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*Peirce's ~~Anti~~ Considerations  
on the London Case*

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SOME  
CONSIDERATIONS

On the  
SIXTH CHAPTER  
Of The

Abridgement

Of the  
**London Cases:**

Containing, A  
VINDICATION

Of the  
*Office for Baptism,*

And Particularly, of the  
Sign of the Cross.

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By JAMES PEIRCE.

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LONDON :

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THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
FROM 1630 TO 1880  
BY  
JOHN B. HENNING



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T H E

P R E F A C E.



**I**T Seems very plain and obvious, That they who impose any Terms of Communion upon either Ministers or People, are bound to give a full and clear Account of these Three things : First, The Lawfulness of the things imposed, that so they who submit to them, may do it with an entire Satisfaction, and may be free from all Uneasiness and Perplexity in reflecting upon their Practice. Secondly, The Usefulness of the things imposed ; for things Lawful may not be Expedient, and for Edification. Thirdly, Their own Authority to impose them ; for it is very possible, that Lawful things may be imposed by those who have no Power to impose them ; and whoever does innovate in the Church of God, and introduce and impose Customs, of which we have no Footsteps in the Holy Scriptures, and does not at the same time produce such a Seal of his Commission from God as our Lord did, may very justly be asked that

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Math. 21. *Question, By what authority dost thou these things ? and who gave thee this authority ? Till these Three things are well cleared, I cannot see that either Ministers or People are bound to obey the Imposers ; or that they have any thing more to do, than to weigh the Strength of those Arguments which the Imposers do alledge in their own Behalf, and to answer them : But in the Management of the chief Controversy before us, these things seem to be strangely overlook'd.*

*The Author seems to take it for granted, That the Imposers have Authority for what they do : He alledges not any thing in the Ceremony of the Cross, that carries in it any tolerable Appearance of Usefulness : The only thing he aims at is to shew, That the Sign of the Cross is not proved Unlawful by two or three Objections that are made against it : So that if a Man should ask those plain Questions, Cui bono ? and Quo jure ? To what good Purpose ? and by what Right are these Ceremonies imposed ? he must (for ought I can find in the Case) be still to seek for an Answer. One great part of his Defence consists of Citations from the Fathers, concerning the Custom of ancient times ; and herein I have thought my self obliged to follow him, and must confess, that it is no small Satisfaction to me,*

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to find that this Ceremony was not used in Baptism in the most Primitive, that is, the best Ages of the Church ; that it was not used till the Purity of the Church began to be Ecclipsed, by her Temporal Preferment : But I am sensible, that a great part of the Case, and of this Answer to it, will be lost, with reference to those who look for their Religion only in their Bibles, and who have not Ability or Opportunity to inquire into the Opinions and Practices of those that lived in ancient times. I have followed the Abridgement, rather than the Case it self ; and therein I have consulted not only my own ease, but the Readers too ; for probably my Discourse would have otherwise been more faulty in length than it is already. I have (for the Reason I hinted before) confined my self to the Consideration of my Author's Arguments, and have forbore to start any new ones ; and this Method I thought I had the more Right to use, considering who is the Aggressour. But there is one thing that is but lightly touched here and there in the following Discourse, that deserves to have more particular notice taken of it here, and that is, how far the Laity are concerned in this Ceremony ; and whether there be not just cause for them to scruple Lay-Conformity in this point.

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A wide Difference has been made, between Ministerial and Lay-Conformity ; but perhaps, if the Foundation of that Difference be carefully examined, it will not appear to be so solid as some have imagined. A Lay-man, that observes that the Pastors of the Church here among us are divided into Nonconformists and Conformists, and that would resolve himself who are the most rightful Pastors to whom he ought stately to adhere, is bound to consider the Merits of the Cause depending between them, and consequently must examine the several Points of Conformity which are required of Ministers ; and if upon the whole he judges that they have just reason to refuse Conformity, he is not by any means to forsake their Ministry, however they may in the discharge thereof be despised, persecuted, or not encouraged by either Prince or People : So that it seems plain to me, That the People are to look upon themselves concerned in all the Terms that are imposed upon their Ministers : But in this Ceremony of the Cross, I conceive they are more particularly and immediately concerned.

Let us therefore suppose, That a Lay-man (who is convinced that the use of the Cross in Baptism is sinful) has a Child to be Baptized that is in very good Health, and concern-

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concerning whom he is not apprehensive of any Danger; What course should this Person take? Shall he conform as a Lay-man, and bring his Child to be Baptized by those that will not do it without the Addition of the Sign of the Cross? Shall it satisfy that it is the Minister (and not he) that sins in using it? What reason can there be, why a Man should have his Child Baptized by Men who will use a Ceremony which he judges sinful, when he may have him Baptized by others without it? Or how can a Man chuse to have his Child Baptized in a way he esteems sinful, and yet think himself guiltless? And therefore, supposing that a Minister of the Church of England will not Baptize such a Person's Child without this Sign, it seems plain to me, that he is bound to seek out for some other Minister that will. I know there are some Ministers in the Church of England, who profess they are willing to yield to the Scruples of Parents in this Matter, and to Baptize their Children without the Sign of the Cross: But it deserves well to be considered, both by Ministers and People, whether this Latitude be allowed them by their Oath of Canonical Obedience, and their Subscription, wherein they promise, That they will use the Form prescribed (in the Book of Common-Prayer) in Publick Prayer, and Administration of

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Sacraments, and no other. These Ministers are accused by some of their Brethren, as guilty of no less a Crime than Perjury; and I confess, they seem to me to be so restrained (by their Oath and Promise) to the appointed Form, as not to be allowed to make the least Alteration in their using it: But perhaps some may say, There is a Form for Private Baptism, wherein the Sign of the Cross is left out, and therefore a Minister may Baptize such a one's Child in Private, according to that Form, consistently with his Oath and Promise: But the Answer to this is obvious; For, 1st, The Form for Private Baptism is only to be used in cases of great Necessity, as appears by the Second Rubrick before the Office for Private Baptism. What this Necessity is, is plain, by the Sixty-ninth Canon, viz. The Infant's Weakness, or being in danger of Death; and the same appears by another Rubrick in the Office it self, where we have these Words; Yet nevertheless, if the Child which is after this sort Baptized, DO AFTERWARD LIVE, it is expedient, &c. This appears likewise by the haste in which Private Baptism is performed; let him say the Lord's Prayer, (says the Third Rubrick) and so many of the Collects— as the time and present exigence will suffer:

But

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But nothing can be more contrary to the Orders of the Church, than for a Minister to Baptize a Child, that is not weak or in danger of Death, in a Private House: The Church declares against this in Two Rubricks (viz. the first before Publick, and the second before Private Baptism) except in cases of great Necessity. It cannot be said, that the Parent's dislike of the Sign of the Cross is ever, in the Sense of the Church, a sufficient cause of any such Exigence and Necessity, as will justify Private Baptism: For it is very plain, that the Church designed in a very different manner to treat those who should alledge the Unlawfulness of this Ceremony, as a Reason against having their Children publicly Baptized. He that reads the Sixth Canon will see, She is so far from having any design of Indulgence towards such a one, that on the contrary, She thunders out against him, Let him be Excommunicated, *ipso facto*, and not be Restored, until he Repent, and publicly revoke such his wicked Error. How then can a Minister be true to his Oath of Canonical Obedience, who treats those with Indulgence, whom the Church treats with Excommunication? 2dly, Where the Form for Private Baptism is in the case of Necessity used, it is expected by the Church, That if the Child do afterward live,

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live, he should be brought to the Church, and there be signed with the Sign of the Cross. But in the case before us, a Minister Baptizes the Child without any such Necessity as the Church allows, and when he knows for certain, that he will not be afterwards brought to the Congregation according to the Church's Order: So that I confess, I cannot see how a Minister of the Church of England can, consistently with his Oath and Promise, omit the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, merely to comply with the Scruples of the Parent. But now to finish this Matter, my Lay-man's Case comes at last to this Issue; Whether he shall seek Baptism for his Child, of a Minister of the Church of England, who will not administer it but in a way which he is convinced is sinful, or who must violate his Oath and Promise, if he does it in a way that he is satisfied is in it self Lawful: Or whether he shall seek it of another Minister, who is not of the Church of England, and who is not therefore cramped with any such Oath or Promise, and who will do it in a way in which he is intirely satisfied?

