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PROTESTANCY

To be Embrac'd:

OR, A

New and Infallible Method

To Reduce

ROMANISTS

FROM

POPERY

TO

Protestancy.

A Treatise of great Use to all
His Majesties Subjects, and necessary
to prevent Error and Popery.

By *David Abercromby* D.

Lately Converted, after he had
Profess'd near Nineteen Years
Jesuitism and Popery.

LONDON, Printed for the Author,
by *Thomas Hodgkin*. 1682.

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T O T H E

Right Reverend Father in God,

HENRY,

L O R D B I S H O P of
London, Dean of His
Majesties Chappel, and
one of His most Ho-
nourable Privy Coun-
cil.

My Lord,

I *Was once fully resol-
ved to side first openly
with the Protestant Church,*

A 2 and

The Epistle

and then to inform the Publick of the true motives of my Conversion from Popery to Protestantcy; but upon second thoughts, ad obstruendum os loquentium iniqua, to stop the mouths of such as could misconstrue my intentions, I judg'd it necessary to prevent the reflections of some, and surprisal of others.

I acknowledge my self in this Conjunction Accountable by duty to two sorts of persons: 1. To the Jesuites my former Brethren.

Dedicatory.

thren. 2. To the Roman
Catholicks of my familiar
acquaintance : I was looked
upon by those as being able
to serve them at home, as I
had not been usefess to them
abroad, and by these as a
zealous Defender of Po-
pery. If I can but allay the
first heats of both, and hin-
der a sudden rise of anger
and passion, I may hope by
this peaceable method to
conquer irresistibly their
understandings, yea, if pre-
occupation stand not be-
twixt them and the truth,

The Epistle

strike at their hearts, and change their wills.

My Thoughts, my Lord, were not long at a stand, under whose Patronage this short Treatise should face the Publick, it being chiefly intended for the Conservation of the Protestant Religion, and Conversion of His Majesties Subjects from Superstition and Popery, I was of opinion you could claim a peculiar right to it, not only on the account of your Character and Dignity, but particularly because
of

Dedicatory.

of that Apostolick zeal you are inflam'd withall for your Flocks spiritual Concerns and Proficiency; whereby you are powerfully moved to accept of, and defend whatever may prove instrumental to the increase of true Virtue and Christian Piety.

I confess ingenuously, your Deep Knowledge makes me somewhat apprehensive of your Censure, but your eminent Virtue puts me in hopes again you will easily pardon whatever you

Λ 4 shall.

The Epistle

shall find defective in this method, or not answerable to your own Accuracy. Yet I have call'd it, and hope it shall prove such, infallible for two Reasons. 1. Because taken wholly, it amounts to a clear and forcible Demonstration, though perhaps each Argument it contains will not prove a full Conviction to every obstinate Romanist. 2. Because it relies on Self-evident Principles, and overthrows the most material Obstacles to the Conversion of Romanists,

Dedicatory.

nists, I mean their preoccupied Opinions, and groundless Fancies, That Protestants are all Reprobates, Schismaticks, Hereticks, and such as retreat from Popery to Protestantcy, Apostates; but however this method prove otherwise infallible, which the event must determine; one thing I may confidently ascertain, it will shew infallibly to Posterity, with what respect I am,

MY LORD,

Your most Humble
And Obedient Servant,
David Abercromby.

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of this Book.

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Protestancy

To be embrac'd :

O R

An Infallible Method
to reduce *Romanists*

From

Popery to Protestancy.

I. **T**His little Treatise
will be a Subject
of great amaze-
ment to all such as have
known my former Life and
Conversation, whereof cour-
teous and curious Reader,
take this accurate, short, and
true account.

2. I was bred up in my greener years at *Doway*, and in a short time became so good a Proficient in the mysteries of Popery, that I enter'd the Order of Jesuits in *France* at my first instance : I lived amongst them full eighteen years and more, and I may say, without vanity, in some esteem and repute of a Scholar being judg'd after a solemn examen, capable to teach Divinity and Philosophy in the most renown'd Universities of *Europe*, which is the Jesuits way of Graduating their own men in Divinity. I taught in *France* Grammar, in *Lorrain* Mathematicks and Philosophy ; and being graduate in Physick,

sick, I practis'd it not unhappily, and intend to practise it hereafter, with certain hopes, God willing of the same good success.

3. All this while I studied more to the endowment of the intellectual faculty by humane Sciences, than to perfect my will by solid Vertues and Piety: To which I thought the School-divinity, as taught by Romanists, was not a small hinderance: The speculative part thereof, being apter to beget doubts of the truth of Christianism, than to clear those that men may, and do sometimes frame to themselves.

4. Take for instance, they call in question and dispute,

if the Incarnation of God was possible or not ; if God can lye or speak a falshood ; if it be within the reach of his Omnipotency to condemn an Innocent soul to the pains of everlasting flames; if his actual existency can be clearly proved, or pointed out by the light of a true demonstration, and the like: Such disputes I ever thought, *Otiosorum hominum negotia*, the affairs of those that have no affair to busie themselves withal ; I judg'd them fitter to destroy than edifie, to nourish and spread Errors, than to increase Piety and dispell Ignorance.

5. I studied several years the Jesuit School-divinity, and

and I may say in all truth, I reap'd no other benefit thereby, save only that in my own conceit, and perhaps in the opinion of some others, I became an able Disputant, about what? About Chymera's, beings of reason, as they speak, Impossibilities, and such like whimsical notions.

6. Yet in the midst of these hot disputes we had often for meer Punctilo's of honour, and a vain repute of some sharpness, I felt often the Spirit of God working interiourly my Conversion, by the secret voice of his Holy Inspiration, which caus'd me often to break out in these or the like words : *Quid hæc ad æternitatem?* What avails all

this for my last end and eternal felicity.

7. As to the practical part of the Romish School-divinity, relating to Cases of Conscience, the World knows how far from a true and sincere Conscience are those men commonly called Casuists : I read several of them most exactly, but was still displeas'd at their far fetch'd subtilties, invented for the avoiding of sin, but in reality are the true sources of all looseness and iniquity : Whatever crime your Conscience accuseth you of, consult but a Romish Casuist, and he will instantly endeavour your repose by some by-afs or another tending to his own interest ; and the settling

ling of your inward peace on some frivolous distinction, or groundless precision.

8. Such sort of men are great Patrons of self-love, and always prone to pronounce in favour of our corrupted nature against the light of their own Conscience and Reason, and under pretence of shunning severity, they fall into th' other extream, more dangerous, by yielding through an interests'd complacency to the perverse Inclinations of such as require their advice.

9. I had great intimacy with several Romanists perswaded of the lawfulness of such immoral Practices; their common by-word was, *Les*

gens d'esprit ne pechent point, that is witty men hardly ever sin: Their reason was, because sin, for instance Adultery, may be look'd on as a double fac'd medal; the one side whereof represents to us a natural act, th' other side an unjust act; their meaning is, if you consent to an Adultery as 'tis a natural act precisely, you shun by this precision the guilt of sin, since an act as natural is not sinful, but if you consent to it as 'tis an unjust act, you commit then a sin, which witty and sharp men, especially Casuists, I fancy will never do, knowing how to distinguish in the same individual act, *rationem actus, & rationem peccati,* the for-

formality of an act, from that of a sinful act.

10. So the dultish sort only, either incapable of, or not reflecting on such precisions, shall commit Adulteries, or any other sins for want of this prescinding faculty : Than which no greater illusion could I ever conceive, as to commit a sin were not more than enough to desire an ill thing, or what is necessarily tyed to an ill and unlawful object known to be such.

11. These and the like dangerous opinions which we shall discuss in another place, put often my thoughts to a stand, in order to examine what truth could be in

these ordinary reproaches made by *Protestants* against *Romanists*, accus'd commonly by them of disconformity with the Primitive Church of Novelties, Errors, and Superstitions.

12. Being thus perplex'd in mind and as *Hercules* in *Bivio*, uncertain what way to make choice of, I came to *Scotland*, where because of some repute I had got abroad of a Scholar, I was put instantly to work by the *Jesuits*; against *M. Menzeis*, Doctor and Professor of Divinity in *Aberdeen*. I wrote then in a short time a Treatise of some bulk against his way of defending the *Protestant Religion*, but neither to my own satis-

tis-

tisfaction, though several others seeing things but under one light, seem'd to be perswaded by my arguments, nor to the satisfaction of most *Romanists*, who thought and said my Doctrine in some material points was not unlike, or the same with that of *Protestants*.

13. After a stay of about two years in *Scotland*, after an accurate parallel of Protestantancy and Popery, and a scrupulous scrutiny of the most material grounds they both stand on, I came to *London* as to a safe Sanctuary, where I might serve God in all freedom and security.

14. The extream kindness of the *Londoners* to all distress'd Persons, and their late unparallelable Charity to the Persecuted Brethren of the *French* Nation, could not but inspire me with high sentiments of their Piety and Religion.

15. I must confess here ingenuously, that the *English* Nation, exceeded not only formerly their Neighbours in Warlike Exploits, and would yet, if times and occasion put them to it, but were ever, and are still far beyond them all in beneficency and works of Charity, the genuine Characters of Divine Faith and true Christianity influenc'd no doubt by the example

ple

ple of our most wise and most Gracious Sovereign, who as he defends and con-serves by all imaginable means the *Protestant Religion*, so favours all such with his Royal Protection and Friendship, that conform to it, by renouncing their Errors and Popery.

