom. iii. p. 537.]

^y 2 Thess. iii. 6.

says^z, that by *tradition* here the apostle means not that διὰ λόγων, 'by words,' but that διὰ τῶν ἔργων, 'by works;' that is, he bids them follow his example, (as St. Chrysostom also understands it,) which he proves to be the meaning by what follows, where he saith the apostle teaches what he had delivered by his example; *For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us, for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you^a, &c.* Wherefore, (as I may better say than this man doth,) in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, let all good men withdraw from them who thus falsely pretend to tradition; when they dare not stand to the interpretations of the best of the ancient fathers, and walk disorderly by breaking their own rule, which requires them to interpret the Scriptures according to their unanimous consent^b.

From hence he runs back (like a distracted man who catches at any thing at random) to the First Epistle to the Corinthians^c, which one would have expected in the front. But perhaps he was sensible it had nothing in it but the bare word *tradition* to his purpose, and therefore brought it in after he hoped the reader's mind would be possessed with a false notion, which would make any thing go down with him. And the truth is, there is nothing here for his turn; for if the *traditions* mentioned by the apostle be about matters of order and decency, (as one would think by what follows concerning praying with the head covered or uncovered,) they themselves acknowledge such traditions do not oblige in all places and times. If the apostle means other traditions about matters of doctrine, how doth it appear that now they are not written? As that about the holy Communion is, which the apostle speaks of in the latter part of that chapter^d. In which the church of Rome hath very fairly followed tradition (I mean shamefully forsaken it) by leaving off the ministration of the cup to the people; which, according to what the apostle saith he received from the Lord, and delivered unto them, ought to be given as much as the bread.

Consider then, I beseech you, with what conscience or sense this man could say that we reject all traditions, when we

^z [P. 539.]

[Labbe tom. xx. col. 23.]

^a 2 Thess. iii. 7, 8.

^c 1 Cor. xi. 2.

^b Council of Trent, Sess. iv.

receive this, for instance, more fully than themselves. And how he abuses St. Paul, in making him as schismatically uncharitable as himself, by representing him as disowning us for his brethren, (which St. Austin durst not do by the Donatists,) who are so far from forgetting him in all things, that we remember him and his words better than they do, and keep to his traditions (as I said) just as he hath delivered them unto us. Poor man! he thinks he hath made a fine speech for St. Paul, and made him say to us quite contrary to that he says to the Corinthians. Whereas (according to Theodoret^e, another kind of interpreter than he) “the apostle dispraises the Corinthians as much as he makes him dispraise us: for these words,” saith he, “do not contain true praise, but he speaks ironically, and in truth reprehends them, as not having kept the orders which he had set them.” As if he had said, “You have full well observed the traditions which I left with you, when there is such unbecoming behaviour among you in the time of divine service.” Which nobody need be told, unless he be such an idiot as this, is not a form of commendation, but of reproof.

Lastly, he comes from express Scripture to none at all, for he betakes himself to reasoning, and asks a very doughty question; “If nothing be to be believed but only what is left us written, wherein should the church have exercised herself from Adam to Moses, the space of two thousand six hundred years?”

Let me ask him another; How doth he prove nothing was written all this time? Whence had Moses all that he writes of the times before him, if not out of ancient records? It is more likely there were writings before his, than that there were not. However, our saying there were can no more be confuted, than his saying there were not can be proved.

If the reader be not satisfied with this, he bids him see more Scriptures, and names near a dozen places^f, in never a one of which there is any mention, much less express mention, of tradition: and in the last, the decrees which the apostles are said to deliver are expressly written also in that very chapter and

^e [In loc. tom. iii. p. 232.]

xxi. 25; 1 Cor. xi. 16, 34; 2 John

^f [1 Tim. vi. 3, 20; 2 Tim. i. 13, and ii. 2; John xvi. 12, xx. 30; and

12; 3 John 13; Acts xvi. 4; xv. 28.]

place which he quotes^g. For it is said, ver. 23, *they wrote letters after this manner, &c.*; and ver. 30, *they gathered the multitude and delivered the epistle*. What an unlucky man this is, to confute himself after this fashion!

As for his fathers, he durst not quote the words of any but two only, St. Basil and St. Chrysostom. The first of which are out of a counterfeit part of a book of St. Basil^h, into which somebody hath foisted a discourse about tradition, which as it belongs not at all to his subject, so it contradicts his sense in another place; particularly in his book Of Confession of Faith, where he saith, “It is a manifest infidelity and arrogance, either to reject what is written, or to add any thing that is not writtenⁱ.” But admit those words which this man quotes to be St. Basil’s, they are manifestly false, by the confession of the Roman church, in that sense wherein he takes them; for if those things which he reckons up as apostolical traditions have equal force with those things which are written in the Scripture, how comes the church of Rome to lay aside several of them? For instance, “the words of invocation at the ostension of the bread of the eucharist, and the cup of blessing, the consecration of him that is baptized, standing in prayer on the first day of the week, and all the time between Easter and Whitsuntide.” And how comes it about that others of them are left at liberty, such as praying towards the east, and the three-fold immersion in baptism? Both which they themselves acknowledge to be indifferent, and yet are mentioned by this false St. Basil, (so I cannot but esteem him that wrote this,) among the things which are of equal force unto godliness with those delivered in Scripture. Nay, he proceeds so far as to say in the words following, that if we should reject such unwritten traditions, we should give a deadly wound to the gospel, or rather contract it into a bare name. A saying so senseless, or rather impious, that if these men had but a grain

^g Acts xv. 28.

^h De Spiritu Sancto, c. 27. [tom. iii. p. 54. There seems no adequate ground for doubting the genuineness or authenticity of this passage, which forms part of all the editions and MSS. It was derived by the author of the Touchstone from Bel-

larmine, De Verbo Dei non Scripto, lib. iv. cap. 7. tom. i. col. 184 A.]

ⁱ [Φανερά ἔκπτωσις πίστεως καὶ ὑπερηφανίας κατηγορία, ἢ ἀθετεῖν τι τῶν γεγραμμένων ἢ ἐπεισάγειν τῶν μὴ γεγραμμένων.—Hom. de Fide, tom. ii. p. 224 D.]

of common honesty, they could not thus endeavour to impose upon the world by such spurious stuff, as I would willingly think they have wit enough to see this is.

As for St. Chrysostom^k, it is manifest he speaks of the traditions of the whole church. And unless they be confirmed by Scripture, he contradicts himself in saying, “traditions not written are worthy of belief.” For upon Psal. xev. he saith expressly, “If any thing unwritten be spoken, the understanding of the auditors halts and wavers, sometimes inclining, sometimes hesitating^l ;” sometimes turning away from it as a frivolous saying, and again receiving it as probable: “but when the written testimony of the divine voice comes forth, it confirms and establishes both the words of the speaker and the minds of the hearers^m.”

V.

Next he makes us affirm, that a man by his own understanding or private spirit may rightly judge and interpret Scriptureⁿ.

ANSWER.

There is no such crude saying as this among us; but that which we affirm is, that a man may, in the faithful use of such means as God hath appointed, rightly understand the holy Scripture so far as is necessary for his salvation. Who should understand or judge for him but his own understanding, we can no more understand, than who should see for him but his own eyes, if he have any, and be not blind.

And what is there to be found in our Bibles expressly against this? The first place is far from express, for the gift of *prophesying*^o doth not to every one expressly signify the interpreting of Scripture, it having manifestly another signification in some places, viz. inditing hymns. Besides, if this place were pertinent, forbidding all to interpret Scripture but only such as

^k [“Ὡστε καὶ τὴν παράδοσιν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀξιόπιστον ἠγώμεθα.—In 2 Thess. hom. iv. tom. xi. p. 532 B.]

^l Ἐάν τι γὰρ ἄγραφον, &c.

^m Ὅταν δὲ ἔγγραφος ἢ μαρτυρία,

&c. p. 924, 30. edit. Sav. [inter spuria ed. Ben. tom. v. p. 636 B.]

ⁿ [Touchstone, p. 14.]

^o 1 Cor. xii. 8.

have the gift of prophecy, their church must not meddle with that work, for they have not that gift no more than those that follow, *discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, &c.*

His second place is as impertinent, for it doth not speak at all of interpreting the Scripture, but of the propheticall Scripture itself^p. Which was “not of *private interpretation*, that is, the proper invention of them that prophesied; for the propheticall oracles were given forth, not at the will and pleasure of man, but the holy prophets when they laid open secret things, or foretold future, were acted by the Spirit of God, and spake those things which were suggested by him.” These are the words of Menochius^q, which are sufficient to show the gross stupidity of this man’s glosses, who babbles here about a company of men, and those very holy, who are to do he knows not what, which private and profane men cannot do. As if all private men were profane, and all companies of men were holy. The Lord help them who follow such guides as these.

The third place, if it say any thing to this purpose, is expressly against him. For it is a direction to every Christian, not to be of too hasty belief, but to *try the spirits*^r, that is, doctrines which pretended to be from the Spirit of God. Now how should Christians try or examine them, but by using their own understandings to discern between pretended inspirations and true? If they must let others judge for them, they cross the apostle’s doctrine; for they do not try, but trust. To tell us that their church is infallible, and therefore ought to judge for us, is a pretence that must also be tried above all things else, and in which every man’s particular judgment must be satisfied, or else he cannot with reason believe it. And to believe it without reason is to be a fool: nor doth the apostle leave those to whom he writes without a plain rule whereby to judge of spirits, but lays down these two in the following words. 1. If any man denied Jesus Christ to be come in the flesh, he was a deceiver^s. And secondly, if any man rejected the apostles, and would not hear them, he was not to be received himself. *Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error*^t. This makes it plain the apostle did not leave them then without

^p 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

^q [In loc. tom. ii. p. 212.]

^r 1 John iv. 1.

^s Verse 2.

^t Verse 6.

means of judging aright, as he hath not left us now, who are to try all things by the doctrine of Christ and of his apostles.

What this man means by "the spirit of the whole church," which cannot be tried by "particular men," is past my understanding; and I believe he did not understand it himself, but used it as a big phrase, to amuse poor people withal. Who may easily understand that St. John speaks of particular persons, or of the doctrines vented by certain persons who pretended to be inspired, whom every particular Christian was bound to examine and try by this mark, whether they contradicted what the apostles taught; which was sufficient, if they did, to discover them to be impostors.

His fathers he only names, and therefore they signify nothing to common readers, for whose sake I write this confutation of his folly; which makes him bring in Luther as saying the same that he doth^u, that is, giving him the lie; who accuses protestants of affirming that which the very chief of them (according to him) denies. But whether Luther say as he makes him, or in what sense, I am not able to affirm, for I cannot find the words.

VI.

They affirm that St. Peter's faith hath failed^x.

ANSWER.

THERE needs no more to make him confess the truth of this, than only to ask him whether St. Peter did not deny his Master, which our Saviour supposes in the words immediately following those he quotes, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren^y*. He was therefore out of the way for a time, which is all we mean when any of us say, Peter's faith hath failed; not finally, but for that present. He fell, though he recovered himself. So that this is an equivocal proposition, "Peter's faith hath failed;" which is true, and so is the contrary, "his faith hath not failed." Both are true in different respects; it did fail, and

^u ["Yea, Martin Luther himself (the protestants great-grand-father) saith, lib. De Potestate Papæ: We are not certain of any private person, whether he hath the revelation of the

Father or no; but that the church hath it, we ought not to doubt."—p. 15.]

^x [Touchstone, p. 15.]

^y Luke xxii. 32.

that notoriously, when he denied his Master over and over. But it was more steadfast afterward, even by his fall, which our Saviour foreseeing, prayed particularly for him that he might not utterly miscarry. Which is no prerogative, as this man fancies it, that Christ prayed principally for him; but rather tended to his disparagement, as denoting him to be weaker than the rest, and indeed so much the weaker, because in his own opinion he was the strongest.

The second text, Matt. xvi. 18, as he manages it, is expressly to another purpose. For he lays the weight of his discourse (it appears by the consequence he draws,) upon those words, *the gates of hell shall not prevail against*—what? the text saith expressly *against it*, that is, the church; not against thee, that is, Peter. They that are wiser argue from the foregoing words, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock, &c.* If this be to his purpose, the faith of St. Peter must be the rock upon which the church is built, (which they do not love to hear of,) and if it be the rock, was thrown down, and the gates of hell prevailed against it, at the time before mentioned, when he denied his master. Which made a great man^z say, “Doubtless that religion which hath no better ground of infallibility than Peter’s faith, which was not secured from a threefold denial of Christ, was first planted by the spirit of error and antichrist.”

The third text we had before in the second chapter, where I have answered his question, how Christ might command the people, and his disciples also, to do whatsoever they that sat in Moses’s chair bade them, and yet those doctors might err^a. But to prove that Peter’s faith could not fail, he asserts the Scribes and Pharisees when they sat in Moses’s chair could not err; which is to justify their putting our Lord Christ to death. Whither will not the folly of such men as this carry them? who mind not when they overthrow the Christian religion to establish their own conceits. Nay, this man doth not mind when he ruins even his own conceits. For if the truth of Christian religion hath been no better preserved by the Romanists in the chair of St. Peter, than the truth of the Jewish religion was preserved by the Scribes and Pharisees in the chair of Moses, the Roman church is certainly become antichristian.

He hath picked up a fourth text which hath nothing in it of

^z Dr. Jackson, l. 3. c. 7. [Works, vol. ii. p. 238.] ^a Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.

Peter, no more than the former, but only tells us that the Jewish high priest prophesied, John xi. 49, 51. Yet this is an express text, forsooth, to prove that Peter's faith could not fail. It is not easy to have patience enough so much as to read such wretched, nay, wicked stuff as this : which still proves, if it be to the purpose, that the high priest speaking forth of his chair could not but determine truly ; and consequently gave a right judgment when he condemned Christ to be put to death. For he sat in the same chair when he passed sentence on Christ, and when he thus prophesied : both were in a council which was assembled on purpose to resolve what to do with him^c.

Here the good man is in great want of fathers, and contents himself, because he cannot help it, with Leo, whose words he doth not rightly translate. For Leo doth not say, "if the head were invincible," but "if the mind of the chief were not conquered^d." Worsted it was for the present, though not quite overcome. "For he lost the confession of faith with his mouth," saith Theophylact^e, "though he kept the faith (or the seeds of faith, as he speaks) in his heart. But unless a man do confess with his mouth, as well as believe in his heart, he cannot be saved." Both are necessary, unless St. Paul cross St. Peter^f.

But what is all this to the purpose? Suppose St. Peter's faith did not fail, what then? Must we conclude from thence the pope's faith cannot fail? Stay there. One of his own communion, a great man indeed^g, hath shown that there being four interpretations of this place^h, the greatest number of ecclesiastical writers (he reckons up forty-four, and among the rest this pope Leo) expound it of the faith of Peter alone, which Christ prayed might not be lost in that time of temptation which was a coming. But next to this, they are most numerous who think Christ prayed for the universal church, that it may never fail in the faith. In which number is Thomas Aquinas, one of their saints, who expressly proves from

^c John xi. 47, Matt. xxvi. 57.

^d [Tanquam aliorum status certior sit futurus, si mens principis victa non fuerit.—Serm. iii. al. iv. de Assump. sua, tom. i. col. 18.]

^e [In Luc. xxii. 32. tom. i. p.

471 C.]

^f Rom. x. 9, 10.

^g Launoy part. v. Epist. ad Jac. Bevilacqua. [Epist. 6. tom. v. part. 2. p. 71 sqq.]

^h Luke xxii. 32.

this place, that the universal church cannot err, "because he who was always heard by God said to Peter, upon whose confession the church is founded, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Where it is evident he did not think our Lord prayed for Peter separately from the rest of the church, but for the whole church, "whose person Peter sustained," as St. Austin is wont to speak; or, as Gregory the Great's words are, "of which church he was the first member¹."

But this belongs to the next head, where he saith we affirm,

VII.

That the church can err, and hath erred^k.

WHICH is true in one sense, though not true in another. For if by *church* be meant the universal church, and by *erring* be meant departing from the truth in matters of necessary belief, then we say the church (though it may mistake in matters of lesser moment, yet) cannot thus err, because Christ will always have a church upon earth, which cannot be without the belief of all things necessary to make it a church. But if by *church* be meant the church of Rome, or any other particular church, we say it may err even in matters of necessary belief, (as St. Paul plainly supposes in his caution he gives the Romans, Rom. xi. 20, 21,) and thus many churches have erred and fallen from Christianity.

Now what hath he to say out of our Bibles which is expressly contrary to this?

First, he alleges a place out of the prophet Isaiah¹, where there is not one express word either of the church, or of its not erring, but only of what God will do for those who *turn from transgression in Jacob*, (as the words beforegoing are,) upon whom (we may suppose,) he covenants and engages to bestow his Spirit, &c. Now before the church of Rome (whom this man here intends) can apply this text to themselves, they must prove that they are the people who turn from transgression in Jacob, which will be a very difficult task. And when that is done, this text may prove to be a command rather than

¹ ["Certe Petrus apostolus primum 18. tom. ii. col. 742.]

membrum sanctæ et universæ ecclésiæ," &c.—S. Greg. lib. v. epist. ^k [Touchstone, p. 19.]

¹ Isa. lix. 21.

a promise, that it is their duty having “ God’s Spirit, who by faith and charity is diffused in the whole church, that is, in the hearts of the faithful,” (as Menochius^m here glosses,) and “ his words,” that is, saith he, “ his precepts,” they should keep them faithfully, and not suffer them to depart out of their own mouth, and their own heart (as he goes on), or out of the mouth and heart of their children. It is a most wretched inference (for after all his brags of express texts, he is fain to come to that at last) which this man draws from hence, “ Therefore the church cannot err.” He might (with respect to the sense) have said more colourably, “ therefore the church cannot sin.” The folly of which every one sees, men being too negligent on their part, when God hath done his.

The next place is less to the purpose, for it is a peculiar promise (as appears by the whole context) unto the apostles of Christⁿ. “ In whose hearts he promises the Holy Ghost shall inhabit,” as Menochius expounds it^o, “ performing the office of a comforter, and of an instructor.” And this for ever, not for so short a time as Christ stayed on earth with them, but all the days of their life. But let us extend this promise to their successors, they can never prove the apostles have no successor but only at Rome: to which this promise can by no inferences be confined, but must extend to the whole church of Christ, with whom he is still present by his Spirit, to preserve them in the way of truth, if they will be led by it.

In the next place^p, he is at his collections again, instead of express words, for his talent is mere bragging without any performance. But how doth he gather from this text that the church cannot err? Why, that he leaves to his reader, telling him only “ it may be clearly gathered,” but he, for his part, did not know how, though it may be others do. Let them try who have a mind. I can find nothing in this place which concerns matters of faith, and he himself seems to be sensible of it when he saith, “ the church cannot err in her censure.” But what church is this? And what censure? It belongs to every church to censure him that wrongs his brother, after he hath been admonished of the injury he hath done, first in private, and then before two or three witnesses. This being done,

^m [In loc. tom. i. p. 437.]

ⁿ John xiv. 16.

^o [In loc. tom. ii. p. 81.]

^p Matt. xviii. 17.

where should he be proceeded against but in the church where he lives? Unto which if he will not submit, but continue obstinately his injurious actions, he is justly to be looked upon as no Christian. No man that is unprejudiced can read this text with all its circumstances, and not take this to be the sense of the words. And then, if they prove the church cannot err, we shall have as many infallible tribunals as there are churches.

That which follows^a speaks of *not erring*, but says nothing of the church; unless he make the church to be *fools*, who the prophet saith *shall not err*. How much wiser would this man have been, if he had but consulted some such author as Menochius, who, observing that the prophet saith, ver. 4, *God will come, he will, and save you*, i. e. "God incarnate," as he expounds it^r; by *the way* (here mentioned, ver. 8) understands that "narrow way which he taught, leading by holiness of manners and life to the holy place, i. e. to heaven^s." And upon the last words, *fools shall not err therein*, gives us this good protestant gloss; "for even the simple and unskilful might easily learn those things which are necessary to salvation^t." The way is plain in these matters, and none need err about them unless they will. And I wish it was not a wilful error in this man, to say that we affirm, "the whole church, and all holy men that ever have been therein for these thousand years, have erred." There cannot be a greater calumny, for we believe the whole church cannot stray from the way that leads to heaven, though some particular churches may.

There is nothing contrary to this in Ephes. v. 27; which, if it prove any thing of this nature, proves the church is so perfectly pure that it hath no sin in it. But I doubt we must stay for this happiness till the other world, when the church will indeed be made a glorious church. I have "noted," as he desires, the words *without spot, wrinkle, or any blemish*; and yet I think it possible that some church or other hath taught "horrible blasphemies and abominations." For St. John in the Revelation tells us it is not only possible, but

^a Isa. xxxv. 8.

^r ["Humanam carnem assumens,"
—p. 423.]

^s ["Quia per sanctitatem morum et
vitæ ducet ad sanctum locum, hoc

est, ad cœlum."]

^t ["Nam etiam simplices et imperiti facile addiscere poterunt quæ ad salutem sunt necessaria,"—*ibid.*]

certain ^u. And there are, we think, very evident proofs that the present Roman church of which he is so fond (and always hath in his mind when he speaks of *the church*) is described by St. John in that place.

We have seen so little in these texts, that I cannot find in my heart to look into the rest ^x; several of which we have had already, as Luke xxii. 32; Matth. xxiii. 3; Deut. xvii. 8; Acts xv. 28. And he seems to have intended nothing but merely to make a show of more strength than he had; which made him thrust in among the rest Ephes. v. 27, which I have just now examined. His fathers also are only names, without their sense, and so let them pass. Next, he saith, we affirm,

VIII.

That the church hath been hidden, and invisible ^y.

He still goes on in his ambiguous way of stating our doctrine. There are no papists but confess that the most excellent parts even of the visible church in this world are invisible or hidden. For none but God who searches the heart can know certainly who are truly good men and not hypocrites. And there are no protestants who maintain that they who profess the Christian religion (who are the church) have ever been hidden and invisible. But this they say, that this church hath not been always visible, free from corruption; and that it hath not been at all times alike visible: but sometimes more, sometimes less conspicuous. Now these men by the visibility of the church mean such an illustrious state as by its glory, splendour, and pomp, all men may be led to it. This is it, and no more, which protestants deny. And Mr. Chillingworth hath long ago told them that the most rigid protestants do not deny the visibility of the church absolutely, but only this degree of it. For the church hath not always had open visible assemblies, and so might be said to have been hidden

^u Rev. xvii. 3, 4.

^x [John xvi. 13; Ephes. v. 27; Isaiah ix. 7; Ezech. xxxvii. 26; Luke xii. 32; Matt. xxii. 3; 1 Pet. ii. 9; John xvii. 17; 1 Cor. xi. 25; Psal. ci. (cii.) 22, 28; Ephes. ii. 10;

John x. 16; Acts iv. 32; Ephes. iv. 5, 11; Luke x. 16; Deut. xvii. 8; Jerem. iii. 15; Malach. ii. 7; Matt. xvi. 18; Acts xv. 28; 2 Cor. xiii. 8; 1 Tim. iii. 15.]

^y [Touchstone, p. 21.]

and invisible, when they met underground and in obscure places.

There is nothing in the texts of Scripture which he quotes contrary to this, much less "expressly contrary."

The first of them^z is manifestly a precept to the apostles, setting forth the duty incumbent upon them by their office, that they might gather a church to Christ. So the before-named Menochius^a interprets those words, *Ye are the light of the world*, "who ought to illuminate the world by your doctrine and example. You ought not to be hid, no more than a city can be which is seated on a hill: *Men do not light a candle* (much less God) *to put it under a bushel*. Our Saviour," saith he, "exhorts his disciples by this similitude, that they should diligently shine both in their words and in their example; and not be sparing of their pains, or of themselves, by withdrawing themselves from the work, but communicate their light liberally to their neighbours." But after the world was thus illuminated by their doctrine, (which they could not always neither preach in public, but sometimes only in private houses,) Christians were forced to meet together in some places and times very secretly; not being able always to hold such public visible assemblies that all men beheld them and what they did.

The second^b we had before, to prove the church cannot err, and now it is served up again to prove it was never hid; and this not expressly, but by a consequence, and that a very senseless one. For who ever said or thought that nobody can see a church when it is not visible to everybody? Its members no doubt see it, even when it is invisible to others. Any man may be seen by his friends, when he lies hid from his enemies. And a church is visible in that place where it is planted, and by them that belong to it, though strangers perhaps take no notice of it, especially those that are at a distance from it.

In the third place^c we have mention of the *gospel*, but not a word of the *church*; which he puts in (such is his honesty) contrary to the express words of ours and of all Bibles. Nor doth the apostle deny the gospel to be hid, but expressly supposes it^d,

^z Matt. v. 14, 15.

^a [In loc. tom. i. p. 5.]

^b Matt. xviii. 17.

^c 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

^d 2 Cor. iv. 3.

that it is hid from those whose minds are blinded by the god of this world; who shut their eyes against the clearest light, *even the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*. One would think this man besides himself, when he bids us behold the censure of St. Paul upon those who affirm the gospel can be hid; when his words are a plain supposition that it was hid to some people; not indeed because they could not, (for it was visible enough in itself,) but because they would not see it. And I wish there be not too many of this sort in that church for which this writer stickles.

The last place^d is an illustrious prophecy of the setting up the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which was very visible in its beginning, when the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles, and by them the law, that is, the Christian doctrine, *went out of Sion, and the word of the Lord, that is the gospel, from Jerusalem*. But did not always continue so, when grievous persecutions arose for the gospel's sake, and drove the visible professors of religion into obscure places. And I hope he will allow those Scriptures to be as true as these, which say there shall be *an apostasy from the faith*, and that the church shall *fly into the wilderness*^e, which is not consistent with such a visibility of the church as this man dreams of.

As for the prophecies which mention a *kingdom of Christ* particularly^f, they point at a state of his church which is not yet come, and when it doth come will be with a vengeance to the Roman church, whose present state will be utterly overturned, to make way for the setting up of Christ's universal and everlasting kingdom, which is to be erected when *the mystery of God is finished*^g, and that cannot be till Babylon, that is Rome, be thrown down^h. And we are so far from thinking this kingdom will be invisible, that we believe it will be the most illustrious appearance that ever was of Christian truth, righteousness, charity and peace among men.

He bids us, as his manner is, "see more in other placesⁱ." But if they had more in them than these, we should have had

^d Isaiah ii. 2.

^e 2 Thess. ii. 3. Rev. xii. 6.

^f Dan. vii. 14.

^g Rev. x. 7; xi. 15.

^h Rev. xviii. 2; xix. 1, 2, 6.

ⁱ [Psalm xxvii. 8; Rom. x. 14;

1 Cor. xi. 19; Psalm xix. 3, 4;

Isaiah lx. 20; Acts xx. 21; Isaiah

lxi. 9.]

them as length. And his fathers also, some light touches of which he gives us just as he found them, in a cluster altogether, word for word, in a book called "The Rule of Faith, and the Marks of the Church," which was answered above eighty years ago by Dr. F. White, who observes^k, that when Origen^l (whom upon other occasions they call an heretic) saith, "the church is full of witnesses from the east to the west," he speaks "not of the outward state or appearance thereof, but of the truth professed therein." Which, "though clear to the world" when he said so, yet doth not prove "it shall be always so, for a cloud of apostasy might and did afterwards obscure it."

St. Chrysostom^m doth not mean that the church cannot be at all darkened, but not so as to be extinguished, no more than the sun can be put out. For he could not be so senseless as not to know that it had been for a time eclipsed.

When St. Austinⁿ saith, they are blind who see not so great a mountain, he speaks against the Donatists, who confined the church to themselves, as the papists now do. And he justly calls them blind who could not see the church all Afric over, it being at that time as plain as a mountain or a lighted candle, as our church now is at this day. But his words do not imply that the church shall always be so manifest and never hid, mountains themselves being sometimes hidden in a mist. For he saith in other places, "The church shall sometimes be obscured, and the cloud of offences may shadow it^o." "It shall not appear by reason of the unmeasurable rage of ungodly persecutors^p;" "it is like the moon, and may be hid^q," yea, so obscured, that "the members of it may not know one another," as he speaks in his sixth book Of Baptism, against the Donatists^r.

What St. Cyprian^s saith is not contrary to this.

^k Way to the true church, sect. 23. [Works, p. 55, fol. Lond. 1624.]

^l Hom. xxx. in Matt. [tom. iii. p. 871.]

^m [Hom. iv. in Es. vi. tom. vi. p. 122 E.]

ⁿ [Tract. ii. in Joann. epist. cap. 2. tom. iii. part. 2. col. 837 D.]

^o Epist. xlvi. [al. epist. 93. tom. ii. col. 241.]

^p Epist. lxxx. [al. 199. tom. ii. col. 755.]

^q Psalm. xix. [al. Psalm. xviii. enarr. 2. tom. iv. col. 84.]

^r [Cap. 4. [tom. ix. col. 163 F.]

^s [Vid. De Unit. Eccles. p. 108.]

IX.

We maintain, he saith, that the church was not always to remain catholic or universal; and that the church of Rome is not such a church^t.

ANSWER.

WE maintain the quite contrary to the first part of his proposition, asserting that the church is always to remain catholic or universal, not confined to one country, as the Jewish was, but spread all the world over. The second part indeed we do maintain, that the church of Rome is not such a church, that is, (which is the thing they contend for,) is not the universal church, but hath its limits, and was anciently bounded within certain regions, beyond which it did not extend.

The first Scripture he alleges against us is a promise to Christ, which we believe hath been fulfilled in part^u, and will be more and more fulfilled before the end of the world, but hath nothing in it peculiar to the church of Rome, which at the best is but a piece of his inheritance.

The second speaks expressly not of the universality of Christ's kingdom^x, but of its perpetuity; and is as much verified in other churches as in the Roman, which is so far from being the only universal church, that in this sense it is not universal at all.

The third is directly against him, for it shows that the faith of the gospely (unto which he now skips, when he should have said *the church*, of which he was speaking) was planted at Colosse, (which was never under the jurisdiction of Rome,) and there fructified and grew as much as in other places.

Nor will the next place help him, where St. Paul doth not call the faith of the whole world the faith of the Romans, but only saith *their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world*^z; that is, "the fame of it was spread all the world over," as Menochius^a, one of their own, honestly interprets it. "For what was done at Rome could not be concealed from the rest of the world," saith Theodoret, "because the Roman emperors

^t [Touchstone, p. 24.]

^u Psalm ii. 8.

^x Luke i. 33.

^y Coloss. i. 3, &c.

^z Rom. i. 8.

^a [In loc. tom. ii. p. 112.]

having their palace there, from whence all sort of officers were sent, and whither all people resorted who had any boon to beg, by whom it was signified every where that the city of Rome had received the faith of Christ." Thus he, which shows the gospel was spread in the world before it came to the city of Rome, it not coming from thence, but from Jerusalem; and not coming thither till many other places had received it, who were not beholden to Rome for it. With what face then, against such a clear sense of the words, could this man say that St. Paul in express terms calls *the faith of the whole world* the faith of the Romans, or the church of Rome; when the words rather import that he calls the faith of the Romans the faith received in the whole world? But he saith neither the one nor the other, though if he had it would prove nothing, but that there was one and the same faith then at Rome which was in other places: the truly catholic faith from whence churches were named catholic, (not from their extending all the world over, which was impossible,) and Jerusalem and other churches were as much so as Rome itself, and were so before there was a church at Rome. In short, a catholic church signified no more than an orthodox church.

It is a matter of serious lamentation that men should go about to pervert such plain and easy truths as this, and should heap up Scriptures to prove mere nonsense. For all the Scriptures which he bids us further look into, he saith, "are not to be understood that the whole world should be catholic at one and the same time." Let the reader consider what it is for the whole world to be catholic, as he hath explained it, but for the whole world to be the whole world.

And he will have a hard task to make sense of the next words, "that the whole world being converted unto Christ at sundry times, it shall comprehend a greater part of the world than any sect of heretics shall ever do." I thought the whole world would certainly comprehend the whole world, and not only the greater part of the world. It is impossible by such jargon as this to understand the true sense of being catholic or universal. Which the church is either with respect to faith, because there is the same faith in all parts of the true church; or with respect to place, because no country is excluded from it which will receive this faith; or with respect

to time, because it continues throughout all ages, though not always in such an extent as to be actually in all nations. For those countries which were once parts of the catholic church are not so now; and if those that are now so should lose the faith, still the church might be catholic if others embraced it, as Bellarmine^b himself confesses: "if only one province should retain the true faith, the church might truly and properly be called catholic, as long as it might be clearly shown that it was one and the same with that which had been at some time or in divers throughout the world."

According to his former method he carries us now to the fathers, and makes them guilty of as much nonsense as himself. For he makes St. Cyprian confess that "part is the whole." But the comfort is, he either did not understand, or else misrepresents St. Cyprian, who speaks not there of the authority, but of the example of the Roman church, and especially of Cornelius their bishop; who remaining constant in time of trial made all his brethren every where rejoice, particularly Cyprian himself, who in that very place styles Cornelius and others his fellow-priests or bishops. "For what priest," saith he, "can choose but rejoice in the praises of his fellow-priests, as if they were his own?" It is not to be expressed with what joy and exultation he heard of his fortitude, whereby he made himself "a captain and leader of confession unto the brethren," &c. And then follows^c, "While there is among you (i. e. Cornelius and his brethren) one mind and one voice, all the Roman church hath confessed," that is, their faith which the apostle praised was become famous, as it follows in the next words; and while they were thus unanimous, thus valiant, "they gave great examples of unanimity and fortitude to the rest of their brethren." This is the meaning of *ecclesia omnis Romana confessa est*. They were all steadfast in their faith; which this poor man construes as if St. Cyprian owned Rome for the only catholic church, by translating those words thus, "the whole church is confessed to be the Roman church." Which he vehemently denied, ordaining in a council at Carthage, according to ancient canons, that every man's cause should be

^b Lib. iv. de Eccles. c. 7. [tom. ii. col. 176 D.]
edit. Oxon. [p. 141.]

^c Epist. lx.

heard there where the crime was committed ; and commanded those to return home who had appealed to Rome, which he shows was most just and reasonable, “ unless the authority of the bishops in Afric seem less than the authority of other bishops to a few desperate and profligate persons, who had already been judged and condemned by them.” This he writes in another epistle to the same Cornelius ^d; to which I could add a great deal more, if this were not sufficient to make such writers as this blush, if they have any shame left, who make the whole church to be the Roman church.

St. Austin (of whom I must say something, lest they pretend we cannot answer what is alleged out of him) and the whole church of Afric, in a council of two hundred bishops, made the same opposition to the pretended authority of the Roman church ; and therefore could mean no such thing as this man would have in his book of the Unity of the Church ^e. Where he saith, in the third chapter, that “ he would not have the holy church to be shown him out of human teachings, but out of the divine oracles ; and if the holy Scriptures have designed it in Africa alone, &c., whatsoever other writings may say, the Donatists he acknowledges will carry the cause, and none be the church but they.” But he proceeds to show the doctrine of the Scriptures is quite otherwise, designing the church to be spread throughout the world. And then he goes on to say, chap. iv. ^f, that “ whosoever they be who believe in Jesus Christ the head, but yet do so dissent (those are his words, which this man recites imperfectly and treacherously) from his body, which is the church, that their communion is not with the whole body, wheresoever it is diffused, but is found in some part separated ; it is manifest they are not in the catholic church.” Now this speaks no more of the Roman church than of any other part of the catholic church ; and, in truth, makes them like the Donatists, since their communion is not with the whole body, (which they absolutely refuse to admit to their communion,) but “ they are found in a part of it separated by themselves.”

The rest which he quotes out of St. Austin, I assure the

^d Epist. lix. [p. 137.]

tom. ix. col. 341.]

^e [Al. Epist. contr. Donat. cap. 3.]

^f [Col. 342.]

reader, is as much besides the matter, and therefore I will not trouble him with it. And I can find no such saying of St. Hierom in his Apology against Ruffinus. But this I find, (lib. iii. g,) “The Roman faith praised by the voice of the apostle (viz. Rom. i. 8.) admits not such deceit and delusion into it,” &c. Where it is to be noted, that the Roman faith commended by the apostle is one thing, and the Roman church another. And the faith which they had in the apostles’ time was certainly most pure: but who shall secure us it is so now? If we had the voice of an angel from heaven to tell us so, we should not believe it, because it is not what they then believed, nor what they believed in St. Hierom’s time, but much altered in many points. And suppose St. Hierom had told us, “It is all one to say the Roman faith and the catholic faith^g,” it must be meant of the then Roman faith: and it is no more than might have been said in the praise of any other church which held the true faith. No, nor more than is said; for thus Nicephorus, patriarch of Constantinople, writes in an epistleⁱ to Leo bishop of Rome, “We also have obtained the name of New Rome, and being built upon one and the same foundation of faith, the prophets and apostles, (mark that, he doth not say on the Roman church,) where Christ our Saviour and God is the corner-stone, are in the matter of faith nothing behind the elder Romans. For in the church of God there is none to be reckoned or numbered before the rest^k. Wherefore let St. Paul glory and rejoice in us also, &c. (i. e. if he were alive, Nicephorus doubted not St. Paul would have commended the faith of that city, as he had theirs at old Rome,) for we as well as they, following his doctrine and institutions, wherein we are rooted, are confirmed in the confession of our faith, wherein we stand and rejoice,” &c.

^g [“Attamen scito Romanam fidem apostolica voce landatam istiusmodi præstigias non recipere.— Contr. Rufin. lib. iii. tom. ii. col. 542 E.]

^h [So “Touchstone,” &c. p. 26.]

ⁱ Council of Ephesus, p. 107. [Mansi, tom. xiv. col. 40 B.]

^k Οὐκ ἔστι τὸ προαριθμούμενον.

X.

The reformers, he saith, hold that the church's unity is not necessary in all points of faith¹.

ANSWER.

THIS writer hath so accustomed himself to fraud and deceit, that we can scarce hope to have any truth from him. For no reformers hold any thing of this nature, if by points of faith be meant what the apostle means in the text he quotes; where he saith, *there is one faith*^m. Which we believe is necessary to make one church: every part of which, blessed be God, at this very day is baptized into that one and the same faith (and no other) contained in the common creed of Christians, called the Apostles' Creed. Therefore so far church unity is still preserved. But it is not necessary there should be unity in all opinions that are not contrary to this faith. Nor should the differences which may be among Christians about such matters break unity of communion. And if they do, those churches which are thus broken and divided, by not having external communion one with another, may notwithstanding still remain, both of them, members of the same one catholic church, because they still retain the same one catholic faith. Thus the Asian and Roman churches in pope Victor's time, and the African and Roman in Stephen's time, differed in external communion, and yet were still parts of one and the same church of Christ.

This is more than I need have said in answer to him, but I was willing to say something useful to the reader; who cannot but see that he produces texts of Scripture to contradict his own fancies, not our opinions. We believe as the apostle teaches usⁿ, and from thence conclude that "unity is necessary in all points of faith," truly so called; that is, all things necessary to be believed. Nor do we differ in any such things, and therefore have "the unity requisite to one church."

The second text^o speaks not a word of faith, therefore instead of express words this man tells us, by a likeness of rea-

¹ [Touchstone, p. 27.]

^m Ephes. iv. 5.

ⁿ Ibid.

^o James ii. 10.

son, it is the same in faith that it is in sin; "he who denies one article, denies all." We deny none: but only their new articles, which are no part of the ancient apostolic catholic faith.

The next^p speaks of the brotherly affection and unanimity that was among the first Christians. And that which follows^q doth not tell us what was, but what ought to be in the church: for among those Corinthians there were very great divisions, as appears by that very chapter. Therefore he is still beside the book, and very childishly objects to us the "sects that are among us," as an argument we are not the "true believers" the apostle speaks of: when the apostolical churches were not free from them while the apostles lived; nor is the church of Rome, or any other church, at such unity, but there are various sects among them.

He hath little to do who will trouble himself upon the account of such a scribbler as this, to consider that heap of texts which he hath huddled together without any order, or any regard to his point he was to prove^r. What St. Austin also and the rest of his fathers say about unity doth not at all concern us; who preserve that unity which they have broken, by preserving that one faith from which they of the church of Rome have departed. For it will not suffice them to believe as the apostles did, but they have another faith of their own devising. This is that wherein we cannot unite with them. And all the unity they brag of is, in truth, no better than that of the Jews, heretics, and pagans; who, as St. Austin speaks^s, "maintain an unity against unity." In this they combine together to oppose that one faith the apostles delivered, as insufficient to salvation. Which is a conspiracy in error, rather than unity in the truth.

^p Acts iv. 32.

^q 1 Cor. i. 10.

^r [Jer. xxxii. 39; Cant. ii. 6; Psalm lxvii. 7; Matt. xii. 25; Mark iii. 24; Luke xi. 17; Matt. xviii. 19; Ephes. ii. 14, 15, 16, 22; v. 27;

Phil. iii. 16; i. 26, 7; Gal. i. 8; v. 9; Col. iii. 15; John xvii. 11; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Psalm. cxxi. 3.]

^s De Verbis Domini, serm. vi. [al. serm. lxii. cap. 12. tom. v. col. 364 E.]

XI.

That St. Peter was not ordained by Christ the first head, or chief among the apostles : and that among the twelve none was greater or lesser than other^t.

ANSWER.

We are now come to the great point, which is the support of the whole Roman cause. But he neither knows our opinion about it, nor their own ; or else dares not own what it is. We believe Peter was the first apostle, and that he was a chief, though not the chief apostle. For there were others who were eminent (that is, chiefs) upon some account or other, as well as himself^u. But what he means by a “ first head or chief,” neither we nor those of his own religion know, unless there were secondary heads and chiefs among the apostles, one over another. This is strange language, which none understands. Peter was first in order, place, precedence, but not in power, authority, and jurisdiction ; in these none was greater or lesser than another. Which is not contrary to any text in the Bible, but most agreeable thereunto.

For so the text saith^x, and we needed not his observation to inform us that “ all the evangelists, when they mention the apostles which Christ chose, put Peter first :” which doth not signify he was the worthiest of them all ; that no way appears : but that he and Andrew his brother were first called, we expressly read, and possibly he might be the elder of the two. But if it did denote his dignity and worthiness, it doth not prove his authority over the rest, (as he is pleased to improve this observation in the conclusion of his note upon this place,) for though he had some eminent qualities in him which perhaps were not in others, they gave him no superiority in power ; but in that every one of them was his equal. What follows upon this text is so frivolous and childish a reasoning, it ought to be despised.

Next he betakes himself to the *rock* mentioned Matt. xvi. 18., which they have been told over and over again (but they harden their heart against it) is not spoken of Peter, as this

^t [Touchstone, p. 29.]^u 2 Cor. xi. 5 ; xii. 11.^x Matt. x. 2.

man most impudently, contrary to his own Bible, makes the words sound, but of the faith which Peter confessed, as the general current of ecclesiastical writers expound it. But if we should by the *rock* understand Peter, it insinuates no supremacy, much less clearly insinuates it. For none but such a man as this, to whom the bell clinks just as he thinks, would have thought of that at the reading of the word *rock*; but rather of firmness, stability, or solidity, which the word plainly enough imports, but nothing of authority. Our blessed Lord himself is not called a rock or stone with respect to his being the sovereign and absolute pastor of his church, but because of the firm foundation he gives to our hope in God. Next to those who by *rock* understand, as I said, the faith which Peter confessed, the greatest number of ancient expositors understand thereby Christ himself. Unto whom this man hath the face to say these words do not agree, because he speaks of the time to come, *I will build*, as if Christ were not always what he ever was, being *the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever*. It is a burning shame, as we speak, that such men as this should take upon them to be instructors, and to write books, which have nothing in them but trifling observations and false allegations. For after all, should we grant Peter to be the rock, it will not exclude the rest of the apostles from being so as much as he; for the church was built upon them all, *on the foundation of the apostles and prophets*^z. And accordingly St. John had represented to him not one alone, but twelve foundations of the wall of the *new Jerusalem*, i. e. the church of Christ, which had in them *the names of the twelve apostles of the Lord*^a.

The next place^b is so plain a promise to all the apostles, that it is impudence to restrain it to St. Peter, or to conclude from thence any prerogative to him above the rest; especially if it be observed, that when this promise was fulfilled they were all equally partakers of it, when our Saviour breathed on them and said unto them, (mark that, he breathed on them all, and said not to Peter alone, but them, i. e. the apostles,) *Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained*^c, &c.

Now he falls a reasoning again, (for alas, express texts fail

^z Ephes. ii. 20.

^a Rev. xxi. 14.

^b Matt. xviii. 18.

^c John xx. 22, 23.

him,) but it amounts to no more than this, that our Saviour did not call him Simon in the forementioned place, but gave him another name. I am sorry for his ignorance that he did not know, or for his dishonesty that he would not consider, this was become his name as much as Simon before this time, for at their first meeting Christ gave him this name of Peter^d.

From that which follows^e there is a wonderful fetch. For as before he argues Peter's supremacy from his being named first, so now he argues it from his being named last; whereas in his first observation it was an argument of Judas being the unworthiest, because named last. When he thinks again, perhaps he will prove his supremacy, because in Gal. ii. 9, he is named neither first nor last, but in the middle between James and John. And according to his wise note, that the apostle ascends from those he would have esteemed lesser to those whom he would have esteemed greater, we must look upon Apollos as greater than Paul, because he ascends here from Paul to him, and so to Peter. Whither will not the folly of these men lead them?

His reasoning (for we are not to expect express texts, whatsoever he vainly brags) upon the next place^f is still more strange. For who ever heard that to *strengthen* or *confirm* his brethren, can be nothing but to "practise and exercise his greatness over them?" This greatness of his runs so in their heads, that they fancy they see it everywhere, even where there is not a shadow of it; for none before him sure ever thought that to strengthen others is an exercise of greatness, but rather of goodness: it implies indeed, that he who establishes another is in that greater than he, but it doth not follow he is so in any thing else, nor doth it imply any thing of jurisdiction over others; though if it did, they are not the apostles who are here intended to be strengthened, (for they were as strong as himself,) but the converted Jews, who might be in the same danger wherein he had been. And therefore our Lord bids him learn to pity their weakness by the remembrance of his own, and to establish them in that faith which he had denied.

From hence he leads us back to ver. 26 of the same chapter^g,

^d John i. 42. ^e 1 Cor. iii. 4, 22. ^f Luke xxii. 31, 32. ^g Luke xxii. 26.

and from the vain ambition which was in the apostles, who strove *which of them should be accounted the greatest*^h, concludes that really some of them was greater than others, viz. in power and authority over the rest, or else he concludes nothing: but this vanity our Saviour checks, and therefore it is far from truth that one of them was accounted greater than another, even by Christ himself. No such matter, he only shows them that if in any quality one excelled another, it should make him more humble and subservient to his brethren, not swell him, and make him perk up above them. And thus Theophylactⁱ understands it not of any superiority in power, but in other things. For the occasion of their contention, who should be esteemed greatest, he thinks was this; that there being an inquiry among them which of them should be so wicked as to betray their Master^k, and one perhaps saying, Thou art likely to be the man, and another, No, it will be thyself, they proceed from hence to say, I am better than you, and I am greater, and such like things: which our Saviour expresses in the following words, *The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, &c., but it shall not be so among you, &c.* Which is a pretty plain denial of any authority they were to have one over another. And indeed, when he comes to speak of power in the following verses, 29, 30, he saith indifferently to them all, *I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, &c.* It was divided among them, and none had an higher throne given him than his fellows.

We are at last come to the main prop of this cause, which is as weak as all the rest^l. For who told him that the word used the second time by our Saviour, which we translate *feed*^m, must interpret the other two which are used at first and last? Why may not they, being used twice, rather interpret that which is used but once? And how doth he prove that it signifies to govern and rule rather than feed? Or if it do signify government, what is this to his governing the apostles, who had as much power to feed and rule both lambs and sheep as himself? And thus the ancients understood this to be spoken unto all the apostles as well as unto him; and even his own com-

^h Luke xxii. 24.ⁱ [Tom. i. p. 469 E.]^k Luke xxii. 23.^l John xxi. 15, 16, 17.^m Ποίμαινε.

panions, who have more wit and less impudence, by *lambs* and *sheep* understand not the apostles, but weaker and stronger Christians. I will mention only Menochius, whose words are these, in his notes upon this place ⁿ; “By *lambs* he signifies, as the very name shows, those that were newly converted to the faith, and were weaker in the faith, whose number was very great when the apostles began to preach, and therefore needed greater care; for which cause Christ repeats this twice, *Feed my lambs*, and but once *Feed my sheep*, who are those that are stronger in the faith,” and therefore needed less pains to preserve them. This is spoken like a man of sound sense; and with the like judgment and integrity he interprets the rest directly contrary to the silly reasonings of this trifler, who says ^o, “Peter loved Christ more than the rest, and therefore it follows necessarily he received more power to feed than all the rest did.” This is more than Peter himself durst say, that he loved Christ more than the rest. “No,” says Menochius, “he dares not answer that he loved more than others, but only that he loved, for his fall had made him more modest. He had preferred himself to others, when he said Matt. xxvi. 33, *Though all be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended*; and after this he fell more foully than others, therefore now he speaks of himself what he thinks to be true, but he doth not prefer himself before others, whose hearts he did not see.”

Now I thought we had done, when like a man out of his wits, or rather possessed, he flies to the devil to help him at a dead lift, and thus argues (for express Scriptures have failed him long ago), from Matt. xii. 24, “Satan therefore hath a kingdom whereof he is chief.” And what then? One would think he should have concluded, Therefore so hath our Lord Christ. But he was afraid of that, for he saw it would not do his business, but ours rather, who own Christ for the only head of the church. He tells us therefore (as if he had found it in the text), there is but one “visible head even in hell,” as there is one “visible head of the church triumphant in heaven,” and therefore “why not a visible head on earth?” He might as well have asked, why not one universal monarch over all the

ⁿ [Tom. ii. p. 88.]

^o [P. 34.]

earth? Which is as reasonable from these principles as one visible head of the church. But to answer his question plainly, there is no one visible head here, because Christ the head of the church, both triumphant and militant, hath ordered it otherwise: having placed, saith St. Paul^a, in the church, *first apostles*, not Peter, or any one alone over the rest; but the apostles were left by Christ the supreme power in the church.

Here I cannot but conclude, as that great and good man Dr. Jackson^r doth upon such an occasion; "Reader, consult with thy own heart, and give sentence as in the sight of God; and judge of the whole frame of their religion by the foundation; and of the foundation (which is this supremacy of Peter) by the wretched arguments whereby they support it."

For from the other Scriptures^s which follow in this writer, their arguments stand thus; "David was made *head of the heathen*^t, therefore Peter was made head of the church." *Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all lands*^u, "therefore Peter ruled over all the rest as a prince." *Simon he surnamed Peter*^x, "therefore he had authority over all, because named first." The same is gathered from Acts i. 13, merely from the order of precedence, which must be granted to one or other, in a body where all are equal. Finally, *Christ's kingdom shall have no end*^y, "therefore St. Peter must reign for ever in his successors." St. Paul was not *a whit behind the very chiefest apostles*^z, therefore what? Common reason would have concluded, therefore there were more chief apostles besides Peter; and St. Paul was not inferior to the greatest of them, not to Peter himself. These are his Scripture arguments for their supremacy.

And his fathers affirm nothing at all of Peter which is not said of other apostles. Particularly St. Chrysostom (who says no such thing of Peter as he makes him in his 55th homily upon Matthew^a) expressly says, "St. Paul governed the whole

^a 1 Cor. xii. 28.

^r Lib. iii. chap. 1. [Works, vol. ii. p. 238.]

^s [Psalm xviii. 43; xlv. 16; Mark iii. 16; Acts i. 13; Luke i. 33; 2 Cor. xi. 5.]

^t Psalm xviii. 43.

^u xlv. 16.

^x Mark iii. 16.

^y Luke i. 33.

^z 2 Cor. xi. 5.

^a [Tom. vii. pp. 555, 6.]

world as one ship," (homily 25 upon 2 Corinth.^b) and frequently calls him, as well as Peter, "prince of the apostles:" and calls them all "the pastors and rectors of the whole world," in his second homily upon Titus^c. And, to be short, the author of the imperfect work upon St. Matthew (commonly ascribed to St. Chrysostom) calls all bishops the "vicars of Christ," homily 17^d. Finally, there is no title so great, which is not given to others as well as Peter by ancient writers; even the title of "bishop of bishops," the name of "pope," "holiness," "blessed," and such like.

XII.

We hold, he saith, that a woman may be head, or supreme governess of the church, in all causes, as the late queen Elizabeth was^e.

ANSWER.

NONE of us ever called queen Elizabeth the head of the church, unless as it signifies supreme governor. And that indeed we assert she was, and all our kings are, "of all persons whatsoever, in all causes." But because some lewd people perverted the meaning of this, our church took care to explain it in one of the Articles of religion, that no man might mistake in the matter, unless he would wilfully, as this writer doth; who could not but understand, that it is expressly declared, Article XXXVII, that "when we attribute to the queen's majesty the chief government, we do not give to our princes the ministering either of God's word, or the sacraments, &c., but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly princes in the holy Scripture by God himself. That is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesi-

^b [Καθάπερ πλοῖον ἐν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἅπανσαν κυβερνῶν.—tom. x. p. 616 C.]

^c [Καθάπερ οἰκίαν μίαν τὴν οἰκουμένην διανειμᾶμενοι οὕτως ἅπαντα διηκουῦντο.—tom. xi. p. 737 C.]

^d ["Nec considerant, nec intelligunt, sacerdotes Christi vicarios esse Christi et Christum."—tom. vi. append. p. lxxxvii. B.]

^e [Touchstone, p. 36.]

astical or temporal; and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil doers." This is our avowed doctrine.

Now what do our Bibles say against this? Nothing, but *a woman may not teach*^f, &c. And do not we say the same, that our princes "may not minister the word or sacraments?" What a shameless sort of people have we to deal withal, who face us down that we affirm what we flatly deny! And when he pretends faithfully to recite the words of our Bible after the new translation, (as he doth in his preface,) here he gives us another translation in the second text he alleges^g. But take it as it is, it proves nothing but his folly and impudence, unless he could show that queen Elizabeth preached publicly in any of our churches. But see the childishness of this writer, in alleging these texts against the queen, which make nothing against our kings, who are not women sure: and we ascribe the same power to them which we do to her, and no more to her than belongs to them.

From Scripture he betakes himself to reasoning; which proceeds upon the same wilful, mistake we cannot call it, but calumny, (against our express declaration to the contrary,) that we give our kings such an headship, or supreme power, as makes them capable to minister the word and sacraments. From whence he draws this new slander, that many "hundreds of them have been hanged, drawn and quartered" for denying this power. Whereas every one knows the oath of supremacy is nothing else but a solemn declaration of our belief, that our kings are the supreme governors of these realms in all spiritual things or causes as well as temporal: and that no foreign prince or prelate hath any jurisdiction, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, in these realms, &c.

Now what can he find in his fathers to oppose this? There were none of them for above 800 years who did not believe this; that emperors and kings are next to God, and the pope himself ought to be subject to them. The words of Optatus^h speak the sense of them all; "There is none above the emperor but God alone, who made him emperor." And none can deny the ancient custom to have been, that the clergy and

^f 1 Tim. ii. 12.

^g 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

^h [Lib. iii. cap. 3. p. 52.]

people of Rome having chosen the pope, the emperor confirmed or invalidated the election as he pleased. Adrian indeed would fain have changed this custom, (anno 811,) but still it continued a long time, that the election was not accounted valid till the emperor's confirmation. And he cannot but know, (if he have read his own authors,) that after Adrian's attempt, above forty popes, from John IX. to Leo IX. were all created by the emperors, who frequently also deposed popes. And popes were so far from having any such authority over the emperors, that when pope Gregory VII. adventured upon it, it was esteemed a novity, not to say an heresy, (as Sigebert's words are, *ad ann.* 1088ⁱ;) which had not sprung up in the world before.

But the reader may here observe how well skilled this man is in the fathers, who places John Damascen in the very front of them, who lived in the eighth century, and yet is set before Theodoret who lived in the fifth, and St. Chrysostom who lived in the fourth, nay, and before his Ignatius, who lived in the time of the apostles; whose words import no more, but that all must obey their bishop as their pastor, which agrees well enough with the bishop's obeying the emperor as his prince. What John Damascen says I cannot find, nor is there any thing of that nature in the place he quotes out of Theodoret. But Valens was an Arian, who commanded things contrary to the Christian religion, and so was not to be obeyed. It is mere tittle-tattle about St. Chrysostom's calling the bishop a prince as well as a king^k; for a greater than he, Constantine the Great, in like manner calls himself a bishop as to all external government.

XIII.

That antichrist shall not be a particular man, and that the pope is antichrist^l.

ANSWER.

THIS proposition hath two parts, neither of which are the settled doctrine of our church or of any other protestants, but

^l ["Hæc sola novitas, (non dicam hæresis) necdum in mundo—emerserat."—Sigebert. Chron. inter script. rer. German. Pistorii, vol. i. p. 847.]

^k [Hom. v. de verb. Isaïæ, *Vidi Dom.* tom. vi. p. 132.]

¹ [Touchstone, p. 38.]

the common opinion of all, some few excepted. Especially the first part, that antichrist shall not be a particular man, but a succession of men; which may be evidently proved from the confession of the ablest men in the Roman church. For it is the opinion of almost all their interpreters, that the last head mentioned by St. John^m and called after a signal manner by the name of *the beast*, is no other than antichrist. Now all the foregoing heads do not signify so many single persons only; but all expositors, saith their Riberaⁿ, have understood that in every one of those heads there are a great many comprehended. And never hath any man but Victorinus taken them only for seven single persons, "whose opinion all do deservedly gainsay." To the very same purpose also Alcasar, another famous Roman expositor, writes upon the same place^o. And let this man or any one else tell me, if they can, why the last head, i. e. antichrist, as he is commonly called, should not comprehend a succession of single persons of the same sort, as it is manifest the beasts in Daniel signify. The ram, for instance, doth not signify Darius only, but the ruling power of Persia during that kingdom. And the he-goat, not Alexander alone, but him and his successors^p.

Now from this ground it may be plainly proved, (which is the second thing,) that the ruling power at this time in the Roman church is the beast, that is, antichrist. For the beast and Babylon are all one in this vision, and by Babylon is certainly meant Rome (as their great cardinal Bellarmine, and Baronius, the best of their authors, not only confess but contend.) And not Rome pagan, but Rome Christian; because she is called the *great whore*^q, which always signifies a people apostatized from true religion to idolatry, and because it is the same Babylon which St. John saith must be *burnt with fire*^r. From whence Malvenda, another of their authors, confesses it probable that Rome Christian will be an idolatrous harlot in the time of antichrist, because it is to be laid desolate, it is manifest, for some crime against the church of Christ.

Now that this antichristian power ruling in that church is

^m Rev. xvii. 11.

ⁿ In Revel. xvii. [p. 526. 8vo, Antv. 1603.]

^o [P. 809. fol. Antv. 1614.]

^p Daniel viii. 4, 5.

^q Rev. xvii. 1.

^r Rev. xvii. 16; xviii. 18.

not to be adjourned to the end of the world, as they would fain have it, but is at this present, appears from hence, that the *sixth head* being that power which reigned when St. John saw this vision ^s, there was but one *ruling power* more, and that to continue but a short space, to come between the end of the *sixth head* and this last *head* or power, called in an eminent sense *the beast* ^t. Now that imperial power which reigned at Rome in time of St. John, it is evident ended at the fall of the western empire with Augustulus, when another settled authority was received by the city of Rome itself, instead of that former imperial government. Which new authority lasting but a short space, as the vision tells us, it is plain, *the beast*, that is, antichrist, is long ago in the throne of the Roman church. Let this man and all his friends try if they can answer this argument, and see how they will free the papacy from being that antichristian power which St. John foretold should arise, and make itself *drunk with the blood of the saints*. I am sure this is a stronger and clearer explication of that Scripture than any he hath attempted.

And now let us examine whether there be any thing in our Bible contrary to this. The first place he produces ^u most evidently overthrows both parts of his proposition, as I shall demonstrate. For the *man of sin*, and the *son of perdition* ^x, is no more to be restrained to a single person, than *he who now letteth* ^y is to be restrained to a single emperor. Now St. Chrysostom in plain terms saith, that the apostle by the *τὸ κατέχον* ^z, that which withholdeth this man of sin from appearing, was the Roman empire; and the *ὁ κατέχων* ^a, *he who now letteth*, the very same Roman power, that is, the Roman emperors; not one particular emperor, but the whole succession of them, who as long as they lasted would keep back the man of sin. And this is not only his sense, (in his comment upon the place,) but the general sense of the ancient fathers, (Tertullian, Lactantius, Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Ambrose, St. Hierom, and St. Austin, and a great number of schoolmen in the Roman church,) that upon the fall of the Roman empire antichrist shall come. Which may satisfy any unprejudiced man both that antichrist is come, and that he is not a par-

^s Rev. xvii. 10.^t Ver. 11.^u 2 Thess. ii. 3.^x Ver. 3.^y Ver. 7.^z Ver. 5.^a Ver. 7.

ticular man, but a succession of men, who all together make up one person called the "man of sin," who can be none else but the papacy. For what particular man is there to whom this can be applied after the fall of the empire?

His next place of Scripture^b, as he quotes it, is neither out of our Bible nor out of theirs, (so little is his honesty). For thus the words run in both, *Let him that hath understanding count the number* (not of a man, as he falsely translates it, but) *of the beast, for it is the number of a man.* Now I have proved the beast doth not signify a particular man, and therefore this number, whatsoever it is, ought not to be sought only in one man's name. Which is not the meaning of the *number of a man*, as this man would have it; but signifies, as a better interpreter than he (viz. Arethas^c out of Andreas Cæsariensis) "A number, or counting, usual and well known to men." And if we will believe Irenæus, (who in all probability was not the inventor of it, but had it from the foregoing doctors of the church,) it is to be found in the word *Λατῆῖνος*, i. e. Latin, for saith he^d, "they are Latins who now reign." But we will not glory in this. For it being the common opinion of the church, the Latin, i. e. Roman empire was that which hindered the appearance of antichrist; Irenæus might thence conclude that antichrist should reign in the seat of that Latin empire when it was fallen. And antichrist not being, as I have proved, a particular man, this number must be common unto all that make up that antichristian rule in the Roman church. In which the popes are all Latins, and they are distinguished from the Greek by the name of the Latin church, and they have their service still in the Latin tongue, as if they affected to make good this observation, that in them is found this number of the beast. But I lay no great weight upon this opinion of Irenæus, though it will be very hard for them to confute it.

As to the 1 John ii. 22., we do not say the pope is the antichrist there meant; and yet for all that he may be the great antichrist. For it is to be observed that St. John saith there^e, that there were many antichrists in his time; and this antichrist who denied Jesus Christ to be come in the flesh, or that

^b Rev. xiii. 18.

^c [Ad calc. Œcum. p. 765 B.]

^d L. v. cap. 30. [tom. i. p. 329.]

^e Ver. 18.

Jesus was the Christ, was one of them; yet not a single person, but a body of men: there being several sects of them under Simon Magus, Cerinthus, and the rest who belonged to this antichrist. All which heretics their own church acknowledges were the forerunners of the great antichrist, whom we are seeking after, and can find no where but in the papacy.

From hence he runs back again to the 2 Thess. ii. 4., where those very characters, which he saith "do not agree to the pope," are those whereby we are led to take him for the man of sin. He being manifestly *ὁ ἄνομος*, *that wicked one*, we translate it, who will be subject to no laws; and sits in or upon the temple of God, that is, the Christian church; where he exalts himself over all that is called God, that is, all power on earth, whom he makes subject to his decrees, which he would have received as the oracles of God, and that by a blind obedience against men's reason; which is more than God himself requires of us. The original of his greatness was out of the ruins of the Roman empire. His coming was with lying wonders, and (whatsoever this man fancies) our Lord Jesus Christ, though not yet come, will come and certainly destroy him: *when the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever*^e.

The last place upon which he adventures to discourse is John v. 43, where we have only his word for it, that when our Saviour saith, *If another shall come in his own name*, he means especially the wicked antichrist. Why him especially? or him at all? And not rather any one who should pretend to be the Christ? as several did, (according to our Saviour's prediction^f;) such as Theudas, Barehozba, mentioned by Josephus, and another of the same name in the time of the emperor Adrian. And indeed there are such clear demonstrations (which I have not room to mention) that this word *another* ought not to be restrained to one single person, (such as they make the great antichrist,) but signifies any body indifferently, who pretended to be the Christ; that we may well conclude those to be blinded who make Christ have respect to the great antichrist, and from thence conclude the pope not to be that antichrist, because the Jews do not follow him. Alas! they see as little concerning antichrist as the Jews do of Christ (as was

^e Rev. xi. 15.

^f Matt. xxiv. 5.

truly observed by an eminent divine of our own long ago). For as the Jews still expect the Messiah, who is already come, and was crucified by their forefathers, so they of the Roman church look for an antichrist who hath been a long time revealed, and is revered by them as a god upon earth. Thus Dr. Jackson^g, who ventures to say further, that “ he who will not acknowledge the papacy to be the kingdom of antichrist, hath great reason to suspect his heart, that if he had lived with our Saviour he would scarce have taken him for his Messiah^h.”

They that have a mind to see more of this man's folly may look into the other Scriptures he barely mentions, where they will soon discover how much they make against himⁱ.

What the fathers say about this matter I have already acquainted the reader, which is so positive and unanimous, that it is sufficient to overthrow what some of them say conjecturally. Particularly upon the place last mentioned^k, concerning which they speak with no certainty, as they do of the rise of antichrist after the Roman empire was removed out of the way; which gave the greatest advantage to the bishop of Rome to advance himself unto that unlimited power which he hath usurped over the church of God. In short, this man hath stolen all his authorities about this matter out of Feuarentius's notes upon Irenæus^l; where he makes this *alius*, ‘another,’ to be antichrist, because he is *alienus a Domino*, ‘an alien from the Lord,’ which is not the right character of antichrist, whom St. Paul makes to be no less than *ἀντικείμενος*, ‘an adversary,’ who opposeth our blessed Saviour. And to show that this is a mere accommodation, he adds in the next words, that he is the *unjust judge* whom Christ speaks of, *that feared not God, nor regarded man*. If any one can think the fathers intended to expound the Scripture, and to give us the express sense of it in such speeches as these, he hath a very strange understanding.

^g Book iii. on the Creed, ch. 8. [Works, vol. ii. p. 285.]

^h Ib. chap. xxii. p. 452. [Works, vol. ii. p. 474.]

ⁱ [Dan. vii. 7; xii. 11; Rev. xiii.

17; xvii. 8, 11; Luke xiii. 13; Matt. xxiv. 15.]

^k John v. 43.

^l Lib. v. c. 25. [p. 323.]

XIV.

That no man, nor any but God, can forgive or retain sins^m.

ANSWER.

The strength of these men lies only in their deceit and fraud. They dare not represent either their own doctrine or ours truly. For this proposition is both true and false in divers regards. It is true that none but God can absolutely and sovereignly forgive sin: but it is false that no man can forgive sins ministerially and conditionally. For by authority from God men appointed thereunto do forgive sins, as his ministers, by baptism, by the holy Communion, by preaching, and by absolution. The only question is, Whether their absolution be only declarative, or also operative? And in this if we be not all agreed, no more are they of the Roman church. For P. Lombard did not believe that the priest wrought any absolution from sins, but only declared the party to be absolved. And the most ancient schoolmen follow him: such as Occam, who says, “according to the master, that priests bind and loose, because they declare men to be bound and loosed.” In short, the doctrine of the church is, that God absolves by his ministers; who cannot see into men’s hearts, and therefore can only pronounce that he absolves them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, upon supposal of their unfeigned repentance. But it is apparent the church always believed it is God who properly absolves and forgives sins, not the priest. For all the ancient rituals show that the absolution was given by prayer to God for the penitent, there being no other form of absolution in them but prayers; which being made in behalf of the penitent, they believed did obtain from God the pardon of those sins which he had with all humility publicly confessed. And therefore the present form, “I absolve thee,” (which was never used but in the Latin church, and not there neither till the middle of the thirteenth century,) must be understood to be only a very seldom declaration that God forgives the person upon his sincere contrition and repentance.

This is the meaning of our Saviourⁿ when he made the

^m [Touchstone, p. 40.]

ⁿ John xx. 21.

apostles his delegates, saying, *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.* Which supposes a superior power to theirs, in whose name they acted only as ministers.

And therefore when he adds in the next words^o, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye remit, they are remitted, &c.*, Menochius expounds thus, that though the Holy Ghost was not given till the day of Pentecost, yet on the first day of the resurrection they received the grace of it, by which they might remit sins, and baptize, and make children of God, and give the spirit of adoption to them that believed, &c. Now, let any man tell me whether it were they that, for instance, gave the Spirit of adoption, or God himself; they that healed and wrought miracles, (as they did after the day of Pentecost,) or God by their ministry. In like manner it was not they who conferred forgiveness of sins, but God properly bestowed it, as he did the other blessings; they only serving as ministers by whom he conveyed it to the penitent.

In the next place of Scripture he makes bold to add words which are neither in our Bible nor theirs^p. *When the multitude saw it, (i. e. the man take up his bed and walk,) they marvelled and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.* He adds, “as to forgive sins.” Whereas the evangelist speaks of the power of healing a sick man, which they saw plainly, and which our Saviour alleges as an argument that he could forgive sins, which the multitude could see no other way but in this miraculous demonstration of it. But suppose the multitude had admired at his power to forgive sins, will it follow that anybody else had that power which Christ hath? No, Christ could, “as man,” forgive sins, “yet not as any sort of man, (saith Menochius^q himself,) but as God-man,” which no priest whatsoever is.

He bids us, after his usual form, see more in several texts which he sets down without the words^r; and we are very willing to obey him, if there were any thing to be seen to this purpose: but the two first of them are only a promise of what our Saviour afterward bestowed, and we have heard what that was from John

^o John xx. 22, 23.

^p Matt. ix. 8.

^q Non ut qualiscunque homo, sed ut homo Deus. [tom. ii. p. 12.]

^r [Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 1; 1 Cor.

v. 5; 1 Tim. i. 20; 2 Cor. ii. 10;

v. 19; Num. 5, 6.]

xx. 23. The two next speak not of forgiving sins, nor merely of retaining them, but of delivering men up to Satan, which nobody now can do.

The next^s proves too much, if it prove any thing to this purpose, for it speaks of the whole church giving pardon to an offender, viz., by receiving him again by the apostles' order into their communion. The next^t relates to the apostles' reconciling men "by preaching the word of God," as Menochius expounds it^u; or "if by *word of reconciliation* we understand," saith he, "the thing that is reconciliation itself, then the apostle speaks of the whole power and ministry of reconciling men to God." The last place out of Numb. v. 6 is as impertinent as the quotations that follow out of the fathers, which they have a little mended since bishop Montague lashed this author severely for his childish and careless transcriptions of them out of father Bellarmine. You may judge of them all by the last save one (which was the first heretofore), out of Irenæus^x, who proving that we have a specimen of the resurrection in those whom Christ raised from the dead, instances in Lazarus, unto whom he said, *Come forth*, and the dead man came forth bound hand and foot, &c.; "a symbol," saith he, "or type of that man who is tied and bound in sins; and with respect to this the Lord said, *Loose him, and let him go*." But what good would their loosing him have done, if Christ had not first raised him from the dead? unto whose power, not theirs, all that followed is to be ascribed. And to whom did Christ speak when he bade them loose Lazarus, but to the Jews who were present? As Maldonate, one of their own good writers expounds it^z, and saith, "It is the opinion of all good authors except Austin, Gregory, and Bede," and adds, that "to found the doctrine of confession or absolution upon this place is no better than to build upon sand." But if it be supposed that he here speaks to his apostles and bids them loose him, still it can figure no more but a declaration of pardon of sins, granted already by the mercy of the Almighty. What St. Austin therefore saith in the place which this man mentions first, is to no purpose, for it is the very same with this of Irenæus; for hav-

^s 2 Cor. ii. 10.

^t 2 Cor. v. 19.

^u [Tom. ii. p. 146.]

^x L. v. c. 13. [tom. i. p. 308.]

^y John xi. 44.

^z [In loc. col. 1671 E.]

ing said in the beginning of that tractate^a, that the works of our Lord were not only *facta* but *signa*, and showed how the three persons raised by him from the dead signify the raising up three degrees of sinners out of their sins, when he comes to this passage in the story of Lazarus's resurrection, *Loose him and let him go*, he saith, "what is *Loose him*, &c., but *What ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*^b?" And let it be so, that our Lord's words fitly represent this, yet still it was God that properly loosed men from their sins; the apostles were but ministers in this business, who declared what God had granted. As God raised up Lazarus from the dead, they only untied him after he had really made him alive, and raised him out of his grave.

All the rest of the fathers is no better than this, and therefore I will not trouble the reader with it, but pass to the next, where he makes us say,

XV.

That we ought not to confess our sins to any man, but to God only^c.

ANSWER.

THIS is a most impudent falsehood, for we press this as a duty in some cases, for the quieting of men's consciences when they are burdened with guilt, particularly before they receive the communion, and when they are sick. But that which we affirm in this matter is, that God doth not require all Christians to make a particular confession privately to a priest, of every sin he hath committed, though only in thought, under pain of being damned if he do not. Much less do we believe such confession to be meritorious and satisfactory for sin. Nor do the Scriptures which he quotes prove a syllable of this doctrine.

The first he alleges^d speaks of those who confessed their sins before they received baptism of John the Baptist. But what is this to confession of sins after baptism? And besides, there is not a word of their confessing them to John, nor of particular

^a Tract. xlix. in Johan. [§ 2. tom. iii. part. 2. col. 619.]

^b [§ 24. col. 628.]

^c [Touchstone, p. 43.]

^d Matt. iii. 5, 6.

confession of every sin; and therefore Maldonate tells such raw divines as this^e, “we ought not to rely upon this testimony, for it is manifest it doth not treat of sacramental confession, which was not yet instituted.” And Bellarmine, their great master, durst venture no further than to call this which was done at John’s baptism, “a figure of their sacramental confession^f.” And this poor man himself concludes no more from hence than this, that “we may confess our sins (who doubts of it?) not only to God, but also to man.” But this is very short of what he undertook to prove by express texts, that “we ought to confess,” &c.

Nor dare he venture to conclude any more from the next place, but that we may confess our sins to men^g. Where he bids us “behold confession,” but doth not tell us to whom. So we are never the wiser, because it might be to God, and that before all the company, as the words seem to import. But he bids us also “behold satisfaction,” because several people (not the same he spake of before) brought forth their curious books, which were worth a great deal of money, and burnt them before all men. A plain and public demonstration indeed that they detested those magical arts, whereby they gave also satisfaction to all men of their sincere renunciation of such wicked practices. But what proof is this of a compensation made to God hereby for their sins, which deserved of him an acquittance?

His third text is still more remote from the business^h, and therefore alleged by wiser heads than his, such as Bellarmine, only as a figure of sacramental confession, the least shadow of which doth not appear: for there is neither confession of all sins here mentioned, but only of that particular for which the sacrifice was offered; nor confession of the sin to the priest, but rather to the Lord, as the words more plainly signify: *If a man or woman commit any sin that men commit, and do trespass against the Lord, and that person be guilty, then they shall confess their sin which they have done.* An unbiassed reader would hence conclude, they were bound to confess their sin to the Lord, against whom they had trespassed.

^e [In loc. col. 72 B.]

^f [“Sicut enim baptismus Joannis figura fuit baptismi Christi, ita et confessio quæ Joanni fiebat figura fuit confessionis quæ Christi mini-

stris facienda erat.”—Bellarm. de Poenit. lib. iii. cap. 3. tom. iii. col. 1137 D.]

^g Acts xix. 18, 19.

^h Numb. v. 6, 7.

His other Scriptures, perhaps he was sensible, were nothing to the purpose, and therefore he only sets down the chapter and verse as his manner is, when he bids, “see more^k,” where nothing is to be seen: for the first is only the same we had out of St. Matthew. The next^l speaks of one man’s confessing his sins to his neighbour. The next we had before under the former head; and the last I am willing to think is misprinted, or his mind was much amiss when he noted it^m.

His fathers also have only the word confession, not saying whether to God or to man, and he thinks that enough. But it is a shameless thing to quote St. Chrysostom for this doctrineⁿ, who in so many places exhorts his people only to confess their sins in private to God, that Sixtus Senensis is forced to expound him as if he spake only against the necessity of such public confession as was abolished at Constantinople. But Petavius (who proves there was no such public confession) is fain to desire the reader to be so kind as not to take St. Chrysostom’s words strictly, but spoken popularly in a heat of declamation; and we are content to do so if they would be so just as to do the same in other cases. But still we cannot think St. Chrysostom so very hot-headed, but that sometimes he would have been so cool as to have spoken more cautiously, and not have so frequently overlashed as they make him.

That which he quotes out of Ambrose, he is told by Bellarmine^o, is Greg. Nyssen^p, so little doth this poor man know of their own authors. As for “his sitting to hear confessions,” (if his author be worth any thing, which is much suspected by learned men of his own communion,) it is meant of public confession, such as was in use in his time.

^k [Mark i. 4; James v. 16; Matt. xviii. 18; xvii. 14.]

^l James v. 16.

^m Matt. xvii. 14.

ⁿ [De Sacerd. l. 3.]

^o [De Pœnit. lib. iii. cap. 8. tom. iii. col. 1153 C]

^p [“Audacter ostende sacerdoti quæ sunt recondita, animi arcana tamquam occulta vulnera medico retege. Ipse et honoris et valetudinis tuæ rationem habebit.”—Greg. Nyssen. in Mulier. Peccatr. tom. ii. p. 137 B.]

XVI.

*That pardons and indulgences were not in the apostles' times*⁹.

ANSWER.

NOTHING truer by the confession of their own authors, particularly Antoninus^r in his Sums, "Of these we have nothing expressly, neither in the Scriptures, nor out of the sayings of the ancient doctors." The same is said by Durandus and many others, who have been so honest as to confess that such indulgences and pardons as are now in use are but of late invention; there being no such thing heard of in the ancient church as a "treasure of the church made up of the satisfaction of Christ and of the saints, out of which these indulgences are now granted for the profit of the dead, as well as of the living." Whereas of old they were nothing but relaxations of canonical penances, when long and severe humiliations had been imposed upon great offenders, which sometimes were thought fit to be remitted upon good considerations, either as to their severity or as to their length. Now this which was done by any bishop, as well as he of Rome, we are not against. But such indulgences are in these ages of no use, because the penitential canons themselves are relaxed, or rather laid aside, and no such tedious and rigorous penances are inflicted; which the church of Rome hath exchanged for auricular confession, and a slight penance soon finished.

The first place he produces out of our Bible to countenance their indulgences^s, we had before to prove men may forgive sins, sect. xiv, and others have alleged it to prove men may satisfy for their sins; now it is pressed for the service of indulgences. What will not these men make the Scripture say, if they may have the handling of it? But after all, this will not serve their purpose, for the pardon the apostle here speaks of was nothing but the restoring him again to Christian communion, who had been thrown out of the church. But is this the indulgence they contend for in the church of Rome? Will this serve their turn? Then every church hath as much power as

⁹ [Touchstone, p. 45.]

2. ed. fol. Lond. 1506.]

^r Part. i. tit. x. c. 3. [tom. i. sign.

^s 2 Cor. ii. 10.

this comes to, and the whole body of the church will have a share in this power of indulgences; for St. Paul speaks to all the Corinthian Christians in general, that they should forgive him.

And so he doth also in the next place here alleged, ver. 6, 7 of the same chapter; which speak of a punishment inflicted by many: which he tells them ought not to be continued, but contrariwise, “Ye ought to forgive him and comfort him,” &c. Upon which words hear what your Menochius says: “This punishment was public separation from the church, out of which he was ejected by many, i. e. by you all, with detestation of his wickedness,” &c. The forgiveness of which was taking him into the church again, as Theodoret expounds the next words^r, “Unite the members to the body, join the sheep together with the flock, and thereby show your ardent affection to him.”

He bids us see more in two other places of Scripture^s, which we have examined before for other purposes, but he would have serve for all: a sign they have great scarcity of Scripture proofs; and therefore he gives us a large catalogue of fathers, which he packs together after such a fashion as no scholar ever did. For after Tertullian and Cyprian, who speak only of the forenamed relaxation of canonical censures, he mentions the council of Lateran^t, but doth not tell us which; though if he had, it would have been to no end; for the first Lateran council was above eleven hundred years after Christ: and Innocent III., who is his next father, lived an hundred year later, holding the fourth Lateran council, 1215. After these he brings St. Ambrose, Austin, Chrysostom, who lived 800 years before, and knew of no indulgences but such as I have mentioned. Lastly, he tells us, “Urban the Second granted a plenary indulgence:” and when lived this holy father, do you think? Almost 1100 years after Christ, *anno* 1086. A most excellent proof that the Romish indulgences were in use in the apostles’ times! Can one think that such men as this expect to be read by any but fools? who perhaps may imagine this Urban was contemporary with the apostles. It is some wonder he did not quote that holy father Hildebrand, Gregory VII,

^r Verse 8.

^s [Matt. xviii. 18; xvi. 19.]

^t [He refers to the 62nd canon

of the fourth council of Lateran, A. D. 1215. Mansi, tom. xxii. col. 1051.]

who something before this granted pardon of sins to all those who would take up arms against his enemies. Poor man! he did not know this, else he would have mentioned him rather than Urban, who was but his ape.

 XVII.

The protestants hold (if you will believe him), that the actions and passions of the saints do serve for nothing to the church^t.

ANSWER.

A most wicked slander; for we look upon what they did and suffered as glorious testimonies to the truth they believed and preached, as strong incitements to us to follow their examples, and as eminent instances of the power of God's grace in them, for which we bless and praise him, and thankfully commemorate them.

But all this serves for nothing to the church, that is, to the church of Rome; unless men believe there is a treasury which contains all the superfluous satisfactions of the saints, who suffered more than they were bound to endure. Of which last revenue that church having possessed itself, it serves to bring abundance of money into their coffers; which must be paid by those who desire to be relieved out of these superabundant satisfactions of the saints, by having them applied to them for the supply of their defects. This is the meaning of this very man, it appears by the Scriptures he quotes for their belief.

The first is Col. i. 24, which speaks of the persecutions St. Paul endured in preaching the gospel to the Colossians; which, though grievous to him, was so beneficial to them, that he rejoiced in his sufferings, and resolved to endure more for the confirmation of their faith, and for the edification of the church of Christ. This he calls *filling up what was behind of the afflictions of Christ*: because Christ began to testify to the truth by shedding of his blood, and thence is called *the faithful Witness*: but it remained still that the apostles should give their testimony by the like sufferings, because the gospel was to be carried to the Gentile world; which could not be

^t [Touchstone, p. 46.]

effected without their enduring such hardships as Christ had endured in preaching to the Jews. Thus Theodoret expounds, "that which was behind, or which remained of the affliction of Christ^u." But here is not a word of satisfaction; no, not by Christ's sufferings, which were of such value, that there was nothing of this nature left to be done by others. This better men than this of their own church ingenuously confess. Particularly Justinianus, a Jesuit, whose words are these upon this very place: "He saith he filled up what was wanting of the passion of Christ, not to merit indeed, or make satisfaction, (for what can be wanting to that which is infinite?) but as to the power and efficacy of bringing men to the faith; that his mystical body, which is the church, may be perfected^x," &c. For he signifies in the latter end of the verse, that "he suffered for the enlarging or propagating of the church, to confirm and establish its faith, that he might provoke others to his imitation^y."

I could add many more to show the folly of this man, who saith, "from hence ground hath always been taken for indulgences." A notorious falsehood; not always, for indulgences are late things; not by all men in their church, since it used them. For Estius, in his notes upon this place, absolutely disclaims it, and saith, though some divines hence argue that the passions of the saints are profitable for the remission of sins, which is called indulgence, yet he doth not think this to be solidly enough concluded from this place.

Which I have been the longer about, because they are wont to make a great noise with it. The next place they curtailed heretofore in this manner, *He was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack^z*, (leaving out what follows, *of service towards me,*) which made it sound something like as if their lack of goodness had been supplied by his merits, or rather, satisfaction; for merit will do no service in this case. But bishop Montague banged them so terribly for this foul play, that now they have printed it right; though, alas! nothing to the purpose. And therefore this man doth not venture to say so much as one word upon this text, but barely recites the words, and leaves the reader to make what

^u [In loc. tom. iii. p. 481.]

^y [P. 325 D.]

^x [In loc. tom. ii. p. 324 D.]

^z Philipp. ii. 30.

he can of them. And all that Menochius^a, a truly learned expositor of their own, could make of them is this, that “ St. Paul being in prison, Epaphroditus performs him those good offices which the Philippians should have done, had they not been absent : but he so much neglected himself, while he was wholly intent upon serving the apostle, that he fell dangerously sick. and lay for a time without hope of life.”

Finding so little relief in these places of Scripture, he betakes himself to arguing from that article of our creed, the Communion of Saints. Which Bellarmine, from whom he borrows these goodly proofs, manages on this manner^b, “ We are taught by this article that all the faithful are members of one another, being a kind of living body. Now as living members help one another, so the faithful communicate good things among themselves, especially when those which are superfluous to the one are necessary or profitable to the other.”

This is admirable catholic doctrine : the saints have more than they need, and therefore they communicate it to us for the supply of our wants. But this should have been proved, and not supposed, that the saints have more than enough, something to spare ; and that their passions were satisfactions, and superabundant satisfactions. After which it would still remain a pretty undertaking to prove, that because one member helps another when it suffers any thing, therefore the sufferings of one member will cure another member ; the pain, for instance, of the long finger will free the little finger from the pain which it suffers. Thus the actions and passions of saints are not imparted to us, as this man presumes, from the relation we have one to another ; and yet they serve for very good purposes to the church, as I have already shown.

And one would imagine he distrusted this argument after he had set it down, because he runs back again to the Scriptures. A great company of which he heaps up^c, to no more purpose than if he had quoted so many texts of Aristotle. I will give

^a [Tom. ii. p. 266.]

^b L. I. de Indulg. c. 3. [tom. vii. col. 416.]

^c [Ps. cxix. 63 ; 1 Cor. xii. 12 ; 2 Cor. xi. 28 ; Ps. liii. 9 ; 2 Mac. xv. 16 ; Matt. xvii. 3 ; Luke ix. 30, 1 ;

Matt. xxvii. 52 ; Apoc. v. 8 ; Gen. xxvi. 5 ; xlviii. 16 ; Exod. xxxii. 13 ; Job. v. 1 ; Hier. xv. 1 ; Isai. xxxvii. 35 ; Mark xiv. 36 ; Luke viii. 44 ; Acts v. 15.]

the reader a taste of one or two. The first is^d, *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.* Thus the words run expressly in our Bible. Now let me beseech the reader to consider what “action or prayer of the church triumphant for the church militant or patient, or for both,” he can find contained in this text, as he saith there is in all the passages he quotes. Let him look into the next, and I will be his bondsman if he meet with a word of any “action or prayer of the church triumphant,” but only mention of many members which make up but one body^e. And what “action or prayer of the church triumphant” can one gather out of St. Paul’s care for all the churches^f? As for Isaiah liii., the church always thought it a prophecy of the sufferings of Christ, and not of the saints, and so the apostles interpret it in many places. If he mean Psalm liii. 9, (as one edition of his book hath it,) there are not so many verses in it, and we should be as far to seek for any sense if we should see more, and therefore I will look no further.

What the fathers affirm he bids us also see, but doth not tell us, and I cannot trust him so much as to think it worth my pains to look into the places to which he points us. St. Austin I am sure (the first he names) is abused by him, who hath not a word of this matter in his second chapter of his book about the care of the dead^g; which is altogether concerning this question, “Whether the dead suffer any thing for want of burial?” Upon Psalm lxi. indeed, (which he quotes at last,) he mentions that place of St. Paul^h, and discourses how Christ suffered not only in his own person, but in his members, every one of which suffers what comes to his share; and all of them together fill up what is wanting of the sufferings of Christ. So that none hath superabundant sufferings, but he expressly saithⁱ, that “we every one of us, *pro modulo nostro*, ‘according to our small measure,’ pay what we owe, (mark that, not more than we are obliged unto, which is the Romish doctrine, but what we are bound unto,) and to the utmost of our power we cast in, as it were, the stint or measure of sufferings, which will not be filled up till the end of the world.” Which is directly

^d Psalm cxix. 63.

^h Coloss. i. 24.

^e 1 Cor. xii. 12. ^f 2 Cor. xi. 28.

ⁱ [§ 4. tom. iv. col. 591.]

^g [Tom. vi. col. 517.]

against what this man and his church would have; for they that bring in but their share, and nothing more than they owe, have no redundant passions out of which flow superfluous satisfaction.

XVIII.

That no man can do works of supererogation^k.

ANSWER.

How should he? When no man can supererogate till he have first erogated. In plainer terms, no man can have any thing to spare to bestow upon others (for this they mean by supererogating) till he hath done all that he is bound to do for himself. And therefore bishop Andrews^l well calls these works of supererogation, “proud pretences of doing more than a man needs, when he hath not done all he ought.” For these two things are necessary to make such works as they mean by this word. First, that a man have done all that God’s law commands. Secondly, that he have done something which it commandeth not. But who is there that hath done all which God’s law requires? That is, who is without all sin? Therefore who can, by doing some voluntary things to which he is not bound, do above his duty, when he falls so much below it in things expressly commanded? There is another great flaw also in this doctrine, for they suppose precepts to require a lower degree of goodness, and counsels a more high or excellent. Which is false, for God’s precepts require the height of virtue, and counsels only show the means whereby we may more easily in some circumstances attain it. As forsaking all, keeping virginity, are not perfections, but the instruments of it as they may be used.

The places which he brings to prove men may do such works are, first, Matt. xix. 21, where there is not a word of doing any thing which might be bestowed upon others, but only of laying up treasure to himself in heaven, by doing a thing extraordinary. We do not say all things are commanded, but some are counselled; yet there are men of great name in the church, (such as St. Chrysostomⁿ and St. Hilary^o;) who

^k [Touchstone, p. 48.]

ⁿ [In loc. tom. lxiii. tom. vii. p.

^l Resp. ad Apolog. Bellarmini, p. 629.]

196. [p. 268. 8vo, Oxon. 1851.]

^o [In loc. tom. i. col. 763 C.]

call this a commandment which Christ gave the young man. And so it is, if he would come and follow Christ, that is, be one of his constant attendants as the apostles were, who had left all that they might give up themselves wholly to his service.

The next is no more to the purpose^p, for nobody thinks there is any command to live single, but it was a prudent counsel of the apostle at that time, when the church was in great distress; which made it advisable for people, if they could, to keep themselves single, whereby they would shift the better, and be freed from a great many cares and troubles of this life. But he doth not say that hereby they would lay up a treasure of satisfactions which would serve more than themselves, and might be bestowed upon others. This is the meaning of the Roman church.

The third^q hath no more in it than the two former. It is a counsel, *he that is able to receive it, let him receive it*. But they who received it did not thereby make satisfaction for defects in obedience to God's precepts, much less did they do so much as to have to distribute unto others. Let who will look into the other Scriptures which he barely notes^r, he will find them as empty as these, especially the first of them^s, which contains only a question propounded to our Saviour by a tempting lawyer: unless he means the answer to it, which is a command for loving God with all the heart and all the soul, &c. And it is not left at our liberty, I hope, whether we will thus love him or no.

Not one of his fathers say what he would have them. The first of them, St. Ambrose, only says, he that obeys a counsel (for instance, sells all his goods to follow Christ) may say more than he that obeys only a precept. For he may expect a reward, as the apostles did when they said, *Behold, we have left all, and followed thee; what therefore shall we have^t?* Whereas they that do what they are commanded must say, *We are unprofitable servants, and have but done our duty*. Now what doth this discourse prove, but that they shall have a greater reward themselves? But there is not a syllable of their supere-

^p 1 Cor. vii. 25.