And now I have stated this Case, I will acquaint my Reader, that it is so far from being an imaginary one, or a wild Supposition, that it is a Case that has actually happened. Some in constant Communion  
with



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with the Church of England, have upon these very Considerations thought themselves obliged, not to seek Baptism for their Infants from those Ministers, upon whose Ministry, in all the other parts of it, they have constantly attended, and have sought it elsewhere; and to their farther Consideration I shall commend this one thing; How they can think themselves bound to be in so constant Communion with a Church, wherein they judge that one of the Sacraments is not administred with Purity enough for their own use; and what reason they can have, for not communicating in other things with those Ministers, the Validity of whose Ministrations, and the Righteousness of whose Cause, they do by this Practice acknowledge.

This Ceremony has been the occasion of much Controversy, and has been learnedly handled by several, and particularly by the Learned Robert Parker, in his Treatise upon the Subject; whom I the rather mention, that I may tell the Reader, that he will find many things in him which he will here meet with; several of which I freely own I borrowed from him, though a great many of them I had observed and set down in the first rude Draft of these Papers, before I had had the Happiness so much as to see his Learned Piece: They were drawn

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up presently after the Publishing of the Abridgement, and have lain by ever since for some Reasons, which it will not avail the Reader to know, and which therefore he shall not be troubled with. I hope it will appear, that my Design is the Peace of the Church, (which is not to be expected, till those Things are removed which are matter of Offence) and this Design is, I doubt not, pleasing to GOD, whatever Acceptation it shall meet with from Men.

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The

The Sixth Chapter of  
the Abridgement of the London  
Cases, which I propose to con-  
sider, is Intituled; *Objections*  
*against our Form of Baptism,*  
*and particularly that of the Sign*  
*of the Cross, Answered: And*  
these Objections are;

1. **I**T is said, That all Baptized Infants Abridg.  
are supposed to be Regenerated, of pag. 126.  
which; some think, we cannot be cer-  
tain: But since they are Baptized in:  
to Christ's Body, 1 Cor. 12, 13. and into  
Christ, and have put on Christ, Gal. 3. 27. and  
consequently are new Creatures, 2 Cor. 5. 17.  
Since, I say, they are Baptized for the Remis-  
sion of Sins, Acts 2, 38. and since Baptism is  
called the washing of Regeneration, Tit. 3. 5.  
therefore the Scripture, as well as our Church,  
supposes them to be Regenerated; unless the  
Ordinances and Promises of God are of none  
Effect towards them.

A Man may believe the Ordinances and  
Promises of God to be of very good Effect,  
and yet doubt, Whether all are Regenerated  
whom the Church Baptizes. Should it be  
supposed (which yet some Learned Men even  
of

of the Church of of *England* have denied) that where-ever Baptism is in all respects rightly administred, that there the Holy Spirit does Regenerate ; yet may it be doubted, whether her asserting all to be Regenerated whom she Baptizes is true ; because it may be they are not all the proper Subjects of Baptism. It is not a Matter clear from all doubt, that Bastards, or the Children of notorious Infidels, or of debauched and scandalous Persons, are by Baptism to be received into the Church ; especially if, as it often happens, the Sureties are of the same Stamp with the Parents : Now, if it be doubtful whether such Children ought to be received, we cannot be charged with accounting the Ordinances and Promises ineffectual, because we question, whether such have the ordinary benefit of Baptism : But it is no wonder, that the Church should pronounce all she Baptizes Regenerated ; he that looks into the other parts of her Office for Baptism will see, that she need not lay the stress upon Baptism, the Infants are supposed to be Regenerated before, unless an unregenerate Person can be a true Believer. I am sensible of many Difficulties about Baptism, and therefore would not be peremptory in my Determinations : On the one hand I must own, that many Expressions in the Scripture about Baptism, the Language of the Ancients, who called it Regeneration, together with my Charity, incline me to a Latitude in this matter : But on the other hand, when I consider it is in the Parent's Right that the Child is Baptized (as the Promise is to Christians and their

Seed, *Acts* 2. 39.) and that though Persons may, by a visible Profession, have a Right to the external Ordinances and Priviledges of the Church, yet nothing less than true Repentance and Faith, will give them a Right to the spiritual Benefits of the Covenant in the sight of God : I say, when I consider this, I am at a loss how to assign by the Promise greater Benefits to the Child, in the Parents Right, than do belong to the Parent himself, and methinks Mr. *Hales* Proposal is very reasonable, That particular and private Fancies should have no place in a publick Liturgy : It is reasonable a Latitude should be left to Men's Sentiments, and that very doubtful Matters should not be determined by it.

But it is the Rubrick (which ought to have been here considered) which is more liable to Objection ; “ That it is certain by God’s  
 “ Word, that Children which are Baptized,  
 “ dying before they commit actual Sin, are  
 “ undoubtedly saved. If this Indefinite Expression is not equivalent to an Universal one, no one can doubt of it ; but if it be (as it plainly is) to be understood of all Children, it ought first to be shewn, that all Children have a Right to Baptism ; for otherwise it may so happen, that some Children may be Baptized that have no Right at all, and then it will not be *certain, that they are undoubtedly saved.* I confess this Rubrick, as it stood in the Old Common-Prayer-Book, was less liable to Exception ; because it seemed only to declare, that this was the utmost the Church could do for them, and that  
 there

there was no absolute necessity of Confirmation, but that they might be saved without it; and this the Dissenters acknowledged to be very true; but yet thinking that there was no need of any such Rubrick, and that as it was worded it was liable to a bad Construction, they desired it might be left out. And that the *Reader* may see that our Brethren (who have given us abundance of hard Words as a parcel of contentious and humourfome Schismatics) did not act upon the most charitable and healing Principles, I will recite the Rubrick as it was formerly, and upon comparing both together, he will be satisfied, that the Alteration that was made was not calculated for the lessening, but the widening our Differences, that being left out which before made it at all capable of a tolerable Sense in the Apprehensions of the Objectors. The Words therefore were formerly these;

“ And that no Man shall think that any  
 “ Detriment shall come to Children by deferring  
 “ of their Confirmation, he shall know  
 “ for truth, that it is certain from God’s  
 “ Word, that Children being Baptized, have  
 “ all things necessary to Salvation, and be  
 “ undoubtedly saved. By which and several the like Instances, it is very plain, the Design of some Men in 1662. was to drive the Dissenters from the Communion of the Church of *England*, however, they have been since wofully becalled and abused for leaving it.