16. I foresee this change of mine, how well grounded so-ever, will stir up against me.
 1. My former Brethren, the Jesuits. 2. My nearest Relations, who are for the most part, and ever were Zealous Romanists: I doubt not nevertheless but they shall put a favourable construction on what I have done; provided
 1. They condemn me not,
incog-

incognitâ causâ, unheard, and
 2. Suspend their censure till
 after an impartial, and intire
 perusal of this present Trea-
 tise, all preoccupation Mo-
 ther of error laid aside.

17. They cannot say that
 any other motive but that of
 saving my Soul in the securest
 way, caus'd me to withdraw
 from them, and side with
Protestants: They know I
 was in a Condition amongst
 them to want for nothing,
 being supplied with necessa-
 ries sufficiently; but now I
 must rely on Gods Provi-
 dence and my own Industry.
 Yet this I am not troubled at,
 since Christ has said, Search
 first after the Kingdom of
 Heaven, and then all other
 things

things ye stand in need of, shall be added unto you: Since he can neither deceive nor be deceiv'd, may we either think or say without Blasphemy, he will disappoint such as have setled all their hopes in his infallible promises; but to shun Prolixity, I come to the main point I aim at, which is to give to the publick an infallible method, not written of for ought I know by any other, to reduce Romanists to Conformity with the Reform'd Churches: By the same means I shall lay open to the World on what grounds I have forsaken Popery and embrac'd Protestantcy.

18. This method to be such as 'tis design'd, shall be

1. Plain, that every one may understand it.
2. Peaceable, that the will may be gain'd, and by it the understanding sweetly conquer'd.
3. Short, that it may be proportionable to the leisure of the most busied, and none through Prolixity loth to read it: All this I hope I shall perform to the satisfaction of *Protestants* and Conviction of *Romanists*, if I make out with the clearness of a Noon Sun-shine:

1. That *Protestants* may be saved.

2. That they may be saved more easily, and with greater security than those of the Romish persuasion.

19. The

19. The first of these Principles proved, will cause Romanists to look upon *Protestants* with a brotherly Love and Charity; the second once establish'd, will force them sweetly but irresistably to side with them, as to matters of Religion and Divine Worship; since they are perswaded in a business of such a weighty moment, as is that of our Everlasting Happiness: *Tutius semper est eligendum*, the safest must still be preferred before what is less secure.

20. This Treatise shall contain three short Articles; in the two first, I shall prove evidently to all Impartial Readers, the forementioned truths;

truths; in the last we shall raise such inferences as flow naturally from these two foregoing Principles.

ARTIC.

ARTICLE I.

PRINCIPLE I.

That Protestants may be saved.

SECT. I.

I. **N**othing makes *Romanists* more averse from *Protestants*, than this groundless persuasion of theirs, that *Protestants* cannot be saved, this is the sole cause of their obstinacy in Popery; the
true

true source of their immortal hatred against us, and the very root of these extream Rigors they have practis'd against *Protestants*, where-ever they happen'd to be absolute Masters : This pitiful mistake wherein I liv'd several years, was as a veil before my eyes, hindering me to see the truth, which now by the Grace of God I see clearly.

2. Because this Principle is of great moment for the Conversion of *Romanists*, I shall prove it to perswasion in two different ways.

1. Positively, by positive and evincing Reasons.

2. Negatively, by shewing there can be no let or hinderance of Salvation ,
to

to such as profess *Protestancy*.

3. I can imagine but two things necessary to Salvation, or the attaining of Eternal Felicity.

The First is to live conformably to the Law of God, because he is what he is, our Sovereign Lord and Master.

The Second is, to live conformably to the lawful Commands of such men as have their Authority deriv'd from him, as the first Lawgiver; such are Kings, Magistrates, Princes, and all Superiors whatsoever, in their respective degrees of Superiority, and Authority.

4. As

4. As to the first point, what people in the World professeth a more sincere allegiance to God, or a more scrupulous observance of his Holy Law, than the Reformed Churches do? So as of old it was said, *Notus in judæâ Deus*, that God was known particularly to the Jews, we may say in all truth of them; there is no where such a general knowledge, whether practical, or speculative of his Holy Law, as amongst *Protestants*; they read it in their Churches, they interpret it in their Pulpits, they peruse it in their Families, they make it the Subject of their private Meditations, of their more serious Conversations:

The

The Star they guide themselves by through the stormy Sea of this World is no other but Gods Infallible written Word, whereunto they conform; or which is all one for my intent, they ought by their Principles, to conform their Thoughts, Words, and all their Actions: Is it than consistent with reason, to exclude from a capacity of Eternal Felicity, such as not relying upon uncertain Traditions, regulate all their steps by the rule of God's Infallible Word? Let us lay aside our own particular fancies, and renounce our too partial and preoccupied Judgments, and we shall instantly pronounce in their favour

your not a little discontent, and amaz'd at our former uncharity and gross mistakes.

5. Their Doctrine relating to our allegiance due to all Superiors, is so wholesome and peaceable, that I can imagine none more subservient to the interest of Princes; they are infinitely averse, and with all reason from that irrational opinion of most *Romanist Divines*; who teach the Pope of *Rome* has power to Depose Princes, when it pleaseth him to fancy they are Hereticks: Whether they give a direct authority to the Pope over Kings, which is no less than to enslave all Crown'd Heads to the Bishop

shop of *Rome*, or an indirect one, only to depose Princes in certain Junctures, 'tis clear they take from *Cæsar* what is *Cæsar's*, that independency on all earthly power, God has allowed him here on Earth. Princes are accountable to the King of Kings for all their actions, and we to them, if we forget so far our duty, as to refuse them due allegiance. This Doctrine being confess'd and profess'd by all true *Protestants*, can we either think or say they are *Reprobates*, or not in the way to Heav'n?

6. To banish such an unchristian fancy far from your thoughts, remember what is said in Scripture, God illuminates

minates all men, *illuminat omnem hominem*, for what end? For no other but that by this light they may discover the way to their last end; if all men be thus illuminated, are *Protestants* excepted? Are they not men, and most of them great examples of vertue and piety?

7. I wonder'd often to hear *Romanists* grant such as shall never hear of Christ and his Gospel, were nevertheless in a capacity to save their Souls, provided they lived conformably to the dictates of right reason: I was amaz'd I say, to hear them confess this, and so inconsequentially deny the same to *Protestants*; but what can we expect from pre-
occu-

occupied *judgments*, but in just Censures, uncharitable Reflexions, and illegal Conclusions?

8. I desire them here to consider that no people in the World hath higher sentiments of God, and lower of themselves, than those of the Reform'd Churches: Which are confessedly the best Dispositions can be imagin'd, to render us capable of that end we were created for. They neither rely on the Mediation and Merits of Saints, nor on their own good works, they ground all their hopes of Salvation on the precious blood of Christ, shed for us upon the Altar of the Cross, they exalt highly by all their principles, Gods

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infi-

infinite goodness and mercy ever acknowledging when they have done all they can, they are but useless Servants, and that all their sufficiency floweth from that overflowing Fountain of all power, goodness, and mercy.

9. And if without faith 'tis impossible to please God, we have all reason to say they are most acceptable to his eyes, since they show by their works their Faith is a saving and living Faith. Who ever hath convers'd with them more intimately, and will speak impartially what he thinks of their Life and Conversation, shall easily assent to this, and confess ingenuously they are the best representa-

sentatives of the Primitive Christians, so real you shall find them in their intentions, so sincere in their words, and upright in all their procedures .

10. How than can *Romanists* without the guilt of an extream uncharity, impose so pitifully upon the ignorant sort, causing them to believe on their bare word and authority, without the least rational inducement imaginable, that no *Protestants* are Elects, that to be a Reprobate and a *Protestant*, is one and the same thing? Are they God's Counsellors? Advise they he with them who is to be saved, and who not? If a rash judgment be a sin, as undoub-

doubtedly 'tis, they are not innocent, when rashly and upon groundless grounds, they condemn so unmercifully their Neighbours, who are as good, if not better than themselves.

11. Believe they not all the Fundamental points, whatever is contain'd in the Creeds and Scripture? And if acts of Divine Love have been ever thought necessary, and sufficient means to the attaining of our last end; where shall we find a greater aptitude, and better dispositions to such acts, than amongst Protestants?

12. *As Ignoti nulla cupido,*
There is no Love without Knowledge: The more know-
ledge

ledge we have of, and the greater perfections we discover in the object we tye our hearts to, our love is ordinarily so much the more ardent. The Reformed Churches have this advantage above all others: They read the Scriptures, and command them to be read by all their Subjects; whereby they attain to a high knowledge of Gods infinite Power, Clemency, Wisdom, Mercy, and his other attributes: Their understanding thus enlightened, their will takes easily fire, and burns with a flame of true Divine Love: The Origine whereof, is no other but that not ordinary knowledge of God they attain to

by reading often and meditating frequently his infallible Word: Which I know certainly to be wanting amongst *Romanists*, because of their slight performance, or rather intire neglect of such a Christian duty.

13. Out of these foregoing reflexions the Charitable and Impartial Reader may easily gather, they go streight on their Journey, and not one step out of the way, who forsaking *Popery* imbrace *Protestancy*; and if any *Romanist* doubt yet of this self-evident truth, I shall be at the pains to convince him once more, by an argument beyond the reach either of a rational answer or flat denyal, it runs thus, *ad hominem*. 14.

14. The learnedest sort of *Romanists* teach it lawful and secure in Conscience to square our actions by the rule of a probable opinion, yea the Jesuits hold it safe, to stand to that opinion which is less sure, and participates less of probability than the opposite, though in reality surer and more probable; their reason is, because a man so doing, acts prudently, and consequently sins not.