^s Luke x. 25.

^q Matt. xix. 12.

^t De viduit. cap. 12. tom. ii. col.

^r [Luke x. 25; 1 Cor. vii. 1; Rev. 205 E.]
iii. 4; Acts ii. 44; iv. 34.]

rogating for others. Nor in Origen nor Eusebius, much less St. Chrysostom, whose business it is to prove that "God's commands are not impossible." What is this to counsels? Of which Gregory the great indeed (not Greg. Nyssen, who hath no such work) speaks in his *Morals*^u; but is so far from maintaining works of supererogation, that none can be more express than he for the protestant doctrine, of the imperfection of all men's righteousness, and renouncing all confidence in our own merits.

 XIX.

That by the fall of Adam we have all lost our free will, and that it is not in our power to choose good, but only evil^x.

ANSWER.

THIS is another insufferable slander in the first part of it, for if we had all lost our freedom of will, we should be no longer men. We only say we have not such a freedom of will as we formerly had, and so all say. And he that says, (which is the second part of this proposition,) "It is in our power to choose that which is good" without the assistance of grace, is a Pelagian, that is an heretic, as this man is, by contradicting what we affirm, that it is not in our power (that is, our natural strength) to choose good, that is, spiritual good, of which if he do not speak, he only babbles. "For the will of man," saith Bellarmine^y himself, "in things appertaining to piety and salvation, can do nothing without the assistance of God's grace, yea, without his special assistance." This is the doctrine of the gospel, and is our doctrine in the tenth Article of our religion, unto which he hath nothing to oppose.

For not one of his places of Scripture^z prove man hath a power of himself to will what is good without God's grace. His

^u [The reference in the Touchstone, probably by a misprint, is 'S. Greg. Nicen. i. Moral. cap. 5:' it should be S. Greg. Magn. Moral. in Job, tom. i. col. 10.]

^x [Touchstone, p. 50.]

^y L. vi. de Lib. Arbitr. et Gratia, c. 4. [tom. iv. col. 769 C.]

^z [Luke x. 42; Acts v. 4; Philem. 14; 1 Cor. vii. 37; ix. 1, 13; 2 Cor. ix. 7; Hos. iii. 9; Num. xxx. 14; Josh. xiv. 13; 2 Reg. xxiv. 12; 3 Reg. iii. 5; Eccles. xv. 15; Matt. xix. 17; Josh. xxiv. 15; 2 Sam. xii.; Prov. xi. 24; Rev. iii. 20; Isaiah i. 19, 20.]

first Scripture^a speaks of a thing that is neither good or evil in itself, but indifferent; for no man is bound to marry or not to marry, but it may be as he pleases either way. Yet it is manifest by the very text, that the apostle supposes some men have not a power to contain, and so in their case marriage becomes necessary.

As to what he intermixes with this, (which is very foreign to it,) *My son, give me thy heart*; let me demand of him whether any man can consent to this, unless God draw his heart to him, when he asks a man to give it? And he that is drawn, saith St. Hierom^b, doth not run spontaneously of himself; but he is brought to it when he either draws back, or is slow or unwilling. But I will not abuse the reader's time in so much as mentioning the rest, since we say nothing in this matter but what the gospel, what the ancient fathers, particularly St. Austin, say; nay, what Bellarmine himself confesses to be true, whose words in the conclusion of this controversy fully express our sense, and give an answer to all that this man foolishly as well as falsely charges us withal.

“The conversion of man to God, as also every other good work^c, as it is a work, (that is an human act,) is only from his free will, yet not excluding God's general help. As it is pious, it is from grace alone; as it is a pious work, it is both from our free will and from grace.” To this we subscribe.

XX.

That it is impossible to keep the commandments of God, though assisted with his grace and the Holy Ghost^d.

ANSWER.

THIS is such a downright calumny, that I cannot but say with the Psalmist, *What shall be done unto thee, O thou false tongue?* We most thankfully acknowledge the power of the divine grace to be so great that it is possible for us to keep God's commandments to such a degree as he requires and accepts, though

^a 1 Cor. vii. 37.

^b L. iii. adv. Pelag. [tom. ii. col. 15. 778 D.]

^c L. vi. De Grat. et Lib. Arbit. c.

15. decima sent. [col. 809 A.]

^d [Touchstone, p. 53.]

not with such an exact and strict obedience as to stand in no need of his gracious pardon of our defects.

St. Paul means no more when he saith he could *do all things*^e, that is, all before mentioned, and harder things yet, if occasion were, by the help of Christ, who administered strength to him to do all those things, as Menochius interprets it.

Nor doth St. Luke's character of Zachary and Elizabeth^f amount to more than this, that they were sincerely good people, who were therefore "*blameless* or irreprehensible," (as Menochius^g translates it,) because, says Theophylact^h, they acted out of pure respect to God, and not to please men. For many walk in the law of God who are not irreprehensible, because they do all to be seen of men. But Zachary both did what God commanded, and did it irreprehensibly, not performing such things that he might please men. Thus he, and St. Austin gives another reason of this glossing upon the virgins mentionedⁱ: *In whose mouth was found no guile, because they were irreprehensible*, (as he renders the word we translate without fault,) before the throne of God; "they were," saith he, "therefore without reprehension, because they faithfully reprehended themselves, and therefore guile was not found in their mouth, because if they had said they had no sin, they had deceived themselves." It is plain by this they did not look upon such persons as without all sin, but only sincere and entire in their obedience to Christ's commands. Nay, it is evident Zachary himself, whom St. Luke so highly commends, was not thus blameless as to be without all sin; for he was much to blame in not believing the angel who brought him a message from God, and was punished for not believing it by being struck dumb till the angel's word was fulfilled.

All his other Scriptures therefore^k, and fathers, proving that which none of us deny, are here alleged in vain.

^e Philipp. iv. 13.

^f Luke i. 5, 6.

^g ["Irreprehensibiles, sine reprehensione,"—tom. ii. p. 40.]

^h [Ἀμέμπτως ἔπραττε, μὴ διὰ τὸ ἀρέσαι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ταύτας τελεῶν. in loc. tom. i. p. 271 D.]

ⁱ Rev. xiv.

^k [Ezech. xxxvi. 27; Matt. xi. 30; xix. 17; Eccles. xv. 15; Rom. xiii. 8, 10, 13; Josh. xi. 15; xxii. 5; Ps. xvii. 3; Deut. xxx. 11; 1 John ii. 4; Job xxvii. 6; i. 22; Rom. ii. 27; Luke x. 28, &c.; xv. 7; 3 Reg. xiv. 8; xv. 5; Ephes. i. 4; Gal. v. 14; Gen. vi. 9.]

XXI.

He next of all saith we maintain that faith only justifieth, and that good works are not absolutely necessary to salvation¹.

ANSWER.

WHAT shall one do with a man that opposeth he knows not what? The first part of this proposition is St. Paul's, who in effect saith the same^m. Therefore no man should be so bold as to contradict it, but rather explain it, which it is easy to do; for when we say faith only justifies, this faith includes in it a sincere purpose of good living, without which we believe it will not justify. And therefore the second part of it is a new slander, that we affirm good works are not necessary to salvation, the direct contrary to which we heartily believe; for it is absolutely necessary to our salvation, we all affirm, that we act according to our faith; though by such good works we can merit nothing, neither justification nor salvation: but "we are accounted righteous before God only for the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith, not for our own works or deserving," as the words are in the eleventh article of our religion. So that when we say "by faith," it is manifest we exclude not good works, but only the merit of them. And thus Luther himself shows, upon Gal. v., that "faith alone will not suffice, though faith alone justifies."

Therefore all his Scriptures might have been spared, especially the first of them^o, which speaks of a miraculous faith, and besides, doth not contradict us, who believe faith without works will not avail to salvation; though let us do never so much, we can never merit it by what we do.

The second text^p is agreeable to what we say, that the faith which justifies includes in it a purpose of well doing. Such an one as was in Abraham, whose faith in purposing to offer up Isaac was imputed to him for righteousness, though he had not actually done as he purposed to do. In like manner, if any man sincerely profess the Christian faith and be baptized, he is justified, though he have not as yet brought forth the fruit of it in good works; (witness the eunuch^q), which if he should

¹ [Touchstone, p. 56.]

^m Rom. iii. 28; Gal. ii. 16.

^o 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

^p James ii. 24. ^q Acts viii. 37.

not produce afterward he could not be saved. St. Austin in that very book and chapter which he quotes expressly saith, "Good works follow him that is justified, they do not precede him that is to be justified." What doth he think of the thief upon the cross, who only believed, and was not so much as baptized?

James ii. 14 is not contrary to what we say, but according to it. Mr. Calvin himself upon these very words saith, "Therefore we are saved by faith because it joins us to God, which is done no other way but that living by his Spirit we be governed by him." St. Paul and St. James agree very well, though the one say, *We are not justified by faith only*, (which is St. James's doctrine,) and the other, St. Paul, in effect says, we are justified by faith only, when he saith, *We are justified by faith without works*. As he shows in Abraham's case, where he opposes justification by faith, and justification by works; and affirms Abraham was not justified by works, but by faith. St. James alleging the same case, and the very same words, proves he was justified by works, and not by faith only. Can any one think they make use of the same instance for quite contrary ends? It is a wonder men do not learn this plain and easy truth from hence, that faith alone (having in it a purpose of well doing) enters us into the state of justification before we have done what we purpose, but good works are necessary to continue us in this state, and so may be said to justify us; that is, continue our justification, which faith only cannot do.

The last place^r we have noted so well, that we expressly declare in our twelfth Article, that "good works cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment, (these are the great things we deny,) yet they do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith." And the doctrine of St. Austin is perfectly ours^s, which I will set down, because it explains all that I have said; "A good life is inseparable from faith; yea, in truth, faith itself is a good life." And again^t, "How can he that is justified by faith choose but work righteousness? But if any man when he hath believed presently depart this life, the justification of faith remains with him; no

^r Gal. v. 6.

^t Lib. Quæst. 83. q. 76. [tom. vi.

^s L. de Fide et Operib. c. 14. col. 67.]
[tom. vi. col. 177.]

good work preceding, because he came to it not by merit, but by grace; nor following, because he was not suffered to remain in this life. From whence it is manifest what the apostle saith, *We conclude a man is justified by faith without works.*"

All his other Scriptures therefore ^u serve only to show his ignorance, if not his malice, in charging us with the denial of that which we affirm, that "good works are necessary to salvation." His fathers he had better have kept to himself, for they frequently say faith only justifies. Even Origen ^x, upon that very book, the Epistle to the Romans, affirms that "justification of faith alone suffices, though a man hath not done any works." Which he proves by the example of the thief upon the cross, and the woman in Luke vii. to whom our Saviour said, *Go in peace, thy faith hath saved thee.* "But perhaps," saith he, "some reading this may think he may neglect to do well, since faith alone sufficeth to justification. To whom we say, that if any man doth wickedly after justification, without doubt he despiseth the grace of justification. Neither doth a man receive forgiveness of sins for this, that he may think he hath a license given him to sin again; for a pardon is given him not for sins to come, but for sins that are past." And what he saith upon the next chapter (not the fifth, as this man quotes him, but the fourth) doth not contradict this: "Faith cannot be imputed to those who believe in Christ, but do not put off the old man with his unrighteous acts ^y." Which very well agrees with what he said before, and we with him: faith enters us into a state of acceptance with God, but we cannot go to heaven unless we bring forth the fruit of faith in new obedience. So he explains himself most excellently in that very place, a little before, in these words, which comprehend the whole business ^z: "I think that the first beginnings and the very foundations of salvation is faith, the progress and increase of the building is hope, but the perfection and top of the whole work is charity." I will not trouble the reader with what the rest of his fathers say, since they themselves are sensible their cause is endangered by the fathers. Which is so notorious, that they have taken care to have this passage expunged out

^u [Matt. vii. 21, 2; v. 21; xix. 17; Rom. iii. 31; Phil. ii. 12.]
^x In cap. iii. [tom. iv. pp. 516, 7.]
^y [P. 534 B.] ^z [P. 531 A.]

of the very index of St. Austin's works upon the Psalms^a, "Through grace we are saved by faith," though St. Paul affirms the same^b. And out of the very text of St. Cyril upon Isaiah these words are ordered to be expunged, (by the Spanish Index of Gasp. Quiroga^c;) "The grace of faith is sufficient to the cleansing of sin," and "Christ dwells in our heart by faith." No wonder then they have dealt thus with later authors of their own who followed the fathers' doctrine, particularly with Vatablus, out of whose Annotations upon Isaiah viii. 32 they have ordered these words to be blotted out, "They that believe in the Lord shall be saved, but they that do not shall perish." And these upon Luke viii., "Faith saveth."

XXII.

That no good works are meritorious^d.

ANSWER.

At last he speaks some truth, though very lamely. For if by *meritorious* were meant nothing but that good works are highly valued by God when performed out of love to him, and we deny ourselves to serve him; which undoubtedly he will reward with a glorious recompense, though far transcending our services; there would be no quarrel about this matter. But by "works meritorious" they mean such as are no ways defective, and have such an exact proportion to the reward that God is bound in strict justice to bestow, or rather pay it. Now this is it we deny, believing that good works, in the rigour of justice, do not deserve eternal life as wages; and this is it which they presume, but can never prove.

^a Printed 1543, apud Ambr. Girau. ["Cap. 51. in fin. deleantur ex textu illa verba, 'Sed ubi non haberent Dei timorem in seipsis, nec Jesum per fidem incolam reciperent; habitat enim in cordibus nostris per fidem, sicut scriptum est.'"—ibid. P. 343 of Humfrey's version.]

^b Ephes. ii. 8.

^c ["Ex textu deleantur illa verba, 'Fidei autem gratiam cum his qui valde inquinati sunt, tum etiam

paulum morbo affectis, satis ad emendationem valituram esse fidem facit dicens.'"—Index Libr. Expurg. Gasparis Quirogæ, card. et archiep. Tolet. fol. 62. 4to, Salmur. 1601. The version referred to is that of Lawrence Humfrey, president of Magdalene College, Oxford, p. 12. published by Frobenius, fol. Bas. 1563.]

^d [Touchstone, p. 58.]

His first text^c is so far from express, that quite contrary it saith, God will only *reward every man according to his works*, not for the merit of his works; which imports them to be an adequate cause: whereas *according* signifies nothing of a cause, but only of a respect or comparison between the work and the reward; so that they who have done evil shall be punished, and they that have done good be blessed. And he belies St. Austin (according to the manner of their catholic sincerity) to justify his interpretation. For St. Austin speaks of the punishment of sinners, not of the reward of the righteous:—"I beseech you, brethren, attend diligently, and be ye afraid as well as I, for he doth not say he will render to every one according to his mercy, but according to their works," (he saith not a word of their faith, which this man put in of his own head,) "for now he is merciful, but then just^d." Would to God they would take St. Austin's counsel, and so diligently attend to this as to repent of their shameless forgeries, that they may find mercy with God, which hereafter will be denied.

The word for *reward* in Matt. v. 12 is not to be interpreted *wages*, and *hire*, due to the work. For the labourers who came at the eleventh hour into the vineyard, as St. Hilary^e observes, received *mercedem*, "their reward, not of the work, but of mercy:" which is exactly according to St. Paul, Romans iv. 4, where he saith there is a *μισθος*, (which this man would have translated *wages*,) 'reward' of grace, not of debt. Which place St. Austin^f having occasion to mention, thus glosses: "*Now to him that worketh*, that is, presumeth of his works, and saith that for their merit the grace of faith was given, *the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt*. What is this, but that our reward is called grace? If it be grace, it is freely given. What is meant by 'freely given?' It cost thee nothing, thou didst no good, and remission of sins is bestowed upon thee." I have quoted this at large, that, if it be possible, such men as this may be put to the blush, if not confounded. As one would expect they should be when they read St. Paul, who, though he say, *Death is the wages of sin*, yet saith, *Eternal*

^c Matt. xvi. 17.

^d Serm. xxxv. de verbis apost.

[al. Serm. cx. tom. v. append. col. 200 C.]

^e In Psal. 129. in fine. [tom. i. col. 496 D.]

^f In Psal. xxxi. [§ 7. tom. iv. col. 175.]

life is the gift of God: which the fathers take great notice of, particularly St. Hierom; “He doth not say the wages of righteousness, as he had said the *wages of sin*; for eternal life is not earned by our labour, but graciously bestowed by God’s gift ϵ .”

The same answer serves for the next place^h, and all such texts. And 2 Cor. v. 10 was answered before, that we shall receive according to what we have done in the body; they that have done well shall be rewarded above their deserts, and they that have done evil receive what they have deserved. Which is the highest encouragement unto well-doing; to believe that God will do more abundantly for us out of his infinite bounty than we can ask or think; and not consider our merits, (which are none at all,) but his own incomprehensible goodness and mercy. They that teach otherways derogate from the grace of God, and proudly arrogate to themselves a worthiness of which creatures are not capable.

I need not examine that heap of Scriptures which he confusedly huddles togetherⁱ; for they have no more in them than these we have already considered. And as for the fathers, it is a most insufferable impudence to say, as he doth, that “they unanimously confirm the same.” The quite contrary hath been unanswerably proved by our writers, that the fathers from the first times down to venerable Bede have taught as he doth, that “no man ought to think his own merits will suffice him to salvation, but let him understand that he must be saved by the sole grace of God k .”

It is frivolous to allege the word *merit*, so often used by the fathers; for they mean no more thereby, but obtaining that which they are said to merit. So the word is used in innumerable places, and in many authors: insomuch that in the passion of St. Maximilian it is said, his mother, after he was killed, “merited his body of the judge;” that is, she obtained it by her entreaties. Every novice in learning knows this.

ϵ [In Rom. vi. tom. xi. col. 862 C.]

^h Matt. x. 42.

ⁱ [1 Cor. xix. 17; xviii. 25; Heb. xi. 26; Psal. xviii. 20; 1 Cor. iv. 5; iii. 8; 2 Esdr. xv. 19; Apoc. xxii. 12; xvi. 6; iii. 4; xxii. 12; Rom. ii. 6; Eccles. xii. 2; Col. iii. 23;

Luke xvi. 9; vi. 38; Gen. xv. 1; Jer. xxxi. 16; Sap. v. 16; 1 Tim. iv. 8; 2 Thess. i. 6; Rom. xi. 21.]

^k In Psal. 31. [“Instruit, videlicet, ut nemo vel libertatem arbitrii vel merita sua sufficere sibi ad beatitudinem credat, sed sola gratia Dei sesalvari posse.”—tom. viii. col. 461.]

XXIII.

*Faith once had cannot possibly be lost*¹.

ANSWER.

IT was not possible for him to go on to speak some truth ; but he returns to his old way of calumniating : for there is no such position maintained among us, but expressly the contrary in our sixteenth Article : “ After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, (and faith is a grace and gift of God,) and fall into sin ; and by the grace of God we may rise again,” &c. The only question is, Whether they that once have saving faith may lose it totally and finally. In which there are various opinions, not only among us, but among themselves ; some saying it may be lost totally, but not finally ; others, that it may be lost in both regards. But this is no matter of faith, but only of opinion ; for which we do not break communion.

All his proofs therefore out of Scripture are perfectly impertinent ; for they prove what none of us deny, that “ men may lose their faith after they have received it.” As for his fathers, St. Austin, in that very book which he quotes^m, asserts the direct contrary to what is here pretended to be his sense, that “ there are some who cannot finally lose the grace of God.” For comparing the grace which Adam had with that which is now given to the saints, he saith, “ To the first man (who had received a power not to sin, not to die, not to desert the good estate in which he was created) was given the aid of perseverance ; not whereby he was made that he should persevere, but without which he could not by his free will have persevered. But now to the saints, who are predestinated by God’s grace to the kingdom of God, there is not only given such an aid of perseverance, but such an one that perseverance itself is given them, not only that without this gift they cannot persevere, but also that by this gift they cannot but persevere. For our Saviour saith to his apostles, not only *Without me ye can do nothing*ⁿ, but withal, *Ye have not chosen me, but I*

¹ [Touchstone, p. 60.] ^m De Correp. et Gratia, c. 12.[tom. x. col. 769.]

ⁿ John xv. 5.

have chosen you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain^o." I have quoted this at large, that such writers as I have to deal withal may blush, if they can, at such shameless untruths as they father upon St. Austin. And let a deeper blush colour this man's cheeks, who quotes the council of Trent^p, which was but a little above a hundred years ago, among the ancient fathers.

XXIV.

His next charge is, they maintain that God by his will and inevitable decree hath ordained from all eternity who shall be damned, and who saved^q.

ANSWER.

AND who is he that dares maintain the contrary? When our Lord hath said in express terms, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned^r.* This is the eternal purpose of God in Christ, which the apostles were commanded to publish every where, as his inevitable decree concerning mankind, which cannot be avoided: that if they do not believe the gospel which is preached to them, they shall perish; but if they sincerely believe it, and be baptized, they shall be saved.

This babbler, I doubt not, would have said something else, but he had not the wit, viz. that we maintain God hath for his own mere will and pleasure, without any respect to men's faith or unbelief, resolved to damn some, and to save others. But this is not the doctrine of our church, as he might have seen in our seventeenth Article. If any among us teach such doctrine, it is no more than some of their own doctors have taught. And it is a most senseless thing to accuse us of that, which, if it be a fault, they are as chargeable with it themselves.

His Scriptures prove nothing contrary to us; but we expressly teach according to the first of them, that "we ought

^o Ver. 16.^p [He quotes Conc. Trid. sess. 6. c. 9, 12, 13, &c. See Labbe, tom.

xiv. pp. 760 sqq.]

^q [Touchstone, p. 62.]^r Mark xvi. 15, 16.

to receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth to us in holy Scripture^s." And therefore we must believe that *God would have all men to be saved*; notwithstanding which, such triflers as this man is must be told that *God will have some men to be damned*, (as I showed before;) and these two propositions do not contradict one the other.

The next is of the same import, *God is not willing any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*^t. And yet he is willing, nay, resolved, that all those shall perish who will not repent.

For want of other Scriptures, he runs to those that are apocryphal, and quotes a passage out of the book of Wisdom, which we believe to be canonical enough in this point: and then he returns to Scripture, a great many texts of which he jumbles together with some *apocrypha*^u; but if any one will take the pains to consult them, he will find they do not contradict any thing that we or other protestants affirm. Even they who believe the absolute and irrelative decree, consent to what the prophet Hosea saith, xiii. 9, which is his first place, that *every man's destruction is of himself*. He beats the air therefore in alleging those places and the sayings of the fathers; to which we subscribe, and so do all other protestants; whose true opinion this poor *ignoramus* did not understand, and therefore could not oppose. For those that say the cause why some are reprobated is God's will and pleasure, yet maintain the cause of their damnation and destruction is their own sins. This if he had questioned, and asked them why God reprobates this man rather than another; they would have had St. Austin as ready at hand as he hath to answer for them. "You seek to know the causes of God's will, when the will of God is the very cause of all things that are. For if the will of God have a cause, there is something which antecedes his will, which it is impious to believe. If any man therefore ask, why God made this? the answer is, because he would. If he go on to ask, why would he? he searches for something greater than

^s 1 Tim. ii. 3.

^t 2 Pet. iii. 9.

^u [Hos. xiii. 9; Ezech. xviii. 32; Wisd. xi. 24; John iii. 16; Rom. xi. 20, 32; Prov. xx. 9; xxviii. 14;

Phil. ii. 12; 1 Cor. iv. 4; ix. 27; x. 12; Eccles. v. 5; Job ix. 2; Joel ii. 14; Jon. iii. 9; Acts viii. 20; Jer. xvii. 9; 2 John i. 8.]

God's will, when nothing greater can be found. Let human temerity therefore bridle itself, and not seek for that which is not, lest he do not find that which is." *L. de Gen. contra Manich.* c. 2.^x

XXV.

Further they hold, saith he, that every one ought infallibly to assure himself of his salvation; and to believe that he is of the number of the predestinate y.

ANSWER.

No man in his wits, much less any church, ever uttered such foolish words as these; which are inconsistent with the former assertion, that God hath resolved to damn some men. How can they who say this oblige every man to believe he shall be saved? The most that any one hath said is, that (not every one, but) "every true believer," every one that is justified, ought to be so assured. So Bellarmine himself represents their doctrine^z, which hath as many friends and favourers in the Roman church as it hath in ours: where no more than this is commonly taught, that "being assured of the truth of the divine promises, (which cannot deceive us,) we are so far assured of attaining them, as we are certain that we faithfully perform our duty; which is the condition upon which the attaining of them depends."

But this is a very strange man, for because every man ought not to be assured of his salvation, he will allow no man to be assured, no, not St. Paul; expressly against the doctrine of his own church, which looks upon him as a man particularly elected by God, not only to the apostleship, but to salvation. Nor doth he contradict this in 1 Cor. ix. 27, but rather tells us how he secured his salvation, *by keeping under his body*. By which means we also may be secured, for if we *continue in his goodness*, as the next Scripture speaks^a, we ought not to doubt he will continue it unto us to the end. And we teach no other assurance of salvation, but by constant fidelity unto Christ, which as long as

^x [Lib. i. tom. i. col. 647 C.]

tom. iv. col. 949.]

^y [Touchstone, p. 64.]

^a Rom. xi. 20, 21.

^z [De Justific. lib. iii. cap. 3.]

we maintain, we ought to be certain of the other. The only fear is lest we should not be steadfast, and therefore we are well admonished in the next Scripture^c to *work out our salvation with fear and trembling*: but so doing we shall undoubtedly be saved.

No church in the world more beats down “vain security” than this of ours, nor doth any more encourage it than the church of Rome, where men are secured of their salvation, if they can be so vain as to believe it, by confessing to a priest, and receiving his absolution at the last gasp.

The other Scriptures which he hath shovelled together^d are of no different import from these, and therefore need not be examined; nor his fathers neither, which they have now made a shift to scrape together, though they had none in the first edition of this book. For they that read Bellarmine could not but know what a great number of testimonies are brought out of the fathers to confirm their opinion, who hold men may be so certain they are in a state of grace that they may be assured of their salvation. Particularly out of St. Austin, in a great number of places, more especially in traet xxii. upon St. John, where he argues thus^e:—“Our Saviour hath told me, *He that hears my words, and believes on him that sent me, hath eternal life, and shall not come into condemnation.* Now I have heard the words of my Lord, I have believed, when I was an infidel I was made a faithful man, and therefore, as he tells me, I have passed from death unto life, and shall not come into condemnation, not by my presumption, but by his own promise.” Which words are so convincing, that Bellarmine^f himself acknowledges every one may conclude from this promise of Christ, he is passed from death unto life, &c. “The only question is, with what certainty this can be gathered; which St. Austin,” saith he, “doth not explain.” But it is plain to every understanding that there is the same certainty of the conclusion that there is of the premises. A man may be as certain of his salvation as he is that he sincerely believes Christ’s words, and

^c Philip. ii. 12.

^d [Prov. xxviii. 14; Eccles. ix. 1, 2; 2 Tim. ii. 15; 2 Pet. i. 10; Tob. xii. 2, 13; Prov. xx. 9; Eccles. v. 5; Job ix. 20; Ps. xviii. 13;

1 Cor. iv. 4; Deut. iv. 29; 2 Cor. x. 18; 1 Pet. i. 17.]

^e [Tom. iii. part. 2. col. 466 D.]

^f L. iii. de Justif. c. x. [tom. iv. col. 978.]

is obedient to them. Nor doth the place which this man quotes out of St. Austin contradict this, but rather confirm it, if the following words be added, which this man fraudulently conceals. They are these^s: “There is no stability nor hope in myself. My soul is troubled within me; wilt thou not be troubled? do not remain in thyself, but say, *To thee, O Lord, have I lift up my soul.* Hear this more plainly. Do not hope from thyself, but from God. For if thy hope be from thyself, thy soul will be troubled because it hath not yet found whence it may be secure of thyself.” Which shows St. Austin thought men might attain to security, but not in or from themselves, but in God alone, before whom every one ought to humble himself, that he may exalt him. It is to no purpose to examine the rest.

 XXVI.

That every man hath not an angel-guardian or keeper^h.

ANSWER.

MEN may believe either that every one hath or hath not, and yet not contradict our church, which hath determined nothing about it, nor hath it been resolved in any church, but every one left to think as he pleases. For all that Suarez and Vasquez (other kind of men than this) durst say in this case is this, that though this assertion “be not expressed in Scripture nor defined by the church, (mind that,) yet it hath been received with such an universal consent, and hath such great foundation in Scripture, as understood by the fathers, that it cannot be denied without great rashness and almost error.” See here how cautiously these learned men speak, and how ingenuously they confess the church hath determined nothing in this point, but it is a kind of popular opinion. As for Scripture, in direct contradiction to this man they tell us it is not expressly delivered therein: and whatsoever foundations they think are there laid for this opinion, it seems to me upon serious consideration that the Scriptures rather suppose that every man (no, not the good,) hath not a particular guardian angel that constantly attends him; but God sends either one or more angels as there is oc-

^s In Psalm. xli. [§ 12. tom. iv. col. 361 E.] ^h [Touchstone, p. 66.]

casation, and as he thinks fit, to do what he appoints: who, after they have dispatched that business, depart from them, till he thinks fit again to employ those or some other heavenly messengers for their good. This seems very manifest to me in that which is reported concerning Abraham, Daniel, St. Peter, St. John, and the blessed Virgin herself in the first of St. Luke. Let him or any one else show such proofs, if he can, out of Scripture, that the angels do constantly remain with those whom they sometimes attend, and are fixed in their office of guardianship to them.

Matt. xviii. 10, speaks not of one angel, but of more, and doth not say they *guard* Christ's *little ones*, but that they *always behold the face of his Father in heaven*; that is, wait to receive his commands, (as servants who stand before their master,) which they are ready to execute. This confirms the other opinion I now mentioned, that angels are only sent as God orders, and are not fixed in their attendance. Neither doth this text speak of every man, as this scribbler idly talks, but of Christians, and particularly the weaker sort called *little ones*, who most needed their ministry. Mr. Calvin also, in that very place which this man mentions, restrains his question to the faithful, who he dare not say have every one of them a particular angel to minister to them, but rather inclines to the contrary opinionⁱ.

Psaln xci. 11, 12, proves the very same, that God gives his angels charge of good men. But it neither speaks of one who is the angel-keeper, nor that the angels, whether more or fewer, remain always with good men. There were a great many about one prophet, Elisha^k: but it is not likely that those troops were his constant guard. But it is in vain to appeal to St. Cyril of Alexandria's¹ opinion, that it is meant of the angel-keeper; for they will not in other cases, as I shall show shortly, stand to his judgment.

It is true in Acts xii. 13, the Jewish Christians who were assembled in Mary's house were of opinion that it was the angel of St. Peter who knocked at the door; but whether this opinion was true or no, is the question; which the Scripture doth not solve: nor can we gather the faith of the primitive

ⁱ [Instit. lib. i. cap. 14, § 7. p. 36.]

^k 1 Kings vi. 12.

¹ [Contr. Julian. lib. iv. tom. vi. p. 122 E.]

church (which this man thinks is apparent from this place) from the opinion of a few of the Jewish Christians; who had many opinions which I hope this man will not justify. And though this should prove such a man as Peter had an angel-guardian, it will not prove that every man hath. For this seems to have been the old opinion among the Jews, that only excellent men, persons of great integrity and usefulness, had such attendants to take care of them; for instance, Jacob, as one may gather out of St. Chrysostom's third Homily upon the Colossians^m. But it doth not appear that they thought they had them always, nor one and the same, when God favoured them with their ministry. And thus Mr. Calvin (in that place of his Institutions which this man quotes) says he does not see what should hinder us from understanding this angel of St. Peter of any angel whatsoever, to whom God committed the care of him at that time, whom we cannot therefore conclude to have been his perpetual keeper.

Let who pleases "see more," he will not find one of the Scriptures he quotesⁿ speak home to the point; no, not those out of Tobit, (which he knows we do not own for any part of the rule of our belief,) for it doth not follow that every man hath an angel-guardian, if Tobit had one who accompanied him in that journey. No, Tobit himself had not his company alway; but the angel, when he had finished his journey, departed from him. See how foolish this man is, who not only quotes books which we allow not to be holy writ, but alleges places there that make against him.

And his fathers he quotes as madly, beginning with St. Gregory; and putting even Gregory of Tours before St. Austin. And the reader may judge of what value his testimonies are by what he alleges out of St. Hierom; whose words if he would have given us entirely, it would have appeared they carry no authority with them^o. For it immediately follows,

^m [Tom. xi. p. 347 C.]

ⁿ [1 Cor. xi. 10; Zech. iii. 10; Luke xv. 10; xvi. 22; Tob. v. 15, 20; Job xii. 12; v. 27; Exod. xxiii. 23; Josh. v. 13; Numb. xxii. 22, 31; Gen. xxiv. 40; Dan. ix. 22.]

^o ["Magna dignitas animarum, ut unaquæque habeat ab ortu nativi-

tatis in custodiam sui angelum delegatum. Unde legitur in apocalypsi Johannis angelo Ephesi, Thyatiræ, et angelo Philadelphicæ, et angelis quatuor reliquarum ecclesiarum scribe hæc."—S. Hieron. in Matt. xviii. 10. tom. vii. col. 139 E.]

“ Whence we read in the Revelation of St. John to the angel of Ephesus, of Thyatira, and the angel of Philadelphia:” as if these had been guardian angels of these churches, to whom our Saviour wrote; when all agree they were the bishops of those churches, as Ribera confesses; who justly wonders that St. Hierom, or any one else, should think them to be angelical spirits. If St. Hierom wrote those commentaries, it is manifest he departed from the opinion of other fathers, when he saith that “ every soul hath its angel assigned it from its nativity:” for they say only that every believer hath this privilege. There needs no more be said in this matter, which can at most be no more than a probable opinion, and therefore it is not contrary to the faith to deny that every one of us hath an angel for his custody and patronage.

XXVII.

That the holy angels pray not for us, nor know our thoughts and desires on earth P.

ANSWER.

NONE of us say “ that the holy angels pray not for us” in general, (no, many protestants grant it,) but we have no reason to believe they pray for us in our particular concerns, and we are sure they do not intercede for us by their merits, for they have none. We are sure also that they “ know not our thoughts or desires,” unless they be discovered by external effects or signs, or they be revealed to them by God. For the Scripture expressly saith, God only knows the heart^q. And this Suarez^r himself saith is a catholic assertion, that an angel cannot naturally know or see the act or free consent of any created will, unless by him that hath such a free affection it be manifested to another. And this he saith is *de fide*, and proves it from Scriptures and fathers. Now if any one will say that God doth reveal our internal thoughts and desires to the angels, he is a very bold man; unless he have a divine revelation for it. None of the Scriptures here mentioned say any such thing.

The first of them^s only proves that an angel prayed (not for

^p [Touchstone, p. 67.]

[p. 143. part. ii. disp. in D. Thomam.]

^q 1 Kings viii. 39; 1 Cor. ii. 11.

^s Zach. i. 12.

^r L. ii. de Angel. c. 21. n. 3.

a particular person and his particular necessities, but) that he would *have mercy upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judah*; that is, upon the whole nation. This many protestants grant, and therefore he belies them when he saith, “they believe the angels do not pray for us.” For this very place is alleged by the Apology for the Augustan Confession^t, and by Chemnitius in his Common places, as an argument why they grant “angels pray for the church in general:” for this text proves no more.

The next (though out of an Apocryphal book^u) says nothing of the angels praying for us, but of their “bringing men’s prayers before the Holy One;” which the same protestants also allow: meaning thereby only a ministerial oblation of men’s prayers before God, (as they explain themselves,) not a propitiatory oblation, which is proper only to Jesus Christ.

Unto whom the third place belongs^x; not to an ordinary angel, but to that great Angel of the covenant, (whom the prophet speaks of^y), out of whose hand the smoke of the incense came, and ascended up before God. So St. Austin^z and Primasius^a; nay, Viega^b, a famous Jesuit, affirms, that most interpreters by this angel understand Christ. And he gives these good reasons for it: “Unto whom, but to him alone, doth it belong to offer the incense of the whole church, that is, their prayers, in a golden censer? Who but he could send down part of the fire with which the golden censer was filled^c upon the earth, and inflame it with the fire of the divine love, and the flaming gifts of the Holy Ghost?” &c. See the folly of this man, who applies that to angels which belongs, in the opinion of most interpreters, unto Christ alone. And see his falseness also, who would make his reader believe that Irenæus understood this place as he doth, when he speaks not one word of this matter in the place he mentions; but only saith^d, “There is therefore an altar in the heavens, for thither our prayers and our oblations are directed, and to the temple there, as John in the Revelation saith, and there was opened the temple of God

^t [Opp. Melancthon. tom. i. fol. 101 a.]

^u Tobit xii. 12.

^x Rev. viii. 4.

^y Malachi. iii. 1.

^z [In Apoc. tom. iii. append. col. 167 E.]

^a [Max. Bibl. vet. Patr. tom. x. p. 310.]

^b [Blasius Viegas, Comment. in loc. sect. 2. p. 368. fol. Eboræ 1601.]

^c Verse 5.

^d [Contr. Hær. lib. iv. cap. 18. tom. i. p. 252.]

and the tabernacle; for behold, saith he, the tabernacle of God, in which he will dwell with men." In which words he hath no respect to this place, but to Rev. xi. 19, and xxi. 3.

Once more, take notice of the wretched performance of this man, who took upon him to prove that angels not only pray for us, but "know our thoughts and desires upon earth;" about which there is not the least touch in any one of these places, which are all he quotes at large. And so for those the chapters and verses of which follow ^d; they only tell us what angels knew of the mind of God, which they brought in messages to men; but nothing of their knowing the minds of men. Let the reader, if he think good, peruse them, and he will see I say true. What heart then can one have to look into his fathers, when he deals thus insincerely with the holy Scriptures? But to show that nothing else can be expected from such men, I will briefly note, that St. Hilary expressly speaks of such a ministerial intercession as many protestants grant; that is, of their bringing men's prayers to God, as he speak^e. Whose words are a gloss upon the apostle's, Heb. i. For *they are ministering spirits, sent forth for to minister to them who are heirs of salvation*. Whereupon follows the words he quotes, "Therefore the nature of God doth not need their intercession, but our infirmity; for they are sent forth for those who shall be heirs of salvation." What can be plainer than that he speaks only of a ministerial, (for they are sent forth to *minister*,) not of a powerful intercession?

XXVIII.

That we may not pray to them^f.

ANSWER.

HERE he speaks some truth again; and a great many of his own church ingenuously confess, that there is no command in Scripture, nor so much as an example of praying to them.

The text they have most in their mouths who assert we may pray to them, is this which he first quotes, Gen. xlviii. 16. But by this angel a great number of the fathers understand Christ

^d [Gen. xix. 18—20; Dan. viii. 15; ix. 20; Acts v. 19.]

^e [In Psalm cxxix. col. 440 A.]

^f [Touchstone, p. 69.]

himself; St. Cyril, for instance, (to whose authority I told you they dare not always stand,) thus expounds it, *L. 3. Thesaur. C. 1.*^g And so doth Novatianus in his book of the Trinity, *C. 15.*^h St. Athanasius also against the Arians, *Orat. 4.*ⁱ And St. Chrysostom upon the place, (*Hom. 66. in Gen.*^k), and divers others. Therefore this is no sorry shift, (as this ignorant man presumes to call it,) having such very great patrons to maintain it. And what if St. Chrysostom in another place^l understands this of an angel, which attends (not “every man,” as this writer pretends, but) “every believer,” (as his words are expressly, and St. Basil’s^m;) it is no more than some protestants do; even Mr. Calvin himself is content with this exposition in his Institutions, (though in his Commentaries on Genesis he saith it is meant of Christ;) but they of the church of Rome gain nothing at all from this concession. For Jacob’s words are no direct formal invocation or compellation of the angel, (for he doth not say, O angel of God bless the lads,) but only an earnest desire that they might have the angelical protection; for which he prays to God, that he would send the angel to preserve them, as he had done him.

Tobit himself meant no more in the place which he next allegesⁿ: that God who dwells in heaven would prosper their journey, by sending his angel to keep them company. For it is certain that the Jews never prayed to angels; and it is as certain that they constantly define prayer by a direct and express relation to God, and none else. And therefore it is not to be thought that any good man among them ever joined prayer to God and an angel together in the same breath, as he makes Tobit do in this place. No, this is contrary to the sense of the greatest divines in his own church.

Before he ventured to allege the next place, Hosea iv. 12, he should have been sure that the prophet speaks of a created angel, and not of the Son of God, who in the opinion of Justin Martyr, Eusebius, St. Hilary, and many more fathers, appeared to Jacob, and blessed him. Whence it is that he called the

^g [Assert. 35. tom. v. p. 379 C.]

^h [Apud Galland. Biblioth. patr. tom. iii. p. 303 D.]

ⁱ [Orat. iii. § 12. tom. i. p. 561.]

^k [Tom. iv. p. 632.]

^l [Hom. iii. in Col. tom. xi. p. 347 C.]

^m [Contr. Eunom. lib. iii. tom. i. p. 272 C.]

ⁿ Tobit v. 16.

place Peniel, having there seen the *face of God*. And to this sense the next verse inclines, where he is called *the Lord God of Hosts*, who found Jacob in Bethel. Which the fathers in the council of Sirmium thought so certain, that they denounce a curse against those that maintained it was the unbegotten Father, not the Son, (for God they concluded he was,) that wrestled with Jacob p. But suppose it was an angel, the Hebrews are so far from thinking that Jacob made supplication to him, that they conceive (many of them) the angel made supplication to Jacob, for he prayed him to let him go. Take it otherwise; it signifies no more but that he desired him to give him his blessing: which we desire of men here upon earth, to whom we do not properly pray.

From hence he passes to satisfy scruples which he saith some have; who say they would pray to them, if they could be assured that they hear us, &c. Who they are that say thus I know not: they are none of us. For we do not think it lawful to pray to them, though they could hear us. But how doth he prove that they can hear us? Why, he brings the common place, Luke xv. 10, which saith there is *joy in their presence*, that is, *in heaven* (as it is verse 7.), *over one sinner that repenteth*. Which shows they know when there is joy in heaven, and what that joy is for, because they are in heaven: but it doth not prove they know all things that pass upon earth, but only those things of which notice is given in heaven. At this rate we may prove that good men know all that is done on earth, because they rejoice at the conversion of a sinner; that is, when they hear of it: and the angels rejoice no other ways.

They that like his performances upon these texts may look into the rest q; and see how, to fill up the number, he alleges the same over again, Hosea xii. 4; and now also quotes Gen. xix. 18, &c., to prove we may pray to angels, which in the

p [Εἴ τις τῷ Ἰακώβ μὴ τὸν Υἱὸν ὡς ἄνθρωπον πεπαλαικένοι, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀγένητον Θεόν, ἣ μέρος αὐτοῦ λέγοι, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.—Formula seu Confessio Semi-Arianorum in Conc. Sirm. A. D. 351. Græce apud Athanas. de Synod. tom. i. p. 743. La-

tine in Mansi, Concill. tom. iii. col. 258; Hil. de Synod. tom. ii. col. 486 D.]

q [Hos. xii. 4. Song of the three Children, xxxvi; Psalm xxxiv. 8; Num. xxii. 34; Gen. xix. 18; xix. 30; Psalm cxlviii. 2.]

foregoing section he brought to prove that they pray for us. Nay, sends us to the Song of the three Children; where I can find nothing of praying to the angels, no more than of praying to the sun, and moon, and stars.

His quotation out of St. Austin's Annotations on the Book of Job^r is not worth our regard. For St. Austin himself was doubtful whether he should own them^s, being put forth by others rather than him, and so corruptly, that he would scarce say they were his. And being admitted for his, he doth not speak home to this man's purpose: for he only says, "Job seems to intreat the angels that they would deprecate for him; or rather the saints, that they would pray for a penitent." Now this is not the religious invocation which the Romanists plead for; but only such a desire as we make to a friend here on earth to help us by his prayers. But whatsoever St. Austin may be supposed to say, it is manifest he that thus interprets the place mistakes very much; fancying those to be friends in heaven who are friends on earth, of whom Job most certainly speaks. And so doth the next place^t, which speaks not at all of praying to the saints, but of desiring them to appear for him, and testify to his innocence. Thus Menochius himself expounds it^u, "The meaning seems to be, I (that is Eliphaz) have already told thee my opinion, If thou hast any patron among the saints, or whose testimony thou canst bring forth in thy defence, do not delay, but produce it before us. They can tell of none (as others enlarge upon the words) who was ever oppressed with such calamities as are fallen upon thee, unless they deserved them for their sins." If these words relate to angels, as some protestants think they do, (because the LXX here have *angels* instead of *saints*;) the meaning is the same: "If thou hast seen an angel, as I have done, he can give thee no other answer." Thus the same Menochius^x.

^r ["Angelos videtur postulare ut pro eo deprecetur, aut certe sanctos ut pro pœnitente orent."]—In Job. xix. 31. tom. iii. col. 643.]

^s See his *Retract. lib. ii. c. 13.*

[tom. i. col. 46.]

^t Job v. 1.

^u [In loc. tom. i. p. 221.]

^x Job iv. 15.

XXIX.

Protestants hold, he saith, that the angels cannot help us^y.

ANSWER.

THIS man seems to have been in love with lying, else he could not have invented such a senseless falsehood. For no protestant ever was so foolish as to say, they cannot help us. We believe they both can and do; and we thankfully acknowledge their ministry in our public prayers on Michaelmas day. But we look upon them only as ministers, who can do nothing of themselves but as they are ordered. For they are not set over us as lords, to act according to their own pleasure; but sent by the great Lord of all, to do us service as he appoints them.

Neither his Scriptures^z nor fathers say more than this, and we say the same; therefore what a trifler is this, who blots paper to prove the sun shines!

XXX.

That no saint deceased hath afterward appeared to any upon earth^a.

ANSWER.

THIS is just such another falsehood, devised on purpose to have something, right or wrong, to object against us: for no protestant is of this mind. He saith he hath met with some such; but for my part, I cannot give any credit to one who hath told so many untruths.

The Scriptures therefore which he alleges need not be considered^b, much less his story out of the Maccabees. And his fathers are such as were imposed on by fabulous relations, devised to make way for the belief of purgatory. And such apparitions we have great reason to doubt of.

^y [Touchstone, p. 71.]

ii. 17; Isa. lxiii. 9.]

^z [Dan. x. 13; Rev. xii. 7, 10, 21; Acts xii. 7, 12; Matt. ii. 13; iv. 6; Ps. xci. 11, 2; Acts v. 19; xxvii. 23; Ps. civ. 4; Heb. i. 7; Luke xvi. 22; Gen. xix. 10, 5, 6;

^a [Touchstone, p. 73.]

^b [Matt. xvii. 3; xxvii. 52; 2 Mac. xv. 12; Luke xvi. 27, 8; John xi. 44; Luke vii. 15, 22; Matt. ix. 2; Mark v. 42.]

XXXI.

That the saints deceased know not what passeth upon earth^c.

ANSWER.

No, nor every thing that here passeth, as his words seem to import. For so Aquinas^d himself resolves, speaking of the knowledge of the blessed in heaven, "Though it be the natural desire of a rational creature to know all things which belong to the perfection of its understanding, (which are the species and kinds of things, and the reasons of them, &c.,) yet to know particulars, and the thoughts and actions of them, belong not to the perfection of a created understanding; nor doth its natural desire tend to this." The very same say we, and a little more; they may know some particulars at some times, but not all at all times. And let us hear what this vain talker hath to say to the contrary.

First, he says, out of Luke xvi. 29, that Abraham knew there were Moses' and the prophets' books here on earth, which he had never seen when he was alive. What a ninny is this! who undertakes to prove they know what passeth here at present, (or else he doth nothing,) by proving they know what is passed and gone long ago: which they may know, and not understand what is done at this instant. Besides, if they know some such general things, it doth not prove they know all particulars; for instance, what I am now writing about this matter. St. Austin, in that book he mentions^e, doth indeed say Abraham knew of Moses; but in the very same book and the chapter foregoing (c. 13^f) he expressly saith, the spirits of the dead are there, "where they do not see whatsoever things are done or come to pass in the life of men." And in the same place he allegeth Isa. lxiii. 16, to prove that "Abraham and Israel did not know what is done in this world, nor how their children fare." And (to confound this man and all such false pretenders to learning) he saith, in that very chapter quoted by him (which is the fourteenth, not the twenty-fourth, for there are not so many chapters in the book), in express terms he knew

^c [Touchstone, p. 74.]

^e L. de Cura pro Mortuis. [cap.

^d Pars i. Q. xii. Art. 8. ad 4. 14. tom. vi. col. 527.]

[Opp. tom. xx. p. 51.]

^f [Col. 526.]

those things, "not while they were a doing when they were alive, but being dead he might know them from Lazarus; and thus he resolves, lest it should be false which the prophet saith, *Abraham knows us not.*" And then immediately begins the next chapter in this manner, "It must be confessed therefore, that the dead do not know what is done here while it is doing; but may hear it afterwards from those who dying go from us to them. Not all things indeed, but such as they are suffered to relate, and such as they are suffered to remember, and such as are fit for them to hear. They may hear something also from the angels," &c. It would be too long to transcribe the rest, and this is sufficient to convince those that have a mind to understand the truth, how little credit is to be given to such men as this, who, to give us further proofs of his folly, alleges John v. 45 to prove the saints know what is done here. When it is evident our Saviour doth not speak of Moses' person, but of his writings or laws, as he himself could interpret it in the foregoing place.

And "who for shame" (to use his own word), but such a man as he, would quote Rev. xii. 10 to prove the saints must know what is done on earth because the devil doth; whose business it is to go to and fro (which the saints do not) while he seeks whom he may devour; and to prove likewise the devil knows what is done, because he lays false accusations to the charge of good Christians? So this text signifies, as Menochius himself expounds it. "The accuser," saith he, "is the backbiter, the calumniator, the detractor, who accuses the saints with false criminations and calumnies, as anciently he did Job." A most excellent argument to prove the devil knows what is done here, because he is a liar, a false accuser, who tells what was never done. Will people never open their eyes and see the senselessness of these men, who trouble the world with their brain-sick discourses?

He promised express Scriptures, and perpetually falls into pitiful arguing. As he doth here upon another Scripture in the Old Testament, where, because Elisha is said to know what the king of Israel said in his bed-chamber, he concludes that he knew by the light of prophecy, even the inward

thoughts. And what if God had revealed this to him, (which he did not,) would it follow that he knew the words and the thoughts of all Israel? And because he knew what the king said in secret at some time, that he knew what he and all his people said at all times? These are extravagant conceits, fit only for men in Bedlam. What the "light of glory," as he calls it, can make the souls of the blessed understand, we cannot tell: but they are not capable to understand all particulars, as you heard before. And therefore St. Austin^h, in the book and chapter before quoted by himself, argues quite otherwise: that it doth not follow, because the rich man told Abraham how many brethren he had, therefore he knew what his brethren did, and what they suffered at that time. In like manner he would have argued, no doubt, in any other case, if there had been occasion; that because the saints, for instance, know some things which they are told by others from this world, we must not infer that they know other things besides them.

That which follows is like this, but much worse. For because Elisha being afar off, as he saysⁱ, saw all that passed between Naaman and Gehazi, therefore the saints, he concludes, see what passes in this world. What mad stuff is this! Elisha was not afar off, for the text saith expressly^k Naaman was departed from him *a little way* when Gehazi ran after him. And in the very same book we find that though Elisha knew this thing at some distance from him, yet he did not know another, which was as easy to know, viz. that the Shunamite's son was dead^l.

And how doth St. Paul's being rapt into the third heaven (which is his next proof) give us any reason to believe that they who are there know what is done upon earth? These things hang together like harp and harrow.

Nor doth it appear that St. Stephen saw from earth as far as heaven. Our Saviour indeed presented himself unto him, *standing*^m (not sitting, as this man quotes it) at the right hand of the divine glory: which then also appeared. But so it had done in ancient times in the very door of the tabernacle: where the congregation of Israel saw it, without looking as far

^h Cura pro Mortuis, c. 14. [col. 527.]

ⁱ 2 Kings v. 26.

^k Ver. 19.

^l 2 Kings iv. 27.

^m Acts vii. 55.

as heaven. But if we take it otherwise, it doth not follow that because God can make his divine glory shine from heaven to earth, therefore any one can see from earth to heaven, or from heaven to earth. Much less that the saints can always see what is done here on earth: for St. Stephen could not alway behold the glory of God, and our Lord standing at his right hand; but only at that time, upon an extraordinary occasion, when God in an extraordinary manner shone upon him.

All his own divines will tell him that arguments are not to be drawn from parables: such as that of the rich man and Lazarus, (to which he makes his next resort). For if we allow that way of reasoning, then he may prove from hence that we and the saints may talk together, though at this distance one from another; as the rich man did with Abraham, and Abraham with him. Of all the ways that have been invented to show how the saints may know what we do, there was never any so extravagant as this, of their seeing from heaven what is done here.

I believe the reader is weary of such discourse as this, especially if he looked for express Scripture, which this man bade him expect. Therefore I shall not exercise his patience with any further notice of what he saith about the communion of saints, which may be without the least knowledge they have of us, or we of them; as appears by the communion of all the members of Christ's body here on earth, some of which never heard of, much less have ever seen the other.

Look never so long in the other Scriptures he quotesⁿ, you will find nothing in them to the purpose. And the first of his fathers^o is a counterfeit: the two next we shall meet withal presently, to prove we may pray to the saints; which is the drift also of this discourse.

XXXII.

That the saints pray not for us^p.

ANSWER.

There is no such assertion as this among us; but he again

ⁿ Matt. xix. 38; Rev. ii. 26; in epit. Paul. S. Max. serm. de S. Luke xxii. 30; Acts v. 3: 1 Kings Agnete.]
xxviii. 14; Eccles. iv. 6, 23.]

^p Touchstone, p. 76.

^o [Euseb. serm. de Annunc. Hier.

calumniates us. For though the saints cannot know our particular wants, and therefore cannot make particular prayers for us; yet that in general they pray for that part of God's church which is here on earth, and perhaps (for this we cannot affirm certainly) for some particular persons, who were well known and dear to them when on earth, we do not deny: but if we did, he is so ill provided of proofs, and of Scripture for it, that those which he alleges will work no belief in us.

For in Rev. v. 8, there is a plain representation of the church here on earth, not in heaven. So the latter end of their song^p might have informed him, where they say, *Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.* And thus many of the fathers understood it, as he might have learnt from Viega, one of their own doctors. So that he might have spared his "Lo, how," &c. and we may rather say, in imitation of it, "Lo, how silly an interpreter this is of such divine mysteries!"

What is recorded in a book of no authority^q concerning Judas' dreams is not worth considering: and it proves no more, if we should allow it, but only a general recommendation of that nation to God.

The next place, out of Jer. xv. 1, doth not imply that Moses and Samuel then prayed for them in heaven, but that if they did, or rather, if two such powerful persons were then alive to intercede for that people, they should not prevail. And so St. Hierom (whom this man belies, as he doth us) plainly enough expounds it. Nay, his own Sixtus Senensis saith, upon the like place (*Though Noah, Daniel, and Job stood before me*), that the prophet speaks upon a supposition, that if such men as they were in this sinful world, they should deliver none, &c.; God would not hear them for such a wicked people.

It is of no consequence what Baruch saith, being never reputed a canonical book, and according to his own rule in his Preface ought to pass for nothing, unless he had proved the same that Baruch saith by places of canonical writ^r. Besides, *dead Israelites* may mean no more but those now dead, who when they were alive prayed as their posterity now did: and so Nich. Lyra understands by *dead Israelites* the holy patriarchs

^p Rev. v. 10.^q 2 Mac. xv. 14.^r Baruch iii. 4.

and prophets, who when they were alive prayed for the good estate of their posterity. Or *dead* may signify those whose condition was so low that they could do nothing for themselves, as he describes all Israel, v. 10, that *they were accounted with them that go down into the grave*, that is, dead men. This, I will stand to it, is an interpretation they cannot confute. Theodoret doth say^s that these words “clearly prove the immortality of the soul,” and that is all.

I see no reason why Rev. ii. 26, 27 may not be interpreted of the preferment Christ promised in this world to those who should keep his words, i. e. fulfil his commands to the end of that present persecution. But if it relate to the other world, Menochius (a better interpreter than he) expressly saith^t, that “Christ speaks of the power which the saints shall exercise in the day of judgment over all nations which did not obey Christ, judging them with Christ, and delivering them to the punishment of eternal death. Agreeable to what we read, Wisdom iii. 8, *They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people.*” St. Austin hath not a word of this matter upon the second Psalm, but only says, these words, *ruling with a rod of iron*, is as much as “with inflexible justice^u.” We see what these men would bring things to if they be let alone. The saints may be looked upon now as rulers of this world, by a power imparted unto them from Christ who hath thus established them, this man saith, over the nations. He should have shown us where he reads this, for we cannot find it here.

But this leads him into reasoning again, (finding so little help in his express Scriptures,) and that is as weak as all the rest. For it is out of a parabolical Scripture before named, from which all acknowledge arguments ought not to be drawn. And besides, it is not a prayer to Abraham, but such a request as we make one to another here when we want relief.

What St. Austin saith on this place is not worth the searching after, for it will prove no more than what he quotes out of his fifteenth sermon *de Verb. Apostol.*: he should have said the seventeenth^x, where he distinguisheth between the commemoration that was made of the martyrs at the altar, and of other

^s [In loc. tom. iii. p. 636.]

^t [In loc. tom. ii. p. 223.]

^u [Tom. iv. col. 5 F.]

^x [Ed. Ben. Serm. clix. cap. 1. tom. v. col.]

faithful persons. For the latter they prayed, but this would have been an injury, he thinks, to the martyrs, by whose prayers we rather should be recommended to God. But this signifies no more than a general recommendation of the church to God's mercy. His next father, St. Hilary, speaks only of what angels do, not of saints^y; and I gave an account of that before, but for want of company he brings him in again. He concludes with Damascen^z, a father that lived almost eight hundred years after Christ, and was so credulous as to vouch it for a truth, that "Trajan's soul was delivered out of hell by Gregory's prayers," and saith, "the whole world witnesseth it;" which all the world now, even their own church, believes to be a fable. And yet this Damascen saith no more but that they are to be honoured as those that make intercession to God for us, that is, for the church.

XXXIII.

That we ought not to beseech God to grant our prayers in favour of the saints or their merits; nor do we receive any benefit thereby^a.

ANSWER.

It is no small favour that we can get so much truth out of him as to confess that this is "one way of their praying by the mediation of saints, to beseech God to grant their desires in favour of them and their merits." For some of his brethren mince the matter, and say they only desire the saints to pray for them. But their missals and breviaries confute such men as notorious dissemblers, for there are abundance of prayers like this, that "by the merits and prayers of St. Nicholas, God would deliver them from the fire of hell^b." Which if it be an allowable way of praying, I do not see but the saints are mediators of redemption as well as of intercession, (as they are wont to distinguish;) for "by their merits" is a great deal more than "by their intercession." And if they intercede by their merits, wherein do they fall short of Christ, who by his merits redeemed us, and in virtue of the same merits intercedes for us?

^y [In Psalm. cxxix. tom. i. col. cap. 16. tom. i. p. 591 A.]

494.] ^a [Touchstone, p. 79.]

^z [De iis qui in fide dormierunt, ^b Decemb. 6.]

But let us hear his Scriptures, which the reader may take notice are every one of them out of the Old Testament, during which (according to the common doctrine of their church) the souls of pious men were held in a *limbus*, remote from God, in the borders of hell; and therefore could not be intercessors with God, much less plead their merits. This is enough to overthrow their whole discourse in this chapter; yet to show his folly a little more fully, I am content to consider them particularly.

The first is Exod. xxxii. 13, which he hath the confidence to say is against us in express words, when there is no mention of merit, and the sense is evidently declared in the text itself, which speaks of the oath of God to those great men, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; showing that Moses' prayer was grounded not upon their merit, but upon God's gracious covenant with them confirmed by his oath^c: which is the sense of Theodoret also (whom this man most shamefully belies) in the place by him quoted; "Moses mentions the name of the patriarchs instead of supplication, and remembers the oaths made to them, and begs that the covenants wherein he was engaged to them might stand firm." Who would trust such a man as this, who makes Theodoret say that "Moses added the intercession of the holy patriarchs, thinking himself insufficient?" when he only saith, "he mentioned their name (as men i. e. in covenant with God) instead of supplication^d." And thus he deals with St. Austin, or rather worse, who, in the place he mentions, saith not a word of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but only of Moses, whose merits were so great with God, as his most faithful servant, that God saith, *Let me alone*, &c., upon which passage he makes this reflection, "We are admonished hereby that when our merits have so loaded us as to make us not beloved of God, we may be relieved by the merits of those whom God doth love. For when he saith *Let me alone that I may destroy them*, what is it but to say, I would have destroyed them had they not been beloved of thee?" Now what is this to the meritorious intercession of the saints in the other world,

^c Gen. xxvi. 3.

^d [Τῶν πατριάρχων τὰς προσηγορίας ἀνθ' ἑκτηρίας προσήγαγε, καὶ τῶν

πρὸς ἐκείνους ὄρκων ὑπέμνησι, καὶ τὰς γεγενημένας συνθήκας ἐμπεδωθῆναι ἰκέτευσεν.—In loc. tom. i. p. 171.]

when he speaks of the merits (as his phrase is) of Moses here on earth?

I have been the longer in this, because it will serve to answer all the rest. For in 2 Chron. vi. 16, the prayer expressly relies upon the promise God had made to his servant David, not upon David's merits.

In the next place, Psalm cxxxii. 1, God is desired to *remember David's afflictions*: but how doth it appear that they merited? If this Psalm was made by David, (as many think from the first eight verses of it,) sure he was not so immodest as to plead his own merits with God. The truth is, the penner of this Psalm, whoever he was, most likely Solomon, puts God in mind of David, and his fidelity to him under all his sufferings; because of the covenant God had made, and confirmed by an oath with that pious man, ver. 10, 11, 12.

He doth wisely only to name the next place, 2 Chron. i. 9, for the words are expressly against him, which are these, *Now, O Lord God, let thy promise unto David my father be established*. But the alleging Isaiah lxiii. 17 argues gross ignorance; for it is a plain desire God would return to them, "for the sake of the twelve tribes of Israel, which contained his people, who were his inheritance," as Menochius, and indeed the text itself expounds it. And this desire is founded upon the above-named covenant, promise, or oath, made to their fathers, which he may find in a number of places^d.

Why he adds the two next places, unless to make a show, I cannot imagine. For Hester's apocryphal prayer hath nothing in it sounding this way, but only those words, *O God of Abraham*. And David only says, *O God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers*^e. Which no man in the world but himself, I believe, will take to be "naming them for his intercessors," (as he speaks,) when they evidently signify the favour and kindness God had to them, which he hoped he would graciously continue, according to his promise, unto his people Israel.

The last place, Exod. xx. 5, is a direct confutation of all that he saith; for it mentions not the merits of good men, but the

^d 1 Kings viii. 25, 26; 2 Chron. xxi. 7; Psalm lxxxix. 3, 4.

^e 1 Chron. xxix. 8.

mercy which God will show unto thousands of them that love him, and keep his commandments.

God of his infinite mercy put an end to the reign of these men, who thus foully abuse his holy word, that they may no longer pervert the right way of the Lord, and mislead his people into pernicious errors.

XXXIV.

That we ought not expressly to pray them to pray or intercede to God for us ^f.

ANSWER.

HERETOFORE the words were these, “that we may not pray to them,” which is the true point. But now they are changed into, “we may not pray them to pray for us.” As if the church of Rome did no more than this, when it is manifest they pray directly to them; and invocation, according to their doctrine, is a part of that worship which is due to them; whereas praying them to pray for us (as one man desires another to do) hath nothing of worship in it. He could not go on to deal sincerely, as he had begun in the former section. Truth is a very great stranger to them; and their great business is to misrepresent both our opinion and their own.

The very first Scripture also, which he quotes over again, if it prove any thing, proves more than he would have us think is their opinion. For the rich man doth not say, I pray father Abraham pray for me, but *have mercy on me* ^g. But I have told him before this is a parable, which he will by no means allow, and thinks to choke us with the “voice of ten renowned and ancient fathers,” who all affirm this to be a “true history, and not a parable.” But this man hath very ill luck with his fathers: for the very first he mentions, (who should have been one of the last,) Theophylact, not only calls it a parable, but is so confident of it, that he says they ‘think foolishly’ (so it is in the Greek, though in the Latin they leave out that word *ἀνοήτως*, ‘foolishly’) who take it for an history ^h. The reader, I believe, blushes for this man, who if he could or would have

^f [Touchstone, p. 82.]

^g Luke xvi. 24.

^h [Tom. i. p. 417.]

ⁱ [In loc. col. 1126.]

looked into Maldonate, (a Jesuit of no mean noteⁱ;) he might have found several other fathers whom Theophylact follows in this opinion; and St. Chrysostom among the rest, who indeed sometimes says it is a history; but doth not say, as this man makes him, that it is not a parable. And if the cause must be carried by the voices of fathers, I can name him more than ten or a dozen, who say the souls of the faithful do not enjoy the glorious vision of God till the resurrection. And therefore saints can neither know our prayers, nor are to be invoked, as he concludes merely from this parable. Concerning which I think both Maldonate^k and Menochius^l (two considerable Jesuits) have very judiciously resolved, for the quieting of this doubt, whether it be history or parable, that it is both. "For that there was a rich man, and a poor called Lazarus; that the one when he died went to hell, and the other was carried to Abraham's bosom, is a history. But that the rich man talked with Abraham, and desired him to send Lazarus to cool his tongue with a drop of water, is a parable adjoined to the history; for they that are in hell do not ask courtesies of the saints." Now it happens unfortunately for this man, that what he grounds his argument upon falls within that part which is parable, *Father Abraham, have mercy on me*. Which Maldonate judiciously observes is a form of speech which beggars use as they lie in the highway showing their sores, and well represents how Lazarus and he had changed conditions. Lazarus was poor here, and the rich man stripped of all there. Here the rich man enjoyed his pleasure, and there Lazarus rejoiced. No man of sense can reject this interpretation. And yet this writer cries out, "Lo, two saints are here prayed to, and besought in one verse." Nay, he hath the confidence to ask us, "For God's sake, where are your eyes?" Truly, mine are newly open this morning, when men are wont to be most sober; and I can see none to whom the rich man addresses his request but Abraham alone. How this man came to see double, I leave it to himself to consider. Here is not a word said to Lazarus in this parable, but all to Abraham; who is desired to *send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger, &c.* And yet this man was so intoxicated with something or other, that he thinks the rich man called upon Lazarus also to

^k [Col. 1132 A.]

^l [Tom. ii. p. 57.]

have mercy on him. For shame, let them throw this book away, and not give it about any more. For all that can be gathered from this story is, that such was the torment of the rich man, that if he could have seen Abraham, and Lazarus in his bosom, and have spoken to him, he would have expressed in some such words as these his intolerable pain.

It is to no end to look what St. Austin saith I know not where, when he declares himself so positively^m, that “though they named the martyrs at the altar, yet they were not invoked by the priest that sacrificed.”

The next place of Scripture I have considered before, Job v. 1, and both given the meaning and answered his cavils, when he brought it to prove praying to angels, as now (so indigent and beggarly they are,) it is pressed for praying to saints.

He will lose his labour that looks into the other places, which he barely namesⁿ, or into his fathers. Some of which are forged, as Dionysius Areop., Athanasius *de Annunc.*, St. Chrysostom, *Hom. 66. ad Pop. Antioch.*, (for there is but one and twenty in the ancient Greek MS., as Prosevine acknowledges,) Maximus Taurin., whose sermon upon St. Agnes is by others ascribed to St. Ambrose; but Bellarmine confesses it contradicts St. Ambrose in another place, and therefore cannot be his, nor any one’s else on whom we can rely^o. And others of his fathers are falsely alleged, as St. Basil, who only says that people run to their memories or monuments, viz. there to pray to God, not to them. St. Bernard is a father that lived above 1150 years after Christ, who should have learnt of his elders, particularly Epiphanius^p, that “Mary is to be honoured, but God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, alone to be worshipped.” I could name a vast number of the fathers who expressly condemn this worship of saints, and none more than St. Chrysostom. St. Hierom doth not pray to Paula, but, speaking to her in an oration as if she were present, saith^q, “Farewell, Paula, and help thy honourer (that is, him that honoured her when she was alive)

^m L. xxii. de Civ. Dei, c. 10. [tom. vii. col. 674 A.]

ⁿ [2 Pet. i. 15; Dan. iii. 28; Hest. xiii. 15; 1 Chron. xxix. 18; Luke xvi. 9; xv. 10.]

^o [Hom. in xl. Mart. tom. ii. p. 155.]

^p [Hær. lxxxix. [§ 7. tom. i. p. 1064 D.]

^q [“Vale, O Paula, et cultoris tui ultimam senectutem orationibus juva.”—Epist. cviii. al. Epitaph. tom. i. col. 718 C.]

with thy prayers." From hence one may plainly conclude he never intended to pray to her, for he takes leave of her and bids her adieu, and is one of those fathers who believed the saints do not know what we do here, as appears by another epitaph he made upon Nepotian, as this upon Paula, where he saith^r, "Nepotian was happy in that he neither saw nor heard the calamities which were then upon the church."

XXXV.

That the bones or relics of saints are not to be kept or reserved, no virtue proceeding from them after they be once dead^s.

ANSWER.

HERE he says some truth. We do believe they ought not to be kept or reserved, (that is to be worshipped,) but to be decently buried, as we read in the most ancient letter of the church of Smyrna the relics of Polycarp were.

His first text, 2 Kings xiii. 21, saith not a word (much less speaks expressly) of their taking the bones of Elisha out of the sepulchre; but for any thing that appears they let them lie there still. Nor doth it say any virtue proceeded out of them, but that upon the touching of them the dead man revived and stood upon his feet, that is, was raised by the power of God. Who thereby testified to the truth of Elisha's prophecy, and confirmed the Israelites in the belief of what he had said a little before he died concerning their victories over the Syrians.

The next place, Acts v. 14, 15, is alleged so senselessly, that it may tempt one to be a little pleasant upon it. For is not a shadow cast from a man's body a pretty relic? Who caught it? How did they keep it? Who can show us this relic? or where shall we find it reserved? And what proof is there that virtue proceeded out of Peter's shadow and cured sick people? We believe it went forth from our Lord as Peter passed by, and cast his shadow upon them. The sermon he quotes of St. Austin is a bastard, lewdly fathered on him. And the gloss which this man makes upon this passage of it is very idle. For it is most reasonable to take the sense of it to be this, that "if they re-

^r ["Felix Nepotianus, qui hæc non videt; felix qui ista non audit."—

Epist. lx. col. 343 C.]

^s [Touchstone, p. 85.]

ceived so much benefit by his shadow, the fulness of his power could do more for them^t;" speaking not of what he can do now in heaven, but what at that time they might have received, when, his very shadow coming upon them, "they were healed of their infirmities." So he says the words are in their Bible, but he undertook to confute us out of our own. And if this passage was in ours, (as it would have been now if it had been found in the most ancient copies,) it would have signified no more than the rest of the words do without it; which give us sufficiently to understand that the sick were cured when Peter's shadow overshadowed them.

Acts xix. 11, 12, says not a syllable of those aprons and handkerchiefs being kept as relics, much less of their working any cures when the apostles were dead, or after that time when they were immediately brought from St. Paul's body unto the sick. St. Chrysostom might well argue the divinity of our Saviour from the power that wrought in his servants, nay, accompanied their very shadows and napkins^u. But doth this prove that these napkins were kept as relics, (shadows we are sure could not,) and that this virtue proceeded from them was inherent and continued in them when the apostles were gone? For this the reader may go look, if he know where.

Hitherto we have not heard one word to the purpose; and if we will see more, we shall find nothing but that they carried Joseph's bones with them when they went out of Egypt^x, because he charged them so to do, as an argument God would bring them into Canaan, where he desired his bones might be laid in the grave of his father, not kept as relics for people to kiss and worship. We read also that Elijah's mantle fell down from him when he was carried to heaven, with which Elisha smote the waters^y, but what became of this mantle we do not read; it is most likely he wore it out. I can find nothing of the "reverend esteem St. John Baptist had of our Saviour's shoelatchet," much less of his keeping it for a relic^z. He only expresses his reverend esteem of our Saviour, whom he was not

^t ["Si tunc opem ferre poterat umbra corporis, quanto magis nunc plenitudo virtutis."—Pseud-Aug. serm. xxxix. de Sanctis: ed. Ben. serm. ccciii. tom. v. append. col.

338 A.]

^u [Vid. hom. xii. tom. ix. p. 99]

^x Exod. xiii. 19.

^y 2 Kings ii. 8, 14.

^z John i. 27.

worthy to serve in the meanest ministry, as the woman did her high opinion of him when she stooped to touch the hem of his garment.

His fathers help him not at all; for Eusebius^a only saith, the chair of St. James, first bishop of Jerusalem, was preserved, but not a word of its having any virtue in it, or of its being kept to be worshipped as they now do relics. Athanasius^b speaks of an old cloak, and another garment which St. Anthony desired might be given to him (who had bestowed it on him new) when he died, as we are wont to bequeath something or other in remembrance of us: but that he laid it up and delivered it to posterity as a sacred relic, we are yet to learn. And how far he was from desiring to have his garments preserved as relics, appears from the charge he gives in the same place about his own body, which he would not have them carry into Egypt, "lest it should be reserved in some of their houses^c," (mind this,) but bury it in some unknown place. And so they did, none knowing where they interred it, but only two servants to whom that care was committed. His friends indeed, he saith, kept those garments as some great thing: but mark what follows as the reason, "For he that saw them thought he saw Anthony, and he that wore them was as if he carried about with him joyfully his precepts." They were not laid up then as relics, but used still us garments, which put them in mind of him and of his words. St. Basil doth speak of wonderful things^d done at the touch of the bones of a martyr whom God was pleased to honour at that time, to convince unbelievers of the truth of that religion which martyrs sealed with their blood. But there is no reason to expect such things now, nor have their bones been preserved to this age. St. Chrysostom's words are falsely alleged by Bellarmine, (from whom this man hath all these fathers^e.) when he makes him say, "Let us visit them often, let us adore their tombs," when in truth the very Latin interpreter hath it, "Let us adorn their tombs;" and this not according to the Greek, where it is, "Let us touch their coffin^f." St. Ambrose's honouring the ashes of martyrs is

^a [Hist. eccles. vii. 19.]

^b [In Vita S. Anton. [§ 91, 2. tom. i. p. 864.]

^c *Μήπως ἐν τοῖς οἴκοις ἀποθῶνται.*

^d [In Psalm. cxv. tom. i. p. 375 A.]

^e [De Reliq. Sanct. lib. ii. cap. 3. tom. ii. col. 769.]

^f [Συνεχῶς τοῖνυν αὐτοῖς ἐπιχωριά-

nothing to the worshipping of them. If we knew of any true relics of their bodies, we should not fail to honour them, and we think the greatest honour would be to give them a decent burial.

XXXVI.

That creatures cannot be sanctified, or made more holy than they are already of their own nature g.

ANSWER.

No, not so much as to make them become sacramental things, which have a power in them to purge away venial sins, cure diseases, drive away devils, preserve from all dangers, and produce other such like supernatural effects; which they ascribe to holy water, and many other blessed things. But that creatures may be set apart to holy uses, we own by our practice; and withal acknowledge that by prayer and thanksgiving to God they may be blessed to us in the use of them more than otherwise they would be. It is only the forementioned sanctification of them which we believe to be superstitious and magical, for we can find nothing in God's word to warrant such consecrations of creatures to those supernatural effects.

St. Paul in 1 Tim. iv. 4 speaks only of a general sanctification of the things we eat and drink, which may be performed by any good Christian; not of such a special one as this man intends, made by the bishop: for doth any creature that we receive (though sanctified by the word of God and prayer) cure diseases, lay storms and tempests, preserve from thunder and lightning, and such like mischiefs? The apostle plainly disputes against those who condemned the use of certain meats, (as not only the Jews, but the followers of Simon Magus, Ebion, and others did,) which he proves from the words of Moses, as Theodoret^h observes, are all good in their kind. And if they be "received with thanksgiving, in remembrance of God, (who hath made these things, and by his word given us allowance to eat them,) they become more than good," saith the same Theodoret, "being sanctified by that holy action, which makes the

ζωμεν, καὶ τοῦ λάρνακος ἀπτόμεθα,
κ. τ. λ.—Hom. in SS. Juvent. et
Mâx. tom. ii. p. 583 C.]

g Touchstone, p. 87.

h [In loc. tom. iii. p. 660.]

use of them well pleasing to God." That is the most that can be meant by *sanctified*: and so Emanuel Sa, one of his own interpreters, expounds it: "It is sanctified, that is, made fit for foodⁱ." Which Claud. Guillaudus, like a man of learning, thus further explains: "It is sanctified by the word of God, by which we believe that nothing is any longer common or unclean; and by prayer, whereby we request that such things may be given us, and for which, being given, we return thanks to God^k." But the popish sanctification of creatures supposes that they are not only unclean, but that the devil is in them, or that they are under his power, (the very opinion of the old heretics,) which is the reason of their exorcisms, that they may cast the devil out of them. Whereas, should we grant they are any way unclean, (as Theophylact^l and Menochius^m think the apostle speaks by way of concession,) it is quite taken away and purged (that is all they understand by sanctification, if we take this to be the sense) by God's word, which allows the use of them; and by prayer and benediction when we sit down to eat our meat.

We need not be told that in ancient time they sent sometimes part of the consecrated bread unto their neighbours, in token of mutual love and fellowship in the same faith: but this was forbidden by the council of Laodicea; and when afterwards they sent only bread blessed, not consecrated, unto those who were not yet baptized, but in the number of learners under instruction; that had the like meaning, to put them in hope they should at last be taken into church communion. But what is this to the blessing of water, and oil, and wax, &c., for such purposes as *Agnus Dei*'s are consecrated in the Roman church? Which may be seen in several of our authors out of the *Ceremoniale*.

His texts out of Matt. xxiii. 17, 19, prove no such sanctification either of the altar or gift, but only the separation of them from profane uses; which doth not amount to the making them powerful against sin, the devil, and all manner of evil.

He bids us see more in 2 Kings ii, where we find Elisha cast salt in the waters, and thereby made them wholesome to drink; but did not infuse into them such a virtue as they pre-

ⁱ [In loc. p. 426.]

^k [In loc. fol. 319 a.]

^l [In loc. tom. ii. p. 572 B.]

^m [In loc. tom. ii. p. 179.]

tend to give to the water mixed with salt, which the priest exorcises in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with crosses at the name of every one of them; that it may become an exorcised water, “to drive away all the power of the enemy, and to root out the enemy himself, with all his apostate angels;” as their church speaks in the office for this purpose.

Why he mentions Raphael’s using the liver of the fish to drive away the devil, and David’s harp to keep the evil spirit from Saul, I cannot devise; for I never read, nor he neither, that they were sanctified any way.

None of his fathers, though half of them are young ones in comparison, ascribe any supernatural virtue to such things; and therefore it is to no purpose to consider what they say of any other kind of holiness.

XXXVII.

That children may be saved by their parents’ faith without the sacrament of baptism^o.

ANSWER.

Now he falls again to his old trade of downright calumniating our doctrine. For we teach that there is no salvation for infants in the ordinary way of the church without baptism. Insomuch that by an express canon (LXIX.), every minister is to be suspended for three months who suffers any infant in his parish to die without baptism, being informed of its weakness and danger of death, and desired to come and baptize the same; and is not to be restored till he acknowledge his fault, and promise before his ordinary that he will not wittingly incur the like again. But we do not tie God to those means to the use of which he hath tied us, and therefore do believe that by his infinite grace and mercy those infants may be saved who without their own fault die unbaptized. And this was the faith of the ancient church, as appears from Socrates^p, who says, “In Thessaly they baptized only at Easter, by which means many died unbaptized;” and by a decree of pope Leo I., which shows it was an universal custom in other places to baptize only twice a year; which custom he saith hath been

^o [Touchstone, p. 89.]

^p L. v. Hist. c. 22.

changed, because a great many departed without baptism. But still this is an evidence they did not think it absolutely necessary, nor do the greatest doctors of the Roman church, such as Gabriel Biel, card. Cajetan, and many others I could name, condemn children to hell who die unbaptized; but being the children of faithful parents, look upon them as within the covenant of grace, and capable of eternal life. For which they give these reasons; first, the infinite mercy of God, who is not tied to the sacraments which he hath ordained; and secondly, the like case under the Old Testament, when circumcision answered to our baptism (as this man acknowledges), and the children dying unbaptized were notwithstanding saved by the sole faith of their parents. So St. Bernard, *Epist. 77 ad Hug. de S. Vict.*^q and Cajetan in 3. *part. Thom. Q. 68^r*. From whence we may gather that even this notion of children's being saved by their parents' faith, without baptism, is no more our opinion than it is theirs. Some say so among us, and so do some among them.

Matters therefore being thus stated, all his texts are already answered. We say the very same our Saviour doth^s in the very entrance of our Office of Baptism. Where we make it as a reason why the church should pray that "God will grant to the child that thing which by nature he cannot have," &c. But though this be the ordinary way, we dare not say it is the only. God's grace, many of themselves acknowledge, supplies the want of baptism in extraordinary cases. Thus even Lorinus, a Jesuit, on Acts x. 44^t; and he alleges St. Austin^u for it, (who was very rigid in this point,) that the invisible sanctification sometimes is sufficient without the visible sacrament; when not by contempt of religion, but by mere necessity, they are deprived of baptism. And thus Peter Lombard^x understands this text: "It is to be understood of those who can be baptized, and contemn it."

Tit. iii. 5 proves no more but that baptism is the ordinary way, and ought not to be neglected where it can be had.

From Mark xvi. 16 he concludes peremptorily, that children

^q [Al. Tract. de Bapt. cap. 3. tom. i. col. 637.]

^u [In Ps. xcvi. tom. iv. col. 1050.]

^r [Art. 2. fol. 216 b.]

^x L. iv. Distin. 4. c. 21. [fol.

334 a.]

^s John iii. 5.

^t [P. 472.]

must be baptized or not saved, because they cannot believe; which is to make baptism more necessary than belief: whereas they cannot be baptized but upon a supposition of belief, as his own church acknowledges in the council of Trent^y; “Children wanting faith in the first act are baptized in the faith of the church.” And therefore the true way of arguing from this place is, that as our Lord saith, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, so he would have said (had he thought baptism absolutely necessary), “He that believeth not and is not baptized shall be damned.” But he only saith, *He that believeth not shall be damned*, which makes faith only absolutely necessary. And I showed before, there are those in his own church who think the faith of the parents sufficient for this purpose.

And thus the most learned of the fathers expound those words of St. Paul^z, particularly Theodoret^a; “The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband;” that is, saith he, “hath hope of salvation; but if either he or she continue in this disease, their seed shall partake of salvation.” Which is but reason, for if the unbelieving husband, suppose, should not have suffered the child begotten of his believing wife to be baptized, who can think this child so dying perished?

His last text^b proves no more but the necessity of both circumcision and baptism where they could be had, as was shown before. For it is evident the children of Israel were not circumcised while they were in the wilderness^c. But who will say, that all they who were born and died within that time, which was forty years, went without remedy to hell?

His fathers which he hath picked up out of Bellarmine are not worth examining, because some of them speak only against those who deny infants to be regenerate in baptism, as St. Austin, Epist. 90^d. Others speak of it in such terms as are not easy to be understood; for let him inform us what Irenæus

^y Sess. vii. Can. 18. [“Si quis dixerit eos præstare omitti eorum baptismum, quum eos non actu proprio credentes baptizari in sola fide ecclesiæ, anathema sit.” — Labbe, vol. xx. col. 54.]

^z 1 Cor. vii. 14.

^a [Tom. iii. p. 205.]

^b Gen. xvii. 14. ^c Josh. v. 5.

^d [I. e. Epist. concilii Carthaginensis ad Innocentium, inter epist. Augustini, clxxv. ed. Ben. tom. ii. col. 619.]

means in the place he quotes, that “our bodies have received unity by the washing of incorruption, and our souls by the Spirit :” and others speak such words of the necessity of baptism as the papists themselves will not abide by, but confess St. Austin was too hard in his opinion, which must admit of some exception ; and his opinion is condemned by later fathers, as they call them, particularly St. Bernard, who disputes against it at large in the epistle before mentioned. As for St. Cyprian’s epistle to Fiduse, it is wholly against the opinion which that bishop had received, that children of two or three days old were not to be baptized, but they were to stay till the eighth day, as in circumcision. But there is not a word of the absolute necessity of baptism, but that none should be denied it, though newly born ; who the rather should be received, because not their own sins but another’s was there remitted to them.

XXXVIII.

That the sacrament of confirmation is not to be used^f.

ANSWER.

HE knew very well that though we deny confirmation to be a sacrament, yet we use it, not as a sacrament nor as absolutely necessary to salvation, (for we have declared that “children baptized dying before they commit actual sin are undoubtedly saved,”) but so necessary unto complete communion, that we require the godfathers and godmothers to bring children baptized to the bishop to be confirmed by him when they come to years of discretion ; and we admit none to the holy communion of Christ’s body and blood, “till they be confirmed, or be ready and desirous so to be.”

Now where doth the Scripture say it is a sacrament ? There is not a word of it in Acts viii. 14, much less is it there expressly declared, and declared to be necessary, or so much as to be used by others, but only that the apostles laid their hands on those who were baptized, and they received the Holy Ghost, which I am sure nobody can now communicate in such gifts as were then bestowed. But above all it is to be noted, that there is nothing said here of the chrism or anointing with holy oil, in

^e [Epist. lxiv. p. 158 sq.]

^f [Touchstone, p. 91.]

which they make this sacrament consist, but only of *laying on of hands*, unto which they have no regard. For thus confirmation is performed in the Roman church : the bishop takes sanctified chrisam, as they call it, made of oil and balsam, and therewith anoints a person baptized with the thumb of his right hand in the form of a cross upon the forehead, which is bound with a fillet on the anointing till it be dry ; and it is also accompanied with a box on the ear, all which is plainly ordered to be done in their public office of confirmation. But nothing of *laying on of hands* is there mentioned, which they deny to be either the matter or the form of this sacrament, though we read of nothing else but this *laying on of hands*, either here or in what follows. A clear demonstration that this place is expressly against their pretended sacrament of confirmation.

Hebrews vi. 1 is so far from being contrary to our doctrine, that some of their own authors^s think it doth not speak of confirmation at all, but of the benediction of catechumens and others ; and some of our authors think it doth, even Mr. Calvin himself ; but then it is expressly said to consist in *laying on of hands*, and ought not to be turned into a sacrament, but looked upon as a solemn form of prayer (as St. Austin calls it) for youth, who being grown beyond childhood made a profession of their faith, and thereupon were thus blessed. Which “ pure institution (as Mr. Calvin’s words are,) is to be retained at this day, and the superstition corrected.” Behold how vilely the protestant doctrine is calumniated by such wretched writers as this, who seem not to understand common sense. For he saith, “ Confirmation is here called not only one of the principles of the doctrine of Christ, but a foundation of repentance,” when all but such as himself clearly see that the apostle here makes the foundation of *repentance from dead works* to be one of the principles of Christ’s doctrine, as *laying on of hands* is another.

He betrays also notorious ignorance or falsehood in the citations of his fathers to which he sends us. For Tertullian plainly speaks of the “ unction which accompanied baptism” in his country, not of a distinct sacrament from baptism. And Pacianus also mentions it as a solemn rite in the sacrament of

^s Salmero [in loc. disp. xiv. tom. xv. p. 714], et Justinianus, [in loc. tom. ii. p. 688 E.]

baptism, wherein children are regenerated. So doth St. Cyprian likewise, even in that place which he mentions, where is no such sense as he dreams. For he disputes for the rebaptizing of heretics^h, “because it is not enough if hands be laid upon them, unless they receive the baptism of the church, for then they are fully sanctified and made the children of God, if they be born by both sacraments, for it is written, *Unless a man be born again of water and of the Spirit*;ⁱ” &c. This latter part this man conceals, which shows St. Cyprian speaks altogether of baptism, in which there were then two rites, washing with water, and *laying on of hands*. Which were not two sacraments properly, but two parts of the same sacrament, which he calls both the sacraments of baptism. Just as Hulbertus Carnotensis^k calls the body and blood of Christ in the communion two sacraments, which in truth are but one. For speaking of three things necessary to salvation, he saith of the third, that in it “two sacraments of life, that is, the Lord’s body and his blood, are contained.” St. Hierom^l likewise speaks of *laying on of hands*, but not as a distinct sacrament; for he earnestly contends (in that book) that the Spirit is conferred in baptism, and that there can be no baptism of the church without the Spirit. I have not taken any notice of St. Ambrose, for those books of the sacrament which go under his name are none of his.

XXXIX.

That the bread of the Supper of our Lord was but a figure or remembrance of the body of Christ received by faith, and not his true and very body^m.

ANSWER.

THIS is fiction and false representation; for we expressly declare in the twenty-eighth Article of our religion that it is “a sacrament of our redemption by Christ’s death, in so much that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of

^h [Epist. lxxii. p. 196.]

ⁱ [“Caro ungitur,” &c.—de Resurr. Carn. cap. 8. p. 330 B.]

^k [Potius Fulbertus Carnotensis,

Epist. i. ad Adeodatam, in Max. Bibl. vet. Patr. tom. xviii. p. 3. F.]

^l [Contr. Lucif. tom. ii. col. 180 D.]

^m [Touchstone, p. 92.]

Christ," &c. And in our Catechism we also declare that "the inward and spiritual grace in this sacrament is the body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." And Mr. Calvin himself saith as much.

But if we had not been of this mind, his first place of Scripture, Luke xxii. 15, would have proved nothing against us, for it speaks only of eating the passover, in which he instituted this sacrament; but that followed after: here he speaks only of the paschal feast; insomuch that Menochius thus interprets it; "He most earnestly desired to eat the paschal lamb of this year and this day in which the Eucharist was to be instituted, and shortly after it was to be shown by his death how much he loved mankind whom he so redeemed." It was not therefore "the *pasche* (as this man speaks) of his true body and blood," which our Saviour desired to eat. This is an idle fancy of a dreaming divine, who hath a divinity by himself, which forbids him to admit faith to have been in the Son of God. But St. Peter was a better divine than he, who applies those words of David to our blessed Saviour, *My flesh shall rest in hope, because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*ⁿ, &c. Now I would fain know of this learned divine whether there can be any hope without faith, which made him confidently expect to be raised out of his grave.

That which follows also in Luke xxii. 18, *I will not drink of the fruit of the vine*, &c., plainly belongs to the paschal feast as they stand in St. Luke, who immediately thereupon proceeds to the institution of the sacrament, and speaks of the cup that is there administered as different from the cup he had before mentioned. If this man had understood his business, he should rather have alleged Matt. xxvi. 29, where immediately after the institution of the sacrament he adds these words, *But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine*, &c., which St. Luke puts before the institution. But it is a wonderful stupidity to conclude from hence, as this man doth, that Christ will drink his own blood in heaven, (or else he concludes nothing,) because there is no material bread and drink in use there. Menochius^o (to name no others) might have taught

ⁿ Acts ii. 26, 27.

^o [In loc. tom. ii. p. 60.]

him better, who thus expounds this passage. "Our Saviour speaks after the manner of men, who being to depart from their friends for a long time are wont to say, We shall eat and drink together no more. As I shall not drink of this fruit of the vine till that day, &c., when I shall drink another new and celestial wine with you in the banquet of eternal glory." And he might have known that we from hence with a "wonderful force" (to use his own phrase) conclude that wine remains in the sacrament after consecration, because our Saviour calls that which he said before was the new testament in his blood, the fruit of the vine, that is, wine. And so not only we, but Origen, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Austin, Hierom, Epiphanius, Bede, Euthymius, and Theophylact, refer the fruit of the vine unto the blood of Christ before mentioned, as Maldonate himself acknowledges ^p, and could not produce so much as one father to the contrary.