*’Tis Objected, that God-fathers and God-mothers have no Authority to Act or Covenant in their Names.*

*Dissenters* do not absolutely condemn the Use of God-fathers; there are some Cases, in which they acknowledge them necessary, as if both the Parents are dead, &c. but the Objection that lyes against your Practice, is your excluding the Parent from that which does primarily belong to him, as is plain, from the Words of the Convocation; † “ No † *Can. 29.*  
 “ Parent shall be urged to be present, nor be  
 “ admitted to answer as God-father for his  
 “ own Child. We are told by our Author, in the very Page before, That “ it is very  
 “ probable the Apostles made Parents, &c.  
 “ stipulate for their Minors when they Bapti-  
 “ zed them. And is the Church grown wiser than the Apostles, that the Parents must not now be admitted to stipulate for their own Children? Certainly, since the chief care of educating Children lyes upon the Parents, it is very fit they should solemnly oblige themselves to it. Our Author’s Answer to the Objection is;

1. *That the Sureties are procured by the Parents; and therefore, since it is granted that the Parents may act in behalf of the Infant, the Sureties have all that Authority which the Parents can give them.*

We think that they not only may, but ought to act in the behalf of the Infant; and that therefore it is contrary to all Reason and Right, that they should be thus excluded: And what reason there can be to oblige Persons to act by a Proxy or Representative; when they are able and desirous to act in their own Persons, is not easy to imagine.

2. *The Church does hereby take great Security, that the Infant shall be religiously brought up, in as much as besides their Parents, an Obligation is laid upon others also to take care of it.*

But there is not the least hint given by the Church of any such Obligation that lyes upon the Parents, but they transfer their whole Duty to others ; and I hardly believe, that the Church would take the same Security for her Revenues, that she does for the religious Education of her young Members ; I mean, where the principal Debter, and he from whom most may in reason be expected, is left out in the Obligation. There would be some colour for this Practice, if only scandalous Persons were debarred from performing that Office for their Children, and were obliged to procure understanding and religious God-fathers ; whereas now there is none at all, when all Parents are equally excluded, and no Person (according to the Canon<sup>†</sup>) can be refused for a God-father or God-mother, that has been once at the Communion of the Church of *England* ; and even this Limitation (however wide the Communion of the Church is) is far from being strictly observed.

† *Can. 29.*

*If the Parents should dye, or be negligent, the Sureties are engaged to admonish the Child, and have greater Authority, and better Advantages of doing so than other Persons.*

And therefore if the Church looks upon them obliged only in such cases, let the chief Obligation be laid (where it ought) upon the Parents.

*And*



*And in this Age, when the Duty of Christian Reproof is so generally omitted, 'twere well if the Defect were this way a little supplied: But it is by no means fit that the opportunity thereof, and the Obligation thereto should be taken away.*

This is answered already, Let the Parent enjoy his own Right, and let only fit and competent Persons be permitted to join with him, and I conceive this Dispute is at an end.

*If it be said, that this is seldom practised (the Truth of which Objection is not denied) I answer that the Goodness of a Rule is to be judged of by the Good that is done, where it is kept, and not where it is broken.*

The Goodness of a Rule is to be judged of not only by the Good that it aims at, but by its being also in all respects adapted to the obtaining or enforcing that Good; and upon the Considerations before alledged, we judge the defect in Practice, to be greatly owing to a defect in the Rule it self.

*And if the Dissenters have nothing to say, but that it is neglected, they may remove this Objection themselves by returning to the Church, and increasing the number of those that observe it: Thus they shall have the benefit of the Order of the Church, and the Church the benefit of their Examples.*

The benefit of the Church's Order will (I suppose) be no great Temptation to any Man, who considers he is thereby deprived of the opportunity of offering his own Child to God. And if the *Dissenters* were sensible of any Benefit of the Order of the Church, they might practice it as they are, whether you will

suffer them to return or no. As to the Benefit of our Examples, we are willing and desirous you should have them in your Church, if you please to yield to such Concessions as you acknowledge you can make, and you know we can in Conscience comply with : Though I confess my Aversion to Suretiship would prevent my engaging here, if there were not special reason for it, and such as would oblige me in case of need to be at the expence and care of the Child's Education. I am apt to think, that an Obligation hereto lyes upon the Sureties, from whom alone the Church does receive any Security. And I think my Lord of *Sarum* says truly, † “ That  
 † *Past.* “ no one ought to do this Office for another,  
*Car. p. 186.* “ but he that is willing to charge himself  
 “ with the Education of the Child for whom  
 “ he answers : And I suppose no doubt will  
 \* *Protest.* be made of this, by those \* who hold, That  
*Reconciler,* the Persecutions which cut off the Parents,  
*part 2. P.* and so left the poor Infants incapable of  
*274.* Christian Education, without the help of  
 Sureties, were one reason that made God-fathers and God-mothers the more necessary in the first Ages of the Church. And now if this Doctrine were very generally preached, I am apt to think it would soon put an end to the Practice.

*As for the Interrogatories put to the Sureties, and their Answers, they are a solemn Declaration of what Baptism obliges us to, and that Infants stand engaged to perform it when they come to Age : This is the known meaning of the Contract, and therefore I see not why it should be said to be liable to Misunderstanding.*

But these Interrogatories and Answers do seem very much to countenance the Error opposed in the preceding Chapter. The Questions are propounded to the Child, tho' he being incapable of Understanding and answering them himself, does both by his Sureties. This seems to imply the necessity of an actual Profession of Faith, to be made by every one before he is Baptized; and if that be once granted, I do not see how we can defend *Infant-Baptism*. But farther, these Interrogatories and Answers are so liable to Misunderstanding, that it is evident, our Author himself has misunderstood them. One Question which the Minister asks is this, *Wilt thou be Baptized in this Faith?* and the Answer is, *That is my Desire*. This I take to be no Declaration of what Baptism obliges us to, nor of what the Infant stands engaged to perform when he comes to Age. If the *Dissenters* practiced any thing like this, it is easy to imagine how they would have been treated for it. I will not deny that *St. Augustine* and some others, have some Expressions that favour the Infants promising by their Sureties: But the vicarious Baptism for the Dead among the *Cerinthian* Hereticks, is undoubtedly the most ancient Precedent for the vicarious Sponson; and perhaps to them the rise of this Practice is owing: But whoever have been the Abettors of this Practice, it is evidently absurd. How can an Infant be supposed to believe all the Articles of the Creed? or to renounce or desire things that he is capable of having no Notion of? It is plain, the Answers contain more than a Declaration

of what Baptism obliges us to ; they contain a Declaration of the Infants present Faith, and renouncing the Devil, &c. and the Baptizing him in that Faith profess, does import his Obligation to continue therein. It seems much more reasonable to me, to have this Profession made by the Parents in their own Name, (as it is through them that the Children have a Right to the Promise, *Acts* 2. 39.) and to take Security of them, that they will use their utmost Endeavours to bring up the Infant in the same Faith, &c. than to require any Persons to declare that concerning the Child, which there is no reason to believe to be true, or which if it were true, there is no possibility of their knowing, or to make them promise that which it is not in their power to perform.

*But that which is most disliked, is the Sign of the Cross in Baptism ; against which it is objected, (1.) That the Sign of the Cross has been notoriously abused by the Papists ; that our retaining it makes us Partakers of their Superstitions and Idolatry.*

But it is not simply the Abuse that is alleged ; the Force of this Objection appears much stronger, when the other Consideration that has been urged is joined herewith. The Cross in Baptism may (your selves being judges) be as well omitted ; the Worship of God will not be in the least impaired thereby ; and therefore, since there is no need of it, and it is a thing so liable to abuse, and has been most notoriously abused, it ought now to be laid aside ; especially, since your Brethren account it sinful, and the retaining of

of it only occasions Strife and Contenti-  
on among *Protestants*. But let us consider  
the Answer that is returned to this Objection.