15. But the main and material point, is to know what is understood by a probable opinion: The *Romanists* generally, and I think none can deny it, mean by a probable opinion, that which learned and pious men hold and follow:

low : For if they be pious, godliness and piety will be their sole aim in all their practices ; if learned, they will believe nothing without sufficient grounds and good reason ; this definition of a probable opinion laid as a confess'd Principle and immoveable ground-stone, I build thereon this ensuing, clear, and short Discourse.

16. Who-ever follows a probable opinion, sins not, does neither rashly, nor imprudently, but who holds that *Protestants* may be saved, follows a probable opinion, *ergo*, he sins not, he neither does rashly nor imprudently in so doing. The second proposition I prove, *argumento*

mento ad hominem, invincibly thus, that opinion is probable which is believed, and defended by learned and pious men, that *Protestants* may be saved, 'tis believ'd and defended by learned and pious men, *ergo* 'tis a probable opinion, and by a necessary inference may be followed and believ'd without the least appearance either of sin, rashness, or imprudence.

17. The middle proposition is not unlike to a self-evident principle, and on this account can be denyed by none as have their Wits about them, or so much of common sense and understanding as to see through
the

the terms 'tis enounc'd in:
Dare they say *Protestants*
are neither pious, nor lear-
ned ?

*Auditum admissi risum tene-
atis amici.*

I am perswaded they will be
asham'd of such a childish and
groundless answer: For if
they be neither pious nor
learned, they must then both
be wicked and ignorant, I
know no middle, this must
be their inference, which is so
pitiful that the meer recital
of such an extravagancy is a
full and intire refutation
thereof, *enarrasse, refutasse
est.*

18. But sure I am, they will grant willingly their own Divines to be both pious and learned men, yet they teach, and I was taught by them, that all *Protestants* are not *Reprobates*: To understand this 'tis observable they distinguish two sorts of *Protestants*, the one they call material, and th' other we may call for distinction's sake, formal. The *Material Protestants* are bred up in an invincible ignorance of what the *Romanists* think necessary to Salvation, as the belief of Transubstantiation, of Purgatory, and the like: In an Ignorance, I say, invincible, because living in the midst of *Protestants*, they are supposed

sed to want all opportunity of instruction, and so must rely on their Pastors authority: To these they extend their charity, and grant they may be saved; they are not so merciful to th' others, who live they say in a vincible ignorance of Catholick truths, which they may easily dispel and overcome, but will not through wilfulness and obstinacy.

19. But to such also I shall cause them to be favourable, and by a parity of reason, *paritate rationis*, force them to impart, will they, nill, they a part of their Charity: Because generals produce not such a clear knowledge as particulars do, I shall take
this

this particular, the Transubstantiation, for instance: The belief of this mystery, sayes the *Romanist*, is necessary to Salvation, yet confesseth a *Material Protestant* may be saved without it, because he liveth in an invincible ignorance, occasion'd by his want of opportunity to be instructed: But the *Formal Protestant* upon another account liveth likewise in an invincible ignorance of this necessity, because the Reasons he is convinc'd by are stronger in his opinion than yours, and so you shall never influence him by your arguments to believe, acknowledge, or understand the contrary; what then the
 want

want of instruction or understanding worketh in the Material *Protestants*, this wit effectuates in those whom for method's sake we have called formal : If those, I mean the former, be guiltless, because hearing nothing of Transubstantiation, they cannot assent to the existency thereof, these are not to be blamed, for though they hear of such a mystery, yet their understanding is conquer'd by lights destructive to it, which discovering to them clearly the truth of this Negative, *there is no Transubstantiation*, remove far from their intellectual faculty, the knowledge of this Positive, *there is a Transubstantiation*.

20. I say then they are not to be blam'd, because 'tis not in the power of the will to force upon our understanding the belief of a known falshood, or of what appears to us evidently false; to conclude as I have begun, *paritate rationis*, by a parity of reason, since the *Romanists*, because of the foresaid invincible ignorance, grant to some *Protestants* a capacity of being saved, unless they be-lye themselves, they will not refuse the same to those in whom we meet with a like invincible ignorance, yea more and harder to be overcome, as may appear by what I have said.

21. I foresee the *Romanist* may reply, that those *Protestants* he hath no charity for, are such as resist the known truth, for instance, they are perswaded the arguments in favour of Transubstantiation are better grounded than these, they oppose against it: So they shall not be saved through their own misbelief, wilfulness, and obstinacy in error: To which I make this short and satisfactory answer, that such men are not true *Protestants* of whom only we speak, but rather abominable *Hypocrites* professing outwardly a Doctrine they judge in their hearts false and erroneous. This Objection than vanisheth,

eth, as being *de subiecto non supponente*, grounded on a false supposition.

SECT. II.

I. **I** Have proved positively, and I think to persuasion, if preoccupation be laid aside, the undeniable truth of my first Principle, that *Protestants* may be saved: For the Readers intire satisfaction, I shall make out the same in a Negative way, by showing to all not willfully blind, there can be no let or hinderance to their Salvation; what-ever *Romanists* can instance as inconsistent

sistent with their attaining to eternal happiness, may be reduc'd either to Schism or Heresie, and that either jointly or severally: After an impartial scrutiny of their best grounds of such foul aspersions, I found them all to be groundless, unwarrantable, and insufficient.

2. Schism is a separation from the true Church of God, *Protestants* are not separated from the true Church of God, *ergo*, they are not guilty of Schism, they are not Schismatics: All generally confess the Christians of the three first Centuries, to have been the constituent Members of Christ's true Church; from these the *Protestants* are not
separa-

separated either in beliefs
manners, or Ecclesiastical Dis-
cipline, this I could prove to
the conviction of the most
obstinate, had it not been
perform'd abundantly, and
more than once by others :
The same cannot be said of
the *Romanists*, since they
have admitted of many no-
velties never heard of in these
Primitive times, such are in
invocation of Saints, adora-
tion of the consecrated Wa-
fer, Image-worship, Popes
Supremacy, &c. So if they
stand to the same Fundamen-
tals with the Church in her
purest age, 'tis certain they
have added thereunto, and
are guilty of divers Super-
structures which the *Prote-*
stants

stants were never, and cannot be accus'd of: But 'tis not so much my design in this place to charge *Romanists*, as to justify *Protestants*, and those who embrace Protestantcy.

3. They will perhaps say we are Schismaticks, because separated from the Church of *Rome*: But

1. The Church of *Rome* is a particular one, and a member only of the Universal Church.

2. As it now stands, 'tis not our rule, but that undoubted of Christian Church in the Primitive times without spot or blemish.

3. This

3. This asperſion of Schiſm ſmites rather themſelves ; For thoſe only we call Schiſmaticks who are guilty of diviſion and breach of unity, by doing that which is the true cauſe thereof : That the meaneſt capacities may underſtand this, let them take notice of what follows: If my body were united or cloſely joining to yours, would ye not be judg'd the true cauſe of our ſeparation, if ye put any thing between you and me hindring this union? ſo you are the true Separatiſt, not I, becauſe you have thruſt me from you by that middle Obſtacle you have plac'd betwixt us both, which unleſs firſt removed, I
can-

cannot unite my body to yours again.

4. This is downright our present case if well understood : The *Protestants* and *Romanists* were once two united bodies in the pure age of the Church, in these happy times when Superstition had not as yet gain'd a foot of ground amongst Christians, they were one People, *anima una cor unum*, one Soul, and one Heart : But at length the *Romanists* set up betwixt us and them, *murum aheneum*, an invincible obstacle, a heap of errors destructive both to union and unity, so if we be separated now, who were formerly united, 'tis evidently by their fault we could

not persevere in union with them because of this middle wall that did separate us, let them throw it down as they are oblig'd in conscience to do, and we shall draw up together and joyn them close again: Since then they gave a just occasion, yea, and are the true causes of this separation, they are the Separatists and true Schismatics, not we.

5. As for Heresie let *Romanists* say what they please, it can't with the least appearance of truth be laid to our charge: He is not guilty of that crime, who defends obstinately any opinion whatsoever, else all School-men

D and

and Divines standing stifiy to their own fancys in Doctrinal points, would be reckon'd Hereticks: Such be those only who deny flatly and with obstinacy Divine Truths or Articles of Faith, which cannot be impos'd upon *Protestants* without injustice, ignorance, and calumny.

6. They deny indeed General Councils to be infallible in their decisions, but their infallibility is no Article of Faith, else *Austin* was a Heretick; asserting,

Tom. 6. l. 2. “ General Councils
con. Donat. “ gathered out of
 “ all the Christian World,
 “ are often corrected, the
 “ former by the latter; correction
 rection

rection of a Council undoubtedly supposeth a precedent error and a Council to be errable, as every one understands that knows any thing : On the same account he speaks after this manner to *Maximian*, an *Arian* Bishop.

“ Neither ought *Anst. con.*
 “ I to instance the *Maxim. l. 3.*
 “ Council of *Nice*, *c. 4.*
 “ nor thou the Council of
 “ *Arimene*; to take advantage thereby, for neither I am bound by the authority of this nor thou of that; set matter with matter, cause with cause, reason with reason, try the matter by the authority of Divine Scriptures.

7. An Article of Faith must either be clearly contain'd in Scripture, or according to the *Romanists*, declared expressly by some of their General Councils: But that General Councils are infallible in their Decisions, is neither contain'd clearly in Scriptures, let them tell us in what Part, Book, Chapter, Verse, nor is it determin'd in any of the eighteen General Councils, they acknowledge as the rules of their Faith; none can be instanc'd, where this hath been decided: Upon what grounds then hold they this as a Divine Truth, which is nothing else but a fanciful opinion hindering them to follow *Austin's* advice, to set
 matter

matter with matter, cause with cause, reason with reason, to try the matter by the authority of Divine Scriptures.