He might have known also that a great many of his own church do not think St. John vi. 51, and other verses of that chapter, speaks of sacramental bread: as for other reasons, so for this, that if he did, then such as Judas, who eat the sacramental bread, must have eternal life. Which we find our Lord promises to those who believe on him ^q; and this we take to be the eating he here speaks of, as appears by the whole scope of the chapter. For if any such conversion as they fancy in the sacrament, and call transubstantiation, could be proved out of this text, it would prove the flesh of Christ is turned into bread, rather than the bread into his flesh; because he saith, *The bread that I will give you is my flesh*. To make this good literally, it is manifest his flesh must be made bread. See into what absurdities these men draw themselves by their perverse interpretations. It is not worth considering what he saith about Beza's interpretation of one word in this verse ^r; there being those of his own church, as well as he, that by *living bread* understand *bread that gives life*; which is most suitable to the words preceding, and unto ver. 33.

^p [In Matt. col. 592.]

^q John vi. 40, 47.

^r P. 213. ["Beza is very angry when we ask him if the bread that came down from heaven be living, or life-giving bread? He willingly grants us the latter, but cannot en-

sure to hear tell of the former, and therefore translatheth "life-giving" instead of "living." But this is absurd, for the sun is life-giving, but is not living; and being granted to be living, what else is it but his body?"—Touchstone, p. 94.]

We have noted often enough our Saviour's words both in Matt. xxvi. 26, and Luke xxii. 19. And therefore do not say, as he slanders us, that Christ gave, and the apostles received, nothing else but bare bread, for it was the sacrament of Christ's body; as Druthmarus, and a great many more ancient than he, expound those words, *This is my body*. We believe also, and thankfully acknowledge, that the bread and wine in the sacrament is *the communion of the body and blood of Christ*. But those are St. Paul's words^s, not our Saviour's; which spoils this man's observation, that our Lord calls it *his body*, both before and at the very giving of it. Which if he had done, (though these, as I said, are St. Paul's words, who only calls it *the communion of his body*, &c.,) it would prove nothing but that the bread is his body, which we believe, and they are so absurd as to deny: though we have bidden them note how St. Paul, in that very place he next mentions^t, often calls that which he saith is the Lord's body, by the name of *bread*^u. But they shut their eyes, and will not take any notice of it. Why should we, then, regard his frivolous argument (to which he at last betakes himself) against our true and real receiving of Christ by faith? Unto which Dr. Fulke hath long ago given a sufficient answer in his Notes upon this chapter. "We receive him after a spiritual manner, by faith on our behalf, and by the working of the Holy Ghost on the behalf of Christ^x." So there is no need either of our going up to heaven, or Christ's coming down to us, as he sillily argues.

His ancient fathers have been so often viewed, and shown to be against them by our writers, and that lately, (particularly the two first he mentions,) that I will not go about a needless labour to give an account of them.

 XL.

That we ought to receive under both kinds, and that one alone sufficeth not^y.

ANSWER.

VERY true: for so Christ appointed; so the apostles both re-

^s 1 Cor. x. 16.

^t 1 Cor. xi.

^u Ver. 26—28.

^x [Text of the N. T. with annotations, p. 526. fol. Lond. 1617.]

^y [Touchstone, p. 96.]

ceived and gave it; so the church of Christ for above one thousand years practised: and woe be to them who alter Christ's institution. Which cannot be justified by such fallacious arguments as this man here uses, instead of giving us express Scripture for it. That he promised, but alas! could find none; and therefore makes little trifling reasonings his refuge.

First from John vi. 51, which I have shown doth not speak of sacramental eating; but if it did, the next verse but one he could not but see told him, that "it is as necessary to drink Christ's blood as to eat his flesh." To which the answer is not so easy as he fancies: for we have only Dr. Kellison's word for it, that the conjunction *and* is used for *or*^z. Men may put off any thing by such shifts: and it is as sufficient and as learned for us to say it is expressly *and* in our Bible, and not *or*; and you do nothing if you confute us not, as you undertook, by the express words of our own Bible. How strangely do men forget what they promise and what they are about! Besides, the fathers from these very words prove "the necessity^a of giving both the body and blood of Christ:" and attribute a distinct effect to each of them. Particularly the author of the Comments under the name of St. Ambrose in 1 Cor. xi.^b "The flesh of Christ was delivered for the salvation of the body, and the blood was poured out for our souls."

He should have proved, not barely affirmed, that Christ gave the sacrament to the disciples at Emaus^c. We say he did not,

^z ["The conjunction *and* is there taken disjunctively instead of *or*, as is learnedly observed by Doctour Kellison in his reply to M. Sutcliff, p. 189."

"If Sotc." (are Kellison's words) "say that this is a forced exposition, I can quote him divers other places vvh^{ere} *et*, *and*, is taken disiunctively, as vvh^{ere} in Exodus it is sayd, *Hee that killeth his father and mother, let him dye the death*: for the sense is, He that killeth his father or mother shal dye; because the one vvas sufficient: as also in the Actes, S. Peter being demaunded almes, ansvered that he had not siluer and gold, that is, not siluer nor gold, else he had not an-

svvered sufficiently, siluer only sufficing to almes giuing."—Kellison, Reply to Sutcliffe's Answer to the Survey of the new religion, Append. to book ii. fol. 189 b. 8vo, Rhemes, 1608.]

^a See late treatise against Communion in one kind, ch. 3. ["A Discourse of the Communion in one kind; in answer to a Treatise of the Bishop of Meaux's, of Communion under both species, lately translated into English."—by William Payne, M.A. 4to, Lond. 1687. see p. 32.]

^b ["Caro Salvatoris pro salute corporis, sanguis vero pro anima nostra effusus est."—Pseud-Ambros. tom. ii. append. col. 149 D.]

^c Luke xxiv. 30, 35.

though if he had, it is to be supposed there was wine as well as bread: else it will prove it is lawful for their church to consecrate, as well as to give the Communion in one kind alone. Nor are there any of the ancient interpreters who thus expound it. St. Austin and Theophylact only apply it allegorically and mystically to the sacrament, (as Jansenius^d ingenuously acknowledges,) the virtue of which may be here “insinuated (as Theophylact^e phrases it, not expressly declared,) to enlighten the eyes of men.” The author of the imperfect work upon St. Matthew is thus to be understood; or else we must make St. Paul’s breaking bread in the ship among the soldiers and mariners^f to be giving the sacrament: for that writer joins this together with the other ξ . The later scholastic writers all expound it of common breaking of bread, such as Albertus Magnus, Bonaventure, Dionysius Carthusianus, nay, Tho. Aquinas himself, whatsoever this man is pleased to say, as any one may be satisfied who can look into him, in *Tert. Sum. Dist. xxi. q. 55^h*.

It is mere impudence to quote Acts ii. 42 to prove one kind to be sufficient, when all acknowledge this action was performed in the apostolical assemblies by giving the wine as well as the bread. Therefore breaking of bread is used as a short form of speech to signify they had communion one with another at the same holy feast.

He durst not here quote so much as one single father, as hitherto he hath done every where else, because they are all manifestly against him. As not only Cassander and such as he acknowledge, but cardinal Bonaⁱ himself saith, that “always and every where, from the beginning of the church to the twelfth century, the faithful communicated under the species of bread and wine.”

^d [In Concord. Evang. cap. 146. p. 627.]

^e [Αἰνίττεται δέ τι καὶ ἕτερον, ὅτι τοῖς μεταλαμβάνουσι τοῦ εὐλογημένου ἄρτου διανοίγονται οἱ ὄφθαλμοὶ εἰς τὸ ἐπιγῶναι αὐτόν.—in loc. tom. i. p. 495 A.]

^f Acts xxviii.

^g [In Matt. vi. hom. xvi. tom. vi. append. inter opp. Chrysostomi, p. lxxxviii.]

^h [Summ. Theol. Quæst. lv. art. 5. tom. xii. fol. 183 F.]

ⁱ Rer. Liturg. l. 2. c. 18. [p. 444-4to, Rom. 1671.]

XLI.

*That there is not in the church a true and proper sacrifice,
and that the mass is not a sacrifice*ⁱ.

ANSWER.

HE began to speak some truth in this proposition, but could not hold out till he came to the end. Falsehood is so natural to them that it will not let them declare the whole truth, when that which they said already would directly lead them to it. For having said we do not believe "there is a true and proper sacrifice in the church," why did he not conclude that we deny the "mass to be a proper sacrifice?" This had been honest, for it is the very thing we have constantly said, because proper sacrificing is a destructive act, by which that which is offered to God is plainly destroyed, that is, so changed that it ceases to be what before it was. This they themselves confess, and it is from this principle (among others) that we conclude "there is no proper sacrifice in the sacrament."

Malachi i. 11, it is manifest from the current consent of the ancient interpreters, speaks of an improper sacrifice, viz. prayer and thanksgiving represented by the incense. So Irenæus, Tertullian, Eusebius, Chrysostom, and divers others. His reasoning upon this place therefore is very childish; for the offering here spoken of is neither Christ sacrificed on the cross, nor Christ in the sacrament, for he cannot be often sacrificed. But if we will apply it to the sacrament, it is the commemorative sacrifice which is there made of the sacrifice of Christ with the sacrifice of prayer, praises, thanksgivings, and the oblation of ourselves, souls and bodies, to him. Such a sacrifice we acknowledge is offered in the holy Communion.

The Psalmist in Psalm cx. 4 speaks of the priesthood of Christ which endures for ever in heaven, (not of any sacrificing priest here on earth,) where he presents himself to God in the most holy place not made with hands. Nothing can be more contrary to the Scripture than to say Melchisedec sacrificed bread and wine, unless we will make his offering them to Abraham (unto whom he brought them forth, as several of the fathers consent) to be a proper sacrifice. But what dare not

ⁱ [Touchstone, p. 98.]

such men say when he affirms that “Christ exercises an external priesthood upon earth,” though the apostle expressly tells us the contrary^l? Some of the fathers indeed make an analogy between the bread and wine in the eucharist, and that which Melchisedec brought forth; but this is against the popish notion, who will not have bread and wine to be sacrificed in the eucharist, though the fathers expressly say they are.

His argument from Luke xxii. 19 is very idle. For when Christ saith, *This is my body which is given for you*^m, the meaning is, “which I have offered to be a sacrifice to God, and am about actually to give in sacrifice for you.” And so their own vulgar interpreter understood it, and translates this word *tradetur*ⁿ, not which ‘was then given,’ but ‘was to be given,’ viz. to die. And so he constantly interprets the other part, not ‘is shed,’ but ‘shall be shed.’ And if he spake here in the next words^o of what was given to the apostles in the sacrament, it would prove that the blood of Christ is shed in the sacrament, which is directly contrary to their own doctrine, which makes it an unbloody sacrifice.

All the other Scriptures^p speak of the priesthood of Christ, which none can exercise but Christ himself. See them who will, he will find this true.

Not one of his fathers have a word of a proper sacrifice, much less of a propitiatory, but of a reasonable, unbloody, mystical, heavenly sacrifice^q; which proves the contrary to

^l Heb. viii. 4.

^m John x. 17.

ⁿ 1 Cor. xi. 24.

^o Luke xxii. 20.

^p [Heb. vii. 15—17; viii. 1, 3; ix. 11.]

^q [The following are the passages referred to.

Clem. Const. Apost. lib. vi. cap. 23.—*Ἀντὶ θυσίας τῆς δι’ αἱμάτων, λογικὴν καὶ ἀνάμακτον καὶ τὴν μυστικὴν ἥτις εἰς τὸν θάνατον τοῦ Κυρίου συμβόλων χάριν ἐπιτελεῖται, τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος.*—Coteler. Patr. Apost. tom. i. p. 356.

S. Aug. contr. Advers. Leg. et Prophet. lib. i. cap. 18.—“Quoniam singulari et solo vero sacrificio pro

nobis Christi sanguis effusus est.” &c.—tom. viii. col. 568 B.

Chrysost. in Ps. xcvi.—He is quoting Mal. i. 10, on which he says, Ὅρα πῶς λαμπρῶς καὶ περιφανῶς τὴν μυστικὴν ἠρμήνευσε τράπεζαν, τὴν ἀνάμακτον θυσίαν. Θυμίαμα δὲ λέγει καθαρὸν τὴν προσευχὴν τὴν ἁγίαν τὴν μετὰ τῆς θυσίας ἀναφορμένην.—tom. v. p. 630 D. inter spuria.

Hesych. in Levit. lib. i. cap. 4.—“Sed et præveniens semetipsum in cœna apostolorum immolavit, quod sciunt qui mysteriorum percipiunt veritatem, &c.,—Max. Bibl. vet. Patr. tom. xii. p. 63 G.]

what they would have ; as the fathers do also when they say it is a sacrifice, and then immediately correct themselves in some such words as these, “or rather a commemoration of a sacrifice, (viz. of Christ on the cross,) a memorial instead of a sacrifice.” And thus Aquinas himself understood it.

 XLII.

That sacramental unction is not to be used to the sick^r.

ANSWER.

THERE are many things sacramental which are not sacraments, and others called sacraments by the ancients which are not properly so, as the sign of the cross, the bread given to catechumens, washing of the saints’ feet, &c., because they were signs and symbols of some sacred thing. So was unction, but not appointed by our Saviour to be a sacrament of the new testament. This he should have proved if he could have performed any thing, and that it “confers grace from the work done, or hath a power by divine institution “to cause holiness and righteousness in us,” as the Roman Catechism defines a sacrament. But it was impossible, and therefore he uses these dubious words, “sacramental unction,” which we see no reason to use unless we could hope for such miraculous cures as were performed therewith by the apostles.

His first text, James v. 4, hath not a word of sacrament or sacramental in it, and plainly speaks not of their extreme unction which is for the health of the soul when a man is dying, but of anointing for the health of the body, and the restoring of man to life. Therefore he might have spared his discourse about the matter and form &c. of a sacrament ; for their sacrament is not here described, but an holy rite, for a purpose as much different from theirs as the soul is from the body, and life from death.

Mark vi. 13 his own best writers confess belongs not to this matter ; containing only “an adumbration and a figure of the sacrament, but was not the sacrament itself,” as Menochius expounds the place^s, according to the doctrine of the council of Trent, which saith this sacrament (as they call it) was in-

^r [Touchstone, p. 101.]

^s [In loc. tom. ii. p. 36.]

sinuated in Mark vi. "Now that is said to be insinuated which is not expressly propounded (mark that), but adumbrated and obscurely indicated." See how ignorant this man is in his own religion.

Mark xvi. 18 makes not any mention of anointing, but only of laying on of hands: and yet this man hath the face to ask (as if the cause were to be carried by impudence) if they "are not sick in their wits who oppose so plain Scriptures?" When nothing is plainer, than that these places speak of miraculous cures, as they themselves would confess, if they would "speak the truth" (to use his words) "and shame the devil." For cardinal Cajetan^t, a man of no small learning, expressly declares neither of the two places where anointing is mentioned speak of sacramental unction. Particularly upon those words of St. James (which is the only place the best of them dare rely upon) he thus writes: "It doth not appear that he speaks of the sacramental unction of extreme unction, either from the words or from the effect; but rather of the unction our Lord appointed in the gospel for the cure of the sick. For the text doth not say, *Is any man sick unto death?* but absolutely, *is any man sick?* And the effect was the relief of the sick man, on whom forgiveness of sins was bestowed only conditionally: whereas extreme unction is not given but when a man is at the point of death, and directly tends, as its form showeth, to remission of sins. Besides, St. James bids them call more elders than one unto the sick man to pray and anoint him, which is disagreeing to the rite of extreme unction." Nothing but the force of truth could extort this ingenuous interpretation from him; for he was no friend to protestants, but would not lie for the service of his cause. And before him, such great men as Hugo de S. Victore, Bonaventure, Alex. Halensis, Altisiodorus, all taught that extreme unction was not instituted by Christ.

His fathers say not a word of this extreme unction. Both Origen^u and Bede^x, as Estius acknowledges^y, accommodate the words of St. James unto "the more grievous sort of sins, to the remission of which there is need of the ministry of the keys; and so they refer it to another sacrament, (as they now

^t [In loc. fol. 212 a.]

^x [In Marc. vi. tom. v. col. 132.]

^u [Hom. ii. in Levit. tom. ii. p.

^y [In Jac. v. p. 1143 sq.]

call it,) viz. that of absolution." See the faith of this man, who thus endeavours to impose upon his readers, as he doth also in the citing of St. Chrysostom^z, who saith the same with the other two; and of St. Austin, who only recites the text of St. James in his book *de Speculo*^a, without adding any words of his own to signify the sense. As for the 215 *Serm. de Temp.*^b, it is none of his. Next to this, he makes us say,

XLIII.

That no interior grace is given by imposition of hands in holy orders. And that ordinary vocation, and mission of pastors, is not necessary in the church^c.

ANSWER.

HERE are two parts of this proposition; in both of which he notoriously slanders us, and in the first of them dissembles their own opinion. For we do not say that "no interior grace is given by imposition of hands in holy orders;" but that "this is not a sacrament, properly so called, conferring sanctifying grace;" and that the outward sign among them is not imposition of hands, but "delivering of the paten and chalice," concerning which the Scripture speaks not a syllable. Nor is any man admitted to be a pastor among us but by a solemn ordination, wherein the person to be ordained priest professes he thinks himself "truly called, according to the will of our Lord, &c., unto that order and ministry;" and the bishop when he lays hands on him saith in so many words, "Receive the Holy Ghost," &c., which is the conferring that grace which they themselves call *gratis data*; and which the apostle intends in the Scriptures he mentions.

In the first of which, 1 Tim. iv. 14, there is no express mention of grace, (which he promised to show us in our Bible,) but of a *gift*. By which Menochius himself understands "the office and order of a bishop, the authority and charge of teaching^d." And so several of the ancient interpreters, such as Theodoret^e, St. Chrysostom^f, understand it: as others take

^z [De Sacerd. lib. iii. tom. ii. p. 384.]

^a [Tom. iii. part. i. col. 813 F.]

^b [Ed. Ben. Serm. cclxv. tom. v. append. col. 436.]

^c [Touchstone, p. 103.]

^d [In loc. tom. ii. p. 179.]

^e [Χάρισμα τὴν διδασκαλίαν ἐκα-
λεσε, — in loc. tom. iii. p. 662.]

^f [In loc. tom. xi. p. 618 B.]

it to signify extraordinary gifts, such as those of tongues, healing, &c.: none think it speaks of sanctifying grace. So that I may say, (alluding to his own words,) "See how plain it is" that this man doth not understand the Scripture; and hath made a mere rope of sand in his following reasoning! for there is this mission among us of which the apostle speaks, viz. "a designation unto a special office, with authority and power to perform it."

The apostle speaks of the same thing in 2 Tim. i. 6, where there is no mention of grace at all, but only of the *gift of God* which was in him. Which if we will call a grace, (a word we dislike not,) it was not a grace to sanctify, but to "enable him to perform all the offices belonging to that order, *ex. gr.* strenuously to preach the gospel, and to propagate the faith," &c. They are the words of the same Menochius^g; from whence I may take occasion again to say, "See how plain the Scripture is against him." And how foully he belies us, in saying that we affirm laying on of hands not to be needful to them who have already in them the Spirit of God! For after the bishop hath asked the question to one to be ordained deacon, whether he "trust that he is inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him that office and ministration," &c., and he hath answered, "I trust so," then the bishop (after other questions and answers) layeth hands on him. Which is not to sanctify him, for that is supposed; but to empower him to execute the office committed to him in the church of God.

The apostle's words, Heb. v. 4, are alleged after his manner, to prove what none of us deny, that no man may take this office upon him unless he be called to it.

They who have a mind to "see more" may soon find that the rest of the Scriptures^h (some of which are the same again) prove nothing but a mission by laying on of hands, which we practise. And one of them, 1 Tim. v. 22, can never be proved to belong to ordination; being referred by many, of no small name, to absolution. For imposition of hands was used in giving that as well as in giving orders; which is an unanswerable argument that this is not a sacrament, because the only

* [P. 181.]

^h [Acts xiii. 2; 2 Tim. i. 6; 1 Tim. v. 22; 2 Tim. i. 8; Num. xxvii. 23.]

sign that can be pretended out of Scripture to belong unto it (viz. imposition of hands) is not proper to giving orders, but common to other things.

None of his fathers, nor any others for many ages, knew of more proper sacraments than two only. And therefore it is but to waste paper and abuse the reader's patience, to show how impertinently those whom he mentions are alleged.

XLIV.

That the priests and other religious persons who have vowed their chastity to God may freely marry notwithstanding their vowⁱ.

ANSWER.

THERE is no such loose doctrine among us; but we say that "it is free for priests to marry as well as other persons, for *marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled.*" Which signifies, we think, that chastity may be preserved in marriage as well as in virginity. Therefore, we further say no man ought rashly to vow he will never marry, when he is not sure of his power to contain. For this is not given to all, as Christ himself saith^k; *but every one hath his proper gift from God, one after this manner, another after that^l.* If any one hath made such a vow, we say he ought to use his endeavours to keep it, but if he cannot without sin, he ought to marry; for in this case the matter of his vow ceases. This is our doctrine, which is not contrary to the Scripture.

There is mention of a vow in Deut. xxiii. 22, but not of chastity, which he undertook to show us expressly in our Bible. Alas! that was impossible, and so he falls a talking of vows about other matters. And yet even in such vows as this whereof Moses speaks, if a person was not in his own power, or vowed a thing impossible for him to give, or a thing not acceptable to God, he was not bound by his vow.

The next place^m is against him. For the apostle would not have widows taken into the office of deaconesses when they were young, (as the church of Rome lets boys and girls of sixteen years old vow virginity,) but requires Timothy to

ⁱ [Touchstone, p. 106.]

^k Matt. xix. 11.

^l 1 Cor. vii. 7.

^m 1 Tim. v. 11, 12.

refuse such if they offered themselves to that service, and take in none under the age of sixty; when it was likely they would have no mind to change their condition, as the younger would be apt to do. Who thereby became guilty of a "great fault," (as Menochiusⁿ expounds "having damnation,") in departing from the covenant they had made, to devote themselves to the service of the church. For "they had not chosen widowhood with the judgment of reason or just consideration," (as Theophylact glosses^o;) in which case the apostle allows them to marry^p. Upon which the same Theophylact thus again paraphrases^q, "In the first place, I wish they would not make void their contracts (or covenants), but because they desire marriage I desire it also, condescending to them. For it is better they should be mistresses of families, that is, look after their own house and labour, than, running about to other folk's houses, be trifling and idle." Which is the sense of more ancient fathers than he, particularly of St. Cyprian, who speaking of virgins, that after they had dedicated themselves to God were found in bed with men, saith, "It was better for them to marry than to fall into the fire by their offences^r." His master Tertullian saith the same, speaking of this very text. Nay, St. Austin, though he do not approve of marriage after a vow, yet resolves that such a marriage is not to be dissolved. And their own doctors determine that "when a thing is unprofitable and hinders a greater good, what is promised by a vow ought not to be kept." Upon which their dispensations are founded, even in this solemn vow of chastity.

I have said the more of this, because it answers what he pretends out of the fifteenth verse of the same chapter; where the apostle doth not call their marrying *turning aside after Satan*. For he had just before given them leave, or rather advised them to marry, lest they should *give occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully*, &c.; that is, as Theophylact explains it^s, "Give the devil occasion to make a mock of them, by drawing them into adultery through the unsteadfastness of youth." And for this very reason he thinks the apostle endeavoured to bring them under the yoke of marriage, (as his

ⁿ [In loc. tom. ii. p. 179.]

^o [Tom. ii. p. 578 E.]

^p 1 Tim. v. 14. ^q [P. 579 B.]

^r Epist. ad Pompon. [Epist. iv. p. 8.]

^s [P. 579 D.]

phrase is,) lest being left loose they should run into the afore-said mischiefs.

By this the reader may be convinced with what honesty this man quotes the fathers, and reproaches those that marry (after they have unadvisedly devoted themselves to single life) as “God’s adulterers^t;” when they say the apostle directs them to marry, that they may not be such adulterers.

In all the other Scriptures which he would have us see^u, there is not one that speaks of the vow of chastity; but of the vow of offering sacrifice, or of being Nazarites, (which was in some cases but for a time,) or such like things, as any one may satisfy himself that will read the places.

We and the fathers do not differ in this point, as I have already said, and therefore I will not swell this book by an unnecessary account of what they say in the places he mentions.

XLV.

That fasting and abstinence from certain meats is not grounded on holy Scripture, nor causeth any spiritual good^s.

ANSWER.

FASTING, that is, abstinence from all meat and drink, is grounded on Scripture, and doth much good; but fasting or “abstinence from certain meats” only, is not fasting, and hath no ground in Scripture, nor do we see any spiritual good in it, but rather much hurt, because it cheats men into a belief that they fast when they feast.

The prophet, Jer. xxxv. 5, doth not speak of fasting from any meat whatsoever, but of a total forbearance of all wine and from dwelling in houses, or having any land, &c. And all this not out of religion, but for a civil reason, as the very text tells us^v. Which laid no obligation upon other people so to do, no, not upon the Israelites, much less upon us Christians, being an

^t [“We call the religious that after marry (as Luther, Bucer, Peter Martyr, and the rest of that lascivious rabble) apostates, God’s adulterers, incestuous, sacrilegious, and the like,”—p. 107.]

^u [Ps. lxvi. 16; Num. vi. 2, 18; Josh. xxi. 26; Jer. xxxv. 18; Eccles. v. 3; Acts xxi. 23.]

^x [Touchstone, p. 108.]

^y Ver. 7.

injunction to one family only by the father of it. Are not these men rare interpreters of Scripture, who expound it at this rate, and apply it to any purpose? for this very case just before was brought to prove the obligation of vows.

The next place^a is alleged as sillily. For it proves too much; an abstinence, which no man thinks himself bound unto, from all wine and strong drink as long as he lives. Which John Baptist himself would not have practised, had he not been designed to an austere sort of life after the manner of the ancient Nazarites, as Menochius^b expounds this place. It is a wonder, when there are so many texts that speak of fasting, this man should pick out such as these, which have no respect unto it.

The next indeed hath^c, and accordingly we have our fasts before every ordination in the ember weeks.

Matt. xvii. 27 proves nothing but that upon extraordinary occasions there must be extraordinary prayer and fasting; which we also both affirm and practise.

The rest of his Scriptures^d and his fathers, I assure the reader, say nothing that we deny; but he had a mind to slander us, as if we were enemies to fasting: when we fast truly, by total abstinence from meat and drink on our fasting days; they fast only nominally, eating all sorts of fish, and drinking wine on their fasting days. Whereby they hope also to “satisfy for their sins, and to merit a celestial reward;” as Bel-larmine speaks in his second book of Good Works. Why did he not prove this end of fasting, and not spend his time about that which is not questioned? for we acknowledge that fasting is good if rightly designed.

XLVI.

That Jesus Christ descended not into hell, nor delivered thence the souls of the fathers^e.

ANSWER.

What an impudent liar is this, to say we deny that which is

^a Luke i. 15.

^b [In loc. tom. ii. p. 40.]

^c Acts xiii. 3.

^d [Joel ii. 12; Matt. vi. 16; ix.

15, 29; Tob. xii. 8; Luke ii. 37;

Acts xiv. 22; 2 Cor. xi. 27; vi. 5;

Num. xxx. 14; 1 Tim. iv. 3.]

^e [Touchstone, p. 110.]

an article of our Creed, professed by us every day, that Christ did descend into hell! Not, indeed, to deliver the souls of the fathers *in limbo*; because we read of no such thing in any of the Scriptures which he mentions.

The apostle in Ephes. iv. 8 says nothing either of their *limbus*, or of the souls of the fathers; but of *leading captivity captive*. Which hath no relation to the souls either of the glorified or of the damned, but of such men and women as we are: "whom Christ did not captivate when we were free, (saith Theodoret^f upon the place,) but being under the power of the devil, he rescued us; and making us his captives, bestowed liberty upon us." To the same purpose Theophylact but a little larger^g, (comprehending all our enemies,) "What captivity doth the apostle mean? That of the devil: for he took the devil captive, and death, and the curse, and sin, and us, who were under the devil's power, and obnoxious to the forenamed enemies."

The next place^h only proves our Saviour descended into hell, but saith nothing of the fathers being there. What St. Austin saith is not the business, but what the Scripture saith expressly. Yet the words which he quotes out of himⁱ touch not us; who believe Christ's descent into hell as much or more than himself. And it is worth the noting, how in this very place where he calls it "infidelity to deny Christ's going into hell," he overthrows this end of it, (to fetch the fathers from thence); for he professes he could find the name of *hell* no where given unto that place where the souls of righteous men did rest.

There is no mention in 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, of so much as Christ's descending into hell, but only of his *preaching to the spirits in prison*: and that not in person, but by that Spirit which raised him from the dead. St. Austin wishes us to consider, (in that very epistle which he just now named, *xcix. ad Euod.* k,) "lest perhaps all that which the apostle speaks of the spirits shut up in prison, who did not believe in the days of Noah, do not at all belong to hell, but rather unto those times (of Noah) whose pattern he applies to our times." And this St. Hierom relates as the opinion of a most prudent man, and

^f [Tom. iii. p. 423.]

^g [Tom. ii. p. 395.]

^h Acts ii. 27.

ⁱ [Epist. xcix. ad Euod. al. epist.

clxiv. cap. 2. ed. Ben. tom. ii. col. 574 C.]

^k [Cap. 5. coll. 578, 9.]

is followed by Bede, Walfridus Strabo, and others. And if this place should not be thus interpreted of his preaching by his Spirit in the ministry of Noah unto the old world, but of his own preaching unto the spirits in hell, it must be to the damned spirits, (for we read of no others there,) as a great many ancient writers, through mistake of this place, conceived: and this is as much against his opinion as against ours.

Heb. ix. 39, 40 proves no more, but that they had not their complete happiness; yet were not in hell, as that signifies any thing of torment: but in heaven, though not in the highest felicity of it. Thus Theodoret^l and others of the ancients understand it: "Though the combats of these men were so many and so great, yet they received not their crowns: for the God of the universe," saith he, "expects till others have finished their race, that then he may solemnly declare them all together to be conquerors." Which Theophylact^m thus further enlargeth: "Is not God unjust then unto them, if they who have got the start in labours must expect us in crowns? No such matter, for this is very acceptable unto them, to be perfected with their brethren; we are one body, and the pleasure is greater to the body if all its members be crowned together, &c.; but God gave to those who preceded us in labours, a certain foretaste, bidding them wait for the complete banquet till their brethren come to them. And they being lovers of mankind joyfully expect (note that) that they may be all merry together." This plainly shows such men as these did not look upon the fathers as in hell, but in heaven, in a state of joy; though not consummate, but in expectation of its completion. I could show this to be the sense which men in his own church put upon this place; but I am afraid of being tedious, and therefore shall make shorter work of the rest.

Jonas, mentioned Matt. xii. 40, was a type of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; and the whale's belly represented his grave, and nothing else. So Menochius^o acknowledges that "though many by the *heart of the earth* understand the *limbus* of the fathers, yet others take it for the grave." As Ignatius doth in that very epistle which he quotes presently, and St. Chrysostom, to name no more.

^l [Tom iii. p. 623.]

^m [Tom. ii. p. 744 D.]

^o [In loc. tom. ii. p. 14.]

Matt. xxvii. 52 speaks of the resurrection of many out of their graves: but whence their souls came, neither he nor Ignatius say a word ^p.

There is no reason to think that Zach. ix. 11 speaks of fetching souls out of the infernal prison; but Theodoret^q saith expressly, that “if by the *pit* or *lake* we shall understand either eternal death or idolatry, we shall not miss the mark. For when men were bound in this lake, our Lord Christ loosed them and brought them out, and bestowed liberty upon them by his precious blood, and sent them forth into the way of life when he gave them the New Testament.” And so St. Austin^r thinks it is best understood of “the profundity of human misery.” And I assure the reader that both St. Hierom^s and St. Cyril^t (to the great shame of this false writer^u) understand this place as Theodoret doth.

1 Sam. ii. 6 is very foolishly applied to this matter; for the plain meaning is, as Menochius^x acknowledgeth, that “God, if he pleaseth, raises dead men to life again;” or, by way of allegory, “he restoreth unhappy and miserable men to a happy and flourishing condition, according to his will:” as in the next verse (saith he) is more clearly repeated, “he raiseth up the poor out of the dust,” &c., that is, from a low condition. He did not think it absurd to understand the grave by that word which they translate *hell*; concerning which it is not proper now to dispute, because he promised to confute us out of our own Bible, not out of theirs. Nor is it fit to trouble ourselves about the rest of his Scriptures^y, (which he barely names, and some of the very same over again,) or his fathers, which we have seen he alleges without judgment or fidelity.

^p [“Understood by S. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, of Limbus Patrum, writing to the citizens of Trallis thus:—‘Many arose with our Lord, for the Scripture saith that many of the bodies that slept arose with our Lord. He descended alone, returned with a multitude.’”—Touchstone, p. 114.]

^q [Tom. ii. p. 1636.]

^r [L. xviii. de Civit. Dei, c. 35.]

[tom. vii. col. 517 E.]

^s [In loc. lib. ii. tom. vi. col. 864.]

^t [In loc. tom. iii. p. 738 E.]

^u [“Both S. Hier. and S. Cyril understand this to be meant of Limbus Patrum.”—Touchstone, *ibid.*]

^x [In loc. tom. i. p. 118.]

^y [Hosea vi. 3; Psalm xvi. 10; 2 Pet. iii. 19; Zech. ix. 11; Rom. x. 6; Eccles. xxiv. 45; Psalm xxiii. 7; Gen. xxxvii. 35.]

XLVII.

That there is no purgatory fire or other prison wherein sins may be satisfied for after this life^z.

ANSWER.

VERY right, and there is nothing either in Scripture or antiquity to prove it.

The fire spoke of 1 Cor. iii. 13 is by their own authors interpreted to signify the fire at the day of judgment in the conflagration of the world. So Menochius^a and Estius^b expressly dispute against the application of this to purgatory. Nor doth one of the ancient fathers in the six first centuries so understand it, but all apply the words to other purposes. St. Austin, in a great many places, particularly in his *Enchiridion*^c, expounds it of “the tribulations of this life, and that grief wherewith a man’s mind is stung when he loses those things which he dearly loves;” and hence saith it is not incredible that some such thing may be after this life; but whether it be so or no, he leaves it to every one’s inquiry: which demonstrates he did not look on this as an article of faith, but as a thing uncertain, and it is certain understood these words of St. Paul otherways. And in the place he here mentions, Psalm xxxvii, it is evident he speaks of the fire at the end of the world, as any one may see who will look into it.

The “learned reasoning” (as he esteems it) of card. Allen^d upon John xi. 22 is so frivolous, that it shows how impossible it is with all the learning or wit in the world to make good their cause. For Martha’s speech, any one may see without much learning, hath respect to the resurrection of her brother out of his grave, not to praying for his soul in purgatory, which if she learnt in the synagogue we have the less reason to receive it, especially if she was then so ignorant as he saith she was, that she did not know our Saviour to be the Son of God.

It might be sufficient to answer to the next place, Acts ii. 24, that he falsifies our Bible to make a show of an argument

^z [Touchstone, p. 115.]

^a [Tom. ii. p. 131.]

^b [P. 216.]

^c Cap. 67, 68, &c. [tom. vi. col. 221 sqq.]

^d [“Prayer for souls departed,” chap. 4. fol. 155, appended to his ‘Defence and declaration of the catholike churches doctrine touching Purgatory,’—8vo, Antv. 1565.]

against us ; for we translate those words, *God hath raised him up, having loosed the pains of death*, not, as he reports it, the sorrows of hell. And St. Chrysostom^e with other of the ancients justify our translation, when by *the pains of Hades* they understand death, which suffered grievously by Christ's resurrection from the dead. Menochius himself puts in both words, and saith^f, "The pains of death and of hell are by a metonymy 'most grievous pains ;' so that the sense is, God raised up Christ, death and hell being overcome with all the pains that attend it ; he loosing, that is, making void, whatsoever death had done by its pains and torments." See by what pitiful wresting of Scripture these men maintain their doctrine, applying that to Christ's loosing others which is evidently spoken of God's loosing him from the bands of death, (as the plainest meaning is,) *for it was not possible he should be held by it*, as the next words explain it.

If those words, *baptized for the dead*^g, afforded such an "evident proof," as he pretends, "of the help which the souls departed out of this world may receive by the church on earth," for their deliverance out of purgatory, it is a wonder that not so much as one of the ancient interpreters thought of this sense of the words among the very many they have given, but every one carry the sense another way. St. Chrysostom^h with many other of the Greek writersⁱ, and some of the Latin, expound them of the "solemn baptism of the faithful ;" which is said to be *for the dead*, because they are all baptized into the belief of the resurrection of the dead. This is a plain and natural interpretation ; whereas this man's sense of the word *baptized* is violently forced and strained. For to be baptized no where signifies to afflict oneself, or to do penance. Our Saviour indeed saith he had a baptism to be baptized withal ; but he doth not call any sort of afflictions by this name, much less speaks of afflicting himself, but of his suffering death. And if we thus understand the word *baptize* in this place of the apostle, Guillaudus, a doctor of his own church, (to name none of ours,) hath given this probable interpretation of those who were baptized for the dead, that they were such as did not stick to suffer martyrdom

^e [In loc. hom. vi. tom. ix. p. 48.]

^f [In loc. tom. ii. p. 90.]

^g 1 Cor. xv. 29.

^h [In loc. hom. xl. tom. x. p. 379.]

ⁱ [Theod. in loc. tom. iii. p. 275 ;

Theoph. in loc. tom. ii. p. 223 D.]

for the defence of their belief of the resurrection of the dead^k.

There are very few scholars in the Roman church who adventure to allege Luke xvi. 9 for a proof of purgatory. For "it is manifest," saith Maldonate, "that the poor are the *friends* who are to *receive us into everlasting habitations*. That is, we shall be received thither for our charity to them." And in this he says, "all authors consent except St. Ambrose^l, whose singular opinion it is that they are the holy angels, which is deservedly rejected by all;" and yet this poor creature follows that rejected opinion, (else why doth he quote St. Ambrose?) though it makes nothing for his purpose, which is to prove not what angels, but what we on earth can do for the help of the dead^m. After the like senseless manner he allegeth St. Austin, who saith not a word of purgatory in the place he names; but mentioning a "double order of those that shall be saved," he saith, "some have lived in such sanctity that they may help their friends to be received into everlasting habitations, and others lived not so well as to have been sufficient to attain so great a blessedness, unless they had obtained mercy by the merits," that is, the prayers (as Bellarmine acknowledges), "of their friends." Now what is this to purgatory? unless it can be proved that there is no way to receive mercy from God but by passing through that fire, of which he says nothing. How the word *fail* in this text enforceth, as he fancies, receiving succour after death, I cannot conceive. For it signifies our dying, as Menochius himself expounds it; departing this life, as Theophylact, who knew of no other sense, "unless it be understood," saith he, of "pusillanimity being condemned."

Nor doth St. Austin in the next place, Luke xxiii. 44, say that souls may be holpen in purgatory, but expressly declares, "if no sin were to be remitted in the last judgment, our Lord would not have said of a certain sin, *it shall not be remitted in this world, nor in the world to come*. Which the thief hoped for when he prayed, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom*ⁿ." And if the thief had any such erroneous notion in his head, (which we do not believe,) of going to purgatory when he died, our Lord presently freed him from that

^k [In loc. fol. 145 B.]

§ 5. tom. vii. col. 653.]

^l [In loc. col. 1121 E.]

ⁿ [Contr. Jul. Pelag. lib. vi. cap.

^m [De Civ. Dei, lib. xxi. cap. 27. 15. tom. x. col. 686.]

false conceit by that gracious promise, *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

It is a lamentable cause which must be supported by such an author as Jason of Cyrene, whose book is of no credit. But if it were, the place he cites, 2 Maccab. xii. 44, 45, proves nothing but prayer for the dead, which doth not infer a purgatory. For the Greeks use prayer for the dead, who believe nothing of purgatory. And indeed the text itself tells us their prayers had respect, not to the deliverance of those prayed for out of the flames of purgatory, but to their resurrection: and if they had believed purgatory, they could not, according to the popish opinion, have prayed for these men who died in mortal sin; being defiled by things belonging to idols which were found under their garments. Now the Romish church doth not admit such people as die in mortal sin into purgatory. See how weak all their proofs are of this great article of their faith. For there is no greater strength to be found in the rest of his texts, which he hath jumbled together after a very strange fashion, as if a long row of chapters and verses would do his business°. Nor did the fathers in the six first ages know any thing of this doctrine. Gregory indeed, called the Great, began to talk of it, and laid the foundation of it; but his authority is not great, being much addicted to fables, and relying upon pretended revelations, visions, and apparitions. And as for Origen's purgatory^p, St. Austin saith^q, "What catholic Christian is there, whether learned or unlearned, who doth not vehemently abhor it?" And yet this man is not ashamed to allege his testimony, by which the reader may make a judgment of the rest.

XLVIII.

That it is not lawful to make or have images^r.

ANSWER.

THIS is another shameless slander, as his own Bellarmine con-

° [2 Tim. i. 18; 1 John v. 16; Is. iv. 4; ix. 18; Acts ii. 24; Matt. iii. 11; xii. 32; v. 26; Mich. vii. 8; Ps. lxvi. 12; Tob. iv. 18; Phil. ii. 10; Zach. ix. 11.]

^p [See Origen, hom. vi. in Exod. tom. ii. p. 148 A; and on the ques-

tion of Origen's views of Purgatory, Huet's Origeniana, lib. ii. quæst. 11. tom. iv. append. p. 216 sqq.]

^q De Hæres. c. 43. [tom. viii. col. 13 B.]

^r [Touchstone, p. 119.]

fesses^s, who says, the opinion of Calvin himself is this, that “images are not simply forbidden, but he admits only of an historical use of them.” The sum of our doctrine is this, that “it is not lawful to make an image of God, (and so some of their own church have confessed,) nor to make any image to be worshipped.” If we should have further added, that “it is unlawful to make or have images because of the danger of idolatry,” we could have justified ourselves by the authority of as wise men as any in their church. For more than one of the ancient fathers were of this opinion, who were never condemned by the ancient church, nor was this reckoned among their errors.

His texts of Scripture are impertinently alleged. For God might command that to be done^t, which he forbade them to do without such a special order. And there is no proof that “the cherubims were made with faces of beautiful young men,” as this writer asserts, but the contrary is apparent, as many have demonstrated. He belies St. Hierom also when he makes him say, “the Jews worshipped them;” which the best of their own authors deny: particularly Lorinus, a famous Jesuit, upon Acts xvii. 25: “Concerning the cherubims made by God’s command, and other images made by Solomon, it must be said that they were only an appendix and additional ornament of another thing; and were not of themselves propounded for adoration, which it is manifest the Hebrews did not give them^u.” And Vasquez saith the same out of Tertullian, that no worship was given to the cherubims, alleging no less than twelve schoolmen of that opinion. Why should I trouble myself therefore any further with such a writer, whose next Scriptures are still about the cherubims, and therefore are already answered? For he doth not believe, I hope, that when the apostle speaks of the ordinances of divine service^x, that is, “commandments about the worship of God,” (as Theodoret^y, and from him Menochius expounds it,) and after many other things mentions “the cherubims of glory,” he intended they should have divine service performed to them. If not, then his observation is frivolous, for nobody denies there were such

^s L. 2. de Eccles. Triumph. c. 8.

[De Imag. Sanct. tom. ii. col. 783.]

^t Exod. xxv. 18. ^u [P. 666.]

^x Hebr. ix. 1.

^y [In loc. tom. ii. p. 193.]

things as cherubims in the most holy place ; where nobody saw them, much less worshipped them.

When he hath done with his Scriptures^z, he goes about to prove (so fond he is of images) that “an image is of divine and natural right,” because we always form one in our mind when we conceive and understand any thing. As if it were all one to form an idea invisibly in the mind, and to make a visible standing representation of it in wood, brass, or stone. Such writers tire one with their folly and falsehood ; which is notorious in what he quotes out of St. Austin in the conclusion of this chapter^a ; who taking notice that some pagans had forged a story of I know not what books, written by Christ to Peter and Paul, concerning the secret arts of working miracles, says they named those two perhaps rather than other apostles to whom those pretended books were directed, because they might have “seen them painted with him in many places.” Which whether it be meant in private houses (as is most probable) or in public places, it is manifest St. Austin did not regard such pictures ; for he presently adds in the very next sentence, (which this false writer conceals,) these remarkable words : “Thus they deserved to err utterly, who sought for Christ and his apostles not in the holy books, but in painted walls. And it is no wonder if they that counterfeit (in forging books he means) were deceived by them that paint.”

XLIX.

That it is not lawful to reverence images, nor to give any honour to insensible things^b.

ANSWER.

Now we are come indeed to the business ; but they seem afraid to touch it. For first, instead of saying “it is not lawful to worship images,” (as it was before when bishop Montague answered this book^c), now they dwindle it into “reverence”

^z [He quotes in addition 1 Kings vii. 36, 42-44 ; Num. xxi. 8 ; Matt. xxii. 20 ; Exod. xxxi. 2 ; xxxv. 30.]

^a [De Consens. Evang. lib. i. cap. 10. tom. iii. part 2. col. 8.]

^b [Touchstone, p. 123.]

^c [“That it is not lawfull to worship images, nor to give any honour to any dead or insensible thing.”—Gag for the New Gospel, art. 45, quoted by Montagu, p. 307.]

of them. And then they fallaciously tack to this a proposition of another nature, that “no honour is to be given to insensible things.” Which is a new calumny, for we do upon some occasions give honour or respect (though no worship nor adoration) to things that have no sense in them.

Therefore he might have kept to himself his first Scripture, which is brought to prove this, not the worshipping of any creature. For putting off the shoes was a respect paid to earthly princes in those countries, when they came into their presence.

In the next place^d, instead of our translation *Worship at his footstool*, (which he promised to stick unto,) he gives us their own “Adore the footstool of his feet,” expressly contrary to the original, and to the most ancient translations; particularly the Chaldee Paraphrase, which runs thus, “Adore or worship in the house of his sanctuary, for he is holy^e.” Which is so plain and literal an interpretation, that Jansenius and Lorinus himself follow it. And they among the ancients who follow the vulgar translation thought it so horrible a thing to worship his footstool, thereby understanding the earth, which is called God’s footstool, that they expound these words of Christ. Hear St. Austin upon the place^f:—“I am afraid to worship the earth, lest he that made heaven and earth condemn me, (observe that;) and yet I am afraid not to worship the footstool of my Lord, because the Psalmist saith, *Worship the footstool of his feet*. What therefore shall I do? In this doubt I turn myself to Christ, whom here I seek and find; how without impiety the earth may be worshipped, without impiety may be worshipped the footstool of his feet: for he took earth from the earth, flesh being of the earth; and he took flesh of the flesh of Mary.” He must have a brow of brass if he can read this and not be put out of countenance. But if they had any shame left, they would not draw in St. Hierom to countenance this impiety, whom this man quotes again (though he tells us not in what epistle to Marcella we may find it) to prove that “the ark was worshipped in regard of the images that were set

^d Psal. xcix. 5.

^e [אֲדוֹרָה בְּבֵית מְקוֹמֵי קְדֻשָּׁתוֹ הַזֶּה,
‘Adorate in domo sanctuarii ejus.’
—Paraphr. Chald. vers. Lat., in

Bibl. Polyglott. Waltoni, tom. iii.
p. 242.]

^f [In Psalm xviii. tom. iv. col.
1065 B.]

upon it," that is, the cherubims. A foul forgery! for he only saith, "the tabernacle was venerated;" that is, had in honourable regard, "because the cherubims were there." Veneration is one thing, and religious worship is another; and his meaning is no more than this, that they revered the sanctuary (as God commanded Moses) because of a divine presence there. It was the more impudent to allege him, because he is the father who saith ^g, "We have one husband, and we worship one image; which is the image of the invisible, omnipotent God," i. e. Christ.

What he intends by alleging Philip. ii. 10 for a proof that images are to be worshipped, I cannot imagine; unless he be so senseless as to take the name of a thing for an image of it. And he could not but know also, that when we bow at the name of Jesus, we worship our Lord Christ.

His long discourse of the brasen serpent, mentioned Numbers xxi. 8, is as impertinent. For there is no proof that it was an image, nor the least signification that it was set up to be worshipped. If it were, why did Hezekiah break it in pieces; for that very reason, because in process of time people burnt incense to it? He ought to have known also, that Vasquez, (as I showed before,) together with Azorius ^h, both learned Jesuits, with a great many other of the best writers of his own church, acknowledge that "no image among the Jews was set up for worship." And Azorius expressly confutes his most learned Dr. Saunders, for abusing the testimony of some fathers to prove the contrary. As this man doth those whom he hath named, particularly their pope Gregory the Great; who is known to all the world to have been against the worship of images, though he earnestly contended to have them in churches. But I refer the reader to bishop Montague for satisfaction about his fathers, (some of which are forged, others say nothing to the purpose; and John Damascen was no father, but a superstitious monk,) because, contrary to his custom, he takes notice of some of our objections against image-worship, and endeavours to answer them; which may seem to require consideration, though I think the most ordinary reader might be left to grapple with him.

^g Lib. iv. in Ezek. c. 16. [tom. v. col. 162 D.]

^h [Instit. Moral. lib. ix. cap. 6. tom. i. col. 861. p. 316.]

His answer to the first objection, of Hezekiah's breaking the brazen serpentⁱ, seeing it the cause of idolatry, if it have any sense in it, is an audacious reflection upon that good king; nay, upon the Holy Ghost, who commends him for what he did: whereas this man going about to prove that the abuse of a good thing ought not to take away the use of it, doth as good as say Hezekiah should not have broken it, but left it as a monument of God's mercy to them, without destroying it. What is this but censuring him, instead of answering us?

His answer to the next is an impudent denial of their principles and of their practice^k. For their greatest writers say it is the constant opinion of divines, that "the image is to be worshipped with the same worship wherewith that is worshipped of which it is the image." So Azorius.

The third is no answer to what we charge upon them, but a false charge upon us^l; who do not fall down before the sacrament, and worship it as an image of Christ, but worship Christ himself, when we receive it upon our knees.

The fourth is a fresh piece of impudence, in denying images to be set up in churches "with a special intent that people should worship or adore them^m:" and in affirming, that the worship is "given them, as it were, by a consequence; and rather because it may be lawfully given, than because it is principally sought to be given." For their great cardinal Bellarmineⁿ, to name no other, expressly saith, that "the images of Christ and of the saints are honoured, not only by accident, and improperly, but *per se*, and properly; so that they terminate the veneration, as they are considered in themselves, and not only as they represent their exemplar." And their opinion savours of heresy in that church, who say that they are not set up to be worshipped. Of which this man, I believe, was sen-

ⁱ ["Their first objection is taken out of 2 Kings xviii. where king Ezechias broke down the brazen serpent (whereof we last made mention), seeing it to be the cause of idolatry."—p. 126.]

^k ["Their second objection. You give that honour to images which is due to God alone; worshipping, adoring, and creeping to them as to God."—p. 127.]

^l ["Their third objection. It is expressly forbidden by God himself to fall down before any image, or to worship it."—p. 128.]

^m ["Their fourth objection. An image is a creature, and no God; and to set up a creature to be worshipped or adored is flat idolatry."—p. 129.]

ⁿ Lib. ii. de Imag. c. 21, 22. [tom. ii. col. 830.]

sible when he tells us, they are “partly set up in churches to stir up our minds to follow the example of those holy men whose images we behold.” Which supposes this not the whole end for which they are set up: but that they are partly intended for another purpose. What that is he durst not confess, for fear he should confute himself. For he knew that the stirring up of people’s minds to follow the saints is but a small part of the reason for which images are set up in churches: the great end is, that they may be worshipped.

His distinction between an idol and an image is as vain as all the rest^o, (as our authors have demonstrated a thousand times,) and that they do not give *latria* to images is another egregious untruth: for they expressly say in the *Ceremoniale* that *latria* is due to the cross: for which reason it is ordered to take place of the imperial sword, when they are both carried together.

Neither he nor any one else (whatsoever he vapours) dare “break in pieces or tear a crucifix or picture,” solemnly consecrated to be worshipped: not with an “inferior sort of worship” (as he pretends); for that the greatest men in his church acknowledge is downright idolatry: and therefore maintain, that the image, and the person represented by it, are worshipped as one object with the same act of worship.

What the council of Trent saith hath been considered by a number of our writers, who have shown that the prayers wherewith images are consecrated, the pilgrimages that are made to them, the prayers to the wood of the cross, do suppose they expect virtue, yea, very great benefit from them; and that, notwithstanding all their distinctions, the worship of them is idolatry.

“That much I have thought good to add in this place (that I may not be less careful than he) for the preservation of our people from being deceived by those who mince this matter of image-worship. Concerning which I may truly say, as Dr.

^o [“As for the idolatry which is objected, we are to understand that the word is compounded of *latria* and *idolum*, and is as much to say, as the giving of *latria* or of God’s honour unto an idol. But our

images are no idols, nor the honour we give unto them that of *latria*; how then can it be said that images are set up to be used to idolatry?”—p. 130.]

Jackson hath done, that “the primitive church abandoned it, as the liturgy of hell P.”

L.

That no man hath seen God in any form, and that therefore his picture or image cannot be made^q.

ANSWER.

In the first edition of this book they condemned us for saying, “No man hath seen God at any time,” (so well are they skilled in Scripture, where we find those very words^r;) but having been soundly lashed for this foul ignorance by bishop Montague, now they have altered the words, they think, more wisely; though still with a contradiction to St. Paul, who saith of God, that *no man hath seen him, nor can see him*: which is as much, we think, as if he had said, No man hath seen him in any form; because his words import that it is impossible one should see him at all.

From whence it is a plain consequence, that “his picture, or image, cannot be made.” And nothing but stupid superstition, that horrid blindness wherewith those are struck who fall into idolatry, could make any man affirm the contrary. Their ancient schoolmen, it is well known, absolutely condemn the making any picture of God, but only a sin Christ he took upon him our nature. Nay, the second council of Nice (as blockish as they were) had so much sense remaining as to condemn the making of an image of God, when they established the worship of images. And John Damascen himself saith, “it is the highest madness and impiety to make any figure of the Deity^s.” But time hath wrought men’s minds into this madness: and one would think a real phrensy possessed this man when he thought of Gen. iii. 8, (which only saith, *They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden*;) to prove God hath been seen “in a corporal form:” as if hearing were seeing; or one could paint the form of a sound, or of motion. To what impiety may not such men arrive, who can satisfy themselves with such arguments?

^p [Commentaries on the Creed, book v. chap. 33. vol. iv. p. 291.]

^q [Touchstone, p. 132.]

^r John i. 18.

^s [De Imag. orat. ii. tom. i. p.

35^r sqq.]

Nor is there the least mention of any form wherein the Lord appeared to Jacob ^t. But if there had, it would be the highest impiety to call that the picture of God, who hath no form, no shape, no figure, or lineaments; and therefore cannot be painted.

God speaking to Moses face to face ^u doth not imply God to have a face, but only that he spake most familiarly to him, as one friend speaketh to another. His own Menochius ^x goes farther, for his interpretation is: "By an angel appearing in corporeal and human shape, God spake most familiarly to him." And indeed it is the opinion of his order (the Jesuits), and of all later divines in the Roman church, very few excepted, that "God never appeared but by the ministry of angels."

Which answers what he allegeth out of Daniel vii. 9. To which Menochius ^y also gives this further satisfaction, that "every thing which is here attributed unto God signifies only the splendour of the Divine Majesty; which, in one word, may be called glory." This is the only thing that can be represented, which it is impossible for any one to describe.

As for Isaiah vi. 1, 5, 1 Kings xxii. 19, there is not the least signification of any form wherein the Divine Majesty appeared. His reasonings upon these texts are so weak that they are not worthy any one's notice: but lest he should be wise in his own conceit, let him take this rational account from Abulensis, an author of his own church, why no image of the Trinity should be made. "First, for fear of idolatry, lest the image itself should be worshipped. Secondly, for fear of error and heresy, in attributing to God corporeity and essential differences, such as we see those three figures represent." This is sufficient to convince any man who is not *drunk with the cup of fornication*, mentioned by St. John in the Revelation.

We hear not a word of fathers to countenance this doctrine, which is a shrewd sign it is so far from being ancient that they speak directly against it. And it is observable that they bring in the Gentiles excusing their making images of their gods, just as the papists now excuse themselves, and as this man

^t Gen. xxviii. 12.

^u Exod. xxxii. 11.

^x [In loc. tom. i. p. 44.]

^y [In loc. tom. i. p. 523.]

argues^z; that “images were unto men instead of writings, (or Scriptures,) upon which fixing their sight they might have some conceptions of God.” They are the words of Athanasius in his oration against the Gentiles^a. And so Eusebius tells us Porphyry said that men by statues, as by books, have learnt to know the doctrine of the gods. Behold the fathers whom they follow. Thus the sworn enemies of Jesus Christ were wont to discourse.

 LI.

That blessing or signing with the sign of the cross is not founded in holy Scripture^b.

ANSWER.

It is uncertain what he means by this proposition; whether he make “blessing, and signing with the sign of the cross,” two several things, or the same. If he mean that we say blessing things or persons is not founded in Scripture, he is a notorious calumniator; for we bless our children and our meat. But if he mean that “blessing by signing with the sign of the cross” is not founded there, he saith true: for we find no precept or example for such a way of blessing. Anciently indeed, when the cross of Christ was counted foolishness, Christians used to sign themselves in the forehead with this sign, in token that they gloried in the death of Christ; which was nothing else but to make a confession of their faith, and to testify in what esteem they had Christ crucified. The use of the sign upon such an occasion is not to be condemned, nor the use of it in their benedictions: whereby they declared their belief, that they and all they had was blessed by Christ, who was made a curse for us; and that through his death and passion (of which the cross was a memorial) they expected all manner of blessings from God. But all this was of human institution, for which we find no directions in Scripture.

^z [“But perhaps they will say that God commands us to hear his word, and the histories which speak of his apparitions, but not to paint them. I answer, that seeing we learn by our eyes as well as by our ears, there is no reason why that may not be painted before our eyes which may be preached to

our ears. Again, seeing we may finde the aforesaid visions and histories in the Bible; why may we not as well see them painted in pictures, as written in a book of white paper?”—p. 133.]

^a [§ 19. tom. i. p. 19 D.]

^b [Touchstone, p. 134.]

None of the places he allegeth say a syllable of it, much less expressly mention this sign. Let the reader look as long as he pleaseth into Rev. vii. 3, he will find no more but that the angel was commanded to seal the servants of God in their foreheads: with what mark we are not told.

In Mark x. 16, and Luke xxiv. 50, we read of Christ's blessing the children that were brought to him, and of blessing his disciples, but nothing of signing either with the cross or any thing else; which therefore is not founded in these, or indeed in any other Scriptures.

The fathers, we know, speak of the use of the sign of the cross upon several occasions, but do they say it was founded in Scripture? Not a word of that, which is the only point. And "signing with the cross" may be laid aside now, as many other rites have been which were no less in use in ancient times than that was, particularly the custom of praying standing, not kneeling, on the Lord's day, and every day between Easter and Whitsuntide; which was decreed in the famous council of Nice, and as it had been in use before and not then introduced, but only confirmed, so continued in the church for eight hundred years, and yet is now quite disused. I say nothing of the spiritual virtue as well as bodily protection which they in the Roman church now expect from the sign of the cross, for which there is not either Scripture or other ancient authority.

LII.

That the public service of the church ought not to be said but in a language that all the people may understand^b.

ANSWER.

IT is some satisfaction that we shall part fairly, for in conclusion he speaks truly and plainly. This is our doctrine, which is so agreeable to the express words of the Bible, that unless the Bible contradict itself, nothing can be found there to the contrary.

St. Luke i. 8 saith nothing of any words the priest spake when he ministered in the sanctuary. Nor do we find in the Bible the least mention of public prayers he made there, but

^b [Touchstone, p. 135.]

only of burning incense, which the people well understood represented the going up of their prayers to God with acceptance, which they made without while he burnt incense within; which may be called a symbolical prayer, the meaning of which was as well understood by the people as what they themselves spake. The angel indeed tells him, ver. 13, *thy prayer is heard*, but this doth not prove he spake any words, but rather lifted up his mind to God when the incense ascended towards heaven. For it is manifest he continued his ministration after he was struck dumb, and therefore it was not the custom to speak any words. But suppose he did, how doth it appear he did not speak in the language he used at other times, the language of the country? though it is not material whether he did or no, for the people were not in a capacity to hear his voice. And therefore this place, if it prove any thing, proves too much, that the public service of the church may be said in a place separate from all the people, where they can neither hear nor see the priest.

Levit. xvi. 17 is most absurdly alleged to serve this purpose, because it speaks of a typical service in the most holy place, unto which we have nothing here answerable upon earth, but is fulfilling in the intercession which our Lord Jesus Christ makes for us continually in heaven, by virtue of his most precious blood, wherewith he entered in thither. Besides, the high priest of old said not one word while he stayed there, and therefore this can be no argument the people need not understand the public prayers of the church, which are made not in such a secret place as that was, but openly in the hearing of all the people. Who by this reasoning may be shut out of the church, as well as excluded from understanding the prayers, and the priest left there to a silent service by himself.

Here fathers being wanting, (for they are all against a service in an unknown tongue,) he pretends he hath no need of them, though he needlessly heaped them up where he could find a word that seemed to look that way he would have it. But he supplies this want with a bold untruth, that "the practice of the whole Christian world for these many hundred years hath been against us^c," who would have divine service in a language the

^c ["I shall not need to produce the authorities of fathers for this point, when the practice of the whole Christian church for these many

people understand; which can be salved by nothing but by another proud falsity, that the Roman church is the whole Christian world. For no church uses Latin service but such as are under the dominion of the pope of Rome; all others use the language of their several countries. Nay, there are some who have acknowledged his authority, that would still have the public service in their own language which the people understood.

For shame let these men leave off writing, and betake themselves to their prayers that God would forgive them their abominable falsehoods wherewith they have laboured to maintain their cause, particularly in this point about public service in a language the people do not understand; which they are sensible is against the express doctrine of St. Paul in 1 Cor. xiv., and therefore this man thinks himself concerned to attempt an answer unto what we allege from hence.

At first he distinguishes between public prayer and private, which here is very idle, for it is evident the apostle speaks of public prayers in the church, ver. 19, *When the whole church came together in one place*, verse 23.

Secondly, he saith this place is against us^d because it proves "the common service of the church was not then in a tongue which every man understood, but in another language not so common to all," verse 16. Mark how he contradicts himself. Before he supposed (or else he talked impertinently) that the apostle discourses of private prayers; now he acknowledges it is the common service of the church of which he speaks, but shows it was not in the common language. What a brow have these men, who can thus outface the clearest truth! That which the apostle condemns as a fault of some persons, and condemns as utterly inconsistent with the very end of speech, as well as with the edification of the church, this man makes to have been common allowed practice. Was there ever such prevarication? A man had better have no use of reason than discourse on this fashion, no tongue at all than talk at this rate, expressly against the apostle's injunction, who requires him who could not deliver

hundred years together hath been directly contrary to our reformers herein, against which to dispute (as

S. Aug. saith) were insolent madness."—p. 136.]

^d [Page 138.]

what he spake in a known tongue, or had no interpreter, to hold his peace, and speak to himself and to God, ver. 28.

His argument to justify their practice is so silly, that it cannot but make a good man sigh deeply to think that poor ignorant people should be misled by such idiots. For he takes him who occupied the place of the unlearned (in verse 16) to be one who was required or supposed to be there to supply the unlearned man's place, "that is," saith he, "one who should have further understanding of that tongue in which the service of the church is said." Which he imagines is a proof the service was not in the vulgar tongue, for then there had been no need of one to supply the idiot's place, &c. This is such a gross piece of duncery as his master Bellarmine would have corrected, if he had looked into him, or any of the ancient and modern interpreters; who by one that takes up the place of the unlearned do not understand one that acts in the stead of an unlearned person, (that is a dull fancy, never heard of among the learned,) but one that sits in the place or bench, is 'in the form,' as we speak, of the unlearned. That is, an ignorant person, who is the man that the apostle saith could not say Amen, if he understood not what was said in the thanksgiving. So Menochius upon that text; "He that sits among the simple and rude who are ignorant of tongues, how shall he say Amen, that is, approve thy prayer, if he do not understand it?"

His cavil therefore at the Geneva ministers is foolish, if not malicious^f; for they translate the words honestly, not deceitfully, according to the certain sense of them; there being no difference between an idiot, and he who supplies the place of an idiot.

We know of no reformed churches where they do not say Amen to their public prayers. Here we are sure the people are enjoined so to do. Therefore it is another slander if he object this to us, who have not turned Amen into 'so be it,' as he says many of the reformed churches have done. If it be true that any have expounded the word into others of like

^e [Tom. ii. p. 139.]

^f ["The ministers of Geneva in many of their Bibles have turned the same most deceitfully and maliciously thus, 'He that is an idiot, how shall

he say *Amen*?' as if there were no distinction betwixt an idiot and he who supplies the place of an idiot." p. 139.]

signification, it was for the edification of the people, and nobody hath just reason to find fault with them, if the people did not understand its meaning. Which they did in Greece, as much as in Judea, and therefore the apostle had reason to retain it.

But he belies St. Austin, as he hath done us, when he makes him say, It is not lawful to turn Amen into any other language, without the scandal of the whole church. For he saith ^g, “There is such variety of Latin interpreters of the Scripture, as makes the knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek necessary; that when one doubts of the Latin, recourse may be had thither; (this is worth marking for other purposes.) Though some Hebrew words indeed we often find are not interpreted, as *Amen*, *Allelujah*, *Racha*, and *Osanna*, &c. Which antiquity hath preserved, partly for the more sacred authority, though they might have been interpreted (observe that), as *Amen* and *Allelujah*; partly because it is said they cannot be translated into another tongue, as the two other words, *Racha* and *Osanna*.” In which discourse he says nothing of the unlawfulness of translating the Hebrew words, nor of the scandal their translation would give; but only of some of them, particularly *Amen*, being more venerable in the original language than in any other. What he says in his Epistles I cannot stand to examine; for in that Epistle which he quotes^h there is nothing to be found about this matter.

In conclusion, he is driven to this shift to say that our own service is not understood, because it consists partly of the Psalms of David, (which he most falsely says are “the hardest part of all the Bible,”) and of Lessons out of the Old and New Testament, which are not understood by the people. But is this all that our service consists of? Have we not prayers and thanksgivings, easy to be understood every word? As in the other part of the service they understand enough for their edification; whereas of their mass the simple people understand nothing: or suppose they understand a little, yet this will not make their case like ours; because the people with us have all in their vulgar language, though they do not every one under-

^g Lib. ii. de Doct. Christ. c. 11.
[tom. iii. col. 25 A.]

^h [Epist. x. al. lxxi. ed. Ben.
ad Hieron. tom. ii. col. 159 sq.]

stand all; but they have not a word in their vulgar language, though some perhaps may understand a little of the Latin tongue.

And what is the reason they dare not trust the mass in the vulgar language? Because it is hard to be understood? No, but quite contrary, because the people would easily find things there which confute their own religion, and are conformable unto ours. For who would believe purgatory any longer, who heard the priest say in the vulgar tongue, "Lord, remember thy servants and handmaids that are gone before us with the sign of faith, and sleep in the sleep of peace?" If they be in peace, every one would be ready to say, Then they are not burning in the purgatory fire; and what need I give my money to pray them out from thence? The like passages there are that would make them believe transubstantiation to be a fable, and that it is a novel thing to have the divine service in an unknown tongue; which I have not room to mention, but desire the reader to observe how this practice is condemned out of the mouths of many great persons in their own church. I will name two.

One is cardinal Cajetan, upon 1 Cor. xiv., who saith, "Out of this doctrine of Paul we learn, that it is better for the edification of the church, that the public prayers which are said in the audience of the people should be said in the tongue common to clerks and people, than said in Latinⁱ." A most ingenuous confession; in which he doth but follow one of their saints, viz. Anselm, in his exposition of the same chapter; "That is good which thou sayest, but another is not edified by thy words, which he understands not. Therefore since you meet in the church for edification, those things ought to be said in the church which may be understood by men, and afford edification to the hearers."

ⁱ [In loc. fol. 79 b.]

CONCLUSION.

Now I leave all men who have a grain of common sense and common honesty, whether this man, who (both in the title and conclusion of his book) pretends to *judge us out of our own mouth*, be not, as St. James speaks, a *judge of evil thoughts*^k: that is, as his Menochius expounds it^l, “one who reasons ill, and therefore judgeth ill:” who *desiring to be a teacher of others, understands neither what he saith, nor whereof he affirms*^m. As will be confessed by all who follow our Saviour’s rule,

JOHN VII. 24.

Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

^k James ii. 4.

^l [Tom. ii. p. 202.]

^m 1 Tim. i. 7.

OF
THE TRUTH
OF
CHRISTIAN RELIGION:
AGAINST THE PRESENT
ROMAN CHURCH.

[Appended as a seventh book to a translation of the six books of
Grotius, de Veritate Religionis Christianæ.]

THE NEW YORK

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[Dedicatory epistle prefixed to the translation of Grotius.]

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM

EARL OF BEDFORD,

KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER, &c.

MY VERY GOOD LORD AND PATRON.

MY LORD,

I AM so desirous to express my thankfulness to your lordship, as for all the rest, so especially for the last favour you have done me, in contributing so freely to the giving me some ease from that burden which grew too heavy for me^a; that I make bold to prefix your lordship's name to this book of a great man in another nation; which I have translated, and will live, I believe, as long as learning and religion shall last among us.

Whereby your lordship will see that I have only exchanged, not given over my labours; and that I intend not to be less diligent in my station than when I preached more: but rather study industriously to serve the public good some other way.

Which that I might promote, I have augmented this work of Grotius by the addition of another book; not equal indeed in strength of reasoning and variety of reasoning to the fore-

^a [In his Autobiography bishop Patrick relates that in the year 1679 he was enabled by the cooperation of the earl of Bedford and other leading parishioners of St. Paul's,

Covent Garden, to appoint an afternoon lecturer at that church, whose stipend was provided wholly by their unsolicited and voluntary contributions.]

going, but in brevity and perspicuity, I hope, nothing inferior : and, being a building relying in great part upon his foundations, will stand as firm and unshaken as those which excel it in beauty and neatness of contrivance.

Such as it is, I humbly present it to your lordship, and praying God that the whole work may have some effect for the reclaiming those that are irreligious, or the settling those who are wavering and doubtful, and the exciting us all to hold fast the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus,

I remain, My Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble

and obliged Servant,

[1680.]

S. PATRICK.

A PREFACE,

GIVING SOME ACCOUNT OF GROTIUS, AND OF HIS WORK.

THE name of this author hath been so illustrious in these western parts of the world, that, as there are few persons who read books to whom it is not known, so there needs no more to recommend this work, and procure it entertainment with all those that have heard of him. In which he hath faithfully laid out those great talents of reason and learning wherewith God blessed him above most other men, in the defence of his most holy religion. Which he hath served very much in other works of his, but in none more than this; because it is of such general use, and so satisfactory, that it may alone merit those titles of honour which the men of learning have bestowed on him, though they be as high as well can be devised.

There is nothing more ordinary in our Selden than *vir maximus, vir summus*, 'the greatest, the chief of men,' when he speaks of Grotius. Upon whom Salmasius bestows the title of *ἐξοχώτατος*, 'most excellent,' and, as if he were in a rapture when he thought of him, cries out, *ὦ θαυμασιώτατε*, 'O most admirable, or wonderful,' and *supereminetissime*, 'most supereminent' Grotius! to whom he wished much rather to be like than to be the most eminent person for riches and honour in the whole world. I shall only add the character which Baudius gave of him very early, 1612, in a scazon he made upon him, where he thus admired him,

Vir magne, vir mirande, vir sine exemplo.

In English.

'O thou great man, thou wonderful man, a man without example.'

Yet as great a man as he was he fell into disgrace in his own country, and was thrown into prison (every body knows) in the castle of Lupstein. In which strict confinement he meditated many profitable works, especially in things sacred. For during his long imprisonment he found by a happy experience, (as he writes to Barlaeus a great while after,) there was "a wonderful power in the holy doctrines to support the mind and to keep it erect against all calamities."

And therefore, for his own solace, in the first place, (as he tells another friend,) he set himself to write this little book; which he

intimates both in the beginning and in the conclusion of it, was then composed or rather hastily put together, when his mind was more free than his body. And therefore (when after several editions he set it forth with annotations, 1640,) he calls it in an Epistle to Sarra-vius, *partum doloris quondam mei*, &c^a, ‘the child of my grief in time past, now a monument of my thanksgiving to God.’ And as it was written originally in his own language, so it was in verse, that it might be more popular and more easily committed to memory by the rudest people, such as mariners, for whom he chiefly intended it. He tells us as much in the Preface, but we may learn it more fully out of a letter to him on this subject from Episcopius^b, who says, that the oftener he read over those rhymes, the more he was wrapt both into love and admiration of them. There being nothing in them which was not most necessary to be known, and was able to incline the hardest heart to embrace this holy religion. “For it was hard to determine,” he says, “whether the majesty of the things, or the clearness and sweetness of the expressions were most to be com-mended: the majesty of the matter not at all hindering the clearness of the verse, nor its being tied to verse at all diluting or enervating the majesty of the matter.” Such a strife there was between these two, with equal success, that it became a question whether it was more divine to be able to have a solid and distinct conception in his mind of things so difficult and sublime; or having conceived them, to clothe them in such comely and perspicuous words, that at the first glance every reader understood his great sense, though bound up and fettered within the laws of verse.

Which way I suppose he chose, because it was the ancient manner of delivering the most useful things, as he himself observes in his *Prolegomena* to Stobæus’s *Florilegium*, which was written not long after this book. Where, as a proof of it, he alleges that of Homer, who says Clytæmnestra did not incline to vice till she had lost him that was wont to sing to her. For precepts of wisdom so taught are exceeding charming to the minds of youth, being not only more easily imprinted on the memory, but touching the affections more powerfully and to the very quick, than when otherwise spoken at large. And therefore the public laws were in the most ancient times thus written, as Aristotle informs us; and that true religion might be more easily conveyed into people’s minds and fixed there. Apollinarius translated all the books of Moses, (as Sozomen tells us, l. vi. cap. 18,) and the rest of the history of the Bible as far as the

^a [Epist. ad Gallos, 197, p. 460.]

[Epist. 407. p. 673. ed. Limborch, fol.

^b Inter Epist. Præst. Vir. p. 630.

Amst. 1704.]

reign of Saul, into heroic verse, in imitation of Homer's poems. Suidas says he put the whole Old Testament into such verse, and it is not improbable, for what he did upon the Psalms is still remaining.

If it were my present business I could trace this way of instruction down to our own times and through our own nation, in which it hath been very effectual, as the story of Aldhelmus sufficiently informs us. Who first brought in the composition of Latin verse among the English, a little before Edward the Confessor's time; and by his excellent faculty in singing, wrought such wonderful effects upon the people for the civilising of their manners, and for their instruction in the duties of religion, that Lanfranc by his own authority thought good to make him a saint.

The very same charms Grotius hoped would have the same effect upon the rude seamen of his country, into whom he desired by his rhymes not only to instil a sense of piety, but to enable them to convey it to other nations with whom they traded. And it seems this work was so much famed, that it moved the curiosity of a great man in France, (into which Grotius went after his wonderful escape, 1621, out of that prison, or rather sepulchre, as he calls it in a letter to a friend, wherein it was first projected,) to ask him very often what the contents of that book were which he had written in Dutch, upon this subject of religion. Whom he satisfied by translating the sense of it into the Latin tongue in the year 1628, and addressing it unto that excellent person who made the inquiry, viz. Hieronymus Bignonius; who together with Grotius and Salmasius, the famous cardinal Richelieu (a notable judge of wits) was wont to say^c, were the only persons of that age whom he looked upon as arrived to the highest pitch of learning.

In which translation he tells Sarravius, in a letter to him that year, he should find, if nothing else, that he had at least endeavoured brevity with perspicuity; which made it so acceptable every where, though no longer in verse, but now in prose, that in the year 1632, I find (he tells Cordesius, another learned man in France^d;) it was gone the third time to the press with some additions. But not with so many, it seems, as some desired; for there were those who wished he would have answered a book of Bodin's which seemed to impugn it. This he thought a needless pains, for "whatsoever it is," saith he, (in a

^c Epist. Cl. Sarravii, p. 146. [Claudio Salmasio, April 21, 1645. p. 146. Svo, Araus. 1654.]

^d Epist. ad Gallos, p. 331, 417. [Epist. 129. Eeb. 12, 1632, and Epist. 170. Oct. 30, 1634.]

letter to the same person^e;) “ that seems to shake the foundations I have laid, (upon which the Christian faith relies,) I have already obviated it, as far as is necessary to persuade a reader that is not pertinacious. As for those opinions which are commonly received in Christianity, but without the exact knowledge of which we may be Christians, they do not belong to my argument.”

In the same year also (1632,) I find it translated here into the English language; which he himself afterwards takes notice of in a letter to Gerhard Vossius, 1638^f, where he tells him that there were (besides the English) two high Dutch translations of this book, one French, and that the English ambassador’s chaplain was turning it into Greek, and the Romanists themselves into the Persian tongue; that by God’s blessing it might convert the Mahometans.

None of these could see any Socinianism (or other dangerous heresy) in it, which some of the duller sort of learned men were forward to charge it withal; because he doth not directly prove in this book the doctrine of the blessed Trinity. Of which he gives this account in the forenamed letter, that he heard a great man (who was Franc. Junius, as I take it) condemn Du Plessis and others for endeavouring to prove that mystery by reasons fetched from nature, and by Platonical testimonies, (sometimes not very pertinent,) which ought not to come into a disputation with atheists, pagans, Jews and Mahometans; who must all be first drawn to believe the holy Scriptures, that from thence they may learn such things as cannot be known but by divine revelation.

This was the reason he meddled not with the doctrine of the Trinity directly: but if any body doubted of his orthodoxy in this point, they might see (he tells him in another letter) what his opinion was in his poems then newly come forth; and the larger explication of it he reserved to his notes.

And for the same cause he did not distinctly treat of some other things, particularly about the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ and his satisfaction; for which omission this book was blamed, as Sarra-vius writes to him, by some who had nothing else to do but to find fault with the labours of others. To which Grotius returned such an answer as not only gave him, he tells us, most satisfaction in those two points, but enabled him to silence those accusers. He doth not intimate indeed what that reply was, but as to the former point, it is apparent from his Annotations that he believed our Saviour to be

^e Ib. pag. 407. [Epist. 166. Sept. 19, 1634.]

^f Inter Epist. Præstant. Virorum, p. 748. [Epist. 548. p. 797. ed. Limborch.]

indeed God of God. And that passage in the conclusion of the twenty-first section of the fifth book, concerning the Messias being called in the holy Scriptures by the name of God and Lord, I should have translated thus:—"The Messias is called by that august name of God *Jehovah*, and also of Lord, viz. *Elohim* and *Adonai*." For so he explains himself, I have since taken notice, in his Annotations, and adds this observation, that the Talmud in *Taanith* says, that when the time shall come spoken of Isaiah xxv. 8, 9, (i. e. of the Messias,) *Jehovah* shall be shown, as we say, with the finger; that is, men shall be able to point others to him, saying, *Lo, there is Jehovah*.

And as for the other thing, it is possible his answer might be to the same purpose with what he writ to Vossius^g. In which he tells him that if any one desired to know (as he had already signified in a letter to one that said he was accused of Socinianism) what his opinion was in the business of Christ's satisfaction, even since Crellius had written against him; it would appear plainly enough out of his translation of the fifty-third of Isaiah, in his disputation against the Jews, (which you may find here in book v. sect. 19;) and from hence also that in the conclusion of this work of the Truth of Christian religion, he doth not interpret those words, Hebr. i. 3, *καθαρισμὸν ποιησάμενος*, in the present tense, 'making a purgation,' or 'expiating our sins,' as Socinus doth; but in the past time, *expiatis peccatis nostris*, 'having expiated or purged away our sins.' How they come to be otherwise translated in his Annotations on that place, put forth since his death, I can give no account.

And in like manner, I suppose, he satisfied another doubt about a passage in this book which Sarravius desired him to resolve; though I cannot find his answer to it: for he gives a punctual answer afterward to a question propounded by a minister of Rouen, who asked him where he had that of rabbi Nechumias, who made that public declaration (mentioned in the fifth book, sect. 14,) concerning the appearing of Christ fifty years before our Saviour, to this effect; "that the time which Daniel had prefixed for the coming of the Messiah could not be prolonged above those fifty years." Which he tells Sarravius^h is to be found in the Talmud, in the title *Sanhedrin*, (as he remembered,) and he thought also in Abenada upon Daniel.

This was in the year 1640, when he first put out this book with Annotations; containing the testimonies of those authors in words

^g Epist. Præstant. Viror. p. 747.
[ubi supra.]

^h Epist. Claud. Sarrav. [Dec. 23,
1641. p. 52.]

at length, whom he had alleged; but had forgotten, it seems, to set down where he had this passage of rabbi Nechumias. Nor is it now to be found among the Annotations, and therefore they that next print the book so enlarged will do well to supply it from hence out of Sarravius. Who was the first person to whom he made a present of it after it came outⁱ, with the addition of testimonies; desiring to be admonished by him, if, in the midst of much business, any thing had escaped him which was less exactly spoken, while he studied to serve the Christian cause.

To which he replies immediately, that "as he could not but esteem it a very great honour to be acknowledged and beloved by the coryphæus of all learning, both sacred and profane; so he esteemed this as a golden book wherein Grotius joined learning together with piety: consulting, that is, the disease of the age; to whose palate piety (of itself) had little savour. And as for the immense collection of testimonies then added, he made it appear by them, that in all his studies the glory of Christ had always been before his eyes: his holy diligence and industry having discovered so many and such things which had escaped the sagacious eyes of others."

And not long after he propounded some doubts according to his own desire, and mentioned some exceptions (as was noted before) which some who had no good will to him took at this golden book, as he again calls it; and notwithstanding the harsh censures of some learned men, this excellent person still persisted in his high esteem of the worth of this author, and believed all unprejudiced men would ever look upon him with great veneration. So he tells Salmasius five years after^k (1645): "Whether they will or no, Grotius will always be accounted a great man by you and me, and by all that love equity and goodness: for he is full of envy who denies due praises to such a hero." And a little while after, hearing of the news of his death, he most sadly bewails it^l, as the extinction of the bright star of that age; whose name would be great as long as either books or learning were in honour. And while he had breath, he saith, he would glory in this, that he once had familiar acquaintance with a man who was *re et nomine magnus*, no less great indeed than his name imported.

This affection he seems to have carried with him to his grave, and honoured his memory at such a rate, that in the year 1648 he still says, he was proud of the friendship of that man, by whom to have

ⁱ Epist. ad Gallos, p. 460. [Epist. [Claudio Salmasio, Apr. 21, 1645.] 197. Mar. 5, 1640.]

^l Ibid. p. 173. [Eidem, Sept. 29,

^k Epist. Claud. Sarrav. p. 146. 1645.]

been known was glorious, and who would be revered in all futnre ages. In conclusion, he calls him "that blessed soul:" even after he himself had pronounced this sentence against Grotius^m, that he favoured the papists; and not only yielded too much to them in his later writings, but expressed too much disaffection to the reformed in those countries. All this he candidly passed over with this censureⁿ: "He is the best man who hath fewest faults; for there is nobody to be found without some."

And the same favourable judgment, I suppose, all serious and considering men will pass upon him now; and not be hindered by any prejudices which may have been taken up against him among ourselves from reaping that benefit which they may receive by reading this excellent book. Which I present again to the view of the English world, and have in a manner made a new translation of it: the former, which came out near fifty years ago, being so defective, that there were few paragraphs in it which stood not in need of some amendment, and in a great number the sense was quite mistaken.

Who the translator was I am ignorant; but it is certain he either did not understand the Latin tongue, or did not attend to what he was about, as appears by innumerable instances. But one may suffice, in the third book, sect. iii., where he translates *altera Petri*, 'the one Epistle of Peter.' Besides, there is plain Arianism in his translation, (book v. sect. 21;) for he says the Son was not uncreate as the Father is; when in Grotius the words are, the Son is not *ingenitus*, 'unbegotten' as the Father is.

Yet where the translation was passable, I have let it go as it was; that I might not seem to be too curious a censorer of other men's labours. And I have added such passages as were not there; the book itself having been enlarged by Grotius since that old English translation. I know not how necessary it might be at that time, when it was first put into our language, but now I think nothing can be more: and to make it of larger use, I have added also a seventh book of my own. In which, out of those principles chiefly which Grotius builds upon in his six books, I have shown that Christian religion hath suffered very much by the church of Rome; and that we need not go thither to be assured of the truth of that religion; but shall be better informed in our own church by the holy Scriptures, and such works as these.

I have not quoted all my authors, no more than Grotius did in the

^m [Eidem, Feb. 11, 1646.]

ⁿ [Apr. 21, 1645.]

first edition of his book. And it would have made the work also too long (I thought) to translate his testimonies, and add the like of my own. Nor would it have been so useful to common readers; who do but perplex themselves in abundance of quotations, and must after all believe that we report them truly: and therefore may as well believe us when we say, that they are ready at hand to attest every thing which is here affirmed from their authority.

Since the finishing of this little labour, I was informed by a friend that Mr. Clement Barksdale had translated part of this work into English: and upon search I found the three first books, among some other discourses, printed 1669^o. And I am told further by another friend, that he hath lately added (though I have not seen it) the three last books. Which if I had known sooner, it might have saved me, I believe, most, if not all of the pains I have taken. But I was perfectly ignorant of it; as I perceive he was of any former translation before his. For in that edition of his discourses, where he hath added the third book of this work, concerning the authority of the Scriptures, he saith it had not been till then in English.

But it will do no hurt, though the same good thing be reached out to us by more hands than one; and so I leave it to God's blessing upon the reader's serious perusal.

S. P.

A Christian prayer for the adversaries of true religion.

O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word: and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

^o ["Discourses of God and his Providence, and of Christ and his miracles and doctrines, with annotations and the author's life, by C. Barksdale;"]

first published in 1655. A second edition was issued in 1658, and a third in 1663.]

OF THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

SECT. I.

An introduction, showing what makes the addition of another book necessary.

IF those apostolical exhortations which conclude the last book had been carefully followed, there would have been no need of saying any more for the confirmation of men's minds in the belief of the truth and certainty of the Christian religion. But the unhappy differences which are among Christians, and which are maintained with unspeakable animosities and hatreds, (nay, with anathemas also, which one part pronounces against the rest,) have made many men doubtful which of these hold the true Christian faith, for which the apostle exhorts us most earnestly to contend; and in this doubtfulness there are some who embrace none at all.

For we see the eastern church disjointed from the western, and the western divided into three great parts, every one of which condemn the other two: and all of them are subdivided into several little parties by variety of opinions; for which they contend with the same zeal that they do for the faith of Christ. Which is thereby disgraced, and reputed by some to be of no greater certainty than those dubious opinions.

SECT. II.

Divisions among Christians no such objection against Christianity as is imagined.

BUT to a considering man this will be no occasion of scandal, but rather confirm him more in the true Christian faith; which every one of us ought to preserve with the greatest care, as a

most inestimable treasure. For, as this is common to every religion, to have many disputes about it, and different opinions in it; and as Christ and his apostles foretold there would many *false Christs*, and *false apostles*, and *false prophets* arise, (as was said before in the end of the foregoing book,) who would lie, and say they were sent when they were not, introducing false doctrines, and calling them by the name of his religion; and as they give us a good reason also why it should be so, that men's probity and sincerity might be tried, and brought hereby to the touchstone, and that their diligence and care in preserving themselves might be exercised; so, blessed be our Lord, the true Christian religion is still retained, and kept entire every where, by all these disagreeing parties, notwithstanding the fierce quarrels they have one with another. As appears by this, (which is a short, easy, and certain way to our satisfaction in this manner,) that the faith into which they are all baptized is one and the same without any variation. That is, they all enter into the church at the very same gate, and upon the same terms and conditions, neither more nor less, are made members of Christ, and have a title given them if they live according to this faith, unto eternal salvation.

SECT. III.

As appears even in the Roman church, which hath given the greatest scandal.

THE church of Rome itself, which now makes the greatest differences in the Christian world, requires nothing more at this day to be believed by those that are by baptism received into the church of Christ, but only those things which are contained in the creed commonly called the Apostles'. This creed is recited there by the priest, and this alone, when he comes to the font; and he interrogates the persons to be baptized (if they be adult) or their undertakers (if they be infants) about no other belief. Upon the profession of which he bids them enter into the holy church of God, that they may receive the celestial blessing from the Lord Jesus Christ, and have a part with him and with his saints: and having again examined adult persons, asking them, "Do ye believe in God the Father Almighty," &c., and mentioning no other articles of faith, he baptizes them, and declares them to be regenerate, and to have

remission of all sins. And so do we do here, nor is there any different practice in any other part of the Christian world; but every where it is sufficient to consent to this Creed: which is nothing but a brief explication what we are to believe concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in whose name we are baptized.

If there were any thing beyond this which we are necessarily bound to believe, it should have been then propounded, when we were admitted into the state of Christianity. For baptism gives us a right and title to salvation, (if we do not forfeit it afterward by apostasy, or by a wicked life,) and this faith (with a promise to live according to it) gives us a right to baptism.

Herein indeed the Roman church contradicts itself, in decreeing many other articles of belief, without which it declares men cannot be saved; and yet receiving men at baptism into a state of salvation without demanding their consent to any such articles. But so they do in many other things, and cannot avoid it; while they forsake the ancient universal rule, and set up their own private authority to impose what they please, under pain of damnation.

SECT. IV.

But both contradicts itself, and departs from the ancient and truly catholic church.

FOR that no such things as they would now oblige all Christians to believe were anciently exacted, it appears most manifestly by Irenæus and Tertullian (to name no others) in several places. Who call the Creed now mentioned “the rule of truth” and “the rule of faith,” which the church throughout all the world, saith Irenæus, “though it be dispersed to the most extreme parts of the earth, received from the apostles and their disciples; and believes as if there were but one soul and one heart in so many men; and with a perfect consent preaches and teaches, and delivers these things as having but one mouth. For though there be divers languages in the world, yet one and the same tradition prevails every where: for neither the churches in Germany believe otherways, or deliver any thing else; nor they in Spain, nor they in France, nor they in the east, nor they in Egypt, nor they in Libya, nor they that are founded in the midst of the world. But as the sun is one and

the same in the whole world, so is the preaching of the truth, enlightening all men who will come to the knowledge of it. And neither he who is most eloquent among the governors of the church preaches any thing different, (for no man is above his master,) nor doth he that is weakest in speech lessen in the least this tradition. For there being one and the same faith, he that hath most to say cannot enlarge it, nor he that hath least diminish it ^a.”

Thus they declared their minds in those early days; when there was no catholic man or woman in the world required to believe any of those doctrines now in controversy between us and the Roman church, (and set down in the Creed of pope Pius IV. as necessary to salvation ^b;) but they all contented themselves with the simple belief of those things which the apostles have delivered in their Creed; the greatest men in the church delivering no more, nor the meanest saying less. And with this wise and good men satisfied themselves in times succeeding, as appears by this remarkable passage of St. Hilary, in his little book which he himself delivered to the emperor Constantius, where he thus complains: “Faith is not inquired after; as if we had none. Faith must be set down in writing; as if it were not in the heart. Being regenerated by faith, we are now taught what to believe; as if that regeneration could have been without faith. We learn Christ after baptism; as if there could have been any baptism without faith in Christ ^c.”

SECT. V.