*As to the first Pretence, though I readily  
acknowledge, that the Cross has been notori-  
ously abused by the Papists, yet this does not  
prove our retaining of it to be unlawful, if we  
consider these Three things: 1. That the use  
of this Sign was common in the Primitive times,  
and is more ancient than any of those Corrup-  
tions, for which we differ from the Papists.*

It may not be amiss, that I should here  
observe to the Reader, whence it is that our  
Brethren borrow the Weapons wherewith  
they endeavour to defend themselves. In  
this Chapter he will meet with the same Ar-  
guments which *Suarez* † and others use, to  
prove the Holiness of Crosses and Images, *viz.* † *Tom. 1. in Thom. di- Antiquity, the Authority of holy Men that put. 54.*  
have used them, the Presence of God that  
hath wrought Miracles by them, and the Be-  
nediction of the Church. And as to this pre-  
sence of Antiquity, I will readily grant some  
use of this Sign to be as old as *Tertullian's*  
time, (as his Testimonies prove) but deny  
that that is a Rule for us; and it is worth  
observing, that the very first Author that  
mentions the use of this Sign, does likewise  
mention such Superstition in the using it, as  
the Church of *England* does not approve of, or  
at least does not practice; and it will be evident  
from the following Discourse, that there are  
some things that are rejected by the Church  
of *England*, but retained by the *Papists*, that  
are full as ancient as the Sign of the Cross;  
so that a Learned Doctor of the Church of

England, has not scrupled to tax the pretence of retaining this and other Ceremonies, out of a Reverence to Antiquity, with † Hypocrisy. But to proceed to our Author's Testimonies, let us consider what he adds :

† See Prot. Recon. part 1. p. 297.  
 \* De Cor. Mil. Tertullian \* speaks of it as of a Practice which Tradition had introduced, Custom had confirmed, and the Believers Faith had observed and maintained.

The Reader must not conclude from hence, that *Tertullian* is speaking concerning the use of the Cross in Baptism ; for in truth, he is speaking concerning the frequent and superstitious use of it, which is still retained by the *Papists* : He is speaking of that use of it, which our Author himself makes one difference, between the Popish and the Church's use of it : *Our use* (says he ||) *even of this transient Sign, is nothing like the Popish use of it, for the Papists use it on all Occasions.*

|| Pag. 131.

This using it then on all Occasions, is supposed to be a Corruption, for which we differ from the *Papists* ; and yet by this very Testimony that is alledged it appears, that this Corruption is as old as the Sign it self : And I cannot but wonder, so much stress should be laid upon these Words of *Tertullian*, when his Authority is and must be rejected in some other Customs, to which these Words are as much applied as to the Cross ; and to clear this, I will set down his Words more largely. For want therefore of a Scripture Proof of his Assertion, he has recourse to Custom and Tradition, and reckons up several Practices, for which they had no other Rule, " That I may begin (says he) with Baptism ; as  
 " we

we are going into the Water, we do protest (as we did also afore that in the Church, before the Bishop) that we renounce the Devil, and his Pomp and Angels: After that, we taste a mixture † of Milk and Honey, and from that time for a Week together we forbear to go into the Bath. \* The Sacrament of the Eucharist, that was instituted by our Lord, we receive at Meal-times, and at all other times, in our Assemblies, before Day, and only from the Hands of the Bishops. We make Oblations for the Dead, and for their || Martyrdom on a stated Day yearly. We reckon it unlawful to Fast, or to Worship kneeling, on a Lord's day, and all the while between *Easter* and *Whitsunday*. We take great care that none of our Wine or Bread should fall to the Ground: And upon every Motion, at our going out, or coming in, when we put on our Clothes, or our Shoes, or go into the Bath, when we come to the Light, or to the Table, or to Bed, or sit down, or whatsoever we do, we sign our Foreheads with the Sign of the Cross. If you seek for a Law of the Scriptures for these and such other Institutions, you will find none; Tradition is alledged to have introduced them, Custom to have confirmed them, and the Faith of Christians to have observed them. Thus far *Tertullian*. Now if his Authority is good, why are not all those things practiced for which he here vouches? How is it fair to urge his Authority in one case, and reject it in so many others? Moreover, it appears by *Tertullian*, † that

† *Lactis & mellis concordia, elsewhere he terms it Societas.*

\* Or, *The Sacrament of the Eucharist, which was appointed by our Lord at a Meal-time, and to all, (i. e. the apostles in general) we receive in our Assemblies before day, & only from the Hands of the Bishops.*

|| *Pro natalitiis.*

† *De Baptismo.*

in his time they used Anointing in Baptism, which the Papists still use : But the Church of *England* therein differs from them, and from *Tertullian* too : So that for this Corruption for which we differ from them, the Papists have as good and as ancient Authority, as the Church of *England* has for the Cross in Baptism ; nay, I may say they have much better : For, 1. His Treatise *de Baptismo* is both more Ancient and more Orthodox, than that *de Coronâ*, out of which our Author has taken his Citation. The first was written before, and the latter after *Tertullian* was gone over to the Heresy of *Montanus*, which I shall have occasion to mention again presently. 2. *Tertullian's* Words make nothing to our Author's purpose ; for as the Reader may easily see, *Tertullian* says not a Word of the Cross in Baptism, but speaks only of the vulgar use of it, which the Church of *England* has now rejected : And indeed, if the Practice of the Church in *Tertullian's* time were to be judged of by this Passage (which our Author is pleased to think for his purpose) one would conclude, that the Cross (however common the use of it was) was not as yet brought into Religious Worship, or tacked to any of God's Ordinances : For had the Cross been thus used at that time, he would without doubt have given us some hint of it ; had it been used in Baptism, he would have mentioned it towards the beginning of what I have set down from him ; among the other uninstituted Customs used in Baptism, or else among those many Instances that he gives us in the latter end of the



use of it, he would have put down this also. For my own part, I cannot find any thing in *Tertullian* sufficient to persuade me, that it was thus used in his time. There is no mention made of it in that Treatise that he wrote concerning Baptism, where he particularly describes the Ceremonies used by them in the administering it. Nor has our Author helped me to so much as one Passage of this Nature out of his Writings. I know there is one Passage that is often cited (which is the only one that can be with any colour alledged) and that I think is easily answered, by comparing it with *Tertullian's* other Writings, viz. those *de Baptismo, & de Coronâ*. I conclude therefore, that the manner in which this Sign is used by the Church of *England*, does not as yet appear more ancient, nor indeed so ancient as some of those Corruptions for which we differ from the Papists.

*Which Words (of Tertullian) together with his frequent and familiar mention of it, make it very improbable, that he received it from the Montanists.*

But how do THESE WORDS make it improbable? just in the same manner as this Treatise of our Author's about the Cross, makes it improbable that he received it from the Church of *England*. Our Protestant Writers have, I think, agreed, that *Tertullian* was a *Montanist* when he wrote this Treatise *de Coronâ*, and the same is granted by † *Du Pin*, a judicious and candid Papist; † *Nouvelle Bibliothec.* so that these Words signify no more to prove *part 1. pag.* that he had it not from the *Montanists*, than *91, 92.* they

they do to prove that they used it in Baptism. Well, but *these Words, together with his frequent and familiar mention of it, will make it very improbable*: But where is his frequent and familiar mention of it to be found? In his Orthodox Treatises written before he turned *Montanist*? I confess that would be very much to the purpose: But I do not find that he does in any of those Treatises clearly mention this Custom: Nor has our Author helped me to any Instances of that Nature; and till he does, I shall be ready to conclude, that because he frequently and familiarly mentions it after that he turned *Montanist*, and mentions it not at all while he remained Orthodox, that therefore it is very probable, that he received it from the *Montanists*: And it is to me very considerable, that in the Treatise which he wrote concerning Baptism, before he turned *Montanist*, he should mention nothing of it, which he would most certainly have done, had it then been used among the Orthodox, in Baptism. I might add, that from *Tertullian* himself, in the very place which I have cited, it seems very probable, that he is mentioning and endeavouring to recommend some *Montanistical* Customs; and it is not unlikely, that this is one of them, which he therefore puts last of all, that so by considering the rest before they came at this, they might be the better prepared to digest it; and to this purpose likewise I understand him, when a little after he tells us, that  
 “ whatever is agreeable to Reason becomes a  
 “ Law, let who will start it; (i. e. *let him be Friend or Enemy, counted Orthodox or Heretical*)