8. The general Councils are so far from pretending to be infallible Judges of controversial Debates, that in a set form.

*De ordin.
Cele. con.*

of Prayer appointed to be said after every Council, they pray that God would spare their ignorance, and pardon their errors: and if they curse and anathematize such as reject their decisions, this argues not they arrogate to themselves any infallibility in deciding, for the same is the practice of Provincial and Particular Councils, who

neither pretend to be, nor are look'd upon by the *Romanists* as infallible Judges.

9. This undeniable truth is of greater moment than perhaps it appears to be of at first: For if the General Councils be not infallible when they decide in matters of Faith, none of their decisions can be holden by *Romanists* as divine and reveal'd truths, unless they be evidently conformable to God's written Word: Wherefore receive they not the definitions of a private man as reveal'd Oracles? the reason is, because they know he is fallible and lyable to error: Now the same being the condition and fate of General Councils, they

they must of necessity confefs, they impose no obligation upon us to believe their decisions as Articles of Divine Faith: Who then rejects as *Protestants* do Transubstantiation, Invocation of Saints, Image-worship, Power of *Popes* to depose Princes, Prayer for the dead, and all other points we yield not to the *Romanists*, deny's only what is asserted by errable Councils, and consequently no Articles of Divine Faith, we are therefore notoriously calumniated, when on this account we are called by *Papists* obstinate in error and Hereticks.

10. But how sayes the *Romanist*? shall we resolve our

D. 4. doubts

doubts in matters of Faith, if we acknowledge not the definitions of General Councils as divine and infallible Oracles? You was told before by *S. Austin* how to behave in this case : I repeat his words, set matter with matter, sayes he, cause with cause, reason with reason, try the matter by the authority of Divine Scriptures, never yet corrupted in material points, nor ever shall by Gods especial and necessary Providence over his Church ; if then you read his Infallible Word with true humility and a sincere desire of your own spiritual profit, he will open your understanding , resolve your scruples, give repose to your
 consci-

conscience, and as great insight in his Word as he knows to be convenient for your spiritual interest.

II. This method is better and securer than that of the *Romanists*; what-ever is decided by a lawful general Council, is to them an Article of Faith, a reveal'd truth, a divine Oracle, but such Councils they hold none to be, unless the Members thereof have been really baptiz'd, which they can never be certain of, because this depends on the uncertain intentions of those who Baptiz'd them: For they generally teach besides the pronounciation of the words, *I Baptize thee in the Name of the Father, &c.* The

Ministers intention to confer the Sacrament, is absolutely necessary, so if it be wanting, as easily it may, the Child is not Baptiz'd. On the same account they are not certain if their Popes be Priests, because perhaps the Bishop who ordain'd them, had no such intention when he pronounced the set form of ordination: Of this I shall say a word again in another place.

12. But if the general Councils be not infallible, what mean the Scriptures, by asserting, The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Church, the Church is the pillar and ground of truth? To this I answer, There is nothing here as is evident relating

lating to that pretended infallible decisive faculty of General Councils: The first Proposition signifieth only the true Church shall have an existency and being to the end of the World, maugre the opposition of Tyrants, Persecutors, and all her Enemies, though it may fall out she be not always visible in any Assembly or Congregation: As it happen'd to the Primitive Church at *Jerusalem*, when all her Members were scattered abroad throughout the Regions of *Judæa* and *Samaria*; as it happen'd when *Acts 8. 1.* Christ was smitten, and all the rest were hid, as it happen'd in *Elias* his time, who

who thought he was left alone, not knowing where th' other seaven thousand true Worshippers of God were; as it happen'd during the Persecution of the *Roman* Emperors, and lately before the General Reformation of the Christian World, yet the Gates of Hell prevail'd not against the Church because she was ever existent, though not visible as now to the World: Her Meetings and Assemblys being of necessity in that juncture of affairs very secret and unknown to her Enemies. She is said to be the pillar and ground of truth, by reason of Gods especial Providence over her Children, never suffering them

them all to fail and err, but still stirring up some or several in opposition to Superstition, Idolatry and Errors.

ARTIC.

ARTICLE II.

PRINCIPLE II.

That Protestants may be saved more easily, and with greater security, than Romanists.

I Hope the foregoing Discourse will be an occasion of moderation to the most severe *Romanists*, who reflecting impartially on their former mistakes, rash Judgments, and preoccupied opinions, will convert their former zeal, or rather fury
against

against *Protestants*, into Brotherly Love and Charity. I say more, if they will be at the pains to consider a moment or two, and seriously, the Contents of this second Article; they shall, I doubt not, let go the uncertain, take what is surest, and embrace *Protestancy*, as the easiest and safest way to our Eternal Happiness, since by the grace of God it wants these lets and impediments to be met with in the Profession of Popery: To run over some of them, with order and method, we shall take notice.

I. Of their Faith and Doctrine.

2. Of

2. Of their Divine Worship and Ecclesiastical Discipline.

SECT. I.

Their Faith and Doctrine.

I. **T**Heir Faith is so blind, that I have heard many of them say, if a General Council had defin'd white to be black, they would believe it, whereby you see they are disposed to admit of any error, if it be authoriz'd by a General Council, though the infallibility thereof be no point of their Faith, as I have proved
 evi-

evidently in the foregoing Article.

2. They believe Baptism absolutely necessary to Salvation, and none a true and real one, if the Minister when he pronounceth the words intends not to Baptize, which no doubt happens frequently, since his intention may be easily diverted to his other designs and affairs: Let all the World judge if people thus principled can enjoy a true repose of mind or peace of Conscience, the only foretast we have in this life, of that to come: For how can they know assuredly, whether the Minister or Priest really intended to Baptize them or not, and so they may doubt
if

if they be Christians? for such they grant none is to be accounted without true Baptism; and of this they can have no certainty, because they are still uncertain of the Ministers intention, judg'd by them so necessary to the validity of this Sacrament, that if he intended only the meer pronounciation of the words, I Baptize thee in the name of the Father, &c. The Baptism could be no more a true one than a bare, frivolous, and insignificant Ceremony; what trouble then and turmoil of Spirit they must needs perpetually wrestle with, while *Protestants* as to this point enjoy a perfect Tranquility, holding
 Bap-

Baptism independent on the Ministers good or ill will, malice or intention, provided he pronounce seriously the words, and set form of Baptism, which we cannot be but sure of.

3. I was once eye-witness to the cruel torture of Conscience, a *Romanist* suffered upon a doubt of his Baptism, occasion'd by this *Romish* Doctrine: We were in the same Ship together upon Sea, press'd by a furious Storm to think on what was our only concern in that conjuncture: In the mean time this Gentleman showing by his melancholy looks the inward distemper of his Soul; cries aloud, as if he had been beside

side

side himself, *he fear'd to be damn'd*: I question'd him on what grounds he spoke so rashly; because, said he, I know not whether I be Baptiz'd or not; I doubt if the Priest had any such intention when he pronounc'd the words commonly used in Baptism; I told him whatever I thought fittest to convince his understanding and quiet his Conscience, but could not prevail, because he knew the Council of *Trent* teacheth the Ministers intention to be absolutely necessary to the existency of Baptism.

4. On the same grounds they may doubt if their Priests can absolve, and be truly
Priests,

Priests, because in their persuasion they are no Priests without the intention of the Bishop that ordain'd them, which perhaps he had not when he utter'd the set form of Ordination. This minds me of a Bishop lately deceas'd in *France*, who confess'd at his last hour he had ordain'd many, but ever without intention to ordain any: I was intimately acquainted with one ordain'd by the same Prelate, and I am fully perswaded if he were advertis'd of this last confession of his, he would scruple to continue a moment in the function of Priesthood.

5. Who can relish, if he hath any sentiment of true Piety, what they teach of their Purgatory and purging fires. This Doctrine flatters sinners in their imperfections, causeth them to live more loosely than otherwise they would do, to make little scruple of these sins they call venial, and never eternally punish'd : On this account they are not so apprehensive of these Everlasting Torments we should ever remember of, when we are sollicitated to sin, if no higher motive can withdraw us from it : Hell I say enters not so deeply into their thoughts because they rely on this third place : And the worst of them all after an ab-
 solu-

solution got from a Priest, hopes to go to Heaven, if not streight, at least a little about by Purgatory: The *Protestants* who believe no middle place after death, out of Heaven or Hell, walk more cautiously, fear more God's dreadful but just Judgments, certain if they dye in the Lord, they shall rest from their labours, if in sin they shall be liable to his wrath for ever.

6. The Scripture is the true Spiritual book we should still have in our hands.

Nocturnâ versare manu versare diurnâ.

Here we are to gather that
Spiri-

Spiritual *Manna* to nourish not our Bodies but our Souls, while we travel through the Wilderness of this wild World. These sacred Writings are capable to make us wise unto Salvation ; search the Scriptures saith *S. John*, for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life : Yet the *Romanists* deprive the people of this Spiritual Food, forbidding them severely to read the Holy Scriptures, as if they were more hurtful than profitable ; hence 'tis they live in a deep ignorance of all true Christian Duty, in indifference, and lukewarmness, without relish of heavenly things, without true devotion, which is never more stirred

red

red up, than when we hear God speaking in the secret of our hearts by the Divine Oracles of his Holy Word.