Christianity therefore is not there in its purity; but much corrupted.

WHICH is a sufficient argument to prove that the Christian religion is not sincerely preserved in that church; and ought to withhold us from joining with them in imposing thus upon the Christian world, and thereby breaking the bond of unity, and turning men away from the faith by the palpable falsities and absurd mixtures which are brought into it, and that as necessary parts of the faith of Christ. To the adulterating of which we ought by no means to consent; but maintain it in that purity

^a [Compare p. 85 above.]

^b [P. 106 above.]

^c [Lib. ii. ad Constant. § 6. col. 1228 C.]

wherein the apostles delivered it to their successors; as we find it set down in the works of a great many following doctors of the church, whose names I forbear, but are ready at hand to make good what I quoted just now out of Irenæus. Who acknowledges him for a sincere Christian, “who holds fast τὸν κανόνα τῆς ἀληθείας,” (as Epiphanius recites his words, which were then extant in Greek,) “that rule of faith which he received in baptism firm and unmovable.” He cannot be a heretic who thus believes on the Son of God in the sense wherein the Nicene Creed (not adding any new article of faith, but only declaring what was believed from the beginning) hath explained the word: but they are schismatics who call him so, and will not admit him into their communion unless he consent to other things, and hold them to be equally certain and necessary with the ancient rule of faith.

SECT. VI.

Answer to an evasion from the force of the foregoing argument.

To pretend that all those articles of faith which they now impose, though not expressly mentioned in the Creed, yet are contained in one article of it, viz. in the belief of the holy catholic church, is in effect to make all the rest of the Creed unnecessary, and to establish this sole rule of faith in the room of it. For if by believing the catholic church we are to understand, as they would have us, whatsoever the catholic church propounds, then it had been enough to have said to those catechumens that came for baptism, “Do you believe in the holy catholic church?” and to add any more had been utterly superfluous.

But the vanity of this further appears, in that none of the ancient doctors who have expounded the Creed (and there are many of them) have given any such sense of that article of the catholic church: nay, it was not in the most ancient forms of faith; nor doth the church truly catholic teach any thing as necessary to be believed to salvation but what is contained in the Creed. For we do, in their own sense, believe the catholic church, but not the Roman catholic church (which their Creed will have to be the mother and mistress of all churches); because, to omit many other absurdities which are in it, there

was a catholic church before there was a Roman: and to say that they believe the catholic church, meaning thereby the Roman, is nothing more than to say they believe themselves.

SECT. VII.

Their absurd explication of the unity of the catholic church.

NOTHING therefore can be further from the truth, than that explication of the unity of the catholic church which is delivered in the Roman Catechism, published by the authority of the same pope Pius IV. in pursuance of the council of Trent. Wherein the catechumen is taught to believe and profess that the catholic church is one, not only because of one faith, (and other reasons mentioned by the apostle Ephes. iv.,) and because it is subject to one invisible governor, which is Christ; but “because it is subject also to one visible governor, who holds the Roman chair, the legitimate successor of St. Peter. Concerning whom it is the unanimous opinion of all the fathers, that this visible head is necessary to constitute and conserve the unity of the church. And to this head or pastor Christ hath given the authority of ruling and governing the whole church, as the vicar and minister of his power.”

Thus that Catechism teaches in the first part, Article IX. N^o. 11, 12, 13^d. Which (besides that it is confuted by the plain demonstration now mentioned, that Christ had a catholic church, which had unity in itself, when there was no Roman church) is directly contrary to the constant doctrine, not only of the Scripture, but of all the fathers, (whose consent they falsely boast of,) and of many popes of Rome, and of councils also, both general and particular; even of the councils of Lateran and Trent, which by approving the five first general councils, who condemn this supremacy of the bishop of Rome, do in effect condemn it themselves.

SECT. VIII.

Which forbids us to join in communion with them upon such terms.

To that church then we ought to adhere which hath kept the rule of faith, once delivered to the saints, simple and un-

^d [Catechismus ad Parochos, pp. 80, 1. 8vo. Par. 1671.]

mixed with human inventions. Which if we admit as necessary to salvation, we betray the truth of Christ, and are false and unjust to innumerable Christian brethren, who by baptism are admitted into a state of salvation, but hereby unmercifully cut off from the body of Christ, though they have that faith which makes them true members of it.

This is the great crime of the Roman church; and may suffice, instead of all other demonstrations, to prove that they have corrupted themselves, and departed from the simplicity that is in Christ. For this very article alone, (which is a part of their faith,) that there is no salvation but by union with the Roman catholic church, and that by subjection to it, thrusts out of heaven not only the ancient Christian pious emperors who refused such subjection, but many of their ancient popes, who acknowledged their subjection was due to the Christian emperors; together with the ancient patriarchs and fathers assembled in many councils, and the most famous Christian churches, the most glorious martyrs and saints of Christ that the best times of Christianity have known, and, to say nothing of after-ages, the present Christians of Greece, Russia, Armenia, Syria, Ethiopia; who, by this article of subjection to the catholic Roman church, are all excluded from Christian communion, and must perish everlastingly.

For Bellonius says, that in his travels he met with nine sorts of Christians at Jerusalem, eight of which nine know nothing of this universal bishop, or do not regard him: and of the ninth, there is scarce half that acknowledges his authority.

And yet there are men among them, of no mean note and number, who have the confidence to tell us, that by the catholic church, which we are bound to believe, is to be understood the bishop of Rome: whose declarations, when he will determine any thing to be of faith, we all ought to receive. And though we are assured, as much as we are that there was such a person as St. Peter, that Christ never gave him (much less his successors) any authority at all over his whole church; yet now to deny the pope's supremacy is such a heresy, that let a man be never so orthodox in all other points of the catholic faith, this alone is sufficient to make him be excommunicated and cut off from the body of Christ.

Witness our king Henry VIII., who was excommunicated

and his kingdom given away for no other fault by a bull of Paul the Third: who affirms in the beginning of that bull, that herein he acted by Divine authority; *which* (according as God saith in the prophet Jeremiah) *had set him over nations and kingdoms, to root up and destroy, as well as to build and plant; having the supreme power over all kings and people throughout the whole earth.* Which certainly is such new language, never known in the church for many ages, that they who are not convinced thereby of the corruption of Christian religion in the Roman church have their eyes blinded with the worldly splendour of it.

SECT. IX.

But on the other side, not to slight episcopal authority.

YET on the other hand it must be acknowledged, that this enormous power which they have usurped is a very strong proof of the high authority of Christian bishops in the church, and of the great reverence that was paid to them by Christian people. Who otherways would never have thus submitted to their will and pleasure, had not the obedience which they had been wont always to yield to their authority disposed them to be brought by little and little under an absolute subjection.

Nor would there have been reason for those cautions which St. Peter gives to the governors of God's church, (not at Rome, but elsewhere,) *not to lord it over them*^e, if they had not been invested with a power, which all Christians revered so much, that it might more easily be abused than contemned; and sooner persuade people to follow them with a blind obedience, than to slight their judgment, and refuse to conform to their injunctions.

And therefore whosoever they are that now despise all ecclesiastical authority, we may be sure they have swerved from the true principles of Christianity; and they also are altogether inexcusable, who shake off the episcopal government, and refuse to be subject to it, under a pretence that there ought to be an equality among Christ's ministers. Which as it is against the practice of the whole church for many ages from the beginning, so directly opposes the institution of Christ, who set his apostles

^e [1 Pet. v. 2, 3.]

in a superiority to the LXX, as his apostles set such men as Timothy and Titus in a superiority over the presbyteries of those churches which they could no longer attend themselves.

SECT. X.

Arguments enough in the foregoing books to prove the true Christian religion not to be sincerely preserved in the Roman church. One is, their way of worship.

It would be easy to show how much the Roman church hath deviated from the rule of faith, by considering particularly the falsity of every one of those doctrines which they have added to the ancient creeds. But it will be more proper, in so short a treatise as this, only to bring to the reader's mind some principles in the foregoing books, which direct us as plainly to reject popery (and upon the very same ground) as those false religions for whose confutation he alleges them.

And first, let the reader again weigh his arguments against the worship of the pagans; and he will find them, in several things, as strong against the worship of the Roman church: whose practices it will hereby appear are no less faulty than their faith. As for example, in the worship of angels and saints.

For the former, they should not only (as he discourses there, book iv.) in their very worship make an evident difference between the most high God and those angels to whom they commend themselves, (which they do not do in the Roman church, but quite contrary, in the external acts of adoration have none that are appropriated to God alone, but are all common to him with others, as adoration, invocation, burning incense, nay, offering the sacrifice of the mass in their honour, and making vows to them,) but be satisfied also what order there is among the angels, what good may be expected from each of them, and what honour the most high God is willing should be bestowed upon every one of them. All which being wanting, (for there is nothing revealed about such matters,) it is plain from thence how uncertain that religion is, and how much safer it would be for them to betake themselves, as we do, to the worship of Almighty God alone. Especially for that to whomsoever he is favourable, to them the holy angels must needs be kind and serviceable, (though no petitions be made to them,) being the ministers and servants of the Most

High; who hath revealed this to us, that he hath made them all subject to Jesus Christ, to be sent forth by him for the good of those who shall be heirs of salvation. In the number of which they, above all others, have reason to hope to be, who have so great a respect to his Majesty, and confidence in his goodness, that for fear of offending him they dare worship none but himself alone: resting assured he will deal well with them, even for this reason, because they have such a regard to him as not to presume, without his warrant and authority, so much as to recommend themselves to him by any angel in heaven, though never so great; but by his only begotten Son Jesus Christ alone, who is the head of them all, and whom he hath consecrated to be our perpetual intercessor with him.

The like we may say of the worship of saints; to whom all prayers are fruitless and vain, unless they be able to do something for their supplicants. Of which they have no certainty, nor is there more ground to say that they can, than that they cannot; but rather less ground: since it is inconceivable how they should be able to hear and assist so many as address themselves to the same saint in several far distant parts of the world, without supposing them to be equal to our blessed Saviour, (for they have as many, if not more, supplicants as he) by such an union as he hath with the Divinity.

They worship also, which is still worse, such for saints as never were in being; and others whose saintship there is too much reason to question, being apparently guilty of such crimes as are inconsistent with it. For instance, our Thomas a Becket, (by whose blood they have prayed our Lord Christ that they may ascend into heaven, and do still pray (upon Dec. 29) that they who implore his help "may have the saving effect of his petitions,") whom our forefathers, even in the time of popery, looked upon as a perjured person, and as a traitor; being not only called so by the king, but in parliament accused of treason, the bishops as well as others being present; and the bishop of Winchester pronouncing the sentence against him.

In short, the devotions of the Roman church are so like the ancient idolatry, that the cunningest man in the world cannot find any difference without a great many nice and subtle distinctions, which in practice make no difference at all.

SECT. XI.

Another is the way of promoting their religion.

THERE is this argument also against it, (as Grotius speaks of paganism, book iv. sect. 10,) taken from the religion itself; that if it be not supported by human power, or policy, immediately it falls to the ground. For as the church of Rome (it hath been observed by wise men of our own) got and increased its absolute authority over men's consciences, by obtruding on the world supposititious writings, and corrupting the monuments of former times by false miracles and forging false stories; by wars also and persecutions; by massacres, treasons, and rebellions; in short, by all manner of carnal means, whether violent or fraudulent: so take away these supports, and that religion cannot stand by its own strength.

And truly his reason in the third section of the same book against the paganish worship, that it was from evil spirits, because they instigated their worshippers to destroy them that worshipped one God, holds good still (if there be any force in it) to prove the Roman church not to be acted by the good Spirit of God; because they would not let those live (had they sufficient power) who worship only one God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and content themselves with the belief before mentioned, into which they were baptized; not presuming to superadd any thing else as necessary to salvation.

And, which is worse, while they have been most cruel to those who, for fear of offending God, dare not allow the worship they give to saints, which they think belongs to him alone, nor fall down before the sacrament and adore it, as very God himself; they have tolerated such without any censure, who have raised St. Francis into an equality with, if not superiority unto, our blessed Saviour; and made the blessed virgin a kind of goddess: nay, called the pope the king of kings and the lord of lords; giving him such a power over all kings and kingdoms, as sober men among themselves are ashamed to own. Which is just after the example of the pagans, among whom, as Grotius observes, it was lawful for the poets to sing what they pleased, though never so lewd, concerning the gods, and for the Epicures to take providence out of the world: while the Jews were made ridiculous, and the Christians most barbarously

used, as if they had been the vilest of mankind. Of which more anon.

SECT. XII.

The Romanists themselves overthrow their own religion.

THAT argument also which he urges for Christianity against the pagans, that the chief points of Christian doctrine were acknowledged by some or other of the best and greatest among them, may be used by us also for the faith to which we now hold: there being several learned writers in the Roman church who have acknowledged our belief to be sufficient to salvation; and the points which they have superadded having been looked upon by the most excellent persons among them only as mere scholastical opinions, and not certain truths of which we can have a full assurance.

Here I might show how the sufficiency of the Scripture hath been owned, and the Apostles' Creed likewise confessed to contain all things that are absolutely necessary to be believed to salvation. But because I would not have this book swell above the bigness of the foregoing, I shall let them alone, and instance only in the doctrine of transubstantiation: which is now pressed with so much violence upon the Christian world; but most plainly condemned by Gratian in their canon law, and by the author or authors of the canon of the mass itself.

About the former we may be satisfied out of the *Decretum*, if we look into the third part, and the second distinction, concerning consecration: where in chapter xlvi. out of St. Austin and Prosper, he says^f, “The heavenly bread which is truly Christ's flesh, *suo modo*, ‘after a sort or manner,’ is called the body of Christ; whereas *revera*, ‘in truth,’ it is the sacrament of his body which was hanged on the cross; and the sacrificing of the flesh of Christ by the hand of the priest is called his death, and passion, and crucifixion, not in the truth of the thing, but in a signifying mystery.” Which words are so directly against the present sense of the Roman church, that no protestant can speak more expressly and clearly against it, nor desire a plainer confutation of it; unless it be that of the gloss upon those words, which is this: “The celestial sacrament, which truly represents the flesh of Christ, is said to

^f [Col. 2109.]

be the body of Christ, but improperly : whence it is said to be so *suo modo, sed non rei veritate*, ‘ after a manner; but not in the truth of the thing.’ So the sense is, it is called Christ’s body, that is, it is signified thereby^g.”

And if we look further into chapter lii, we find he saith “ Christ was sacrificed but once, *in semetipso*, ‘ in himself,’ when he hung upon the cross, &c. ; yet is offered daily *in sacramento*, ‘ in the sacrament,’ which the church frequents in memory of that thing^h.” Which sacrifice in the next chapter he calls *exemplum*, “ the example, or resemblance of that upon the cross offered in remembrance of his death.” Which is sufficient to convince us that they believed in those days as we do now, and not as the Roman church doth ; else he would not have called that which he says was truly the flesh of Christ “ the heavenly bread.” But, to put all out of doubt, let us turn to chapter lxxii, and there we find these remarkable words out of St. Austin, which fully explain the business, “ Because it is not lawful for Christ to be devoured by our teeth, therefore our Lord would have this bread and this wine in a mystery, by consecration of the Holy Spirit, to be potentially created his flesh and blood, and to be daily mystically offered for the life of the world^k.” They are potentially, then, or virtually made his body and blood, though but bread and wine in themselves : “ and of this sacrifice which is thus wonderfully made in commemoration of Christ, (as he adds out of St. Hierom, chap. lxxvi,) it is lawful to eat ; but of that which Christ offered on the cross *secundum se*, ‘ according to itself,’ none can eat^l.”

But the canon of the mass will more abundantly convince us that he or they that made it did not believe any thing of transubstantiation. For first, after the consecration of the bread and wine, the priest signs them ten times at least with the sign of the cross ; which can have no excuse made for it, (but is the greatest impudence,) if it be indeed Christ himself who lies before the priest whom he thus crosses ; for sure he doth not intend to bless Christ, or to drive away the devil from him, or any such like thing, for which those crossings are used in that church.

^g [In marg. *ibid.*]

^h [*Ibid.*]

ⁱ [Col. 2111.]

^k [Col. 2123.]

^l [Col. 2197.]

But more than this, secondly, it is observable that after consecration also the priest still calls Christ's body *panem sanctum*, 'the holy bread of eternal life,' which shows that when this rule was made they believed the bread to be still remaining.

A further indication of which is, that, thirdly, the priest proceeds to beseech God that he would vouchsafe to look upon that sacrifice of his gifts with a propitious and serene countenance, and to accept them as he did the gift of his servant Abel, and the sacrifice of Abraham, and that which his high priest Melchisedec offered to him: which is most absurdly spoken, if the priest there offer Christ himself unto God; for then he intercedes with him for our Intercessor, as if he needed our prayers: and besides compares him with the firstfruits of the flock, and the spoils of war; which is so incongruous, and so much below his heavenly glory, that an unprejudiced man cannot but think they who composed that prayer looked upon those gifts which they offered as still bread and wine.

Which appears more fully, fourthly, from what follows in the next prayer, where, bowing profoundly, and laying his hands upon the altar, the priest humbly entreats God in this manner; "Command these things to be carried by the hands of thy holy angel to thy high altar, into the presence of thy divine majesty." Where there are two plain testimonies against their present doctrine. For first, nothing but the bread and wine can be called *hæc*, 'these things;' which in no propriety of speech can signify the very natural body of Christ. Who, secondly, can by none of God's angels be carried into heaven, being there already; nor brought more than he is into the presence of the divine majesty, where he was before the priest said mass, and sits for ever there at God's right hand.

Had they that composed this prayer believed any thing of transubstantiation, they would have said, (and could not have said otherways if they said any thing of this matter,) "Almighty God, behold here before me upon thy altar lies thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ by my sacrifice unto thee: that very Christ who is at thy right hand I now take into my hands to present unto thy Majesty under the form of bread and wine. Him thou canst not reject, nor me his priest who offer him unto thee," &c. Or some such like words, more

befitting their present notions than desiring an angel may carry what the priest offers and present it unto God.

But we find quite contrary, which is the last thing I shall observe, that in conclusion the priest acknowledges that by Christ Jesus God always “creates, and sanctifies, and quickens, and blesses (making a cross upon the host and the chalice at every one of those three last words) all these good things.” Which can be meant of nothing but the bread and wine consecrated to the commemoration and representation of Christ’s body and blood sacrificed for us. For Christ’s own very natural body and blood cannot in any tolerable sense be said to be continually created and quickened, or made alive; unless you will suppose him to have been dead before, nay, not to have been dead at all. For creation implies the thing not to have been; and vivification, not to have been then alive when it was quickened.

Yet this fancy of Christ’s real presence in the sacrament by transubstantiation, against which there are such numerous testimonies in their own communion service, is now become the main article of their religion. For we all know to our great grief and astonishment, that when the public authority of this realm was on their side, subscription was not urged to any article of their religion upon such violent and bloody terms as unto this of the Real Presence. The mystery of which iniquity, as a great man of our own said in the age before us, cannot be better resolved than into the powerful and deceitful working of Satan, who delights thus to do despite to our Lord and to his religion; by seducing his professed subjects into a belief of such things as make them and him ridiculous unto unbelievers, and engage them in the worst kind of rebellion he could imagine, by worshipping bread and wine instead of their Saviour; and all this upon the least occasions and shallowest reasons.

SECT. XIII.

Other instances of it.

BUT besides these plain confessions of that church against itself, there are many other things (which I shall but just name) wherein we have the testimony of several of their own learned men (ready to be produced) for our and against their belief; proving clearly that the present is not the old religion

of that church, but that they have brought into it many innovations; by adding to the canonical books of Scripture, by making their vulgar Latin translation of the Bible (about which they themselves cannot agree) authentical; by forbidding the people to read the holy Scriptures in their own language; and by denying them the public prayers in a language they understand; by giving the pope not only a new title of universal bishop, but an authority and jurisdiction which was never heard of for many ages; by increasing the number of sacraments and altering their nature; by taking away the cup from the people; and turning the sacrament of Christ's body and blood into a proper expiatory sacrifice; by celebrating the eucharist without anybody to communicate; by setting up images in churches, and ordaining religious worship to be given to them; by invoking saints and angels, (as was said before;) and by the doctrine of purgatory and indulgences, and many other; together with a vast number of strange ceremonies in the making holy water, consecrating bells, &c. For which no antiquity can be pretended.

The woeful effect of which is this (if we may speak the plain truth) that by pressing upon men's belief a great deal too much, and placing great virtue in trifles, they have tempted men to believe nothing at all. As is apparent from hence, that where and when (as an excellent writer of our own speaks) this religion hath most absolutely commanded, there and then atheism or infidelity hath most abounded. And how should it do otherwise? when, as he observes, so many lying legends have been obtruded upon men's belief, and so many false miracles forged to justify them, as are very likely to make suspicious men question the truth of all: and so many weak and frivolous ceremonies devised, and such abundance of ridiculous observances in religion introduced, as are no less apt to beget a secret contempt and scorn of it in witty men; and consequently atheism and impiety, if they have this persuasion settled in their mind, (which is endeavoured to be rooted in them from their childhood,) that if they be not of that religion, they were as good be of none at all; and when a great part also of the doctrines now mentioned so apparently make for the temporal ends of those who teach them, that sagacious men can scarce forbear thinking they were on purpose devised to serve those

designs; that particular doctrine also of transubstantiation being so portentous, that joined with the forenamed persuasion of no papists, no Christians, it hath in all probability brought more than Averroes to this resolution, "Since Christians eat that which they adore, let my soul be among the philosophers^k:" and lastly, the pretence which is so common, that there is no ground to believe the Scriptures but their church's infallibility, and yet no ground to believe their church's infallibility but some texts of Scripture, being too plain a way to lead those who discern the labyrinth wherein they are to believe neither church nor Scripture.

SECT. XIV.

Whereby they have spoiled Christianity, as the pagans did the natural religion.

THESE things, which have been already urged by the writers of our church for the conviction of those who are capable of it, I repeat here again, because they seem to me very powerful for the preservation of those who are not already tainted, or too far gone in that delusion. Which is so great that (to sum up all belonging to this head) we may safely say, popery is just such a depravation of the true Christian religion, as paganism was of the natural religion. There cannot be a righter conception of it than this, which appears too plainly in the absurd doctrines and opinions which they have mingled with the Christian faith in their multiplied superstitions; in their fabulous relations of the saints, wherein they have surpassed the very poets themselves; and (to pass by the rest) in their prostrating themselves before images, and giving religious worship to men departed.

Which last instance furnished the pagans of Cochin with this answer to the Jesuits, (as Christoph. Borrus^l, one of that order, relates,) when they pressed upon them the belief of one God, and no more. We do believe it, said they; but those whom you see us worship in their images were men of great sanctity; whom pious people therefore worship according to their merit, just as you give to the apostles and martyrs and

^k [Compare Jeremy Taylor's Works, vol. iv. p. 444, and the editor's note.]

^l [Account of Cochin China, by Christoforo Borri, cap. 8. translated

in the Collection of voyages and travels, published by Awnsham and Churchill, fol. Lond. 1704-32. tom. ii. p. 833.]

confessors divers degrees of honour and religious service, as you know them to have excelled in virtue and piety. And that they might confirm this to be their sense of the Divinity, they bid the Jesuits observe one part of the altar in their temple to be void of images, and to be hid in an obscure and dark place; which they said was the proper seat of the most high God, the Maker of heaven and earth, who could not be represented in any form and shape: and that the images which stood about that place were the representations of their intercessors with him; who, having great power with the most high God, did obtain many gifts and blessings for those that invocated them. How this differs from the notions of the Roman church I do not see; unless it be in this, that they have sometimes adventured to represent God himself in a shape. Otherwise the worship is the very same, (the dead men, who are the objects of it, only changed,) and may very well justify us, if we say (and therein we speak very moderately) that their worship is an image, at least, of the ancient idolatry. And moves them (to make the resemblance more perfect) unto the very same rage and violence which was in the pagans against all those that differ from them, and cannot consent to worship God in that way; prosecuting them with all manner of cruelty, as if they were utter enemies of God and of all religion.

By which we may certainly know that they are so far from being the only true Christians, that they are a very degenerate part of Christ's church; wanting that great mark of his faithful disciples, to *love one another, even as Christ loved us*. To which they are such strangers that, quite contrary, they not only hate and persecute, but endeavour, as I said, to root out those from the face of the earth who obediently believe all that they can find our Lord and his apostles have delivered; and profess they are ready with all their hearts to receive and do whatsoever anybody can further teach them to be his mind: nay, are very desirous and diligent to know it; sparing no pains to understand the whole truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

SECT. XV.

Answer to what they say about miracles.

THEY pretend indeed abundance of miracles wrought in their church as a sufficient condemnation of those who obstinately

refuse to invoke saints, to worship their images and the consecrated host, to believe purgatory, and all other things for the proof of which these wonders are alleged. But herein also they imitate the pagans, who were guilty of the like deceit: and the same answer will serve here which Grotius gives there¹, in his confutation of the old idolatry. For first, the wisest men among them have rejected many of these miracles, as not supported by the testimony of any credible witnesses, nay, as plain fictions. Others also of them, which are pretended to be of better credit, happened in some private place in the night, before one or two persons: whose eyes crafty priests (as he speaks) might easily delude with false shows and counterfeit appearances of things. And further, there are others which only raise admiration among people ignorant of the nature of things, and are no true miracles.

I deny not but there may have things been done among them which no human power could effect by the strength of natural causes; and yet no divine, that is, omnipotent power be needful to their production. For those spirits which are interposed between God and man are able by their nimbleness, cunning, activity, and strength, to make such strange application of things (very distant) one to another, as shall astonish the spectators with wonderful effects. But there is too great reason to think they are not good spirits that do these feats; because they revive hereby the ancient superstition, or uphold the image of it still in the Christian world, to the great dishonour of our Saviour, and the endangering the souls of his people. Who have been so far misled, as not only to fancy great virtue in the images of the saints, and to cry up also some images, particularly of our lady, (of Loretto for instance,) as indued with some singular power and virtue which is not to be found in others; but to honour them so highly as for one miracle said to be done by a crucifix, to report a hundred to be wrought at such or such a shrine of hers.

It is very considerable also (to omit the rest) which he notes in book v. out of the law of Moses, that it supposes God might permit some wonders to be done, only for their trial; whether the people would persist in the worship of the true God, which

¹ L. iv. sect. 8.

had been confirmed by undoubted and far greater and more numerous miracles. Read Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3, &c.

This is excellently expressed and with advantage by a great man of our own in these words, or to this effect. The doctrine which we believe, that is, the Bible, hath been confirmed, as is confessed on all sides, by innumerable supernatural and truly divine miracles; and consequently the doctrine of the Roman church, which in many points is plainly opposite to the Bible, is condemned by them: I mean the miracles of Christ and his apostles. And therefore if any strange things have been done in that church, they prove nothing but the truth of Scripture, which foretold that (God's providence permitting it, and the wickedness of the world deserving it) strange signs and wonders should be wrought to confirm false doctrine, that they which love not the truth might be given over to strong delusions. So that now we have reason rather to suspect and be afraid of pretended miracles, as signs of false doctrine, than much to regard them as certain arguments of truth. Neither is it strange that God should permit some true wonders to be done, to delude those who have forged so many wonders to deceive the world.

SECT. XVI.

Answer to another objection.

BUT it is not likely, they say, that religion should be thus depraved in the Roman church, because their ancestors were men of greater virtue and honesty than to suffer the least alteration.

Which is the very thing that is alleged by the Jews, why they should not believe our Saviour was unjustly condemned, and his religion rejected by their priests and elders, as Grotius observes in the fifth book. Out of which I might produce several things, as I have done out of the foregoing, to prove the vanity of the Romish traditions, as well as of the Jewish; and show also how they have brought back Judaism in a great measure by the vast burden of rites and ceremonies wherewith they have incumbered Christian religion: but I shall wave all this, (because I would make this book as short as the rest,) and only observe, in answer to what was now pretended, that whosoever shall consider (as he speaks of the ancestors of the Jews) what kind of men for several ages sat in the chair of Rome,

and how ignorant the people generally were, he cannot wonder at the corruption of which we complain.

Let him but read, first the censures which their own authors have passed upon several popes, as mere epicures and men void of all religion, &c.: and then the bitter complaints which St. Bernard himself makes (and that while he wrote to a pope) of the vices which were then annexed even to the very papacy; and further, the description which such men as Marsilius of Padua make of the church of Rome; the whole body of which, he saith, was so infected by the plenitude of power which is allowed to the pope, that it might be more truly called a shop of traffic, nay, a den of thieves, than a church of Christ; and (to come nearer to our own times) the forwardness of their people, even since the Reformation, to worship men as saints before they were canonized by the pope: and he will not think there hath been always such care and caution used about that and such like matters as they would have us believe.

We have a memorable instance of this thing last mentioned (to meddle with no other) in the founder of the Jesuits' order, Ignatius Loyola, by whose merits people recommended themselves to God (if we may believe the pope himself) before he was declared to be a saint. So Urban VIII. informs us in his very bull or decretal letters for his canonization^m, where several miraculous works are said to have been done for those who fled to his help and religiously worshipped his image, and commended themselves to him (as the words are) with all their heart. He was made indeed a *beato* by the preceding pope; but the like stories are told of Xavier, one of Ignatius's companions, unto whose intercession the people applied themselves, and hoped in his merits (as the bull for his sainting tells us) even before he was made a *beato*. So exceeding prone they have been of late to run into superstition, as they were more long ago in the days of St. Martin, who broke down an altar which had been set up by former bishops themselves in honour of a martyr, as the people called him; who proved to be no better than a highwayman, (as St. Martin discovered,) that had been executed for his robberies and there buried.

^m [P. 32 of the Bull appended to the *Exercitia Spiritualia* of Ignatius, published with his life, at the royal

press of Paris, fol. 1644. It is not contained in the *Magnum Bullarium* or the collection of Cherubini.]

SECT. XVII.

Popery and Mahometism had the same original.

WE may safely therefore affirm that the account which Grotius gives in the beginning of the sixth book, of the rise of Mahometism, may serve as well for the original of popery; which took its rise from the great decay of true piety, and the vain jangling that fell out among Christian people, by employing their time in curious questions; which made the vulgar at last not know what to believe, and to lay the fault upon the Scriptures; nay, to avoid them as hurtful and dangerous. And then it was easy to lead them any whither when they had forsaken the light which showed them their way; and began also to place religion, not in purity of mind, but in rites and ceremonies; and to content themselves with such things as served rather to exercise the body than to amend the soul.

In short, that false prophet Mahomet, and an universal bishop, sprang up both together very near the same time; as treason and idolatry settled themselves also together at the same time in the age following. For the pope, under the pretence of retaining images, which the Constantinopolitan emperor destroyed, revolted from him, denied him the tribute that was wont till then to be paid him, even out of Rome itself, as well as other places; and denying him all obedience, plainly thrust him out of Italy. This account Zonaras and others give of Gregory the Second's proceeding against Leo Isaurus; and thus the bishop of Rome, by his papal authority, became the first author of defection from a lawful prince upon the account of religion.

SECT. XVIII.

And supports itself by the same means.

IF we look further into what was said before about Mahometism, we shall find that popery stands and upholds itself by the very same shameful means which keep up the religion of that false prophet. By force, that is, and violence, compelling men, where they have any power, to consent to what they say, or rather to feign a consent to what they do not believe; which discovers the weakness of that religion, and of the reasons of those that profess it: for he that extorts assent (as was said in the book foregoing) by sense of pain or fear of punishment,

plainly confesses by that very proceeding that he distrusts his arguments.

At the best they require belief of men without all liberty of inquiring into religion. For the vulgar (just as in Turkey) are prohibited to read the books which are accounted holy ; which is a manifest sign of its iniquity, (as he here speaks of the Turkish religion ;) for justly may that merchandise be suspected which is obtruded upon this condition, that it must not be looked into nor examined. This is the way of the grossest deceivers, who will not submit themselves to a trial, and refuse to give any account ; but will have us submit to their authority, and take what such men as they say upon trust. Which is the method of the Roman church, who are wont to put doubting of any part of their doctrine among mortal sins : and so for fear what the issue may be, will not suffer their people to try their religion with indifference, that is, with true liberty of judgment, and with a resolution to doubt of it, if the grounds of it appear upon examination to be uncertain, and to leave it if they prove apparently false.

It is true indeed, (as it there follows,) there is not in every man the like capacity of knowledge and quicksightedness to discern between truth and falsehood : many also are carried away into error by pride, others by inordinate passions or affections, and some by custom and imitation, or by the weakness of their understandings, and forwardness to judge without due consideration or advice with their proper guides. But those very books which the Roman church pretends may mislead men (and therefore will not let them use) teach them in the first and principal place to purge themselves from all naughty affections, and then to be sober-minded, and not too forward to determine things on their own heads, but to reverence their judgments who are over them in the Lord ; and not to pretend to religion, nor imagine they can judge aright, till they be humble and meek, and without any other design than this alone of saving their souls. Now the divine goodness forbids us to think that such men shall not be able to find the way to eternal salvation, who seek for it in God's own word and in this manner, without any by-respect to honour or worldly advantage ; and with entire submission of themselves and all they have to him, imploring

his assistance that they may attain it. Which are in effect the very words of Justin Martyr and Origen.

And truly, since God hath implanted in men's minds the power and faculty of judging, there is no part of truth that better deserves the employment of this faculty about it, than that of which we cannot be ignorant without hazard of our salvation. After this whosoever inquires with a godly mind, he shall not dangerously err; and where should he inquire after it but in God's most holy word? without which we cannot know whether there be either church, or priest, or any thing else wherein they would have us trust.

SECT. XIX.

And refuses to be tried by Scripture.

IT is a manifest sign therefore of imposture, that, when they cannot for shame but sometimes suffer their religion to be tried, yet they will not have it tried by the holy Scriptures; in the reading of which (as was excellently said in the conclusion of the foregoing books) no man can be deceived but he who hath first deceived himself. For the writers of them were more faithful and fuller of divine inspiration than either to defraud us of any necessary part of divine truth, or to hide it in a cloud so that we cannot see it.

Why then should any body decline this way of trial? unless they see themselves so manifestly condemned by the holy Scriptures, that they dare not let their cause be brought into so clear a light. Which hurts indeed sore eyes, but comforts and delights those that are sound; showing us so plainly what we are to embrace and what to refuse, and being so sure and so perfect a guide in all such matters, that St. Hilary not only commends and admires the emperor Constantius for desiring a faith according to what was written, but saith, "He is an anti-christ who refuses this, and an anathema that counterfeits it." And thereupon calls to him in this manner, "O emperor, thou seekest for faith, hearken to it not out of new little papers, but of the books of Godⁿ." There we must seek for it if we mean to find it; and if they be silent and can tell us nothing, (says St. Ambrose,) who shall dare to speak?

ⁿ [Ad Constant. lib. ii. § 8. col. 1229 D.]

“ Let us not therefore bring deceitful balances,” (they are the words of St. Austin in his second book of Baptism, chap. vi.º,) “ wherein we may weigh what we list, and as we list, after our own liking; saying, This is heavy, that is light; but let us bring the divine balance out of the holy Scriptures, (as out of the Lord’s treasures,) and in that let us weigh what is most ponderous: or rather let not us weigh, but acknowledge those things which are already weighed by the Lord.”

Yes, say they of the church of Rome, we will be put into that balance and tried by the Scriptures, but not by them alone. Which is in effect to refuse to be tried by them; for they give testimony to their own fulness and perfection, and plainness too, in things necessary; and so do all other Christian writers that succeeded the apostles, who do not send us to turn over we know not how many other volumes, but tell us here we may be abundantly satisfied. Insomuch that the first Christian emperor Constantine (the father of Constantius now mentioned) admonished the bishops in the famous council of Nice to consult with these heavenly inspired writings, as their guide and rule in all their debates; because “ they perspicuously instruct us (as his very words are) what to believe in divine things; and therefore they ought, he told them, to fetch from thence the resolution of those things which should come in question.” To which cardinal Bellarmine indeed is pleased to say, that Constantine truly was a great emperor, but no great doctor: but as herein he speaks too scornfully of him, so he reflects no less upon the understanding and judgment of those venerable fathers assembled in that council, which (as Theodoret tells us in his Ecclesiastical History) was composed of men excelling in apostolical gifts, and many of them carried in their bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus, and were, for the far greater part, a multitude of martyrs assembled together; who all consented unto and followed this wholesome counsel of the emperor, (as he there testifies;) knowing he did but speak the sense of the truly catholic church.

º [Tom. ix. col. 101 B.]

ρ [Εὐαγγελικαὶ γὰρ βίβλοι καὶ ἀποστολικαί, καὶ τῶν παλαιῶν προφητῶν τὰ θεσπίσματα, σαφῶς ἡμᾶς ἄπερ χρῆ περι τοῦ θεοῦ φρονεῖν ἐκπαιδεύουσι. Τὴν πολεμοποιὸν οὖν

ἀπελάσαντες ἔριν, ἐκ τῶν θεοπνεύστον λόγων λάβωμεν τῶν ζητουμένων τὴν λύσιν.—Gelas. Hist. Concil. Nicæen. apud Mansi, tom. ii. col. 817 B. Theodoret. Hist. Eccles. i. 6.]

Which did not merely bid men hear it and bring all doctrines to its touchstone; but confessed plainly that even the church itself must be tried by the Scriptures. It is the express sentence of the same St. Austin, in his book of the Unity of the Church: where in the second chapter he saith, the question then was, (as it is now,) "Where is the church?" Now what shall we do, says he? seek for it in our own words? or in the words of our Head, our Lord Jesus Christ? "I think we ought to seek it rather in his words who is the truth, and best knows his own body^q." And in the beginning of the third chapter thus proceeds; "Let us not hear, Thus say I, and Thus sayest thou: but let us hear, Thus saith the Lord. The Lord's books there are certainly, to whose authority we both consent, we both believe, we both yield obedience: there let us seek the church, there let us discuss our cause^r."

And to name no more, the author of the imperfect work upon St. Matthew (carrying the name of St. Chrysostom) declares this so fully, that it leaves no doubt in us what course they took for satisfaction in this business. "Heretofore," says he, "there were many ways whereby one might know what was the true church of Christ, and what was Gentilism; but now there is no way to know what is the true church of Christ, but by the Scriptures. Why so? Because all those things which belong properly to Christ in truth and reality, those heresies have also in show and in appearance. They have Scriptures, baptism, eucharist, and all the rest, even Christ himself; like as we have. Therefore if any one would know which is the true church of Christ, how should he know it in such a confusion of multitude, but only by the Scriptures?" which he repeats over again a little after, "he therefore that would know which is the true church of Christ, how should he know it but by the Scriptures^s?"

To them let us go, and in them let us rest; and if you are the disciples of the gospel, may we say to the Romanists, (as Athanasius does to the followers of Apollinarius, in his book about the Incarnation of Christ^t;) "Do not speak unrighteously against the Lord, but walk in what is written and done. But

^q [Tom. ix. col. 338 C.]

p. xciv.]

^r [Col. 340 G.]

^t [§ 8. tom. i. p. 928 D.]

^s [Opp. Chrysostomi, tom. vi.

if you will talk of different things from what are written, why do you contend with us, who dare not hear nor speak beside those things which are written? Our Lord telling us, *If you abide in the word, even in my word, you shall be free indeed.* What immodest frenzy is this, to speak things which are not written! and to devise things which are strangers to piety!"

To which if we faithfully adhere, there is this to be added for our encouragement, that though we should mistake in the sense of the Scriptures, yet they secure us, that if we with honest and upright hearts continue to inquire after the truth, (designing nothing else,) that error shall not prejudice us; but God will either discover to us his mind, or not condemn us for our error of weakness, not of wilfulness.

SECT. XX.

The vanity of their appeal to traditions.

As for interpretations of Scripture by tradition, they may be pretended and talked of, but cannot be produced in most places where we are desirous of that help: which we gladly receive, when we can have it by a truly universal consent. But as for particular interpretations of the ancient fathers, they do not absolutely agree with each other in their expositions of those texts upon which controversies of greatest moment are now grounded. Nay, they oftentimes propound divers interpretations alike probable: and sometimes plainly intimate their doubtfulness, and make but imperfect conjectures; in such a manner as if they intended to excite posterity to seek for further resolution. Therefore we shall not dissent from them, though we do not assent to all their particular interpretations. Nay, we cannot more dissent from them, than by following their interpretations on such strict terms as the Romanists would bind us all to do, when they seem to make for their advantage. For then there is not the least surmise or conjecture of any one father, but must suffice against the joint authority of all the rest. To which rule (of serving their interest) they are so true, that they stick not to reject any interpretation of the fathers when they think good: and, which is more, to prefer their own expositions before theirs.

And so they do in the matter of all other traditions, though called apostolical. For instance, the threefold immersion in

baptism, "which seems to have flowed from an apostolical canon, is long ago abolished (saith their Canus) by a contrary custom^u." And so is the custom of giving the communion to infants (which prevailed, says their Maldonate, for six hundred years in the church) not only antiquated by them, but decreed to be unlawful. Which clearly shows that they might, if they pleased, make an end of all the controversies that trouble the church, without any disparagement (but rather with the increase) of its authority. For challenging a power to alter even the institutions of Jesus Christ, (as they have done in taking away the cup from the people in the holy communion,) and much more those of the apostles; what need all this stir about apostolical traditions, or the decrees of the church? which they may lay aside at their pleasure, and have laid aside, as appears by many other instances, besides those now named, that may be given of it.

But it is sufficient for the direction of every honest-hearted man to know (which is as certain as any thing of that nature can be, and may be undoubtedly relied on) that nothing is clearer in the tradition of the church than this, that the doctors of it declare the Scriptures to be full and perspicuous in all needful matters. And therefore there needs no other tradition but the tradition of the Scriptures: which satisfy us abundantly in the truth of all those things which are universally received.

SECT. XXI.

And their guilt in what they say about the holy Scriptures.

THERE cannot therefore be a greater demonstration of their guilt than this, that notwithstanding such evident testimonies from the Scriptures themselves, and the concurrent stream of the ancient doctors of Christ's church, they have been forced (to avoid this trial by the Scriptures) to say so many scandalous things as they have done in disparagement of the sacred writings. Many of them are commonly known, and I am not willing to repeat the rest; but only say this great truth, that whether they will or no, their church, such as it is, receives all its authority from the Scriptures, and not the Scriptures from

^u [De Tradit. Apost. lib. iii. Loc. theol. cap. 5. p. 163.]

it. For we can have no notion, as was said before, of a church, or of its authority, but from the Scriptures: which therefore must be of greater authority than that which receives authority from them, and be first supposed to be infallible, before they can make us believe any thing else is so. For we must be secure of the proof before we can be sure of the thing proved by it; otherwise it is no proof, but leaves us as much in doubt as we were before it was alleged.

If they say (and what else can be said with any colour of reason?) that we must indeed learn their church's infallibility from the Scriptures, but then learn the rest from their church; mark, I beseech you, what follows. Then it is manifest, first, that they themselves make the Scriptures the rule of faith in this one article at least, concerning the catholic church's infallibility: which we must therefore believe, (and for no other reason,) because the Scriptures, which we first infallibly believe, do teach and prove it.

Whence it plainly follows, that private men may and must be assured of the truth of Scriptures (without the help of their church's authority) before they can believe any thing else; because it is the ground for their belief of that infallibility which their church pretends, which to them is the general rule of faith.

And from thence it follows further, that the Scriptures, which to us are the only rule of faith, ought to be acknowledged by them to be more than so, even the rule of their rule of faith. And if it be so, what reason can any man allege why it should not be the immediate rule of faith (without sending us elsewhere to seek it) in all other articles of the Creed, as well as in that of their pretended infallible church.

We may appeal to all the world, and call heaven and earth, angels and men to witness between us and the Roman church, (as a worthy champion of our cause did long ago,) whether the articles of Christ's incarnation, his death, passion, burial, resurrection, ascension, intercession, the resurrection of the dead, and life everlasting, &c., be not much more plainly set down in the Scriptures, to any man's apprehension whatsoever, than the infallibility of the present Roman church is in such words as these, *Thou art Peter, &c., Feed my sheep*, or any other from whence they challenge it. And therefore why should we be

required to learn these, or any other part of Christian faith, merely from their church, when we learn them so easily by the Scriptures; in which they are to be found more clearly delivered than any thing we read about their church?

Let no man doubt but if the Holy Ghost will teach us that article of the church's infallibility immediately by the Scriptures, without the help of the church's infallible authority, (as they themselves are forced to confess, because else the church can have no authority,) then he will immediately teach us by the same Scriptures any other article of our Creed, and whatsoever is necessary to salvation; which are plainly and perspicuously enough set down in the Scriptures, without the help and assistance of the church's infallible authority, which the Scriptures cannot be supposed to teach but by places far more doubtful.

SECT. XXII.

It is our wisdom therefore to adhere to the Scriptures.

To this rule then let us stick, keeping those words of our Saviour always in mind^x: *He that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.* Let that be his guide who would not go astray in dangerous paths; into which he cannot fall who keeps close to the directions of the holy books, wherein all necessary truth being set down, as the most ancient and best doctors unanimously agree, we are certain (every way) by believing them to believe all necessary truth; and if our lives be accordingly, (without which they tell us our belief will be vain,) it is impossible we should fail of everlasting salvation.

To these alone (as St. Austin speaks for himself in his book of Nature and Grace^y) we owe an absolute consent without refusing any thing they propound to us. Whatsoever it be (as his words are in his 112th Epistle^z) that is confirmed by the perspicuous authority of the divine Scriptures, those viz. which are canonical in the church, it must be believed without any doubting. But as for any other witnesses or testimonies to

^x John iii. 21, 22.

^y [Cap. 61. tom. x. col. 158 B.]

^z [Epist. cxlvii. § 4. ed. Ben.

tom. ii. col. 475 A.]

which thou art persuaded to give credit, thou mayest believe them or not believe them according as thou perceivest them to deserve or not deserve to be relied on." A great reverence is due to the church and its testimony, (though less to the present church of Rome than others, because it hath so grossly abused the world by false records and forged miracles, and such like things,) yet only as to a human testimony, which cannot equal that of the holy Scriptures.

SECT. XXIII.

Which have more manifest notes of certainty than the church.

FOR if we take their own way and method to assure our minds that we follow an infallible guide, there is no note which they give of the true church, which they say ought to be our guide, but pleads far more strongly for the holy Scriptures, that we should rather follow them and give an undoubted credit to them. I shall not run over all those notes, nor examine the certainty of them; but only briefly name some of them, and show that if they prove any thing, it is the authority of the Scriptures above the church.

First, they say, the very name of the Catholic Church is venerable and ought to be regarded. But as that name is not proper to them alone, so if there be any power in names to make us respect any thing, what more awful than the name of the Word of God and the sacred Scriptures, which were always given to these books, to which we advise all Christians to adhere!

The next note, which is antiquity, is on the side of the Scriptures also, which more justly claim to be ancients than all other books which pretend to any divinity, than the catholic church can claim to be ancients than all other societies which call themselves by the name of a church. Nay, the doctrine contained therein must be supposed, as I have shown, to be before the church, which is made by belief and profession of that doctrine: and the Old Testament certainly written long before the church was made catholic.

As for unity, in that the church is not comparable to the Scriptures, whose agreement and consent of parts is admirable. And if we speak of the surest bond of true catholic unity, it is as manifest as the sun, that the holy Scriptures lay the foundation of it, and preserve us in it (if we adhere to them,) by keeping

us close to *one Lord, one faith, one baptism*: but the church of Rome, which hath usurped the name of catholic, makes this blessed unity impossible. For there being but two ways to it, either that we all agree in our opinions about religion, or that while we differ it be no hinderance to communion, they have made the latter as impossible as the former; because they make it absolutely necessary to communion and salvation to believe in every thing as they do.

The like might be said of holiness and efficacy of doctrine, (which depends upon the church's speaking according to the Scriptures,) sanctity of the authors of our religion, (which cannot be known but out of the Scriptures,) the glory of miracles, the light of prophecy, and all the rest: but I shall only touch upon one more, the amplitude and universality of the church, in which they make their boast. But herein the Scriptures most evidently excel, their authority being there sacred, where the church of Rome (whose notes these are,) is not known or not regarded. For all Christians in the world, of whatsoever sect they be, believe the Scriptures to be the word of God: whereas they alone say that they are the only true church of God. All Christians besides, who know any thing of this pretence of theirs, absolutely deny it, and maintain the divinity and authority of the Scriptures against all their cavils.

SECT. XXIV.

The great encouragement we have to do so.

By following the Scriptures, then, we follow the surest guide by their own confession. For first, by following the Scriptures, we are certainly led by God; but by following the church, we are only led by men. And consequently the faith we build upon the Scriptures is a divine faith; but the faith we build upon the authority of the church merely can be no more than human. For the Scriptures are fully and amply proved to be of divine authority, by all those arguments which are alleged in the third book of this work; the like to which cannot be produced to prove the infallible authority of the church. Which cannot so much as pretend that God hath bid us believe it, but by sending us to the holy Scriptures, from whence it derives all its authority.

Which is the second thing to be considered (and here I will

take the liberty to transcribe part of the discourse of a great man on this subject with some additions,) that by following the Scriptures, we follow that which they themselves are forced to follow, (as was noted before,) and on which they entirely depend for the proof of their own authority, on which they would have us entirely depend. Who have reason rather to rely on that which they rely, and in so doing tacitly confess the Scriptures are of greatest authority, and that they are surer of their truth than of the church's infallibility.

And thirdly, by following the Scriptures we follow that which must be true, if their church (which they would have us follow) have any truth in it, for their church cannot but give attestation to them; whereas, if we follow their church, we must follow that which, though the Scriptures be true, may be false; nay, which, if the Scriptures be true, must be false, because the Scriptures testify against it.

Further, fourthly, to follow the Scriptures we have God's express warrant and commandment, without any colour for any prohibition; but to believe their church infallible we have no commandment, much less any express commandment, nay, have reason to think we are prohibited so to do in such words as those: *Beware of false prophets: Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God, &c.*: which require us to examine before we trust; and consequently not to give up ourselves blindfold to those who confidently claim the infallibility of St. Peter, but cannot produce any evidence of it.

Again, fifthly, by following the Scriptures we shall keep to that which was always believed, and every where received: but by following the church of Rome we shall make ourselves guilty of the changes and alterations which they have made (as another great champion of our church hath observed) in the Apostolical Creed, (by making a new one containing things that hold no conformity with the apostles,); and in the apostolical succession, (by engrossing the whole succession to Rome, and making other bishops to be but the pope's deputies, as to their jurisdiction;) and in the apostolical government, (by erecting a new and universal monarchy in the church;) and lastly, in the apostolical communion, by excommunicating the greatest part of the holy catholic church.

By (sixthly) following the Roman church also, we shall be

bound to hold many things not only above reason, but against it : whereas by following the Scriptures we shall only believe some mysteries, but no impossibilities ; some things above reason, but nothing contrary to it. For though there be things in Scripture which, had they not been revealed, reason could not have discovered ; yet there is nothing there which, being revealed, can by true reason be confuted.

Seventhly, contrary to flesh and blood indeed there are many things contained in the Scriptures ; and therefore by following them we shall believe a religion which, notwithstanding that great prejudice which men had to it, prevailed and enlarged itself over the world in a short time, without any assistance from worldly power, wit, or policy ; nay, against all these : whereas the Roman church hath got all its authority over men's consciences by no other means than by devising false records, false miracles and reports, (as was said before,) and by complying with men's corrupt affections, or by persecuting those that would not comply ; and by all other such like worldly means, whether of policy or force.

Eighthly, to which add, that by following the Scriptures we shall believe a religion whose first preachers and professors could have no worldly ends to serve, (as hath been demonstrated in the foregoing books,) but rather were to expect, as they every where found, nothing but disgrace, vile, nay cruel usage, by all manner of punishments ; whereas the head of the Roman church, it is even palpable, makes their religion the instrument of his ambition, and seeks thereby to entitle himself, directly or indirectly, to the monarchy of the world ; and besides, it is evident to him that hath but half an eye, as we say, that most of the doctrines which they have added to the Scriptures make, one way or other, for the honour or temporal advantage of the teachers of them.

Ninthly, again, following the Scriptures we shall embrace a religion of admirable simplicity ; whereas the Roman church and doctrine is even loaded with an infinity of weak, childish, unsavoury superstitions and ceremonies, under which its own children have groaned and heavily complained.

Tenthly, those holy books also teach us that we must not promise ourselves salvation, unless we effectually mortify all our evil affections and lusts, and forsaking every sin whatso-

ever, betake ourselves to the practice of all Christian virtue : but the Roman church opens an easier and broader way to salvation ; permitting at least this to be taught for as good and catholic doctrine as any other, that though a man have continued all his life long in a course of sin, without the practice of any virtue, he may notwithstanding be let into heaven by an act of attrition at the hour of death, if joined with confession, or by an act of contrition without confession. And therefore in this and several other regards the religion of that church is not so holy as the doctrine of Christ and his apostles delivered in the Scriptures ; and consequently is not so likely to come from the fountain of holiness and goodness.

Eleventhly, but whatsoever ways they are pleased to devise to humour men's depraved appetites, we are sure of this advantage by following the Scriptures, which they cannot pretend to by following their church ; that if we happen to entertain an erroneous opinion, grounded, as we think, upon some place of Scripture, it is implicitly retracted and condemned by our precedent full and entire assent to all things contained in the Scriptures ; and our general resolution to hold nothing contrary to them, nor admit any thing (as necessary to salvation) that cannot be proved by them. Which makes the error that we unwittingly and unwillingly hold against the Scriptures less dangerous ; because our adherence to the Scriptures is nearer, closer, and firmer, than it is to our particular error. Whereas by following their church, not knowing what it is, (whether the whole body of people in that communion, or a general council, or the pope in or out of a council,) we shall have no such excuse for our errors ; but they will be rather much aggravated by our adhering so strictly to a doubtful and uncertain rule ; unto which the people in that communion sticking closer than they do to the word of God, it lessens the value of all the truths which they believe, and doubles the guilt of all their errors.

And lastly, as this is a great satisfaction to ourselves, so there is this to be added for the comfort of others also, that by following the Scriptures we shall learn to bear with one another in our different opinions about things which cannot thereby be determined ; nay, in things which are not directly against it, or wherein we are not yet sufficiently instructed : but by following the Roman church we shall be taught to pass

the heaviest sentences upon all those that believe not in all things as we do; nay, to take the severest courses with them, though they be men of the most innocent and useful lives; conforming themselves in all things to the precepts of Christ Jesus, and to the authority of their governors for his sake, where it doth not manifestly contradict him.

To conclude this, we for our parts are of the same mind, even towards them, which Grotius before observed the apostles were of towards the Jews: "From whom," saith he, (and let the words be taken as if spoken by us to those of the Roman communion,) "they would not so much as exact an acknowledgment of their happiness in being delivered from the heavy yoke of rites and ceremonies that lay upon them; but if they would admit of the commandments of Christ, which are full of all goodness, easily permitted them to follow what course of life they pleased in matters of indifferency; provided they would not impose the necessity of observing them upon others."

SECT. XXV.

Conclusion of all.

UPON these terms we are ready to agree with them, and I conclude all with this memorable proposal which Erasmus made in a letter to Johannes Slechta, a friend of his in Bohemia^a, at the very beginning of the Reformation, 1519.

"This would reconcile people to the church of Rome, if all things were not so particularly defined and made a matter of faith, which we would have to belong to it; but those only which are evidently expressed in the Holy Scriptures, or without which we do not see any way to be saved.

"To this purpose a few things are sufficient, and a few things may be sooner persuaded than a great many.

"Now out of one article we make six hundred; some of which are such, that, without endangering piety, we may either be ignorant or doubt of them. And such is the nature of mankind, that what is once defined we hold tooth and nail, and will by no means part with it.

"But when all is done, the sum of Christian philosophy lies in this; that we understand all our hope to be placed in God, who freely gives us all things by his Son Jesus; by whose

^a [Epist. cccclxxix. tom. iii. part. i. col. 521.]

death we are redeemed, into whose body we are planted by baptism; that being dead to the lusts of this world, we may live according to his doctrine and example, not only abstaining from all evil, but endeavouring to deserve well of everybody: and that if any adversity happen, we bear it courageously in hope of a future reward, which, without all doubt, waits for all pious persons at the coming of Christ: and that we make such progress from virtue to virtue, as notwithstanding to arrogate nothing to ourselves, but to ascribe all the good that is in us or that we can do unto God.

“ These things chiefly are to be inculcated and beaten into the minds of men, so that they become as it were their nature. But if any will search into those things which are more abstruse, about the divine nature, the hypostasis of Christ, or the sacraments, that they may raise their minds the higher, and draw them from things here below, let them do so; provided that everybody be not compelled presently to believe what seems good to this or that person.

“ For as out of large deeds arise sooner lawsuits, so are differences begotten by very many definitions.

“ And let us not be ashamed to answer to some things, God knows how it may be done; it is sufficient for me to believe that it is done.

“ I know that Christ’s pure body and blood is to be purely received by those that are pure, and that he would have this to be a most holy token and pledge both of his love to us, and of our Christian concord among ourselves. And therefore I will examine myself, and make a strict search, whether there be any thing in me that ill agrees with Christ, whether any discord with my neighbour.

“ But how the ten predicaments are there, how the bread is transubstantiated by the mystical words, (or as he explains himself in the latter end of his book upon the eighty-fourth Psalm,) how the body of Christ is there, whether under the substance of bread, or under the species of bread and wine, and such like; doth not much conduce, in my judgment, to proficiency in piety, &c.

“ By these and other such innumerable disputations, in which some triumph, the minds of men are called away from those things which alone are to the purpose.

“To conclude, it will be of great moment to establish the concord of the world, if all secular princes, and especially the bishop of Rome, would abstain from all appearance of tyranny and of covetousness.

“For men easily start back when they see slavery is prepared for them, when they see they are not invited to piety, but inveigled to be made a prey.

“If they perceive us to be harmless, to be beneficent, they will most easily credit us and intrust themselves with us.” Thus he.

It would not be very hard to make a longer book on this subject; but this is sufficient (as Grotius speaks in the beginning of his discourse about the Truth of Christian Religion) to convince those whose understandings are rightly disposed, and are not pertinaciously set against all further information. But no arguments can be found of force enough to convince a froward will, and persuade perverse affections; which make men uncapable of moral truth, most of all of divine. *Which will not enter (as the wise man speaks) into a malicious soul, nor dwell in the body that is subject unto sin. For the holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in^b.*

^b [Wisd. i. 4, 5.]

ON SCHISM;

TWO TRACTS

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE

COUNTESS OF LINDSAY.

[Now first printed from a manuscript in the library of
Queen's College, Oxford.]

TO THE COUNTESS OF LINDSAY, OF SCHISM.

TRACT I.

THAT church which divideth itself from the communion of all other true Christian churches that have been or are in the world is the most schismatical church in the world.

But the church of Rome thus divideth itself, and that in a peremptory manner. Therefore it is the most schismatical of all other.

The first proposition nobody can question.

The second is proved thus. To make it necessary for every Christian, under pain of damnation, to be subject to the bishop of Rome as Christ's vicar upon earth, is to divide themselves from all those churches which acknowledge not this, and to cut them off from the body of Christ as much as in them lies.

Now this the church of Rome doth, by declaring openly in their Creed, (set forth by pope Pius IV, by the authority of the Trent council,) "That the catholic apostolic Roman church is the mother and mistress of all churches, and that obedience is due to the pope of Rome, the vicar of Christ, &c. ; and that they hold this to be the true catholic faith, which whosoever believeth not cannot be saved." By which means they have cut off from Christ's body the church all the famous churches of Christ in the first times for many ages ; who believed nothing of this, but the quite contrary ; and likewise all the present churches of Christ in Greece, Ethiopia, &c., (to say nothing of the churches called protestant,) which contain a vaster number of Christian souls than are in the Roman church ; all which they shut out of the communion of the church, and consequently from salvation ; though many of them are in great sufferings for Christ's sake, and all of them believe the whole Christian religion contained in the ancient creeds.

To those therefore who demand why we have separated from the Roman church, our answer is, that it is the Roman church which hath separated from us and from all other Christian churches, by excommunicating all those that will not submit to the papal usurpations and corruptions; we by the Reformation of religion having only got out of that schism wherein the Roman church still continues. Which is the more heinous crime, because it is merely out of love of worldly wealth and dominion that this great schism is made and continues, which breaks Christian communion in all parts of the Christian world.

From which ambition and covetousness (for we can find no other cause) very great schisms have been made among themselves in the Roman church, far greater than have been among any other Christians whatsoever. Their own authors reckon no less than twenty, and Onuphrius, a famous writer among them, goes further, and finds out thirty schisms among their popes^a.

The history of which it will be too long here to set down, but I will name two for a test, whereby you may judge of the rest.

The first is very ancient, whereby you may discern the early ambition of those bishops, and the wicked means they made use of to attain the popedom. I will transcribe it out of an unquestionable book, which is the preface of Marcellinus and Faustinus, two Roman priests, unto their humble supplication to the emperors Valentinian, Theodosius, and Arcadius^b, contracting it as much as I can, but not altering one word. “In the times of Constantius the son of Constantine, there arose a severe persecution of Christians by the impious Arrian heretics, not without the consent of Constantius: who both persecuted Athanasius resisting the heretics, and commanded him to be condemned by all bishops; which through fear of the prince all the bishops attempted every where, condemning him unheard and innocent. But Liberius the Roman bishop, and Eusebius Vercellensis, and Lucifer Caralitanus, and Hilarius Pictavensis

^a [Onuphrius Panvinius in his *Chronicon Pontificum Romanorum*, appended to his edition and continuation of the *Vitæ Pontificum* of

Platina, fol. Colon. 1574.]

^b [Apud Galland. *Biblioth. Vet. Patr.* tom. vii. pp. 461, 462.]

would not consent to the condemnation ; and therefore were sent into banishment, whither Liberius's deacon, Damasus, pretended he would go also : but in their journey slipped from him back again to Rome, being corrupted with ambition. But the day that Liberius went into banishment, all the clergy, that is the priests, with the archdeacon Felix, and Damasus the deacon himself, and all the officers of the church, bound themselves all alike by an oath in the presence of the Roman people, that while Liberius lived they would have no other bishop. But the clergy with the greatest crime of perjury received Felix the archdeacon, ordained in the place of Liberius : which fact so displeased all the people that they would not accompany his procession. After two years, Constantinus coming to Rome, the people begged of him their old bishop Liberius, who granted their petition, saying, " You have Liberius, who shall return to you a better man than he went away : " pointing to the consent whereby he had yielded to the Arian perfidiousness, (a thing, madam, much to be marked, because some are wont to deny he was ever an Arian.)

" The third year Liberius returned, and was joyfully met by the people, Felix being driven out of the city. But after a little time, by the impulse of the perjured clergy, he rushed into the city, and presumed to take up his station in the church of Iulus beyond Tiber : whom the multitude of the faithful and the nobles cast out again with great disgrace. After eight years Felix died, and Liberius took pity on the perjured clergy, and restored them to their proper places.

" Not long after Liberius also died ; and then the presbyters and deacons Ursinus Amantius and Lupus, with the holy people who had kept their faith with Liberius in banishment, went to the church of Iulus, and demanded Ursinus the deacon to be ordained in the room of Liberius ; but the perjured clergy desired Damasus in the room of Felix. Paulus Tiburtinus ordained Ursinus : which as soon as Damasus, who was always ambitious of the popedom, found, he stirred up by giving them money all the coachmen and the rabble, armed with clubs, broke into the church of Iulus, where he furiously raged for three days, with great slaughter of the faithful. After seven days he got together all the perjured clergy, and such kind of people as are before mentioned, whom he corrupted with a vast

sum of money, and possessed himself of the church of Lateran, and there was ordained bishop, and procured Ursinus with Lupus and Amantius to be banished.

“ Which being done, Damasus began to oppress the Roman people sorely with clubs and various slaughters, because they would not go along with him. Seven priests also he endeavoured to expel the city, but the faithful people rescued them, and brought them to the church of Liberius. Then Damasus, with the perfidious persons, invited them that belong to the pit in the theatres, the trenchmakers and all the clergy, and laid siege to the church, on the second hour of the day, and the seventh of the kalends of November, and raised a grievous fight; for the doors being broken through, and fire put under, he endeavoured to open a passage for his irruption. Some of his familiars also uncovered the roof of the church, and felled the faithful people with the tiles. Then all the Damasians rushing into the church killed one hundred and sixty of the people, both men and women, and wounded a great many, of which not a few died; but on the part of Damasus there was not so much as one slain.

“ After three days the holy people got together again, reciting the commands of our Lord, *Fear not them that can kill the body*; and also singing psalms, and saying, *The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heavens, &c.*^c: and the same people joined in one body in the church of Liberius, cried for relief to the emperor, and called upon all the bishops to come to Rome and hear their cause, and expel this Damasus, with whom the matrons were so much in love that he was called *matronarum auriscalpius*. Valentinian the emperor granted leave to Ursinus and his two deacons to return, being moved with a pious pity, &c.; but Damasus, conscious to himself of his wickedness, purchased of the court a revocation of this grant, that his facts might not be laid open. So Ursinus the bishop, a holy man and without fault, consulting the quiet of the people, delivered himself into the hands of wicked men, and of his own accord, at the command of the emperor, made haste into banishment.

“ But the people fearing God, and tired of no persecutions, neither feared the emperor, nor the judge, nor the author of

^c Psalm lxxix. 2, 3.

these wickednesses, the murderer Damasus; but kept their stations (i. e. made solemn prayers) at the tombs of the martyrs, without the clergy; whereupon, when many of the faithful were met at St. Agnes, Damasus with his armed guards fell upon them, and destroyed a great many of them . . . which most cruel fact much displeased the bishops of Italy, whom when he had invited to keep his birthday, and some of them were come, he endeavoured by prayers and money to procure their sentence against holy Ursin; who answered, they were come to keep a birthday, not to condemn one unheard. So his wicked intention wanted the effect he laboured: after which the priests were afflicted divers ways, and dispersed by banishment and flight into foreign parts, among whom were those two, Marcellinus and Faustinus, whose preface this is to their supplicatory book unto the forenamed emperors."

I hope I have not tired your honour with this dismal story, whereby you may see how much better the people were than the pope and most of his clergy, whom they forsook and assembled without them; and also how the line of personal succession so much talked of was here broken in the Roman church, which was a long time governed by this impious intruder.

This will now fully appear in the following story, which I shall shorten more than I have done the other.

In the year 1044 (seven hundred years after the former) there was a shameful confusion, saith Otho Frisingensis^d, happened in the city of Rome. Three usurpers (Silvester the Third, Gregory the Sixth, and Benedict the Ninth) occupying that seat at that time. And to increase the heap of miseries, dividing the patriarchal revenues among them, one of them had his abode at St. Peter's, the other at St. Mary's the greater, the third (viz. Benedict) sitting in the palace of Lateran.

I spare the mention of the lewd life which all three led, and only hereupon remark how the succession was interrupted, so that they cannot find the true. For though they are pleased to reckon Benedict for the lawful pope, yet they cannot deny that he came into his seat by faction and bribery, and also was but a lad of ten years old. And the canons of the church make simoniacal promotion void, so that he could not be true pope,

^d [Hist. lib. vi. cap. 32. in Biblioth. Patr. Cisterc. per Bernard. Tissier, tom. viii. p. 80.]

being so vile, that he at length sold the papacy to Gregory the Sixth for 1500*l*. And now Gregory must pass for the lawful pope, and the line of personal succession must be derived through him : though he was presently after deposed for simony, and Clement the Second put in his room ; and the succession begins afresh in this Clement, Gregory and Benedict being both still alive ; and at the decease of Clement one of them, viz. Benedict, stepped in the papal throne again, and sat there eight months.

What confused work is here, madam ! which I beseech your honour, for the love of God, to consider, (together with what I said in a former paper of the schism of three other popes, who were at last deposed,) for as it demonstrates that they have had such schisms among them as are no where else to be found, so it shows that the line of personal succession hath been so broken, so confusedly perplexed and entangled, that it is impossible to know how to derive it ; and that their bishops, above all other bishops in the world, have entered corruptly into their seats. Such a great number having entered by force or bribery, &c., that Genebrard, one of their own authors, ingenuously confessed, that “ for near one hundred and fifty years’ space there were about fifty popes together, who might more justly be called apotactical or apostatical, than apostolical^e.”

He begins the account from John the Eighth, (who is commonly said to have been a woman,) until the time of Leo the Ninth, during which space of time most filthy harlots domineered at Rome, and made what bishops they pleased, and (which is most horrid) false popes, who were their paramours, were intruded into the seat of St. Peter.

These are the words of their great historian, cardinal Baroni-
nius, (*ad ann.* 912^f.) who thereupon adds, “ Christ was now fast asleep in the ship, and, which is worse, there were no disciples to wake him with their cries. What kind of presbyters, deacons, and cardinals, may we think were made by those

^e [“ Hoc vero uno infelex, quod per annos fere 150 pontifices circiter 50, a Joanne scilicet VIII, qui Nicolao et Adriano II, sanctis pontiff. successit, ad Leonem IX usque, qui primus a Deo vocatus velut alter Aaron, antiquam pontificum integri-

tatem e cœlo in sedem apostolicam revocavit, a virtute majorum prorsus defecerint, apotactici, apostaticive, potius quam apostolici.”—Chron. l. iv. ad ann. 901. p. 553.]

^f [Annal. tom. xv. p. 571.]

monsters, when it is natural for every creature to beget its like?"

And it can be no wonder if religion were depraved in that church in such a time as this, when the chief ministers and the very supreme head of it were so depraved as to mind nothing belonging to their office; but were so negligent, that in many Christian countries neither the sacraments nor ecclesiastical rites were observed, as Wernerus writes. But it will be a great wonder to me, madam, if you, knowing all this, (which is but a little of what you may know in this matter if you please,) should think to find religion most pure there, where the least care has been taken of its preservation; and at last be persuaded against such clear demonstration, to join yourself to that great schism, (in which I have shown they are, and which they peremptorily maintain,) from which we of this church most happily have escaped.

TRACT II.

THERE EVER was and ever will be a church, (viz. a company of men and women holding and professing the saving doctrine of Christ,) which hath been and ever will be visible more or less to such as are capable to discern it. Such was the church of Jerusalem at the beginning of our religion; though Jews and pagans did not acknowledge them, but reproached them as heretics, or atheists, or innovators in religion. Such were all other churches derived from thence as the first and mother church, which of all of them together made up the catholic church, the body of Christ.

None of which, as far as we can find, did so hold the saving doctrine of Christ as to be exempted from all errors: and yet notwithstanding continued part of Christ's body, while they held the catholic faith entire, though mixed with some errors. Which catholic faith is comprehended in the Apostles' Creed, as it is explained by the council of Nice; being that form of sound words which they that keep hold the saving doctrine of Christ, and will be owned by him, though they build some false steps upon this foundation.

Therefore a visible church no way erroneous, holding neither

more nor less than Christ and his apostles taught, is not to be sought after, because it is not to be found.

Even the first church of Jerusalem had those in it who held a most dangerous error; for they who taught that *except men were circumcised after the manner of Moses, they would not be saved*, came from thence^g. And how far this opinion spread there we cannot tell, but there are many passages in Scripture which make it likely that they were infected with it.

In the church of Rome itself there was this doctrine maintained, that men were justified by the works of the law, as appears by St. Paul's vehement disputation against it in the Epistle to the Romans.

In the Corinthian church there were not only lamentable schisms, but heresies also; which St. Paul saith must be, *that they which are approved may be made manifest*^h.

The churches of Galatia were so overrun with Judaical errors, that St. Paul saith they were *removed from him that called them unto the grace of Christ unto another gospel*ⁱ.

The like I might show in all the churches mentioned in Scripture; some of whose chief pastors were very guilty of conniving at those who taught wicked doctrines.

For instance, the bishop of Thyatira suffered *that woman Jezebel*, which called herself a *prophetess*, to teach and to seduce the servants of Christ *to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols*^k.

And if it were thus immediately after our Lord's ascension to heaven, and while the apostles lived, it can be no wonder if the churches in after-times were very much infested with errors and heresies of various sorts; as appears by the first four general councils, wherein the great heresies were condemned. One of which so overspread the Christian world that heretics were far more visible than true believers.

For the Arian heresy prevailed so much, that St. Hierom saith "the whole world groaned under it, and wondered to see itself become Arian^l:" the bishops of the churches themselves having so generally departed from the soundness of the Christian doctrine, that it was upholden and maintained only by a

^g Acts xv. 1. ^h 1 Cor. xi. 19. anum se esse miratus est."—Hieron.

ⁱ Galat. i. 6. ^k Rev. ii. 20. adv. Lucif. § 19. tom. ii. col. 191

^l ["Ingemuit totus orbis, et Ari- B.]

few men, and those persecuted and misrepresented as turbulent and factious persons who troubled the church's peace. This is acknowledged by the writers of the Roman church, who when they speak of this matter say as much of the obscurity of the catholic church at that time, as any of us have done of its obscurity at any time.

Salmeron, for instance, observes, that when Constantius objected to catholics the smallness of their number and the great multitude of Arians, the pope of Rome that then was answered, " It mattered not whether the number of true believers were great or little, for the church of the Jews when it was in Babylon was reduced to the number of three, commonly called the three children : " and yet all this time there was a true visible catholic church, though not so visible as it had sometimes been and afterwards was again ; which church had in it, besides the church of Rome, four great patriarchships into which it was divided, that of Constantinople, that of Antioch, that of Alexandria, and that of Jerusalem. All of them independent one upon the other, and none of them owning the great doctrine of the Roman church (now put into their Creed) " that the Roman church is the mother and mistress of all churches : " who all ought (as the Roman Catechism teaches) to be subject to one visible head, the pope.

They all believe the contrary to this very day, as we do, and have believed so in every age, and have had visible members professing that belief. And though [there had been a great mixture of several errors and superstitions together with the articles of Christian faith which those churches have retained, yet not so many nor so dangerous errors as some of those in the present Roman church. For none of those churches ever damned others that do not acknowledge the headship of their patriarchs over them ; as the church of Rome now doth all those who own not the supreme authority of their bishop over the whole church. A doctrine which hath been opposed, even in the Roman church itself, in every age downward, from the time that pope Boniface usurped this headship over the universal church.

As other false doctrines have also been from the time that they were first broached ; for instance, the doctrine of transubstantiation was first advanced by Paschasius Radbertus, a friar

of Corby near Amiens, about the year 818. So both Bellarmine and Sirmond confess, that he first so explained the true sense of the catholic church, that he opened the way to those who have since written of this matter. But Rabanus Maurus, archbishop of Mayence, (a far greater man than the friar Paschasius,) at that very time absolutely denies this to be the sense of the catholic church about the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, and set himself to oppose it, and write against it as a new and strange doctrine. And so did Bertramus, (or Bertramus, as he was then called,) and Johannes Erigena, both great men in that age; who were chosen by the emperor Charles the Bald to inform him what was the true doctrine of the church in this matter: and both confuted that which was taught by Paschasius.

To those a great many other famous men may be added, both in that and in the following ages; as we can make good by undeniable testimonies, which show that there have always been a visible company of men not only professing the same faith that we do, but rejecting also the greatest errors in the now Roman church which we reject.

They have not indeed been always alike visible, nor to all men alike: for they have in some ages been so traduced and persecuted that they were forced to obscure themselves from their prevailing adversaries: but might still be seen by those who sought to understand the truth, and would use the means of being acquainted with it.

Thus the church, sometimes shining so gloriously that it was compared to a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, was forced afterwards to flee into the wilderness; where whilst she remained, they that were prepared by God to feed her visibly beheld her, but all others did not see her^m. And such an obscurity of the church of Christ the doctors of the Roman church themselves acknowledge in the reign of antichrist, when they say the external state of the Roman church and the public intercourse of the faithful with the same may cease, and the communion of Christians therewith be in heart and secret.

Nay, Suarez saith it is probable that in those days the pope himself shall profess his faith in secret.

And the doctors of that church are very well known, who have been of opinion that during the time Christ lay in his grave the church subsisted only in the blessed virgin Mary ; the apostles having forsaken Christ.

The sum of all then is this, there were always a visible company of believers holding the same faith which Christ and his apostles taught in all things.

But a company of men no way erring, nor holding more, but just so much as Christ and his apostles taught, we ought not to inquire after, for they are not to be found ; there never having been any such church.

Therefore it is a vain thing to ask for a company of men who always believed nothing but what we do ; for it is impossible for the church of Rome to show any such company of men for several ages who believed all that they do.

It is sufficient that there was a church always believing whatsoever we believe to be necessary to salvation : which we are sure was everywhere visible in all places where Christ had a church.

And further, we can name those in all ages who did not believe as the present Roman church doth ; and more than that, opposed their main errors when they appeared. But such a church or company of men were not always alike visible in all places and to all men : but like to our blessed Saviour, who was visible to his apostles and other faithful people after his resurrection, and yet invisible at the same time to the Scribes and Pharisees ; that is, they were always as visible as good people can be in a time of persecution, and would have made themselves more visible had it been in their power to reform the errors which they opposed, and for doing so were persecuted and oppressed.

Which our church, blessed be God, at last effected, having always had the same being and the same visibility (as to the great articles of faith necessary to salvation) with the best members even of the Roman church ; and now at present differing no otherways from it than as a body which is purged and restored to health doth from itself when it was full of ill humours and sick unto death.

In short, neither their church nor ours have been always alike visible : I mean a church believing no more for the main than we do, and a church believing so much as they do. Such

a church as ours was most visible in the first and best ages, but not so visible in the latter and worse ages.

Such a church as theirs was not at all visible in those best ages, but very visible in the worst; so that if they say there was a time when ours could not be seen, we with more truth can affirm there was a time when theirs could not be seen.

But there is this remarkable difference between us in this respect, that if ours could not be seen it was only in the night, but theirs could not be seen at noon-day.

S E R M O N S.

THE HYPOCRITICAL NATION

DESCRIBED,

IN

A SERMON

PREACHED AT ST. MARY'S IN CAMBRIDGE, UPON A
DAY OF PUBLIC FASTING.

WITH AN EPISTLE PREFIXED BY MR. SAMUEL JACOMBE.

Ἔστι γὰρ καὶ πόνον ὑπομείναι νηστείας, καὶ μισθὸν νηστείας μὴ λαβεῖν. Πῶς ;
"Ὅταν βρωμάτων μὲν ἀπεχώμεθα, ἀμαρτημάτων δὲ μὴ ἀπεχώμεθα· ὅταν κρέα
μὴν μὴ ἐσθίωμεν, κατεσθίωμεν δὲ τὰς τῶν πενήτων οἰκίας, &c.—*Chrysost.*
Orat. 2. περὶ νηστ. [Ed. Ben. hom. vi. de Pœnit. tom. ii. p. 317 D.]

*Because of unrighteous dealings, injuries, and riches got by deceit,
the kingdom is translated from one people to another. Ecclus. x. 8.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

1900

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READER,

It is well known that an hypocrite is an artificial piece, a mere cheat, a stage-player, every thing almost but what he seems to be, who makes religion serve some private end, or thrust himself into the company of professors, as the hunted deer doth into the midst of the herd because he hopes for some outward safety; but the knife that glisters well is quickly found to be what it is, all lead, by cutting something hard with it, for it bends every way: follow him to his family, observe him in his dealings with men in acts of justice, mind him in his sobriety, and though he may be quick and nimble, yet he leaves his scent behind him, and his own conscience will one day pursue him by it.

I question not, but an ordinary dissembler knows himself to be so. There is one company of hypocrites that are less apt to suspect themselves, because great zealots for some pieces of God's service, whereby they think they make God amends for the neglect of others, but alas, one string out of tune spoils the music; one vein opened will let out all the blood in the body, one little hole will let in water enough to drown the ship. This notion is excellently discussed in this sermon, as also the absolute necessity of observing all the duties we owe to our neighbours, if we will avoid the charge of hypocrisy; both which, with many other things, being of excellent use for the present canting, talking, and not doing Christians, I thought my friend served the interest of piety by publishing this discourse. The judicious reader, I am confident, will find the author much a scholar, much a Christian in it; all that know him have testimony of both in his converse. I am one who have reason to bless God for his good example, and for this sermon, which with advantage I heard in the University. That it may be a blessing to thee also, shall be the prayer of

Thy servant, for Jesus' sake,

SAM. JACOMBE.

Lombard Street, London,

1657.

TO THE
AUTHOR'S BEST BELOVED AND HONOURED FRIEND,
MR. THOMAS HUNT.

SIR, I hope the author of this discourse will have no reason to be angry that I have exposed his papers to public view, but if he should chance to be arrested with any sudden passion, I doubt not but he will be instantly calmed when he meets with your name at the entrance, which I know to be so pleasing unto him, that he cannot think of it without a smile and a smooth forehead. It is a general good that I aim at in sending them abroad, (many things of great concernment being in my poor judgment treated of in them,) but yet I am sure the author will be glad that I have made them also serve a particular end, and give testimony by this short dedication of the singular and dear affection which he bears to you.

I will not go about to divine what entertainment they will meet withal among men, but I can more than guess how you will embrace and kiss the offspring of a mind that could not bring forth any thing into the world, without exposing (as a twin together with it) its great love to you; and how welcome any thing that designs to advance pure religion and undefiled will be to your soul. For I have observed such a strange compliance between you and him, that it hath made me sometimes think it was great pity you did not both suck the same breasts, or rather lie together and embrace in the same womb, that there might not have been that little thing wanting to have made you twin-brethren; or I am ready to entertain the Jewish fancy, (though upon a different ground,) that souls come into being by pairs, and that you are one of those happy couples, by whom a more masculine and generous love than that which they make to be the effect of such an union is revived and commended to those who are of your familiarity. And how great an affection I have likewise discerned in you to the holy truths of our Lord Jesus I will not say; knowing that modesty, humility, and self-denial, are among those that you judge the greatest devotion to be due unto. I cannot tell whether any thing in the discourse is through careless-

ness and non-attendancy short of or contrary unto the author's sense, or whether he might find reason to correct any thing upon a second review ; but I am certain there is nothing here said to you which he would make any alteration in, or find any fault with, unless it be that I have not writ enough of his love and your merit. As for myself, it is no matter who I am: though I give you but half of my name, yet I am wholly yours as much as he can be, and none knows so well as he how much I honour you.

RIC. PATIUS.

March 25, 1657.

THE
HYPOCRITICAL NATION DESCRIBED.

ZACH. vii. 5.

When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years did you at all fast unto me, even to me?

THESE words are part of the answer which the prophet gives to a question, that the people returned out of captivity had by their messengers proposed to the priests, and (as it should seem) in case they could not resolve them to the prophet, concerning which we read in the third verse of this chapter. For the better understanding both the question and the answer, we must observe, that after the destruction of Jerusalem and their being carried captive by the king of Babylon, they appointed certain fasts to be kept at some set times of the year, which were sad commemorations of that ruin which by degrees God had brought upon them. In the law of Moses we read but of one fast (that I remember) commanded by God to this people, which was in the same month with one of these, viz. *the tenth day of the seventh month*; and it is mentioned Lev. xvi. 29, 31, xxiii. 27, &c. The neglect, or rather hypocritical observance of which Sabbath or day of rest, (for so there it is called,) is reproved very sharply in Isaiah lviii. through the whole chapter, where by *Sabbath*, verse 13, is to be understood this *fasting day on the tenth of the seventh month*, and not the seventh day of the week. But as there were many occasional fasts appointed (as is clear in the history of the Bible,) by the supreme magistrate, so upon the carrying of the nation captive, their rulers (it is most like,) did appoint four fasts to be observed every year, which are mentioned altogether, Zach. viii. 19, and were in remembrance (as both ancient and modern, Christian and Jewish interpreters

conjecture,) of so many several remarkables in their ruin. The fast of the fourth month was in memory of the first breach made in the wall of Hierusalem by the Chaldeans, of which we read, Jer. lii. 6, &c. The fast of the fifth, in memory of the burning of the temple, which in that month happened^a, as the burning of the second by Titus also did. That of the seventh was in memory of the slaughter of Gedaliah by Ishmael, of which we read, Jer. xli. That of the tenth month, in memory of the beginning of that siege which proved so fatal to them, which fell out to be in that month^b.

But they being now returned to their own land, and the temple being begun to be rebuilt by Zerubbabel, it comes into their mind to inquire of the Lord whether they should keep that fast any longer which was in memory of its destruction, (for concerning that only their scruple is moved, verse 3.) The prophet, before he comes to determine the case, and to tell them that the day should still be observed, only with a change of the solemnity, that from a fast it should be turned (together with the rest) into a feast, as it is in chap. viii. 19; I say before this he gives them to understand what a true fast is, (lest afterward their days of mirth should be to no better purpose than their days of sorrow,) and tells them plainly that they were much mistaken if they thought that they had observed a true fast to God all this while, in the fifth or the seventh month either, or had served God better than their forefathers did, whose fasting is by God in the forementioned place, Isaiah lviii., undervalued and slighted as unworthy of his least respect. And this he doth here in the words of my text, and those that follow by way of question. *When you fasted in the fifth, &c. did you at all fast unto me, even to me?* or as it is in the Hebrew, **הַצּוֹם צִמַּתְנִי אֲנִי**, *Did you fast your fast to me, I say to me?* which is a phrase like that in Hag. i. 4, **הֲיֵת לָכֶם אֲתָם**, *Is it a time for you, I say, for you, who are newly delivered by me, to dwell in your ceiled houses, &c.?* So, *Did you fast to me, I say, to me*, who have often declared to you that I care not for these outward performances, but love the hearty forsaking of sin? or was it **לְכַנּוּרִי** or **בְּעִבּוּרִי** (as Aben-Ezra interprets it)

^a Jer. lii. 12.

^b 2 Kings xxv. 1; Jer. lii. 3.

because of me, for my sake, for my glory, or to do any thing really pleasing unto me? Or the word צוֹרֵרִי may be supposed to be understood after אָנֹכִי, *Did I command any such fast as this unto you?* who bid you fast on this fashion? When you eat and drink, verse 6, did not you eat? i. e. upon your own pleasure, or did you any thing but eat and drink? Just such a thing is your fasting. I am no more pleased with it than with your eating and drinking. It is indifferent unto me, if barely considered, whether you fast or not. If you had kept no such days, you pleased me as well, unless you had kept them better. This is the sum of these words. The fast which they observed was but as the exercise of any ordinary day: if they had taken their repast, followed their calling, anointed their heads, done as they used at other times, they had found as much acceptance with God, and equally given him content, who looked for other kind of fasting, as the prophet tells us in the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses of this chapter.

The words then are a sharp expostulation with them about their hypocritical fasting, or a tart answer to their scruple or doubt (wherein they were very pious and of a tender conscience, whether they should cease to fast or no. And in them these things are obvious to be noted.

1. The parties to whom the answer is directed, to the priests and the people of the land; which was either because that both of them were guilty, or that both of them came with this inquiry; the people seeking to the priests, and they, not being able to resolve them, coming with the people to the prophet, as the manner was in difficult cases.

2. The matter of the answer; wherein there is, 1. A concession that indeed they had fasted many years, and yet, 2. An absolute denial that they had observed any true fast all this time, which being propounded to them by way of question and appeal to their own consciences, making them judges in their own cases, doth put the answer out of all doubt, and leaves it as a matter clear, evident, and without any the least contradiction true, that they had not fasted at all. Do you yourselves now tell me, (saith the prophet,) in your sober thoughts, whether you can think that not eating, weeping, howling, &c., is God's fast. No, you have been told often enough of this: are not these words *which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem*

was inhabited and in prosperity, &c., (so these words are best rendered in verse 7, *הֲלֹא אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים*, &c. ;) have not I told your fathers by all my servants while you were in this land before your captivity, that this was not the fast that I have chosen? And yet you their children are in the same mistake, and come confidently to me, and tell me of your performing that which I always upbraided them withal. Methinks your own hearts should reprove you, and spare me a labour of giving you any other answer.

I will speak only to the matter of these words, and endeavour to assert the truth of one or both of these observations.

1. That there is a serious, devout, and laborious humbling of a man's self, which is not the true fasting and humiliation that God will accept of.

2. That if there be not that which is the true, there will be but little difference between the other, and none at all. The second will be a consequent of the first, and therefore in the clearing of that it will sufficiently be spoken unto.

The former lies open enough before our eyes in the text, and he must be very careless that doth not observe this people to have been very contrite in some instances, and to have expressed a great deal of sorrow, much afflicted themselves, and that in so serious a manner, that they thought they had very well pleased God, and could not in conscience leave off these exercises till they knew his mind about it; and yet that they were but idly employed all this time, and had as good have been doing the quite contrary thing. They themselves durst confidently avouch the truth of the first part of what I affirm; and God, he as peremptorily asserts the other, and makes their consciences return as much to themselves, while he saith, *Did you fast unto me, &c.*; though this was not the first time neither that he had told them so, and they might have known so much before; another as convincing a question following upon this verse 7, *Nunquid non sunt verba quæ locutus est Dominus?* &c., (so the vulgar reads them, agreeable to the Hebrew,) 'Are not these the words which the Lord cried by the former prophets,' &c. There is no doubt of it, and I need not go far for proof, for God himself directs us to it if we will but look into the words of all his prophets, which are as so many comments upon the text, and as so many witnesses to the truth of what from it I have undertaken to

make good ; some of which I shall have occasion to call in to attest what I affirm in the sequel of this discourse.

That we may not therefore put a cheat upon ourselves, and think we do God good service upon such a day as this, while we are an abomination to him, and the hated of his soul, because of our hypocrisy, I will show you

I. What is not God's fast which this people did observe. What this humiliation is that God will not accept.

II. What is God's fast which this people did not, but should have observed. Or what more is required to the pleasing God, and being accepted of him.

While I speak of the former of these two, I will not quite exclude all notice of the latter, nor keep it altogether from your view, till this be dispatched ; but shall reflect some light upon it as I am opening of this, and so make fewer words necessary for the clearing of it when my discourse is descended to it ; and get a liberty thereby to crowd into the narrow compass of this hour some material considerations concerning the state of this people, which will conduce very much to the illustrating of the whole business.

I. God's fast is not mere abstinence from food, from either the delicacies or the ordinary refreshments of nature, which this people did most punctually and nicely observe, and also tell us that to the *afflicting of the soul of a man* (by which phrase the great fast is expressed^d) there are four things required beside not tasting any food, viz. *abstaining from*, or laying aside, *their baths, their ointments, their wives, and their shoes*, i. e. every thing that might be a pleasure and delight to their bodies. And these may seem to be included in that phrase ver. 3 of this chapter, *Shall I weep in the fifth month, (הַפֵּיזָר) separating myself as I have done these many years?* But alas ! these severities amounted to a labour about nothing, because, while they would not for a world touch a bit of bread, they drunk in iniquity like water, and were filled with it, even to an excess, and it broke out like a sore disease ; while they pined their body, their lusts, the *body of sin*, was fat and well liking ; while they took down their flesh and made their faces look thin, that which the Scripture calls *flesh* was lusty, strong, pampered, and high fed. Their proud and big thoughts were

^d Leviticus xvi.

not taken down, their inordinate covetous desires were not impaired, their luxurious appetites were not retrenched, nothing that was unreasonable in them was paired off, moderated, or abated. And so their fast was to no more purpose (not being thus designed) than if they had been feeding themselves with more plentiful than ordinary cheer. And if we intend no more to-day than what they performed, we had as good have gone and made a feast, invited our neighbours, and passed away that time merrily which we are now spending only upon a sad ceremony. If we consider the simple act, either of the one or the other of these things, neither of them are good in themselves; but as they are designed by us to certain purposes which are good, so they come to be acts of religion. And fasting then from food is good and profitable,

1. When in respect of the time past it is an act of sorrow and grief, of anger and displeasure against and of revenge upon ourselves, for the abuse of those good things which God hath given us leave to feed upon to our refreshment, but which we have fattened ourselves withal to an excessive fulness and wantonness. When it is an expression of our repentance, and disclaiming of our former courses, an acknowledgment that we deserve nothing at all but to have our daily food taken away from our tables, and not so much as the scraps left behind of that plenteous provision which God blesses us withal.