retical) and then he adds, " Don't you think  
 " that any of the Faithful may appoint and  
 " contrive (*any Rite*) so it be worthy of  
 " God, promotes Discipline, and is profitable  
 " for Salvation; since our Lord has said,  
 " Why judge ye not your selves that which  
 " is right? He tells us also, " That we are  
 " only to see, whether the Tradition be a-  
 " greeable to right Reason, whoever is the  
 " Author of it; q. d. *Have no respect of Per-*  
*sons, reject not anything I plead for, because*  
*Montanus first insisted on it, only see whether*  
*what he, or any other Person says, be agreea-*  
*ble to Reason.* Which Passages, I think, make  
 it probable, that he received this Custom  
 from the *Montanists*. Doubtless, *Tertullian*  
 received several other Customs, which he  
 there mentions from the same Hands.  
 We meet not with the Trine Immersion be-  
 fore this, nor the tasting the Milk and Ho-  
 ney. Their forbearing the Bath *Tertullian*  
 † himself mentions, as objected against the  
*Montanists* by the *Psychici*, the Nick-name † *De Jeju-*  
 he is pleased to give the Catholicks; and in *nis, cap. 1.*  
 like manner he speaks of their \* *Fasts*; and \* *Ibid.*  
 if *Apollonius* (cited by *Eusebius* ||) may be || *Hist. Ec.*  
 credited, *Montanus* was the first that made *lib. 5. c. 18.*  
 Rules for the fixing and stating *Fasts*. The  
 Oblations that he mentions for the Dead have  
 the same Date, and are I suppose of the same  
 Original: *Tertullian* is their first Voucher,  
 who speaks of them in a Treatise † which he † *De Mono.*  
 wrote expressly against the Catholicks. *cap. 10.*

Forty Years after him (*Tertullian*) and a-  
 bout Two Hundred after Christ, (sc. his Death,  
 and not according to the Vulgar *Æra*; for  
 Tertul.

*Tertullian* wrote this Treatise *de Coronâ* after  
 † *Hom. 2.* the Year Two Hundred) *Origen* † mentions  
 in *Pf. 38.* those, who at their Baptism were signed with  
 this Sign.

But it is not certain, whether this be the  
 Testimony of *Origen*, or of *Ruffinus*, who dy-  
 ed in the beginning of the Fifth Century. It  
 is cited out of a Translation of *Ruffinus*, and  
 the Original is lost; and it is well known,  
 that *Ruffinus* took a great liberty in transla-  
 ting *Origen*, left out and added what he plea-  
 sed. Our Author could not be ignorant of  
 this, for every Body complains of it; and  
 usually in citing any of those Translations,  
 give the Reader a Caution. And after all,  
 it is not said expressly, that they were signed  
 with this Sign in *Baptism*. He warns Chri-  
 stians, not to give the Devil advantage against  
 them to upbraid them in this manner; "Be-  
 hold this Man was called a Christian, and  
 signed with Christ's Mark in his Forehead,  
 but he had my Laws and my Mark written  
 upon his Heart. Behold he that renoun-  
 ced me and my Works in Baptism, hath  
 again set himself to the doing my Works,  
 and hath obeyed my Laws. I own these  
 Words may be understood according to our  
 Author's mind; but if we consider what *Ter-  
 tullian* says of their use of this Sign, it will  
 appear, that there is no absolute necessity of  
 understanding them in this Sense.

And about One Hundred Years after, *St.*  
 \* *Despir. f.* *Basil* \* gives this Usage the Venerable Title of  
 c. 27. an Ecclesiastical Constitution; or fixed Law of  
 the Church, that had prevailed from the Apo-  
 stles Days, that those who believe in the Name  
 of

of the Lord Jesus Christ should be signed with the Sign of the Cross.

Here I might alledge, that very many *Protestants* have doubted, whether this be a genuine Piece of *St. Basil's*. Or supposing that the Treatise it self be genuine (as I believe it is) it is very possible that some later Hand may have corrupted this Chapter, and have put in that long and tedious Digression, in which this Citation is contained. I cannot but take notice, that the Doctrine maintained in this place seems to be contradicted by *St. Basil*, in another place in that same Book, † where he tells his Adversaries, who alledged the Fathers in their own behalf, that they did it falsely, and adds, "What our Ancestors said we say also— Although this is not that which satisfies us, that it is the Tradition of our Fathers, for they herein followed the mind of the Scriptures. This I think does not at all agree with the Twenty-seventh Chapter of that Treatise; and I am confident, the Papists have not in all Antiquity a Testimony for Oral Traditions, which they value or use more than that. I am sure it looks very like that which *Tertullian* condemns in the Hereticks \* : But let it be granted that the Passage is genuine, I then answer ;

† Cap. 7.

\* *De Praescrip.* c. 25.

1. That we need not wonder at the Titles and Encomiums which *St. Basil* gives this Usage, because it was very common for them to talk of their particular Customs as Apostolical: *St. Jerom's* † Advice is very remarkable to this purpose; "That Ecclesiastical Traditions, especially those that are not against  
" the

† *Epist. ad Lucin.*

“ the Faith, are to be observed as they were  
 “ delivered to us by our Ancestors ; and that  
 “ the Custom of one Country is not to be sub-  
 “ verted by the contrary Custom of another---  
 “ —But let every Country abound in its  
 “ own Sense, and reckon the Precepts of  
 “ their Ancestors Apostolical Laws. And to  
 “ the same purpose are many Passages in St. Au-

† Vide de *gustine* †.

*Baptismo*

*contra Don.*

*lib. 2. c. 7.*

*lib. 4. c. 24.*

*lib. 5. c. 23.*

2. St. *Basil* lived at too great a distance from the times of the Apostles, to be able to give us good Information what were Apostolical Laws or Traditions, about which the Orthodox in much earlier times could not agree among themselves, but put this specious Name upon their different Sentiments : To which purpose, I will here set down the

\* Not in E-

*pist. Cypri.*

*ani, p. 219.*

Remark of the Learned Bishop *Fell*, \* “ That  
 “ from the Controversy about the Baptism  
 “ of Hereticks it appears, how easy it was  
 “ for any Persons to make use of the pretence  
 “ of Apostolical Traditions, since *Stephanus*  
 “ and *Firmilianus*, the Patrons of the two  
 “ opposite Opinions, did both of them with  
 “ equal Assurance lay claim to it. And the  
 “ same thing is evident, from another Instance  
 “ mentioned by *Firmilian* in that Epistle upon  
 “ which is this Note, and that is, the different  
 “ Traditions that were pretended about the time  
 “ of keeping *Easter*.