7. They cause the People to contemn or at least to have less veneration for Divine Scriptures, by teaching they contain not all things necessary to Salvation, they are obscure, they are imperfect. They seem sometimes to question their Divine Original, when they ask how we are sure they are inspir'd by the Holy Ghost; as if that were not known to say no more by the Air, Majesty, and Simplicity of expression, proper to God only, as we know the Kings Letters and Commands to his Subjects by

his Seal and proper expressions, none but the King uttering himself after that manner: So the Holy Scriptures being as God's Patents and Letters to us, we need not enquire from whom they are, let us only disclose them, and we shall instantly know their Divine Original, *quasi dei sigillo*, as by God's own Seal and Characters proper to him only, without having recourse to the pretended infallible decisions of General Councils, as *Romanists* do, who must run back to the Scriptures again to prove these decisions infallible, and so, *in circuitu ambulans*, they turn round in a circle without advancing one step. But 'tis
not

not so much my design to dispute and quarrel with the *Romanists*, as to go on peaceably and in the Spirit of Christian Charity, pointing out as with the finger, the great Obstacles to perfection they meet with, by following blindly the Maxims of Popery: I add only here their Prayers in an unknown Tongue unfruitful as *S. Paul* saith, to the understanding, is not a small let to Piety and Devotion; what Spiritual Consolation can the ignorant sort reap at Mass, or as they call it, Divine Service, by hearing the Priest praying they know not what? unless they hold against common sense and reason, that igno-

rance is the Mother of Piety and Devotion.

8. Their Doctrine of Transubstantiation, is on several accounts dangerous and ensnaring.

First, It destroys all evidence grounded on the experimental knowledge of our senses, and makes void the proof Christ made use of to his Apostles, in aim *Luk. 24.32.* to convince them he was not a Spirit; *Handle me, sayes he, and see, for a spirit hath not Flesh and Bones as ye see me have,* which can be no conviction to *Romanists*, who both tast, handle, and see bread in the *Eucharist*; if they will trust their own senses as our Saviour in

a not unlike case desir'd his Disciples to trust to theirs, yet deny flatly what they see, tast, and handle, to be Bread, against their own and the experience of all men not blind of both eyes: Our Saviour's Proof, I say, that he was not a Spirit, shall never influence a *Papist* to Conviction, for though the Apostles could both see and handle our Saviour's Body, nevertheless 'tis no necessary inference by their Doctrine of Transubstantiation, that Christ's Body was there ; may they not say the Apostles could touch, handle, and see the appearance only thereof , as they handle, and see the accidents of Bread, and not really

Bread in the *Eucharist* in their opinion of this Sacrament, which taketh quite away the force of Christ's argüment grounded on the meer Testimony of our senses and favours, the *Marcionists* denying he had ever a true and real body?

I shall say yet something more surprizing, but no less true than what I have said before. This Doctrine of Transubstantiation. 1. Establisheth that old and odd fancy of some doting Philosophers, who doubted of all things how evident soever. 2. 'Tis evidently destructive to the whole body of Christian Religion: In order to prove *apodictically* these two Proposi-

positions, I must suppose a Third one, as a self-evident Principle, and whence they both flow as from their only source, *That our Senses in the Eucharist, are deceiv'd in and about their proper object* ; which I think can be denyed by no *Romanists*, since they confess, though they see all the appearances of true Bread, that nevertheless there is no such substance in the *Eucharist*, but the Body and Blood of Christ, under the veils of Bread and Wine : I see nothing, I tast nothing, I touch nothing in a Consecrated Wafer, but what my senses are sensible of in an unconsecrated one, but saith the *Romanist*, I must not stand

stand in this case to the judgment of my senses, what I see, touch, and taste, after the Consecration, is no more in reality Bread, what-ever the constant and experimental knowledge of our Senses teach us to the contrary; they will grant then I hope they are deceiv'd, and mistake their own proper object; but perhaps because they foresee the dangerous consequence of such a Concession, some will be apt to run to a School-distinction, in aim to defend with a show of reason this self-evident falshood, that our Senses in the case here handled are not deceived as to their proper Object: They may distinguish, I
fancy,

fancy, two sort of Objects, a Mediate one, and another Immediate, the Immediate one is, the colour, shape, quantity, and other accidents or appearances of Bread, the Mediate one is the substance it self; our Senses, say they, mistake not the former, because the accidents are the same both before and after the Consecration, but sure I am, they mistake the latter, it being now by their Principles invisibly changed into the Body of Christ: This distinction then cannot serve their turn. Let them torture their discursive faculty never so much, they shall never be able to prove that our Senses are not truly deceiv'd, re-

presenting to us as Bread, what really, if we believe the *Romanists*, is not Bread. I come now to the Conclusions springing naturally from this granted Principle: If I mind to play the *Pyrrhonian*, and doubt of every thing I have from the *Romish* Transubstantiation, a ground whereon to build this extravagancy; whither-soever I direct my sight, I can ascertain you of nothing that my eye sees: I enter into a Garden, and there I behold here Lillies, and there Roses, I smell them, I touch them, and yet I may question the truth of this; and doubt if I see any such thing, what if the red of the Roses and the white of the

the

the Lillies be now by an Eucharistick-like Miracle the covertures of some other substances that are neither Roses nor Lillies; so perhaps 'tis not a Rose that I smell, a Lilly that I see, Fire that I feel, an Apple that I tast, a Trumpet that I hear, but some other substances in their shape, and cloath'd with their Garments: As 'tis not Bread that I see in the *Eucharist*, but another substance, to wit Christ's Body and Blood under the accidental parts of Bread and Wine; what do we know but the whole visible Mass of this World, and all the Objects of our Senses are nothing else but meer accidents and Superficial Re-
pre-

presentations of things that perhaps were and now have no foundation in being, or never were, but have ever been supplied by God's infinite power? Thus the *Pyrrhonian* Triumphs upon the same ground whereon the *Romanist* settles that strange Doctrine of Transubstantiation, while the whole Body of Christian Religion is as it were a flote and carried too and fro by the wind of this uncertain Doctrine. For if our Senses may mistake their own proper object, as confessedly the *Romanist* sayes they do in the *Eucharist*, our Faith is nothing else but fancy and uncertainty: Comes it not by hearing? *Fides ex auditu?*

ditu? if than one sense may be deceiv'd, why may not likewise the other? What I see in the *Eucharist* is not Bread; though it appears to be such, perhaps what I hear is not the true Word of God, though it shine with all the Characters thereof: In fine, since our Senses are capable of an error relating to their proper object, an eye-witness now can be no witness at all, or at least no Conviction: To what purpose then did our Saviour show himself after his Resurrection so often, and to so many in the day of his glorious Ascension? In *promptu causa est*, the Answer is at hand, to no purpose, if our Senses could mistake
their

their proper object, and what so many eye-witnesses saw and judg'd to be Christ, could have been his meer shape and figure, as the *Marcionist* pretends, with a clear advantage over and from the *Romanists* whose Doctrine he may easily make use of in defence of his error and Heresie. To conclude, if what appears to the eyes of all men to be Bread, is no such thing, what has been sounded in the ears of all the World, from Father to Son as a truth may prove a falshood? Our ears being no less apt to be impos'd upon than our eyes. Which looks like a mortal blow to all tradition of equal authority with Divine Scriptures,

tures, and I discover not yet how the *Romanist* can shun it: For since he grants we may all, and have been from the Cradle of the Church, mistaken in what we see, may not we likewise be deceiv'd in what we have heard from our Fathers, and they in what they have heard from their Fore-runners, &c. And the rather that an ear-witness is not so much to be credited as he that has seen: You judge by this discourse, what extreams these are forc'd into, who deny on so slight grounds the greatest and most sensible evidence, which is that of our senses: But Christ's Word, says the *Romanist*, is my security; he assures

fures us the Bread is chang'd
 into his body, I enquire no
 more: Who speaks so for-
 gets, or knows not what is
 said elsewhere, *litera occidit*,
 the letter killeth, and the
 literal Sense is an occasion to
 several of gross errors and pi-
 tiful mistakes: Christ is cal-
 led a Door, a Rock, a Wine
 Tree, a Lyon, &c. We
 would be look'd upon as be-
 sides our selves if we assent-
 ed to all this, as interpreted
 in the literal sence, and ac-
 cording to the bare sound of
 the words: For as the lite-
 ral sence of such and the like
 expressions, involves not only
 obvious implicancys and ma-
 nifest absurdities, but more-
 over was constantly contra-
 dicted

dicted by the experimental knowledge of such as were so happy as to see Christ, even so in our case, these words, *this is my Body*, if understood conformably to the mute Letter, both represent to our mind a World of illegal; absur'd, and irrational inferences, and are besides contradicted through all Ages by the constant experience of all seeing and feeling men: Let no Man nevertheless imagine we ground our mysteries on the Testimony of our Senses; we only say nothing can be suppos'd as a mystery that is point blank against the evidence of sense and infallible experience, which cannot be retorted

ed

ed against the mystery of the Trinity, for though we neither see it nor feel it, yet our Senses shew nothing to us evidently destructive to it, and on this account this mystery is not against but above the reach both of Sense and Reason.

Secondly, This Doctrine inclineth the meaner capacities to idolatry, and the sharper wits to Hypocrisie and Dissimulation: The common People, because incapable to distinguish the appearance of Bread they see, from the Body of Christ they see not, and being taught to adore him hidden thus under the veils of Bread and Wine, are apt to, and no doubt do

do frequently adore the accidents they see, which they call sometimes blasphemously, God, yea say commonly, when the Wafer is lifted up by the Priest in the midst of the Mass, *on leve Dieu*, God is lifted, their understanding finding no passage through the Consecrated Wafer to Christ's Body.

9. As for the sharper sort of *Romanists* when they reflect;

1. On what is said in Scripture, that the Heavens must receive *Act. 3. 22.* Christ until the times of restitution of all things.

2. That

2. That a Body can no more be without its due extension, for example, of five or six foot, than water without humidity, fire without heat, a stone without hardness.