2. When in respect of the time to come it is an act of mortification, designed to the starving and pining of our lusts, to the cutting off their provision, and withdrawing of their nourishment, to the learning of sobriety and temperate living, to the practising denial of our own appetites, and crossing our own desires. And so it is not a business for a day, or whose efficacy reacheth but till night, but hath a design upon the whole life; wherein we are to abstain as carefully from all excess, yea, from all sin, as we do to-day from all our food. To which that of the father's doth most truly accord, who calls fasting *θανάτου σύμβολον*, 'a symbol of death,' it being that which tends to the destruction of the body, and the taking away its life. It should not only signify that we are dying to all earthly things, but should be an instrument of death to take away the life of our lusts; and when it is so used as not to be a whetstone to sharpen our stomachs against the next meal,

but to be a knife, to cut and lash off all the immoderation of our appetites; and, in general, to wound and kill our sins, it is a thing acceptable to God, and hugely serviceable to our souls. But let us here note two things: first, it is to be used not only to the mortifying of some, but of all our lusts and carnal affections. We must withdraw the food of our appetites after vain glory, and the praise of men, riches, and great honours in the world. We must make it an instrument to dull and blunt the edge of all our inordinate longings, and to the fixing such deadening considerations in us as may take us quite off from pleasing ourselves. So Clemens Alexandrinus observes that a Christian knows very well the secret meaning and enigmatical sense of fasting upon the fourth and sixth days of the week, which are called by the names of Mercury and Venus, viz. Wednesday and Friday^e: *αὐτίκα νηστεύει κατὰ τὸν βίον φιλαργυρίας τε ὁμοῦ καὶ φιληδονίας*, ‘he thereupon learns to fast through his whole life from covetousness and voluptuousness.’ The choice of those days was to give him a secret document and remembrance that he should pine, and waste away his covetous and voluptuous desires, from whence spring all manner of evil. “And a Christian,” saith he, “fasts not only according to the law, *ἀπὸ τῶν πράξεων τῶν φαύλων*, ‘from all evil actions,’ but according to the perfection of the gospel, *ἀπὸ τῶν ἐννοίων τῶν πονηρῶν*, ‘from all wicked thoughts and imaginations.’ These days give him notice what he is to do in every day of his life, and the gospel fast is so strict that it will not let an evil thought or affection have its daily food, though they never grow so strong as to beget any evil actions, but subtracts their nourishment, and intends their mortification, putting the soul upon cutting off all those luxuriances and worldly adherencies which nobody observes. Secondly, it must be observed also to the learning our appetites to feed upon spiritual things, upon God and all his holy truths. When the soul is at liberty from its attendance upon the necessities of the body, it should stir up its own hunger, and satisfy itself with its proper nutriment, and labour so to taste and relish its sweetness, that ever after it may have a longing for it, and observe set times for its own repast. And so the body’s fast should be the soul’s

^e Strom. lib. vii. [cap. 12. p. 877.]

festival, wherein it not only relieves and refreshes itself for that present, but affects its palate also with such a delicious savour of God's holy commands, that they seem sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb, and make the soul break for the longing that it hath unto those judgments at all times.

3. When in respect of the time present, it is a help to self-examination, prayer, and holy meditation, by freeing the mind from clouds and obscure vapours, and setting it at liberty from bodily mixtures and interposals, that it may altogether attend upon its own business. *Κενοί τῆς ὑλῆς τὴν ψυχὴν ἢ νηστεία, καὶ καθαρὰν καὶ κουφήν σὺν τῷ σώματι παρίστησι τοῖς θείοις λόγοις,* saith the forementioned Clemens (*in Eclog.*^f); 'fasting voids and discharges the soul of that matter which clogs its spirits, and makes it pure, light, and cheerful, together with the body, in heavenly employments.' We cannot at the same time eat and drink, and taste pleasant things, *καὶ πρὸς τοῖς ἀύλοις εἶναι,* and be conversant with things separate from all matter, and that are within the knowledge only of the mind, as a philosopher could determine. (*Porphyr. lib. 1. περὶ ἀποχ.*^g) And therefore it may be to very good purpose to abstain from our daily food, that thereby our souls being lightened and exonerated of that dull heavy matter which oppresses them, they may more freely and clearly mind their own proper objects which are perfectly spiritual. When there is this universal intendment in our fasting, it becomes of excellent use and singular advantage unto us; but when we understand no more by it than the Pharisees did, who fasted indeed twice every week, but were still full of covetousness, rapine, and excess; we shall be loathsome things with all this religion unto God. For this is not the fast which God hath chosen, to pinch and use our bodies unkindly for a day.

II. It is not weeping, wailing, and making lamentation added to our fasting, though this be done with a great deal of sadness, and doleful complaints, as the word *סָפַד* in the text gives us to understand. Their *planctus* used to be with howling, beating of their heads, or knocking of their breasts, and sometimes tearing of their hair, with such like expressions of inward grief. Now they ask the question, verse 3, *הֲאֵבָבָה,*

^f [Cap. 14. p. 992.]

^g [§ 41. p. 34.]

Shall I weep? God answers here in the text, To what purpose is your weeping? yet when you make a pitiful moan, a lamentable deal of do, most bitter complaints, beside your weeping, it was nothing unto me. For that word in the third verse is altered here into רָעַד, *weeping* is changed into *mourning*; God grants more than they spoke of, and saith, *When you fasted and wept with wailing and lamentation, &c., you did it not unto me.* And there was a little in all the appendices of this weeping which here we may conceive not to have been excluded, viz. rending of the garments, putting on of sackcloth, strowing ashes on their heads, lying upon the ground, (a thing in fashion among the heathens themselves, as Plutarch tells us of the Athenian women, *νηστεύουσιν ἐν Θεσμοφορλοῖς χαμαὶ καθήμεναι*.) sitting in silence, and hanging down their heads, &c. (*L. de Isid. et Osir.*^h) For alas! the deep and hearty sorrow for sin, the mourning of their souls after God, the rending and tearing of their hearts, the doffing off all the fine gay clothing wherein their souls secretly prided themselves, the uncasing and stripping of their souls of all their coverings, wherein they hid and kept warm many beloved sins, the laying close some grating considerations to their hearts, the pouring such shame and reproach upon themselves, that they should never look God in the face with any confidence, till they were peremptorily resolved (against all impediments) to be better: these things, I say, they were mere strangers unto, and therefore the prophet cries out, *Is this the fast that I have chosen, to bow down his head as a bulrush, &c.? Wilt thou call this a fast and an acceptable day to the Lordⁱ? &c. No, rend your hearts, and not your garments,* saith the prophet Joel, *turn unto the Lord with fasting, weeping, and mourning.* Then tears are good, when they are the companions of a relenting and a returning heart, when they run out of a soul that is running towards God. *All the house of Israel lamented after the Lord, and Samuel spake unto them saying, If you return unto the Lord with all your heart, then put away the strange gods...and prepare your hearts to the Lord, and serve him only; and he will deliver you^k:* i. e. If you be in good earnest, let us see something beside your weeping and lamentation,

^h [P. 378.]ⁱ Isa. lviii. 4, 5.^k 1 Sam. vii. 2, 3.

and if these be the outward expressions of the inward relenting of your hearts, then put away all those displeasing things that have created you so much mischief, and cost you now so many tears, &c. This people here in the text might mourn and weep, if it had but been to think of the great calamities that had befallen them, the ruin of their city, the burning of their temple, the captivity of their nation, the pouring out their blood like water, and sundry doleful circumstances in all these, which might make them wish, with Jeremiah, that *their head was waters, and their eyes fountains of tears, that they might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of their people*¹. But what is all this to a sense of sin and a groaning under the intolerable burden of their iniquity? To what purpose are all these tears, if inward anguish and grief for sin do not give them all their acrimony and smartness, if they wash and cleanse not the soul from its filth and nastiness? Or suppose there was some present sense of sin which expressed these briny tears; alas! they were but like a sudden dash of rain, which is soon passed over, and then all is clear again. At the next meeting they entertained their sins with as great a friendship and familiarity as if there had been never any falling out, nor any unkindnesses past between them. Such are the tears of many a one that cozens himself into a conceit that he is a penitent; they are the issue of a natural tenderness, or the product of some sharp affliction, or the overflow of some sudden passion, which are but like to those which flow from the eyes of a young man, who, being in love with one hugely below him, and therefore chidden by his father, weeps like a little child, and seems as though he would drown himself in the flood of his tears, but upon the very next sight is as hot in his love and as eager in his pursuit, as though there had been no such cooler. Tears are no further liked of God, than as they are expressions of a serious inward grief and sorrow, and then only are they expected from us, when we use to weep in other cases of sadness, and upon doleful accidents. If that be our temper, to weep bitterly when some mournful object presents itself to us wherein we are concerned, it is a sad sign to see our eyes dry when the deplorable condition of our souls do lie

¹ Jer. ix. 1.

before us ; but if our sorrow use to express itself some other way in such cases, then that is all the outward token that God requires in this. Yet let it be what it will, God will not accept of it unless it amount to a great displeasure against ourselves, base thoughts of ourselves, that have committed such acts, a huge trouble in our mind for what is past, hearty wishes all were undone, sense of our obnoxiousness to God's judgments, fear of his displeasure, humble and earnest requests to be received into his favour ; which last thing, if it be true, is inconsistent with our remaining in a state of sin : and therefore this sorrow goes a great deal further, and includes in it a hatred of sin, a resolution never more to have to do with it, a choosing rather to die than willingly attempt such another act ; an actual declining of it, a setting ourselves to resist the next temptation, a placing of a watch over ourselves, and in every thing such a temper as cannot be quiet in the condition it is, but must be better. If we find not ourselves in this posture, there is not so much as the beginning of that work in us which God looks for, when *we fast, and mourn, and seek unto him*, viz. of that thorough reformation without which we do not fast unto him.

III. Large confessions of our sins, and prayers to God for the pardon of them, and turning away of his wrath, will not make the fast of God.

1. Not large confessions of sin, which were usual upon days of fasting, as appears from Nehemiah ix. and sundry other places, and perhaps were not wanting in those fasts which my text speaks of. They brought, it is most likely, before God long catalogues of their own sins, and of the provocations of their forefathers, of their kings, princes, prophets, and priests, and they might condemn themselves, and acknowledge the righteous judgments of God ; and yet all this was nothing but their hypocritical dealing with God, while they were in love with those sins which they did so earnestly confess, and were not in a state of irreconciliation to those iniquities which they cried out so vehemently against. This kind of devotion was far from finding any kind entertainment with God, and was rather like to meet with a frown and this angry sentence, *Out of your own mouth shall you be condemned, and perish, you yourselves being judges*. This confession signifies nothing more (if any thing at all) but that men desire that they may do still

as they were wont to do, and that the acknowledgments of their faults may procure leave to practise the same again with no greater trouble, but only to make a new acknowledgment: it speaks only that they are sinners, and that they desire they may so still be, and they will not stick to make an open confession of it. Yea, whatsoever men may mean by it, this confession signifies nothing at all unto God; for the sins that men rehearse are known unto God before, and are all present before him: if that be all they have to say, viz. that they are sinners, and have committed such and such acts against God, they may as well let their tongues be quiet, there is nothing new in all this. Then confession is significant, when it is an act of shame and reproach to ourselves, an act of grief and hatred, a disavowing and disclaiming such practices. Now we say something unto God; this is a new business, and the case is quite altered; there is forgiveness with God for such persons, Prov. xxviii. 13, 1 John i. 7, and what Solomon prays for in the behalf of such supplicants, 1 Kings viii. 47, 48, God himself promiseth unto them, 2 Chron. vii. 14. True confession signifies that we are ashamed, that we have nothing to say for ourselves, that we cannot but cry out against our own baseness and falseness to God; that we would rather not be, than do one such vile act again; that we are grieved and pained at the very heart, and cannot but vent ourselves in sighs and groans, that we cannot with patience think upon ourselves, and cannot hold from proclaiming our own guiltiness, that we remember nothing with so much sadness as that we have been sinners, and that we resolve by God's assistance, and our utmost endeavours, to be better, may we but be pardoned such offences. God loves such a pungent sorrow as pricks to the very heart, and gives a deadly wound to our sins, such a grief as strikes through the very life of our lusts, and nails them to the cross. He loves, when we look upon him whom we have pierced, and mourn bitterly; so that our hearts are struck through with an incurable wound to the flesh, and all the affections and desires thereof; and he loves such a confession as expresses this sorrow, this pain, and this torment of our hearts, which will be mixed with a vehement displeasure and hatred, both against ourselves and our sins; and then he willingly embraces us. This is part of the *fast which he hath chosen*; but whatsoever

volumes we bring in against ourselves without this, they are but hypocritical talk before God, and will not avail us; yea, will harm us, because we lie under this dangerous deceit, that some one good action will commend us to God without all the rest; and so even our seriousness in some one thing will be our undoing, and keep us from the practice of all other necessary duties.

2. As for prayer, it is plain the Jews neglected not that in their fasts, but it was commonly to no other purpose but that God would pardon them, turn again unto them, and save them from the hands of their enemies, while they thought not of turning unto him and putting all his enemies out of their souls; and therefore he tells them that which I assert as the second branch of this particular, *that this is not the fast which he hath chosen, to cause their voice to be heard on high, viz. either in mournful howlings or in clamorous petitions^a: and that when they fast, he will not hear their cry^b, &c. For he that turns away his ear from hearing of the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination^c. If men will not hear God, he will not hear them*: I had almost said he cannot give ear to them, there being some things that either in themselves, or in the method of God's proceedings in the government of the world, are altogether inconsistent with the blessings which we desire, or are the causes of those evils which we groan under; and therefore unless we heartily renounce to all those things and thoroughly discharge them, our prayers for mercies, and for removal of miseries, are a piece of nonsense, incoherent, ignorant stuff, which will be thrown as dung in our faces.

When men bear a love to those sins which they pray may not ruin them, and the evil consequence of which they desire may be prevented or remedied, they are as ridiculous and unsuccessful as if a man should beg health while he continues in his riotous and intemperate course of living. Let a man raise his confidence by what arts he please, and speak with a boldness in his prayers as though he could command heaven and have what he would of God; yet he cannot have any true faith that he shall be heard, unless he utterly abandon in heart and resolution whatsoever is incompatible, and cannot

^a Isa. lviii. 4.

^b Jer. xiv. 12.

^c Prov. xxviii. 9.

stand with the things that he desires. We may call our fasts by the name of days of prayer, (as we commonly do,) but though we should pray from morning until night, though the whole nation should cry to God that he would bow the heavens and come to save us, and that with a voice that would rend the clouds and seem to make way for him to come down to us; yet if we be in love with the causes of our trouble, we have put in such a strong *caveat*, such a bar to our suits and petitions in the court of heaven, that we can have no audience. Yea further, though we should be distasted against our sins, though we should resolve amendment, and therefore beg divine grace to destroy our iniquities, yet this will not complete God's fast; neither if we resolve to be at no trouble nor pains about this business, but leave all to the care of God, whom we would have so far to concern himself in our business as not to expect that we should be such creatures as he made us. Such prayers will have a perfect likeness to the requests of the man in the fable to Hercules, when his cart stuck in the mire, who would neither prick forward the oxen nor lay his own shoulders to the wheels, but cast all upon the strength of his God, expecting that he should come and draw them out; and such an answer will be most fitly returned to such petitions as was to him,

*O bone, disce pigeris non flecti numina votis,
Præsentisque adhibe, quum facis ipse, deos^d.*

‘Learn, good sir, that God is not moved by lazy desires and sluggish wishes, and that thou shalt then find God present when thou thyself art busy about thy work.’

I may add further, that the case may so be, that though there be some good men in a nation that do most seriously and heartily pray for it, they may not be able to help them, and that not be the fast of God; unto which truth I might call in the testimony of the prophet Jeremiah, in chap. xi. 14, and xiv. 11, where God bids him *not pray for that people, &c.*, and Lam. iii. 8, 44, where he saith, that *when he did cry and shout, God shut out his prayers, and covered himself with a cloud, that their prayer could not pass through.*

The like testimony Ezekiel would afford us, who tells us

^d [Avian. fab. 32. Compare vol. v. p. 38.]

more than once, chap. xiv., that in some cases three such prevalent persons as Noah, Job, and Daniel, shall obtain no more than their own security.

And I might have all their suffrages to this, that sometimes nothing less than an universal reformation (in the great officers, magistrates, and governors especially) will procure God's favour : but I have already stayed so long upon this head, that the time calls me to hasten to a conclusion of it. Then therefore prayers are to good purpose for ourselves or the nation, when we or the nation come to God with a holy disposition of heart to forsake our sins, and with a readiness of heart to make use of that divine grace which we beg at his hands, with a resolution to do that ourselves which we desire God should do for us ; when they are instruments to piety and godliness, and put our hearts into such a holy frame, that even by our actions we may pray and pull down the blessings of heaven upon us.

For as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks of a spiritual heavenly person, *Εὐχὴ μὲν αὐτῷ ὁ βίος ἅπας, καὶ ὁμιλία πρὸς θεόν^e*, ' his whole life is a prayer to God, and a familiar converse with him.' He prays all day long in some sort, viz. as to the effect and issue of prayer ; the holiness of his life, speaking powerfully and effectually in his behalf to God, if not more prevalently, because it is the use and the improvement of that grace which we have received, and so directly entitles us to the blessings that are in that promise, *To him that hath shall be given.*

But yet we must take notice of this, that when we pray thus to the reforming and amending of our hearts and lives, the blessings we are most confidently to expect are those of a spiritual and eternal nature ; such as are forgiveness of sin, acceptance with God to life : and that we cannot be certain sometimes that by all our reformation we shall avert temporal judgments upon our own persons or our nation.

And so I am ascended one step higher than I was before. Perhaps the decree may be irrevocably gone forth, the ruin of a people or person may be absolutely determined, or at least some very sharp punishment without any possibility of rever-

^e [Strom. lib. vii. cap. 12. p. 875.]

sing the sentence may be resolved upon; and though the sin may be forgiven to some (and those the chiefest) purposes, yet not unto all. *Who can tell whether God will return and repent?* was all that could be said in the Ninivites' case. And in the case of Jerusalem, it was at last decreed that their city and temple should be destroyed, without any hopes of prevention of such a calamity, though they had space given them to repent in, that their souls might find mercy with God. And this is our satisfaction, that when we fast and pray aright we shall partake of the principal benefits that attend upon them, though not always of all the fruits and blessings which have thereby been procured.

4. I might add, that to be good a while after we have fasted, confessed our sins, and prayed, is not the fast of God which will quite turn away his wrath from us. That which God expects is an eternal divorce between us and our sins, and that we seek him with our whole heart, so as to continue in well-doing; else with our return again to folly, the stripes which are for the back of fools will return also. And commonly the case is more dangerous, and the disease harder to cure, when we do relapse after we were well recovered. The holy story is so clear in this, that he must be much unacquainted with the condition of these people in all those times that doth not see it, and therefore knowing every one can furnish himself with proofs enough, if he do but read any one book of their history, I shall herein spare my further labour.

5. And lastly, though all this be done out of conscience, and we would not for any good omit these performances, but in the honesty of our heart observe days of fasting, times of confession, and constant prayer, and have very pious intentions in the business, yet it will not make up the fast which God requires. Such was the temper of this people, as I noted in the beginning of this discourse. They were scrupulous in their consciences, very loath to displease God by neglecting good duties; but alas! poor souls, this was the hypocrisy which the Scripture so much speaks of; the finer sort of hypocrisy, I say, that carries so many to hell in a pleasing belief that they are going to heaven, while they are serious and zealous in some things, but not in all. They fasted severely, they mourned very bitterly, knocked their breasts very heartily, confessed

very devoutly, and prayed very earnestly : but yet they did not *search and try their ways, to turn again unto the Lord*, they did not every one *put away the evil of their doings* ; and so all their zeal in the former things, instead of doing them good, wrought their greater mischief, by making them confidently to account themselves religious persons, and to be angry with the prophets who would persuade them to the contrary.

The prophet Isaiah will fully inform us how God valued their diligence and forwardness in such services. *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices ? I am full of burnt-offerings, &c.* (I even nauseate the plenty of these devotions.) *When you come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands ? &c.* *The sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with : it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting : your new moons, &c. are a trouble to me ; I am weary to bear them, &c.*^f This is worse than all the rest, that men can see so much reason to do all these things, and yet will see no reason to be good ; that they will have God to be pleased with what pleases them, and give no great distaste to their natures, but will not part with any thing that they dearly love, though it be the greatest offence to him.

It were well now if every one would examine his own heart, and give himself an account, whether he have done thus much as the people of the Jews here mentioned did, and then whether he have done any more. There are not many, it is like, that have thus fasted, and wept, and prayed ; but I doubt they are rarely to be found (one perhaps of a thousand) that make a conscience not to sin, and to keep a fast every day to God by the constant practice of mortification and holy living.

I leave it to the private scrutiny of every man's conscience, to find whether or no he be in the number of those that observe the fast of God ; and I think I have said enough to let him know the state of his soul, if he will impartially ransack his heart, and have no mind to cozen himself. If it be necessary further to assist him, the explication of the second truth which I proposed to be considered will, I hope, contribute

^f Isaiah i. 11-13, &c.

some further help to his sincere search, both into his own condition, and of the whole nation, unto which I shall now betake myself, and show,

II. What the true fast of God is which this people did not, but should have observed; and so what is further required to the rendering us acceptable to God. This hath been so much touched upon in the former argument, that less remains now due to the unfolding of it, except it be what most particularly belongs to the opening of this portion of Scripture, and the laying before us the condition of this people; which may be applicable unto us, as far as we are parallel unto them, in which our own observation will best inform us.

God's fast then is, as you cannot but already acknowledge, a thorough amending of our ways and doings; and commonly it is a general, universal reformation, if it be a general good for which God is solicited by us; to which I may add, especially in the rulers, governors, and leaders of the people, who have a manifest influence upon all the rest, whose fashion ordinarily they will be in, and whose sins therefore are sometimes alone named in holy writ, as procuring God's judgments, because by their neglect and ill example the rest run more pronely into all wickedness.

Now because there is but a little time more remaining which I can hope your patience will allow me, I shall address myself to treat particularly of that which God required of this people, who came to be enforced by him in relation to their fasting: and we may bring it home to our own condition, according as we shall find just cause and reason so to do.

God, you have heard, upbraids them here in the text with their hypocritical, partial fasting, and therefore proceeds in the 9th and 10th verses to acquaint them what fast it was that he always called for and expected; which he doth again in chap. viii. 16, 17, which places I desire you will take the pains to consult.

And then I doubt not but you will see reason for this observation, that the sins they were chiefly guilty of more than others were neglects of the duties of the second table, (as we speak,) not performing of those offices which one man owes unto another, but violent breaking all those bonds whereby men are tied by God together; and therefore that these things

were carefully to be reformed by their fasting and prayer. They may be reduced to these three heads :

1. Unjust dealing and defrauding one another, by lying, false swearing, devising to overreach and ruin their brethren. *Speak every man the truth to his neighbour, execute the judgment of truth, imagine not evil, love not a false oath &c.*

2. Want of mercy and compassion, cruelty, hard, and rigid dealing with their neighbours ; and this is as bad as downright injustice : chap. vii. 9, *Show mercy, &c.*

3. Oppression of the poor, and those that could not right themselves against the mighty : chap. vii. 10, *Oppress not the widow, &c.*

And this was chiefly the fault of the great ones, of the rich, the rulers and governors.

Concerning all these and such like sins we must further observe, that they were the iniquities of their forefathers ; and so hard it seems it was to cure these distempers, (either because they are so dearly beloved, or else so little regarded, while men have a conceit of their purity in religion,) that these persons, their children, remain guilty of the very same faults.

God here tells them what words he had spoken to their fathers by the prophets of old, (as I have noted before,) verse 7, who for these, together with two other sins, viz. sabbath breaking and idolatry, were turned out of the promised land : there are indeed other sins mentioned by the prophets, but none so much insisted upon as these, to be the cause of their expulsion out of the good land, and banishment into a strange country, as you shall discern before I have gone much further.

Now it seems that their posterity (these men in the captivity) was grown more observant of the sabbath, and greater haters of idolatry, and because of their religious services which were more pure, took themselves for very good men, though they retained their fathers' injustice and fraud, cruelty, and unmercifulness, oppression and violent dealing. Which was plainly the case of the Pharisees (the posterity of these persons) in our Saviour's time, before this their last and long captivity ; they were notoriously guilty of these sins more than of any

other, while they could not be challengèd with any idolatrous practices, or with neglect of the sabbath day, no, nor with less strictness in any other religious performances. Under their religion they cloaked their unrighteousness, and made all their piety good for nothing, being stained with covetousness, oppression of the widows, and those that had no helpers, with such like wickedness.

From all which we may be bold to affirm still, that God proceeds in such a manner with nations, that where these sins do remain, it is in vain to fast, and pray, and cry to God for mercy, yea, to reform in other matters which concern God's worship and service, about which commonly most of the noise is made, out of hopes that their prayers, and their preaching, and other religious offices, together with the asserting of these from superstition and impurities, will drown the cry of injustice, cruelty, blood, oppression, and such like sins. Of the which that we may be the more sensible, I shall digest what remains into these particular considerations, and make appear,

1. That this of old was the fast which God required of their fathers by the prophets, viz. that they should forsake these sins which I have mentioned. And that he everywhere urges, even in the most reforming times, their growing more just, merciful, &c. in their dealings, and their practising those duties which arise from the respect that one man hath to another.

2. That after their return from the captivity of Babylon, still these things more than any else are insisted upon as those they were deficient in and should amend.

3. That these are noted as the wasting and destroying sins, though there should be no other.

4. That where men expect peace, settlement, quiet, and removal of judgments in a nation, they must have an especial care to reform in these particulars. And above other things these are to be minded in our humiliation, because commonly in these, nations are most guilty, and men are apt to imagine that some religious duties are the great matters that God expects.

1. That these of old were the things the prophets insisted upon, is the first thing to be cleared. And the prophet Isaiah

offers himself a witness in the very first chapter of his vision, where he finds no fault for their idolatry, nor questions the legality of their sacrifices, nor charges them with praying to strange gods, nor blames for withholding his due oblations from him; no, on the contrary, he acknowledges *a multitude of sacrifices*, that he was *full of burnt offerings*, that they *observed their appointed feasts and solemn meetings*, and *made many prayers*: but he tells them, ver. 15, that he *could not endure to look upon them when they spread their hands towards heaven, because those hands were full of blood*; and therefore the thing he calls for is, that *they would wash and cleanse their hands of that blood which had besmeared them, that they would put away their injustice, oppression, unmercifulness, &c.*: and then *if they came and prayed he would speak friendly to them, and have a parley with them, and do away those bloody crimson sins, and restore them by their repentance and amendment to a snow-like whiteness, as if they had been as innocent as lambs, and not so ravenous as lions*. Read ver. 16, 17, 18, and observe to whom it is that he speaks, viz. to the rulers first (who were like Sodom), and then to the people (who were not far distant from them in this wickedness, being like to Gomorrah), ver. 9. I say, of the rulers first, who had the deepest share in this guilt, and were the ringleaders in these sins, as will appear to him that shall but cast his eye upon ver. 21, 22, 23, 26. I will not yet dismiss this witness, who speaks so fully and closely to the business. Be pleased seriously to read chap. lviii. ver. 4, 6, 7, and then tell me what fast it was that God called for in those times.

And likewise those woes against them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed to *turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor, &c.* chap. x. 1, 2, xxx. 12, 13, and then tell me what sins they were much guilty of.

He that will take the pains duly to consider these places will find so many other bordering upon them to the same purpose, that he will be more sensible of the truth of that which I affirm; and I shall have occasion to call in the assistance of many of them before I conclude.

I shall next desire you to hear what the prophet Micah

informs us concerning this matter, who lived in the same time with Isaiah ; and methinks he speaks still more plainly, (if it be possible so to do,) crying out against these sins more than against others, especially in their rulers. The woes in chap. ii. 1, 2, (which I beseech you read) are against those who, because they had power in their hands, contrived how to greaten themselves, though with the ruin of others ; and if they saw but a fair field or a house which they had a mind unto, would by violence take it away, though it was the man's inheritance, and tended to his undoing. And in chap. iii. 1, 2, 3, he speaks of most cruel and butcherly actions, the slaying and peeling of the people to the very bones ; yea, and after one would think that they had brought them low enough, yet they would have no pity upon these poor skeletons, but broke their very bones and chopped them in pieces, as one doth when he puts flesh in the pot ; i. e. they *utterly devoured them and eat them up* : and it is observable that at the very same time they *built up Zion and Jerusalem with this blood*, ver. 9, 10, 11, i. e. they *beautified the temple*, and repaired or enlarged the city, and were reformers of things amiss or decayed in God's worship, at the cost and charges of many a poor innocent that they had rent in pieces and shared amongst them. What is all this but that which the prophet Isaiah told us, chap. i. 10, 21, 23, and again, chap. iii. 13, 14, 15, where he reproves the elders and great ones for their *beating his people to pieces, and grinding the faces of the poor*, for which he was come to call them to a reckoning, ver. 13 ? The rulers then being so bad, there is little reason to expect much justice or mercy among the people, who also oppressed and offered violence one to another as far as their power would reach : for proof of which spare not to read Micah vi. 10, 11, 12, and likewise the six first verses of the seventh chapter, which tells us largely of the general cruelty, covetousness, treachery, &c. both of the princes and all the people, though never so nearly related one to another ; so that it was as hard to find a merciful and a just man, as to find a bunch of grapes after the vintage. And therefore in the sixth chapter, ver. 6, &c. God by the same prophet calls not for their sacrifices and religious services, (which it seems they were frank enough in, and could have been content to have

been at any expense about, so they might but quietly keep their covetous, griping, and devouring lusts and desires,) but *to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.*

If we draw nearer to the time of the first captivity into Babylon, we shall hear no new sermons, but the very same sins still reprov'd and laid before them to be repented of. Zephaniah will be our informer in this matter, who lived in the days of Josiah, who was a reformer, and with whom it is plain the princes joined, (though we may guess from chap. i. 4, 5, that many of the people did not affect their proceedings,) to purge the land from idolatry. And yet read but the five first verses of the third chapter, and you will easily discern what still was lacking, and how easily they would part with any thing (even their idols) rather than these sins of which I am speaking. And therefore the prophet exhorts those that had any of these rare virtues in them, any mercifulness and righteousness, that they would go on to practise them, and in these ways to seek the Lord; and saith, it is probable (but not certain) they may be secured in that deluge of misery that was like to overflow the whole land, chap. ii. 3. And afterward he prophesies that they should be the *poor* and the *afflicted*, (those that had been oppressed and stripped naked by the great and the rich,) who should escape and be left in the land, when all those men's possessions were taken from them; and that they should be such a remnant as *should not do iniquity, nor speak lies, nor have a deceitful tongue in their mouth*, but shall trust in God, and not in these evil arts, chap. iii. 12, 13. Jeremiah also, who prophesied in the days of the same Josiah, and also of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, in the time of both the first and second captivity into Babylon, and also after, he, I say, speaks the very same words, as will be very plain to those who will do themselves so much right for the understanding of this truth as to consult chap. vii. 4, 5, 6, 7; where though, ver. 9, he speak of their *offering incense to Baal*, yet, I suppose, it was the sin only of some of them, who also came into the house of God in this time of reformation by Josiah, and worshipp'd him, though privately it should seem they had an altar for Baal: and he speaks not half so much of this idolatry as of these other sins; complaining again, ver. 11, that *his house was a den of robbers*, a mere

nest of thieves, where a crew of oppressors met together thinking to expiate all by their devotions: and chap. ix., from the second verse to the ninth, he bewails these sins, and these alone, with a sad and compassionate heart, they being the very sins that undid them, as he notes ver. 6, (*through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord,*) and as I shall ere long come to demonstrate.

Ezekiel likewise will witness largely to this truth, who tells us how little they were amended after the first captivity in the days of Jehoiakim, (when he prophesied, as appears from chap. i. 1, 2,) while he lets us know who the persons were that God would account righteous, and that should live, and who the wicked persons were that should be destroyed, chap. xviii. from verse 3 to 19, and chap. xxxiii. 14, 15, 25, 26; where, though he mention their idolatry, yet he enlarges far more upon these other sins and the contrary virtues, and notes it as remarkable in them, chap. xxxiii. 26, that they *stood upon their sword*, i. e. did commit violence and oppression, of which the sword was the instrument, and by which they thought to defend and protect themselves in such practices: and this they did even after they saw God's judgments upon part of their nation not above twelve years before, and the Chaldeans were just now ready to take their city again and destroy them utterly, as we may note from verse 21. These things they were so settled in, that it seems they made but a mock of those that came to reprove them, and to threaten God's judgments; and did but laugh when the prophets said that *for these sins they should be destroyed*, and sodden in their city like *flesh in a pot*, (as they themselves phrased it in a jeering way against them that would talk of such an unlikely thing,) chap. xi. 3. And therefore the prophet applies it to another purpose, and then gives them leave what to think of this threatening, telling them that they had multiplied their slain in that city and filled the streets with them, and he was sure that those slain might well be compared to flesh, and their city to the caldron where it had soaked and been sodden in its own blood; and that their saying did better set forth their own wickedness than their punishment, which they would not believe should come; for because of their bloodiness they should be slain, not in the city, (where then they hoped for

security,) but in the border of the land of Israel, whither they fled, hoping that way to save themselves when the city was taken, ver. 6, 7, 10, 11.

I should be too tedious, should I let you hear all that may be said in this argument, and lead you also to the ten tribes, and show you how guilty they were in these matters, and how the prophets threaten them as well as Judah, (to which I refer you to the prophet Micah, whose vision was concerning Samaria and Jerusalem, chap. i. 1, and the prophet Amos, whose vision was chiefly concerning Israel, and saw what was coming upon the kine of Bashan, who did oppress the poor and crush the needy, chap. iv. 1;) and therefore I will only observe three things, which it will be useful to take into our consideration, and will more illustrate all this discourse, and so pass to the second thing which I propounded to be spoken unto.

1. We cannot but take notice from what hath been said, that even when they were reformed in their divine worship and service, when idolatry and superstition were cast out of the church, yet these great abuses, these crying sins remained among them.

The temple was purged, the Levites were sanctified, sacrifices according to the law offered, the passover celebrated in such a manner that scarce ever was the like seen from its first institution, the brazen serpent was broken; and all this by the consent of the princes and rulers, who yet continued thus unjust, cruel, and devouring, as both Isaiah and Micah (who lived in Hezekiah's time) and Zephaniah (who lived in Josiah's) have informed us very largely. Do but consult 2 Chron. xxix. 30, and you will find that Hezekiah the king and the princes ordered the worship of God, and chap. xxxv., where you will behold the princes in Josiah's time giving at the passover an offering of two thousand six hundred small cattle and three hundred oxen; when notwithstanding these were the men who like lions and wolves tore the people in pieces, and gnawed the very bones after they had *done with the flesh*, (as Zephaniah hath told us.) making them as bare and poor as ever they could.

2. Herein consisted a main ground of their hypocrisy and deceiving of themselves, and so of their ruin. A man must wink very hard that doth not see the duties of justice and mercifulness, of pity and favourable dealing, &c. written in capital letters

both upon his own heart and in the book of God ; and one would not think it possible that a man should have such strange arts of abusing himself as to make himself believe he is a good man and in a safe condition, while he violates all these known principles.

There must be some notable blind, some very plausible trick that can cast such a mist before his eyes, and juggle him into such a conceited belief which here (I think) we have discovered. They had high thoughts of their divine worship, and looked upon their religious services as hugely pleasing to God, and they knew themselves to be very real, it is like, in this piece of reformation ; and so they thought themselves God's people, the right worship being restored, the altar of God being cleansed, and the temple repaired by their means.

Now their great zeal in these matters, and their forwardness to introduce the true religion, made them overlook these little trifling things of justice and equity, of mercy and compassion, and to hope that God would do so also, and not be angry with such a reformed people. What ! will not God give leave to a people that hate idols, and observe diligently his sabbaths, and offer him his constant sacrifices in the right prescribed manner, to be a little unjust, and to get what they can by any arts for themselves in the world ? Cannot he be pleased that they give him his due, and defraud him of none of his right, though they be not so exact in their justice one to another ? Must he needs take notice what they do among themselves, when they hope he hath no reason to complain that he is in any piece of his worship neglected ?

Will it not satisfy him that they are so zealous in those great and weighty concernments of his, which had been so long disregarded, and for which they had been so often threatened ? Yes surely, thought they, we are in a safe condition, God is well paid, we need not trouble ourselves any further, but confidently wait upon him, that he will be with us and save us. Thus the prophet tells us they found a way to deceive themselves, as you may read, Mic. iii. 11, *The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money : yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us ? none evil can come upon us.* They would needs be God's favourites, and thrust themselves upon

him, and be confident of his goodness to them, though they were conscious of all this wickedness. They cried, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord*, as long as those of Ephesus cried, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*, and in this temple-worship and religion they trusted^m, thinking that God was fixed to that place, and that the temple would secure them, as certainly as the Trojans thought themselves out of all danger while they could keep their *palladium*. They dreamt that as long as they kept their holy place pure, they need not fear the taking of their city; just as the heathens thought their fortresses could never be won while they could keep the good genius of the place from being charmed away from it. They came and stood before God in his house and said, *We are delivered*; and that made them do all those forementioned abominations with the greater boldness, verse 10. Yea, knowing themselves to be zealous in their worship, they have the confidence to come and challenge God, as though they had wrong done them, and had hard measure at his hands in not being saved by him from their enemies. *Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? &c.*ⁿ Do we not seek thee daily? Do we not delight to know thy ways, and take pleasure in approaching to thee? Why then dost thou take no knowledge of us? This, this was the very thing that immediately ruined them; this was it that would not let them see the mischief that was coming upon them for their oppression, violence, and such like sins. They *held fast this deceit*, and so *refused to return*^o. This made them interpret all the instances of God's displeasure against others, to the encouragement of themselves in their wickedness, rather than to the awakening of their hearts to repentance. Ahaz, the predecessor of their good king Hezekiah, was delivered into the hand of the king of Syria, who smote him, and carried a great multitude captive unto Damascus, and into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter, destroying an hundred and twenty thousand valiant men in one day, and carrying captive two hundred thousand men, women, and children, (which indeed were afterwards returned, to see if they would amend^p.) The Edomites also and the Philistines

^m Jer. vii. 4.ⁿ Isaiah lviii. 2, 3.^o Jer. viii. 5.^p 2 Chron. xxviii. 4, 5, 8.

came and laid them waste, and brought them very low. The king of Assyria likewise, who was hired to relieve him, did but more distress and not at all strengthen him⁹.

But they could easily impute all this mischief which befell their fathers unto their idolatry, their offering incense to other gods, and forsaking the God of their fathers^r. As for themselves, they were returned to him, and hated the strange worship with all their hearts, and therefore could be in no such peril of being destroyed, now they amended those very faults for which their fathers were scourged. This justice and righteousness were but the virtues of the heathen that was round about them.

The pure worship of God was that which distinguished them from all others, and would secure them without any of that admired pagan morality.

Well, Israel afterwards is carried captive in the days of Hezekiah by the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xvii.; but the answer was ready, they worshipped the calves in Bethel, the remnant of them laughed the messengers of Hezekiah to scorn, and mocked them who were sent to invite them to join in the reformation, (2 Chron. xxx. 6, &c. ;) and therefore God cast them out of their land, and continued their captivity. But how any such evil should betide those that were the reformed, they could not tell how to imagine; no, they were (as the prophet Zephaniah speaks, chap. iii. 11.) *haughty because of his holy mountain*, they bragged of God's presence with them, and of the care they had to keep his house clean from all heathenish impurities; and by this means flattered themselves into such a conceit of their acceptance with God, and security under him, that even after the captivity of Judah, those in the land of Babylon would not be persuaded that any more was required to the pleasing of God, or that there was any other cause of their expulsion, but the profaning of God's worship. Let the prophet Ezekiel be called in again to bear witness unto this. *They came and sat before him*, as though they took a great deal of delight in hearing God's word, whenas their heart *ran after their covetousness*^s; which words, by the whole story,

⁹ 2 Chron. xxviii. 16-20.

^r Verse 25.

^s Ezek. xxxiii. 31-33.

appear to be spoken to them of the first captivity, yea, after the taking of the city the second time ^t.

And can you think that the Israelites were not helped forward also to their ruin by this deceit? No question but they thought their religion, as bad as it was, would preserve them, and were so confident of it, that with the very spoil of the poor they would serve their gods; they *sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes*, they were *very corrupt in judgment*, and they *lay down upon clothes which they had in pledge by every altar*, and they *drank the wine of the condemned in the house of their god* ^u, i. e. they served God with those things which they had so unjustly and violently gotten, and could be content to spend something upon him, so he would but wink at these unlawful cruel ways of getting. This iniquity would, it is like, have stared them in the face, had it not been for this fine deceit, this hypocrisy which I speak of, that their serving of God and keeping up his worship (such as it was) would be accepted of God instead of all things else wherein they might be faulty.

And how far this piece of self-cozenage prevailed in after times, when the Pharisees were in their greatest height, I leave to those to judge who read but those passages of their making long prayers, fasting twice a week, strict observance of the sabbath, and boasting of God, while they were the most gross transgressors of the law and dishonourers of God.

3. Observe, that this hypocrisy and partial dealing was cherished by the generality of the prophets and priests, who were exceedingly corrupted, and cared for no more but that the worship of God might be maintained, that it might maintain them; that there were a multitude of offerings and sacrifices, whereby their fees might be the more plentiful. They would say any thing to please their rulers, to get their favour, or avert their displeasure; and would preach smooth things, that should never grate upon their conscience, lest they should lose their gain, or diminish their worldly advantages; and would make them believe they were religious and godly enough, though they did all those abominations which I have been speaking of. In Micah iii. 5 the prophet saith, that they *made*

^t Ezek. xxxiii. 21.

^u Amos ii. 6, 8.

God's people to err, and when any one had put any thing into their mouths, then they would cry *Peace*; but if they put nothing into them, then against that man they would at an adventure proclaim war: he must be God's enemy that was not a friend to their belly and purse; and God could do him no harm who would be kind to them. Unto which add what is said verse 11 of the same chapter, and what the prophet Ezekiel charges upon them, chap. xxii. xxv. xxviii. xxix., &c., who tells us there of the defection which both priests, prophets, princes and people had made from God; so that there was not so much as a man to make up the hedge, and to stand in the gap against the wrath of God, which had made a breach upon them; and particularly of the prophets and priests, that they were like ravening lions, had devoured souls, made many widows, daubed with untempered mortar, seen vanity and divined lies. Let me intreat you to read the whole thirteenth chapter, where he tells us how the prophets and prophetesses seduced the people, preaching peace when there was no peace, and strengthening the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life. Jeremiah also, Lament. iv. 13, lets us know that even they were guilty of *shedding the blood of the just*, and loved, it should seem, oppression and cruelty as much as the rest of the nation. They cried up, it is like, the purity of their church, the holiness of their ordinances, the devotion of their rulers, and the forwardness of the people to divine worship; and concluded that God could not destroy such a people as they were, and that the king of Babylon should not come into their city: even unto those that despised the Lord they said, *You shall have peace*, and unto every one that walked after the imagination of his own heart, *No evil shall come upon you*^x. Every one, from the least even unto the greatest, was given unto covetousness; from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealt falsely: for they *healed the daughter of God's people slightly, saying, Peace, when there was no peace*. Were they at all ashamed when they had committed all these abominations? No, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush^y. And what was the reason of this confidence, but that they thought their temple-

^x Jer. xxiii. 17.

^y Jer. viii. 10, 11, 12.

worship made amends for all? *We are wise, say they, and the law of the Lord is with us*^z; which, whether they be the words of the prophets or the people, do signify that they laid the greatest weight of their hopes upon that piece of religion which respects God, though they had no respect at all in their actions towards one another.

I shall not make bold to detain you any longer upon these observables, but leaving them to your private consideration, I come to the second thing to be briefly illustrated, which is this, that

2. These were the very sins which the prophets note this people to have been guilty of, after they were returned out of their captivity, and when any one would have expected an amendment. Very devout they were, for ought that we can read; no complaints are brought in against them for not keeping the sabbath, not praying, fasting, offering sacrifice, &c.: nay, they knew themselves punctual enough in these things, and so slid into the same deceit wherein their fathers were caught and perished. For in the very beginning of this prophecy of Zachariah he cries out, *Turn you, turn you unto me, saith the Lord, be not as your fathers*^a, unto whom the former prophets cried the very same words, &c. And this was when the captivity was expired that he made this proclamation unto them, who, as chap. v. ver. 2, 3 teaches us, were still guilty of robbery and perjury, with such like sins, and yet they said they were innocent; so Junius and Tremel. read those words, verse 3. "This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth, for every one that steals of this people saith, as it, (i. e. as the rest of the earth,) that he is innocent; and whosoever sweareth of this people," as it, saith that he is innocent: they were no more sensible of these sins than heathen people, who knew but little of God, and might more easily forget what was only taught them by themselves.

And therefore he goes on to threaten them for such wickedness, and speaking of the woman, ver. 7, which sat in the midst of the *ephah*, by whom was shadowed that people, he saith, *this is הַרְשָׁעָה, wickedness, iniquity itself, the mother of all deceit, theft, and perjuries.* And afterward most plainly, chap.

^z Jer. viii. 8.

^a Zach. i. 2, 3, 4, &c.

viii., having told them how the case stood with their fathers, he tells them that now he was returned to Zion, ver. 3, and that he would bless them now, as he had cursed them before, ver. 13; but then he saith these are the things that they must do: *Speak ye every man the truth, execute the judgment of truth and peace, &c.*, vers. 16, 17.

If we look back to Haggai, who prophesied but two years before these words in Zach. viii. were spoken, (one being in the second, the other in the fourth year of Darius,) he will tell us no better news of this people, chap. ii. 11—14. Every thing that they did was as bad as those illegal offerings and impure sacrifices; and he seems to intimate that they had not, with a holy mind composed to all obedience, hitherto offered sacrifice to God, and therefore he could not accept them.

Now I think, if we compare this passage with what we before gathered out of Zachary, (who, as I said, was his contemporary,) we shall easily discern what the matter was that God was offended at in their doings.

At the first they neglected the worship of God, and let the temple lie waste, building their own houses before it; and when they were awakened by these prophets to that work, then they thought that all was well, and that there needed no care of any other thing, so the building of the temple were but carried on unto perfection; and thereupon continued in a world of wickedness, making their zeal for temple work eat up all their love to justice and mercy.

If we should trace their footsteps further, we should soon find that when the temple was completed and finished they were but little better. For Malachi, (who is called by them חותם הנביאים, 'the seal of the prophets,' because he was the last, and shuts up all,) complaining of the iniquity both of priest and people, sets down these sins as famous among the rest, *false swearing, oppression of the hireling in his wages, of the widow and fatherless, and turning aside the stranger from his right*^a; which, together with other sins, made way for that long captivity which endures to this day, as those acquaint us upon whom the spirit of prophecy was again poured forth. For Christ coming and reprovng the chief of them, for *de-*

^a Malachi iii. 5.

vouring widows' houses, for extortion, rapine, and blood, for covetousness and oppression, while they made long prayers, and pretended a great deal of sanctity and religion; lie declaring also that *faith, judgment, mercy, and the love of God* were more to be regarded than their strict observance of days and sacrifices, &c.; they, out of a great zeal for their religion, which they thought he did not speak honourably enough concerning, most shamefully put him to death. And I believe they thought themselves very religious persons, and were serious in what they did; only their great and unequally dispensed zeal for these few things made them believe themselves so good as not to see themselves sinners while they committed all manner of wickedness, and easily to slide into the usual hypocrisy, i. e. partiality in obedience.

Their great zeal for those things made them take themselves for pious and devout persons; but the partiality and particularity of it made them really to be such as our Saviour calls *hypocrites*, which appellation they took in such disdain, that they conspired his death, who would not let such as they pass for godly men.

I should be too tedious, should I prosecute this through all the story. This truth shines clear enough without borrowing any more light from other Scriptures, that these have been often the wasting and destroying sins, because commonly not observed in the midst of a blaze of religious duties, which dazzle men's eyes, and make these sins seem either none at all, or very little and contemptible; which leads me unto the third thing which I am to make proof of.

3. That these are sins which pull down ruin and destruction upon a nation, and indeed are oft the chiefest cause of it. The poet never spoke truer word than when he said *Δίκας τείχος ὑψιον*, (that is, as the Scholiast well notes, *ἀσφαλὲς ἰσχυρόν*,) there is scarce such a tall and impregnable bulwark, such a safe defence to a nation, as justice; and then I am sure it is like to be laid waste when there is a breach made in this wall, for oppression, violence, and wrong to enter in: which I have as good as already cleared, while I have brought in the prophets every where crying out upon these sins as the cause of their desolation, and being carried captive out of their own land.

^b Pindar. [Compare vol. v. p. 96.]

But if you desire more particular satisfaction, be pleased to observe,

1. That the captivity of Israel is in a great part charged upon the account of these sins : and take the pains to consult but these two places in a prophet, whose vision was concerning the ten tribes, Amos ii. 6, 7, 8 ; iv. 1, 2, 3.

2. The captivity of Judah, both first and last, is most manifestly ascribed to them, (these being the iniquities which even in their reformation they spared from being destroyed,) and I must again put you to the pains of considering these places (which the time will not give me leave to enlarge upon), Isa. x. 1, 2, 3 ; xxx. 12, 13, 14 ; Micah iii. 12. ; and especially that remarkable one, Jer. xxxiv., where he calls upon them to let the bondmen of the Hebrew nation go free, according to the law ; which because after their promise they refused, and kept them still in their service, see what is threatened, vers. 17, 18, 19, &c. And to this that passage (I am apt to think) relates, which we meet withal in the very beginning of Jeremiah's Lamentations, *Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude*^c.

3. Babylon herself, who destroyed Judah, was destroyed for these sins, (which I note, lest you should think that these things concerned only that particular people, and do not bode so sadly to other nations where they are found). In Isa. x. 5, 6, 7, it is said that God sent the Assyrian against the hypocritical nation that I have been describing, and gave him charge to take the spoil, &c. ; but he thought of nothing but destroying and cutting off nations, and therefore he threatens to *destroy him utterly*, and to *take off his burdens and yokes from his people*, vers. 26, 27. ; and more fully, chap. xiv. 3, 4, 5, 6, he notes *the hard bondage wherewith they made the conquered serve*, and their *oppression*, and *ruling the nations in anger*, as causes of their destruction. To which may be added that most evident place, Isa. xlvii. 5, 6, where plainly he saith, that cruelty and oppression toward those whom she had overcome, brought the lady and mistress of the world down to sit in the dust in perpetual silence and darkness. And take notice that one reason why this mischief was not prevented, and this destruction came upon them while they thought not of it, was

^c Lam. i. 3.

the same with that which we met withal in the case of Judah, viz. the base flattering humour of their soothsayers, the men-pleasing prophecies of her diviners, and those watchmen they had (though pitiful ones they were,) who had told them lies, just as the watchmen of God's people had to them; which the latter part of that chapter doth give us reason to take for a truth.

I will refer you but to one place more, which most largely treats of the Chaldeans' ruin, Habak. ii. from the fifth verse to the eighteenth, which whosoever reads must cast his eyes very carelessly upon it who doth not see that unsatiable covetousness, cruelty, bloodiness, violence, spoiling, and such like sins, are made to have a greater hand than their idols, in *reaching the cup of the Lord's right hand* unto them, and making them so drunken and full gorged that *shameful spewing* should be upon *all their glory*.

How long should I detain you if I should multiply more particulars from Nineveh^e, from Damascus, Gaza, Edom, Ammon, and all the rest mentioned in the first and second chapters of Amos, who were all threatened for their oppression and cruelty to be punished without any mercy?

I will only desire you to consider as you read those chapters whether you can refuse to assent to this as a true observation, that one great destroying (if not the chiefest) sin of those people there mentioned was this, their unmercifulness and cruel dealing with those whom they had conquered and got into their power. I am sure that Edom's four transgressions are so near of kin to this, that we can scarce make them any more than four degrees of this one sin, viz. want of kindness, compassion, and mercy to those whom it was natural for him to pity, especially when he had the better of them. *He did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and kept his wrath for ever*^f.

And I think there is another whole chapter which renders no other cause of the perishing of those Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Philistines also, but this, that they either rejoiced and clapped their hands at the ruin of their neighbour Judah, or else with an implacable and irreconcilable hatred prosecuted their victories over them, intending their total deletion and final

^e Nahum iii. 1.

^f Amos i. 11.

destruction^g. But, as I said, I will not now make so bold as to prolong this discourse till a particular narrative be given you of all these things. Nor will I do any more than suggest to your meditation that Ammon is again threatened for *insulting upon the necks of the slain*, i. e. of a fallen and feeble enemy^h; and Pharaoh for deceiving and cozening the expectation of Israel, who leaned upon his promiseⁱ; and the Israelites themselves for slaying their brethren of Judah with a rage that reached up to heaven, and without any pity, intending to make them bondmen^k; and that in general it is denounced that *the robbery of the wicked shall destroy them, because they refuse to do judgment, &c.*^l; and that God hath styled himself *the avenger of the poor and needy*, and he that will plead the cause of those that have no helper, that are crushed by the mighty and cannot right themselves, nor have any other to do them right; and that these are such unnatural sins, and so contrary to all the dealings of God with men, (who is merciful, kind, and compassionate, as well as just and righteous,) that God will not let them go unpunished, especially in the rulers whose office it is to see right, equity, and mercy take place among men.

The Jews, you have seen, are a notable example of this, and by often experience it seems they were so sensible of it, that there grew to be a common saying among their wise men of this signification, that when God's ears are shut against all men's prayers, he will hear the cry of the poor, needy, and oppressed.

Quando vastata fuit domus sanctuarii, omnes portae clausae fuerunt, (און אה חוץ משער) excepta porta oppressionis, i. e. 'when the temple was destroyed there was no gate open for the prayers and petitions of any to enter, but only the gate for the petitions of the oppressed, which they say is never shut.'

This they prove (as Buxtorfius hath noted^m) out of Amos vii. 7. *And he showed, and behold the Lord stood upon the wall made by a plumb-line.* The words in the original are *עַל הַחֹמַת אֲנָךְ*, which they interpret 'upon the wall of defraudation or oppression,' *דְּבִירוֹ אֲנָךְ*, and in his hand were 'defraudations,' i. e. prayers

^g Ezek. xxv.

^h Ezek. xxi. 29. V. Jun. [F. Junium, in loc. Opp. Theol. tom. i. col. 981.]

ⁱ Ezek. xxix. 6, 7.

^k 2 Chron. xxviii. 9, 10.

^l Prov. xxi. 7, 15.

^m [See vol. v. p. 104.]

against defrauders, petitions of those who complained of oppression and unjust dealing, (of which we have heard enough to have been in those times.) Even in Israel, (if this interpretation be true,) where they had fallen from God, he would not exclude the suits of such persons, but take their requests into his hands, and let them have a favourable audience. See *Eclus.* *xxi.* 5 ; *xxxv.* 13—17, &c.

But I am not much concerned to dispute the truth of this gloss, seeing the thing which it asserts is already put out of all doubts, and this very prophet presently after saith that these are such works as God cannot forget to punishⁿ, and there is such particular notice taken of the *shedding innocent blood*^o, as an iniquity that he will not pardon. And therefore leaving it to obtain what credit it can get with those who are skilled in that language, I shall descend to the fourth and last thing which I am engaged to treat of.

4. That where peace settlement and safety is expected by men, they are to have a great care to see whether they be guilty of such things as these ; and if they be, deeply to be humbled, and speedily to reform.

And these should be the more miuded upon such a day as this, because, as you have heard all along, many have cozened themselves by the willing performance of some religious duties, unto a most dangerous security and vain confidence in God ; while by reason of these sins (which are counted by such persons but small petty matters in comparison with their glittering piety) they have been working their own ruin.

These things were proposed to the people before their captivity as matters to be reformed if they hoped for any favour from God, as we may see in Amos' words to Israel, who had been much wasted and spoiled, (*chap. iv.* from the seventh verse of the fifth chapter to the sixteenth verse, and again repeated with abundance of earnestness, verses 21—24.) “Do not make a noise in my ears with good words and flattering devotions : away with these offerings and sacrifices in which you are so forward, but let me see judgment and righteousness like a mighty torrent carry all before it.”

To whom consent the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah concerning Judah, as you shall instantly understand, if you will

ⁿ Amos viii. 4—8.

^o 1 Kings xxiv. 3, 4.

be at no more labour but to cast your eyes upon Isaiah i. 16—20; xxxiii. 14, 15, 16, &c.; lviii. 8, 9, 10, &c.; Jer. vii. 5, 6, 7; xxii. 2—5: which very thing they might have learnt from the experience of their fathers, ver. 15, 16, 17, who *judged the cause of the poor, &c.*; and *was not this to know me, saith the Lord?* Yes, this is the business, though you would fain make the world believe you know me, while you are covetous, unjust, bloody, cruel, and unmerciful, &c., and would persuade yourselves that you are a religious people and shall be in safety. Yet there is no such matter; do not deceive yourselves: it went well with your fathers only when they did judgment and justice, and then they truly had the knowledge of God.

And therefore when they are returned from Babylon's slavery, this is the means proposed to them for a settlement here presently after my text, ver. 9, 10: this is the business of such a fasting day as will turn away God's wrath. The Jews say that *merces jejunii est elemosyna*^o, the best thing in a fast is an act of mercy; and there is some truth in the saying, for *the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright, and with the merciful he will show himself merciful. The instruments of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right: but the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand*^p. And when judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remains in the fruitful field, then we find it follow that *the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever, and that his people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in a quiet resting place*; as we read in the same Isaiah xxxii. 16, 17, 18.

Two words of caution, to prevent all mistakes, shall shut up this discourse; because I see that I should beyond all reason try your patience, if I should adventure to apply so much of this as belongs to our case unto your hearers; and that I should too much suspect your judgments, if I should go about to tell you how to improve every of these considerations.

I. Then, be pleased to take notice that I do not take upon

^o [Compare vol. v. p. 110.]

^p Psalm xi. 7, 18, 25; Isaiah xxxii. 7, 8.

me to be as one of those prophets, nor to say that our nation is guilty of all these sins, and that our case is exactly parallel to that of the Jewish people. I only lay it down as a true position, that this was the condition of that people, and this the cause of their ruin; and that upon supposition that the same things are found amongst any other, in all likelihood they will bring down the same vengeance.

All the application I make to our own selves of these things is, that every man (would all, both one and other of the nation, were told so much!) ought to enter into his own heart, and to consider whether there be any violence in his hands, any of the blood of the poor and oppressed running about his fingers, while he lifts up his hands to God, any unjust acquisitions that he is conscious to himself of, &c. If these things be not found amongst us, we may have good hope that God will not make us a desolation; but if they be, we ought deeply to be humbled this day for our hypocritical fasting and humiliation, that while we have mourned and prayed, and would needs lean upon God, and cry, *The temple of the Lord*, and called for the building up of Sion, we have not minded so much as matters of common justice, equity and mercy between a man and his neighbour; and we may fear that the Lord will make an utter end of us, unless we do speedily amend our ways and doings. For the hypocritical nation is the people of God's wrath, and *he will be avenged of such enemies, and ease himself of his adversaries*^x. *When he goes into his vineyard, and looks for judgment, but behold oppression, for righteousness, but behold a cry*^y; when men are grown to that condition, that they hope these matters of justice are but a trifling business, and that the change of so small a thing as a letter, the placing of מִשְׁפָּח in the stead of מִשְׁפָּט, and of זְעֵקָה in the room of צְדָקָה, will make no great change in God's affection to his people, and be accounted but a petty oversight^z; then immediately comes out a woe in the following verse, and an asseveration, that *many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair without an inhabitant*^a.

If I may be allowed to say any more, it should be only this, that the rulers of the people ought carefully and impartially to

^x Isa. x. 6; i. 24.

^y Isa. v. 7.

^z [Compare vol. v. p. 115.]

^a Verse 8, 9, and 20 to 25.

inquire into themselves about these matters, they being more than others concerned in them, (as many of these places which I have alleged will tell him that reads them,) and having greater power and temptations to do these things than most of the people, or at least to come nearer in their sins to the height of prophetic expressions than the ordinary sort of men, in regard of whom those phrases must be interpreted with some diminution and abatement.

I am sure they everywhere note it as a sad thing, when *the rulers cause the people to err*: but I shall mention now only that single place, Isa. ix. 14—17, and remember that I am now speaking in an auditory where there are no rulers that have scarce power to do anybody any wrong, but are far, I am persuaded, from having any will.

If any one have occasion to treat of these matters in a more public assembly, it might not perhaps be intolerable in him to propose this question, whether we may not fear (though I have excluded all confident assertion as to my own particular) that if a prophet should now rise up in the Christian (yea, in the reformed) world, he would thunder out against it, that men make little difference of *fas* and *nefas*, 'right' and 'wrong,' that they invade one another's rights and properties, wallow in blood and cruelty, &c., and yet cry up the purity of religion, the merits of Christ Jesus, and such like things, with as loud a voice as they in the prophet did, *The temple of the Lord*: yea, whether it be out of all doubt, that he would not have any better language for those who are double refined from popery, and have reformed even the reformation.

2. I do not say that these are the only sins that undo a people, nor that sins more immediately against God, as denying of his being and his truths, and blaspheming of his name, &c., (if they be general,) are not wasting sins, nor that these are the more heinous in themselves than those against God. All that I affirm is, that these alone are (and have been) enough to destroy a nation without the other, and that these commonly prove the most dangerous and ruining to a nation of any else, because they are commonly overlooked, (whereas one would think the duties toward our brother whom we see should be most easily in our eye,) and when men reform impieties against God, they think themselves to have done him such

high service, and are so much in those upper speculations, that they take no notice of these things under their feet, and make no reckoning how they deal with men, so they be but zealous and fierce for that which is due to God; or they can be content to be religious, so they but retain their unlawful gains, pleasures and ambitious ends: yea, perhaps their religion and forwardness for reformation in other things may give them a better advantage, more colourably to practise these iniquities, and their unmortified affections will easily put them in mind to make use of such opportunities.

Religious services in their greatest outward purity, besides that the natures of men are not so averse unto and abhorrent from them, but that they may be very forward to do them, they also make a great sound and din in the world; and have such a glorious appearance, that by the doing of them he may be reputed, and also take himself for a saint; and then be so pleased with this fine persuasion, and so inwardly tickled with the delight of such thoughts, that he is engaged to mind with all his power the promoting of such matters as have gained him the credit of a holy person, without denying his worldly lusts, which may rather have a freer liberty under such a brave and splendid master, as stands not upon punctilios of honesty and equity between one man and another. But if we turn our eyes the other way, we shall find that justice and mercy, pity and compassion, forgiveness and doing good to others, (especially to those who have wronged us,) will fall out sometimes with a man's worldly interests and carnal desires, and will put him to learn that hard lesson of self-denial; and beside, they make no such great noise in the world, but must be content to pass with many men for a piece of dull morality.

It was most truly said by a very wise man, *Nulli facilius ad magnam pietatis famam perveniunt, quam superstitiosi et hypocritæ*^a. They that have nothing else to show for their sanctity but their religious performances will be most nice, exact, and even ceremonious about them, and do them with a greater pang of zeal than many cordial Christians; which easily obtains for them the name of holy and devout persons among men, when honesty, mercy, and a sober religion and piety

^a [Des Cartes, quoted in vol. v. p. 119.]

cannot prevail for so much credit. Whence is it that men are easily tempted to neglect these things while they mind the other; and so the sins of injustice, &c., as I have been proving, oftener undo a nation than any other.

Hence, I say again, it is that these things do more commonly ruin a nation than corruption in God's worship; not because that is not destructive, but because men will a great deal sooner reform the one than the other: a fair outward correspondence in all the outward worship of God being a great deal more easy than this denial of men's selves in their covetous, malicious, ambitious, and other fleshly desires; and being apt to get a man a higher name if it be in any good measure of fervency and heat, and likewise to beget in himself a comfortable opinion that he is truly pious. And seeing there is such hypocrisy and deceit in men's hearts, and they are so willing thus to cheat themselves, I hope it will not be deemed unseasonable that I have treated of this matter rather than the other.

It is observed, you know, by some, that no men can so securely commit all wicked actions as they who have gained the repute of honest men, and therefore the poet in Plutarch most cunningly adviseth,

Τοῦ μὲν δικαίου τὴν δόκησιν ἄρνησο,
Τὰ δ' ἔργα τοῦ πάντων δρῶντος ἔνθα κερδανεῖς.

'Do all thou canst to be accounted just, and spare to do nothing whereby thou mayest be a gainer.' But then, what may not, what will not he do that hath secured not only other men's opinion, but his own also, of his honesty and piety? This is a far worse cozenage than the other, for a man to deceive himself as well as other folks, and will most inevitably bring him to ruin.

If it be a great piece of that policy whereby the devil rules the world, for a man so notably to counterfeit piety that even when he doth most destroy it he shall be counted pious, (as it was said of Tereus,

—*Ipsa sceleris molimine Tereus
Creditur esse pius*;⁹—

‘ he was cried up for a saint even when he was committing the greatest villainy,’) what a notable piece of the devil’s craft then is it so to persuade a zealous man in religious duties, and so to inflame him, that he shall pass in his own judgment for a saint ! How certainly will he ruin both himself and others ! in what a ready way is he to commit all injustice, when he is out of all danger of having his own conscience secretly reprove him of hypocrisy and simulation, which the other had not so secured ! When a man makes a conscience of some things and is very forward in them, they make such a noise that they quite drown the voice of it in other matters, and with the greater safety he commits all other kind of wickedness, which are no less dangerous than that which he avoids.

But I shall not trespass upon you much further. Whether this be assented unto which I have now discoursed or not, this notwithstanding will remain good, that such sins are a cause sufficient of a people’s ruin, though there be no other, and therefore for the Lord’s, our own, and the land’s sake, let us not look upon these things as lesser and inconsiderable which need not be so much pressed upon men’s practice, nor the pulpits so much sound of, lest by this means the priest and the people should both perish together.

Let the prophet Isaiah be once more allowed to speak, and I will presently conclude, chap. xxx. 8, 9, 10, &c. *Note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever : that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord : which say to the seers, See not ; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits ; get ye out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us, &c.* They would not have the prophets speak to them of things that were right and honest, but desired some soft, sleek, flattering and deceitful doctrines, (i. e. such as would certainly abuse them,) that they should cry *Peace, peace, עשו כחאבותכם*, (as Kimchi there notes,) ‘ do according to your hearts’ desire, and it shall be well with you :’ they would not have them run in the old beaten way, and preach so much strictness of righteousness unto them ; no, find some new smooth path wherein we may go without any rub to our own lusts, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from

before us, i. e. let us hear nothing of the Holy One any more; press not holiness so earnestly and frequently upon us. But what saith God to such a people? Verses 12, 13, 14 will tell us. *Thus saith the Holy One, Because you despise this word, (because you like not to hear of the Holy One,) and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon (hoping that you shall fare well enough): therefore, (mark what the Holy One, the righteous God that hates iniquity, saith,) this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, &c., just as a wall that swells and often bursts on a sudden, falling down upon those who are under it, that dream of no such thing, and crumbles all into dust or little bits that can be put to no use at all; such shall your ruin be, i. e. total and inevitable, because unexpected, and not believed through the deceit of your hearts, and your false confidences in other things, while you remained guilty of those iniquities.*

The Lord open every man's eyes, that he may see how far he is concerned in any of these truths, that he may pass sentence upon himself, and prevent the condemnation of the Lord, who hath set his throne for judgment, who will judge the world in righteousness, and minister judgment to the people in uprightness. *His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men. The Lord trieth the righteous, but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth*[†].

[†]Εὐὴν μὲν οὖν καὶ πλείονα τούτων εἰπεῖν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς σωφρονοῦσι καὶ ταῦτα ἀρκεῖ πρὸς διόρθωσιν.—Chrysost. *περὶ νηστ.* 1. [Hom. v. de Pœnit. ed. Ben. tom. ii. p. 316 C.]

[†] [Psalm ix. 7, 8; xi. 4, 5.]

A S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

THE FUNERAL OF MR. JOHN SMITH,

LATE FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE IN CAMBRIDGE,

Who departed this life August 7th, 1652, and lies interred in the
Chapel of the same College.

WITH

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND DEATH.

The memory of the just is blessed.—Prov. x. 7.

A SERMON, &c.

2 KINGS ii. 12.

*And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father,
the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.*

WHEN I saw the blessed spirit of our brother, shall I say? or our father, making haste out of that body which lies before us, these words which I have now read came into my mind: and methought I saw the good genius of this place, which inspired us with so much sense of learning and goodness, taking its flight and leaving this lower world: at whom my soul caught, as I fancied Elisha to have done at Elijah, and I cried out, “O my father, my father,” &c. Desirous I was, methought, that his ἀποθέωσις might have been a little while deferred; that I might have stayed the wheels of that triumphant chariot wherein he seemed to be carried; that we might have kept him a little longer in this world, till, by his holy breathings into our souls, and the grace of God, we had been all made meet to have some share in that inheritance of the saints in light: and so he might have gone to heaven with his train, taking all his friends along with him as attendants to that glory and honour where-with I make no doubt he is crowned. It grieved me in my thoughts that there should be so many orphans left without a father, a society left naked without one of her best guardians and chieftains, her very *chariot and horsemen*; unto whose instruction and brave conduct not a few of us will acknowledge they owe much of their skill and abilities. For I do not fear to say, as Antoninus doth of the best man, that he was *ιερέυτις καὶ ὑπουργὸς Θεοῦ*^a, ‘a priest or minister of God,’ who was very subservient to him in his great work. If he was not a prophet like Elijah, yet I am sure he was *ὑποφήτης τοῦ Πνεύ-*

^a [De seipso, lib. iii. § 4. p. 39.]

ματος, as Gr. Nazianzen, I think, speaks of St. Basil, ‘an interpreter of the Spirit,’ and very well acquainted with his mind; a man sent down from heaven for our good, and is now gone thither from whence he came, leaving us behind him here a company of poor fatherless children, the sons of this prophet, weeping and crying out, *O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.*

Which sad note would have been most fitly sung just at the ascension of his holy soul: yet give me leave to descant a while upon it, now that we are come to inter his body, which was the dark shadow where that admirable and illustrious learning, wisdom, and godliness, walked up and down, and shone through upon the world.

You will easily see at the first glance that something will here offer itself to be said of Elijah, and something of Elisha: of Elijah, in that he is called *father, the chariot and horsemen of Israel*; of Elisha, in that he applies this relation to himself, saying, *My father, my father.*

Concerning Elijah we may observe,

First, his superiority, eminency, and dignity.

Secondly, his singular care which he took of others.

Thirdly, his great usefulness, or the benefit which his country enjoyed by him.

Concerning Elisha we may observe the expression of three things likewise:

First, of his great affection and love.

Secondly, of the sense he felt of his loss.

Thirdly, of that honour which he gave him, or that respect and regard which he had unto him.

I shall speak a little of all these, and then parallel our case as well as I can, to both.

First, observe Elijah’s eminency, superiority, dignity, and worth: which is both signified in the word *father*, and also in the other expressions, *the chariot and horsemen of Israel*. The Talmudists say of the word *abba*, which is near of kin as can be to this in the text, אבא הוא לשון כבוד כמו רבי^b. *Abba* is a word of honour and glory, even as *Rabbi*: whence the Latin *abbas*, and our English *abbot*, have been derived to

^b Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. [col. 10.]

denote the greatest person in a society. And therefore whom he here calls father is called, ver. 3 and 5, *master*, or *lord*: *Knowest thou not that Jehovah will take אֲדֹנָיִךְ, thy lord, or master, from thee to-day?* Elijah was the head in the body of the prophets, the *dux gregis*, a main leading man among the rest. And this was by reason of his wisdom, experience, and gray-headed understanding, expressed in the word *father*. He was a sage and grave person; such a head as was full of prudence, skill, and advice, wherein were moulded many sober and wise resolutions, many weighty and mature determinations, profound and deep notions, holy and pious counsels for the teaching of rawer and greener heads. He was one that did imitate God *the Father of all*, and in some sort represent him here below, being an oracle among men. And such instruments God hath always in the world; men of greater height and stature than others, whom he sets up as torches on a hill, to give light to all the regions round about; men of public and universal influence, like the sun itself which illuminates all, and is not sparing of its beams; men, whose souls come into the world, as the Chaldee oracle speaks,

—————πολὴν ἐσσάμεναι νοῦν^c,

‘clothed with a great deal of mind,’ more impregnated than others with divine notions, and having more teeming wombs to enrich the world with the fruit of them: men of wide and capacious souls that can grasp much, and of enlarged, open hearts, to give forth that freely unto men which the *πατρικὸς νοῦς*, ‘the fatherly mind,’ as the same oracle calls God^d, hath given unto them; that so, in some sort, they may become fathers in the world, in subordination to God. The Sun of righteousness, Jesus Christ, is described with seven stars in his right hand^e, which were the angels of the churches; men (it is like) who were adorned and beautified with more than ordinary brightness of mind and understanding, and did sparkle with more than common heat of love and piety, and did shine as lights in the world, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Elijah was such a one; and so was the other Elias, John the Baptist, *a burning and a shining light*^f; and so also shall we find our father that is deceased to have been.

^c [In Hist. Philosoph. Orient. T. Stanleii, lib. iv. p. 148.]

^d [Ibid. p. 136.] ^e Rev. i. 16.

^f John v. 35.

Secondly, take notice of the care which Elijah took of Elisha, and that first as a master of his scholar, and secondly as a father of his son, or, if you will have both in one, as a fatherly master. Elisha calls him by this name of *father*, because he was his scholar, and they used commonly to give this title to their masters or teachers; whence *Pirke Avoth* among the Jews, *Capitula Patrum*, is a book that contains the wise sayings and apophthegms of their doctors. And so *πατροπαράδοτος* in the New Testament, *that which is received by tradition from their fathers*^e, signifies nothing else but what their doctors and learned men in the law delivered to them, and therefore they are sometimes called “the traditions of the elders.” Jubal is called *the father of such as handle the harp*^f, which signifies the same with that which is said of his brother^g, *He was an instructor of artificers in brass and iron*. And hence Solomon saith so often, *My son, hear the instruction of a father*. So that אָבִי אָבִי, *my father, my father*, in the text, is nothing else but רַבִּי רַבִּי, *my master, my master*. Elijah taught and instructed him out of the law, but with such a care and fatherly affection, that Elisha was truly his son as well as his scholar, one whom he loved and tendered, whom he wrapped as a child in his mantle when he was following the plough, whom he begot into another shape and made another man, in whose heart he sowed the seeds of true righteousness and godliness, that he might do more good in the world. For what God doth by men, that they many times are said to do. Hence the apostles call Christians their *little children*, and *dear children*, whom they had *travailed in birth withal till Christ was formed in them*^h. They lay in the apostles’ wombs, and they brought them forth Christians, and so were truly their spiritual fathers. And we may still see such noble souls which God continues amongst men, *whose mouths, as Solomon says, are as a well of life, whose lips feed many, and whose tongues are as choice silver*ⁱ: men that are *κοινοὶ πατέρες*, ‘common fathers,’ and will embrace everybody as a son, so they be but willing to be taught; that have the whole world for their school, and are instilling wholesome notions and rectified apprehensions into men’s minds, and

^e 1 Pet. i. 8.^f Gen. iv. 21.^g Ibid. ver. 22.^h Gal. iv. 19.ⁱ Prov. x. 11, 20, 21.

implanting *the truth which is after godliness*^k in their hearts : men that in all meekness, tenderness, and fatherly affection reprove those that oppose themselves ; that endeavour to bring them into their wombs, that, if it be possible, they may beget the life of God and of his Son Christ in their souls : men who cherish and foster the least gasping, panting life that is in any soul, who endeavour to free this life from any obstructions that dull and oppress it ; and so in every sense prove themselves to be the true fathers of the church, common fathers, (as I before expressed it,) neither bound up in themselves nor addicted to any particular sect, but minding the good of all : who think that they were not born for themselves, nor to be linked to this or that body or party of men, but are to be *perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect*^l, who doth good to all, even to the evil and unthankful. A *στοργή*, or natural affection, there is in them, which makes them think that every man's child is their own ; and if they could hatch any heavenly life in them, they would willingly cover them under their wings. Such a person was St. Paul, who went through fire and water, had a pilgrimage through this world upon nothing but briars and thorns, out of his great love that he bare to men : *the care of all the churches lay upon him ; and no man could be weak, but he was weak also ; no man was offended, but he burned*^m ; it put him in a kind of fever : and all this was easy to him, because he had the bowels of a father. Such another was St. John, who hath every where in his mouth *My little children*ⁿ. A good old father he was, who breathed forth nothing but love to man. And it need be no offence if I add, there was a Socrates in Athens, who had so much of this kind of spirit in him, that he styled himself *θεράπων έρωτος*, 'a servant of love,' and professed that he knew nothing but how to love. He would often acknowledge himself to be an *ignoramus* in all those things whereinto their wise men used to inquire, and that he could say nothing in those controversies that were agitated about the gods and such like, as Maximus Tyrius expressly tells us, but he durst not deny himself to have skill in that *ερωτικη τέχνη*^o, 'in the art of love,' wherein he was continually busied and employed ; instructing of their youth, amending of their man-

^k Tit. i. 1.^l Matt. v. 48.^m 2 Cor. xi. 28, 29.ⁿ 1 John ii. 1.^o [Dissert. xxiv. § 4. tom. i. p. 462.]

ners, and making them truly virtuous; which thing the ungrateful wretches of the city called "corrupting of their children." And truly it is very often the lot of these fathers of which I am speaking, who nourish up youth in true piety and virtue, to be esteemed by many the corrupters of the fountain, *pestes* rather than *patres* of the places where they live. But they fare no worse than Elijah did, who was accounted *the troubler of Israel*, though he was *the chariot and horsemen thereof*; a man so useful that they could not tell how to want him, though they knew not how to value him. And that is the third thing to which I am to proceed; only let me entreat you that you would think within yourselves in my passage, such a one was the party deceased.

Thirdly, we have here observable the usefulness of Elijah; he was not only a father, but *the chariot and horsemen of Israel*, the security and safeguard of the place where he was. He calls him by this name in an allusion to the chariot wherein he was fetched to heaven, and would express by this form of speech the good service he did for Israel. He was instead of an army to them, like David, worth ten thousand of the people^p. He alone was able to fight with all their enemies, and by his force to break all their legions in pieces. And indeed all good men, especially men of extraordinary wisdom and godliness, such as I have been speaking of, are the guard and defence of the towns where they reside, yea of the country whereof they are members. They are the tutelar angels of a nation, men that can do more by their prayers and tears, their virtuous and holy actions, than a host of men, wherein none is of less valour than Samson, or the famed Hercules and Achilles. How had it been with Israel, had it not been for Moses, the meekest man on earth, and yet *terrible as an army with banners*? And in what a case had Samaria often been if it had not been for this Elisha, the son of Elijah, who was encompassed about with chariots and horses of fire to fight at his command? What, if I say of such men in the Platonists' phrase, that they are *φύλακες τοῦ κόσμου*, 'the keepers of the world,' that preserve it from being made like to Sodom and Gomorrah? And if there had been but ten of these holy champions there, they had shielded their heads from the arrows of the Almighty, and kept

the showers of fire and brimstone from raining upon them. Good men are the lifeguard of the world; next to God and good angels, they are the walls and bulwarks of a nation; for *by their strength they have power with God*^q, as it is said of Jacob. And so the Chaldee paraphrast reads these words of my text, “Thou wast better to Israel by thy prayers than chariot and horsemen^r.” They are the glory of the world, and without them it would be but a rude rabble, a beast with many heads and no brains, a mere chaos and confusion. And it is by reason of them that it doth not run into such disorder as a company of children would do without their father, or as a multitude of mad soldiers without their skilful leader and commander.

And so I have briefly set before you what Elijah was, what those who are eminent for godliness are, what every good man ought in some measure to be, and what you shall shortly hear our deceased father was in a high degree: men of worth and great renown, אֲנָשֵׁי דְהַשָּׁמ (in a good sense,) ‘men of name,’ men that may be taken notice of in the world, that shine by their wisdom, justice, and goodness, that cheer the world by their love and fatherly care of all, that heartily endeavour to do good, and would not for a world see men perish if they could help it; in a word, men that are as the soul of the world, without whom it would be a stinking and unsufferable place.

II. Now let us look a while upon Elisha, and see what he thought of such a man. And,

First, we meet with his great affections expressed in the very form of the words, *My father, my father*. Methinks I feel within myself with what pure, dear, and ardent love he spake these words; what a glowing fire there was in his breast when he thought of his spiritual father. He burnt in love to him as if some spark had fallen from Elijah’s fiery chariot into his heart. He was all in a desire, as if the angels that fetched his father had lent him a waft of their wings, whereby he strove to fly with him to heaven. There is not a child that can cry more after the breasts that give it suck, and the arms of her that carried it in her womb, than he calls and cries after his father, “O my father, my father! where shall I find my father? what

^q Hosea xii. 3.

^r [Walton, Bibl. Polyglott. tom. ii. p. 524.]

will become of me without my father?" A tender love and kindness there is to be in our hearts to all men of what nature or nation soever; no man ought to be *φίλαντος*, 'a lover of himself,' but *φιλόανθρωπος*, 'a lover of mankind:' yet a more singular cleaving of souls there should be to those that are good; but the most unspeakable and greatest adhesion and union to those by whom we have profited in wisdom and godliness, and whose lips have dropped the words of life into our minds. For, as Solomon hath it, *There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel*^r. We should stand affected to them as the Galatians to St. Paul, who would have pulled out their very eyes and given them unto him^s. They ought to be to us *oculis cariores*, as the ordinary phrase is, 'dearer than our eyes:' by which speech God expresses his extraordinary love to his people Israel, saying that he kept them *as the apple of his eye*. And indeed it can scarce be otherwise, but that there should be an unknown love between such persons, there being such a secret fascination in frequent converse and familiarity as entices a man's soul and heart out of himself. Those precepts which we imbibe from another's mouth naturally call forth a strong affection to flow from us to him; and he who inflames our souls with love to God will certainly enkindle a subordinate love within us to himself. The words of wisdom smite an ingenuous soul *ὡσπερ τιμὴ βέλει*, 'as with a dart,' if I may use Greg. Thaumaturgus' expression concerning Origen's discourses^t, and cannot but wound it both with a love to wisdom and him that shoots those piercing arrows into its heart. They bind a tractable soul *ὡσπερ ὑπὸ τισιν ἀνάγκαις*, 'as it were in indissoluble necessities,' so that it cannot but love those words, and kiss the mouth also from whence they flow unto it. A teachable mind will hang about a wise man's neck, and thereby they come to cleave and cling as fast together as the soul of Jonathan did unto the soul of David. So the aforesaid Gregory speaks of himself and Origen: *Τοιαύταις τισὶν ἀνάγκαις Δαβὶδ οὗτος συσφιγξάμενος ἡμᾶς*^u, &c. "This David (meaning Origen) hath entangled and bound up my soul in such necessary fetters of love, he hath so tied and even knit me to him, that if I would be disengaged I cannot quit myself.

^r Prov. xx. 15.

^s Gal. iv. 15.

^t [Paneg. ad Origen. p. 59 B.]

^u [Ibid. p. 61 C.]

No, *εἰ ἀποδηήσαιμεν*, though we depart out of this world our love cannot die, for I love him even as my own soul, and so my affection must remain for ever." *The words of the wise, saith Solomon, are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies*^x. If a master fix his doctrine in his scholar's mind, he nails himself likewise with the same stroke *quasi trabali clavo*, 'by a pin as strong as a beam,' to his scholar's heart: they mingle souls as they do notions, and mutually pass into each other.

Secondly, we have here likewise the sense which Elisha had of his great loss. For these words are expressions of sorrow and lamentation, as appears by the words following, *And he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in pieces*: and also where we find Joash weeping over this Elisha, and saying these very words of my text, *O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof*^y. And methinks I see Elisha himself here bedewing his cheeks with tears, and hear these words sobbed and sighed out of his heart, having lost his dear father, one that took such special care of him whilst he was in the world. Methinks I see his heart rent as well as his garments, and there I see Elijah graven in letters as great as was his love. How could he look on himself, and not lament to think that he had lost his head? How could he behold Israel unguarded, and not throw off his own clothes as a token of his sorrow? It is said of Jehoiakim, that *they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah my sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah Lord! or, Ah his glory*^z! which both shows that this is a form of speech to denote sorrow, and that it is an honour wicked men shall want, that none shall bemoan their departure. But the just shall be in everlasting remembrance, they shall die desired: and those who can value them will not let them pass away in silence and with dry eyes. No tears are spent so well as for the want of God and a good friend, or a good man, especially such a one as I before described. And indeed, who can think of his gracious lips, his profitable and delightful converse, his cordial love, without a sigh and a tear, without saying, *Ah my father! Ah his glory!* No man will be sooner

^x Eccles. xii. 11.^y 2 Kings xiii. 14.^z Jer. xxii. 18.

missed than such a one as he ; ten thousand others may steal out of the world and nobody scarce mind or inquire after them, but let Elijah go away, and you shall have fifty men go three days to seek him, that if it be possible they may enjoy his company a while longer. We find that Jesus himself wept for his friend Lazarus, at which the Jews said, *Behold how he loved him* ^a! Two souls joined together in cordial love cannot part without a groan, especially a son and his father, a scholar and his master. The child cannot hold itself from crying when it wants the breast that used to feed it, nor can a soul thirsty of knowledge but be pained when the fountain is stopped that used to quench it. There are not so many of these men in the world, but their loss will be as soon felt as the want of a stake in a rotten hedge, or of a buttress against a bowing wall. He who knows one to have been a light in the world and a lamp unto him will surely be melancholy and sad when he sees that light go out, and himself left in the dark, without that *φίλον φῶς*, 'those cheerful and beloved beams' which used to shine upon him, to illuminate and warm his soul with a true knowledge and love of all real goodness.

Thirdly, we may further take notice of the honourable thoughts he had of Elijah, of the reverence, worship, and respect which he gave unto him. For so we may look upon these words as an expression of the high esteem he had of him, and regard he bare to him, even after he was gone from this earth, and could do no more kindnesses for him. Elisha, who had been a minister to him when he was below, and used to pour water upon his hands, could not but have very reverend thoughts toward him now that the angels came to wait upon him, and in flames of fire to carry him up above. He could not but honour him as his elder and father, as his leader and commander, as the general of the sons of the prophets, as the very host and army of Israel. And indeed the souls of those men that are as full of God as the name of Elijah is (*אֵלִיָּהוּ*), which includes two, if not three, of the divine names in it, cannot but draw our eyes toward them; but then they so dazzle us with their lustre and brightness, they strike us into such amazement at their perfections, that the weakness of man's

^a John xi. 35, 36.

nature hath been apt to give no less than divine veneration to such persons. It had not been lawful, I know, to have worshipped Elijah, though he had been an angel; but yet methinks I see Elisha bowing down with some respect to the very mantle which fell from his master, and taking it up as a precious relic of so holy a man. And I could very well pass some civility upon the gown in which this holy man departed, used to walk, out of the great honour which I bear to him. There was so much of divinity enshrined in this excellent man's soul, that it made every thing about him to have a kind of sacredness in it, and will make his name to be always as a sweet odour unto us. Though we may not extol it with divine praises, yet let it never be mentioned by us without the addition of the Hebrew manner of speech בְּרָכָה , 'His memory is blessed,' or of the Greek $\delta \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\upsilon \mu\alpha\kappa\alpha\rho\acute{\iota}\tau\eta\varsigma$, 'That most blessed man.'

And so I am fallen unawares in my meditations upon the application of what hath been said of him that is deceased, and to our own selves.

Some perhaps will be angry that I should go about to compare him with Elijah the man of God, but I have an apology ready at hand; they will give me leave, I hope, to do the same that Greg. Nyssen doth, who, in his oration at the funeral of his brother Basil, compares him not only with Elias, but with John the Baptist the second Elias, and with St. Paul himself, saying, that one should not err if he should affirm that there was in him and in St. Paul $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \mu\acute{\epsilon}\tau\rho\nu \tau\eta\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\gamma\acute{\alpha}\pi\eta\varsigma$, 'one and the same measure of divine love^b.' Suffer me then to use some of his words concerning him of whom we are now to speak. "None will require of human nature to imitate Elijah in his shutting and opening of heaven, in his fasting so many days, and going up to God in a fiery chariot; but in other things we will be bold to compare him with that great man, in his zealous faith, in his cordial love to God, in his earnest desire and thirst $\tau\omicron\upsilon \delta\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma \delta\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$ (as he speaks), 'after that which truly is' in an exact and exquisite life, $\zeta\omega\eta \delta\iota\acute{\alpha} \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omega\nu \acute{\epsilon}\xi\epsilon\tau\alpha\sigma\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta$, 'in a conversation so studied' that it was in all things consonant with itself, in most unaffected gravity, wonderful simplicity, and a countenance proportionable to the vigour and strength of his

^b [Tom. iii. p. 486 B.]

soul, or, in his own words, he had βλέμμα τῷ τόνῳ τῆς ψυχῆς συντεινόμενον, ‘a look that was not one key below his intent, and eager and sprightly mind.’ If you look upon his care of those things that were hoped for, and neglect of these things that are seen, on his equal love to poor and rich; in these and such like things he imitated the wonders of Elijah. But if any man will needs urge us to strain a little higher, and compare something in him to his fasting forty days, then what say you to an every-day’s temperance? And if there must be something answerable to his going up to heaven in a fiery chariot, then look upon the other way of ascending thither which is the best, διὰ τῆς ὑψηλῆς πολιτείας, ‘by a high transcendent conversation in this world,’ whereby he made a chariot of his virtues that he might ascend up unto God^c.

But that I may proceed in this argument according to our former method,

I. Let us first look upon him in his eminency, dignity, and worth. A very glorious star he was, and shone brighter in our eyes than any that he ever looked upon when he took his view of the heavenly bodies: and now he shines as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever, being wise, and having turned many, I believe, unto righteousness.

I shall speak nothing of his earthly parentage, save only this, that herein he was like to John the Baptist, the last Elias, in that he was born after his parents had been long childless and were grown aged. Some have observed that such have proved very famous; for they seem to be sent on purpose by God into the world to do good, and to be scarce begotten by their parents. Such are something like Isaac, who had a great blessing in him, and seem to be intended by God for some great service and work in the world.

But let us look only at his heavenly descent, and see how he was allied to God himself; for, as the poet says of Æneas,

————— *Continget sanguine cælum*^d,

I may say of him as Nazianzen says of his sister^e, “His country was heaven, his town or city was the Jerusalem which is above, his fellow-citizens were the saints, his nobility was ἡ τῆς

^c [P. 491 D.] ^d [Juv. Sat. xi. 62.] ^e [In Gorgon. Orat. viii. § 6. tom. i. p. 221 C.]

εἰκόνας τήρησις, καὶ ἡ πρὸς τὸ ἀρχέτυπον ἐξομοίωσις, ‘ the retaining of the divine impressions and stamps upon his soul, and being like to God the archetype and first pattern of all goodness.’ And indeed the preserving of the heavenly symbols that are in our souls, and especially the purging and scouring of them from the corruption of nature he often spake of, and his endeavour was, that the divine image might be fairly reflected in him, and that it might shine brightly in the face of others.

If I should speak much of the vastness of his learning, (a thing not to be passed by,) it would seem to say that I knew all he was; which I am not so arrogant as to assume unto myself: this I will say, that he could do what he would. He had such a huge, wide capacity of soul, such a sharp and piercing understanding, such a deep reaching mind, that he set himself about nothing but he soon grasped it, and made himself a full possessor of it. And if we consider his great industry and indefatigable pains, his Herculean labours day and night from his first coming to the university^f, till the time of his long sickness, joined with his large parts, and his frequent meditation, contemplation, and abstraction of his mind from sensible things; it must needs be concluded that he was a comprehensor of more than I can say or think of; and if I could, it would be too tedious to give you an account of all.