3. St. *Basil*, in the same place, gives this Venerable Title to the turning to the East when they pray'd, their Anointing with Oil, the Trine Immersion ; and he tells us, That the reason why these things were handed down to them by unwritten Traditions, was

to maintain the Veneration of them, there being few that understood the reason of them ; as he tells us particularly, that they prayed toward the East, because of the Situation of the Garden of *Eden* : But (thanks be to God) we are now generally satisfied of the Vanity of such Pretences, and know that Ignorance is not the Mother of Devotion, and therefore cannot assent to such Doctrine as this : Nor can any stress be laid upon this Passage, without gratifying our common Enemy. The Church of *England* will as much wound themselves with it, as they will us : For *St. Basil* reckons, that such unwritten Traditions do as much concern Religion, and are of as good Authority as those that are written ; and therefore, since the Church does not practice all those Apostolical Laws that *St. Basil* talks of, they do censure themselves by alledging his Authority ; and let them consider, whether the Papists do not as well argue from this Testimony against them for Chrism, as they do against us for the Sign of the Cross. *St. Basil's* Words will not allow it to be an indifferent Ceremony (as *Dr. Hammond* † imagined it to be ; ) and therefore the Church of *England* must necessarily come under his Censure : But though *Dr. Hammond* seems to speak in the Name of the Church in the place referred to, I hardly persuade my self that he speaks her Sense of the Matter. It is true, they retained Chrism in the first Edition of the Common-Prayer; in King *Edward* the VIth's Days ; but they

† *De Confirmatione. Oper. Vol. 4. p. 869.*

soon altered it in their second Edition before his Death. I do not see how the Primitive use of Chrism can be excused from being plainly Sacramental, and therefore unlawful: And of this Opinion (if I do not greatly mistake him) is my Lord of *Sarum*, where he Discourses concerning Confirmation †, and I suppose our Author is of the same mind also: For though this is as ancient as any of those Customs which he \* objects as used by the Primitive Christians, without any Jealousy of invading Christ's Prerogative in instituting new Sacraments, yet he takes no notice at all of it, because (as I imagine) he looked upon it as plainly Sacramental, and too gross to be vindicated.

† *Exposit.*  
of the 39  
Art. p. 271.

\* *Pag.* 132.

4. I may also add, That *St. Basil* in this Passage does not expressly mention the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, but the common use of it. But,

5. This cannot be an Apostolical Tradition, because there is not the least evidence of any use of this Sign before *Tertullian*, (except perhaps among some Hereticks I shall have occasion to mention hereafter) that is, there is no mention of any such Rite as this in the two first and most pure Ages of Christianity. There is nothing of this Nature in *Clemens Romanus*, *Hermas*, *Barnabas*, *Ignatius*, or *Polycarpus*, &c. But it is most evident, that there was no such Custom in the Church some time before *Tertullian*, because *Justin Martyr* makes no mention of it: He several times mentions Baptism, but never this Ceremony annexed



to it. In his second Apology to the Emperor, he explains the Customs of the Christians, and towards the latter end sets down a particular Account of their manner of Baptizing, which for the Reader's Satisfaction I will transcribe: " We will now (*says he*) P. M. 159.  
 " relate in what manner we dedicate our  
 " selves to God, being New-made by Christ,  
 " least omitting this, we should be thought  
 " to act unfairly in this Narration: As ma-  
 " ny therefore as are persuaded, and do be-  
 " lieve that the things which are taught and  
 " said by us are true, and promise to live  
 " accordingly, are taught to seek of God,  
 " by Fasting and Prayer, the Forgiveness of  
 " their past Sins, we also Fasting and Pray-  
 " ing with them; then they are led to the  
 " Water, where they are Regenerated, the  
 " same way that we our selves were: For  
 " they are Washed in the Name of God the  
 " Father and Lord of all, and of Jesus Christ  
 " our Saviour, and of the Holy Ghost. And  
 then, after a pretty long Digression, he tells  
 us, how they brought the Baptized Person  
 to the Brethren, and Pray'd, &c. And then  
 describes their manner of Celebrating the  
 Lord's Supper. So that in his time, about  
 Twenty or Thirty Years before *Tertullian*,  
 Baptism was free from this, and from divers  
 other Ceremonies, which *Tertullian* men-  
 tions as joined to it. It is this most Pri-  
 mitive Practice, and Native Simplicity of  
 God's Ordinances, which we plead for.

In the next place, St. Cyprian's Authority is produc'd, and we are told, That †  
 † N. B. Having fix'd the rise of this Ceremony to Tertullian's time, I have since the writing of these Papers, met with two Passages that may seem to prove that it was in

ty is produc'd, and we are told, That †  
 Of all the Fathers, St. Cyprian, who was before St. Basil, and very near, if not contemporary with Tertullian himself, not only speaks very familiarly of the use of this Sign, but has some Expressions that would now seem harsh and unwarrantable, and yet the Authority of this Father has saved him from being questioned about it.

Should it be supposed, that the Cross was used in Baptism in St. Cyprian's time, his Authority will be no more able to defend this

use before ; and therefore, though I do not know that any one has ever alledged them in the behalf of the Cross, I have yet thought it might not be amiss to take notice of them to the Reader : They are both in the Acts of *Thecla*, published in the Learned Dr. Grabe's *Spicilegium Patrum*, Part 1. p. 95. Which Acts are more ancient than *Tertullian*, as appears by his citing them, *Lib. de Baptismo*, cap. 17. Nay, if his Testimony there may be relied upon, they are as old as the time of St. *John*. Now in the *Greek Text*, which Mr. Grabe has published, we find, that *Thecla* is said in two several places to have crossed her self, pag. 104. ἡ δὲ τὸν ἴδιον σταυρὸν ποιευσάμην ἐπέβη τῶν ξύλων, & p. 116. ἡ δὲ θεκλα—κατασφραγισαμένη ὄλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτῆς : But in answer to these I observe, that Dr. Grabe himself does not deny, that these Acts are interpolated and corrupted, See pag. 94. Nay he owns, that the *Greek Text* may be mended in several places by the Old *Latin Version*, which he has published, See pag. 120. Now neither of these Passages are in this manner expressed in that Version. The first is only thus ; *At illa expansis manibus orabat ascendens super ligna*, A Man with his Hands stretched out was with some of the Ancients the very shape of a Cross ; and therefore, the Corruptor thought without doubt that he did not alter the Sense, by substituting an Expression which seemed to him more pious. I wonder how the same kind of Expression escaped his Hands, when both *Greek* and *Latin* agree, see p. III. & 125. As to the Second Passage ; besides that the *Latin Version* has nothing at all of it, the very Phrase of *κατασφραγίζειν ὄλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτῆς*, shews, that the Corruption must be long after even *Tertullian's* time.

this Practice, than it is that of Infant-Com-  
munion, in which case our Adversaries take  
the Liberty to reject it, and say that he is  
not an Author Primitive enough to vouch  
for it †. Nor is it fairly said, that his Au-  
thority has saved him from being questioned  
about his Expressions, when it is certain,  
that the Learned *Parker* \*, and others that  
have written against the Cross, do blame  
him, and several other later Fathers, for  
what they say about it ; though it is true,  
*Tertullian* being the first that mentions this  
Sign, his Authority has been most confi-  
dered.

† See *Abr.*  
pag. 123.

\* See *part*  
1. pag. 77.  
90, &  
113, &c.

*He † tells us, that they are signed in the  
Forehead with the Cross, that are thought  
worthy of the Lord ; that Baptism is sanctifi-  
ed by the Cross, and that it compleats every  
Sacrament.*

† *De Laps.*  
pag. 169.  
*adv. De-*  
*metr.* pag.  
203. *de U-*  
*nit.* p. 175.