3. That the Bread cannot be miraculously chang'd into Christ's Body, because all miracles are of necessity visible, as is clear by all those we ever heard or read of: But here the substance into which the Bread is converted, is not visible: This visibility nevertheless is necessary in a change really miraculous, as it appears by that of water into wine, of *Moses* Rod into a Serpent, &c.

4. That

4. That 'tis inconsistent with reason to say Christ's Body is at the same time in Heaven and Earth, yea, and in as many places as there be all the World over Consecrated Wafers: Who-ever understands these absurdities, will never, I am confident, believe a true Transubstantiation, though he profess otherwise outwardly through Hypocrisie and Dissimulation: The Trinity, I confess, and Hypostatical Union, or the Incarnation, are far beyond the reach of our reason, yet because they are not the Objects of our Senses, we believe them with less reluctancy, and more easily upon authority; but that which hath
ever

ever been, and still is evidently repugnant to the experimental knowledge of all our Senses, as the Transubstantiation confessedly is, can scarce ever be looked upon as a truth, by such as make use of their discerning faculty: The *Romanists* instance commonly these Words of Christ, *This is my Body*, as the ground of this Doctrine, which they say, must not be taken in a figurative sence, because they are Christ's last Will and Testament; and no man, neither ignorant nor malicious expresseth his last Will by Figures and Metaphors: But here lies their mistake, that these words, *This is my Body*, are a true
and

and real Testament, or *Christ's* Legacy to his Apostles : For he says not, I leave you my Body, which is the usual manner of uttering our selves in Testaments, but, *This is my Body.* 'Tis no Testament, than as they imagine, or at least not a proper one.

10. Their Doctrine relating to the mediation of the *Virgin Mary* and other Saints, withdraws them from rendering to Christ our only Redeemer due Honour and Glory: For, though there is no other Name under Heaven whereby we must be saved but that of Christ, yet many of them pretend to Eternal Happiness by the merits of the Saints and the *Virgin*

gin *Mary*, whom they joynt
 still with *Jesus* in their Visits
 to the Sick, either crying a-
 loud to them, or exhorting
 the sick to pronounce *Jesus*
Maria, as if they judg'd
 Christ's merits insufficient, or
 that some other Name, than
 that of Christ our Advocate,
 with the Father, could be a
 propitiation for our Sins;
 hence 'tis they extol so much
 their meritorious works, that
 we have reason to say, they
 ground thereon their best
 hopes of the other Life; at
 least 'tis certain, the simple
 undiscerning sort relys more
 on what they do than on
 what Christ did for them, I
 mean more upon their good
 works than on his infinite me-
 rits and mercys.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Their Divine Worship and Ecclesiastical Discipline.

I. **T**Heir manner of Divine Worship is not unlike that of the ancient Heathens, and on this account is far from the purity of the Primitive Church : They adore God in Pictures and Images, as he was adored by the Heathens in the Sun, Moon, and other less noble Creatures, or rather to speak in their own terms, they worship those Images as representations of that invisible

F ble

ble and Sovereign Being, we call God: Though this was severely punished in the *Israelites* worshipping the Golden Calf as a representation of God, for I cannot imagine they ador'd it as a true God, unless you suppose they were as void of reason as it was; if then this Worship of theirs be looked upon by all as Idolatry, what may we judge of that *Romish* Image Worship the very same, or at least in nothing material differing from it?

2. Images are commonly called the Books of Ignorants, but in my judgment they deserve rather to be denominated the Books of Ignorance, because they occasion

sion often mistakes and errors: As for instance, an Old Man representing God the Father, a Dove the Holy Ghost, are apt to make the ignorant sort believe they have indeed some such shape. I shall not contest here about this point, because it hath been discuss'd so often by others: One thing only I shall say, which I think is undeniable, that *Protestants* serve God more in spirit and truth than *Romanists* do: Because they make their Addresses to him immediately, without having recourse to Images, or imploring the help of Saints as Mediators: I know they answer this by distinguishing a relative and Sovereign

Worship. The former they allow to Images, the latter to God only: But

First, This relative Worship was condemn'd and punish'd in the *Israelites*, as I have insinuated above.

And Secondly, They adore confessedly the Cross, *cultu latriæ*, with that Sovereign *cult* belonging to God only: What then can they instance in defence of their innocency? I must as yet tell them in this place;

3. They fall short of the end they aim at, in covering the inside of their Churches with rare Pictures, and Images of exquisite Artifice; their aim is, as I charitably suppose, to stir up the people thereby

thereby to greater devotion. But we find by experience a quite contrary effect; they are diverted from Prayer, by that great variety of alluring objects they have before their eyes, you may see them in their Churches more gazing, for the most part, than praying: At least, certain it is, the common sort is withdrawn by such outward shows, from uniting their hearts to God by fervent Prayer: The use of Images then, is not so great a help to Devotion, as the *Romanists* do falsely imagine.

4. Nevertheless their Image-worship, though to be rejected, is not so intollerable as their adoration of the

Consecrated Wafer ; because besides what I have said before, it may happen, and I am of opinion very frequently, that their Priests either want the necessary intention, or intirely forget, or designedly will not Consecrate the Wafer : In this case meer unconsecrated Bread is ador'd, and expos'd on their Altars to the publick *Cult* : Will they say this is no inconvenience, though the People may be guiltless because of their invincible ignorance, and strong imagination of *Christ's* Body really there existent. The thought of this accident, which no doubt happens frequently, with-draweth several *Romanists* from yielding
 to

to the Wafer, that Sovereign *Cult*, due to God only.

5. There is another inconveniency, not unlike the precedent, in a sort of *Worship* ordinary amongst *Romanists*: They honour the Relicks of Saints, as their Bones, Garments, and Parcels of their Bodies, they expose them to the publick *Cult* on their Altars, they carry them with a ceremonious pomp in their solemn *Processions*: But what if these Relicks be of Men that are not in Heaven? For I suppose 'tis no Article of their Faith, that whom the Pope Canonizeth, as they speak, is not a Reprobate; since his infallibility was never yet declar-

ed by any of their eighteen General Councils, he is not infallible, when he declares this man to be in Heaven, or that Woman to be a Saint : Perhaps then you invoke a damn'd Soul, you kneel before the Bones of a Reprobate, you ask help from those whom God has rejected ; than which I can imagine nothing more absur'd : If this were well reflected on by the *Romanists*, they would not be so forward in worshipping the remainder of the dead.

6. 'Tis now full time, lest I exceed the bonds I have set to my self, to speak one word of their Ecclesiastical Discipline : When I consider besides,

sides, the Written Law of God, how many and how heavy Obligations the *Romish* Church imposeth upon her Subjects, I am fully convinced that Popery is justly called, and without exaggeration, a meer slavery; the Crown'd heads are lyable to it, no less, yea rather more than others: Most of *Romanist* Divines teach without any warrant, either from Scripture or reason; the Popes of *Rome* have power to depose Princes, untye their Subjects from their sworn allegiance, to give their Dominions, *primo occupanti*, to such as can conquer them if they refuse to purge their Kingdoms of opinions judg'd

F 5 by

by *Romanists* Heretical. This you may see at large in the Council of *Lateran*, held under *Innocent* the third, third Chapter.

7. The *Romish* Church enslaves so far the understanding of her Followers, as to forbid them the use of that rational faculty God has bestowed upon us, chiefly to find out by its light the true Church, and having found it to govern our selves therein by the same, to search the Scriptures, to try the Spirit; if they be of God or not, lest we be carried away by the wind of all sort of Doctrine. But this is not permitted to the *Romanists*, they must pull out their eyes and say,
white

white is black, if a General Council, though never as yet proved by them infallible, affirm it: This occasion'd an ancient Philosopher to call the Christian Religion, the Religion of Fools, not because they believe things above the reach of Humane Reason; for that is no folly, but on this account, that some of them, to wit the *Romanists*, believe as 'twas instanc'd in the *Eucharist*, or Lord's Supper, that which is contradicted by the experimental knowledge of all our Senses.

8. 'Twas a Liberty and Priviledge of the Primitive Church, as S. *Paul*

witnesseth to the 1 Cor. 10. 24,

25, 27.

Corinthians,

Corinthians, that whatsoever is sold in the Shambles, whatever is set before us we may eat, asking no question for Conscience-sake, that every Creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with Thanksgiving; the *Roman Church* has taken away this Priviledge, and commands abstinence from Meats, ordains Fasts observed most punctually by some of them, falsely perswaded the best part of Christian perfection consists in such indiscreet Rigors, not knowing that true vertue consists mainly in an intire Victory, we should endeavour to get over our own Passions, our most dangerous, because Domestic

mestick

mestick Enemy: So many commanded Fasts as we see in the *Romish* Church, under the pain of Mortal Sin, are no doubt, an occasion of sin and disobedience to many, who think themselves obliged in Conscience to observe them as injunctions of their Church: Cardinal *Bellarmino* that Renown'd *Romanist*, was of this opinion: 'Tis reported, he was wont to say, that if 'ere he happen'd to be Pope, he would abolish the Obligation of the Lent Fast. No doubt because he judg'd it a too heavy Yoke, and on this account more hurtful than profitable.