There is a discourse which Charidemus (in Dion Chrysostom) makes to his friends a little before his death; “ how that this world is God’s house, wherein a gallant sumptuous feast is prepared, and all men are his guests: and how that there are two waiters at the table which fill out the wine to them that call for it; the one a man, the other a woman; the one called Νοῦς, or ‘ mind,’ from whose hand all wise men drink, the other Ἀκράτεια, or ‘ intemperance,’ who fills the cups of the lovers of this world.” In this house our beloved friend deceased stayed between four and five and thirty years, and, I am sure, drank most large draughts from the hand of the former; for he was a man, he was a mind, he had nothing of that woman in him, and never in the least was known to sip of her cups. He was a most laborious searcher after wisdom, and never gave

^f April 5, 1636.

^g Orat. 30. [tom. i. p. 560.]

his flesh the leisure to please itself in those entertainments : and therefore we may be confident, with that Charidemus, that God hath taken him to be his *συμπότην καὶ ἑταῖρον*, ‘ his friend and companion,’ to drink of the rivers of his pleasure. In a word, he was *βιβλιοθήκη τις ἔμψυχος, καὶ περιπατοῦν μουσεῖον*, as Eupapius speaks of Longinus^h, ‘ a living library,’ better than that which he hath given to our college, ‘ and a walking study,’ that carried his learning about with him. I never got so much good among all my books by a whole day’s plodding in a study as by an hour’s discourse I have got with him. For he was not a library locked up, nor a book clasped, but stood open for any to converse withal that had a mind to learn. Yea, he was a fountain running over, labouring to do good to those who perhaps had no mind to receive it. None more free and communicative than he was to such as desired to discourse with him ; nor would he grudge to be taken off from his studies upon such an occasion. It may be truly said of him, that a man might always come better from him ; and his mouth could drop sentences as easily as an ordinary man’s could speak sense. And he was no less happy in expressing his mind than in conceiving ; wherein he seems to have excelled the famous philosopher Plotin, of whom Porphyry tells us that he was something careless of his words, *ἀλλὰ μόνον τοῦ νοῦ ἐχόμενος*, ‘ but was wholly taken up into his mind.’ He of whom we now speak had such a *copia verborum*, ‘ a plenty of words,’ and those so full, pregnant, and significant, joined with such an active fancy, as is very rarely to be found in the company of such a deep understanding and judgment as dwelt in him.

I have done with his learning when I have told you, that as he looked upon honours, riches, and the eagerly-pursued things of this world as vanities, so did he look upon this also as a piece, though a more excellent piece of vanity, as he was wont to phrase it, if compared with the higher and more divine accomplishments of the soul. For he did not care to value himself by any of those things which were of a perishing nature, which should fail, and cease, and vanish away ; but only by those things which were more solid and substantial, of a divine and immortal nature, which he might carry out of the world

^h In vita Porphyrii. [p. 7.]

with him ; to which my discourse shall not be long before it descend.

He was of very singular wisdom and great prudence, of admirable skill and readiness in the managery of affairs, which I make an account is an imitation of that providence of God that governs the world. His learning was so concocted that it lay not as an idle notion in his head, but made him fit for any employment. He was very full and clear in all his resolutions at any debates, a most wise counsellor in any difficulties and straits, dexterous in untying any knot, of great judgment in satisfying any scruple or doubt, even in matters of religion. He was one that soon saw into the depth of any business that was before him, and looked it quite through, that would presently turn it over and over in his mind, and see it on all sides ; and he understood things so well at the first sight that he did not often need any second thoughts, but usually stood to the present resolution and determination of his mind.

And add to this his known integrity, uprightness, and faithfulness ; his strong and lively, his waking and truly tender conscience, which, joined with the former things I spoke of, made him more than a man, οἷοι νῦν βροτοί εἰσι, ‘ as men now go.’ He was, as one of the ancients speaks, τῆς φιλοσοφίας ὑπόδειγμα καὶ οἶον στάθμη πνευματικῆ, ‘ an exemplar of true Christian philosophy and virtue,’ and as it were the spiritual rule, line, and square thereof: of so poised and even a life, that by his wisdom and conscience, (were it not that every man should know for himself,) one might live almost at a venture, walking blindfold through the world, and not miscarry.

He had incorporated, shall I say? or insouled all principles of justice and righteousness, and made them one with himself. So that I may say of him, in Antoninus’ phraseⁱ, he was δικαιοσύνη βεβαμμένος εἰς βάθος, ‘ dipped into justice as it were over head and ears ;’ he had not a slight superficial tincture, but was dyed and coloured quite through with it ; so that wheresoever he had a soul, there was justice and righteousness. They who knew him very well know the truth of all this. And I am persuaded he did as heartily and cordially, as eagerly and earnestly do what appeared to be just and right, without any self-respect or particular reflections, as any man living.

ⁱ Lib. iii. [§ 4. p. 40.]

Metlinks I see how earnest he would be in a good matter which appeared to be reasonable and just, as though Justice herself had been in him, looking out at his eyes, and speaking at his mouth. It was a virtue indeed that he had a great affection unto, and which he was very zealous to maintain; in whose quarrel he was in danger to be angry, and sometimes to break forth into a short passion.

But he was always very urgent upon us, that by the grace of God, and the help of the mighty Spirit of Jesus Christ working in us, we would endeavour to purge out the corruption of our natures, and to *crucify the flesh with all the affections and lusts thereof*: yea, to subdue as much as it is possible even the ἀπροαίρετα in our souls, those first motions that are without our consent, and to labour after purity of heart, that so we might see God. For his endeavour was not only to be ἐξω ἀμαρτίας, ‘out of the pollutions of the world through lust,’ but, as Plotin speaks, Θεὸν εἶναι, to come to the true likeness of God and his Son, or, in the apostle’s language, *to be partaker of the divine nature*. And here now what words shall I use?

What shall I say of his *love*? None that knew him well but might see in him πηγάζουσιν ἀγάπην, as Nazianzen I think speaks, ‘love bubbling and springing up’ in his soul, and flowing out to all; and that love unfeigned, without guile, hypocrisy, or dissimulation. I cannot tell you how his soul was universalized, how tenderly he embraced all God’s creatures in his arms, more especially men, and principally those in whom he beheld the image of his heavenly Father. There one might have seen running τὸ συγγενὲς πρὸς τὸ συγγενὲς, and he would ever have emptied his soul into theirs. Let any that were thoroughly acquainted with him say if I lie. And truly my happiness is that I have such a subject to exercise my young and weak oratory upon, as will admit of little hyperbole.

His patience was no less admirable than his love, under a lingering and tedious disease, wherein he never murmured nor complained, but rested quietly satisfied in the infinite unbounded goodness and tenderness of his Father, and the commiserations of Jesus Christ our merciful High Priest, *who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities*^k. He still resolved, with Job,

^k Heb. iv. 15.

Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him^l. Εὐγε ὅτι φιλοσοφεῖς ἐν τοῖς πάθεσι, saith Nazianzen in an epistle to Philagrius^m, ‘O bravely done, most noble soul, who canst play the philosopher, the Christian, in thy sickness and sufferings; who canst not only talk, but do, not only do, but suffer!’ And he told me in his sickness, that he hoped he had learned that for which God sent it, and that he thought God kept him so long in such a case, under such burdens and pressures, that *patience might have its perfect work* in him. His sickness undoubtedly was φιλόσοφος νόσος, as Nazianzen speaks, ‘a learned disease and full of true philosophy,’ which taught him more of real Christianity, and made his soul of a more strong, able, athletic habit and temper. For, as St. James saith, *if patience have its perfect work*, then is a soul *perfect and entire, wanting nothing*ⁿ. And really in his sickness he showed what Christianity and true religion is able to do; what might, power, and virtue there is in it to bear up a soul under the greatest loads; and that he could, through Christ strengthening him, do all that which he so admirably discoursed of in his life.

But for his humility, it was that which was most apparent and conspicuous. You might have beheld in him τῆς ταπεινοφροσύνης τὸν ἀκρότατον ὅρον, as the same father speaks, ‘true humility in a most eminent degree, and the more eminent, considering how much there was within him which would have swelled and puffed up another.’ But from his first admission into the University, as I am informed by those that knew him, he sought not great things for himself, but was contented in the condition wherein he was. He made not haste to rise and climb, as youths are apt to do, which we in these late times too much experience, wherein youths scarce fledged have soared to the highest preferments; but proceeded leisurely by orderly steps, not to what he could get, but to what he was fit to undertake. He stayed God’s time of advancement, with all industry and pains following his studies; as if he rather desired to deserve honour than to be honoured. He shook off all idleness and sloth, the bane of youth, and so had the blessing of God upon his endeavours, who gave him great encouragement from divers persons of worth, and at last brought him unto this

^l Job xiii. 15.^m [Epist. xxxii. tom. ii. p. 27 D.]ⁿ James i. 4.

place. And I challenge any one that is impartial to say, if since he came hither they ever beheld in him any pride, vain-glory, boasting, self-conceit, desire of honour, and being famous in the world. No, there is not the man living that had the eyes ever to discern any thing of this swoln nature: but on the contrary, it was easy to take notice of most profound humility and lowliness of mind, which made him a true disciple of Jesus Christ, who took upon him the form of a servant, and made himself of no reputation. And I dare say our dear friend was as true, as humble a servant (without any compliment) to the good of mankind, as any person that this day lives. This was his design in his studies, and if it had pleased the Lord of life to have prolonged his days, it would have been more of his work: for he was resolved, as he once told me, very much to lay aside other studies, and to travail in the salvation of men's souls, after whose good he most ardently thirsted.

Shall I add ἐπὶ πάντι, as the apostle speaks, 'above, or unto all these,' his faith^o; I say, his true, lively and working faith, his simple, plain-hearted, naked faith in Christ? It is likely that it did not busy itself about many fine notions, subtilties, and curiosities, or believing whole volumes; but be sure it was that which was firmly set and fixed in the mercy and goodness of God through Christ; that also which brought down Christ into his soul; which drew down heaven into his heart; which sucked in life and strength continually from our Saviour; which made him hearty, serious, and constant in all those fore-named Christian virtues. His faith was not without a soul; but what Isidore saith of faith and works^p held true of him, *χρῆ ἀπὸ τούτων αὐτὴν ψυχούσθαι*, 'his faith was animated, quickened, and actuated by these.' It made him godlike, and he lived by faith in the Son of God; by it he came to be truly partaker of the righteousness of Christ, and had it wrought and formed in his very soul. For this indeed was the end of his life, the main design which he carried on, that he might become like to God. So that if one should have asked him that question in Antoninus^q, *Τίς σου ἡ τέχνη*, 'What is thy art and profession, thy business and employment?' he would not have answered, To be a great philosopher, mathematician,

^o Eph. vi. 16. ^p Lib. iv. Ep. 65. [p. 448 B.] ^q Lib. xi. [§ 5. p. 239.]

historian, or Hebrician, (all which he was in great eminency,) to be a physician, lawyer, general linguist; which names and many more his general skill deserved: but he would have answered, as he doth there, *Ἀγαθὸν εἶναι*, 'My art is to be good;' to be a true divine is my care and business, or, in the Christian phrase, *to be holy as God is holy, to be perfect as my heavenly Father is perfect*^r. All that remember the serious behaviour and weighty expressions he used in his prayers, cannot but call to mind how much his heart was set upon the attainment of this true goodness.

I have transgressed too much my bounds, now it is so late; and trespassed perhaps too much upon your patience: yet I hope I should not weary you, if I should discourse upon his ingenuity, his courtesy, his gentleness and sweetness, with many other things of the like nature. And let me say thus much, that he was far from that spirit of devouring zeal that now too much rages. He would rather have been consumed in the service of men, than have called for fire down from heaven, as Elijah did, to consume them. And therefore though Elijah excelled him in this, that he ascended up to heaven in a fiery chariot, yet herein I may say he was above the spirit of Elijah, that he called for no fire to descend from heaven upon men, but the fire of divine love that might burn up all their hatreds, roughness, and cruelty to each other. But as for benignity of mind and Christian kindness, everybody that knew him will remember that he ever had their names in his mouth, and I assure them they were no less in his heart and life; as knowing that without these truth itself is in a faction, and Christ is drawn into a party. And this graciousness of spirit was the more remarkable in him, because he was of a temper naturally hot and choleric, as the greatest minds most commonly are. He was wiser than to let any anger rest in his bosom; much less did he suffer it to burn and boil till it was turned into gall and bitterness: and least of all would he endure that any passion should lodge in him, till it was become a cankered malice and black hatred, which men in these days can scarce hide, but let it appear in their countenance and in their carriage towards others.

If he was at any time moved unto anger, it was but a sudden

^r Matt. v. 48.

flushing in his face, and it did as soon vanish as arise; and it used to arise upon no such occasions as I now speak of. No, whensoever he looked upon the fierce and consuming fires that were in men's souls, it made him sad, not angry; and it was his constant endeavour to inspire men's souls with more benign and kindly heats, that they might warm but not scorch their brethren.

And from this spirit, together with the rest of Christian graces that were in him, there did result a great serenity, quiet, and tranquillity in his soul, which dwelt so much above, that it was not shaken with any of those tempests and storms which use to unsettle more low and abject minds. He lived in a continued sweet enjoyment of God, and so was not disquieted with scruples or doubts of his salvation. There was always discernible in him a cheerful sense of God's goodness, which ceased not in the time of sickness. But we most longed to see the motions of his soul, when he drew near to the centre of his rest. He that had such a constant feeling of God within him, we might conclude would have the most strong and powerful sense when he came nearer to a close conjunction with him. But God was pleased to deny this to us, and by a lethargic distemper which seized on his spirits, he passed the six last days of his life (if I may call it a life) in a kind of sleep, and without taking much notice of any thing, he slept in the Lord.

And now have I not described a person of worth and eminency? Have we not reason to be so sad, as you see our faces tell you that we are? But alas! half of that is not told you which your eyes might have seen, had you been acquainted with him. I want thoughts and words to make a lively portraiture of him; my young experience hath not yet seen to the height or the depth of these things which I have here given you a rude draught of; and so my conceits and expressions must needs fall far below that excellent degree of beauty wherein they dwelt in him. Let it suffice therefore to say, that I may keep to the word in the text, that he was truly a *father*, that he wanted ages only to make him reverend, and that if he had lived many generations ago and left us the children of his mind to posterity, he might by this time have been numbered among the fathers of the church.

I have almost prevented myself already in the two latter

particulars, his singular care, and his great usefulness; both which must needs be concluded from the former: his care, I say, of others as a tutor, his usefulness as a fellow of this now mournful society. Let me speak a word or two of either.

Secondly, all his pupils, who are now truly *pupilli*, 'fatherless children,' began to know in his sickness what it was to have and to want a loving father, a faithful tutor, and now they will know it more fully. He was one that did so constantly mind their good, that instilled such excellent pious notions into their minds, and gave such light in every thing a man could desire to know, that I could have been content though in this gown to have been his pupil. His life taught them continual lessons of justice, temperance, prudence, fortitude, and masculine virtue; and above all he taught them true dependence upon God, and reference of themselves and all their studies unto him, with true faith in and imitation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; for which end he often expounded to them out of the holy Scriptures. And for human learning, the many good scholars that came from under his hand do witness how dexterous he was at the training up of youth in all good literature. Porphyry tells us of Plotin^r, that he was such a careful person, that sundry noble men and women, with divers others when they died, committed both their sons and daughters to his tuition, ὡς ἱερῶ τινι καὶ θεῷ φύλακι, 'as unto some tutelar angel, or a sacred and divine guardian.' Truly those that come hither are in a manner without father and mother, but they could not be committed to a more loving tutor, a more holy and faithful guardian, that would bring them up in all true learning and piety. If any think that he was too severe, let me tell them that they are such as find fault with the lion ὅτι μὴ πιθήκειον βλέπει, ἀλλὰ βλοσυρὸν καὶ βασιλικὸν^s, 'because he looks not like an ape, but with a stern, royal, and kingly countenance.' He both looked and spoke like a man that had drunk into his soul such solid, high, and generous principles, as few men are acquainted with; which made him very zealous not only for righteousness, integrity, and holiness, but for decorum in all things. He had a

^r [Life of Plotinus, § 9. prefixed to his Works, vol. i. p. lx.]

^s [Εἰ μὴ καὶ τὸν λέοντα αἰτιῶτό τις,

ὅτι μὴ πιθήκειον βλέπει, ἀλλὰ βλοσυρὸν καὶ βασιλικόν.—Greg. Naz. Orat. xliiii. § 64. tom. i. p. 819 E.]

great regard for all those things which are mentioned by the apostle, for *whatsoever things were true, honest,* (or rather, comely and grave, seemly and venerable, as *σεμνὰ* doth signify,) for all that was *just, pure, lovely, of good fame and report*; if there was *any praise, or any virtue*^t, he was most earnest and forward in its behalf.

Thirdly, and now what his usefulness was, and the benefit we received by him, all that bear any share in the government of this society will be made to know by the want of him. There is not one but will cry out with Elisha, “O the chariot of this place and the horsemen thereof!” which words seem to express what a necessary man Elias was, and to be just like that of Horace to Mecænas^u when sick, which we may use concerning him that is now dead,

Grande decus, columenque rerum,

‘our great glory, the pillar upon whose shoulders the weight of business of late lay;’

O et præsidium et dulce decus meum,

as he saith in another place^x, ‘O thou who wast both my safeguard and my ornament!’ who wast a society by thyself, a college in brief, what a loss have we sustained by thy departure! That must not be resolved by me nor by any one single person of us, but we must all lay our heads together to tell our loss. To which of us was not he dear? Who is there that was not engaged to him? Who can think himself as wise as he was when we had him?

And this our high and dear esteem of him when he was with us leads me to speak of that honour and reverence which we all express to his name, that affection which is in our hearts to his memory, the sense that is in us of our great and unspeakable loss; in answer to those three foregoing considerations about Elisha. But here I must be very brief and put all together. There is none that knew his worth, but honour his very dust. And, for my part, I honour him so much, that I wish we might do as the virgins of Israel did for Jephthah’s daughter^y, come once a year hither and lament his death; and so at once we might express all these three, our respect, affection, and sense of our loss. His name is most worthy to be

^t Phil. iv. 8. ^u Lib. ii. Od. 17. [4.] ^x [i. 1, 2.] ^y Judges xi. 40.

had in a more especial remembrance, and highly deserves to be ranked among our benefactors, he having endowed our library with all the books that he had and we wanted; and I have reason to believe, that if he had not been so suddenly surprised by those forgetful lethargic fits, he intended to bestow more upon us than his books, which yet were both many and choice ones, being above six hundred in number, and many of them large and costly; and for the matter of them, many Hebrew books, besides some Arabic, many mathematical books, many books of history both ancient and modern, as also of philosophy and philology, both sacred and profane.

And whensoever we commemorate his love unto us, let it be with some encomium; let us mourn *quod talem amiserimus*, 'that we are deprived of such a person,' but let us rejoice and give thanks to God *quod talem habuerimus*, 'that we ever had such a one who hath done us so much good;' they are the words of St. Hierom to Nepotian^z, with a little alteration.

But let me tell you in conclusion of all that herein would be shown our greatest love and affection which we bare to him, this would be the greatest honour of him, if we would but express his life in ours, that others might say when they behold us, There walks at least a shadow of Mr. Smith. And O that I might beg, with Elisha, a double portion among those that I desire should share in the gifts and graces of this Elijah! This is the highest of my ambition, that many might but possess the riches that lodged in this one. They disgrace their master who have not skill in that which they say he professed; but they who tread in his steps and excel in his art shine back again upon him from whom first they received their light. Let me seriously therefore exhort every one of us to imitate this master in Israel; imitate him in his industry, if not in his learning, shake off all laziness and sloth; do not *σωματοῦν τὴν ψυχὴν*, 'embody and enervate your souls' by idleness and base neglect, do not emasculate them and turn them into flesh by drowsiness or vain pleasures. Imitate his temperance, his patience, his fortitude, his candour and ingenuity, his holiness and righteousness, his faith and love, his charity and humility,

^z [Rather to Heliodorus in memory of Nepotian, epist. lx. § 7. tom. i. col. 334 B.]

his self-denial and true self-resignation to the will of God; in a word, all those Christian virtues which lived in him, let them live in us for ever. Let us die to the world, as he did, before we die; let us separate our souls from our bodies and all bodily things before the time of our departure and separation come. Let us take an especial heed lest we do *παθεῖν τὸν περιγίειον κόσμον*, as most men do, lest we ‘suffer this lower and earthly world,’ lest we be drawn forcibly into its embraces, and so held from rising aloft; but let us turn up our minds continually to heaven, and earnestly desire *pati Deum*, ‘to suffer God;’ to be mightily and strongly attracted by him, from all earthy and sensible delights, to an admiration and love of his everlasting beauty and goodness. Let us labour to be so well acquainted with him and all things of the higher world, and so much disengaged in our affections from this and all that is in it, that when we come to go out of this world we may never look back and say, O what goodly things do I leave! what a brave world am I snatched from! would I might but live a little longer there! Let us get our hearts so crucified to the world, that it may be an easy thing to us to shake hands with and bid a farewell to our friends, the dearest things we have, our lands, houses, goods, and whatsoever is valuable in our eyes. Let us use the world as though we used it not; let us die daily as our dear friend did; and so it was easy to him to die at last. Die, did I say? Shall I use that word, or rather *ἀφίπταται*, ‘he is flown away,’ as Nazianzen speaks^a, his soul hath got loose and now feels her wings; or *μετοικίζεται*, ‘he hath changed his habitation,’ he is gone into the other world, as Abraham went out of Ur into Canaan; or, as the same father says, *μικρὸν προαποδημῆί τοῦ σώματος*^b, ‘he hath taken his journey into another country a little before his body?’ He hath left his body behind him a while to take a sleep in the dust, and when it awakes at the resurrection it shall follow also to the same place. Then shall it be made *a spiritual body*, then shall it have wings given to it also, and be lovingly married again to the soul, never more to suffer any separation. And at that time we shall all meet with our dear father and friend again,

^a [Orat. funebr. in Gorgon. viii. § 21. tom. i. p. 231 B.] ^b [Ibid.]

who now are here remaining, crying, out, *O my father, my father, &c.* Then shall all tears be wiped away from our eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain^c: then we shall not need such a light as he was, for there is no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever^d.
Amen.

^c Rev. xxi. 4.

^d Ibid. xxii. 5.

DIVINE ARITHMETIC;

OR

THE RIGHT ART OF NUMBERING OUR DAYS.

BEING

A SERMON

PREACHED JUNE 17, 1659,

AT

THE FUNERALS OF MR. SAMUEL JACOMB, B. D.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT S. MARY WOOLNOTH IN LOMBARD STREET, LONDON,
AND LATELY FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE IN CAMBRIDGE.

I COR. VII. 29, 30, 31.

The time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as they that have none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not, &c.: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

Οὐ τὸ ζῆν περι πλείστου ποιητέον, ἀλλὰ τὸ εὖ ζῆν.—

Plato in Critone. [p. 48 A.]

TO MY WORTHY FRIEND

MR. THOMAS JACOMB.

SIR,

I KNOW that I shall but revive your grief by sending this sermon to your hands ; but it is a trouble which you have drawn upon yourself by desiring to see that which you heard. It was not meet that I should resist your request, because your brother, whom I had reason to love as myself, used to deny you nothing ; yet if I had obtained leisure to have considered these things over again more deeply, you might have seen them (it is possible) pressed with more weight of argument, and put into a more exact order : but since you were desirous that I would despatch them to the press speedily, these papers come to you to intreat you that you will be content to bear a share in the faults that by reason of haste may (it is likely) be discerned in them. And if I could requite you in a greater matter by alleviating your griefs, and helping you to bear your sorrows, I should readily lend you my hands, yea, and my shoulders. But thanks be to God, you need not my assistance, but have learnt to bear patiently this sad providence. It is an easy matter to be pleased with God's providences when he doth what we would have him ; but to rejoice in adverse things, and to suck some sweetness out of gall and wormwood, is very hard. Everybody can thresh corn out of full sheaves, and fetch water out of the Thames ; but to bring an harvest out of the dry stubble, and to draw water out of a rock, is the work only of a divine power, which can bring good out of evil. I need not doubt but you are endued with it, and that God will comfort you with the same comforts wherewith you comfort others, and that you will say, Even this is good too. Let me have a share in your prayers, that it may be sanctified to me also, who ought to think myself concerned in it, and I shall ever remain,

Your true friend to serve you,

SIMON PATRICK.

BATTERSEA, June 28, 1659.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL
THOMAS VINE R,
ALDERMAN OF THE CITY OF LONDON,

AND

THE REST OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE PARISH OF ST. MARY
WOOLNOTH, LOMBARD-STREET.

WHEN the soul is set in sad circumstances, and clothed with black and mournful thoughts, it is very apt to hearken to sober counsels, and to entertain pious purposes and resolutions. I imagine it possible that the sight of the corpse of your beloved pastor might open a wider gate than ordinary for the truths which were then propounded to enter into your hearts, and that in that sad silence of your souls they might have more of your attention, and better audience. If they found any good acceptance with you then, they come now again to ask you whether you still stand so affected, and continue in the same mind, and can find in your heart upon a second motion to renew your good resolutions.

For when the soul that hath been shut up in itself shall but open again to let in some light of mirth and gladness, all our sad and serious purposes are ready to run out at the same door, unless we take good heed and give an express command for their stay by laying fast hold upon them. When the soul grows gay and pleasant again, it is apt to look upon its former resolves but as melancholy fancies, or to retain only such a weak remembrance of them as we do of the shadow of a dream: or they seem as things do that we are run away from, and have left far behind us; which when we were present looked as big as a church steeple, but now at a distance seem no bigger than the stump of a tree. And therefore it is necessary that you ask yourselves how the truths that were then plainly represented appear unto you at ten or eleven days' distance from them. Ask yourselves, I say, whether now they appear so great and weighty as it is possible they might when you were very near unto them; and whether now that you are counting your money and about your

trades, you have as good a mind to reckon your days aright, as perhaps you had when God and you were reckoning together. If you would know your souls aright, and be acquainted with your own temper, you must take yourselves in all moods, both when you are merry and when you are sad, when you are in health as well as when you are sick; and if you like the same truths alike at all times, it is an argument of a healthful constitution. So some of the Persian wise men advised that a man should consider of a business both when he had drunk liberally and when he was fasting, in the night and in the day, when he was angry and when he was well pleased, and he might be sure it was a reasonable thing if it appeared so from whatsoever station he looked upon it. In like manner I advise and entreat you to consider whether you like these things not only when you were swallowed up with sorrow, but now that you have dried your eyes. Do they appear the same now to your sight, that they did when you looked upon them through tears? Can you like these things in shops as you did in the church? now that they are presented to your eyes, as when they struck your ears? Ask your souls whether they are at so much leisure as to consider once more of them. Tell yourselves whether any such sense of the truth remain upon them, that you will try how you like them upon second thoughts. And I pray our good God that whosoever of you taketh a review of these things, may learn so much of this divine art as to take an account of the days he hath passed, to keep a fair account of the rest of his life, and to give up his accounts with joy at the day of our Lord. I use this boldness and freedom of speech to you, because you have been used unto it by my dear friend, and because I think thereby I shall best serve both the truth and you. Let me be so importunate therefore with you, as to conjure you by all the names of love and dearness, by all that is precious and valuable to you, by the remembrance of our Lord, by the remembrance of all the servants of the Lord that have laboured among you, by the love you bear to your own souls, and as you desire after heaven, that you will consider seriously how precious a thing a day is, and that you will not spend it all in the business of this world, much less in sports and recreations, but let God have a considerable portion of it. Some of the heathens have carefully prohibited the wasteful mispence of men's hours; and therefore I may well be suffered if I be urgent with you to redeem them. It is a notable testimony that Ælian gives of the Lacedæmonians^a, that they were "hugely parsimonious and even covetous of their time," spending it all about necessary things, and suffering no

^a Λακεδαιμόνιοι δεινὴν ἐποιοῦντο τοῦ χρόνου τὴν φειδῶ, &c. L. 2. Ver. Hist. cap. 5.

citizen either to be idle or to play; insomuch that when it was told that some used to walk in the afternoons for their recreation, the ephori forbad it as savouring of pleasure, and would have them to recreate their bodies by some manly exercises which had some profit in them, and would breed them to be serviceable to the common good. How much will they shame us in the day of judgment, when it shall appear that all this thriftiness of theirs was not so much for their souls as for the profit of their city; and we would not use half so much care for immortal beings, and the securing of a better country, which is an heavenly! Themistocles seeing two cocks fight when he was going to a battle, pointed his soldiers to them, and said, Do you see yonder combatants, how valiantly they deal their blows^b? and yet they fight not for their country, nor for their gods, nor for the honour of their ancestors; no, nor for glory, nor liberty, nor children; but merely to overcome and crow over the vanquished. What courage then, my brave countrymen, should this put into your hearts, on whose resolution all these depend, and by whose valour they subsist! The same I say to you: Do you see how sparing and saving of their time the old Lacedæmonians were? and yet it was not for the worshipping of their gods, nor for the attending to their souls, &c., but merely that they might be hardy soldiers, and might overcome all their enemies. How good husbands then ought we all to be; how valiantly should we resist all thieves and robbers that would steal away our time from us; when it is for God, for heaven, for the safety of our souls, yea, and for our happiness, peace and quiet in this world also! If this discourse may any thing quicken you, let not me be forgot in those good hours that you spend with God; and I shall not forget to pray for you, that he would provide a pastor for you after his own heart, that will feed you with knowledge and understanding, and guide you in the good old paths that lead to everlasting life.

Your servant in the Lord Jesus,
SIMON PATRICK.

BAFTERSEA, June 28, 1659.

^b Ibid. cap. 28.

DIVINE ARITHMETIC,

OR

THE RIGHT ART OF NUMBERING OUR DAYS.

PSALM XC. 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

IF I were come hither to vent my own passions, they would have been better pleased in the choice of some other text than this that I have read unto you. When I first heard of the departure of mine and your dear friend, those words of David did strike my mind, and methought did very well fit my mouth, with the alteration of a name only. *I am distressed for thee, my brother Jacob: very pleasant hast thou been to me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women^a.* Upon this text it is possible that affection would have taught me eloquence. Grief itself would have been pleased that I should have related his pleasantness. Sorrow would have been contented that I should have remembered the joys of his society; for they would have been huge gainers by it in the conclusion, when the heat and ardency of the affection would have but ended in greater drops of tears for the loss of such a friend. O how willingly could I fill your ears with such pathetic groans as those of David, saying, "O my friend, my friend, would God I had died for thee, my friend, my friend!" And then I imagine that I should hear the return of an universal groan from all your hearts, more sad than his doleful knell. I imagine that at least you would say in your thoughts, as the disciples did when they saw our Saviour weep, *Behold how he loved him!* It were easy, with a very little art, to make this place a *Bochim*, a place of weepers, so that it should be said by those that see you, as they said at good Jacob's funeral,

This is a grievous mourning^a to this people. But then, my beloved, when the flood was a little fallen, and the tempest blown over ; when reason and religion had leave to return and take their places, you and I would begin to ask ourselves, What have we done ? What a folly is it to suffer such a deluge that should drown the thoughts of God ! What forgetfulness, to let grief stifle the motions of our soul to him that ought to have the precedence of all our other relations ! Then should we begin again to lament our too forward lamentations ; then should we call for a new tide to wash away the former mud. Yea, and the soul of our pious brother, if it could be sensible of what we say and do here, would be much grieved too, that he should leave such an unworthy friend behind him, to discourse at his funeral, as knew not how to prefer God's honour before all the respect that is owing unto him.

I will remember therefore that it was his desire, and ought to be mine also, that I should serve the good of your souls ; and accordingly I shall speak as much as I can for God, before I speak anything of him. And what I say of him, I shall endeavour likewise may reflect honour and glory upon God, and redound to your profit and edification.

For this purpose I have chosen these words of the Psalmist, which are no less suitable to the occasion, than they will seem perhaps to some of you to be to the times wherein we live.

The title of the Psalm tells us that they are part of a prayer of Moses the man of God ; and, as the Chaldee Paraphrase saith^b, of a prayer which he made when the children of Israel sinned in the wilderness, and many of them were suddenly cut off, and the rest wasted away in that barren place. He begins his address to God with an acknowledgment of his eternity and everlasting goodness, and of man's dependance on him, even as a word doth upon the mouth of him that speaks it ; so that if he do but say to man, *Return*, he presently goes unto his dust^c. And more especially he acknowledgeth how obnoxious men have made themselves to God by contumacy, and rebellion against him ; and how they shorten too often their own lives by kindling the anger of God against them, from ver. 5 to ver. 10, where he shows how he sweeps them away as a torrent

^a [Gen. 1. 11.]

^b [Walton, Bibl. Polyglott. tom. iii. p. 230.]

^c Psalm xc. 1, 2, 3, 4.

that bears all before it; how he surpriseth them suddenly when they never dream of it^c, and makes them wither away like a flower by some unexpected nipping blast, that causeth it to hang down its head and die: the reason of which severity and sharp proceeding is from their sins, whereby they dared him to his face, and openly contemned his sacred government^d. This was the very case of the Israelites in the wilderness, when *the wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men among them*, as it is Psalm lxxviii. 31.

But how inconsiderate foolish man is, in thus sinning against God, the Psalmist seems to confess, when he saith, *The days of our years are threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow*, &c.^e; i. e. there is no need to stir up thy wrath, for our days are short enough of themselves; we have much ado to crawl to eighty years, and if we do, the very weakness and infirmities of our age will breed us sufficient trouble and sorrow, without any additional griefs from the just displeasure of the Almighty.

And yet for all this, he sadly complains that very few minded or considered the power of God's anger, which is as great as men can possibly fear or imagine it to be, and greatest of all toward those that profess to fear him, but yet rebel against him. *Who knows the power of thy anger* &c.^f Alas! very few that consider how often they provoke God, how jealous he is of his name, and consequently how short their days are like to be who do dishonour unto it. In the words of my text therefore he heartily beseeches the Lord that he would teach them to number their days as they ought, and promises that (after all these corrections) they will bring a heart of wisdom. For so the words run in the Hebrew, as obviously as may be to any one's observation; *Show us so* (i. e. so as we should) *to number our days*, וְנִבְיָא לִבָּב הַחֵמָה, *and we will bring a heart of wisdom, or a wise heart.*

According to this rendering of them, they contain a prayer to God, and a promise. He first prays for something that he would have God to do, *Teach us so to number our days*; and

^c Psalm xc. 5, 6.^d Ver. 8.^e Ver. 10.^f Ver. 11.

secondly, he promises something that they will do; *We will bring a wise heart.* Or, according to the ordinary translation, the words are an entire petition, first for grace, to teach us to *number our days* aright; secondly, for effectual grace, which may *so teach us* that good may come of it; so that there may be some good effect of the account, and it may amount to some valuable consideration.

I shall neglect neither of these translations, nor any else that shall appear to be genuine and unforced; but shall speak to them in these following observations, or in the use and application of them.

First, that we are very apt to misreckon, and in nothing more than in the business of life.

Secondly, that our life is very short if we take it at the best.

Thirdly, that the right numbering of our days is earnestly and diligently to be inquired out.

Fourthly, that the best disposition to attain this true art of numbering is a praying heart and a pious mind.

OBSERV. I.

For the first, it is most plainly supposed, in that we need a master to teach us to reckon right. It would be worth my pains to show you how much we are out in our accounts about the things of this world. What a sum do we make these cyphers, these empty nothings amount unto! What a rate do we set upon riches! at what huge sums do we purchase honours, &c.! How vainly do we think that such an enjoyment will make an addition to our contentment! How do we multiply our hopes without any certainty! &c., and in the mean time heaven and all the great realities of another world stand for nothing in our account. So in reference to ourselves I might show you how few sins or miscarriages we take any notice of, if ever we happen (which is but seldom) to call ourselves to an account; and how many good deeds we very falsely reckon up. But I shall confine myself to the bad arithmetic of men in numbering of their days, which the text most naturally leads me unto; and in a few words I shall show you how men misreckon in the business of life.

First, they are very much out in their reckoning, if we look upon the account itself; and secondly, if we examine the rule by which they number.

For the account, that is very false which men make.

First, about the length of their days, they tell to so many thousands, and are very loath to make an end, when perhaps their life may be summed up in one figure. Yea, the rich fool in the Gospel would rather tell by many years than many days, saying, *Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years; eat, drink, and be merry*^h. He that could not tell truly to one (for that night his soul was required) tells till he came to a million. What an huge mistake! what an irrecoverable error was this, that could never be amended! But thus do all men generally miscount in the days of their health; and which is most strange, even dying men oft-times think of nothing but recovering and living still in the world. They number by years and not by days, or reckon all days to be long and none short.

Secondly, their account is very false about the quality of these days. You shall scarce meet with any man, but he reckons so much pleasure in such a condition which shortly he hopes to attain; and accounts upon so much joy from every mutation and change that he shall make. He thinks that all his days, be they short or long, must all be summer and sunshine days. He dreams not of the *evil days*, (as the Scripture calls them,) i. e. the days of adversity and misery; he thinks not of a storm or a tempest; of a cloud that may cover his sky, and bring a sad darkness upon all his mirth and pleasure; and so he never provides against it, but is miserably surprised when he sees all his expectations perish. Men are like Babylon, that said, *I shall sit as a lady for ever*ⁱ: I shall never know widowhood, nor the loss of children. I shall be happy when I am for myself; when I am married, when my father dies and leaves me a fair estate; when I have builded me a house, and purchased so much land, &c. And so they reckon many years in the same manner, which must be all days and no night, all fair days and none foul. This makes them heavy and oppressed when the days of darkness come, and every one saith, *Non putaram*^k (the fool's motto), 'I never thought of this.' One sad accident blots their whole account, and tells

^h Luke xii. 19.

ⁱ Isai. xlvii. 7.

^k [Plutarch. de Tranq. An. p. 474.

Sen. de Tranq. An. cap. xi. § 7.

Compare the author's Heart's Ease,

vol. iii. p. 528.]

them to their grief how the whole work is wrong wherein their thoughts have laboured.

Thirdly, about the use of these days, they are no less dangerously mistaken. Men reckon that there are none but play-days in their life, and they can find never a working day among them. All their days in their calendar are festivals; and they are so far from minding the business of life, viz. dressing up their souls for God in a blessed eternity by religion and holiness, that a saint should have no respect from many that pretend to honour him, were it not that he gets them leave to play more freely. The whole course of their lives is but a sporting business, and when they lay aside their worldly affairs, it is but to obtain leisure to be more frolic. There are those in the world that do nothing else but make their bodies spruce and trim, that learn to speak finely and court ladies, that in the morning are employed between the comb and the glass, and in the afternoon would have others look on them as much as they did in the glass¹. These account a hair or two out of their place of as great moment as the sacking of a town; and you may say they are employed in the same sense that children are when they are dressing up a baby.

A second sort we cannot but see in the world, whose study is to flatter those that are great; who learn to crouch and comply most basely with all their humours, who gape for a place of preferment as a dog doth for a bone; and they know no other use of a day, but to provide for to-morrow if they can. How many others do we see sit all the day at wine, and know no other business but to eat and drink, and walk from one jolly place unto another; who turn days into nights, and nights into days; who are mere paradoxes in nature, desiring to live for ever in this world, and yet gorging themselves as if they meant to die to-day, and never to taste more of God's creatures? And I wish I could not say there are another sort that have nothing at all to do, but are eat up with laziness: men that have no other thoughts but how they may spend their time which lies upon their hands, with least trouble to themselves: the vermin of the world, that do no good themselves,

¹ Inter pectinem et speculum occupati, &c. Sen. [de Brevit. Vitæ, cap. 12.]

and devour the labours, yea, and the time of others. And for those who you think are busy and full of employment, that have not a day of play in all their lives, (unless they sleep on the Lord's day,) I pray what can you say of them, but what Seneca doth^m, *Operose nihil agunt*, 'they take a great deal of pains to do nothing.' But do they do nothing, will you say, that labour hard all day long, and sweat at their work with the strength of an ox? I answer, Yes, if they were oxen and horses, I should commend their pains, and think they deserved a reward; but since they have a diviner shape, I can call this toil by no better name than a laborious loitering. The man is miserably ridden by the beast, and seeing he takes no time to tame it, all the rest of his toil is but a more painful sort of playing, a more serious kind of idleness. Ask such a man what he would do if he could live a hundred years longer than yet he hath done; and he would tell you that he would add house to house, and increase his acre of land into a hundred, and eat and drink of the best; the very voice of a cow, or such a creature, if it could speak. In such poor fancies do these men's souls sport themselves, and they do no more of the work of a man (which is to mortify these carnal affections, and store their mind with divine knowledge) than he doth that rolls himself in a softer and more delicate laziness. Alas poor souls! that play away their time in a most tyrannous slavery; that are at leisure from themselves, that they may drudge in the service of baser things. And will you say a man that coasts about to every shore of the world to get riches, and lade himself with goods, is really employed? His ship takes as long journeys as himself, and is laden with as much riches as he pretends unto. But he knows how to make use of that riches, and he buys land, or provides for his children, &c. What then! He dies, and as to the other world, he is worse than nothing. Is this all you can say of the life of a man, that he hath fair possessions, and provides well for those that stay behind him? Then sure there is no other state to come; or if there be, the man hath played away his day, having done nothing that will last to all eternity. Nay, if this be the work of a man, it had been better for us to have been apes, or such

^m [Ibid. cap. 13.]

like creatures ; for they take least pains to live, and they need no such inheritance to leave their young ones. And so you may say of him that studies impertinent things, or takes up all his time with other affairs of this present world ; *He hath stood all the day idle*, as our Saviour saith to those that he sends into the vineyard ; and his account at the last will appear so false, that it will be corrected as Philoxenus did the book that was sent him to amend, with one great blot from the beginning to the end^a. The very heathens have reprov'd the folly of these men, and given such a dash to their accounts, that it is a wonder they should not begin to think how they may live. There is a saying in many men's mouths, but I wish they would think from whom it came, that they may be ashamed not to practise it ; and it is that which Socrates used, " Wicked men live that they may eat and drink, and good men eat and drink that they may live^o." This one saying strikes I know not how many out of the number of the living ; and if this heathen were alive, he would take most to be dead men, playing in the shape of the living.

But let us look a while upon the rule by which men reckon, and you shall see more clearly how bad their accounts are.

1. Some reckon by their age ; they account that the old must needs die before those that are young, and they reckon that the fewer days any one hath spent the more he hath to come, and so few think of dying till they think it cannot be avoided. Hence it is that one who is old saith, I shall never live to see an end of these troubles, but you that are young will behold the conclusion ; and perhaps that party drops into the grave in his youthful days. And he that is young saith, These will be fine things to talk of when we are old, our nephews will wonder when we tell them of such strange revolutions ; when perhaps the next week he is sent into the place of silence. These are they that reckon by ages, and who think when childhood is past, that youth, manhood, and gray hairs are all to come : but they forget the vulgar proverb which some of the Jews ele-

^a Εὐθὺς ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς ὅλον μέ-
χρι τῆς κορωνίδος περιγράψαι. Plut.
[De Fort. vel Virt. Alex. orat. 1.
p. 334 C.]

^o Τοὺς μὲν φαύλους ζῆν τοῦ ἐσθίειν
καὶ πίνειν ἔνεκεν, τοὺς δ' ἀγαθοὺς
ἐσθίειν καὶ πίνειν ἔνεκεν τοῦ ζῆν. Plut.
de Aud. Poetis. [p. 21 E.]

gantly express, "The old ass very often carries the skin of the young one to the market." Young men must not let their fancy be so brisk as not to make account that they are but men; and what is that? *Man is like to vanity*, (saith the Psalmist,) *his days are as a shadow that passeth away*^q.

2. Others reckon by their strength and lustiness of body, and imagine that their constitution is so healthful that they are able to wrestle a fall with the greatest sickness. Their rule is, that the best built house shall stand longest; a very false and deceitful rule! For on a sudden we see the fire of a fever will burn up and consume the best timbered body in the world. The flames of a calenture will make him melt away as grease, whose strength is as the strength of stones, and whose flesh is like unto brass. And who can hinder his spirits from catching fire? Who knows what vipers he nourishes within him by his meat and drink, and especially his intemperance, which will eat through his own bowels, even while *his breasts are full of milk, and his bones moistened with marrow*^r? Who knows what rottenness there is at the core of the fairest fruit? and who doth not know that the goodliest oaks prove oftentimes hollow and without heart within? And therefore let us not stay till the axe be laid at the root, and the stroke of some terrible disease teach us to reckon better.

3. Another sort reckon by the care they have of themselves. They measure their days by temperance, chastity, and good use of their bodies, by freedom from excess and riot, and whatsoever might be the matter and occasion of diseases. To say the truth, these men have a great many good rules, *ex.gr.* "Too much oil puts out the lamp; spare diet is the greatest cordial of nature; discreet fasting is the best physic:" but they have one rule which spoils all; "Temperance must needs prolong our time: the moderate man shall have many days." It is a pity such men should never think of the chances, the sudden accidents and unexpected surprisals which yet we have many instances of in the world. Plagues and infections, they say, soonest seize on the finest tempers, pestilent breaths do soonest choke the purest

^p נְדִישִׁי בְּקָלִי סְבִי דְרִשְׁתִּינִי פִּשְׁבִּי
: דְּהוֹנִנִי, 'Quamplurimi cameli sunt
annosi, qui juniorum camelorum
pellibus onusti sunt,'—Talmud,

Sanhedrin, p. 52 a; Plantavit. Floril.
Rabbin. § 1567, p. 293.]

^q Psalm cxliv. 4.

^r Job xxi. 23, 24.

spirits. And there are secret malignant causes which are unknown to the best of nature's secretaries. Yea, the most certain cures of known diseases have sometimes proved fatal to men's bodies. So Gesner reports that one year he observed *omnes pleuriticos a secta vena expirasse*, 'that all those who were let blood in pleurisies gave up the ghost.' The opening of a vein, which useth to give the soul breath, proved through the corruption of the air (as he thinks) to be but the gate of death.

4. Others perhaps do reckon their days by their usefulness and the good which they do in the world. There are a great many promises made to dutiful and obedient persons, to such who are charitable and merciful to others; which may make them apt to promise to themselves a certainty of long life. R. Nechania, a Jew, when his scholars asked him on his death-bed how he came to live so long, answered, "I never sought mine own honour by any man's disgrace, I never reproached nor cursed my neighbour, and I was a liberal dispenser of my riches to others," &c., alluding, it is like, to that in Psalm xxxiv. 12, 13, 14.: *Who is he that would live long and see many days? let him keep his tongue from evil.* But though there be some truth in this, yet there are many exceptions, and such men do count wrong if they have no other rule but this. For sometimes by reason of one great sin, (as in the case of Moses,) sometimes for the sins of others who deserve not such jewels, and sometimes that they may not live to see miserable and evil times which are the punishments of sin, the good man is taken away. You see the days of our dear brother are summed up, and we are taught to number aright by the brevity of his life. If the king of terrors could have been affrighted by piety and usefulness to have let his dart fallen out of his hand, I had not been now here; unless it had been to have offered sacrifices of praise for his recovery to health again.

5. A fifth sort there are that measure their own lives by the lives of others; and that not of all others neither, but of the longest livers. They hope to attain to the days of the oldest man in the parish, and think not that they may go away in the company of the youngest. And especially if they see drunkards and such sinners with gray beards upon red or rotten faces, they think surely that they are many miles off from a grave. I do

not know what kind of dotage it is that possesses men's hearts, but so it is, that though they see many flowers cropped in their fullest beauty, yet they mind not them so much, though they be in their own hands, as they do the rest that still flourish in the garden. Though a wife be snatched out of men's bosoms, yet they think to live and embrace another. Though a child be ravished out of their arms, yet they think to live and get more; as if death must be so kind as to let them grow old, seeing he hath devoured their relations in their youth. You see now the corpse of one before you that is gathered in the flower of his age; and yet which of you is there that doth not think that he shall be at the choice of another minister, and that he shall hear him preach a great many sermons, because some in the parish are grown so old as to have seen the funerals of three ministers besides this? I wish heartily men would but a little ponder upon this common mistake, and when they think of the large extent of some men's lives, they would likewise cast their eyes upon the shortness of others, and see whether they will not overbalance the former account.

Sixthly, some men's rule is, "that all men's days are numbered by a fatal decree, and therefore they need not number them." They measure their days by the stars, and fetch their rule from astrology and some secret fate: or rather, they do not measure them at all, nor make any reckoning how they live, whether piously or wickedly, temperately or lewdly, thinking that the one cannot naturally prolong, nor the other naturally shorten men's days. This is the Turkish way of account; who think that every man's fortune, as they call it, and the length of his days is written in his forehead by the angel that stands by when he is born. And so one of them not many years ago, when he was hanged in the Low Countries, pointed to his forehead; as though it was his destiny, and not his fault. A barbarous, brutish opinion, fit to nourish bloody soldiers, and make them desperate; and was, no question, cunningly devised by the Impostor to make them fear no danger. But whatsoever is determined above concerning our lives, it is plain by Scripture and reason that our wisdom, care, and good behaviour is required, and that by wickedness we may cut short those days which nature hath assigned unto them. Though there be an appointed time beyond which we shall not

go, yet we may never come up to that time, but be taken away in the midst of our days.

Many such false rules there are ; but it is no wonder, if you do but consider, first, what a great love men have to this world. The pleasures and fine things that tickle their senses possess them with a fond desire of long life, that they may enjoy all the kindnesses which the world offers them ; and this most ardent desire will let them think of nothing else but many days to entertain her courtships, and answer her love when she seems to smile and look with a pleasing countenance upon them. Or if she begin afterwards to frown, they are loath to think of death, because they hope to mend their fortune, or are wholly unprovided for any better company in another world. *Facile credimus quod volumus* ; we would fain live long, and therefore we will not be of any other belief but that we shall. And the thoughts of death are unwelcome because we love the dalliances of the flesh so well, which will certainly by it be broken off. This false numbering proceeds not so much from the weakness of men's understanding, as from the wickedness of their wills and distempered affections. They have no mind that it should be true that our days may be short, and therefore they will think so as seldom as they can. And secondly, the love of ourselves that is in us is of no less power to blind us and make us very fools. This will not let us think that we may die presently, though many others do. As when two ships meet at sea, they that are in the one think that the other sails exceeding fast, and that they themselves go fairly and easily, or rather stand still ; even so it is in this case. Though men see the days of another to run away like a post, and fly *after the manner of a swift ship that saileth by*, (as Job speaks,) yet they think that they themselves scarce stir at all, and that their time runs on more slowly ; and they seem to be now no older nor nearer unto their graves than they were a year or two ago. They feel their blood doth dance as pleasantly through their veins, and the light sparkles as clearly in their eyes, and their flesh is as warm and moist as formerly they used, and so they think their life is no shorter than it was, because they feel no sensible decays in their nature. A third reason of which mistake is, that the shortness of their thoughts will not let them number aright. Most men look

but at a few things, and those few they consider of by halves, and that half they search not to the bottom; and so they mistake lamentably, and call those years which are but days, and think they live when they lie rotting in their graves. I conceive such men, who seldom seriously think, to be like to a child who knows not how much twenty is, who imagines it is a number that can scarce be told. If they think of living twenty or thirty years, their short thoughts make them seem to be time that will never have an end, wherein they may accomplish all their desires. And though they know that they may fall far short of such an age, yet they only know it, and think no longer of it than a little child; with those thoughts the next object runs away. It is one of the great mischiefs of the world that so few love to consider, and of all other things they least love to consider themselves, and of all parts of self-knowledge they least know what to do with themselves. Many can tell what life is, who know not how to live; many that confess how short it is, who throw it away as if they had too much.

This mistake is of so evil and dangerous consequence, that we had all need make great speed to correct it. Else we shall begin to think of living when it is too late, and some will never think of it at all; and the best will cry out,

O mihi præteritos, &c.^s—

O that God would give me again that time which is flown away! O that I could call back a day that I might spend it better!

And that I may quicken you to reform this erroneous account, let me give a brief touch upon the second observation, and the Lord make it to touch your hearts.

OBSERVATION II.

Our life is but very short if we take it at the best, separate from all those dangers which are continually impendent over us. You all know this, and are apt to be guilty of another mistake, which is, to account this doctrine of the brevity of man's life but a dry and trite theme; and therefore believe it, and be affected with these two things in the text, which point to this observation: which are all that I shall mention.

^s ["O mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos."—Virg. *Æneid.* viii. 560.]

1. Our life is but days. He doth not say, Teach us to number our years; for it is not safe for us to account upon too much, lest we should be deceived in our computation. Yea, Job saith, that *man who is born of a woman is but of few days and full of trouble; he comes up like a flower and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not*^t. Seneca makes the same observation from his poet that I do here from the divine Psalmist:

Optima quæque dies miseris mortalibus ævi

Prima fugit^u.—

He saith not *ætas*, saith he, but *dies*; he speaks not of an age, but a day, that thy thoughts might not be infinite. Why then dost thou promise to thyself (as he goes on) months and years, and whatsoever thy inordinate desire of life listeth? *De die tecum loquitur, et hoc ipso fugiente*^x; ‘he speaks to thee of a day, and that is upon the wing too, hastening very fast away.’ So may I say, the Psalmist speaks to thee of days; it will not be long ere one sun be set, and then thou liest in the arms of the brother of death. If another day shine upon thy head, yet it flies likewise as *an eagle that hasteth to his prey*^y: and it will be a greater wonder if thou outlive all the accidents and dangers of one day, than that thou diest and descendest to thy grave. Yet some of the heathens will not allow us such a large measure for our lives as a day, nor suffer us to account above an hour, or a minute, or if there be any thing less than the least minute. Such a diminutive expression hath Plutarch somewhere concerning it: *Στιγμὴ χρόνου πᾶς ὁ βίος*^z, ‘All our life is but a point of time;’ which Seneca well interprets when he saith, “It is but a point, yea less than a point that we live^a.” If we believed this, we should not draw so long a line of life as we do in our fancy, nor describe such a large circle wherein we make a thousand figures, and have infinite contrivances, as though it were without any end.

2. Our days may be numbered, and therefore they are but few. If he had said years, yet seeing everybody can count them, we could not justly look upon them as long. That which

^t Job xiv. 1, 2.

^u De Brev. Vitæ, cap. 9. [e Virgil. Georg. iii. 66.]

^x [Id. ibid.]

^y Job ix. 26.

^z [De Lib. Educ. p. 13 A.]

^a Punctum est quod vivimus, et adhuc puncto minus. [Epist. 49.]

§ 4.]

every man can reckon is but little; and that is infinite which no man can number. As who can tell the days of eternity? What thought can conceive the duration of God, who ever was, and is, and will be? But every fool can tell what the days of man are, if he will but set his mind to the account. You can say of man no more but that he hath been so many years, and that he is, and nobody can tell whether he shall be. Here you are at a stop, unless you will at random speak of a few days that perhaps shall never come; or if they do, Moses dare let his pen run no further than eighty year, and these pass away as a tale that is told. Or if you will venture to tell by the son of Sirach's account, they are but a hundred, according as you read in Eccles. xviii. 9, 10: *The number of man's days at the most are but an hundred years; as a drop of water to the sea, and a gravel stone in comparison of the sand,* so are a thousand years to the days of eternity.

Which if we did seriously believe, then first, we should not desire, love, or design any thing in this world, as though we should live to the years of Methusalah, or be like Melchizedeck, without end of days. How soon might we tell what would content us, if we could but tell our days aright! What a just measure should we set to all our affections, if we had but once measured our time, and drawn it into a narrow compass! Innumerable designs would vanish out of our minds, even as a shadow doth when the sun shrinks in his head; if we did but look upon ourselves as a shadow, and our lives as a vapour that goes out of our mouths. And, secondly, if we did seriously think what a few figures will serve to number our years when we have their total sum, and how many of them are spent before we can do any more than a beast, and how many we cast away without considering, after we are men, and how many necessary refreshments by meat, and drink, and sleep, will still devour; we would not be so prodigal and lavish of the small number that remains, but save them for good uses and the service of our souls. We would never endure to be such spendthrifts of that of which only we can be honestly covetous; but rate our time at such a price, that one minute of it would seem more valuable than all the world.

The belief of these things, which men account so common that they scarce think of them, would not suffer men to be so

late before they begin to live. They would instantly step beyond resolution, and labour to do their work, lest they should have no time to do it in. It is a wise and good saying of Seneca, *Male vivunt qui semper vivere incipiunt*^b: ‘they never live well, who are always beginning to live.’ Yet this is the state of most men in the world who are at all awakened; they resolve to live to-morrow or the next week, when their business is over; and then they resolve again, and set another day; or perhaps they pray, and read, and begin a better life for a few days, at the end of which some occasion breaks off all: and then they are to begin again, and new resolutions come into their minds, and if God be content to stay their leisure, a few days hence he shall hear more of them. As if they had their times in their own hands, and could make death wait upon them till they thought good to come to their graves. How strangely do men forget themselves! How dead do many good notions lie in their minds! One would think they were in a dream; for like men in a sleep, they say yea and no to all the questions we ask, and yet remember nothing that is said. Ask them if their life be short, and their days uncertain, they will fetch a sigh, and say that all flesh is grass, or as the flower of grass that soon fadeth away. Ask them if they have no work to do, but may take their pleasure, and they say that all eternity depends on this moment, that their work is great, and their time is little, and their account is dreadful. Ask them if God will take the dregs of their time, and be content with the bottom of their days, and they will judge it unreasonable. Yea, ask them if it be fit that he should let such live that do nothing for him, and they cannot but say that we kill vermin, caterpillars, and such like things that destroy God’s creatures, but bring no good to the world. Would you not expect now that they who make such acknowledgments should be busy about their salvation? Would you not imagine that they esteemed time more than thousands of gold and silver? Alas! their senses are all locked up, they are fast asleep, though they thus speak; not one syllable of this comes from their hearts, but they talk of dying and the grave as if they had never seen nor thought of either. If they had a thousand years still to live in the world, they could not be more drowsy about their souls,

^b [Epist. 23. §. 8. ex Epicuro.]

nor more expensive and wasteful of their precious hours, than they are in this short moment of which they talk. Awake, awake for the sake of your poor soul. Let it feel itself, I beseech you, and shake off these heavy and sleepy thoughts that hang upon its mind. O let it not talk like the soul of a bird, that prattles according as it is taught; but let it look into a grave, let it reason with itself about the true number of our days, let it speak its sense to the full, and state things so that thou mayest not only resolve to live, but make account that thou must either live now or never, for any thing thy soul can tell. If I could see any soul looking forth out of its tomb, any mind lifting up its head, and demanding leave of the body that it may live, how blessed an hour should I count this! I would reckon it among the best times of my life, and it would turn all my present sorrow into joy, that God hath got a friend when I lost one. O let us not wound the air with noises of death and judgment, and your hearts remain insensible and unmoved. Let us not seem as fools that fill the world with sounds and clamours, which nobody heeds or gives ear unto. Who do we preach unto but men? what do we preach for, if you will not believe? to what purpose do we call for belief, if you will not consider? and how should it come to pass that a thing of daily occurrence, as death is, should work no more, if men did consider? We could find no worse entertainment from a herd of beasts than we do from many men, if we should preach unto them: and we shall be as unsuccessful upon inconsiderate men, as upon the birds that fly over our heads; for men that will not consider will not be men. Therefore, I beseech you, resolve to take things into your more retired thoughts; and whosoever he be that lays his eyes upon these papers, let him well consider what I have to say upon the third observation, which is chiefly intended, and it is this.

OBSERV. III.

THE right numbering of our days is earnestly and diligently to be inquired out. It is plain enough from the prayer of this man of God. For his prayer for learning shows that we are highly concerned in the numbering of our days; and his prayer to be taught *so*, signifies that he desires to be taught as is before expressed in the Psalm; or else *so* signifies right or

well, without any mistake. For we find the Hebrew word *יָבִן*, which is here rendered *so*, taken for *right* and *well*, as Numb. xxvii. 7 ; *יָבִן בְּנוֹת* &c., *Right have the daughters of Zelophehad spoken*, &c. ; and, 2 Kings vii. 9, the lepers say, *לֹא יָבִין* אֲנַחְנוּ עִשִׂים, *We do not well, this day is a day of good tidings*. And therefore thus we may render the Psalmist's words, *Teach us aright and well to number our days, or teach us so as we should* &c. But the sense will be the same every way, because we shall reckon aright if we number *so* as he spoke before in the Psalm. How is that? will you say ; what is the right and good account?

I shall spare the labour of giving you reasons why you should so diligently inquire, (in hope that you are a little awakened by what hath been said, and in fear that I should extend this discourse beyond the length of a sermon,) and answer to the question as distinctly as I can, with some reference unto what you find in this Psalm.

The word *numbering* is a word of consideration, and signifies a meditating or casting in our mind, a serious thinking with ourselves what our days are, and for what end and purpose our life is given unto us. And if we would not mistake in our accounts, of which there is such danger, then let us follow these rules.

RULE I.

1. Let us number by ones. Let all our account be pure addition, and that but by units. Let us not multiply our days too fast in our own thoughts, nor venture to add one moment to another till God add it. I mean, we must reckon only upon what is present, and account that all our time that is to come is in God's hands, which we must not number to ourselves, because it is none of our own. And so ver. 3 the Psalmist saith, *Thou turnest man to destruction*, &c., i. e. man is wholly in thy power, and he hath no more than thou givest him, and the next moment, if thou sayest, Return, he gives up the ghost. This now therefore is only ours, and so we must set that down, and there stay till God bestow another moment upon us. He may be poor enough that will value his estate by what he hath only in hopes ; and yet such an one is he that reckons his stock of time by what is future. He was a distracted man who

stood at the key of Athens^c, and took a note of all the goods in the ships that came into the port, and made account that they were his; yet just such is the vanity of a man that puts more time into his accounts than this present instant; for he reckons another's goods, not his own; he takes that which is in the hands of God only (who was, is, and is to come) to be his own proper possession. He that numbers thus must reckon over again before he reckon right; and if he will account what is his, he must take great heed that he set not down in the sum that which is God's, and none of his yet. Let him say, Now I am, and I shall be as long as God pleaseth, in whose hands is the breath of my nostrils. He that is hasty and quick in casting of accounts, you know, is frequently mistaken; and the surest way is to proceed leisurely and slowly, that we may mind the figures and comprehend the numbers clearly in our thoughts. There is no less danger in letting our thoughts run too fast when we are about these sacred thoughts: let us stay and pause, let our minds go along with the moments that number our time, but not outrun them; for then all our accounts will be but a fancy, because we have put into them more than is our own. If we could reckon thus, and tell no faster than God adds unto our days, and increases our stock of time, then God would be more in our thoughts, we could not but be more sensible of our dependence upon him, and acknowledge him more seriously in all our ways: we should be apt at every breath to look upon him as the sun that continues the shadow of our lives; and likewise we should look upon our graves more than upon our houses or any thing else: for, as Lipsius well saith, "our houses are but inns, and our graves are our houses^d."

RULE II.

2. Yet let us count those things that may put an end to our days by greater numbers. Or thus, let us reckon that there are more enemies to life than one. Though we can tell but by

^c [Thrasylaus, in Athen. Deipnos. lib. xii. cap. 81. p. 554 e; et Cæl. Rhodig. Lectt. Antiq. lib. xiv. cap. 8. col. 743. He is called Thrasyllus in some MS. copies of Ælian, Var. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 25, from whom

the incident is quoted by Garzoni, Hosp. dei Pazzi Incurabile, disc. 24. p. 63.]

^d Cent. iv. Epist. 30. [tom. ii. p. 359.]

ones when we number our days, or moments rather, yet we may tell by twenties or hundreds when we number those things that may conclude and put a period to our time. Look over a bill of mortality, and there you may tell thirty or forty diseases. Then add forty more to them, and two or three hundred more to that forty, and so proceed until you come near to a thousand. For according to the account of some of the Jews, there are nine hundred and three diseases in the world^e. And let us be sure in this account to put down more ways to the grave than from a sick bed. And above all take heed of that dotage to think that we must die of old age ; for there are fewer die of that disease than of any other in the world.

We must think that our lives may suddenly be snatched away, and not carried off leisurely by the steps of many days' illness. Some diseases do no sooner appear than we vanish and disappear. An enemy sometimes gives no warning, but strikes us dead at one stroke. And our sickness doth not always lay siege to our strength wherein we trust, but we are blown up in a moment as the Israelites were, ver. 5, 6, *Thou carriest them away as with a flood, &c.* They were swept away with plagues, they fell before their foes, they went quick into the pit, and were gone out of the world as soon as a dream out of our mind. And so still we see some are drowned in the water, others are strangled suddenly in their own blood, and a world of contingencies and casualties there are besides : so that ten thousand things besides these nine hundred diseases may put an end to our days. Anacreon the poet was choked with the kernel of a grape^f ; Æschylus by the shell of a tortoise which fell from an eagle's talons, who mistook, as was thought, his bald head for a white rock^g. An emperor died by the scratch of a comb, and a duke of Brittany (as lord Mountaigne tells^h) was stifled to death in such a throng of people as is now in this place ; one of the kings of France died miserably

^e This they gather from the word תרצאות, Psalm lxxviii. 20, the numeral letters of which are 903. [Vid. Plantavit. Floril. Rabbin. § 2002. p. 401.]

^f [Val. Max. ix. 12. § 8. Plin. Hist. Nat. vii. 5.]

^g [Ælian. Nat. Anim. vii. 16. Plin. Hist. Nat. x. 3. Val. Max. ix. 12. ext. 2.]

^h Essays, lib. i. cap. 19. [p. 31. Compare Jeremy Taylor, Holy Living, Works, vol. iii. p. 269.]

by the shock of an hog; and a brother of that lord's, playing at tennis, received a blow with a ball a little above the right ear, which struck him into his grave. What serious considerations would these things breed in us if we thought of them! We should often say in our mind, What if now the house should fall? What if my foot should slip? What if I should be trodden under foot in this press, or drowned in this sweat? What if the boat should overturn, or the horse should throw me? What would become of me if my meat should choke me, or my drink should quench my life? What then? If I be not well provided, I go down in a moment to hell. And therefore I must always live well, that so I may never die suddenly. The cock in the Arabic fableⁱ, because he had overcome in a battle against another of his neighbouring cocks, thought he had now no enemy, and therefore he got upon the top of an house, and began to crow and clap his wings in token of his triumph, when, behold, on a sudden a vulture comes and snatches this great conqueror away. Just such is the state of silly man; he overthrows some disease, and gets the better of it, and escapes in a battle, and rejoices as if now he were out of danger; when some accident or other lies in ambush for him, and strikes him dead upon the place. We must not therefore be secure at any time; the strong man must not glory in his strength, nor the great man in the honour of his family and numerous progeny: for all may be cut off in a moment. I cannot but here remember how three hundred of the Fabii in Rome were slain in one day, and but one man of the family left that was not extinct. And about five hundred years ago, the whole family of the Justiniani in Venice perished in defence of their country against Emanuel the Greek emperor, except one only, who was a priest^k. And Aventinus relates of a count in the time of Henry the Second, emperor, that had thirty sons (besides eight daughters) who attended on him to the emperor's court, and were all preferred to offices by him, and all died in a very short space of time. And so in Scripture we find all Gideon's children slain at once except one; and the like of Ahab's, a wicked family, whom God intended to root out. And yet

ⁱ V. Locman. [Fabulæ, &c. per Thom. Erpenium, p. 41. 4to, Lugd. Bat. 1656.]

^k Babo Comes Abufinus. [Avent. Annal. Boior. lib. v. cap. 5. § 24. p. 488.]

which of us thinks that if we have nine or ten children they may all die before us? Or who thinks that they may all die in a day? Nay, we are apt to imagine not only that we may stay in the world till we have done all we design, but that we shall go out of the world the ordinary way, and not be let out at any new gate. Let us reform this error, and be verily persuaded that there is a vast uncertainty of life and all worldly things, and that death is dressed in a thousand shapes, and may be in every thing we see in the world.

RULE III.

3. MAKE account that there is no greater enemy to life than sin. Sin is not to stand for one thing in our account, but for a thousand, for all the miseries and evils that can be reckoned up. The stone, the gout, the plague, &c., all the pains and stences and noisome evils that were ever heard of are in the womb of sin: and therefore reckon a sinful life to be of all other the most uncertain, and that which provokes the holy God to shorten our days. So you read ver. 7, 8, 9, of this Psalm, that they were consumed in God's anger, and their days passed away in his wrath, when he took notice of their rebellions and saw how heinous their crimes were. If you will believe the wise man, *the years of the wicked shall be shortened*^l. Or if you will believe his father, *God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded*^m. Or the prophet Malachi, by whom God saith, *I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, &c.* Hear what observations one of Job's friends madeⁿ. Ever since a man was placed upon the earth, it was a known rule that *the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment; though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds, yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung; they which have seen him shall say, Where is he? He shall flee away like a dream and shall not be found, he shall be chased away like the vision of the night.* And Job himself doth assent to the truth of the observation, when he saith, *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! And how oft cometh their destruction upon*

^l Prov. x. 27.

^m Psalm lxiv. 7.

ⁿ Job xx. 4, 5, 6.

them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger. They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away^o. This consideration might a little stop men in their violent pursuit of sinful and unlawful desires. If they would but think that every sin may strike off a figure or two from their lives, that every act of it may cut their days some moments shorter, what heart could they have to sin? With what pleasure could they drink too much, if they thought that it were poison? How could they endure passion and revenge, if they thought it would send a fire into their bones? And yet there is all reason that we should expect it should be so, (unless God think fit to alter the course of things for what ends he sees best in his government of the world,) seeing none are such a trouble and burden to mankind as wicked men. He that is so prodigal of his time hath little reason to think that God should give him more in whose hands it only is. He knows not what to do with that he hath already, and therefore how can he with any face come to beg for a day longer to dishonour God? Wonder in thyself that God lets thee live, who knowest not how to live. Admire that he should give thee any time, who knowest not how to use it. And let this one thing lead thee to repentance, and not make thee presume to continue in the same unreasonable mispence. Methinks every sinner when he is sick should think of nothing but dying, and yet they think the least of it. Methinks they should be in a horrible fright and never imagine to escape, (seeing they do no good,) unless they have less reason than the hog in the Arabic fable, that tells us of a butcher^p, who carrying three creatures upon his horse, a sheep, a goat and a hog, observed the two former lay very quiet and still, but the hog kicked and cried and never rested. Thereupon the man said, "Why art thou so impatient when the other two are so quiet?" The hog answered, "Every one knows himself, and the sheep knows that he perhaps is brought into the city for his wool's sake, and the goat for the sake of its milk, and so they need take no care; but I, alas, know very well that I have neither wool nor milk, but that as soon as I come into the city I must be killed; for that is all that I am good for." A wicked man must be worse than such a

^o Job xxi. 17, 18.

^p Locman. [p. 22.]

swine, that doth not think every plague will sweep him away, and that when there is a great mortality he shall be one of the dead; for he is good for nothing else but to be killed, and to make some room for a better person to stand up in that place which he takes up in the world. But if God be pleased for the punishment of others, and to punish them worse hereafter, to let them stay still here; let them know that a sinful life is a mere death, (as the apostle saith of the lascivious woman, 1 Tim. v. 6,) and they can expect nothing hereafter but such a state as will make them wish they had died sooner here.

RULE IV.

4. Reckon that no man's life seems shorter than his that thinks not often how short it is. Time never seems to pass away so swiftly as when we are thinking of something else than our time. I told you life is very short of itself, and we must reckon it by minutes rather than years, or by fractions rather than whole numbers; and yet it is still shorter in our thoughts, because we mind not how these minutes run away. *They are as a sleep*, saith the Psalmist, ver. 5, and in sleep you know there is no observation of time at all, but a night seems as one moment. How soon is an hour gone when we are in any pleasure! Yea, in business, or any employment which takes up our mind, how quickly is a day flown away! A day seems but as an hour to him that thinks not at all of his day. Just as a man that is in a journey, who talks, or reads, or thinks, is come to the end of it before he thought that he was near the place; so it is with every one of us: our life is gone and we know not how, while we think of all things but only of our life. He seems to himself not to have lived at all, that minds not how his time passeth away, because it slips through his fingers and he feels it not. His thoughts being busied always about other things, a year to him is but as a day, and he complains miserably when he comes to die that God hath given him no longer time. If we did consider this, we should often think how our time spends, and that would make us labour to spend it well. We should think what our life is and how it goes, and that would make us prolong it by doing of good. For life seems long to no man so much as to him that minds how it passes on, and how many hours he hath for to

employ, and who doth something in those hours which is worthy to endure and survive himself. His very work will tell him that he hath lived, or else he could not have done so many things, which are the end of life.

RULE V.

5. We must account that in our life there will be some nights as well as days. We must not expect all kind usage from the world, but look to meet with much trouble and sorrow. So ver. 10, the Psalmist tells us, that if we live till eighty years, our strength will be but labour and sorrow; and besides, you see from what hath been said, that we must endure much grief before that, from the loss of our friends and relations that God takes away; besides all the vexation that will be apt to arise from other accidents. It is a foolish flattery of ourselves, to think that all ours must be halcyon days, and that no disgust shall wrinkle our foreheads, nor no black veil be cast over our faces. We had better reckon truly, and put down more black days than white in our calendar; and then if they be fairer than we expect, our contentment will be the greater; and howsoever the thoughts of trouble will make us desire more after our Father's house, and long more in our hearts for the heavenly country. The travail and toil here would make us have a care to provide for our rest with the people of God; and these black nights of affliction, for the eternal day that knows no night at all. We should not be so much in love with life, if we did reckon upon the evils of it; nor so much in fear of death, if we considered how many ways we die daily. What pleasure is there in living when we are eighty year old? when we are a burden to ourselves, and too oft to others, what contentment can we have? What cheer can there be when *those that look out of the window are darkened?* when *the sound of the grinding is low,* and we rise up at the voice of every bird, and all the daughters of music are brought down^a? i. e. when we have lost our eyes, and teeth, and voice, and sleep, and are but a little distance from a clod of earth, what joy can we feel in our hearts? And yet this is the time that we would fain live to, though we creep to it upon our hands and feet through a world of mire and dirt, and swim through the waters of many

^a [Eccles. xii. 3, 4.]

afflictions to be more miserable. I am of Cardan's⁹ mind, that if the life of man should last five hundred or six hundred years, many one would make away themselves out of madness and desperation, (there are so many miseries that befall them,) and yet we are now madly desirous to live till we be weary of life. Let us think that life if it be long may be but a kind of death, and nothing will comfort us then but the hopes of another life. It was a sharp saying of Cæsar's^r to one of his guard, that by reason of his craziness asked his leave that he might cause himself to be put to death; "Dost thou think then that thou art alive?" Alas! such a decrepit thing as man is, when he comes to old age, is but a walking carcase that is ready at every step to stumble upon its grave. Yea, death is preying upon us every day; he gets a mouthfull of our flesh every moment, and sometimes by a sickness even eats us to the very bone; and then though we recruit again and repair our bodies, yet we do but make food for new diseases. It is said to Adam, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die*; which teacheth us that we are next door to death every day, and that we do not so much live as borrow something from death; and if we live long, it will make us pay intolerable usury for not paying our lives sooner.

As these things will correct our mistakes about the length and quality of our days, so I shall now add some things that will teach us better the use of them.

RULE VI.

6. We must reckon our days by our work, and not by our time, by what we do, and not by what we are. Let us account that the longest day which is best spent^s, and that the oldest life which is most holy. *Οὐκ ὁ μακρότατος βίος ἀριστος, ἀλλ' ὁ σπουδαιότατος*^t. A long life is not the best, but a good life. As we do not commend (saith he) him that hath played a great while on an instrument, or made a long oration, but him that hath played and spoken well; and as we account those

⁹ Si vita humana esset 500 aut 600 annorum, omnes desperatione vitam finirent.—Card. de Vita Propria. [cap. 50. tom. i. p. 51.]

^r [i. e. Caligula,—Sen. Epist. 77. §. 16.]

^s Plutarch Consol. ad Apollon. [p. 111 B.]

^t Τὴν εὐκαιρίαν μᾶλλον ἢ τὴν εὐγηρίαν πανταχοῦ καθορῶμεν πρωτεύουσαν. [ibid.]

creatures best that give us most profit in a short time, and every where we see maturity preferred before length of age; so it ought to be among ourselves. They are the worthiest persons, and have lived longest in the world, who have brought the greatest benefit unto it, and made the greatest advantage of their time to the service of God and of men. Let our conscience therefore be the *ephemeris* or diary of our life. Let us not reckon by the almanaek, but by the book of God, how much we live. And let us account that he who lives godlily lives long; and that other men live not at all.

We must not say that a man hath lived seventy years, if he hath done nothing worthy of a man, but that he 'hath been' so long. *Diu fuit, sed parum vixit*; 'he had a great many days, but lived few or none ^u.'

In one sense most men may count their lives by nights rather than days; for they are as men asleep, and do nothing at all that is the business and intent of life.

They are as childish in their desires, as weak in their fears, as unreasonable in their hopes, as impertinently and vainly employed, as if they were but newly come into the world, and had not attained to the use of their reason. Shall we think a man hath lived because he is a yard higher than he was? Is this enough to denominate us men, that we have hair growing upon our chin? No, there are more children than those that are in coats; and while we look no further than the present life, we are but great infants, and are at play with babies. And alas! if we account the right way by our work and improvement of ourselves in true understanding, conscience and godliness, the best of us must reckon fewer years than eighty; for how little of this time do we truly live! When we do no good we may say, as the emperor did, *Diem perdidit*, 'I have clearly lost a day;' I had as good not have been to-day: you can scarce say that I was, if you look at the purpose of being. For to acknowledge God, and get acquaintance with him, to govern ourselves in conformity to him, to do good to others, &c., are the great businesses of life; and of him that minds not these chiefly you may say that there is such a thing called by such a name, and that hath an existence, but you cannot say that the man

^x ["Non ille diu vixit sed diu fuit,"—Sen. de Brevit. Vitæ, cap. 8.]

lives. Shall we say that he saileth much who is taken in a storm as soon as he puts out to sea, who is tossed by contrary winds in a circle to and fro, and in conclusion is brought just where he was when he first launched forth? *Non ille multum navigavit, sed multum jactatus est*, as Seneca well saith^x, ‘He did not sail much, but was tossed very much.’ Shall we then say, that a man hath lived much, whose soul was filled with air and vanity as soon as he was born; who hath tumbled to and fro in variety of business in the sea of this world, and is never quiet in the pursuit of earthly affairs? Alas! when he comes to the end of his days, he is as far from his port as when he first began them; heaven is as far out of his reach (and further too) as when he lay in his mother’s womb. He was much busied, but he did nothing: he was much employed, but he lived idly. For, as I told you, days and living are truly to be measured by the work of a man. And therefore much less can you say that he hath lived, who hath eaten and drank, and got one of the same kind, &c. For so doth a beast; and therefore all you can say is, that the beast in him lived, but not the man. And if we did reckon thus, and consider how much time this toy and that trifle, this business and that service, this man and that woman have devoured besides what every day will have for necessary uses, *videbimus nos pauciores habere annos quam numeramus*^y; ‘we shall see that we have fewer years than we number.’ We say perhaps sixty years is our age, but we may set down ten, yea, though we have seriously minded our great work. Let us therefore hereafter, when we ask ourselves how old we are, reckon from that time that we are born again. And let us distinguish between time, and what is done in time; for all creatures have time as well as we, and unless our work differ us from them, our age will not. O be ashamed to be a child with a great beard! blush to reckon forty or fifty years, when thou knowest not for what thou camest into the world! Let not the sun see thee again so void of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, as if thy soul were but newly dropt into thy body! Be not twenty or forty years in learning to be sober; and for very shame let it not be said, that in so many years thou knowest not how to pray and

^x De Brev. Vit. [cap. 8.]

^y Sen. ibid. [cap. 3.]

represent thy needs to God! How many years dost thou expect to live, if in so many thou canst not learn to mortify one lust? If in the space of fifty years thou canst not get the victory over a cup of drink, how many must God give thee to overcome all the rest of thy sins? If so long experience will not teach thee humility or contentedness, who can hope that thou shouldst live long enough to put on Jesus Christ, and be conformed to all his image? O live, live, I beseech you, as fast as you can; for it is certain, that is little or nothing which we have lived.

RULE VII.

7. We must not account all days alike: or we must not measure our time by the length, but by the weight; not by its greatness, but by its worth. Let us not measure our days (as we do) by the motion of the sun which we see, but by the shining of the Sun of righteousness upon our souls; not by the celestial bodies, but by the celestial inspirations. Think that a long time wherein there were many days of grace, and mind that time and improve it above all the rest. Always think that time is of a different value as to the chief use of time; and in some days we have more of opportunity though but the same time. This makes a great difference in our days, if we will understand it, and should make us very watchful to lay hold upon this flower of time when it presents itself unto us. A day of grace, a Lord's day, when God shall move upon our souls, such an opportunity as this, if God affect our hearts, is worth all our days beside, when we are left unto ourselves. As to the purposes of holiness, and getting nearer to heaven, one moment, when the Spirit of God is upon us, and strongly possesses our mind with good thoughts, and breathes into us holy affections, is worth many hours; yea, days and years, when that is not with us, or doth not so powerfully incite us. Let us therefore employ such time well, and set ourselves to our business, earnestly entreating more of such time, and that God's Spirit will visit us more frequently with its company. Then our work will go on fast, and if it be possible at all to recall the time past, it must be by doing that in a few moments which naturally could not have been done in a whole life. We must value time hereafter as mariners do at sea, by the wind that blows upon us, and then we must hoise up our sails. We must look at

some as harvest days, and then we must gather and lay up in store by hard labour: or as market days, and then we must buy what we want, and lay in provision for the following days. Yea, the blackest day of affliction, if we were well skilled, might be numbered among the best times of our life; for God chasteneth us for our profit, that we may be made partakers of his holiness.

RULE VIII.

8. Reckon time to stand in order to eternity. Consider it not in the absolute notion, but in the relative. Look on it as a river running into the ocean, and account that time itself must be accounted for. So number thy days as to think that they must be numbered again by God. Think that time passeth, and yet that it remains upon thine account. Think that as thou art now, so to eternity thou shalt be. Do not look upon thy life as a few days to be passed, and there is an end; but reckon so many days I have lived, and the next moment is eternity, for any thing I can tell. Everlastingness hangs upon this moment, and the state of the one depends on the state of the other; as time is used by us, so shall we find ourselves used in the other life. I doubt we seldom look on these two as having a reference to each other; but men live, as if when time was trifled away they might begin upon a new score in eternity. Men live as if all should be forgotten that is done here, and they should have something else to think of when they go from hence. Remember therefore that both God and thyself will call thee to another reckoning; all the days which thou hast never told, but went away without any observation, shall be recalled back unto thy mind. Then the mind shall tell deliberately, and run thee through at every thought, how many hours thou satest with the cup at thy mouth; how many days thou didst spend in sport; how long the time seemed when the preacher overrun his hour; and how many motions of God's Spirit thou didst send back, and bid come at some more convenient time. Yea, all thy false accounts shall then be accounted for, and thou shalt never have done numbering thy errors, but shalt tell them all over again with a new torment, that thou shouldst be so wilfully mistaken. O that you would let your souls, which are apt to number so many days in this world, and are loath to make an end, let them launch into the depths of eternity, and

there spread their thoughts. Seeing they have such a mind to be telling out so many years for us, let them run into that vast ocean. Bring forth all your numbers wherewith your minds are pregnant; heap million upon million; lay one hundred thousand of millions upon another, and they are all but as an unit to eternity. In this vast eternity you must certainly live; and therefore why do you not let your thoughts be more upon eternity than upon a few uncertain days in time? Why do not your minds, which love to count so unboundedly the days of this narrow life, extend themselves into eternity, which is without any limits at all? Tell the torments of an everlasting fire, tell the aching thoughts, if you can, of a burning soul, number the sighs and groans of a heart that fries in the wrath of God to eternal ages: then reckon the joys of heaven, number all the sweet notes of the heavenly quire, tell all the songs and hymns of praise which they sing. And if thou hadst an head as big as Archimedes, and couldst tell how many atoms of dust were in the globe of the earth, yet think that such a vast number is but as one little atom in compare with those endless sorrows and those endless joys. Seeing thou canst look so far as to the very end of thy days, seeing thou art prone to run in thy thoughts as far as it is possible, take one step further than eighty years, and then thy thoughts are in eternity; go a little further than the end of thy life, and there let thy thoughts lose themselves. Let this be thy impress, or motto, let this be writ upon thy mind, that a learned man writes upon all his books, *Æternitatem cogita*^s, 'Think of eternity.' This will make thine account more exact, when thou lettest thy thoughts run thither, whither thy time is running, into all eternity.

RULE IX.

9. Though our time be little, yet let us account that it is great enough for what we have to do in time. I said that our life was short of itself, yet let us reckon that it is long enough to serve all the ends of living. We have day enough to do our real business: we have time enough to prepare for eternity. We must always account that we have days enough to number our days, and make up our accounts; and what can we desire more? If we will charge ourselves indeed with unnecessary

^s Johan. Meursius.

things to bring about some great design, and accomplish some covetous desire, and raise our estate to such an height, we may not have time enough to execute our purpose. But must we therefore whine and complain, and say nature hath dealt hardly with us? No, *Vita, si scias uti, longa est*^a; 'Life is long enough, if thou knowest the use of it.' If thou considerest what thou hast to do, thou hast time enough to do it. There is time enough to moderate those worldly desires; to break off those impertinent employments; to throw away those designs; and to subdue thy passions; to cultivate thy mind; to submit thy will to God; to know the intention of the Son of God, his appearing in the world; to work out thy salvation, and to make ready for his coming again. Though we have not time to resolve all questions that are started in the world, yet we have sufficient time to resolve this great one, *What shall we do to be saved?* Heaven may be got in that time that the world cannot. Why then do we murmur at the shortness of life? why do we sigh that we can number no more days? what would men do with them, and to what use would they employ them? Is it their souls they would save? They need no more days than God hath assigned them for that purpose. Is it an estate they would get, or pleasures they would enjoy? They have too much time for such ends, seeing they are not the goods of a man. Would they know all the secrets and subtleties in learning? Two or three ages will not suffice for that; and seeing that knowledge will die, it is not worth living so long for it. Would they be able to determine all controversies in religion? How absurd a thing is this, for a wicked man to take up his time in disputes, when he lets the devil, without any quarrel, run away with his soul! It is as preposterous a thing, as for a man that is in a deep consumption to consult with his physician for the curing of a cut finger. But this is the misery of it, that the fashion of the world is not to mind religion. Most men, and especially great persons, are led by the opinion of the world; now vulgar people do not expect that we should be godly, and so they mind everything but only that, and then complain that they are straitened in their time. People expect that we should keep open house, and let them eat and drink their fill, &c. And so they tempt their

^a [Sen. de Brevit. Vitæ, cap. 2.]

landlords to think that it is below them to live. Let us correct ourselves in this mistake, and when we account the days are short, we must mean no more but this :

We have one thing necessary to be done, to do the will of our Father, to get ready for heaven ; this must be constantly and seriously minded, and we have no spare time to throw away without any reference to this business. Our life runs away so fast, that unless we take good heed, we shall not be able to do the work for which we live. It would be accounted a piece of madness, if when the enemy is at the walls, when the storm is ready to be made, when the bullets fly about the streets, a man should sit considering whether a bow will carry further than a gun, and whether more were killed by the ancient weapons than by the modern arms ; and yet just such is the folly of mankind. When death is at their back, and life flies before their faces ; when they are beset with evils in the world, and have little strength to resist them ; when they are in the straits of time, and yet have a huge deal of work to do, they are thinking with themselves whether it is best to hunt to-day, or to hawk ; whether they should visit a friend at this town or the next, &c. ; and they spend their time as though they had too much, and yet at last cry out upon the brevity of life. Come, come, let us be honest and reckon right. *Non exiguum temporis habemus, sed multum perdimus*^b, as Seneca well said ; ‘ It is not a little time that we have, but it is not a little that we lose.’ God hath not given a little, but we throw away much. Our portion is not small for what we are to trade, but our mispence is exceeding great. *Non accepimus vitam brevem, sed fecimus*^c ; ‘ We did not receive a short life, but have made it so.’ Not God, but we ourselves have made our time little. He is not niggardly and sparing, but we are prodigal, and make a lamentable waste of our hours. Just as when a great estate and fair possessions come to an unthrifty heir, they are presently consumed and spent ; whenas a little portion well husbanded increaseth to large demesnes : so is it with our life. They that have abundance of time given unto them, through their gross improvidence and mispence are utterly undone, and whine like beggars, as if they had had none : whereas careful and diligent persons

^b De Brev. Vitæ, cap. 1.

^c [Ibid.]

so improve a little, that, thanks be to God, they are rich in good works, and say, It is enough ; let God call for them when he pleaseth.

RULE X.

10. Let us reckon death to be the best accountant, and so number our days now, as we shall do when we come to die. Then a day will appear a precious thing ; then will a covetous man offer all that he hath got in his whole life for one day ; then will a voluptuous man be ready to purchase a day with any pains, though it were all rainy, and he were forced to spend it in tears. But it is a sad reckoning when a man must reckon twice, and one of them must be when he hath no time to mend his errors and mistakes. It will go very ill with us if we make one account in our life, and another at our death. If we should see then that there are as many faults as there are days ; and that so many lines as there are in our life, so many blots we must make : how fearfully shall we be amazed, in what perplexity of spirit shall we see ourselves so foul and black, in the midst of such gross and damnable errors. Let us therefore see and consider now what account dying men make of their time, and take their reckoning as most certainly true. Though men now be lavish of their time, and play away their hours, though they give all or most to the world, and little or nothing to God ; yet come to a dying man, and he will tell you that days were good for something else than for a man to eat and drink and trade in : he will tell you of feeding and nourishing the diviner part, of providing for a soul, of dressing it for the Bridegroom by constant acts of godliness ; besides all those of temperance and sobriety, of justice and mercy. He will tell you of a book more worth your reading and studying than all that ever you turned over. And as for a day of grace, at what rate would he purchase such a precious season ? He will tell you he is ashamed that he ever sat at his door talking vainly among his neighbours on the Lord's day. He will tell you that he cannot sleep now for the aching of his heart that he should sleep at a sermon. He prays that he might but live and pray with his family evening and morning. Yea, let him be a good man, that hath made a good use of his time, yet he will tell you that such an hour he might have spent better ; in such a company he might have done more good ; at such a time

he might have been more solicitous and industrious about heavenly things: and he will pray, as a good bishop^d did, "Lord, pardon my sins of omission." And therefore let us now judge as sensible and good men do, when they are taught by Death, that cannot flatter. That is a stern master, but very just and faithful: he speaks with a dreadful voice, but things that are infinitely true and serious. He cuts their very heart whose accounts they leave him to write; but he will truly state them. Let us then learn of those that he teaches; and not stay till we be taught, when perhaps we shall be past learning. Let us imagine that the room is darkened, that the physician stands by our bedside, that we hear our friends sigh and groan, that we feel the approaches of death; and then conceive that our books of account are brought to us, and we have our pen in our hand. What now shall we write? "Let us eat and drink and be merry? Let us take our ease, for we have goods laid up for many years?" Will you reckon thus, "Our time is long enough, let us take care for nothing but to please ourselves?" Why not thus now, I pray you, when, perhaps, two days ago this was your language? Oh! but now eternity, eternity appears; and therefore set down so many hours for prayer to God, if we live; write down so much pains to understand the word of God; and we make account that so much time must be spent in meditating of the will of God. Make a golden letter at the Lord's day, for that must be more precious time, &c. Whosoever thou art that readest this, do the same now, that thou mayest do perhaps three days hence. Do that which now thou canst, which ere long thou wilt wish to do and canst not. This may be more than an imagination before the morning; and be sure one day it will be a reality, unless thou shalt be struck dead without any warning, and have no leave for one deliberate thought; and therefore now reckon after the same sort, set down the same things in thy resolution; yea, engrave them and cut them upon thy heart, that so thy death-bed's account may agree with that in thy life. Be sick now in thy

^d ["The last words he was heard to utter, about one of the clock in the afternoon, (March 21st, 1655), praying for forgiveness of sins, were these, viz. 'O Lord, forgive me,

especially my sins of omission.'"]—Parr's life of Ussher, p. 77: Elrington's Life of Ussher, prefixed to his works, vol. i. p. 277.]

thoughts, that thou mayest find thyself well then. And seeing then we shall think that we have lived so much as we have done good, and as we have designed the glory of God, let us now think that we do not live unless these be in our hearts and lives.