And do these Expressions now only SEEM  
to be harsh and unwarrantable ? Our Au-  
thor must never expect to bring the *Dissen-*  
*ters* to the same esteem of *St. Cyprian's* Au-  
thority, that he has himself ; if it will save  
him from being questioned by him, for such  
Expressions as these. For my own part, I  
should not scruple to condemn any one who  
should use such Expressions, as grossly super-  
stitious, and an Encourager of the present  
Popish Superstition. It is not by *St. Cypri-*  
*an's* Authority that I will defend my Faith  
or Practice. I respect no Man's Person,  
when he varies from the Rule I have to go  
by. And if these are *St. Cyprian's* Expressi-  
ons, and you do not question him about  
them,

them, Why are you satisfied that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper should be *incompletely* administered in your Church? Why do you not use the Sign of the Cross in that Sacrament, as it was appointed in the first Edition of the Common-Prayer in King *Edward* the VIth's Days? If *Cyprian's* Authority be sufficient with you, you have as much reason to blame our first Reformers, for leaving it out in the Communion-Office, as we (who reject the Authority of all uninspired Persons in this Matter) think we have for the leaving it in the Office for Baptism. In short, *St. Cyprian* was a brave Man, and no good Christian can read his Works without a high Veneration of his great Holiness, Zeal, and most Christian Temper: But notwithstanding this, he had his blind side as well as other Men; and this Weakness is common to him, with some other very excellent Persons in the Primitive Church, that he had some simple Fancies about the Sign of the Cross: But that I may do him Justice, I am persuaded his Expressions are not so bad as our Author would represent them. The first Passage is indeed in his Treatise *De Unitate*, last mentioned in the Margin; where, speaking concerning the Judgment of God upon *Uzziah*, 2 *Chron.* 26. 29. he has these Words: "That the Lord being provoked, marked him in that part of the Body, in which they are marked that are thought worthy of the Lord (or that please the Lord.) The reason of this Expression of his need not be taken from the use

use of the Cross in Baptism, it may as well from the common use mentioned by *Tertullian*; to which purpose is the Note of the Learned Bishop upon this place: But to say the truth, the reason of this, and some other of his Expressions of the like Nature, seems plainly to be no other, than that Interpretation which he more than once gives us of *Ezek. 9. 3, 4.* making the Mark that God set upon those that he would spare to be no other than a Cross. As to the other Expressions which our Author cites out of him, I cannot find them, though I have diligently examined the Treatises referred to in the Margin: And I am almost assured, that whoever will search into this matter, will find that our Author has not here acted with that Sincerity and Fairness that becomes a good Casuist; but has cited two genuine Pieces of *St. Cyprian* in the Margin, when the Passages themselves are not there, nor (I verily believe) in any of his genuine Works, but are to be met with in those Works that are unjustly fathered upon him, in which the Deceit is very evident: For as yet I have not met with any thing in *Cyprian*, that amounts to a Proof of their using this Ceremony in Baptism in his time.

*The great Antiquity of this Usage is manifest.*

This our Author thinks he has proved; but I must confess, I cannot as yet see any cause to recede from Mr. *Daille's* Opinion †, † *De Cult. Lat. Relig.* That the Cross was never used in Baptism in the Three first Centuries: Nor have I pag. 63.

† Bever.  
Cod. Can.  
Illustr. in  
Proem.

been as yet so happy, as to meet with any of those *Luculentissima Antiquitatis testimonia*, which a very Learned Bishop † tells us do contradict Mr. Daille's Assertion.

*Nay, the Fathers frequently use being signed in the Forehead for being Baptized: I shall not instance in St. Cyril, St. Ambrose, and St. Austin, who sprinkle their Writings with the common mention of this Ceremony, and often times frame Arguments for a good Life, from this very Sign upon their Foreheads.*

There is no need of any Testimonies of these later Fathers, we grant that it was used in their time. And as for the Arguments which they framed for a good Life from it, they are as cogent as some others of the like Nature, which we frequently meet with; as from the pure white Garments which a Person received at Baptism, &c. If they had had no better Arguments than these, they must have done much less good than they did.

*Only I shall add this Remark, that the first Christian Emperor, Constantine the Great, had his Directions probably from Heaven it self, to make this Sign the Great Banner in his Wars, with this Incouragement, that by this he should Overcome: That this Dream or Vision was from Heaven, and a thing of great Reality, is evident from the Success of that Prince's Army under it.*

I am very sensible of the Disadvantage of pleading against the Reality of that which so many Ecclesiastical Historians have  
attest.

attested ; and that a Man exposes himself to abundance of Odium, who will venture to question their Authority, and to examine a Matter that has so much vulgar Prejudice on its side : But I must confess, the Rule of our Faith being once fixed and confirmed by Miracles, and the Canon of the Holy Scriptures being once settled, I have very little Faith in the Visions and Miracles, which we meet with afterward, that countenance Rites and Ceremonies, of which we have not the least Footsteps in the Holy Scriptures themselves. I will not take upon me, to condemn every Vision which we meet with in ancient Authors ; but yet I make no doubt, more are pretended than really happened ; and that which perhaps had some Reality in it, was often so improved and amplified, that we know not now what to make of it. It is a very cunning way to encourage and animate Soldiers, to persuade them the Victory is foretold and promised them by God himself, and is therefore certain to them. Such Visions therefore were frequently pretended before any great Action, or at least the Historians do often introduce the Story of any great Victory with some such Preface : Thus *Constantine* the Great (if we may believe *Nicephorus Callistus* †) had another Vision, and looking up to Heaven saw the Stars formed into Letters, expressing these Words, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* Though it is certain, that no Vision was necessary to teach *Constantine*

† Lib. 7.

cap. 47.

*stantine* this Lesson, when he might have learned it from the 50th *Psalms*, ver. 15. And as though the Vision alledged by our Author had not been sufficient for *Constantine*, we are told by the same Historian, that looking up to Heaven, he saw a Cross with this Inscription, *With this Sign thou shalt overcome all thine Enemies*. So again, we meet with the appearance of a Cross, to portend Victory to *Constantius*, Junior, over *Magentius*, mentioned by several Ecclesiastical Historians. So *Licinius* is taught by an Angel a Form of Prayer, and is promised the Victory if he used it, as it is related by *Lactantius* †; though it is certain, *Licinius* was no Friend in his Heart to the Christian Cause; but he had not discovered himself when that Treatise of *Lactantius* was written, and therefore his Pretence of a Vision was more easily credited by *Lactantius*, tho' it lost its Credit after that *Licinius* had pulled off the Mask, and appeared to be an Enemy; and therefore, all the Christian Writers who wrote after that, make no mention hereof, though no doubt, if he had continued as firm and hearty in the Christian Cause as *Constantine* did, this pretended Vision would have been handed down to us with as much care, and as many Encomiums as the other of *Constantine*. There is too much truth in those Words of the Learned Bishop *Fell* \*; "That it is not to be denied, that the Liberty of Counterfeiting, and the Forwardness of Believing, were so great in the first Ages of the Church, that

† De Mor-  
tib. Persec.  
cap. 46.

\* *Monitio*  
*ad Lect. ad*  
*calc. op. cyp.*  
pag. 53.



“ that the Credit of Matters of Fact is much  
 “ lessened thereby ; so that not only the  
 “ World, but the Church has reason to com-  
 “ plain of her fabulous times. And I fear,  
 that there are so many Presumptions against  
 this Story, which is related by Ecclesiasti-  
 cal Historians, as the means of *Constantine’s*  
 Conversion, that it will be able to yield but  
 little Assistance to the Advocates for the Sign  
 of the Cross ; and that the Reader may not  
 be too severe in censuring my Boldness, or  
 think that it is only Partiality to my own  
 Opinion that is the reason why I suspect this  
 Story, he may take notice I am not the first  
 that have been suspicious of it. *Jacobus*  
*Gothofredus*, † a very Learned Lawyer, and  
 no ways interess’d in any such Controversy  
 as this, has gone before me, and has with a  
 great deal of Learning shewn what credit it  
 deserves, out of whom I shall take leave to  
 borrow what seems to my purpose, and shall  
 add what I have my self farther observed  
 concerning it.

† *Vid. Not*  
*in Philost.*  
*ad lib. 1.*  
*cap. 6.*

1. Then (as he observes) although the  
 Banner that *Constantine* so successfully used  
 is mentioned, yet never do we find the least  
 mention of this appearance of the Cross in  
 any of the Heathen Writers : Nay, *Gelasius*  
*Cyzicenus* is so honest in relating this Story,  
 as to tell us, \* that the Heathen did uni-  
 versally esteem it a Fable, contrived for the  
 gaining the more Reputation to Christia-  
 nity.