9. Marriage

9. Marriage in the purest age of the Church, was not forbidden to *Ecclesiasticks*; saith not *S. Paul*,
1 Timot. 3. that a Bishop may be the Husband of
Hebr. 13. 4. one Wife. That Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefil'd : And
1 Timot. 4. 3. 6. writing to *Timothy*, that forbidding to Marry, and commanding to abstain from Meats, is the Doctrine of the Devils: Was not the Fore-runner of Christ, the Son of the High-Priest *Zacharias*, an evident mark, that our Saviour approv'd of, and honoured such sort of Marriages? yet the *Romish* Church adding

ding still great and heavy weights to the yoke of Christ, forbids expressly *Ecclesiasticks* to Marry, though *S. Paul* saith, 1 Corinth. 7. 2. let every man, that

is, whether Clergy or Layman, unless he hath the Gift of Continency, have his own Wife; which Gift is always suppos'd when a Man or a Woman vows Chastity: So if you find by experience, you have it not, you are obliged not to vow, or if you have vowed rashly, flattering your self, you had this Gift, you are no more engag'd by your former vow, because none is obliged to perform beyond what lies in his power, and 'tis in no man's power

power to live continently, without a Gift of Continency, which God bestoweth on whom he pleases, and refuseth it to others as he thinks fit ; who may, and perhaps are obliged in this case, to secure themselves from Sin and Temptation, by a lawful Marriage: For in this conjuncture, *Melius est nubere quam uri*, 'tis better to Marry than burn.

10. 'Tis observable, the most of those that enter these Orders, they call commonly Religious, make their vows so young and so inconsiderately, that they hardly ever reflect on what they undertake, several of them protest they are forced thereunto by
 their

their Parents, or upon the account of some other humane respects and interest, and if afterwards they renew twice a year, as 'tis customary amongst the Jesuits, their first vows, 'tis but with their Lips and not from their Heart: They may sin, I confess, by this dissimulation, though I am perswaded, their Crime is none of the greatest, because of the juncture and necessity of their affairs; but however this Sin communicates no validity to their vow, which subsists not in reality, without an intire liberty, freedom, and inward consent, because of the heavy and insupportable Yoke it lays on their Necks; which
in

in this case they may shake off at the first opportunity, and follow that sort of Life they shall find most convenient for their Spiritual concerns and good of their Souls.

11. I wonder'd often upon what grounds the *Romanists* call these three vows of Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience to their Superiors, Evangelical Counsels, because I had never read in the Gospel, that Christ exhorted ever any to tye themselves to his service by solemn vows. He counselled, I confess, a young man to sell all he had, and give it to the Poor, but not to make a vow to do so: Neither could I ever be persuaded,

swaded, nor any rational man ever will, that 'tis a higher degree of perfection to vow, for instance, Chastity, than to live in Continen- cy, without such a tye and obligation.

12. This is nevertheless the Doctrine of the most learned *Romanists*. And if I remember well of their chief Divine *Thomas Aquinas*, but as they commonly say in *Sor- bon*, *Amicus Aristoteles, ami- cus Divus Thomas, sed magis amica veritas*, no man's au- thority is to be admitted of against the truth, which un- doubtedly sides not with them in this conjuncture; be- cause their assertion is intirely grounded on this weak and
illu-

illusory reason, that he who vows Continency, sacrificeth to God the thing men make most account of, that precious liberty, they think preferable to all the Riches of the World, which he that lives chaste without such a tye does not.

13. This I say is a meer falshood and a flat illusion, for though I vow, I keep intirely my former liberty. True 'tis *I* can't break this promise and vow made to God if it be a real one, without committing a sin, but this puts me in a worse condition than *I* was in before: For now if *I* fall, *I* commit two Sins, one against my Vow, and another against the ver-
tue

tue of Contineney, whereas before I vowed I could be guilty but of one. I think then the state of highest perfection is that which removeth us farthest from sin and the occasions thereof, which certainly vows do not, but ensnaring men rather because of their great weakness and frailty, expose them to both by that perverse, though inbred inclination of theirs, to whatever is forbidden them; for nothing more true than *nitimur in vetitum semper*, &c.

14. This engageth me here to the defence of an Assertion, which will be looked upon as a Paradox by the Romanists, yet if reflected on

on without preoccupation, is a clear, simple, and undeniable truth : They dry up all the veins of their Eloquence in extolling a Religious Life, as they call it : they say it is most perfect, happy, blessed, and what not : read *Jerome Platus* on this Subject , and you shall find him as whimsical in his notions of this imaginary happiness , as *Plato* was in his abstract Idea's.

15. I can prove to persuasion there is no way of serving God more dangerous, and wherein you shall meet with greater obstacles to your spiritual progress and eternal happiness, than in these pretended Religious Orders, as they now stand of
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the Romish Church ; my reason is clear , and runs thus , because their yolk is incomparably greater and heavier than that of other Christians , since besides the Commands of God and their Church , they tye themselves to a numberless number of petty observances and rules , which though they confess bind not their conscience , yet they teach none of them can scarce ever be transgress'd without sin , either *ratione scandali* , by reason of the scandal , or *ratione contemptus* , because of the contempt of Authority , or on some other account ; they say as yet something more strange , that *non progredi , regredi est* , 'tis not enough for them to observe

observe the Commands of God and the Church, they call that *non progredi*, no progress, unless they do more than he has commanded, by standing with as great preciseness to their Customs and Rules, as if they were an essential part of Gods written Law.

15. In what fears then, if they have a timorous conscience; in what troubles and turmoils, and what vexation of spirit they live in : for if so few keep Gods Commands, as 'tis said the Just falls seven times a day, what judgment may we frame of them who pretend to do more than he has ordain'd, by observing a number innumerable of petty Rules,

Rules, Statutes, and frivolous Customs. On this account I have heard several amongst them say what I believe to be most true, that their yoke was not like to the yoke of Christ, sweet and light, *Jugum suave & onus leve*, but rather exceedingly bitter, and most heavy, *Jugum amarum & onus grave*.

16. In fine, I may affirm, without deviating from the Truth, That these *Romish* Vows are rather Snares to intrapSouls, than true means to their attaining to a higher degree of Glory in Heaven. The Devil overcomes some by manifest Temptations, and a flat Proposition of Sin, but because some others, desirous

to live after a more perfect manner, admit not so easily of his Suggestions, he catcheth them by their own inclinations, by vowed engagements, to the pursuance of a Perfection, which, through Humane Frailty, they shall never reach to; so weary to swim always against the water, they are forc'd, at length, to yield to the stream, and go downwards, which was the Enemies sole aim and main design.

17. Out of this foregoing Discourse, we may conclude, Protestants to be most happy, as meeting with none of these forementioned Obstacles, to their eternal happiness, so long as they follow the
 Maxims

Maxims of true Protestancy.

For,

First, Their Faith is not so blind, though submissive enough to Church Authority, as to hold for Divine Truths, the fanciful Opinions of fallible Men, or Decisions of errable Councils: The Word of God onely is their Rule, to this they are taught to conform their Faith and their Actions.

Secondly, They are not tortur'd and turmoil'd with Doubts, if they be Baptiz'd or not, because they know the Existency of Baptism to be independant on the Ministers uncertain intentions.

Thirdly, They have no Incitement to Sin, by relying

on a middle place between Heaven and Hell; they hold no Purgatory, and so are powerfully deterr'd from offending God, through fear of his terrible Justice exercis'd in Hell, upon such as die without Repentance.

Fourthly, They reject the dangerous distinction of Venial, and Mortal Sin, as opening a door to Looseness; for though some Sins be more heinous than others, yet in this we must confess a perfect equality, that they are all offences of an infinite Majesty, and consequently deserve his eternal Wrath, as being of an unlimited malice.

Fifthly, They allow every one to read the Scripture as
the

the Fountain of all wholesom Doctrine, and capable to make us wise unto Salvation, as being a Light to our Understanding, lest we err; and a Fire to our Will, lest we wax Cold in Charity and Love towards God and our Neighbors.

Sixthly, Their Doctrine concerning the Lord's Supper is spirit and life, it gives no occasion either of Idolatry or Hypocrisie, by teaching that strange Novelty of *Transubstantiation*: They captivate indeed their understanding *in obsequium Fidei*, in obedience to Divine Faith, but pull not out their Eyes to believe there is no Bread in the Eucharist, where they

see all the inseparable Properties thereof, as Colour, Shape, Quantity, &c.

Seventhly, They rely solely on the Merits of Christ; neither on the mediation of Saints, nor on their own good works, fully persuaded of this Christian Truth, when they have done all they can, they are but useless Servants, and that all their sufficiency is from Above.

Eighthly, Their Divine Worship is pure, and without mixture of Superstition or Idolatry; neither intirely without Ceremonies, nor overburden'd with 'em superstitiously.

Ninthly, They adore God in Spirit and Truth, not under

der corporal Shapes, and false Representations ; they adore him as Spirit and Truth, as he is in reality, knowing perfectly all their spiritual needs, and bodily necessities, without the help of Saints as Speakers and Informers.

Tenthly, Their Ecclesiastical Discipline is most conformable in all its parts to that of the Primitive Church, as also their Faith, their Manners, and way of living, as may be gathered out of this and the foregoing Article ; and every one knows that is not altogether a Stranger to Antiquity.

Eleventhly, They serve God in all freedom of spirit, without endangering their
 G 4 Souls

Souls by vows of Continen-
cy, true Snares rather to In-
nocency, than fit means for
attaining to Perfection and
eternal Felicity.

ARTIC.

ARTICLE III.

S E C T. .I.

*Conclusions flowing from the
first Principle of this Me-
thod.*

I. **M**Y first Principle was,
*That those who pro-
fess Protestancy, may be saved.*
I proved it to Conviction,
without invectives or bitter-
ness, in the spirit of Christian

Charity, Meekness and Lenity, persuaded of this clear Truth, that Conviction of the intellectual Faculty worketh never a true Conversion, unless the Will be conquer'd by a civil and charitable way of debating.