RULE XI.

11. If we would number aright, let us every day cast up our accounts. Let us so number our days, as at the foot of every day to write the total sum. Let us say: Thus long have we lived, perhaps we may live no longer, nor turn over another leaf; let us see therefore how our accounts stand. Say as Pythagoras taught his scholars, *Τί παρέβην, τί δ' ἔρεξα*^e, &c. What sin have I committed? What good have I done? What good have I neglected? What stand all these actions for? Are they figures or ciphers? Have I lived, or only been? Doth my work go on, or am I running in arrears? Do I live as if I were going to die? Is eternity in my thoughts, and the great account that I must give? If we could call ourselves to such a reckoning, then we might correct any fault we find betime, before it be grown to such a number that it will be beyond our thoughts; and give up our account more fair and in order when God calls for them, and might hope they would be accepted by him. And for the doing of this, it is necessary that we account every day as if it were our last; which is a maxim in this divine art of numbering, that flows from the first proposition. Seeing our time that is to come is in God's hand, therefore we must live this day as though we had no more days to live. And a heathen could say, that it is impossible for a man to live the present day well, *μὴ προθέμενον αὐτὴν ὡς ἐσχάτην βιώσαι*^f, 'that doth not propose to himself to live it as his last.' And so Seneca professeth, *Id ago, ut mihi instar totius vitæ sit dies*^g, 'that he laboured one day might be like a whole life to him.' We must spend our days as though our life were but a day. And if we did, then sure God would have a portion of every day, if we intend him any in our life; and we could not but be diligent to set all right, and to make up our accounts at night,

^e [*Πῆ παρέβην; τί δ' ἔρεξα; τί μοι* § 22.]

δέον οὐκ ἐτελέσθη;—Porph. Vit. Pythag. p. 198. Hierocl. in Carm. Aur. p. 152. Diog. Laert. lib. viii. cap. 1.

^f Musonius apud Stob. Serm. 1.

[83.]

^g Epist. 52.

as if it were the end of our lives, and our days were summed up. The mariner which guides and steers the ship aright sits always in the stern or hindermost part of it; and so must we, if we will guide and direct our life aright through the troublesome sea of the world, according to the course God hath prescribed; be often in the contemplation of our death; dwell much in our last end, and then shall we manage all the better, possess our vessel in holiness, and bring her at last to a safe haven. It is a good saying of one of the Jews, wherewith I shall conclude this, "Mind thy business as if thou wast to live alway, but think of thy end as if thou wast to die to-morrow^h."

RULE XII.

12. Let us number as much backward as we are apt to number forward. Let us cast up our accounts both ways, and tell the time that is past as we are forward to account that which is to come. It is a great fault sure that we skip over such a great part of our time, and never think what we have done, what mercies we have enjoyed, which of them we have abused, and how little profit God hath received from us for all the benefits he hath bestowed. And therefore we must not only now begin to take an account of the passages of every day, but take some time also to study our lives that are past. We shall find such a huge advantage by this, that it will recompense all our pains. For

1. Hereby we shall at least know how long we have lived, and therefore what a little time in all likelihood remains. And

2. How foolishly we have spent that time that is past, and therefore how chary we ought to be of what God will give us no more. And

3. We shall consider how soon those years (perhaps thirty or forty) are gone, which will be a good measure whereby to judge of the time to come; for that will run away as swiftly if it should be as long. And

4. We shall wonder that we have lived so long, rather than that we die so soon, seeing our Lord attained not to so many years as we perhaps number. All these and many other advantages we shall get by our serious review of our lives, which I must leave to your own meditations. And I beseech you think of

^h [Apophth. Patr. lib. iii. 227. p. 392. ad calc. Vit. Mosis per Gaulmyn.]

them thoroughly ; for it is for want of some such reflections that we live as if we were but beginning to live. Though men have lived forty or fifty years, yet *velut ex pleno et abundantī perdunt*, ‘ they waste as if they had their whole and full stock of time to spend upon, and had a great deal to spare ;’ whereas if they did well consider what is gone, and that the less remains, they would double their diligence to gather up what is lost, to provide for that state for which they have but a little time left wherein to provide. And suppose we have forty or fifty years to come, or let our imagination run as far as it pleaseth, yet we must consider how much of this time must be spent in rectifying our accounts and bringing our souls to good order ; and how much will be devoured by the needs of our bodies ; and likewise how speedily they will be all gone if we measure by what is past. How few do the days which we have spent seem ! How soon are they gone, and seem as if they had not been ! Just so fleetly will all that run away which is to come, let it be never so much ; and though it seem a great deal to us while we look forward, yet it will seem as a few days if we look but behind us. *Infinīta est velocitas temporis, quæ magis apparet respicientibus*^h, ‘ Time is infinitely swift, but it most of all appears so to those that cast their eyes back.’ They that are in the bottom of the ship think they do not stir ; but they that look to the place from whence they are come will wonder how fast they have run before the wind. If we did but cast up the sum of our days, when we have numbered as many years as we think good, alas ! they amount but to a trifle. What are eighty or a hundred years, when we have put them altogether in one number ? how few figures will tell the longest term of life ? But we are so foolish that we tell days and months and years one after another, which severally spoken of seem to make a great show, and never put them together, and consider what all these will amount unto, if we should live them all. Then one figure and a cipher will number them all. But if we likewise did consider how fast a great part of this little number is fled away, it would make our life seem so short and transitory that we should never fancy more that there is no haste to make ready for another world. And if we added this consideration likewise, that he who best deserved to live came not

^h Sen. [Epist. 49. § 3.]

to these years which we perhaps have attained, what should we think? What should we look for but death the next moment? Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, lived in our flesh but a little more than three and thirty years. Why, I beseech you, should not this be accounted old age among us Christians, since the head of us all was no elder when he died? Though they reckoned to seventy or eighty years when Moses lived, yet why should we count to more than thirty-three, as the ordinary term of life, since the great Prophet is come into the world? If God lengthen out our days beyond this, we should rather look upon it as a wonder that we live so long than that we live no longer.

To conclude, the safest way is to reckon no more days than we have, as I told you at first. For Moses, you see, reckons but to eighty years, which was the very age that he was of when he entered into the wilderness. Forty years he was in Pharaoh's court, and forty years more he was in banishment, as St. Stephen informs us, Acts vii. 23, 30, and then he went to Pharaoh and brought the people out of Egypt, who presently in the first year of their enlargement began to provoke God, and the second year were threatened to be all destroyed in the wildernessⁱ. Now Moses reckons as if his days were at an end also^k, whenas God lengthened them forty years longer, even to an hundred and twenty years. So let us do also, and reckon that our days are past and gone, though God may lengthen them to many more years; but if he do, we must remember that they will fly away as swiftly as the rest have done, and therefore we must lay hold upon them and fly away with them, that they may not go away without us. Let us not be left behind by our time, but let us be going on as fast as we can along with it, till we and it end comfortably both together; that we may not still call for life when that calls for death, but we may be fit to die when our time of life is done.

But how shall we learn all these good lessons? will you say; who shall teach us to number aright? Death, you say, is a good accountant; but who will lead us unto these deep thoughts?

The fourth observation (which I shall briefly open and com-

ⁱ Acts vii. 36.

^k Deut. xxxiv. 7.

mend to your meditations) will give you some answer to this inquiry.

OBSERV. IV.

We may best learn this right numbering of our days by a praying heart and a pious mind.

The prayer here in the text is directed to God that he would teach them, and for their part they promise to bring an *heart of wisdom*, that is, a godly and religious mind. *The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*¹, (saith the wise man.) If a man will not hear God's law, it is no wonder that God will not hear his prayer. When we come in a compliment, and for fashion sake, having no great mind that God should do that for us that we ask, it cannot be expected that God should regard us. If we have no heart to number our days according to the account that I have laid before you, though we say, *Lord, teach us to number our days*^m, yet he cannot but turn away his ear from us. But on the contrary, that God who is far from the wicked heareth the prayer of the righteous, and delighteth in it. If our heart apply itself to wisdom, if we come with a serious resolution and a sincere deliberate, desire to be what we say, God will answer our requests and fulfil our petitions. If we bring but a heart of wisdom, we shall presently by the help of God reckon right, and make the best use of our life.

By an *heart of wisdom* here in the text is meant a wise heart, as an heart of stone or flesh signifies an hard or soft heart. And it is made up of these things :

First, we must bring a serious heart ; for a spirit that is vain and trifling, that acts like one in jest, cannot be wise. We must all labour to take off that lightness and giddiness that agitates our spirits, and to bring our souls to some composure and settlement by a reverence unto God, yea, and unto ourselves. We must resolve to be in good earnest about our salvation, and to prefer this art of numbering our days aright, before all the fancies of riches and pleasures and such like things, that are apt to toss and whirl our minds we know not whither.

Secondly, we must bring considering hearts. For he will never number and cast accounts well whose mind is not fixed,

¹ Prov. xxviii. 9.

^m Prov. xv. 26.

and whose thoughts cannot put things together. We many times think, but we do not consider. Let us therefore raise observations unto ourselves, and let us weigh them and give them their due value; let us consider which is more and which is less in all things; let us balance things in our thoughts, and well mind what equality and what disproportion there is between them. Say, Is not a soul like to live longer than a body? Had I not more need tell its days and take care of it, than labour thus about a dying thing? What compare is there between time and eternity? How soon have I done telling the days of my life? and how am I lost and even drowned in that vast ocean? But I need not teach a serious man to consider; and I need not tell you that an heart that minds nothing, that lays nothing (as we say) to heart, must needs be ignorant and brutish in its knowledge. And therefore this is a piece of wisdom acceptable to God, to labour in good sadness, to take things into our thoughts, till our hearts be touched by them. We are gone a great way to learn any thing of God, and particularly this great business how to live, when we are once made inquisitive and thoughtful in a serious, sober manner.

Thirdly, a wise heart is such an one as designs something to itself, and intends to improve the knowledge it gets to some purpose. The heart of a fool looks no further than the beginning of a thing, and thinks not of what shall follow: and therefore we must bring such a serious disposition as is determined to deduce some good out of every thing that is propounded to our consideration. Many truths lie by men, but they cannot be said properly to know and skill them, because they are contented with the bare notion of them. They know the number of their days, the shortness of their lives, and the rest that I have said, but they make no use of it at all; it is as mere a speculation, as that twenty and forty make sixty, or the like. And therefore we must not only number and tell how short they are, and whither they are running, and what use they are for; but we must conclude in some resolution, and set down something that results from the whole account for the good of our souls. All these things are but means to something else; reading, praying, considering and examination, are but the beginnings of religion, not the end, they are the way only; and therefore we must not rest in them, but let our

souls go further, till we are carried to something else by them : as when we account but one day to our life, when we tell so many evil days if we live long, &c. We must ask our souls, What then will you do ? Cast in your minds and speak, what course do you mean to take ? And by such like questions bring your work to some good issue. And,

Fourthly, a truly wise heart is that which designs holiness, to be like to God, and eternally to enjoy him. *For the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom ; and to depart from evil, that is understanding*^m. And this therefore is it we must intend, to this issue we must bring our souls ; and if we do consider and contrive this heartily, then we may be encouraged to pray to God that we may know how to take the right measure of our days. We may say to him, Lord, teach me what my life is, for else I am afraid I shall not live. Lord, affect me with the shortness of my time, for else I am in danger to want thyself, and thee it is that I seek ; thou knowest it is the desire of my soul to be godly, I am resolved it shall be my work and employment in the world that I may be friends with thee, and therefore teach me so to use my days that I may not lose both them and thee. God cannot resist such importunate and unfeigned desires ; he seeks such scholars as have a mind to learn, and he will teach them to make a right use of what I have said.

What use should that be ? may some say. What will a pious mind and praying heart learn from hence ? I will tell you how it will shape its life according to this reckoning which I have made, and thereby briefly suggest many good rules of life unto you.

A wise man will learn to be diligent, because the time is short ; to be watchful and alway prepared, because the end may be sudden every moment ; to be fearful of sin, because the anger of God cuts sinners off in the midst ; to think much of time, because it passeth most swiftly when we think of something else ; to remember our Creator betimes, because evil days will come wherein nothing else will please us ; to do good, because that is the work of life ; to work together with God, and zealously improve opportunities, because all times are not alike ; to be very exact in our actions, because they must stand upon

record to eternity ; to renounce unto all unnecessary things, because we may have no time nor leisure for them ; to seek first the kingdom of God, because that is the only thing we are sure to attain ; to die daily, because death makes the best and truest reckoning ; to be constant in self-examination, because this day may be our last ; to look back to our beginning, because the more we have lived the less we have to live : in a word, a wise heart will learn to be a very good husband of its time, and make it serve the most noble design. And he is a wise man indeed that of a few days can make an eternal advantage ; by the improvement of a short life gain endless felicities. He would be accounted a wise man who had an art by a penny in a little space of time to raise an estate of many thousand pounds. But he is far wiser and hath a greater reach, who by the good use of this moment obtains the inheritance of angels, yea, of the Son of God, gets possession of the everliving good, and settles himself in the joys of a never-dying life.

Let me conclude with a brief exhortation to you in the words of the text, as they lie in our translation. Pray unto God earnestly that he would so *teach you to number your days, that you may apply your hearts unto wisdom.* Do you seriously endeavour and then entreat of him to give you such an effectual grace, that there may some good arise to you out of your labour. Pray till you feel your heart inclining unto wisdom, till it apply itself to understanding, *till you seek for it as for silver, and dig for it as for hid treasure.* Never leave importuning the Father of mercies through Christ the Wisdom of the Father, till you be made wise unto salvation.

Let us never cease numbering and taking every consideration several by itself, and beseeching God to impress them on our hearts till we find this effect and fruit of it, that our hearts are brought to the wisdom of the just, till we judge of things as God doth, and choose that which he loves, and follow the thing that good is, and altogether become of the same mind with him. Let us number and pray till we find these considerations taking down the heights of pride, and the heats of lust, the huge desires of a covetous mind, and the humorous desires of a fond fancy, till we find them quieting our passions, moderating our affections, and bringing our wills to the measures of God : till we have found a place in another country, a kingdom that can-

not be shaken, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens ; till we can live as well in poverty as in riches, in hardship as in soft enjoyments, without distrust or envy, without fear or cares, without perplexed or careless thoughts ; in short, till we have learned to live the life of men, and the life of Christians ; till we make God our only joy, and love our neighbours as ourselves, and look death in the face as a friend.

Let us every day call ourselves to an account, and think that we have one day less to live, and one day more to reckon for. We every day make our account greater, and have less time to make it in, and therefore let us make it always as we go along. And suppose, my brethren, that God should come this night and say to any one of us, as he did to Belshazzar, by a hand writing on the wall in the Chaldee tongue, *Mene, mene, it is numbered, it is numbered*, (which Daniel applies to his kingdom,) thy days are told ; God hath counted them up and finished them ; thou shalt not live to see a morrow. Are thy accounts and God's even ? do they not differ very much ? dost not thou reckon for a great many years longer ? and shall he not cut them short in the midst of those days which thou hast told out for thyself ? Dost thou not tell twenty when he tells but one or not so much ? Are not thy thoughts a huge way off from eternity ? Hast thou not most of thy great work to do ? Art thou not in the midst of a design, as building an house, or the like, while thy soul lies in its ruins and rubbish ? If they be not the same, if thy reckoning do not agree with his, then it will make thee shake and tremble as it did him, to see thyself so much mistaken in thy numbering, to behold so much of thine account stricken off by the hand of God, so many of the days which thou reckonedst wiped quite out of the book of the living.

If thou dost account as he doth, and thinkest that thou mayest die to-night, then how canst thou live otherwise than as a dying man ? How canst thou quietly lay thyself on thy pillow for to sleep with the conscience of any guilt upon thy soul ? Why dost thou not say every night as the philosopher could direct—

Vixi, et quem dederat cursum fortuna peregiⁿ ?

‘ I have lived and finished my course which Providence hath

ⁿ [Virg. *Æneid.* iv. 653.]

assigned me to run.' Then if God give thee a morrow, thou wilt look upon it as new life, and be more thankful for it.

He that tells his time by ones and by moments, will think that if he do not live now he may live never; he will betake himself to the most serious and strictest course of piety, knowing that that life is long enough which is good, and that is too long, or rather none at all, which is bad. Truly there is nothing so much to be lamented as the folly of men, whereby they think they live, but do not; and whereby they desire always to live, but cannot. *Weep for the dead*, (saith the son of Sirach, Eccles. xxii. 11,) *for he hath lost the light: and weep for a fool, for he wants understanding: i. e. is without light, even whilst he lives.* And therefore it follows presently in him, *Make little weeping for the dead, for he is at rest: but the life of a fool is worse than death. Seven days do men mourn for him that is dead; but for a fool and an ungodly man all the days of his life.*

We make it an argument, you know, of a fool, that he cannot count aright, nor tell to ten or twenty: and there is no greater argument of stupidity, no doltishness should more move our tears and compassion, than when men reckon after that foolish sort that I spoke of in the beginning; whereby they live in a dream, and die in an amazement. And therefore the holy man puts these together in my text, right numbering and a wise heart; which if we bring not, we are dead while we live, and our friends have reason to take up lamentations over us, and say, *Ah, my brother! ah, my sister!*

Let me once more beseech you therefore to be wise. Go home and tell how many days remain, and if you can find never an one for any thing you can tell, rise not up from your knees before you have taken up some good resolutions against the morrow, if you have it, and then *work out your salvation with fear and trembling*; every day watch and pray, because you know not in what hour the Lord will come. And to this end remember that counsel, and study it thoroughly, which I have already mentioned. Look back, the first thing thou dost, and think how few days thou hast lived,

Exigua vitæ pars est quam nos vivimus^o,

^o [Apud Sen. de Brevit. Vitæ, χρόνον.—in Πλοκίφ.—Stob. Floriſ. cap. 3. sed Menandri versus est, tit. cviii. 32.]
Μικρόν τι τοῦ βίου καὶ στενὸν ζῶμεν

'it is a very little part of our life that we truly live,' all the rest of the space *tempus est, non vita*, 'is time, and not life.' And therefore let that which remains be life.

Perhaps I may awaken you and myself the more, if I leave this text, and take another, which is our dear brother, that not long ago stood in this place from whence I speak unto you. Whose life was a continual sermon, and upon whom I might make another sermon to you, now that one is done. His life was but short in the vulgar account, and yet it was long, if you use the arithmetic which I have been now teaching you. He minded the true end of living, and he lived so long as to do his work, and he did a great deal of work in a little time, and therefore he died old and full of days, and was laded with more of life than many a man with a grey beard. Old age is not to be known by a withered face, but by a mortified spirit; not by the decays of the natural body, but by the weakness of the body of sin; not by the good that we have enjoyed, but by the good that we have done: and if we be prepared for death, we have lived long enough; if our life be a death, then no death can be untimely to us.

But then while I tell you the price of such a jewel, I shall but make you mourn the more for such a loss. How desirable would it have been to us all, if such an aged soul might have dwelt a little longer in a young body! how much more good might he have done by his prudent counsel, by his wise discourses, by grave and serious sermons, by a mature judgment, by a religious and well governed life! Thus you are apt to speak within yourselves; and I think I shall do well to assist these thoughts now they are begun, and help your souls to be delivered of their sighs, and to number their losses, that so they may by serious weighing of them redound to some good.

Consider therefore that the church of God hath lost a burning and a shining light, the commonwealth an excellent and peaceable subject, the ministers a dear brother, this parish a tender father, the city a most worthy member; and when you have wept to think of these, you will have no tears left to console with me who have lost so dear a friend.

If we should consider only what a large stock he had of useful learning, there would be reason that all intelligent persons

should bewail his loss ; for there is not such plenty of profitable learning in the world that we can well spare any, and we know not how long there will be any at all. But then, considering the piety to which it was wedded, our loss is the far more deplorable, because these two are but seldom found conjoined in so large a measure. Nazianzen accounts that they who want either of these, οὐδὲν τῶν ἑτεροφθάλμων διαφέρουσι ⁹, ‘do differ nothing at all from men that want one eye;’ who have not only a great defect, but cannot so confidently appear in the world, to look on others, and let others look on them. Now many one-eyed men there may be in the world, some that want learning, and more that want grace ; but in very few heads shall you see these two luminaries of knowledge and goodness in any great splendour. The more therefore ought such to be valued, and their extinction to be lamented.

Sigismund the emperor (as Dubravius tells us^r) having knighted a doctor of the law that was very learned, and one of his council, and observing that when the council went aside to deliberate about any business, he joined himself to the knights as more honourable, and left the doctors, he called him to him and said, “Fiscellin, (for so was his name,) I did not take thee to be such a fool as to prefer honour before learning ; for thou knowest very well that I can dub six hundred knights in a day, but cannot make one doctor in all my life.” What would this brave king have said, if he had spoken of the value of true godliness, which is to be preferred before all things else ? I will imagine that he would have spoken such words as these ; “I can make knights as many as I will, and only such as thou canst make scholars ; but it is God alone that can give grace ;” and therefore judge which thou art to prize at the highest rate.

Give me leave to make use of this to our present purpose. Men may make others rich, or they may confer upon them honours, yea, and they may appoint preachers ; but alas ! they cannot make them learned, much less can they breathe into them the heavenly Spirit ; and therefore such men living are to be the more esteemed, and dead to be the more honoured : especially

⁹ Orat. xx. [ed. Ben. orat. xliii. § 12. tom. i. p. 779 B.]

^r Hist. Bohæm. [lib. xxv. p. 241.]

where these two are accompanied with moral prudence and decent behaviour ; which came nothing behind the other in our deceased friend and brother. Oh what an unaffected gravity was there in that countenance ! What innocent smiles in that face ! What manlike humility in his deportment ! Cheerfulness in him did contend with seriousness, affability with awfulness, love with discretion, wisdom with simplicity, &c. : and the result of all these reconciled graces was the very picture of virtue and goodness. Do not think that I flatter him with my pencil ; alas ! it gives so rude a stroke, that I am afraid I shall rather disfigure him : and I am ready to draw back my hand now that I am going to draw the lines of his life, and present you with a brief narrative how he spent his days.

Yet since it will be expected from me, who have known him now near fifteen years, I shall give you a draught of what is most material, and leave the fillings up and finishings to your own thoughts, which may have been observant of more particulars.

God was pleased early to sow the seeds of grace in his heart, and to sanctify him to himself, partly by the religious education of his godly parents, and partly by the preaching (as I have heard him say) of one Mr. Ludlam, now with God ; whose sweet and Christian eloquence I have heard him speak often of with great affection. We little think, perhaps, how much we are indebted to God for pious parents, and for a painful ministry : by whose means he was kept from blotting his soul with any of those foul things wherewith the consciences of many are grievously deboshed.

Coming unto Cambridge he was placed in Queen's college, under a very worthy person^s, who did hugely love him, both for his choice parts and early piety. There he followed his study very hard, to the prejudice, I fear, of his body. *Nulla dies sine linea*^t, might well have been writ over his study door in those youthful days, which use to be spent in doing worse than nothing. And the work of godliness, I am sure, he no less laboured in, as some few persons alive can witness, who used to meet together once in a week to confer about things that con-

^s Mr. Whitaker.
i. 4, 12. tom. ii. col. 156.]

^t [Plin. H. N. xxxv. 36. § 22. Erasm. Adag.

cerned their souls, the benefit of which some can to this day remember. For Christian communion discreetly managed is that which keeps our religion in breath. As soon as there was any occasion for him to appear in public, he was noted for his good parts; and after he had been between four and five years at the university he was chosen fellow of the College, with the unanimous consent of the whole society there present. After that time, though he neglected not other useful learning, yet he applied himself chiefly to the study of divine things. And he did not vent his conceptions while they were but half digested notions, but gave his soul leisure to concoct them, and turn them into its habit and constitution. Thus he laboured to do while he wrestled with the ill habit of a splenetic body, which created him (to my knowledge) no small disturbance in his studies. And indeed it doth a great deal of mischief in the world, that men teach others who had need to be taught themselves. Imperfect apprehensions of things, and raw, indigested notions have made as great stirs and convulsions amongst us, as the wind makes in the body, which arises from the ill concoction of a sour and cold stomach. It was a wise saying, (whosoever was the father of it,) “that an indifferent shoemaker might make a good cobbler; and an indifferent tailor might make a good botcher; but an indifferent scholar was good for nothing.” And therefore he laboured to have the mastery of such learning as was necessary for his end; and also avoided another dangerous error which many fall into, and that is meddling with the higher things before they had gained some good knowledge of the lower. By this means they may be both discouraged with the difficulty, and also lose their labour; if they fall not into a worse disease, to have their mind blown up and swollen with things they do not understand. He followed the rule of Simplicius, which is, to begin ἀπὸ τῶν μικρῶν^u, ‘with small things first,’ lest it happen (saith he) unto us according to the proverb, ἐν πίθῳ κεραμείαν μελετᾶν^x, ‘to begin the trade of a potter by making a huge vessel first,’ before we know whether we can make a less; and so we lose both our labour, and cost, and credit altogether. But, which is worst of all, such men do ἐν ταῖς τῶν ἄλλων ψυχαῖς ἐκμελετᾶν εὐσέβειαν, as Nazianzen speaks, ‘exercise religion upon other

^u In Epict. [Enchir. cap. 8. p. 50.]

^x [Greg. Naz. ubi infra.]

men's souls before their own ;' which is the part, saith he, of a fool, and of a bold man. We had better begin any trade ignorantly, and venture before our time at great things in any calling, than in this divine profession undertake to teach souls, and practise godliness upon our hearers' hearts, when we have not the first rudiments of piety in our own. And therefore it was his endeavour to understand well the grounds of godliness, and to settle those foundations on which a soul might rely; and having overcome the crudities of other knowledge, and arrived to some strength, his next care was to study that "learned ignorance, (that a great master commended,) to be willing not to know those things which our supreme Master is not pleased to teach us ^z."

Then as soon as it was fit he should appear in the pulpit, he was presently famed for an excellent preacher; and he drew not only the common people after him, but the most learned ears were chained to his tongue. I shall never forget with what a becoming boldness and modest gravity above his years, he preached at St. Mary's before the university, when he was appointed among others to be of a combination before the ordinary time, by a new order from the higher powers: a sermon, I accounted it, of self-denial, though his speech was not of that subject; because it was so hearty, plain, and searching, and stripped of all those ornaments which young men love to dress and trim their discourses withal.

Not long after, he undertook to preach constantly in the afternoons at a church belonging to the college ^a, which I may say he did freely; for the stipend amounted not to much above the wages of an ordinary servant in one of your houses. There might you have seen a great throng of pious scholars and people hanging upon his lips; many of which desired nearer acquaintance with him, and used to frequent his chamber for advice and counsel. There methought he was in his kingdom, he did so reign and domineer (as it were) over the minds and hearts of his auditors, who could not but attend unto him.

^y Orat. i. *στηλιτεύ*. [ed. Ben. orat. ii. § 47. tom. i. p. 35 C.]

^z ["Nescire velle quæ magister maximus
Docere non vult, erudita inscitia est."]

—J. J. Scaliger, *Iamb. Gnom.* 21. p. 117; quoted also in "Jesus and the Resurrection," &c. part ii. vol. iii. p. 164.]

^a St. Botolph's.

And yet, notwithstanding, he did not neglect the charge which he had likewise undertook of many pupils; but they thrived so well under the wings of his care and great love, (a thing for which he was noted,) that several of them are now fellows of the house. And really, in the managing of all these affairs, he so outstripped his years, that it might have been an argument (had not our eyes been blind with love) that he was old already, his manners being so grey-headed in his youth^b. He did not grow up by degrees, as we do, but all on a sudden methought he was a man. He acted and preached, when his hottest blood boiled in his veins, as men do in their cool age; with great seriousness, gravity, and a certain majestic humility, which commanded reverence to his youth. It is no wonder therefore that God hath gathered him so soon, seeing he brought forth fruit so early, and was ripe when others begin to bloom, or but to put forth a tender bud. He had run half of his course, and seemed to be in his meridian when it was but day-break with us his contemporaries, and we did but begin to peep above the horizon with timorous light. And besides, this is not to be forgotten, that though he was of excellent good learning, and had all this work to do, yet he lived not always among his books, which is to die among the living, and to live among the dead, a dying to all, and perhaps not a living to a man's self; but he was exceeding free to all good converse, and let his friends enjoy so much of him, that sometimes he could scarce enjoy himself but only in them. Yea, I doubt that he was better to them than to himself, and disregarded his own health to satisfy their desires. The Arabic proverb is, *Si amicus tuus sit mel, ne comedas totum*^c: 'If thy friend be honey, do not eat him all up.' I wish that it had been known more familiarly in England, for I fear the sweetness of his society did tempt his friends to devour him among them.

After he had been in Cambridge between eleven and twelve years, and had preached much both there and in the country, the providence of God so ordered it, that coming to London about three year and a half ago upon another occasion, he was desired to preach in this place, and instantly was chosen to be

^b Τοῖς ἡθεσι πόλιος ἐκ νεότητος,
Greg. Nyss. de Bas. [in laudem fratris Basilii, tom. iii. p. 479 D.]

^c [Prov. Arab. per T. Erpen. cent. 275, p. 109, 4to. Lond., 1614.]

the instructor of this congregation. I remember that he was not received with less joy, than now he is carried forth with sorrow. Nor was he less esteemed, as far as I can hear, in other places of the city, than in this parish, who I know had a very great affection to him. His brethren in the ministry did highly value (as I have heard from some of them) his excellent endowments, and looked upon him as one like to be very instrumental in the work of the Lord. And so I hope he hath been; for you have fully known his *doctrine, his manner of life, his purpose, faith and charity*, as the apostle saith concerning himself to Timothy, 2 Epist. iii. 10. I will but remember you a little of the first, viz. his doctrine and speech, for by that you may judge of the rest, it being according to the ancient saying, “The character of a man, and the image of his life.”

His sermons were stings rather than words; they were *ἔπεα πτερόεντα*, ‘winged words,’ in a diviner sense; for they were the arrows of the Almighty, shot with a strong arm into men’s hearts. His discourses were so rational and demonstrative, that they were able to convert an atheist to the faith; so clear and full of light, that they might turn the most ignorant soul unto wisdom. So awakening and lively they were, that it will be a wonder if he have left one soul asleep among you. So persuasive and moving, that they might charm the cup out of the hand of the drunkard, and entice a sinner out of the most delicate unlawful embraces. So cordial likewise and reviving, that if any persons droop who heard him, they never drank them down, but only licked the glass. So considerate and digested, that as he beat down confidence in man’s proper strength, so he roused them from their laziness, and an idle indifferency about their souls. So discreet and fervent, that as he affrighted cold formality, so he tempered zeal, that it might not be frightened out of its wits. And as the apostle hath married truth to charity, so he endeavoured to keep his bond inviolable, that they might never be divorced either in his heart or word. But the text upon which he preached the last commencement before the university was his constant practice,

^d Τὸν λόγον ἔδωλον εἶναι τῶν ἔργων.—Solon. in Laert. [i. 2. §. 10.] Οἷος ὁ λόγος, τοιοῦτος ὁ τρόπος.—Plato.

Speaking the truth in love^e. He was a preacher indeed, that sought to find out *acceptable words, and written upright, even words of truth*, as the great preacher speaks, Eccles. xii. 10. And whereas there are too many sermons that are full of words without matter, and not a few that have excellent matter without words, to set it off and convey it into men's minds; God had given him an excellent faculty to dive into the bottom of the truth, and then to adorn it with such good and rich expressions, that it should lose nothing for want of one to commend it. There was a sweet vein of eloquence that ran through his reason. His arguments were interlaced with handsome illustrations. And after he had drawn the picture of the truth he intended to represent, he had the art to hang it in a convenient light, so that it should look upon everybody in the house. Nazianzen compares a man's mind that cannot utter its mind to the motion of a man whose joints are struck with a benumbing disease^f. And I may compare a mind which speaks without any understanding to the motion of a puppet, that frisks and skips most nimbly, but hath no soul within. But he of whom I speak was not frozen and benumbed, so that his mind could not flow forth, neither had he a flood of words and a drop of sense; but he rapt away his auditors with a double torrent of rhetoric and reason sweetly mixed together. And truly, if a divine could stir up all kind of affections and passions by his sermons, as well as a comedian can do by a play; yet unless there be a sound and substantial truth at the bottom, they will be but like the scorching flames in straw, which will quickly expire for want of something to foment and feed them. It is possible that a man may by earnestness and violence *exprimere affectus*, (as Erasmus I think speaks,) 'express and squeeze out affections' from his auditors; but he will never impress them with any, unless there be the strength of reason and weight of argument to press and persuade men's understanding into obedience. I am sure his sermons were of this sort that were apt to imprint something both upon mind and heart; and I hope he hath left some such seal upon you that will never be blotted out.

^e For his degree of bachelor in divinity, Eph. iv. 15.

λάλητος.—Orat. vices. [ed. Ben. orat. xliiii. §. 13. tom. i. p. 780 C.]

^f Κίνημα ναρκώντων ἐστὶ νοῦς ἀνεκ-

But it pleased God that he had many ill fits since he came hither, which were but spurs, I believe, unto him to make him run the faster. And especially the last September he was encountered with a most dangerous disease, which assaulted him with such violence, that it made all the pillars and supporters of his body tremble. Your hopes were even at the last gasp when God gave his life to your prayers and tears, and let him breathe a little longer among you. Now which of you can think upon his excellent sermons since his recovery without thankfulness to God that he lent him to you a while longer? Who can be impatient, (even for his death,) who remembers those words of our Saviour with his comment in many sermons, *The cup which my Father hath given unto me, shall I not drink it?* And who can be prodigal of his time, and loose in his life, that felt any of those arrows which he took out of the apostle's quiver; *See that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time?* &c.^h It would be a good work for every one of you to examine if you have not been careless in following those directions; which might provoke God to stop the breath of this sweet organ of his, and cut off the thread of his life by another sharp sickness which arrested him on the first day of this month. Then God put a bitter cup into his hand, and he drank it off to the bottom with such an admirable patience as he himself had preached. Then he felt the comfort of a holy walking and good use of his time, so that he was not heard to murmur or repine that God should thus soon take hold of his rod again, neither did he call for time to come back again, as if he were loath to die by this rod.

I cannot but remember a few things that I observed in this sickness, which will be partly for our imitation, and partly for our comfort.

First, his resignation in the beginning of his disease. "God is wise," (said he to me,) "and his will is guided by wisdom, and therefore let him do as seems him good, for I am indifferent."

Secondly, the expression of his faith. When his disease began to make some offers at his head, and a little to obscure his mind, he said to me, "Truly this is the only thing that

^g John xviii. 11.

^h Ephes. v. 15.

troubles me, that I fear I shall lose my understanding: “but my Saviour intercedes in heaven, he doth, he doth.”

Thirdly, his patience and quietness under the violence of his disease. For when he was desired either not to speak, or not to stir, his answer still was, “Well, I will notⁱ.” So that I might say of his fever as Diogenes did when he was sick of the same disease; it was nothing else but *ψυχῆς πάλη καὶ σώματος*^k, ‘the wresting of the soul with the body,’ as two combatants used to do in the Olympic games; and his soul got the better by patience and lying still. When Epictetus broke his leg, they saw he talked and discoursed as if he had been in another man’s body; and when the bones of our deceased brother were sore vexed, methought he lay as if his soul were somewhere else, and was gone out to God. For,

Fourthly, God was pleased to bless him with a quietness and peace in his conscience. Though he had no raptures and excesses of mind, (which he never affected,) yet he thanked God he had a solid peace, and a sweet calm, and he passed out of the world just as he lived, in an even temper. And,

Fifthly, according to his faith in the mediation of Jesus Christ, so it was unto him. God was very good to him in giving him his understanding unto the last, even when the cunning adversary of mankind made an attempt upon him toward his latter end, when his strength declined, and he was least able to resist an assault. He would have slyly conveyed such thoughts into his mind, that he had been a stranger to practical godliness; but he had so much understanding as to consider that he was not himself, nor fit to be a judge when he could look but at a few things. And truly I told him that it was the best way for one that had settled a well-grounded hope in his life, to give the devil no other answer at such a time, but, “Satan, thou liest,” and enter into no further dispute with him. Whereupon he said, “Thou cowardly devil, take me now? Why didst thou not come sooner, if thou hadst any thing to say?” This expression he had more than once, and was troubled no further but to give testimony afterward to some that stood by, that, thanks be to God, we have the victory through Christ Jesus. And,

ⁱ Nazianz. Epist. 64. [ed. Ben. Epist. 32. tom. ii. p. 29 A.]

^k Ἐφιλοσόφει ὡσπερ ἐν ἀλλοτρίῳ σώματι,—ib. [p. 28 A.]

Lastly, he had such *εὐθανασία* as the greatest man once in the world wished for, and he placidly and quietly, without being torn by force out of his body, slept in the Lord on the Lord's day, the twelfth day of this month.

And considering the time of his end, I think it is not a mere fancy to remark upon these three things which made his death just proportionable to his life. First, that as he died in the noon of his age, so he died in the noon of the day. That may seem but an inconsiderable circumstance, unless we join it with the rest. For, secondly, he went to receive his reward upon that day wherein he most laboured. From the communion of saints on earth, he went to the comfort of saints and angels in heaven; and it was one of the last words that he spake, *There remains a rest for the people of God.* Thirdly, he died on one of the longest days in the year, as if God would tell us that he had lived long enough, as long as was fit, and that being now come to his full height, he was at his tropic, and must return to him that sent him forth.

Men, brethren, and fathers, you will pardon it to the affection I bear to his memory, that I have given you this long, though I hope not tedious narration; and if any think it is too short, (which I may rather suspect,) let them be pleased to consider that his life consisted but of a few days, and that it is no small part of virtue to conceal one's virtues. And therefore they may believe without danger that the greatest part of what I have told you is but the least part of that worth which lay latent in him.

And now as you have had the patience to bear with me thus long out of your love to him, so let your love to yourselves bestow so much patience upon you as to suffer a little longer, till I speak a few words to every one in this assembly.

And first of all, to you, my brethren of the ministry, I shall not take upon me to speak any words of my own, but acquaint you with two words of his to the dearest relation he had in his former sickness.

First, let us be much in private prayer. Our time is short as well as other men's, and many times shorter, though our account be greater; therefore let us spend much time with God, as we endeavour to spend it all for him. Let not a crowd of thoughts in our studies, nor a crowd of company here in the

city, thrust God away from our souls; but let them frequently retire unto him as the fountain of all light and good. Prayer before our studies is the key to unlock the secrets of God; and prayer afterward is the turning of the key to lock them safe into our hearts. Prayer sharpens our appetite after truth, and when we have found it, it sets an edge upon the truth, and makes it more cutting and penetrating into the heart. And, as Erasmus well said, “We shall speak more dexterously to men, when with our whole hearts we have first spoken with God^r.”

Secondly, let us look to our ends in our work. This was another of his counsels, without which indeed our labour will be in vain. Let us believe ourselves what we speak, and then we should mind the glory of God, and not ourselves. Alas! what is the applause of men when we are gone, but like a sound in a dead man’s ear? And what is it when we are alive, but an empty breath that is lost sooner than got, and is got oftentimes by idleness sooner than taking pains? And what is there else that can tempt an ingenuous mind? Our very breeding doth teach us to despise money and gain; but the example of our Lord and his apostles will make it seem a sordid thing, to be trampled under our feet. Let the good of men therefore and the glory of God be the mark at which we aim: and the Lord in heaven hear our prayers, and bless our preaching.

Secondly, then to you of this parish let me say a few things. And first, pray earnestly, among other petitions, for these two things, that God would pardon your unprofitableness, which perhaps you may have been guilty of under such means; and that he would bless you with another minister of such a temper as he was, and that will design so seriously the good of your souls. He desired you should know that he loved you, and he prayed God to bless you. I hope God will so hear his desires, and you will so remember his instructions, and those you have received from former lights, that I may spare that prayer which Mr. Udal used at the funeral of Mr. Shute^s, viz. “That God will neither let you fall into the hand of a dark lanthorn, nor be

^r Dexterius loquentur cum hominibus, qui prius tota mente cum Deo fuerint collocuti.—l. 3. de Rat. Concion. [tom. v. col. 985 C.]

^s [P. 41. 4to. Lond. 1645. The Rev. Josias Shute was archdeacon of Colchester.]

led by an *ignis fatuus*." The Jews have a saying (God grant it be true), "That never doth there die any illustrious man, but there is another born as bright on the same day^t." God loves the world so well, that when one sun sets another rises; to which they accommodate that place in Eccles. i. 5: *The sun ariseth, and the sun goeth down*. Nay, they observe further, that he makes some star or other arise before a sun be set: as Joshua began to shine before Moses' light was darkened; and before Joshua went to bed, Othniel, the son of Kenaz, was risen up to judge; Eli was not gathered to his fathers before Samuel appeared to be a most hopeful youth. And among the other sex they also note, that Sarah was not taken away till Rebecca was ready to come in her stead. The Lord grant that you may find this true, and that as now the nights are at the shortest, so you may have but a very short night before another sun arise in this place. But if we be so unworthy, that God will not bless us with such a favour, may it please him but to let posterity twenty year hence sit under such a burning and shining light: may it please his goodness and mercy, that the day of his death may be but the birthday of some eminent person to illuminate this city.

Secondly, let me beseech you to write down any memorable thing that you have heard from him, and hath much affected you; that it may be engraven upon your heart, and do you good for ever. By this means you will cause the lips of the dead to speak, and you will not lose all converse with him now that he is gone from you. For a man's discourses are the picture of his soul, which is himself. O my beloved, how sad an account will you have to make, if you be not truly religious who have had so many lights in your candlestick that have spent themselves to illuminate you! How will you appear before the judgment seat of God, when not only one, but four or five ministers shall witness against you? How will you look not only him, but those that delivered the lamp to him, in the face? Or rather, how will you look God in the face, when you shall think what means of obtaining salvation you have enjoyed, and yet are not saved? Remember therefore now all those wholesome counsels you have received from their mouths;

^t [Talmud. tit. Kidduschin, in apud J. Plantavit. Floril. Rabbin. Tsemach Davidis Ganz, p. 104; et § 179. p. 28.]

and if there be any beginnings of godliness in your hearts, any taste of religion, let me remember you of two directions which were some of the last he gave you, and write them upon your heart. He told me not long before his sickness, that he had begun at his own house to give some short exhortations to some of his communicants, in which he intended (I think once in a fortnight) to insist upon the chief things that belong to the establishing a soul in grace. He begun this course April 14, and lived to give but two directions, which I shall again commend to your thoughts.

First, he desired you to beware lest you should be found in the number of the giddy, or of the lazy professors of this age. And one argument whereby he pressed to diligence was this: Death is near you, like to a mole it is digging your graves under you (so was his expression), therefore *whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might*^u. My beloved, death may be as near to you now, as it was then to him; and therefore take heed that you be not found idle and useless servants.

Secondly, he advised you to give diligence not only to be sincere Christians, but also growing Christians, and at length excellent and very exemplary. Here he directed you to lay the foundation well, and then intended to show how to raise the building and superstructure upon it; but God took him away before he could do that. I beseech you, labour to be true and real Christians, though perhaps you may not live to grow to any great height, no more than he lived to direct you to it. Look to your hearts, lest there be any root of bitterness that may make you to backslide; and remember, as his very expression was, that there is no such antidote against apostasy, as real integrity and sincerity. Yea, remember all other good discourses of his, and your other ministers, that you may frame your lives according to them, and grow taller (if you live still) by so many showers. Let me a little quicken you by this story. Zeno Cittiaeus consulted with the oracle how he might live well, and he received this answer, *Εἰ συγχρωτίζοιτο τοῖς νεκροῖς*^x, 'if he was of the same colour with the dead.' This he interpreted to mean, that he should get and read all the an-

^u Eccles. ix. 10.

^x [Hecato et Apollonius Tyrius apud Diog. Laert. in Zenone, vii. 1. § 3.]

cient books that he could hear of; and then steep and dye his mind in their sacred notions. My brethren, what St. Paul said of Epimenides's sentence, Tit. i. 13, that I may say of this, *This testimony is true.* Look as like to the dead in the Lord as ever you can, and labour to turn your souls into their shape. Not as though there were no living examples and teachers which you are to mind, (thanks be to God, there are a great number here before you,) but I would wish you not to forget men when they are dead and gone; for you cannot tell how soon you must live according to the manner of the dead, and not of the living. The world may prove so bad, that if you will be of their colour, you may be all, but only white. Let me beseech you therefore to remember his doctrine, and his manner of life too; to tread in his steps, and be followers of him, as he was of Christ. And though I have already made your patience sweat, yet let me exercise it a little longer, and borrow so much time of you, as but to remind you of a few things I would have you imitate. 1. Remember how great a reverence he did bear to the name of God. You should not hear him speak of it (I think) without alteration of his countenance, and the manner of his pronounciation. Learn from him not to take it upon every trifling occasion; and when you have any discourse of him, let your mind be serious, and lay aside laughter and jesting, with whatsoever at another time may be lawful, but not grave enough to keep company with God. 2. Remember how serious he was in prayer and addresses unto God. His soul seemed to be gathered into itself, and then gathered up to God. And I believe you can remember that his expressions were such that all might join with him, and that he was not acted by any private, but a public and divine spirit. 3. How he taught you to observe the Lord's day. Not long ago he entered with me into a discourse of that thing; and I perceived by it he had earnestly desired of you in some sermons to spend that time more religiously, in recounting the mercies of God, in telling to your children and servants the great things that the Lord hath done since the beginning of the world, that they may be had in everlasting remembrance. But especially in magnifying the goodness and wisdom of God in the glorious work of redemption by Christ Jesus. 4. Remember his charity to the poor, to which he excited you not only in public, but in private; and if you could

have seen it, by his example also. From some of you sure it was that he obtained yearly a good sum for poor scholars in the university; not being content with doing good himself, unless you did reap some fruit too. Do not forget, I say, this charity, now that he is gone; but let it be still as a living^d water, though it doth not run through the same hands.

Fifthly, get a faithful friend if you can: for a friend was a thing that he much loved and valued as the rarest jewel in the world next to piety; without which no man can be our true friend. A true friend will tell you of your faults, he will advise you of your concernments, he will be to you as the wife in your bosom. He may indeed sometimes be more dear than the nearest relation which we have, *and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother*, or whatsoever name of love there is in the world. And therefore it is observable that in Deut. xiii. 6 he is put in the last place, as the chiefest of all relations. *If thy brother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thy own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, &c.* It is very clear that Moses rises up by steps from the lowest to the highest; from a brother of the same *venter* to a child, and then to a wife, and at last to a friend, as the highest of all: and it is likewise clear that a man and wife are but one flesh, but a man and his friend are one soul; and therefore unless they be friends as well as man and wife, there is a greater love than theirs; but when both these conspire together, the relation of a friend and of consorts too, then it is the highest of all love, and the image of the love that is between Christ and his church.

Friendship is such a sacred thing, that though we are sometimes mistaken in our choice, yet it is not fit to snap the bonds asunder: but gently to dissolve them, that there may be some love afterward. So Cardan^z professeth that he would never rend and tear a false friendship in pieces, but would fairly unloose it, and pick the threads by which they were sown together. I have said more of this than of the rest, because it is so rare; and we are most apt to talk of the thing we love.

To conclude this my address to you, let me prevail with you to remember but this in general, how he commended religion

^z Amicitiam etiam subdolam non lacerabo, sed diffusam.—De Vita Propria. [cap. 23. tom. i. p. 16.]

to you both in his words and in his practice; as the life of the soul, as the soul of friendship, as the best friend of men, and the best natured thing and fullest of humanity in the world. It did not appear in him with its face all clouded, with looks sable and sad, with eyes heavy or distorted: but he represented it as the very joy of one's heart, the marrow of our bones, and that which gives health to all our flesh. Methinks it should make you all in love with religion, when you remember how cheerful, how pleasant, and I had almost said how sportful a thing it seemed. When we have once attained to the true gust and relish of it, a man that shall persuade us to forsake it shall be like to him that is in love with his own dreams, and would persuade us into the paradise of fools. And if at any time you be sad, O what sweet things are those tears! how full of joy are those sorrows! They are like a cypress^c cast over a beautiful face; or at the worst, but like the clouds which cover the face of the sun for a while, that it may be more acceptable when it shines; and beside, they water the earth with their flowers, which make it flourish and spring the better.

But there are some other here present who will expect a few words from me, and therefore I must pass these things over without any further enlargements.

Thirdly, to you then, who were his auditors and friends, let me say, that I hope you have learned by his instruction to choose another guide if you want one in your own parishes; and that you cannot honour his acquaintance more than by a devout and strict life, and walking orderly and peaceably according to the gospel. I am sure he loved his friends with an ardent love, and he was as void of compliment as he was of gall. And therefore love his memory, and labour to do that which you think would have pleased him best if he had still lived. And what is that? As St. John saith concerning his children, so would he have said of his friends, *I have no greater joy than to hear that you walk in the truth*, 3 John 4; and therefore he saith, ver. 11, *Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good: he that doeth good is of God, but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.*

Fourthly, to his relations I need only say that I need say

^c [‘Cypress’ or ‘Cyprus,’ a transparent mourning veil.—See Johnson’s and Richardson’s dictionaries.]

nothing. For should I say, Remember him : alas ! he was so dear, that they cannot forget him. Shall I say, Be of good comfort ? Their piety is so great, that it will let them want no cordials. Shall I bid them prepare themselves against all other changes ? That is counsel common to us all. And therefore I will not address my speech unto them, not knowing how to administer any counsel where there are so many physicians.

Fifthly, but lastly, to myself what shall I say ? If he that hath lost a friend be half dead, and like a worm cut in two, (as Nazianzen speaks^d,) then it is a wonder that I have said already so much to you. Little did I think, when he so passionately bewailed the death of our friend Mr. Bright, that I should so soon have come to pay my tears at his funeral.

I have said enough, having called myself fool by saying so much. But love made me blind, and love makes me speak it. And O that we could all show that we loved him by our tears ! O that we could all water his ashes with such affectionate showers that nothing but roses and violets might grow upon his grave ; that his name may be like a sweet perfume, that none may violate that precious thing by any envious and pestilent breath. May thy dust sleep in peace, my dear friend ! May thy ashes take an undisturbed rest ! May thy memory be always green and fresh in my mind ! May I live and do as much good ! And may I be as happy in my latter end ! O my soul, let us begin then to take our leave more seriously of this world ; let us cease to weep for him, and weep for our own folly. Arise, arise, μεταβῶμεν ἐντεῦθεν, &c.^e : 'let us go away from hence.' Let us throw away these dreams. Let us not live among these shadows. Let us not be mocked any more by these false pleasures. Let honour, glory, and applause find somebody else to make their fools. Farewell all the puppets that dance on the scene of this world. Farewell all these painted clouds, these gilded vanities, these hyperbolized nothings. Let this henceforth be writ upon my heart, yea, let it be engraven on us all, *Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, all is vanity. Surely man at his best estate is altogether vanity.*

^d Ἡμιθανῆς καὶ ἡμίτονος. Orat. 20. ^e Nazian. Epist. 63. [ed. Ben. [ed. Ben. Orat. 43. § 80. tom. i. p. Epist. 178. tom. ii. p. 147 A.] 831 D.]

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

FUNERAL OF MR. THOMAS GRIGG, B. D.

AND RECTOR OF ST. ANDREW-UNDERSHAFT,

SEPTEMBER 4, 1670.

HEB. XIII. 14.

Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

IMPRIMATUR.

October 4, 1670.

Rob. Grove, R. P.
Humfr. Dno. Episc.
Lond. a sac. Dom.

TO THE
RELATIONS AND FRIENDS OF THE DECEASED.

TO satisfy your desires, I have transcribed this discourse, (as soon as my other occasions would suffer,) and exposed it to the public view. The main body of it is printed just as it was delivered; but I have taken liberty to add the preface, and some part of the application, which then I was constrained to omit. If it prove effectual to the furtherance and joy of any one's faith, I doubt not but that very thing will help to mitigate the sorrow which you have conceived for the loss of so worthy a person: a man of so amiable a temper, such an unbiassed judgment, prudent simplicity, unfeigned charity, and discreet zeal, that it is not to be expected you should ever think of his departure from us without a sigh. But the more useful he was to the world, and delightful to you, the greater will your virtue be in humbly submitting to the will of God, by whose order he is removed to a better place. We must not teach him how to dispose of us, nor repine at his wise appointments; no, nor suffer the just grief which we feel on such sad occasions to extinguish quite our joy in him, who would have us *rejoice in the Lord always*^a. What cause we have to do so, the ensuing meditations will in some measure demonstrate: which are plain but solid truths, able to support and satisfy our spirits, if we lay them up not only in our memories to keep safe, but in our understandings to consider, and our wills to love and imitate. Let us but often ruminate on them and press them on our hearts, and live by the faith of the Son of God, and there is no disaster in the world so great but we shall be able, at least, to possess our souls in patience when it threatens to overwhelm us. *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work*^b.

Yours to serve you,

S. P.

COVENT-GARDEN, Octob. 15, 1670.

^a [Phil. iv. 4.]

^b [2 Thess. ii. 16.]

A

FUNERAL SERMON

UPON 2 CORINTHIANS V. 1.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

THE apostle, being at the time of his writing this epistle in great troubles and dangers for the testimony of Jesus, professes himself notwithstanding so abundantly satisfied with the ministry he had undertaken, that he did not faint at all nor grow weary of it, as you read in the first verse of the foregoing chapter.

That which made him so courageous as to preach under so many discouragements (which he mentions, ver. 8, 9) was the *same spirit of faith* which had been in the people of God, but was now more lively and strong in him through the *resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead*, as he tells us, ver. 13, 14. *For this cause*, saith he, *we faint not*, &c. ver. 16. It was no foolhardiness that made them expose themselves to so many calamities, but the belief of some better things which would reward their sufferings. *For our light affliction*, saith he, *which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen*^a, &c. And if any one should think that these sufferings might end at last in death, and bring them down to their graves, he would have them think withal that it was no great matter. Let these miseries proceed so far as to take away our lives, this is the worst of it; the best is, *We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an*

^a 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.

house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. These sufferings, it is true, may pull down our present habitation, but that is all they can do; there is a better building which they cannot touch. Besides, we shall be no great losers by the demolishing of this dwelling, for it is but an *earthly house*. Nay, we shall be great gainers, for we shall the sooner enter into the celestial and eternal mansions.

This is the sense of the words; in which we may consider these three things:

1. The description which the apostle makes of the present state in which we now are. It is in *our earthly house of this tabernacle*, which must be dissolved.

2. His description of the future state in which the faithful shall be hereafter. They *have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*.

3. The certainty of that happy state. It is a thing as evident in its kind as the other is. As we know that this house of ours is to be dissolved, so we know there is a building of God, when it is thrown down, which stands for ever. The one is certain, as well as the other.

Of the two first I have discoursed elsewhere, upon the like occasion with this that hath now brought us together; showing how poor and mean the dwelling is in which our souls lodge while they remain in this world; and what goodly preparation our Lord hath made for them in the next. There seems to be an opposition here of the one state to the other in five respects.

1. We are here only in an *house*, but there is a *building* for us. 2. This is an house of ours, but that is a building of God. 3. We have now but an house of a *tabernacle*, then we shall have an house *not made with hands*. 4. And this is an *earthly house*, whereas that is *in the heavens*. 5. This is to be *dissolved*, but that is *eternal in the heavens*.

As much as to say, we are here confined to a very strait and narrow room, in which the nobler thoughts and affections of our souls are apt to be choked and stifled. And no wonder, considering the meanness of its original, and the pooriness of its beginning. Our body was once a very small pile; so small that it could be inclosed in our mother's womb. Then, and a long time after, our souls were so pent up, that they could not

find themselves. They were forced to stay many years before they could gain so much liberty as to turn about, reflect on themselves, and know that they had a being. Nay, so pitifully were they cooped up, that the rational spirit could not breathe, or give any sign at all of life. And though now indeed this house is raised and advanced to a greater bigness, yet, besides that it is of no huge dimensions, and a great many years were spent in rearing it to such an height, it is but like a *tabernacle*: a place subject to continual changes the scene of perpetual alterations; by which it hath both its subsistence and destruction. It is liable also to outward violence, as well as inward pains and diseases; and at its best state is but a vile and sordid habitation, an house of clay or dirt, into which it will at last be resolved. It cannot stand long, though we underprop it never so much; but as it calls for daily repairs, so in the end it will utterly fall to ruin.

This is the miserable condition of souls in their present abode; which should make them, one would think, not very fond of it; nor to set an high esteem on those pleasures which are limited to so small a space, and crowded into such a narrow compass. *Nunquam magnis ingeniis cara in corpore mora est.* No great minds ever held their bodies in great esteem, nor would purchase their stay in them at too great a price. They rather *groan earnestly*, (as the apostle speaks in the next verse,) when they feel the burdens and pressures of this state, to be translated to that blessed country where they shall be better entertained.

For there all faithful souls shall feel themselves in fairer and more spacious mansions; and possess a building of greater capacity and larger reception: in which they shall enjoy as much liberty and freedom as heart can desire; spreading themselves in a vast and unbounded blessedness. It cannot be otherwise, seeing it is *a building of God*, a fabric wholly of his own rearing: and therefore must needs be a beautiful and stately work, that shall bear some marks of the excellency of the builder; and declare the greatness, wisdom, and magnificent goodness of our Creator and Redeemer. There can be no time conceived there wherein we shall be to seek for our happiness; but at our first entrance into that blessed place we shall find our thoughts full of God, our hearts exceedingly

ravished with his love, and all our troublesome passions turned into joy that we have made such a gainful change. Nor shall we meet with any thing either to trouble our delights, or to divert and interrupt those happy enjoyments. We shall not stand in need of so much as meat, and drink, and clothes, whereby we support and repair this present tabernacle; but as that house is made without hands, so it will subsist unchangeably without those helps which we now require. For it is a building *in the heavens*, the dwelling-place of God himself; who will one day refine our very body, and make it like the purest sky: so that it shall have no spot nor wrinkle nor any such thing, but be of a clear and transparent beauty, like that of the glorious body of our Saviour. This will secure the incorruption and eternity of it. There will be no heaviness in it to incline it to this dull earth again, no such weight as shall sink us down to these lower regions. But being translated to the country of spirits, it will become in a manner a spiritual body: which shall neither grow old nor suffer any decay, but remain in a constant youth and freshness eternally in the heavens.

These are great and glorious things, as I then distinctly showed. So great, that they who do not believe them cannot but wish they should be true. For men naturally abhor to think that any thing of them should perish and die for ever: and they as passionately desire to be in a better condition than now they find themselves. They would all be more happy, if they knew how, than the whole world can make them; and never, by their good wills, have any period put to their enjoyments. Which is the very thing that the apostle here gives us hope of: the general sense of whose words is this; that there is a never-ending felicity for good Christians, not only for their souls, but their bodies too, in the other world. For their souls presently, in those *heavenly mansions* which our Lord spoke of, *in his Father's house*: and for their bodies, at the day of his appearing again; when *he that raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus*: as the apostle speaks in ver. 14 of the former chapter.

But what certainty is there of such things? may some say. May we not abuse ourselves, if we look for that which no man ever saw? Is not this to build castles in the air, as the common

saying is, and to feed ourselves with vain and empty promises out of our own imagination? Why should we hope for any such glorious state, who are so unworthy even our present being? What made it enter into the heart of man, to think of being so happy, and to entertain their minds with the expectation of such matters as seem too good and too great to be true?

The apostle answers to such surmises here in my text: *We know that we have a building of God, &c.* We have good reason for what we preach: we do not flatter ourselves and you when we speak of these things: our hopes are not built on the sand or the air, but stand on a firm foundation. We have solid grounds for this persuasion, and such certain arguments on which to found this belief, that it amounts to a knowledge. We doubt no more of it than of those things of which we have a certain assurance: but as we know that we must die, so we know by other means that, after we are dissolved, there is a better dwelling for us. This shall be the subject of my discourse at this time. And here are five things worthy of our notice, which make up the evidence which the apostle had for this building and eternal possessions in the heavens.

I. He saith it was a thing known; a matter that was demonstrable by proper arguments.

II. A thing generally known; for he speaks in the plural number. Not a private doctrine, but the common sense of all the followers of Jesus.

III. They knew this so that they made it the scope of all their endeavours. That the particle *for* bids us consider, which refers to the words immediately foregoing.

IV. More than this; they were so sure of it, that for its sake they quitted their present dwelling, and ventured their very lives to come at it. For so he will tell you, if you look but a little further back to the 16th, 11th, and 10th verses of the fourth chapter: of which he here also gives the reason.

V. Lastly, they were so perfectly persuaded of it, that they esteemed themselves, in a sort, possessed of this building. For he saith, *ἐχομεν, we have a building of God in the heavens.*

I.

I begin with the first; the knowledge which the apostles had of this happy state, in a greater freedom and liberty, joy

and pleasure, constancy and settlement, than our present condition affords. It was a matter of certainty, which they made no scruple to assert. It was not a probable opinion, but an undoubted conclusion. There were sound arguments which led them to this strong persuasion; necessary causes, which made them of this unmovable belief. What they were must be our inquiry at this time. And upon due examination, I make no question we shall find that their judgment was settled upon substantial reasons, and that they did not pretend to a knowledge without such solid grounds as were able to sustain so great a confidence as they express in all their writings and actions.

I. For they knew that Jesus their Master, who made discovery of these things to them, had certain knowledge of them himself, and could not deceive them. They knew, I mean, that *he came out from God*, that he *descended from heaven*, to lay open that place, and show us what God hath provided there for those that love him. This was very effectual to persuade them of a building of God, because one that came from God assured them of it: and they doubted not of an house in the heavens, because they were told it by one that had been there himself, and knew very well the state of that heavenly country which he described. He was not like to many idle persons, who draw maps of such territories as they never saw, (wherein they paint chimeras, and whatsoever extravagant fancies come into their minds,) but he was acknowledged by more than themselves to be *a teacher that came from God*, and therefore acquainted with the glory of the other world, and the happy condition which God intends for souls there. This he set before their eyes, to their great satisfaction, both because the heavenly country was described by him that had been in it, and, which is more, by him that was the owner and possessor of it. How could they refuse to surrender their belief to such a person; *to him that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven^c*? That which our Saviour saith to Nicodemus, in that place ver. 11, was their assurance in all cases, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.* This he told them over

^c John iii. 13.

and over again, that he had *seen the Father*; that he was *the living bread which came down from heaven*; and that thither he *should ascend up where he was before*^d, and divers other places. Nor did he only say it, but he proved it too, by doing such things as none could do but one that had the power of heaven. Which made Nicodemus say, *We know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him*^e. And the blind man also concludes, that *if he were not of God, he could not have done such a thing, as was never heard of since the world began*^f. These, and such like wonders, made the apostles cry out, *We believe and are sure that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God*^g. *We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us understanding, that we may know him that is true. This is the true God and eternal life*^h. And the certainty of this made them sure of all the rest. For why should they question the words of such a Master? Why should they make any doubt of that which was averred by one of such credit? If they questioned any thing, it must be whether he came from heaven or no. But this being granted, they might very well say they knew they had a building of God eternal there. Now of that they had assurance, by voices from heaven, by miraculous works, by his resurrection from the dead, and by the Holy Ghost sent down from thence. Before which coming of the Holy Ghost, they were confident of this; and therefore much more after they had received it. For that our Saviour testified of them in his prayer to the Father before his departure. *I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and have believed that thou didst send me*ⁱ.

II. They knew likewise that this person, who could not but speak the truth, had promised to purified souls, that they should *see God*. It is one of the first encouragements that he gave to them in his sermon on the mount, Matt. v. 8, to become his followers. From whence they could not but plainly discern, not only that there is a felicity hereafter for holy men, but that it is so exceeding great and glorious, that we must be very

^d John vi. 46, 51, 62.^g John vi. 69.^e John iii. 2.^h I John v. 20.^f John ix. 32, 33.ⁱ John xvii. 8.

much heightened and enlarged in all our faculties, before we can be capable to enjoy it. We must be strangely changed, they knew, both in soul and body, (neither of which he promised should perish,) before we can be rendered fit for conversation with the Most High and Holy One, *the blessed and only Potentate; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see.* For in this body we cannot bear the sight of an angel in his brightness. The lustre of one of those celestial creatures dazzles the eyes of flesh; and made men anciently think they should expire presently, when they were admitted to their company. The reason of which perhaps was, that they concluded this earthly state in this corruptible body was not strong enough to endure such manifestations from above. How can we behold then the glory of God, unless we be made over again, and moulded into a new shape? How can we be able to look upon the splendour of the Divine Majesty, unless all our powers be mightily raised, widened, and fortified beyond the highest of our present conceptions? We must *shine forth as the sun* (according to our Saviour's promise) *in the kingdom of the Father*^k. That transforming sight of God (which the apostle speaks of) which shall so alter our souls, as to render us like unto him, must be in an habitation where we shall be capable to know more of him, and look longer and more steadfastly upon him, than we can in this dark and narrow dwelling. For though it doth not fully appear what we shall be, yet thus much *we know*, saith St. John, *that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; because we shall see him as he is*^l.

III. Of this change they saw an instance in our Lord himself; whose very body, as soon as he was raised from the grave, was so clarified and refined, that they could not but be sensible of a marvellous transmutation to be made in themselves, and of a better dwelling which their souls should one day have. Especially since his resurrection also was the great thing to which he appealed for a proof of the truth of all his promises. They perceived a manifest difference in his condition now from what it was before, and that his body was become more subtle and

^k Matt. xiii. 43.

^l 1 John iii. 2.

airy than it was when he dwelt among them. For on a sudden he appeared in the midst of them, and again in a moment he vanished out of their sight. His body was now in a preparation to a higher state, and therefore, though they felt really flesh and bones, yet he showed them, by the hasty disappearance of it, into what a pure substance it was shortly to be turned. They saw it was to be so thin and rarified, that it would be a spirit rather than a body, and was to suffer such a change, that now it was not fit for them to converse withal, while they were in this earthly tabernacle. This was the reason that he came to them only at certain seasons, and continued not always with them; and that he charged Mary not to touch him^m, as if she meant to hold him fast and keep him with her. For though he intended to afford them some of his company, being not yet ascended to the Father, yet he would have her know they must not expect his stay with them after his wonted manner; but go to his brethren, the disciples, and say to them, *I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.*

IV. Accordingly they knew that he did ascend up into heaven forty days after his resurrection; for they themselves saw him transported thither, and had his own word for it, that he *went to prepare a place for them, and would come again and receive them unto himself, that where he was, there they might be also*ⁿ. For this they had also the word of two of the heavenly court, who stood by them in bright raiment, as they gazed upon him when he was taken up, saying, *This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven*^o. And how glorious his body was made after he came thither, they also very well knew. For St. Stephen, at his trial, *saw the heavens opened, and beheld the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.* This he openly testified to the whole council before whom he stood accused^p, and it signifies the illustrious condition wherein he was; for as he was the Son of man, he stood next to the Divine Majesty, and was arrayed with the glory of God. St. Paul also, who so little believed Stephen's words that he was consenting to his death, as if he had been a blasphemer, saw our Saviour not long after this as he was journeying to

^m John xx. 17. ⁿ John xiv. 3. ^o Acts i. 10, 11. ^p Acts vii. 55, 56.

Damascus. But he beheld him in such an astonishing brightness, that it struck him to the ground, and put out his eyes, which were not able to endure the glory of it^g. Which in his apology to the people he calls *a great light* that shone round about him^r; and in his apology to Agrippa, *a light from heaven at midday above the brightness of the sun*^s. To these two you may add the testimony of the beloved disciple, who when he was in the isle of Patmos for the testimony of Jesus, saw him in a majestic shape, *and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength*. And when he saw him he was so dismayed that he *fell as dead at his feet*^t. By these means they knew to what an amazing glory they should one day be exalted; a little glimpse of which in this mortal nature they were not strong enough to bear.

V. For they knew withal that their very bodies should be made like unto his. 1. They remembered how he called them *brethren*, and told them that *his Father was their Father, and his God their God*; and therefore doubted not that what was done for him should be done for them. 2. And how he prayed that *they might be with him where he was, and behold* (i. e. enjoy) *his glory which the Father hath given him*^u. 3. And how he assured them it was the *will of him that sent him, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and he should raise him up at the last day*^x. Which made the apostle say, as you heard (in the chapter before my text, verse 14), they knew that *he who raised up the Lord Jesus would raise us up by Jesus*. 4. And being raised up, they knew that they should be *carried into the air to meet the Lord*^y. Now these bodies which we wear at present are not of an aerial nature, but altogether of an earthly. They are not fit to be transported beyond this lower region, nor were made to live in any other element than that in which they are. Nay, it would be a great terror to us in this body to be caught and lifted up above; we should be in continual dread of falling down to this earth, whither the heaviness of them doth incline us. And therefore they must be changed, if we go to meet the Lord in the air, as he hath promised we shall. For the apostle

^g Acts ix. 3, 4, &c. ^r xxii. 6.

^s Acts xxvi. 13. ^t Rev. i. 16, 17.

^u John xvii. 24.

^x vi. 40.

^y 1 Thess. iv. 17.

saith, he spake this *by the word of the Lord*^z. 5. And he promised by the same word, that *so we shall be ever with him*^a, which we cannot conceive how this earthly body should endure. It would soon be weary of that strange place, and groan and sigh there as much as the soul doth here. It would be pined for want of meat and drink, as the spirit now is often too much stifled with them. And therefore, in pursuance of his promise, they must be made another kind of bodies, fitted to that country to which they shall be transported; where there is no earth, nor water, nor such creatures as live in them, but pure light of unconceivable brightness. Lastly, they knew that the members must needs be made conformable to the Head, and therefore his body being glorious, so must this vile body of ours be made too, as the apostle tells us, Phil. iii. 21. It would be but an ugly sight among us to behold a handsome beautiful face of the purest complexion joined to a body black and sooty, whose limbs were all deformed and disproportioned: and much more ill-favoured to see a head of light glistening like the sun, and all the members dark as pitch, resembling this sluggish earth. They made no question therefore, but that when he should appear again visibly with them attending on him, they should be conformed to the condition and quality of his person, to whom they related as members of his body; that so he *might be admired in his saints, and glorified in all that believe*. They looked for him to come from heaven and fashion them after his own image, i. e. to make them lightsome, heavenly and spiritual, *according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself*^b.

VI. And this truly they knew as well as any thing else, that he *lives for evermore*, and can make good his kind intentions and gracious promises. According to his own words which he spake to St. John when he appeared to him: *I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I live for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death*^d. That he promised such glorious things they were very certain, for they heard him speak them with their own ears. That it was his goodness and kindness alone which moved him to engage himself in those promises they were well assured, for nothing else could persuade him to it. And that his power was equal

^z 1 Thess. v. 15. ^a Ver. 17. ^b 1 Cor. xv. 49; Phil. iii. 21. ^c Rev. i. 18.

to his will they had abundant demonstration ; for they saw him open the eyes of him that was born blind, and raise Lazarus out of his grave to behold the light of the sun, and all the beauties of this world. Now, what reason had they to imagine that his goodness was lessened when his glory was increased, since there is no good man but is still growing better ? Or how could they suspect any defect in his power now that he was made *Lord of all* ; and they felt him also every where present to work such wonders at their word, that they raised the dead to life again, as he himself had done ? What greater evidence could they desire of his ability to make good all his promises of raising up themselves to a more glorious life ? They might very well trust his word, that *as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself^e, that he came that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly^f, and that because he lived, they should live also^g.*

VII. Especially since they knew by the strange change that he had wrought already in every one of their souls, that he could easily do as much for their bodies. It was no harder for him, they knew, to give a luminous body, than it was so marvellously to illuminate their minds ; to turn this earthly house into an heavenly, than to fill the spirits of common men with the spirit and wisdom of God. That pureness, agility and incorruption of the body which they looked for was as easy to be effected in the twinkling of an eye, as it was for their souls to receive on a sudden such quickness of thoughts, the light of prophecy, the gift of languages, and all the other excellent endowments which they found themselves possessed of. He that had converted their minds into a kind of angelical understanding, they knew could raise them still to what degree he pleased, and convert their other part into as high a glory. So that the angels should as much admire the change of the one as they did of the other ; and as now they desired to look into the goodly state of the Christian church, so hereafter they should be very much surprised with the greater splendour of it, when they saw the dead raised, and made equal to themselves.

Marcion indeed, and other ancient heretics, vilified the body so much, that they thought it unworthy of the care of God.

^e John v. 26.

^f x. 10.

^g xiv. 19.

But, as Tertullian smartly replied, they loved it too well, though they despised and undervalued it so much : and as for God, he will never despise the work of his own hands. And it is not one of his ordinary works neither, but the work of his counsel : “ The receptacle of a noble spirit ; that which ministers to the Most High, and doth him service ; that which is offered and sacrificed to him by the holy martyrs ; that which the Son of God himself did not despise. Therefore, *Absit, absit, ut Deus ingenii sui curam, &c.*, ‘ far be it from God, far be it from him, to abandon and cast away the care of his counsel,’ and admirable contrivance, the receiver of his breath, the queen of his creation, the heir of his liberality, the priest and minister of his religion, the soldier of his testimony, which witnesses to him by sufferings ; and, in one word, the sister of Christ Jesus, which he hath purchased also with his blood.”

He will not forsake it, and leave it for ever in its ruins. He will make it the subject of more of his care, and bestow on it more of his counsel. He will make it far better, and turn it into a nobler being. And though the apostles did not now feel the beginning of a change in it, as they did in their spirits ; yet the wonderful advancement which they felt in them forced them to conclude that he could as easily raise and improve their mortal bodies. And it was a proof also that he would ; for one promise being fulfilled, of sending the Spirit upon them, it was an earnest of the other promise, that he would turn these earthly bodies into heavenly. *Plane accepit et hic Spiritum caro, sed arrabonem*, as the same Tertullian speaks^h. The flesh itself also hath plainly here received the Spirit ; but as an earnest only. What God poured out upon their souls was a pledge of his love to their bodies. Their flesh hereby received a testimony that it should be made spiritual and incorruptible.

VIII. To conclude, they knew likewise there had been some alteration already made upon occasion in the body of some of them, and that others also felt an higher elevation of their soul. As for the body, St. Stephen’s face was seen *as it had been the face of an angel*ⁱ. *Angelicum jam fastigium induerat*^k, as the forenamed author speaks, ‘ he had already put

^e [P. 530 D.]

^h [Ibid. p. 60 A.]

ⁱ Acts vi. ult.

^k [P. 360 D.]

on the angelical state and dignity:’ he was arrayed for a time with their brightness and glory. It was not the author of this religion only which was transfigured, but his followers also, in some measure. And as that transfiguration of our Saviour on the holy mount was to foreshadow his glory in the heavens, so might this of St. Stephen’s be to show what God would do for his faithful servants there. St. Paul was more than ordinarily assured of it, for he was lifted up in soul, at least, to the *third heavens*, and carried likewise *into paradise*, as he tells us in chap. xii. of this Epistle. In which places he heard, among the heavenly company there, *unexpressible words*; which it was not possible for him to utter and relate to others, when he came down to conceive with his brain and speak with his tongue again. But this ecstasy of spirit, or translation of his thither, gave him a high foretaste of the bliss of the celestial inhabitants; and clearly demonstrated what unspeakable joy and pleasures our souls are capable of when they remove into those mansions, and to what a pitch of glory both soul and body shall be promoted at the resurrection of the dead.

It was manifest to them by all these means that *he that hath the Son* (i. e. effectually believes in Christ and is his faithful follower) *hath life*. And these things they have written unto us that believe on the name of the Son of God, *that we may know that we have eternal life*¹. For faith is a certain and sure way of knowledge, as well as any else. And our faith relies, you see, on the testimony of the men of God; who *did not follow cunningly devised fables, when they made known the power and coming of our Lord Jesus, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty, &c.*^m And, as St. Paul speaks in ver. 2 of the foregoing chapter, had *renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but, by manifestation of the truth, commending themselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God*. There appeared nothing of fraud and guile in any of their speeches or actions, but the greatest simplicity, ingenuity, and singleness of heart that can be imagined. They abominated all dishonest dealing, and did not pretend to receive things from the Lord when they were but the devices or

¹ 1 John v. 12, 13.

^m 2 Pet. i. 16, 17.

dreams of their own brains. But, as the apostle tells them in this Epistle, chap. xii. 12, the signs of his being sent of God were wrought among them, *in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds*. That which they had heard, which they had *seen with their eyes*, which they had *looked upon*, and their *hands had handled of the word of life*, they declared unto the world. *For the life was manifested*, (saith St. John,) *and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us*ⁿ. Let us not therefore be faithless, but believe the testimony of men so well assured. For to think that there is no habitation for us in the heavens after we depart from these earthly houses, because we were never there, is as foolish and senseless as if a man but poorly bred, and that had never stirred beyond the door of his cottage, should imagine that all the goodly buildings he hears of at London, or which are shown him from the top of an hill some miles' distance from it, are but so many clouds and phantasms in the air, and have no real being. Let us but a little awaken our souls to look beyond this house of clay: let us but go out of doors in our thoughts and meditations, stretching our minds further than the things of sense; and we shall clearly discern in this light of God which hath shone from heaven upon us that there is a far more glorious state in a *building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*. For these things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God^o. These things say the servants of Christ, the stewards of the mysteries of God; in all things approving themselves to be his ministers^p. We ought therefore to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. How shall we escape if we neglect such great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his will^q?

ⁿ 1 John i. 1, 2, 3.^o Rev. iii. 14.^p 1 Cor. iv. 1; ii. 6, 4.^q Heb. ii. 1, 3, 4.

II.

And that you may be moved to the greater attention to these things, and not to slight the report of our Lord himself, and of men chosen of God to be his witnesses; give me leave to speak a few words of the other remaining heads (mentioned at the beginning.) which will add some strength and force to what you have heard.

It is considerable then, that this was a matter generally known; a thing wherein they were all agreed. They had a knowledge, as I have told you, of them, and not a mere opinion. It was not only a probable but a certain truth, which they preached to the world. And yet an opinion that is not private, but common, is very much respected, and carries no small authority with it. We are all very much overawed by that which is universally received, and inclined to follow that which is every where had in reverence. How much more then is this to be regarded, and worthy of all acceptance, which stands upon such solid foundations, and to which there was also a common consent! They were all satisfied that this was the very truth of God; there was no dispute or division among them about this doctrine: it was the thing which they had *heard from the beginning, that this is the promise which he hath promised us, even eternal life*. This was every apostle's sense; this they all preached, this every Christian believed. It was the *common faith of God's elect; the common hope of their heavenly calling*; and, in one word, *the common salvation*^s. It was not the belief of St. Paul alone; he was not the only man that published this glad tidings to the world. But they all heard the voice of Christ; *they all beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*; they all were witnesses of his resurrection, and all felt the same miraculous change wrought in their souls; and as our Lord prayed, that *they might be one, as he and the Father were*^t, so they unanimously *delivered that which they received*^u, and *preached this hope of the gospel to every creature which is under heaven*^x, *teaching every man in all wisdom, that they might present*

^r I John ii. 24, 25.

^s Titus i. 1, 2, 4; Ephes. iv. 4;
Jude 3.

^t John xvii. 9.

^u I Cor. xv. 3, 11.

^x Col. i. 23.

every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Whereunto I also labour, saith the same apostle, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

This shows that they had no slight and superficial thoughts of the life to come; but that they were exceeding serious in the belief of it, being rooted and grounded in this truth. Which will more fully appear if you go on to consider,

III.

That they knew these things so clearly, and were so abundantly satisfied in the certainty of them, that they made them their scope and their aim, to which they directed and at which they levelled all their desires and endeavours. This the particle *for* puts us in mind of; which sends our thoughts back to the words before, and gives us an account of that character which we there find of the apostles of our Lord, who *looked not at the things which were seen, but at the things which were not seen.* They were so persuaded of this happy state hereafter, that it was always in their eye; and they made it the mark to which they bent all their thoughts, designs and labours. They slighted and trod upon all other things in compare with this, which they valued infinitely above all the contentments and satisfactions of this present life. There were none of them that studied to make any purchases in this world, to lay to their earthly house. They had no designs to grow rich and great; to provide themselves with fair estates, or to raise themselves a name and a praise among men. They did not follow the pleasures of this world, nor contrived how their body might enjoy its ease, and take its fill of sensual delights. No; though they wrought miracles with a word of their mouth, they never employed any of them for their temporal gain and advantage. Silver and gold they had none, though they were enriched with all the gifts of the Holy Ghost. They healed all manner of diseases, but received nothing for the cure. They spoke with tongues, taught mysteries, instructed men in heavenly knowledge; but freely they received, and freely they gave to all their disciples. None of them sought to advance himself to the degree of a nobleman, or a ruler of this world.

γ Col. v. 28, 29.

ζ Μη σκοπούντων ἑμῶν.

None of them laboured so much as to settle himself in a competent estate; but they went up and down as their Master did, and had no certain dwelling-place. They sought only for this *building of God* which is above; the *inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us*. This was all the possessions that they aimed at. They had nothing in their thoughts but to go to Jesus, and to carry others along with them, to those celestial mansions where he is. A great token of the sincerity of their belief; a manifest demonstration that they thought themselves sure of what they preached. For otherwise they would not have been so foolish and unthrifty, as not to have made some present temporal benefit of that great knowledge and power wherewith they were endowed.

IV.

But more than this; they were so sure of this *building of God in the heavens*, that they endured all sorts of miseries and pains in this life, merely in hopes and expectations of it. So St. Paul tells us, as I noted before in the foregoing chapter; and gives us a more particular account of his sufferings, whereby he *approved himself a minister of God*, chap. vi. 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and afterward a larger catalogue of them, chap. xi. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. Which when you have read, you will not doubt but that they *knew whom they had trusted* (as he speaks in another place, *and were persuaded that he was able to keep that which they had committed unto him against that day*^a). They exposed this house, I mean this body, wherein they were, to all the injuries and violence of an angry world. They regarded not what breaches were made in it by cruel hands. They suffered it to be rifled and spoiled of all its goods. They let it be ripped up and laid bare, that men might see into the sincerity of their hearts in this belief. Nay, they cared not though it were pulled down, and laid even with the ground. They let fire be set to it, and contentedly saw it turned to ashes. Which they could never have consented unto, if they had not been assured of a better habitation, *a building of God eternal in the heavens*. Were they, think you, the only fools who knew not what was good for themselves? Were men of

^a 2 Tim. i. 12.

so great knowledge, can you imagine, destitute of so much wit as not to understand the value of life? Were they so grossly ignorant as not to know that pleasure is better than pain? and a poor house better than none at all? What should make them then forsake the common sense of mankind, who by all means labour to preserve life, and seek to maintain the comforts and enjoyments of it; unless it were this belief which I speak of, that they should gain a more happy life by leaving this, and make an exchange of a mean and contemptible dwelling for one more honourable and glorious? It was not a fancy that could prevail with such wise men as they appeared, against sense and bodily feeling. Though fools may carelessly throw themselves into dangers, yet we cannot conceive how men of such divine reason could support themselves by mere imagination under so many dreadful sufferings. We must rather conclude, that it was the presence and real possession of some great good, infinitely surpassing all others, which made them quit so easily that which others hold so fast, and endure so constantly that which others so solicitously labour to avoid. And it is considerable, that they not only suffered all the torments the world could inflict, but underwent them with great patience and admirable quiet of mind. Nay, they endured, not only with patience, but with joy; nay, counted it all joy, when they fell into divers trials. And more than this, they gloried in tribulations; nay, esteemed it as a gift on the behalf of Christ, *not only to believe on him, but to suffer also for his sake*. As if they had looked on their sufferings with the same eye that they did on their celestial habitations; which they made account were a gift, a grace and favour of God to them. Nor was there any of them otherwise minded; but they all departed from the presence of the council where they had been beaten, *rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name*^b, and (as St. Paul testifies of himself) *none of these things moved them, neither counted they their lives dear unto themselves, so that they might finish their course with joy*^c. There was not one of them that shrank back when his life was in danger, and would not leave his possessions here; which we may well think would have happened, if they had not verily believed as they spake. Some or other of them

^b Acts v. 41.^c Acts xx. 24.

would have discovered the fraud, if they had gone about to abuse the world. A rack would have made them speak the truth; a gibbet, the fire, or some other torture, would have drawn from them another confession, if they could have said any thing but this, that the crucified Jesus was alive again, and was gone to heaven, and lived for evermore, and had all power in heaven and earth, and would receive their spirits, and raise their dead bodies, that they might live and reign for ever with him in the high and holy place where he is. But in this they all agreed to lay down their lives, and suffer themselves to be cast out of their present dwellings; which was a sign they had good security given them of enjoying *everlasting habitations*, (as our Saviour calls them, Luke xvi. 9,) which no power on earth can touch. And that brings me to the last thing; the apostle took his security to be so unquestionable that he saith, *ἔχομεν, we have a building of God.*

V.

They were so sure of this, that it seemed to them as if they had this house not made with hands in present possession. They speak as men that belong to two countries, and have estates in this and in another kingdom; who, if they leave one, are owners of lands, revenues, and houses elsewhere. Such men may say, *we have a building*, and still go to their own, when they have left or lost one of their habitations. Though they cannot dwell in both their houses at once, yet they call them both theirs. And when they remain in one, they reckon the other their own, though it be at a distance from them, and they must travel a great way before they can be in it. In this manner the apostle discourses of their habitation with God. He made account it belonged to them, and might be called theirs, though they lived as yet in another place. For, 1. They had a right and title to it: and, 2. they had good deeds (as I have told you) to show for it: 3. which proved, evidences that it was settled on them by the will and testament of Jesus Christ their Lord and Master: 4. to which they had the witness of the Spirit in their hearts, which was the *earnest of the inheritance*, whereby they were sealed to the day of redemption: 5. so that, in conclusion, they might lay claim to it when they departed this world. They might challenge it as their own,

and *lay hold on eternal life*, by virtue of his promise, and that testament of his which he had written and sealed with his own blood, and further confirmed by his resurrection from the dead, and the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. And therefore our Lord himself uses the self-same language, assuring his disciples that his doctrine, being heartily received, was a seed of immortal life in them, and knit them so to himself, that they could no more perish than he who lives for ever. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. He dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me*^d.

USE.

The proper use of which doctrine is contained in those words of this apostle, 1 Cor. xv. ult., *Therefore, my dearly beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* Which words instruct and put us in mind, 1. That we must *work* in this earthly house wherein we dwell. We are in a place of labour, and not of idleness and sport. There is some serious business in which we are to be employed, if we mean to approve ourselves good tenants to the great Lord of the world, and be preferred by him to better possessions. 2. And that this work is *the work of the Lord*, which we must carefully attend; or else our pains and travel is but a busy idleness. We were not sent hither only to toil and sweat for the goods of this life. Nor do we acquit ourselves like honest men merely by diligence in the works of our calling, and making a careful provision for ourselves and families. But our business is to mortify all immoderate desires after riches, or any other earthly enjoyments; to purge ourselves from covetousness, from lust, from intemperance, from envy and wrath, from pride and uncharitableness, and all other sins; to acknowledge the bounty of our Creator and Redeemer; to live by faith in God; to love him above all things; to resign ourselves entirely to his wise and holy will; to imitate him in doing of good; and faithfully to acquit ourselves in all other

^d John vi. 47, 54, 56, 57.

duties which he expects from us. For as he is a good tenant, who performs his contract, and makes good the covenant that is between him and the person of whom he holds: so is he a good Christian, who uprightly and sincerely endeavours to perform the duties wherein he stands engaged to our Lord, by whose will he hath promised to be governed, and not by his own. We are all bound to him in a very sacred covenant; and stand obliged to him in several services. If we desire then to have his favour, and hope for a kind reception by him into a better habitation when we remove from hence, let us tie ourselves strictly to the work which he hath prescribed us, and use our best diligence that we may never violate the bonds that are between us. For which end it highly concerns us to remember the vows we made at our entrance into his service; to read often over the tenor of the covenant, which we then signed and sealed; diligently to peruse those sacred writings to which we have consented; and to understand completely the blessed gospel of Christ, which tells us, that *not every one who calls him Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of his Father which is in heaven.* Which will he hath faithfully reported to us, and assured us that he is *the way, the truth, and the life*: whose doctrine and example if we follow not, we vainly hope to inherit the kingdom of God. In short, there is great reason we should *work*, because we expect some reward; and that we should do *his work*, and live up to the rules of his religion, because we expect this reward from our Lord. Nay, 3. we must be *abundant* in the work of the Lord; labouring to *purify ourselves, as he is pure; to be merciful, as he is merciful; and to be filled with all the fruits of righteousness which are by Christ Jesus unto the glory and praise of God.* The reason is, because we expect such a great and plentiful reward from our Lord, *who hath given us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And therefore, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For so an entrance shall*

be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ^d. And I may add that if these things be in us and abound, they will highly raise and ennoble our natures, before we arrive at those heavenly places. For this poor earthly house wherein we now are will by this means be turned into a goodly temple. So this apostle calls even the body of holy Christians *the temple of the Holy Ghost*^e. What a glorious change is this! What a strange alteration doth the new creature make! *Corpus istud, Platonica sententia carcer, apostolica templum, cum in Christo est*, as Tertullian speaks in his Book of the Soul^f. ‘This body, which in the Platonical opinion is but a prison, in the apostolical is a temple, when it is in Christ.’ When our Lord possesses and governs it, he elevates the condition of this vile body, even while it is upon the earth. He makes it a place where God dwells, where God is worshipped and glorified, where God appears and manifests himself. What a strong invitation is this to all that believe to turn from every evil way, and to be holy, as he that hath called us is holy, in all manner of conversation! whereby they will be turned into such beautiful and glorious tabernacles, as to become *the habitation of God through the Spirit*. 4. And what can more powerfully move us than all these considerations, to be *steadfast and unmovable in the work of the Lord*, if any temptation assault us, and begin to shake the constancy of our Christian resolution? The apostle might well beseech us to stand fast, as a body doth that is firmly seated upon a good basis and foundation; for *we know*, saith he, *that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*. As we know that the temptations which flatter us are very inviting to our fleshly appetites; as we feel the allurements of the pleasures and advantages of this world; so we know, if we be believers, that there are infinitely better things to counterbalance and weigh down the fairest of all the temptations which solicit us. We are assured, if we keep our station, and preserve ourselves holy and undefiled, that we have a building with God, that is unmovable and cannot be shaken. Let us keep ourselves therefore in our seat; let us not be moved by any of the enticements of the world, nor by any shock which violent hands may give us: for we are *built upon the founda-*

^d [2 Pet. i. 4-11.]^e 1 Cor. vi. 19.^f [De anima, p. 305 B.]

*tion of the apostles and prophets, who were sent by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus*g. Our hope stands fast; let us do so too; and *building up ourselves in our most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep ourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*h.

There are but these three things, my beloved, to be done for the attaining of this heavenly condition. First, strongly to believe that there is such a happy state. Secondly, to believe that they only shall enjoy it who love God, and live in obedience to the gospel of Christ. And thirdly, to be led by this faith, and act according to the necessary direction of it. Now how easy is that, when we have convinced ourselves thoroughly of the two former! All the difficulty and labour is to believe seriously, and steadfastly to persuade ourselves of the truth of those things which God hath prepared for those that love him. When they are become sensible to us, and we look constantly for the mercy of our Lord unto eternal life, we cannot choose but endeavour to attain them, more than the best condition that this world affords. And when we see that they cannot be possessed without an holy life, what should hinder us *from having our fruit unto holiness, whose end is everlasting life*?

It is manifest, that as the nature of man is formed to choose that which is deemed good, and to leave and eschew that which is apprehended to be evil; so it is made to prefer a great good before a little, and to abandon a trifling enjoyment, if by that means we may escape a sore mischief, and gain a more noble and illustrious happiness. Now it is no less apparent that a royal palace is more desirable in all men's eyes than a little hovel of turf and straw; an everlasting building, that will need no repairs, nor ever fall to the ground, to be chosen before a tottering frame, which every gust of wind shakes, and must shortly tumble into the dust upon which it stands. What is the matter then, that men prefer the condition of a beggar before that of a prince? that they set their hearts upon that which is built upon a dunghill, before that whose foundations are in heaven, and stands upon the immutable promise and power of God? I mean, that the pleasures and enjoyments of this life gain a higher esteem in their thoughts than the delicious joys

g Ephes. ii. 20; 2 Tim. i. 1.

h Jude 20, 21.

of the world to come? And the dull entertainments of this body are advanced and lifted up to an higher place in their affections than all the entertainments of the soul; yea, and those which God hath provided for the body itself, if we would manage and order all its desires according to his holy will. There can no cause be assigned of this preposterous choice, but only this; that they feel these present things, but have no feeling of those that are to come. They let sense prevail above faith; and what here addresses itself to them, they receive with a greater affection than they do the reports of those heavenly things which our Saviour hath brought to light by his gospel. They taste the pleasures of meat and drink, and all the enjoyments of a fleshly nature; but have little or no relish at all of those delights which are spiritual: for the hope of which our Lord and his apostles despised the other, as not worthy to be compared with the pleasures that are at God's right hand for evermore. They feel this body wherein they now are; and though it be heavy and burdensome in some conditions of life, yet it is better a great deal than none at all. And such the heavenly building seems to be: because our souls are not united to it, and have no sense of it; but look upon it as a thing that is not, and never shall be bestowed on them.

We must persuade ourselves then of the reality and certainty of the state which is to come: we must labour to touch it, and live in a constant sense and expectation of it. By faith we must bring our minds to some such union and conjunction with that *house not made with hands*, as they have with this *tabernacle* wherein they now inhabit.

We must let our thoughts, as they say, dwell upon it: for though a thing be never so certain in itself, yet if we do not apprehend it so to be, it will no more move us than if it were not at all. And according as the reasons and motives that we have of faith are little or great, so will our persuasions be weak and feeble, or strong and powerful. If we would have our faith then do any thing worthy of the gospel, and produce any good effects in our hearts, we must firmly lay the grounds of it; and keep them always visible, naked and bare to our eye; and we must often look upon them, and diligently consider them: else all that we build upon it will shake and waver; and be apt, upon every temptation, to be overthrown. That is,

we must constantly represent to ourselves the Lord Jesus, as the first begotten from the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth; as gone into the heavens, and there sat down at the right hand of the throne of God, angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to him; as the Lord of life and glory, who is gone to prepare a place for us, and will come again and receive us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also. Then will these spiritual things be as much valued by us as now they are despised: and we shall as much slight all these bodily enjoyments, as now they are overprized. We shall not consent, for any good in this world, to lose our portion with him; but choose rather to die a thousand deaths, than not receive the crown of life. In short, the faith of Christians will then be able to do as much as sense now doth.

As that now disparages and thrusts by the things of faith, because they seem nothing or uncertain; so faith will put by all the temptations of sense, and bid them stand aside, because it apprehends celestial things to be sure and certain too. For if they appear as real and certain things, they must, as I told you, be preferred, because they are infinitely better than all other, and have nothing to disparage them, but only their seeming uncertainty. They will undoubtedly make us do and suffer the will of our Lord with all cheerfulness and patient perseverance while we are here, and make us ready to go from hence with the like cheerfulness, when or howsoever it shall be his will and pleasure to call for us.

And what if he send for some of our friends and dear relations to come away before us? Will not the belief of these things make us with some cheerfulness or contentment resign them to him? There can be no greater comfort than this discourse against the grief we are apt to conceive at their departure; for death is but the pulling down of an earthly house that they may pass out into an heavenly. And it is not the going of our friends quite away, but only their going before: and if they be godly, they are gone into a better dwelling. Why should we mourn then immoderately as those that have no hope? Would we not have our friends advanced? Do we grieve that they are possessed of a more plentiful estate? and weep perpetually that they live with kings, and reign with Christ in glorious palaces? O let not the tears flow too fast;

look upon the heavens and dry your eyes; for out of an earthly hole all purified souls take their flight above those spacious vaults. From cold, hunger, thirst, and nakedness, they go to a place where there are none of these necessities. Would you have your children lie always in their swaddling clothes? or when they are grown bigger, do you desire they should always go in their side coats? Do you sigh to see them beyond their nonage, and grown to the state of men and women? Would you have them return to their infancy again, and become little children, merely that you may play with them? Why do you take it ill then that your friends are grown to a higher stature? Why do you lament so heavily that they are stript of their rags to put on richer apparel? Why do you not rather comfort yourselves that they are in the condition of angels, and numbered among the sons of glory, being entered into the family of God above in the court of heaven? Consider, I beseech you, that too long continued bewailings of the loss of our holy friends doth betray our ignorance or forgetfulness of the glory of the other world. It is a sign we do not know, or else not think of, that which the apostle here preaches. We are but in a dream of happiness all this while, and see but the shadows and images of it. There is little or nothing of this felicity which we touch and feel, or that strongly affects our heart. For if it did we should be satisfied, both because they are gone to it, and we may one day follow them. If they loved our Lord in sincerity, he hath better provided for them than if they had stayed in our company. And if we love him too, and so be persuaded of his love to us, they are but poor thoughts that we have of him which cannot supply the place of a friend, a brother, a husband, or a wife; and but low thoughts that we have of his happiness, if there be not a great deal more in it to quiet and compose us, than there is in the loss of any thing in this world to trouble and disturb us. It was a notable saying of one of the ancients, "that the souls of philosophers have the body for their house, but they that are ignorant enjoy it but as their prison." The truth of which is too apparent. For the unbelieving and ungodly are shut up close in their bodies, and fettered within those walls of flesh. They are tied to them by as many chains as they have members, and have no other light but what comes in at the holes of their eyes, no other comfort but what they receive by the means of the

rest of their bodily senses. Whereas all faithful souls enjoy a greater freedom. They can go out of doors, and are at liberty to walk abroad, and take a view of unseen enjoyments. They can look up a while to the highest heavens, and behold in the light of God the glory of our Lord, the *innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect*. The shortest glimpse of whose happiness is able to cheer and refresh their souls in the most disconsolate condition. And if they can but think of their friends departed, as members of that blessed society; the remembrance of them will never fail to be accompanied with such a taste of joy as shall take away the bitterness of all their sorrows. Into that glorious assembly of saints our good friend, I make no question, is gone, whose earthly house we come here to lay for a time in his grave. In whom you might have seen an example of the force of this divine faith, which, as it was the guide and principle of the actions of his life, so it was the exceeding joy and comfort of his heart at death; for that he seemed to fear no more than he did his sleep. He went as willingly out of this body as he was wont to do out of his own house into this place, the house of God; and left the dearest relations with such satisfaction, as if he were taking a journey to them. A very noble degree of Christian confidence! And yet no more than might be expected to wait on a long train of other excellent qualities which were eminent in him. Of which if I proceed to speak a few words, not merely to comply with custom, but to furnish you with a worthy example, as I am sure I shall not wrong the truth, so I hope I shall as little vex your patience.

THERE are none here, I presume, that think it a crime to praise those that highly deserve it, nor are of their humour who make a scruple to commend the dead, though they make none to discommend and calumniate both dead and living. ^a*Ἄν μὲν δέη λοιδορεῖν, &c.* (as the apostate emperor speaks^a, for this is no new vice.) ‘If there be an occasion for reproaches or for cavils, there are always those ready who will not be sparing of them, but if there be an occasion given to commend another, they can find no tongue for that employment.’ Nay, they look

^a [Julian. orat. iii. p. 103 B.]

upon it ὡσπερ ἀνάλωμα πολυτελές, ‘as if it were but a piece of profuseness’ and an unthrifty vanity; such a superfluous expense, that it is one of their virtues to save themselves that cost and charges. But good men think that it is far more pardonable to praise the truly virtuous even above their merits, than to be always carping at others and backbiting them, though they should deserve some reproof. For my part, I shall not willingly fall into either of these guilts. As I have no disposition to detract from an enemy, so I shall not be prodigal in the commendation of a friend: but rather be so frugal and sparing at this time, as to comprehend all that I have to say under these three heads:

1. In general, he was one that endeavoured his ways might be found perfect before God; and not one of the lame and cripple Christians of these days, who hope to go to heaven with one wooden leg. He was careful, I mean, to maintain good works, as the necessary fruits of Christian faith; and such works as are due to men, as well as those that have a more immediate respect to God: good morality was part of his Christianity. To be just and charitable, industrious in his charge, watchful over his tongue, respectful to superiors, obedient to governors, not to speak evil of dignities, to be very sparing in his censures, and kind to those that differed from him, were a piece of his conscience: as well as to read, and pray, and preach, and frequent all the worship of God. Ἀνόητον γὰρ καὶ μάλα αὐθαδές, &c. ‘For it is a stupid thing and exceeding impudent’ to think to please God without the hearty study of virtue, as the fore-named emperor excellently speaks. Into whom the Christian religion had sunk so far as to make him remember that τούτῳ μάλιστα χαίρειν ὑποληπτέον τὸν Θεόν^b. ‘it is to be supposed that God rejoices most of all in this,’ and that you cannot gratify him so much by any means as by being good. Not that we are to neglect his worship and service, (as he proceeds,) nor be careless in doing him honour, but we should exercise the greatest piety with the study of all virtue. For to say the truth, holy devotion is τὴν δικαιοσύνης ἔκγονος, ‘one of the daughters of justice,’ the fruit of natural equity, without which we cannot be said to be honest men. It is a thing due to our Creator, as other things are to our neighbours: and he cannot be a right-

^b Orat. 2. p. 130. [p. 70 D. ed. Spanheim.]

cous man who doth not honour God no more than he doth not love his brother. But more particularly,

2. That which deserves among other Christian virtues to be remembered in him (because so rare and little regarded) is his great modesty of spirit, and humility of mind and behaviour. He was not so ill furnished and provided, but that he had abundant matter for discourse in things belonging to his profession; and yet I always observed that he loved to inquire, and soberly to propound doubts and difficulties. As if he had a mind rather to hear the judgment of others than to speak his own; and to learn and receive instruction, rather than take upon him that great office, (which almost everybody thinks himself to be fit for nowadays,) to be a teacher, nay, controller of all his neighbours. There is scarce a smatterer now in Christian learning in many places, though never so raw and ignorant, but hath so good a conceit of himself, that he will dictate as magisterially, judge as superciliously, censure as boldly, speak as confidently to his betters, and be as pert even before his spiritual guides and those that have been long students in Christian knowledge, as if he were infallible, and breathed nothing but the Holy Ghost. A vice which this good man so studiously avoided, that as none could be a more severe censurer of other men's actions than he was of his own; so it was not easy for any to be more confident that they were in the right, than he was fearful lest he should be in the wrong. This made him *swift to hear*, but *slow to speak*; to consider much and pronounce little; and as one of the ancients saith^c, "to know both how to overcome with reason, and how to yield to reason, and suffer himself to be overcome." And his humility I must tell you was of the right strain. Which, as the same father observes^d, "is not proved and tried so much in little things (wherein it may be easily counterfeited) as in the greatest. To say nothing of our clothes and outward deportment, it is no such great piece of humility," saith he, "in my account, to speak but a little of a man's own self, and this but seldom and before few, or to speak to an inferior in a lowly and courteous manner; ἀλλ' ὅστις μετρίως περὶ Θεοῦ φθέγγεται, 'but he that speaks sparingly and modestly concerning God,' is in my

^c Greg. Nazianz. orat. 3, [ed. Ben. orat. 4. § 5. tom. i. p. 80.]

^d Orat. 26. [ed. Ben. orat. 32. § 19. tom. i. p. 592.]

opinion the most humble person. He hath attained to a considerable pitch in this grace who knows how to speak some things of him, in others, to be silent, and in others, plainly to confess his ignorance; and hath the modesty to let those speak of him who are appointed to it, and to suffer some also to be of more elevated contemplation than himself. It is the most unseemly thing for a man to choose the poorest diet and apparel, to express much humility in tears, in fastings, in watchings, in a sad countenance, and lying hard or on the bare ground; but in discourse of divine matters to exercise a kind of sovereign power or tyranny rather over others; to yield to none, and to seek to govern all. This is to be proud there, where humility is not only glorious, but also safe." The least tang of which vanity I could never discern in this good man, who grew as fast in an humble sense of our distance from God, as some are apt to do in an arrogant opinion of their superiority above all other men. He was like those good students at Athens, who as Menedemus, if I forget not, said, went thither doctors, (in their own opinion he means,) continued there scholars, and came away ignorants. For the more we understand, the more we see there is above our comprehension. And the more we converse with wise and pious men, the more we see there are that we have cause to prefer above ourselves. And the more a man increases in the knowledge of himself, the more ready he will be to excuse the ignorance or errors of his neighbours.

Certain it is, that the greater worth there is in any person, the more humble and lowly he is. Light things ascend aloft, as is commonly observed, but those that are heavy sink down and depress themselves beneath. The little brooks are very talkative, and make a great noise when they and the pebbles meet and prattle together. But for all their haste, and the din they make in our ears, and the plenty of water which seems to flow along, alas, their depth is so small, that you may feel to the bottom of them with your finger. Whereas the great rivers which are very deep, and carry great burdens, and are as profitable as they are fair and beautiful; how modestly and soberly, as I may so speak, do they go into the ocean! They do not so much as murmur in anybody's ears to tell them how profound they are; but move silently and stilly on their way,

as if they would not be observed. There is nothing better, that I can think of, than this vulgar comparison which everybody uses, to represent unto us the clear difference that is between the humble lowly Christian and those that are malapert and confident, full of ostentation and ever talking; even there where it would more become them to use their ears than they do their tongues. For if they did it as the brooks I mentioned, only among the stones and blocks, it were no great matter; or if while they set out themselves they would not despise or defame their neighbours that far excel them, it might be endured; but to instruct their teachers, to babble before the wise, the aged, and experienced, to meddle with things which they do not and perhaps cannot understand; nay, to get up into the seat of judgment, and pass sentence upon their superiors, is such an intolerable piece of arrogance, as (in the phrase of St. Cyprian^e) is born of the spirit of antichrist, and proceeds not from the humble discipline of our Saviour. Which makes the loss of such a person as had the good education of Christian people under his care to be the more deplorable; especially since he taught by his example, as well as his preaching, *the younger to submit themselves to the elder: and that in lowliness of mind each should esteem others better than themselves*^f.

3. And truly, if our governors and tutors be our second parents, and we owe no less to those who breed us in knowledge than to them that breed us in the womb; then this deserves not the least commendation, that he carefully performed the part of a good instructor and curate of souls. Alexander thought himself not more beholden to his father who left him a kingdom, than to Aristotle who taught him how to govern it. And Aristotle taught him this, among other things, that for those who engraft right notions of things in our minds and make us wise, there is no *ισόρροπος τιμή*, 'no honour proportionable to their merits;' unless we will bestow upon them some such veneration as is given to God and our parents; they being a kind of earthly gods, and heavenly parents. Antoninus also, I remember, in the beginning of his book^g, acknowledges the bounty of God in this as much as in any other blessing,

^e Epist. 55. [ed. Fell, epist. 59. p. 119.]

^f 1 Pet. v. 5; Phil. ii. 3.

^g [De seipso, lib. i. cap. 17. p. 18.]

that he had made him the disciple of such excellent philosophers, such as Sextus, Maximus, Rusticus, and others. The last of which, Julius Capitolinus^z tells us, he made of his privy council; and used to salute with a kiss even before the captains of the prætorian band. That he demanded public statues also of the senate for him after his decease; and in fine, had such respect to all his teachers, as to pay an honour to their very sepulchres, and to have their images in gold in the very same place with his household gods.

And the very truth is, we are deeply indebted to them; and the memory of our Christian instructors ought to be very dear and sacred with us as long as we live. For they learn us how to live well, and prepare us for a better life. He that begins to take us into his discipline, and piously discharges the office of a good tutor and schoolmaster, is our good genius, our guardian angel always by our side, the guide of our youth, the security of our slippery age, the seedsman of God, the dresser of infant souls, the husbandman that cultivates and improves the soil of the mind. And a conscientious, skilful minister, to whose care and direction we are delivered afterward, can be no less than all these to our riper years: besides that he is our counsellor in doubts, our comforter in affliction, the dispenser of the mysteries of God, and our conductor to perfection: and therefore ought to be highly esteemed for his work sake. Such an one, I dare boldly say, you have lost in this place, and it is a common loss to more than yourselves; a person both able and honest, wise and pious. So that, as the same Antoninus saith, he learned of one of his masters to suppress anger; of another, to mind serious things; of a third, kindness and benevolence; of a fourth, modesty; of a fifth, an uncounterfeited gravity; of a sixth, to bear with simple people; and of others, constancy, patience, and such an apt accommodation of himself to all, that his conversation might be more soft and sweet than flattery itself: so you, methinks, might be able to say that all these you have learnt of him. For whose understanding and judgment (if I may speak in the language of G. Nazianzen^a) was more grave and aged, even before gray

^z In M. Antonin. philosoph. [cap. εσιν, καὶ πρὸ τῆς πολιᾶς;—Orat. xliiii. § 23. tom. i. p. 788 B.]

^a [Τίς μὲν οὕτω πολιὸς ἦν τὴν συν-

hairs? Whose meditations were more concocted? Whose speech more unaffected? Whose behaviour more solemn and composed? Who is there that had less need of learning to commend him, considering the integrity of his manners? and yet how few that had so considerable a share of both! A man of great candour and ingenuity; of a tender and compassionate spirit; heartily desirous of the good of souls; and very thoughtful and solicitous, I can assure you, how to promote it in the easiest, plainest, and most effectual methods.

Things the more to be prized in these days, because, as the father now named complains in another place^b, *κινδυνεύει τὸ πάντων ἀγιώτατον τάγμα τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν πάντων εἶναι καταγελαστότατον*, 'the most sacred order of all other among us is in danger to become the most ridiculous.' No man can be acknowledged for a physician, unless he have considered the nature of diseases; or for a drawer of pictures, that knows not how to mingle colours: and yet we can find with the greatest ease a teacher of divine truth. Not one that is laboured (as his word is) and prepared, but that starts up on a sudden, and is sown and comes forth as hastily as the fable makes the giants. *Πλάττομεν αὐθημερὸν τοὺς ἀγίους, &c.*^c, 'we make saints in a day's space,' and wise men without any wisdom, and guides to others, who have nothing to qualify them for that office but a great desire to be promoted to it. Such a novice our friend was not; but like that good father himself, who by retirement and much meditation fitted himself, as he tells us, for so great a charge. He was sensible of these two things: first, that it is the art of arts, and the science of sciences, as his words are^d, to guide and govern mankind, *τὸ πολυτροπώτατον τῶν ζώων καὶ ποικιλώτατον*, 'the most humorous, various, and uncertain of all other creatures.' And secondly, that it requires great skill, and not a little spirit, to give to every one in the household their portion of meat in due season, and to manage and dispense with judgment the truths of Christian doctrine. They are great and many, (as he there numbers them,) which if any person think himself, with little labour, able to explain, "O how I wonder," saith he, "at that man's understanding; or,

^b Orat. xx. [Ed. Ben. orat. xliii. § 26. p. 791 D.]

^d Orat. i. [Ed. Ben. orat. ii. § 16. tom. i. p. 20 B.]

^c [Ibid. p. 792 A.]

to speak more plainly, at his folly!" This holy philosophy, as he calls it, requires that we should bring to the study of it great simplicity of mind, an impartial judgment, pure and holy thoughts, quiet affections, a patient spirit, and a will disposed to conform itself to God. And if it had pleased the Almighty to have indulged this good man a little more time, you might have seen a greater proof of his profiting by these means, to the no small benefit, I have reason to think, of others, as well as you that were more immediately under his care. For to all these good qualities now named, he had the advantage also of an even, steady temper; that was always alike, and not subject to any transports.

But God hath taken him off from his work: and what have we to do, but to submit with patience to his wise providence? and, whether you remember his loss as a good Christian, or a faithful minister, or a tender husband, or a kind friend, or a courteous neighbour, still to say, *It is the Lord? The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord*^e. He hath called him away, no doubt, to receive the reward of his labours; praise and commendation from himself, for his diligence and uprightness: and so he stands in no need at all of ours. Only these things may be fit to be considered by us that survive, to excite us to the same love of God and man; to the same modesty and humility of mind; to the same industry and fidelity in our different charges; that so *our faith also may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ*^f.

^e [Job i. 21.]

^f [1 Pet. i. 7.]

A S E R M O N
PREACHED BEFORE THE KING
ON
ST. STEPHEN'S DAY.

PRINTED BY HIS MAJESTY'S SPECIAL COMMAND.

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE KING

ON ST. STEPHEN'S DAY, 1675.

ACTS VII. 59.

And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

“O how beautiful is a succession of good things! (as St. Gregory Nyssen cries out in a sermon on this festival^a.) How sweet is it when one pleasure transmits us to another, and the end of the present is the beginning of a new satisfaction. Behold here that which we all so much desire; ‘Εορτήν ἐξ ἑορτῆς, ‘feast after feast,’ and grace upon grace. Yesterday the Lord of all entertained us; to day we are invited by the noble imitator of our Lord. The one feasted us by putting on the man for us; the other by putting off the man for him: the one by coming down into the dungeon of this life (as he calls it) for our sake; the other by going out of it for his.” O happy life of Christians! whom their Lord would have to *rejoice always*, and *in every thing to give thanks*; first for him, and then for those worthies that followed him.

For next to the most blessed Redeemer of mankind, the great Captain of our salvation, those blessed saints, who were the great champions of his holy truth, challenge our solemn and devout commemoration. The Christian religion, which comforts us with such a blessed hope, was propagated by their means, especially by their sufferings; which *filled up* (as St.

^a [Tom. iii. p. 354.]

Paul speaks) *that which was behind*, or wanting, of the afflictions of Christ in their flesh^b. There were no sufferings wanting indeed to complete Christ's satisfaction; but there did some remain to complete the testimony, which he had begun to give by blood to the truth of God. These the apostles and other great persons filled up and finished in those parts of the world where he had not himself in person appeared. There they published the same truth for which he died, and testified and confirmed it in the same manner that he had done, by laying down their life for it: so that in them he still lived, and preached, and wrought wonders, and was persecuted, and despised death, and subdued the nations under his feet. "He that overcame death once for us (says one of these martyrs) overcomes it always in us. In us he fights, and in us he conquers. In these combats which we constantly endure, *et coronat pariter et coronatur*, 'he both crowns and is likewise crowned.'" They are the words of St. Cyprian^c.

Now among all those triumphant souls who so honourably witnessed to our Saviour, the most eminent was this glorious martyr St. Stephen, whose memory is this day celebrated; because he was the first who subscribed the Christian doctrine, and sealed it with his blood, becoming thereby *primicerius martyrum*, (as St. Augustin calls him,) 'the chief, the prince and captain of the martyrs,' as Christ is the Prince and Captain of their and our salvation. Before he had seen any mere man leading him the way, when there were no footsteps but those of our Saviour's wherein to tread, he led the way himself in a bloody path, and arrived to the honour of being the first-born of all those whose nativities, that is, martyrdoms, the church commemorates with her praises and thanksgivings. And this he did in the very first year (as it is most probable) after our Lord's ascension to the throne of his glory; and when he had but newly received imposition of hands, *ὡσπερ εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο προαχθεὶς*, (as Eusebius speaks^d,) as if he had been ordained only for this ministry, to sacrifice his life for the testimony of Jesus.

It is an easy thing, as St. Gregory Nazianzen speaks^e, φιλο-

^b Col. i. 24.

^c Epist. viii. [ed Fell, Epist. x. p. 22.]

^d Lib. xi. Hist. Eccles. c. 1.

^e [Epist. xxxii. tom. ii. p. 28 B.]

σοφείῳ ἔξω κινδύνων, to be a Christian when there is no danger ; and when there is, all sufferings are the easier when we have many companions, or glorious examples to encourage us. But it is the singular privilege, and peculiar glory of this saint, that Πρῶτος τῷ χορῷ, &c.^f, “ he was the first that opened the passage to the choir of martyrs ; the first that *resisted unto blood, striving against sin* ; the first that was adorned (agreeable to his name) with the crown and diadem of confession.”

It is not my intention, nor will the time permit me to relate the whole story of this great man's sufferings, together with the occasion of them ; how he overpowered his adversaries with the wisdom and spirit wherewith he proved Jesus to be the Son of God ; how he astonished them with the wonders and miracles he did among the people ; how he stopped the mouths of those that disputed with him ; and how false witnesses were thereupon suborned to bring in an accusation against him ; but shall only note the invincible resolution, and the pious patience of this blessed martyr under all that he endured.

For they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

Stoning was the heaviest punishment that the law of Moses enacted against the most grievous crimes. If a man had blasphemed God, or made his children pass through the fire to Moloch, or committed villany with a beast, or cursed his parents, (to name none of the rest of those eighteen sorts of sinners who were to be thus used,) they could do no more, to show their detestation of his wickedness, than to dash him against the stones : and if that did not despatch him, to throw stones at him till he died. Now when a whole shower of these came pouring down on this good man's head, when the blind multitude ran upon him with such a rage, as if he had been the vilest creature on God's earth, it did not move his spirit in the least to any unchristian passion, nor extort from him one angry, one revengeful, one unseemly word. He only commended himself to God, and prayed for his persecutors, and expressed his hope in Jesus, that when they had beaten his soul out of his body, he would receive it unto himself.

^f Greg. Nyss. et Eusebius. [ubi supra.]

And great reason he had for such hope, being already advanced by the faith of Christ to such an heavenly and God-like nature, as to express the greatest love to those who hated him so bitterly; and to expose himself to the greatest danger for the sake of Christian piety, which he desired by these means to propagate even among its most deadly enemies. And if we rightly consider it, we shall not easily find any thing that so much declares the greatness, the excellency (and as I may call it, the divineness) of any man's spirit, or tends so effectually to promote the Christian faith, as truly pious patience under the greatest sufferings upon its account.

I.

First, I say it is an argument of a great and noble spirit; it declares more than any thing else the force and virtue of any man's mind. As complaints, continual repinings, and violent commotions argue weakness and infirmity: so silent meekness, cheerful submission, and quiet composed patience when we suffer wrongfully, speak an heart indued with strength and fortitude. The world indeed thinks those most powerful, who can do wrong and not be punished for it; they that can irresistibly overpower and oppress others, have gained the titles of mighty, illustrious, and magnanimous: but in a right estimation of things, these titles belong to such souls as can suffer all the evil that those men do, with an humble constancy, and meek resignation of themselves to the will of God. These are the truly great and unconquerable spirits; these ought most to be admired and renowned, for they remain victorious even over their insulting enemies; they triumph over those that lead them captive; who find a stop put to the course of their conquests, when they meet with such spirits as cannot be subdued; nay, are in pain, and inwardly grieved, to see men suffer cheerfully, more than they can lay upon them. *Jacuit inter pœnas, pœnis suis fortior* §, &c., says St. Cyprian of Celerinus. "He lay tormented, stronger than the torments he endured; freer in prison than they that shut him in; higher, when flat upon the ground, than they that trampled on him; more at liberty in chains, than they that bound him; sublimer by far when condemned, than they that sat on the bench and judged him."

§ Epist. xxxiv. [ed. Fell, xxxix. p. 76.]

It was a sublime spirit indeed that possessed these men's breasts: for it raised them by these means not only above the common rank of mankind, and above all those who had astonished the world with their greatness and power; but far above those gods whom the nations worshipped. Most of which had left no records but of their amours, their pleasures, and voluptuous enjoyments; and none of which had made themselves remarkable for patient innocence, and pious passing by injuries, without any thought or desire of revenge. This was a thing proper to the Christian heroes, as the martyrs and confessors may be justly called, who became hereby more than men; and, as some of the ancients ventured to say, more than angels: *Διὰ τῶν ἐν σώμασιν ἀγώνων τὰς ἀσωμάτων φύσεις ὑπερβάλλοντες*, 'by the agonies and conflicts they endured in their bodies, excelling those natures which have no bodies,' and consequently no such pains and miseries to contend withal, as those souls (encumbered with flesh) overcame. Which proclaimed so loudly the power of the ineffable Father in them (as Justin, one of these martyrs speaks^h), that they won the hearts of sober pagans to the service of that God, who inspired his worshippers with such meek and humble, but resolved and undaunted spirits. Which is the second thing.

II.

That Christianity was hereby marvellously promoted, and made a great progress in the world, though this seemed to be the ready way to extinguish it. Celsus himself, as great an enemy as he was to Christianity, was put to his shifts, and forced to quit his former principles, when he came to consider the sufferings of the martyrs. Though he was an Epicurean in his other writings, as Origen tells usⁱ, yet when he set himself to dispute against Christian religion, he could not but confess that it was a generous and worthy thing, to lay down their lives in the defence of it; and that nothing was more base, than for a man to flinch from a true opinion for fear of danger. For he goes on to acknowledge, when he was in this good mood, "that there is in man *κρεῖττόν τι τοῦ γηήνου*, 'something better than his earthy part;' which is, says he, of kin to God. "And there-

^h [*Δύναμιν τοῦ ἀρρήτου Πατρός*.—Apol. ii. § 10. p. 95 E.]

ⁱ Lib. i. contra Cels. [tom. i. p. 326.]

fore all well-bred souls desire to be near to their original, and would willingly know more of him." A worthy confession, which the power of truth sometimes extorts from its greatest enemies. And it was eminently verified in this holy martyr, of whom we may speak truly in his words, that being well bred (in the school of Christ) *πάντη ἐφίεσαι τοῦ συγγενοῦς*, he desired by all means to be with his heavenly kindred. Which he knew would not lessen the family of Christ here on earth, but rather increase it, and make it more numerous. "For as skilful wrestlers," says St. Greg. Nyss.^k, "by yielding a little, and bowing their bodies under those that contend with them, more easily overthrow them, and lay them flat on the ground; so did this great Stephen bruise the mighty adversary the devil, by falling to the earth himself." Then it was that the apostles were driven away from Jerusalem, and began to run throughout the world. This was the occasion of the publishing of the Word every where, to the ruin of the devil's kingdom. And besides this, his wonderful piety, and compassionate kindness even to his persecutors, we may rationally think touched some of their hearts, and made them relent and turn to God. For at that very time when they were murdering him, he like a spiritual priest (as the forenamed father speaks^l) whose blood was sprinkled against their will before God, interceded with great charity for them, saying, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.*

When their brutish fury was a little over, and they reflected on what had passed with some coolness, they could not sure but (some of them) be melted with such ardent love, as well as astonished at such rare courage. For in succeeding times, it is certain Christian patience had such effect upon many hearts, that it gave a great stroke to their conversion unto Christ. Justin, whom I mentioned before, professes, that the first thing that inclined him to the faith of Christ, was the devout constancy which he beheld in those who suffered for it. And Tertullian avows in his apology to all the pagan world, that Cicero, Seneca, Pyrrho, Callinicus, with all the rest of their great writers, who had exhorted men to endure pain and death, could never make so many disciples by their eloquent

^k [Serm. in S. Stephen. tom. iii. p. 357 D.]

^l [P. 359 D.]

words as simple Christians had done by their deeds. *Illā ipsa obstinatio quam exprobatīs, magistra est*^m. “That very obstinate resolution which you upbraid us withal, is a mistress that instructs the world. Who is there that beholds it, and is not moved to inquire into the cause? And who is there that takes the pains to inquire into the cause, and doth not become a proselyte to this religion? And who is there that becomes a proselyte to it, and is not ready also to lose his life for it, that he may obtain the favour of God with the expense of his blood?”

And indeed it may be questioned whether the apostles and their followers did more amaze the world by the wonder of their miracles, or by their stupendous patience under the most cruel torments. This, I think is certain, that the divine manner of their suffering was a thing less controverted than their prodigious astonishing works. They, I mean, who disputed the last, could not but admire and commend the first. They ascribed their miracles sometime to the power of evil spirits; but their meek and lamb-like patience, their tender-hearted charity to those that hated them, their forgiving their enemies, their praying for their persecutors, their blessing those that cursed them, and obliging those that reviled and abused them; these things the devil himself knew not how to calumniate, no more than he knew how to counterfeit.

His agents and factors had not the heart to suffer any thing, but loved their ease and their pleasure; though they appeared with a very strange power of marvels and signs and lying wonders: *As Jannes and Jambres says St. Paul, withstood Moses, so did these also resist the truth*ⁿ, which was preached by the apostles: that is, as those Egyptian magicians vied a while with Moses in strange works and astonishing operations, whereby they sought to impair his credit with the people; so did these new jugglers contend for some time with the apostles, and hoped to gain as great admiration by imitating their miracles. But they were not more desirous all this time to show themselves in mighty works, than they were craftily careful to shun all pain and trouble for their cause. For it is expressly noted as a part of their character by the same St. Paul, *that*

^m [Cap. ult. p. 40 B.]ⁿ 2 Tim. iii. 8.

they were enemies to the cross of Christ^o, in which the apostles gloried and rejoiced^p.

And here it will not be unfit to note these two things :

I. First, that what glory soever there was in miracles, (as they did at last so outshine all impostors that they quite eclipsed them, no less than Moses did the magicians,) it never appeared more illustrious than when the apostles exercised perfect patience under the sorest distresses. Then the divine virtue in them broke out and shone most brightly. *When they were weak, then were they strong*, as St. Paul speaks in the place forenamed. When they were crushed by the power of their enemies, then they most amazed them by discovering this mighty power of Christ in such weak and earthen vessels. What could be more astonishing than to see those who were fast manacled and fettered, unloose their own and others' bands, shake the foundations of prisons, open without any key or other instrument the doors which were strongly locked and barred upon them; nay, unchain not only fastbound bodies, but also miserably enthralled souls? Was it not a great wonder to see jailors come and crouch to those whom they had newly scourged, desiring to be unbound and absolved by their chained captives, and yielding themselves voluntary prisoners to those whom they had violently kept in durance? Yet this we read in the story of the blessed St. Paul, Acts xvi., who then triumphed when he sat in the stocks; then appeared illustrious when he was thrust into a dungeon, (for that is the meaning of the *inner prison* there mentioned;) then was highly honoured, insomuch that they were ready to kiss his stripes, when he was treated as a man of no account.

Here the apostles and their successors left all their opposers far behind them, who fled from dangers and timorously avoided all pain and trouble, or endured them with a base and abject spirit, which sunk when it wanted the people's breath to blow it up. They were far from *taking pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses*; having no hopes to win any glory by this means as St. Paul did; who demonstrated his apostleship *in all patience, as well as in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds*^q.

^o Philip. iii. 18.

^p 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10:

^q 2 Cor. xii. 10, 12.

But true patience is such an admirable property, that the devil hath not the power to attain so much as a shadow of it. It is too beautiful for his deformed nature and crooked disposition; being a composition of all those lovely virtues and graces of the Holy Spirit, to which he is a perfect stranger. He can sometime transform himself into an angel of light, but when do we find him in the form of a truly resigned and contented sufferer? This is the unalienable prerogative of Christ, and the great champions of his faith, who with such a charity as St. Paul describes, 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5, 6, 7, (every property of which is the character of patience, as Tertullian hath truly observed^r,) endured all the contempt, hatred, and cruelty of the world; accounting it a great honour and gain (no disparagement or damage at all) to be vile and to lose all they had, for the sake of their dear Lord and master Christ Jesus.

There did, it is true, arise in after-ages such sturdy spirits (for instance the Circumcellions, a part of the Donatists' faction) as would endure any thing with a barbarous resolution, for the credit of those dotages wherewith they troubled the world; but they were wholly void of that ancient spirit which had ever been in Christian sufferers. They had nothing of that *modestissima patientia* (as the author of the book *de Duplici Martyrio* speaks^s) that 'most modest patience' wherewith Christian religion inspired its followers. *Illud placidum, illud mansuetum*, &c., 'that sweet, that soft, that gentle and tender, that humbly sublime (as his phrase is) and sublimely humble spirit,' was no where to be found but among the martyrs, who never spake a worse word when they were condemned, than *Deo gratias*, 'thanks be to God;' which was the common form wherein they received their sentence from the mouth of their judges.

That is the second thing I have to add,

II. That when some impostors endeavoured to imitate the resolution of the apostles and martyrs, in exposing even their lives for the sake of their vain imaginations, they were not able to imitate them at all in the divine manner of their sufferings. It is excellently said by St. Gregory Nazianzen^t, in his funeral oration for his father, that this blessed martyr, St.

^r [De Patientia, cap. 12. p. 147.]

^s [Ad. calc. Cypriani, p. 40.]

^t Orat. xix. [ed. Ben. orat. xviii.]

§ 24. tom. i. p. 346 B.]

Stephen, offered to God a greater thing than death, viz. long-suffering, meekness, and forgiving of his enemies. He opposed, as the other Gregory speaks, τῷ θυμῷ τὴν μακροθυμίαν, &c., 'to their anger a patient spirit,' to their threats silence, to their hatred ardent love, to their malignity good-will, to their false accusations preaching of the truth. If the false apostles and other pretenders could have appeared in this handsome dress, their delusion had been very dangerous; but here they halted, and knew not how to follow the genuine disciples of Christ Jesus.

Their hardness, as St. Austin speaks^u of the surly sect before-mentioned (many of which would kill themselves, and force others to kill them), was to be admired, for it was very great; but their patience was not to be admired, for it was none at all. They suffered much evil that they might do the more. They cared not what others did to them; but withal, they cared not what they did to others.

This was a remarkable difference, which is all the time will give me leave to mention, between the Christian martyrs and their counterfeits: the one were meek, the other angry and furious; the one humble, the other haughty; the one ready to do good to those by whom they suffered, the other desirous of revenge. The one loved their enemies, the other only contemned them. The one were forward to excuse their folly, the other to aggravate and upbraid them with it. The one smiled upon their persecutors and blessed them, the other looked as if they would pour out anathemas, and excommunicate them from all their charitable thoughts. Nothing was more peaceable and quiet than the one, while the other were tumultuous and violent. The martyrs were submissive and easily governed, but the other were boisterous and violent. It was proper to the former to appear with a modest cheerfulness and a humble confidence; but the other seemed to be surly rather than well satisfied, bold rather than well assured.

And therefore no wonder that these holy souls so mightily prevailed over all the powers of darkness, in what shape soever they appeared; and that they *overcame*, as St. John writes, *the dragon, that old serpent the devil, by the blood of the*

^u [De Hæres. cap. 69. tom. viii. col. 22 A.]

Lamb, and the word of their testimony, not loving their lives unto the death. And no wonder also they had such a lively hope in God, and could look up so steadfastly to Jesus, as this blessed martyr did, expecting that he would receive their spirits, with the kindest affection unto himself; for they had attained to the baptism wherewith he the King of glory was baptized: "a baptism (as St. Cyprian calls martyrdom ^x) *in gratia majus, in potestate sublimius, &c.*; 'in grace greater, in power more sublime,' in honour more precious. A baptism in which the angels baptize, in which God and his Christ rejoice. A baptism after which no man sins; which consummates the increase of our faith; and parting us from the world, straightway unites us to God. In the baptism of water is received remission of sins; but in this of blood, the crown of virtues."

And a very noble crown sure it was, that such faithful followers might hope to receive from the hands of so gracious a Master. For being so much advanced above the world while they were in it, and having done him such eminent service, they could not doubt of his favour in lifting them up to live with himself in exceeding great bliss, when his enemies would not permit them to live here any longer. If there were any thrones higher than other, in those heavenly places, where St. Stephen saw our Saviour, they might very well expect to be promoted to them; to reign with him there in endless glory, and to be honoured here on earth with perpetual praises.

I.

For from all this you cannot but see how fit and just it is that we should make most solemn commemorations of those to whom the Christian world stands so deeply obliged; and that the church should give a kind of first fruits of them unto this glorious martyr, whom St. Gregory Nazianzen ^y calls *ἀπαρχὴ τῶν μετὰ Χριστὸν πασχόντων*, 'the first fruits of those who suffered after Christ.' This the ancient Christians did with so great affection, that their enemies calumniated it, and said they worshipped them. "No," says St. Cyril in his sixth

^x De Exhort. Martyrii. [in præfat. p. 169.]

^y Orat. xxii. [ed Ben. orat. xv. §. 3. tom. i. p. 287 D.]

book against Julian ^z, (where he justifies this practice excellently: and therefore give me leave to contract a long discourse he hath about it,) “there is no *ἀνθρωπολατρία*, ‘man-worship’ among Christians. For we have not made a god of a man, nor adore one that is not by nature God, when we worship Christ himself. But acknowledging that man, who appeared to be the Word of God, by whom all things were made, we go to him as God; for so he is. As for the martyrs, we neither call them gods, nor give them any divine worship: yet we cannot but honour them, or rather we crown them *ταῖς ἀνωτάτω τιμαῖς*, ‘with the highest honours:’ as those who have generously contended for the truth, and resolutely preserved the purity of our faith, and propounded themselves as certain images of that so much admired fortitude and gallantry to all the world. There can be no absurdity in it; but rather it is necessary that they who excelled in such famous deeds should be crowned with endless honour. Did not common reason teach the ancient Greeks as much? For those that hazarded their lives at Marathon for the safety of their country, and those that stoutly opposed the army of Xerxes in after-times, the Athenians were wont, meeting together every year at their graves, to crown with their encomiums and high commendations, as men that died a glorious death. And your Plato says, ‘that they who live excellently and die bravely should be honoured as more than men, and their tombs become venerable.’ It is no wonder then that we account the holy martyrs worthy *αἰδοῦς ἀπάσης*, ‘of all respect and reverence,’ and that we honour their very monuments; making a perpetual, never-fading commemoration of them serve instead of a small recompense of such illustrious virtue.” Thus he.

And it is very well known how, in those days, their names were solemnly rehearsed in the public liturgies of the church. Which custom, though it be not still continued, yet their memory is ever precious: we honour them with due praise; we make mention of their noble deeds with hearty thanksgivings to God for them: *Laudamus, glorificamus, admiramur, &c.* (to speak in the words of St. Austin, or whoever he was that wrote the book *De Excidio Urbis* ^a), “We praise, we glorify, we

^z [Tom. vi. p. 203 C.]

^a [Tom. vi. col. 625 D.]

admire the holy martyrs ; we celebrate their days with a pious solemnity ; we venerate their worth, and, as far as we can, we imitate them, and endeavour to do as they did. For by their zealous labours and sufferings infidels were converted, lapsed Christians recovered, the doubtful confirmed, the lukewarm inflamed, the fervour of the pious doubled ; and all posterity excited both to adore the power of the divine grace in them, and also to hope in God for the like grace to help in time of need." Those are the two reasons St. Basil^b gives why those that loved the martyrs were so unwearied in their commemoration of them, " Because the honour which is given to our pious fellow-servants, is a demonstration of our affection to our common Master : and he that entertains brave men with due respect, will not fail to imitate them on the like occasion."

II.

And that, I must needs say, is the greatest honour we can do them, to propound them always to ourselves as our patterns, and to follow them in their constant love to God, to religion, and to all mankind, whatsoever we suffer for it. True Christian piety and virtue, if we will allow the martyrs to have had any judgment, is the most valuable thing in the whole world ; for they preferred it before their lives. And therefore all infidelity is a direct reproach to those blessed souls ; representing them as a company of rash zealots, that threw away their lives for a fancy : and all vice and wickedness is a constant manifest scorn and contempt of their sanctity, as the foolish strictness of those who understood not their liberty. If we will honour them, we must heartily believe and obey that gospel which they preached and asserted with their blood. We must endeavour, as one under the name of St. Cyprian speaks^c, *ut tota etiam vita martyrium, hoc est testimonium Deo reddat*, ' that our whole life may be a martyrdom ; that is, a testimony unto God.' Let it testify that we own him, that we remember him, that we fear and reverence him, and that we love him, and esteem his love and favour more than life itself. Let it witness how much we love his will better than our own, and what a grace we think it, that he hath taught us to *déný un-*

^b In XL martyres. [Hom. xix. de Divers. tom. ii. p. 149 B.]

^c [De Duplici Martyrio, ad. calc. Cypriani, p. 41.]

godliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world. Those lusts (called *worldly*, because they are so common) are the persecutors which now we are to conflict withal, as the martyrs did with other enemies. Here is now the trial of our virtue; here is the proof of our fidelity: these put us to the test, whether we will stick to our Lord and Master, or yield to their desires. *Si deest tyrannus, si tortor, si spoliator, &c.*, as St. Austin speaks, ‘though there be no tyrant,’ (blessed be God, in these peaceable days,) ‘no tormentor, no plunderer;’ yet evil desires are never wanting to afford daily occasion of martyrdom. For it is a kind of death, (*sine cruore martyrium*, in the phrase of Sulpitius^d, ‘a martyrdom without blood:’ *occultum martyrium*, in the language of St. Ambrose^e, ‘a secret, unseen martyrdom,’) to suppress all desires of sinful pleasures; to bear with the unkind censures of the envious, and the reproaches of the malicious; to forbear revenge when a fair opportunity is offered; to stifle all motions of anger, and wrath, and discontent, and hatred, and pride, vainglory and ambition, when there are constant provocations, and strong temptations to them. These are the evil affections we must manfully resist and crucify; and when they are dead it will not be hard for us, by the grace of God, to die too, if need be, for our Saviour’s sake.

III.

And now especially (which is the last thing) let every one of our lives give a testimony to God, and do honour to his religion, when we solemnly commemorate, (as we do at this time of the year,) both the wonderful great love of our Lord the eternal Son of God, in becoming a man for us, and the love also which the martyrs, those ‘rational whole burnt-offerings, (as Gregory Nazianzen calls them^f), those perfect sacrifices, those acceptable oblations,’ expressed to him in dying for his service. Let us now carefully avoid all things contrary to our profession, all riot and luxury, drunkenness and revelling, chambering and wantonness, foolish (that is, filthy, lascivious) talking and jest-

^d [Epist. ii. in Max. Bibl. vet. Patr. tom. vi. p. 356 D.]

^e [In Psalm. cxviii. serm. xx. tom. i. col. 1235 C.]

^f ‘Ολοκαυτώματα λογικά, θύματα τέλεια, προσφοραὶ δεκταί.—Orat. xviii. in laud. Cypr. [ed. Ben. orat. xxiv. § 4. tom. i. p. 439 E.]

ing : for these things, saith the apostle, *are not convenient*, (do not agree with Christianity) : *but rather giving of thanks* for God's inestimable benefits bestowed on us. *Siccine exprimitur publicum gaudium per publicum dedecus^h ?* &c. (as Tertullian speaks of the pagan festivities,) 'Is this the way to express a public joy, by a public shame? Do those things become our solemn days, which are unfit to be done at any time?' *Valde absurdum est* (to use also the words of St. Hieromⁱ) *velle nimia saturitate honorare martyrem, quem scimus Deo placuisse jejuniis* : 'it is extremely absurd to think to honour the martyr by excess, who we know pleased God by fastings;' to celebrate his memory merely with plays, and sports and merriment, who we know was acceptable to our Lord by devout prayers, praises and thanksgivings; to keep his day after the heathenish fashion, whose martyrdom was "the destruction of error, (as the forenamed Greek father speaks,) the persecution of vice, the drowning of sin, and the cleansing of the world."

Not that it is unfit now to feast and recreate ourselves; for it is never more seasonable, nor more safe, to feast and refresh our bodies, than when at such solemnities we have feasted our souls. We can never be better disposed, nor better understand how to use God's blessings thankfully, soberly, and charitably, than when he is fresh in our thoughts, and we have been commemorating his marvellous bounty to us all. And therefore, after the psalms and hymns wherewith they anciently praised God for the martyrs, there followed in many places *σωφρονέστατα συμπόσια*, (as the great Constantine speaks^k), "most sober feasts of Christian good-fellowship, wherein the poor were fed, and all enmities buried." Nor did they think it an unfit expression of their joy to dance at the sepulchres of the martyrs, *ἐνθέοις χορολαίς*, 'with godly and religious dances,' as both St. Basil^l and his great friend so often mentioned^m expressly tell us. And is it not possible for us to separate such innocent things from that intemperance and wantonness, which

^g Eph. v. 4.

^h [Apol. cap. 35. p. 28 D.]

ⁱ [Epist. xxxi. tom. i. col. 149

E.]

^k Ad Sanct. Cœtum, c. 12. [inter opp. Eusebii, ed. Reading. p.

692.]

^l Hom. in Barlaam. [Hom. xvii. de divers. tom. ii. p. 139 A.]

^m [Greg. Naz.] Carm. 63. [ed. Ben. Carm. xxix. 301. tom. ii. p. 580.]

at last robbed the martyrs of this part of their honour, and caused these customs to be abolished? Let us but so devoutly attend upon the divine service on such days, as to carry away a sense of God in our mind, and the business is done. That will sufficiently secure us, and preserve us from danger. Whatsoever we do, we shall express the character which Clemens Alexandrinusⁿ gives of his wise Christian, who, he says, is *σεμνὸς ἄμα καὶ ἰλαρὸς ἐν πᾶσιν*, 'at the same time both grave and merry in all things.' Grave, because he remembers God; and merry, because of the many good things which he enjoys by the favour of God.

For all which his holy name be praised, as well as for his spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, thanksgiving, love and faithful service, both now and evermore. Amen.

ⁿ Strom. l. vii. [cap. 7. p. 852.]

ANGLIÆ SPECULUM:

A GLASS THAT FLATTERS NOT;

PRESENTED TO A COUNTRY CONGREGATION

AT THE LATE

SOLEMN FAST, APRIL 24, 1678.

IN A PARALLEL BETWEEN THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL
AND ENGLAND.

WHEREIN THE WHOLE NATION IS DESIRED TO BEHOLD
AND CONSIDER OUR SIN AND OUR DANGER.

WILLIAM AYTON

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHURCHILL

IMPRIMATUR.

May 4, 1678.

Guil. Sill, R. P. D.

Ep. Lond. a sac. Dom.

A GLASS THAT FLATTERS NOT;
PRESENTED IN A SERMON
AT THE LAST FAST.

ISAIAH v. 25, latter end.

*For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand
is stretched out still.*

WE are assembled here by his majesty's proclamation^a, to humble ourselves before Almighty God, for the manifold sins and provocations of this kingdom; to beg his blessing upon it, and to beseech him to avert his deserved judgments from it.

In order to which you have heard now read (in the first lesson for Morning Prayer this day) another proclamation from God himself, the King of kings, directed particularly unto us his ministers, by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah, saying, *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins*^b. For we cannot be humbled for our sins, unless we know them; and unless we be sensible also how heinous they are; and how displeasing to our heavenly Father, who hath already testified many ways how much he is offended with us.

Now the best way to understand this will be to consider what sins they were which heretofore were most provoking to him, and destructive to others; causing him to cast off even the whole house of Israel and Judah, his own peculiar people whom he had separated to himself from all nations upon the face of the earth. Whose condition is so like to that of ours here in England, that he is a man of little observation, and of slow conception, who is not able to draw the resemblance. If I should endeavour to express to the life how God dealt with them, and how they requited him; and again, how he corrected them for their ingratitude; you would say, This is Eng-

^a [In the spring of the year 1678, the prospect of war with France appearing imminent, a proclamation was issued by order of the king in council, setting apart Wednesday, April 10, and Wednesday, April 24,

as days of public fasting and humiliation, the appointing a special form of prayer "for God's blessing upon for his majesty and his dominions, and the averting of God's judgements."]

^b Isaiah lviii. 1.

land under other names; or, Here is Israel again revived: the same things are acted over again in the world, only the scene is changed and new persons are come upon the stage.

I know no better way to affect your hearts, and to make you both understand my text, and the dangerous condition wherein we are, than by presenting you with some few touches, at least, of a parallel between them and us.

I.

First then, if we consider the singular privileges they enjoyed above other nations, the excellent laws which God gave them, and the true religion which was established and for a time flourished among them; you may easily find something to match them here in England: which is a country that other people have admired more than ourselves; for the excellent frame of our government, for the liberty of its inhabitants, and especially for the enjoyment of the blessed gospel of Christ in great purity, clearness, and splendour; which hath continued many years.

II.

And if we consider, secondly, what strange deliverances God vouchsafed that people, whom he had made so near to himself, and those both upon the sea and upon the land; we are not without some resemblance to them upon that account: having been a people very often saved by the Lord, who hath marvellously preserved us, when we were in great danger of being swallowed up by several enemies of our peace and happiness. They have been wonderfully defeated in their open hostilities; and no less miraculously disappointed in their secret plots and conspiracies. Witness, in the days of our fathers, the Spanish invasion, and the gunpowder treason, which can scarce be paralleled in any story; and the strange restoration of his present majesty, to the astonishment and confusion of his sworn insolent enemies: of which our own eyes have been the witnesses.

And it were well for us if we could stop here, and be able to carry on this parallel no further; if we could only recount the great favours and kindnesses of God to us, and admire at his unexpected salvation which he sent us, when of ourselves we were utterly helpless. But alas! we must confess also in the third place,

III.

That as their ingratitude to God was exceeding great, and their rebellion most shameful against him, who had been kind above measure to them; so we have equalled, if not exceeded them in this: being a nation prodigiously forgetful of his benefits, and that soon let his wonderful works slip quite out of our minds. As it was said of them, that they *provoked God at the sea, even at the Red sea*^b: that is, immediately after God had vouchsafed an extraordinary deliverance to them from a very fierce tyrant, they made no other use of it, but to take the confidence to affront his goodness: so may it be truly said of us, at the restoration of the king and kingdom, even at the restoration of the king and kingdom, we provoked him to anger against us; instantly, I mean, after he had rescued us from a miserable, forlorn, and confused condition, from the power of usurpers as insolent as Pharaoh, and had restored us to peace and settlement, we betook ourselves to our old or worse wickedness; revolting most perfidiously from all the vows we were apt to make in the time of our trouble, and behaving ourselves so basely and disingenuously towards him, that it is a wonder he hath endured us thus long, or that we dare take the confidence to appear before him, and to expect any further favour from him.

The description which the prophet gives, in the beginning of this chapter, of the happy estate of the Jews by the divine favour to them, is exceeding beautiful; and he no less lively sets forth their horrid ingratitude to their sovereign Benefactor. Read the first and second verses, with this brief exposition of them, and you will scarce be able to refrain from thinking with yourselves (though I should make no comparison) how like are we to them in every particular. He compares them to a *vineyard in a very fruitful hill*; which every one easily conceives is a representation of the prosperous estate of the Jews in an exceeding rich country, abounding with all delightful things. This vineyard he *fenced* or hedged in by the law (say the Jews), whereby he severed them from all other nations; or by his special Providence, which was their guard and defence, securing them from all invasions while they observed his law.

^b Psalm cvi. 7.

And he gathered out the stones thereof (as men, you know, are wont to do when they have a very choice piece of ground), that is, cast the gods of stone and all their worshippers out of the land of Canaan, as he did the Romish superstition out of this kingdom. And he planted it with the choicest vine; Joshua and the Judges, that is, and a number of holy and gallant men came and took root in that country; as ours also hath produced many choice and admirable persons of all sorts, who were the glory of their times, in the age before us. And then it follows, *he built a tower in the midst of it*, by which we may safely understand the famous city Jerusalem; which was in the heart and strongest part of the country. And then he *made a winepress*, that is (we may probably conceive), the sanctuary and the altar, flowing with the blood of the sacrifices, and with their drink offerings which were poured upon them; and which he testified his acceptance of by sending down at the first erection of it fire from heaven to consume them. And now, after all this care, he expected some fruit, as the next words tell us: and *looked that it should bring forth grapes*. But what did he find, when he came to examine how they had profited under his heavenly culture? Behold this vineyard *brought forth* nothing but *wild sour grapes*; which could not but be infinitely distasteful to him: that is, all manner of sin and wickedness abounded among them. This was the effect of all his care and pains; they lived as if they had been a wild barbarous people, that were under no laws, no restraints, no discipline in the world, but were left to follow merely their brutish inclinations.

Shall I give you a catalogue of those wicked fruits that all his love and kindness produced? And I will trouble you with no more than those which the prophet mentions in this chapter, when he comes to explain and apply this parable of the vineyard. And he must wink very hard, who doth not see it to be a map of those very crimes which we have been guilty of in this kingdom.

I.

First, they were grossly unjust and unmerciful to their neighbours, verse 7. *The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; and for*

righteousness (or mercy), *but behold a cry*. Woful lamentations, that is, and complaints of many miserable wretches, who were undone by the great and powerful, who should rather have protected and relieved them; these were some of the *wild grapes* they brought forth, the very same with those rapines, and spoils, and plunderings, nay sacrileges, which have been committed among us, (and not yet, it is to be feared, repented of,) besides all the violence and cruelty which is every where too common, and the private injuries that we have done one another.

II.

Then, secondly, follows their insatiable covetousness and greedy desire of riches, which was the cause of the other; that which provoked their hungry appetite to devour so many houses, and swallow up so much treasure, verse 8. *Woe to them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth*. They were so ravenous, that is, as if that fertile country were made for them alone; and they would have nobody have any share in it but themselves. Such cormorants we need not go far to seek in all sorts of men among us in this sinful nation.

Then, after a terrible threatening, verse 9, 10, against these crimes, (for the sin of oppression, denying men their right, or taking it from them, nay, greediness of wealth, and endless heaping one gainful place upon another, are highly displeasing to the just and merciful Lord of the world,) there follows in the third place,

III.

Their gluttony, drunkenness, and riotous excess, ver. 11, *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning*, (a thing very preposterous, to begin the day with a debauch,) *that they may follow strong drink; that continue till night* (as if they would never give over as long as they could see) *till wine inflame them*. And you know to what filthy sins such beasts are wont to be inflamed; nor need I tell you what impure fires have burnt, nay, raged among us; which, woe be to us, are not yet extinguished.

IV.

How should they? When, as the prophet proceeds to inform

us, these sins were attended among that people with a hatred of all that was serious; even then, when God's plagues, the tokens of his heavy displeasure, were remarkable upon them; Read it; for it is the very picture of too many among ourselves. *And the harp, and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.* As much as to say, (if we put it into our language,) they love nothing but merriment and jollity, feasting and dancing, balls and plays, treats and entertainments; but never regard what God is doing in the world, nor mind into how miserable a condition their country is already reduced by their folly. For, as it follows there, ver. 13, 14, *Therefore the people were gone into captivity, their honourable men were famished, and their multitude (i. e. the vulgar sort) were dried up with thirst; hell, or the grave, enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure* (just as it did in the late devouring pestilence, which consumed so many thousands of us): nay, he threatens that *their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth should descend into it.* This madness, that is, will inevitably bring all to an end.

V.

For, fifthly, they devised all ways to be wicked; it was a piece of art and skill to invent new modes of villany; and they took a great deal of pains to destroy themselves and others, ver. 18. *Woe to them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope.* They were not merely drawn in (as we say) to sin by the allurements of pleasure and gain, and such like things; but they drew in themselves, and forced themselves to be wicked, even when there was no inclination in nature to it. They studied something out of the common road of wickedness; and, as if they loved wickedness for itself, they dragged and haled some sins into the nation to which men had no mind: they *set themselves*, as the Scripture speaks, *to do wickedly*; and set themselves to it with all their might. They made a very laborious business of it, and did violence to themselves and others to make them monstrously impious; for that seems to be the meaning of *drawing sin and iniquity as with a cart rope*; unto which, I doubt, too many

have put their hands, and made it their work in this sinful kingdom, as formerly in Israel.

VI.

And in this lewd course they were so impudently confident, that they mocked (as the prophet next of all relates) at those who told them they were in any danger of being punished for these impieties. They made themselves pleasant with such monitors, and laughed and jeered even at the threatening of God's messengers, saying, *Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it^a!* Which are words of abuse uttered by way of taunt and scorn at those who told them God would be avenged of them. They derided the prophets who said God had pronounced a heavy sentence upon such evil-doers, and that a dreadful judgment was coming from the *Holy One of Israel*. If he be so angry, said they, why doth he stay so long? Let us see what he can do, let him make more haste in his executions, that we may know you to be his prophets. And do you think there are no such profane scoffers among ourselves, who go on fearlessly in their sins, and dare the divine vengeance to do his worst against them? O that we were but thus innocent as not to come within the reach of this woe, which the prophet denounces to all such contemners of God's threatenings!

VII.

The ground of all which obdurate wickedness was, that they had utterly confounded all the known notions of good and bad, right and wrong, holy and profane, pure and unclean; between which they made no distinction at all, but looked upon them as names which had no real difference. That is the meaning of the 20th verse, *Woe to them that call evil good,* (it is plainer in the Hebrew, as you read in the margin of the Bible,) "that say concerning evil, it is good, and concerning good that it is evil;" *that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter;* that is, make no difference between these, but look upon those things which we call virtues and vices as words and fancies, there being in their opinion no such qualities. Nothing is good but what fits the turn they have to serve, and nothing bad but what crosses

^a Isaiah v. 19.

it; as much as to say, these men laboured to dig up by the very roots all principles of conscience as a foolish scrupulosity, and to introduce a persuasion that all things are alike lawful in themselves, so that nobody need consult any thing else but his own pleasure and safety. Which (it is no libel to speak it) is the very character of that profane and ungodly crew, which in these later years have sprung up among us in this kingdom.

VIII.

And yet these very men were wonderfully conceited of themselves, and had a high opinion of their own wisdom and skill in managing affairs: as if business would go on with sport and laughter, and flouting at others! Nay, they were confident they should prosper, without maintaining any of those old threadbare notions of good and evil, which seems to be the meaning of the next words^b: *Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!* They will see, that is, ere long, what idiots they are that have so little understanding as not to know the difference between falsehood and truth, fraud and upright dealing, oppression and mercy, soberness and debauchery, devotion and utter neglect of all the offices of religion; which all mankind have ever thought to be as opposite as light and darkness, sweetness and bitterness. Woe be to them that are thus depraved, and have so perfectly lost all spiritual sense and taste, that they can swallow any thing; and yet fancy themselves very wise and prudent men, if by any means, though never so vile, they can bring about their ends. Woful at last was the end of these politicians, who trusted to such weak and rotten counsels.

IX, X.

Especially since, ninthly, they had no other valour but either that of drinking stoutly; or, tenthly, that of boldly perverting all public justice: so the prophet concludes their abominable character^c, *Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!* They were mighty men at a debauch, and resolutely broke the established orders and rules of common right and equity. For if they were entrusted with the administration of justice, they judged the causes that were

^b Isaiah v. 21.^c v. 22, 23.

brought before them, not according to their merits, but as their hatred, or affection, or hope of gain directed them: rich and powerful offenders escaped without any punishment, and the poor innocent could have no redress of the wrongs he suffered by them.

I might tell you also of the idolatry whereby some had corrupted themselves, (as this prophet complains in the first chapter,) and the foul hypocrisy of others who still continued true worshippers; but then I should exceed the limits wherein I promised to contain myself when I entered upon this discourse: the intention of which is to set before your eyes those sins which brought a people, as dear to God as we can fancy ourselves, to utter ruin; and to possess you with such a dread of his almighty displeasure, that you may prepare yourselves, by true repentance of your own particular sins, to be humble supplicants to God for the whole kingdom; which we have too much reason to think is defiled, if not with all, yet with most of these woful crimes.

For certain it is that we are very like them in another regard, from which we may evidently conclude, that our sins are of as deep a dye as theirs: in those heavy judgments, I mean, that God hath sent upon us; which have a cause, no doubt, as weighty, and that can be none else but our crying iniquities. And since God, as you have heard, hath made us so like them in his benefits, in the enjoyment of which he hath also preserved us by wonderful deliverances, and we have made ourselves so like them in our ingratitude, that it is hard to discern the difference between their character and ours; what marvel is it if there be a fourth resemblance between us, that is, in our plagues?

4. It is said, I remember, in the twenty-eighth of Deuteronomy, (where Moses foretells the fate of Israel, if they sinned against God,) ver. 58, 59. *If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.* Behold now out of the records which the prophet Isaiah hath left us, how exactly this prediction of Moses was fulfilled. For they having offended God

by those sins before-mentioned, and cast away his law, and despised his word, *therefore was the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he stretched forth his hand against them, and smote them : so that the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets*^d. And for all this, (saith my text,) *his anger was not turned away, but as the plagues were great, so they were of long continuance, as Moses had said, for his hand was stretched out still.*

When one judgment was past, then he sent another to succeed it ; as you may see if you look forward into the ninth chapter of this prophecy, ver. 11, 12, where the same sad words are repeated again upon this occasion. They were so vain as to imagine themselves secure (notwithstanding all their sins) from the power of the Syrians, by the assistance of Tiglath Pelesar, the king of Assur ; who was their ally, and an enemy to Rezin king of Syria. But even these allies and confederates, in whom they confided, at the last turned against them. They from whom they expected succour and deliverance proved their greatest adversaries. And so the Syrians before and the Philistines behind (who always watched occasions to fall upon the Israelites when they were in distress) made a prey of them, and devoured them with open mouth ; and yet, *for all this, his anger was not turned away, but his hand was stretched out still.*

He had not yet done with them, because, as it follows, v. 13, *The people turned not unto him that smote them, neither did they seek the Lord of hosts.* They never heartily acknowledged their faults, nor went about to amend them. And therefore he proceeded to punish all the senators, and the prophets, and the leaders of the people, together with their young and valiant men ; nay, the fatherless and widows and all ; because every one was an hypocrite, and an evil-doer, and every mouth spoke villany, (as you may read v. 14, 15, 16, 17,) and yet *for all this his anger was not turned away, but his hand stretched out still.* How should it be expected that he should withdraw his vengeance, when they ceased not to provoke him ? for, as it there follows, *wickedness burneth like fire,* v. 18, and so through the wrath of the Lord of hosts *the land was darkened,* v. 19. Which seems to have been in the days of Sennacherib,

^d Isaiah v. 25.

king of Assyria; when Manasseh was against Ephraim, and Ephraim against Manasseh; that is, some of the kingdom of Israel joined with the enemy, and others opposed them; they could not agree among themselves, but continued their divisions till all the ten tribes were subdued; and then they were all together joined against Judah, v. 21, *And yet for all this his anger was not turned away, but his hand stretched out still.*

Were not Moses' words strangely fulfilled, that their *plagues should be great, and of long continuance*? The reason was, their sins continued, the very same sins for which they had thus smarted, as you read chap. x. 1, 2, 3. So that after a new *visitation* and a *desolation which came from far*, (v. 4,) his *anger was not turned away*, (it is repeated there once more,) *but his hand was stretched out still.* The truth is, it was stretched out so long against them, that they were brought to nothing; Jerusalem itself, that impregnable fortress, was laid in ashes, and *came down wonderfully*, as Jeremiah's words are in his Lamentations i. 9. Which sound to me as if he would have us to understand, that no one tittle of Moses' prophecy failed; who said that their *plagues should be wonderful.*

And what difference, I beseech you, is there to be found between us and them, as their case stood in the days of this prophet Isaiah? His words and those of Moses are verified again in this kingdom; which hath lain under plagues, great plagues, and of long continuance. We that in former days were the admiration, if not the envy of our neighbours, for the happiness we enjoyed, became not long ago an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, by reason of the many, very many and sore calamities which fell upon us. Who hath forgotten the bloody and tedious war wherein we were embroiled, when *the land trembled*, and our *carcasses were torn in the streets*? How dreadful is the remembrance of the slaughter of such multitudes of brave men by the hand of their neighbours, the dethroning, nay beheading of the best of kings, the extirpation of monarchy, the abolishing of the apostolical episcopacy, the defacing of holy places; with all the rest of the miserable desolations, which were wrought by our own foolish hands! And yet for all this *his anger*, it is apparent, was *not turned away, but his hand was stretched out still.*

For after his majesty's most happy^e restoration, how soon

were two branches of the royal family lopped off! What floods were there in most parts of the realm by immoderate rains! which threatened a general scarcity of provisions, and were a kind of presage of the deluge of calamities which were coming to sweep us away. (It was the year after his majesty's return to his kingdom; and there was a general fast, I very well remember, appointed merely for that reason.) And yet *his anger was not turned away, but his hand was stretched out still.*

For, not long after we were engaged in a new war, and that was accompanied with the greatest pestilence that hath been known in this nation. And yet, for all this, *his anger was not turned away, but his hand was stretched out still.*

For, the next year followed a most dreadful fire; which consumed the houses, as the former judgment had done the inhabitants of our capital city. And yet, for all this, *his anger was not turned away, but his hand was stretched out still.*

For, not long after, part of the royal navy, the walls and bulwarks of this kingdom, were burnt in an ignominious and disgraceful manner. And yet, for all this, *his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.* Our plagues are of longer continuance; another war being commenced, attended with a great number of ill successes; as if the Lord should say, I have not yet done with you, though all this evil be come upon you.

Why? what can be worse than all this? when we may say with the prophet concerning his people, *From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness, in the body of this realm, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, nor mollified with ointment*^d. It is a great mistake to interpret this, as men commonly do, concerning their sins. It is plain by what goes before and follows after, that he describes the grievousness of their punishments; which were so many and so great, that the body of the kingdom was just like the body of a man, who hath been beaten so long that you cannot find one part whole, where there is not a bruise, or a wound, or a putrifying sore; and those strokes so continued, that there was no time to close one wound before another was made.

^d Isaiah i. 6.

What a mortifying spectacle is this! That is, in what a lamentable condition is this poor nation, whose very picture this seems to be! What can we expect but a total dissolution of a body so wounded and putrified, for which we can find yet no plaister, no healing? What can we expect but that we should fall wonderfully, (as Jeremiah speaks,) our plagues have been so wonderful? For now at last, which seems to me the most wonderful thing that hath been mentioned, we are threatened with the danger of losing our religion, than which nothing ought to be dearer to us. I should not have presumed to say it, if his majesty had not told us so in his proclamation for the last general fast before this, Feb. 4, 1673, where we are invited to the same duty we are now about, because "the restless practices of the Romish recusants, (whose numbers and insolencies his majesty there declares are lately increased,) threaten a subversion both of church and state." So the words are in that proclamation, without whose authority my small acquaintance with the state of affairs would have forbidden me to frighten you with so dismal a calamity; which all considerate persons cannot choose but look upon as the most fearful plague that hath yet befallen us. It puts me in mind of the swarms of locusts which covered the face of the earth, and filled the houses of Pharoah and the houses of his servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians^e; which immediately preceded the plague of thick and palpable darkness which overspread the whole country. And it may justly be thought a prodigious thing, that we should be so sleepy, so stupid, or so negligent and indifferent, as to suffer those Romish sorcerers to come so freely to bewitch us again with their enchantments.

Are we become so sottish as to believe the bishop of Rome ought to have any authority in this kingdom? There are no stripes severe enough for such fools' backs. What! in this age of light and learning? and this kingdom, where his instruments have been so often convicted and stigmatized for cheats and cozeners? Are these Romish factors come again in a confident and open manner to play their tricks, and to put off their pitiful wares among us, as if we were blind Indians that will take their painted glass and bugles for some great jewels and precious stones? I cannot but say again, that this exceeds all

^e Exod. x. 5, 6.

wonder, it amazes my thoughts, and I cannot tell what to call the blindness wherewith we are struck, if we let ourselves be deceived by them.

Beloved, the usurpations of the pope have been so visibly exposed to all men's view in these later times, it hath been so manifestly proved that he hath been the greatest disturber of the Christian world by his encroachments; and the maxims of the Jesuits, who are the chief sticklers for him, are so apparently horrid and destructive to all government, nay, and good manners; and their pretences that the church of Rome is the sole catholic apostolic church have been proved to be so frivolous, or rather ridiculous; that our divines, in the reign of the last king of blessed memory, "thought their pranks to be discovered so plainly to the eyes of all the people, and all their frauds and fooleries so fully detected, that they would not venture to appear here again with their impostures and holy trumperies, but rather go and play their parts upon the stages of Japan and Mexico among their new silly converts, and not here in this kingdom, where an ass is easily known from a lion."

I find these very words in an epistle to the keeper of the great seal in those days. And yet, it seems, they are as busy here as ever, or rather more active; and they brag and vapour, we are told, in some places, as if we were all ready to submit to them by a blind obedience, and were but as so many unclean beasts, that will swallow all their morsels without chewing.

O God! what spirit of slumber is this that is fallen upon us? What a mist have they cast before our eyes, that we cannot discern between things which so vastly differ! but are become such tame and easy fools, that they hope, it seems, to impose upon us that heavy yoke which our fathers threw off with so much reason and Christian resolution. This looks like a kind of fatal stupidity, that we so far follow the old Israelites as to imitate them in their first provocation, by entertaining so much as a thought of returning back again into Egypt.

What shall we assign to be the cause of all these divine judgments, and that there is so little hope to see any conclusion of them? But after all this is come upon us, his anger is not yet turned away, but his hand is stretched out still, and shakes such a rod over us, that all the former are no more to

be compared with it, than the whip of Solomon to the scorpions wherewith the Israelites were threatened to be chastised by Rehoboam.

It can be none else but our foul ingratitude to our most gracious God and merciful Father, and our bringing forth no better fruit than the vineyard did which his own right hand had planted. We are a *sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity*, (as Isaiah complains of them, chap. i. 4,) *a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters, who are gone away backward*; which may justly provoke him to continue our punishments, and to *send us such strong delusion that we should believe a lie*; seeing we *received not the truth in the love of it, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*. There are few, if any, of those sins against every one of which you heard a most terrible woe denounced, that are not to be found among us; and if we will not forsake them, no, not when God hath begun to strike as well as threaten, he may in his righteous judgment, after all his plagues on our bodies and goods, inflict the greatest of all upon our minds, and strike such obstinate sinners with an incurable blindness.

V.

Now what signs are there, that we see, of our repentance and turning from those evil ways in which we have proceeded to such an height of provocation? What do we do to prevent those judgments which we say we fear? What effectual course do we take to avert such an utter destruction as the Israelites brought upon themselves by their continued wickedness? You have seen in too many things how little difference there is between us and that people. The Lord their God, I have shown you, cast them into a most excellent order and admirable form of government and religion, in which we have been praised by the nations round about us. Many wonderful deliverances he granted them from those that hated them, wherein he hath not been wanting to us neither. And all the Bible shows how ungrateful they proved to him, as all the world knows; and posterity I believe will be astonished at it, how wickedly we have behaved ourselves since he hath done the most marvellous things for us. And therefore he hath made us, you have now heard, as like in our punishments, as we have made ourselves like them in our sins. And, for any thing yet appears, to

complete the parallel, we are like to imitate them in their impenitence and hardness of heart, notwithstanding all God's judgments upon them, and so at last to fall under that heavy sentence which the prophet pronounces in the next chapter against such a cross-grained and gainsaying people.

Read it, and be seriously afraid lest it should be our portion. *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land*^f. O dreadful doom! What means do we use, that none like it may pass upon us? Wherein do we difference ourselves from that rebellious generation? What tokens are there, that we intend to become more obedient to the voice of the Lord our God, and to meet him, in the way of his judgments, by a timely repentance?

We talk indeed often of repenting, and acknowledge that we shall perish unless we repent; but still every man goes on in the way of his wicked heart, and doth not at all repent of the evil of his doings. After all the plagues, the great plagues, and of long continuance, which God hath sent upon us; and after all our fastings and humiliations, and confessions that we are a wicked people, who justly deserve sorer judgments; we continue still the very same that we were; unless this render us still more wicked, and justly obnoxious to his severer displeasure, that we will not amend those things which we ourselves confess are so provoking to his Divine Majesty, and so destructive to us.

We are met this day to confess we are very great sinners; and to beseech God to bless our dread sovereign and his kingdoms, and to avert his judgments from us which our provocations deserve. But how do we hope they should be averted? Merely by our sorrowful confessions, and prayers, and supplications for mercy? They rather accuse us as obstinate offenders, and may hasten his judgments, if we do not what in us lies to amend those faults which we say we are sensible will bring

^f Isaiah vi. 10, 11, 12.

them upon us. Why then do we not seriously set upon this necessary, this saving work of thorough amendment, and reformation of our lives? God's anger, we pretend to believe, is not yet quite turned away; but his hand, we fear, is stretched out to give us another stroke; and the cause is visible. Nobody denies that the reason is because we do not repent. Why then do we not heartily engage in that long neglected duty of repentance, which we know will do the business, and save us all this trouble, sadness, sorrow, and more blows, which we may be sure are prepared for the back of such fools as wilfully refuse to go in the only way which they see leads unto their peace and happiness? Let me ask a few more questions.

I.

Are we indeed so foolish as to think that God will be thus angry with us for nothing? that he can send one plague after another, and make a miserable destruction and spoil among the best of his creatures here on earth, when there is no cause for it but merely to satisfy his own will? Doth he delight in the death of sinners, or willingly grieve the children of men? Is it any contentment to him to see us kill one another? to behold our carcasses fall by the pestilence? to rot and corrupt the fruits of the earth, which he hath made it naturally to produce? Doth he love to turn a pleasant garden into a wilderness? or to vex those whom he hath made capable of so much pleasure, with any other mischiefs and calamities? We are all better instructed, sure, than to harbour any such opinion of the just and gracious Lord of all; since no good man can take any delight in the mere miseries, cries, and woeful lamentations of the most inferior creatures.

II.

What then do we think of our condition? Doth God's anger exceed the cause, though there be some reason for it? Is it disproportionable to the provocation? and do we fancy him more displeased than he need? If we think his justice and goodness are so great that they will not suffer that he should smite when there is no offence, we may be as confident they will forbid that the stroke should be above what the offence deserves. He never sends heavy punishments for light crimes, nor common general judgments for some private offences; but

as men sin, so they suffer. When a great calamity overspreads a nation, it is, we may be sure, for a great and contagious iniquity; and when those plagues are *of long continuance*, as Moses speaks, it is because that nation goes on still in its trespasses.

III.

But though in those days the prophet said, *Our God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses*^s; yet now perhaps you think there is no such danger, and that all these are but fanciful applications which we make, when, from God's proceedings against his ancient people, we put you in fear of further severity, which you may expect, if you do not repent of your evil doings. Doth this imagination rise in your minds, to obstruct the passage of these truths to your hearts? Read then, I beseech you, and attend to the second lesson appointed for evening prayer this day, and there the apostle will teach you another lesson: *Now these things* (speaking of what befell the Israelites) *were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted; nor be idolaters, nor commit fornication, nor tempt Christ, nor murmur*^h, as (in the following verses) he shows they did to their cost, and then concludes as he began; *Now all these things happened to them for types: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come*ⁱ.

Why then do we not, without any delay, repent and turn to God? since it is so apparent, both that we are offenders, great offenders, in an high and insolent manner; and that all those woes (which I have so often mentioned) in the prophet Isaiah are a warning to us to beware of these sins, or presently to renounce and forsake them all, when their danger is discovered to us; especially when we have suffered already so sadly for them, and felt such heavy strokes of God's revenging hand, which is not yet withdrawn, but seems to be stretched out still; why, I say, are we so senseless, so fool-hardy, so desperate as still to live in all those wickednesses, which are so hateful to God; though one judgment have come tumbling upon another, and still there are more behind? *For his anger is not turned*

^s Psalm lxxviii. 21.

^h 1 Cor. x. 6.

ⁱ Ver. 12.

away, (let me repeat it, as the prophet doth, four or five times,) *but his hand is stretched out still.*

To resolve this question it will require a new sermon, though no great pains to compose it. For I see the reasons (I think) of our impenitence as plainly as if they were written with the finger of God upon the walls of your church, as legibly as you read many texts of Scripture there. And I am confident one is (which is all I shall now mention,) that there are great numbers of offenders who are not at all sensible that it is the hand of God which hath been stretched out against us in so many plagues; but impute all to ill fortune and blind chance, which hath fallen unluckily upon us. This was one of the things that helped to undo the house of Israel and Judah, as you have heard (ver. 12 of this chapter), they *regarded not the work of the Lord, nor considered the operation of his hands.* And it will inevitably ruin all those who walk on the same tract; for how should such men repent, when God is not in all their thoughts, and they will acknowledge no divine hand in any of our calamities, but stick merely in low causes, above which they are resolved not to look?

If any of you be in the least infected with this dull atheism, endeavour to cure that in the first place: that a sense of God awakened in your mind, may cure all the rest of your diseases, and move you to stand in fear of him and of his judgments. You cannot but be afraid, I am sure, if you see and be sensible of the hand of God in all that we have suffered. It will make you say, as the jailor did when he came in trembling before the apostles, *What shall we do to be saved?*

What, but repent of this, that you have no more laid to heart the works of God, or so soon forgot the operation of his hands? which I beseech you now seriously consider and ponder, and keep in mind; that you may be afraid to offend him any more, by going on still in those trespasses for which you have been so sharply handled, and are in danger to be punished with far greater severity. If you do but mind how God hath proceeded in the method of his judgments against us, till they are risen to high and dreadful degrees, you cannot but be awakened to think how dismal the next stroke is like to be; and so *consider, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.*

I need not, if I were able, to set every one of your particular

sins who are here present before your eyes, for God hath done it by his judgments, if they have at all awakened your drowsy consciences. They have called upon you to examine, and search, and try your ways: which if you have done, you soon found what was amiss. There is none here, I verily believe, that hath lost that discerning faculty which distinguishes between good and evil: you very well know the one from the other; and are not grown so stupid as to put light for darkness and darkness for light. If you would but make as exact a difference in your lives and actions, as you are able to do in your minds and notions, all would be well with you, whatsoever becomes of those who are past feeling, and therefore commit all iniquity with greediness.

As for such senseless souls, I know not well what to say of them; but must acknowledge it to be a very discouraging thought, when I consider that they who are most concerned in what I have said in this sermon are neither here, nor (it is to be feared) in any other place of God's worship and service. They to whom the character which the prophet gives of a people in a woful condition most of all belongs, never so much as read it; nor will come to receive our admonition, nor think of humbling themselves before God: no, not when they are required and strictly charged by his majesty so to do, as they tender God's honour, and would avoid his just wrath and indignation against this land. They make no more of the king's proclamation (how should it be expected) than they do of God's holy word; but are perhaps at this very time feasting and making merry, when we are fasting and testifying our sorrow for our sins. These are the most forlorn wretches of all others; a great part of the plague of the country where they live. We do well to separate ourselves from the herd of such brutes as have no fear, no apprehension of any thing that is future. You are to be commended for addressing yourselves to God in this place; and I hope when you go from hence, you will continue to apply yourselves to him, in the most humble and earnest deprecations of his displeasure; resolving that you, for your part, will have no further hand in provoking the Lord to anger against these kingdoms; but endeavour rather to live the more strictly, because there are so many loose livers, of whose amendment there is little or no hope remaining.

And here it will be necessary to give you a caution ; which it is easy to observe, but it is not well followed. As the greatest provokers of God to anger will never, I doubt, think of atoning him ; so they who have most power to reduce them to some sense of their duty will not, perhaps, employ it sufficiently for the correction of them, and all other bold offenders. The magistrates, I mean, in their several places, notwithstanding the laws for that purpose, will neglect, perhaps, by their execution to give a check to open profaneness and insolent wickedness. The neglecters, or contemners, of so religious and necessary a duty as that of this day may escape the punishment which his majesty puts them in fear of in his proclamation. And they who come to seduce the people from the established religion may meet with no control ; though his majesty and great council have declared that their practices threaten the subversion of church and state. Many more such enormities may be supposed ; and should it so fall out as I have put the case, yet we must take great care of this plain truth, which everybody hath at their tongue's end, but few men live by, that we neglect not our duty because others mind not theirs.

This is a very common and grievous sin, which we are all to resolve this day shall be amended. We are ever finding fault with others more than ourselves. Some are still laying the blame upon the court that things are no better ; others throw all the dirt they can upon the bishops : there are sober people who have got an evil custom of making complaints on all occasions of the fathers of the church ; and others cry out as loudly against the negligence of all the officers of justice : but in the meantime do nothing themselves but what they should not do to remedy all that is amiss.

Is this the way, think you, to avert God's judgments ? to be continually arraigning the vices of others of which we have no knowledge, nay, judging at all adventures those who are our superiors, and in the mean time letting our own apparent sins escape without correction ? Doth this look like the way of God in which we hope to meet with his blessing ? Or are these rash censures which we carelessly throw out likely to redress any disorders ? Or can we find so little work at home, that we

know not where to busy ourselves but in other men's concerns? Why do you suffer yourselves to be thus grossly abused by the devil, whose art it is to divert you from that wherein you may do some good, by employing you there where you have nothing to do, or if you had, have no power to make any amendment?

Grant, if it may be done without offence, that what you surmise is true, that there are faults in those, whom, out of respect to their high office, we would willingly excuse; and, which is more, that they will still be in fault and not do their duty as they ought, (though I hope in God they will not be truly charged with this guilt.) What then? Doth this authorize your irreverent speeches of them? Are they like to do better by your talking against them? or doth it tend to any thing but the disgracing those whose honour you should preserve, and the bringing all things into greater confusion?

Come, come, if you design any good to yourselves or this kingdom, set yourselves to work in that place where you have power to make things better. If you mean really to do what in you lies to turn away God's anger from us, turn then your zeal (if you have any) that way where it may be profitably employed, and work some amendment. There is something, I am sure, which every one of us may do (and if we do not, shall be reproached out of our own mouths, which are so censorious of other folk's negligence) to procure a blessing upon our sovereign and his kingdoms. In that let us employ our most serious endeavours, and consider impartially, are there not a number of things out of order at home? Do you not hear them calling upon your care and diligence to see them amended? Spend your zeal then first of all in that place, and let it be your business this day, when you are alone by yourselves, as to bewail between God and your own souls all the wickedness you know of abroad, to lament the neglects of those who you see do not execute the laws, to sigh in secret for the faults of those which you ought not openly to discourse of; so to descend into your own breasts and make a search there, what duty towards God or man there is which you neglect, and what commands there are which you break: and when you have found them, set them before your eyes in all their foul circumstances, most

sorrowfully bewail them, express your abhorrence of them, and faithfully resolve to reform all your negligence and remissness, as well as your open disobedience.

In this search and examination you must be strict and exact, and when you have sifted yourselves narrowly and resolved to amend all there, the next thing you have to do is to amend all those over whom you have any power, and who are committed to your charge. Upon your children, I mean, and servants, whom you ought to call upon to be more careful in their performance of the duties which they omit, and to break off those sins into which you see them run, resolving with Joshua, that whatsoever others do, *you and your house will serve the Lord.*

And next of all we ought to express our detestation, as much as we are able, of those lewd courses which we cannot reform. What hinders, for instance, but you may frown and show your dislike, when you hear a gentleman, or one that is much your superior, rap out oaths and blasphemies at every word in his common discourse? Is this any incivility or rudeness to him in his house or in your own? And what can detain you, if you have a love to God, from going to do your duty to him, when others are resolved to omit it? Why should you not leave any company when you are called to church, and not be so complimentary as to stay at home with those who have no regard to the divine service, and for fear of disobliging them be guilty of an open neglect of Almighty God? Nay, may not every one of you do very much for the preservation of the true religion, which God's own right hand hath planted and established among us? by studying, that is, more seriously, the grounds of it, by informing yourselves what indeed, and none else, is the true ancient catholic apostolic faith which is so much talked of? And especially by endeavouring after an holy conversation answerable thereunto, cannot you be careful to principle your children with all the diligence you can use in the religion here professed, nay, and your servants too, and all that are under your charge? What hinders you from bringing them constantly to church along with you, and to see they stay there, and wander not to other places? And why cannot you examine them what they have learnt, and remember them of that which was most remarkable, and read in the evening of the Lord's day some good book to them that may instruct them in their

duty, and make them understand the difference between our religion and all that oppose it? These are proper things for you in which to express your zealous desires of bringing things to a better pass. And do not think to throw off the guilt from yourselves, unless you set your hearts to do something of this nature, nor imagine that it is none of your fault that we are in so ill a condition, and in danger of a worse; for if the thing be well scanned, there is never a one of us but is less or more to be charged with it. And to speak a little more particularly, I doubt our religion suffers exceedingly by this, that we do no more value it nor thank God for it, nor stir up ourselves to serve God with fervent spirits in it; for if we did more esteem the knowledge of God our Saviour, and really look upon it as eternal life, and think his service the most “perfect freedom,” (as we pretend to do in our daily prayers,) we need not fear the power of any adversaries, but be confident God would hear our prayers, when we say, “From our enemies defend us, O Christ.” But alas, we are negligent and careless hearers and readers of his holy word, and too many talk all the time the chapters are read, as if that were not one end of our daily assemblies, to hear God’s most holy word, as well as to pray and to set forth his most worthy praise, and thank him for his benefits. Nay, all these, God knows, are but slightly performed; we see people talk out all the hymns, and it is well if they can forbear whispering to one another while they pretend to be at their prayers, a most dreadful profanation, which must be amended if we hope for any mercy. For God will not be moved by our constant show of religion and devotion, if we want the truth and sincerity of it; and how are we religious, how dwelleth the love of God in us, when we mind no more what we do in religious offices?

Let me beseech you again to reform these things thoroughly, and instead of accusing others of their carelessness and negligence, gird up the loins of your own minds, and go about that effectually which you know you ought to do, and which you can do by God’s assistance, for the healing of those wounds which are not yet closed in the body of this church and kingdom.

It is not too late, I hope, nay, I am sure it is not, if we be in good earnest; for the Lord, as the prophet Jeremiah speaks, is *in the midst of us*, and we are yet called by his name, and if

we will return to him with all our heart, and with all our soul, he will not leave us. So Moses declared to the children of Israel long before all those evils befel them which I have related. *If when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse which I set before thee^a, thou shalt call to mind, and return to the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice in all that I command thee, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from among the nations whither he hath scattered thee; and the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee^b.* We need not doubt but the same gracious Lord will do the very same for us, when we, in the veneration of our spirits, and the anguish of our souls, cry unto him; if we also turn unto him with all our heart, and with all our soul. Let us but thus reform ourselves and others, as far as our power extends; and we may comfortably hope that our prayers this day will become prevalent for all the nation. Such supplicants may do much to the turning away God's wrath from us, or to the obtaining a forbearance that it may not come in our days; or if it do, that it may be (as it is admirably expressed in the prayer after sermon) effectual to our correction, and not to our destruction. And if the reformation of our lives were any thing general throughout the kingdom, I persuade myself it might quite avert God's judgments, notwithstanding the great and desperate provokers which will still remain among us. They might only bear their own burden for the sake of those many pious supplicants that are in it: though we stand so guilty before him, that for our evil deeds we do worthily deserve to be punished; yet he might hear the earnest cries of such penitents which sue unto him, that by the comfort of his grace we may be mercifully relieved. He might have a regard to our constant litanies or supplications, that he would "mercifully look upon our infirmities, (or afflictions,) and for the glory of his name turn from us all those evils that we most righteously have deserved;" or if such a blessing could not be obtained, those devout souls would still be able in all their troubles to put their whole trust and confidence in his mercy,

^a Deut. xxx. 1, 2, &c.

^b Ver. 7.

and rejoice in the midst of tribulations in hope of his glory. To which God of his infinite mercy bring us, by such ways and in such methods as he sees best. And let us never cease to pray to him according to the daily collect for this week, with which I conclude.

“ Almighty God, who showest to them that be in error the light of thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness; grant unto all them that are admitted into the fellowship of Christ’s religion, that they may eschew those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

END OF VOL. VII.

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