II. 'Tis Proverbial amongst the *Romanists*, That out of the Church there is no hopes of salvation. In what sense this is true, 'tis not my design here to inquire; but I affirm they are pitifully mistaken, understanding by the Church, that handful of Christians united together in communion with the See of *Rome*, which is as unreasonable,

nable, as if one would say, a Particular is an Universal, a Part is the Whole, or at least of as great and vast a bulk. They will grant then, I suppose, *Protestants* to be Members of the Universal Church, but dead ones, destitute of life, spirit and vigour. The contradictory of this Proposition stands demonstrated in the first Article; for since they may be saved by the merits and influence of their invisible Head Christ, they are both wholesome, living, and vigorous Members of his Church.

III. They cannot be accused of Schism, nor without a ground-

groundless Calumny called *Schismatics*, since they are still contain'd in the Catholick or Universal Church, their Reform being in the Church, not from it; hold they not all Points necessary to salvation, and whatever was of Divine Faith in the primitive Times. They separated, I confess, from the particular Church of *Rome*, but *Romanists* were the true causes of this Separation, by introducing Errors and Novelties, so they are properly the *Separatists*, not *Protestants*: Let them be ashamed then to sound perpetually as they do in the Peoples ears, such a notorious Calumny, which

which with greater truth
may be Retorted against
themselves.

IV. I hope hereafter they
shall prove more moderate,
and call them Brethren,
whom they have thought hi-
therto Hereticks ; for I am
persuaded they are convinc'd
this foul aspersion of Heresie
is groundless, as being a meer
illusion, and the product of a
preoccupied judgment. The
Protestants, say they, are He-
reticks, because they reject
obstinately the Decisions of
General Councils ; but will
they never reflect that these
Decisions can neither be
looked upon by us , nor by
them

them as revealed Truths, unless their Infallibility be either grounded on clear Scripture, or in their sentiment on the Authority of some General Council. In what Scripture is it said, General Councils are infallible Judges of Controversial Debates? In what Council was it decided, that General Councils were unerrable? Here they are amaz'd, and their thoughts at a stand; they are forced to yield, and confess ingenuously, that this pretended Infallibility hath no other foundation in being, but that of their own Opinion and Fancy: For though 'twere grounded on the Decision
of

of some General Council; this must be first proved Infallible by an Evidence distinct from its own Testimony.

V. But because my onely design in this place is to raise Inferences, and not to frame new Arguments, I entreat the *Romanist* Reader, after a serious perusal of my first Article, to reflect a moment upon his own Uncharity against so many Thousands of His Majesties Subjects, and other Nations, so commendable for their unstain'd Life and Conversation; so acceptable to God, because of their Virtue and Innocency. Let them,

them, I say, upon second thoughts, repent of their former Uncharity, in condemning their Neighbors so inconsiderately, as *Schismatics*, *Hereticks*, *Reprobates*. Let them detest from the bottom of their hearts this Unchristian Rigor and Severity; if perhaps upon such groundless pretences they were persuaded 'twas lawful to persecute them by Treason, Fire and Sword, the deep ignorance they liv'd in could be as a Veil to the Enormity of their Crime: But after the perusal of this Treatise they can no more pretend ignorance, they are told of their Errour, and sufficiently

ly inform'd of their former mistakes.

VI. Neither can they with the least appearance of Truth call *Apostates* such as embrace *Protestancy*, since they retain still the Faith of that Church which flourished the first three Centuries after our Saviour's Birth, and is confessed by all Parties to have been the true Church of Christ. They admit not indeed the additional Articles of *Purgatory*, *Transubstantiation*, *Image-worship*, *Invocation of Saints*, &c. for the grounds above laid. But on this account they are in no true sense *Apostates*, because *Apostasie* is a defection

fection from the true Faith, and these Points are either gross Errors, or, as a learned Divine of the *English* Church calls them, inferiour Truths, not destructive to Divine Faith, whether believ'd or denied; though they be, as I have insinuated elsewhere, not a little prejudicial to true Virtue, and Christian Piety.

VII. Rashness or Imprudence can with as little justice be objected to such as retreat from *Popery*. It has been demonstrated by the consent of *Romanists*, and self-evident Principles they follow, by professing *Protestancy* a
pro-

probable and well-grounded opinion, That worshipping God after the Protestant manner, they may attain to the end they were created for, which is eternal happiness.

SECT.

S E C T. 2.

*Conclusions flowing naturally
from the second Principle
of this method.*

TH E second Principle was, *That Protestants may be saved more easily, and with greater security, than those of the Romish Persuasion.* I shall not repeat here what I said before, to explain, rather than to prove this self-evident Truth, hence only I infer what is evident enough of it self without any formal-inference.

I. That

I. That *Romish Priests* are obliged not to endeavor, as they do, the Conversion, or rather Perversion of *Protestants*, because 'tis a sin to withdraw any man from the safest way to Heaven.

II. The *Romanists* once convinc'd, as I hope they are, of this second Principle, must of necessity renounce *Popery*, and profess *Protestancy*, there being an obligation incumbent to all men in matters of such a high Concern, to chuse that which is securest.

III. *Protestants* must stand stoutly to their own Religion,

on, and way of Divine Worship, and cannot, if they regard a good Conscience, after this instruction turn *Romanists*, because in so doing they would endanger their own Souls, by reason of the fore-mentioned obstacles to salvation in the profession of *Po- pery*.

IV. All true *Protestants*, and more particularly Those who by their Dignity, Office, and Employment, are to watch over the Flock, must needs, if they will perform their duty, endeavour with all Charitable and Christian means the Confirmation of *Protestants* in *Protestancy*,
and

and the Conversion of their Popish Subjects from *Popery*, else they forfeit their Character and Ministry, as neglecting the spiritual concerns of Souls redeem'd by the precious blood of Christ, and committed to their trust and vigilancy : If I have been my self instrumental to the perversion of several, while misled by a blind Zeal, I saw things but under one light, I shall, at Conveniency, repair this Damage done to the Church, by writing in my spare-hours such instructions as may be subservient to their returning homewards, or useful to the conversion of others, and particularly

cularly my nearest and dearest Relations.

V. I shall put here a stop to my Pen, and an end to this Treatise, with a short and charitable Advice to all His Majesties Subjects of the *Romish* Persuasion.

Char-

*Charitable Advice to
all His Majesties
Subjects of the Ro-
mish Persuasion.*

YOU have believ'd
till now, as an
Article of your Faith,
That Protestants were
all Reprobates, Here-
ticks, Schismaticks, and
H many

many of them Apo-
 states. Your Faith being
 ever an implicate one,
 and pinn'd on other
 mens sleeves. You are
 more to be pitied for
 this gross mistake, than
 blam'd. You are not
 unlike, pardon me the
 freedom of this Parallel,
 to those that are blind
 from their birth. You
 may induce such men to
 believe any Falshood
 you please, as for in-
 stance, that White is
 Black, or Black is White,
 be-

because they want the use of their visive Faculty, and solely rely on your Authority. You renounce not only to your reason, in favour of the pretended Council-Oracles. You hold not only your understanding captive when *Rome* speaks, but you extinguish the clearest light thereof, in submission to her Decisions, as if you were quite blind, and understood nothing, or as if Nature had not bestow-

ed upon you an intellectual Faculty, in order to discern good from evil, falshood from truth, to try the spirits whence they are, whether of God or not. The *Romanists*, your Masters, imitate those ancient Heathens, who, to gain the Peoples esteem and greater veneration for their Laws, said confidently, They had received them immediately from the gods: So they, to hold you in awe, and tyrannize over
your

your understandings, as by a principle of Conscience, call boldly whatever is decided in General Councils, Divine Oracles, Reveal'd Truths, Faith-Articles, which is the greatest Artifice the Prince of Darkness could invent, to spread all the World over Error, Ignorance, and Superstition.

To avoid then your being seduc'd hereafter, make use of your Reason, since 'tis chiefly allow'd you for your at-

taining to the knowledge of saving Truths, peruse often, and meditate frequently this Treatise, wherein you shall discover clearly,

I. That *Protestants*, you have been so averse from hitherto, through preoccupation and ignorance, may be saved, as being true Members of the Universal Church, and neither Hereticks nor Schismaticks.

II. That

II. That they attain to Eternal Happiness more easily, and with greater safety than *Romanists*, standing to the Principles of *Popery*.

III. That the boasted of Infallibility of General Councils is no Article of Faith amongst *Roman-Catholicks*, but a meer politick design to domineer by this persuasion over all Nations, for the increase of temporal Concerns; and that

that as *Rome* of old subdued the World by force of Arms, she may still enslave it by Religious Scruples, and strong Fancies of the Divine Original of her Oracles, which was meant by the Poet that sung thus :

*Roma caput mundi, quicquid
non possidet armis Reli-
gione tenet.*

You have pretended formerly your Conscience suffered you not to
con-

conform to that Divine
Worship now establi-
shed by Law in these
three Kingdoms , you
thought it not lawful to
forsake *Popery*, and pro-
fess *Protestancy*, as being
in your opinion nothing
else but *Heresie*, *Schism*,
Apostasie. This can be
no more an *Obstacle* to
your *Conversion* , you
are now informed to
Conviction of the con-
trary , and of your in-
cumbent *Obligation* to
retreat from *Romanism* ;
of

of two Evils, the least is to be chosen; and of two ways to Heaven, that which is securest, in matters of this Concern all deliberation laid aside, your Conscience will press you to the surest. So long as you endeavour your being insensible to her Checks, you pretend in vain to any true happiness in this life, she will sound perpetually in your ears the extreme danger you are in through your own
own

own fault, and as an inseparable, terrifying, and threatening Ghost, disturb your Repose by day and by night, *in all times, and in all places.*

Omnibus umbra locis aderit.

F I N I S.

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