\* *Act. Conc.*  
*nic. lib. 1.*  
*cap. 4.*

2. The

2. The chief Foundation of this Story is a Panegyrick : The other Historians do generally cite as their Voucher, *Eusebius's* Life of *Constantine* ; and in Panegyricks it is usual to amplify Matters, and to make the most of them ; and therefore *Socrates*, tho' he follows *Eusebius* in this Story, yet says of him, † that in writing the Life of *Constantine*, he was more careful in setting down his Praises, than in giving an exact Relation of Matters. The Learned Bishop of *Sarum* makes the same Remark, who upon another Occasion is pleased to use these

\* *Four Discourses, pref. pag. 34.* “ I confess, we ought not to take it singly from *Eusebius*, for he is rather a perpetual Encomiast of *Constantine*, than his Historian : And the

† *Biblioth. cod. 127. pag. 306, 307.* same Opinion had the Learned *Photius* † of him. Does it not look a little suspicious, that we should meet with nothing of this Story in *Eusebius's* Ecclesiastical History ? Such Stories do easily spread themselves far and near, especially when they are in favour of that Party that has the Ascendent over its Rival. Such a Story as this, if it had been true, must have been universally known among Christians, or without doubt must have reached as far as *Cæsarea* in Twelve Years time ; and so long it was between the pretended time of this Vision, and the Death of *Licinius*, at which *Eusebius* ends his History : And yet it is plain, *Eusebius* knew nothing of it when he wrote his History, because (though he had occasion enough) yet he never mentions it therein. And is it

† *Lib. 1. cap. 1.*

\* *Four Discourses, pref. pag. 34.*

† *Biblioth. cod. 127. pag. 306, 307.*

not very strange, this Story should be hid from so eminent and inquisitive a Person as *Eusebius*? and that he should be able to give us no account of it, when he was writing the History of the very time and Battle at which this is pretended to have happened? Is it likely, that not only *Constantine*; but his Army too which saw this Vision with him, should industriously conceal it? Or if they did not, that it should never come to *Eusebius's* Ears? This, I confess, is to me a Presumption, that the Story was trumped up afterward: And I am the more confirmed herein, by what we meet with in *Eusebius's* History, *viz.* an Account of *Constantine's* Statue, which he erected at *Rome*, after the Victory he obtained over *Maxentius*, which held a Cross in its Right-hand, and upon which he tells us, † the Emperor himself ordered an Inscription, declaring, *That* † H. E. lib. 9. c. 9. *by this salutary Banner (the Cross) he had freed their City from the Yoke of Tyrannical Government.* Doubtless, if he had then known any thing of this Story, he would have told us likewise how *Constantine* came by this Banner. But I need not insist upon this, since *Eusebius's* own Account seems to imply, that he knew nothing at all of this Matter, till he had the Honour to be himself acquainted with the Emperor\*. So that if the Reader will bear with a Conjecture, I will offer one which, I think, is not void of all Probability. There were, at the time when this Vision is pretended to have happened, no less than Four who shared the

Empire,

\* *Vid. Vit. Const. lib. 1. cap. 28.*

Empire, or who (if you will) were Competitors for the whole of it. The Christians were no despicable Party at this time, but were very numerous through the whole Empire, as we may see by a Letter of *Maximus* † their Enemy, and *Constantine's* Rival, and by the Indulgence which both he and *Licinius* were forced to grant the Christians for their own Security. Now nothing was ever like to be so advantagious for the setting *Constantine* above the rest of his Rivals, as his engaging in his Interest so strong and numerous a Party as the Christians every where were; who, by reason of the desperate Hardships they groaned under, would most gladly behold an approaching Deliverance, and with a desperate Courage contend for it.

† *Euf. H.*  
E. *ibid.*

A little matter of Policy then would teach a Man in *Constantine's* Circumstances (especially considering his Education, of which afterward) to use his best Endeavours to secure their most hearty Affection: And therefore to speak freely, he seems to me to have chosen the Banner of the Cross, because he knew from the ordinary Practice of the Christians (who were abundantly superstitious in this matter) that it would make him very acceptable to them; and afterwards to set a better Gloss upon his Practice, and perhaps out of a Zeal also to promote Christianity, he seems to have devised this pious Fraud, if it be one. It is certain, that some of his other Actions will not bear a strict Scrutiny; and it is not improbable, that his  
Opinion

Opinion concerning Baptism, and his delaying it to the end of his Life, might occasion his not acting in every thing like a thorough Casuist, hoping to wash away all at last.

3. There is not a perfect Harmony in the Accounts of all that relate the Story : Here I might observe, with reference to the Motto that *Gelasius Cyzicenus* says it was †, τὸ ἐν νίκῃ, upon which *Balsoreus* notes, that there is undoubtedly wanting the Particle ω, which he tells us is prefixed by all those that mention the Story : But therein he is grossly mistaken, for though *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Philostorgius*, and some others have it, yet *Eusebius* himself, the great Patron of the Story, leaves it out.

Again, *Philostorgius* \*, and from him I suppose † *Nicephorus Callistus*, say it was in Latin, of which I remember not the least hint in any of the rest. *Eusebius* says, the Letters of the Motto were ranked about the Cross, to which *Philostorgius* and *Nicephorus* add, they were formed of Stars ; and the first says they ran about the Cross like a Rainbow ; and the Author in *Photius* \* says the Cross and Letters were formed by immaterial Light ; whereas *Sozomen*, who makes more than any of the rest of this Story, tells us, that when he first saw this Sign, the Holy Angels standing by him said, O Constantine, in this Overcome.

Again, there is not a perfect Agreement about the time when this happened. *Eusebius* places it before his engaging *Maxentius*, and

† *Act. S.*  
*Conc. Nic.*  
*lib. 1. c. 4.*

\* *Lib. 1.*  
*cap. 6.*  
† *Lib. 7.*  
*cap. 29.*

\* *Biblioth.*  
*numb. 256.*  
*pag. 1407.*

and both he and *Nicephorus* make him to be in a Journey: But *Philostorgius* says, that his Victory over *Maxentius* was the occasion of his Conversion, and that he saw this Vision about that time; whereas the Author in † *De Mort. persec. cap. 44.* *Photius* and *Lactantius* † place it after the first Battle with *Maxentius*, in which *Maxentius* got the better.

Again *Eusebius* says, this Cross was placed over the Sun, and that he saw it in the Afternoon, and consequently he must see it where the Sun then was, in the South or South-West, and the later you place the Vision, the more Westerly it must be. With *Eusebius* agrees *Nicephorus* as to the time, and *Zonaras* makes it in the middle of the Day. Now what can be more contrary to this, than that he should see it in the East, which yet is asserted by *Philostorgius* and *Nicephorus Callistus*.

But the chief Difference that I insist upon, is in the Account of the thing it self: We have Three Authors that relate this Story, that lived in *Constantine's* time; but they do not any two of them agree, whether it were a Dream or a Vision only, or both. The Author I mentioned in *Photius* lived in this time, and he makes it to be only a Vision, and with him agree *Philostorgius*, and *Gelasius Cyzic. Lactantius*, who lived at Court, and was Tutor to *Constantine's* Son, (and should therefore, one would think, have as perfect knowledge of the Story as any Man) makes it only a \* Dream † *De Mort. persec. cap. 44.* (which perhaps may be the bottom of the Story,

Story, the Addition of the Vision, and the other Improvements, being probably made after he was Dead) whereas *Eusebius* says he had first a Vision, then a Dream in which Christ appeared to him, shewed him the Sign, and bad him make another like to it, &c. and *Sozomen* (as I observed before) prefixes to both these another Vision, with the Apparition of Angels, saying, *O Constantine, in this Overcome.* And because of this very material Difference, our Author styles it a Dream or Vision, because he did not know which to make of it.

4. It seems to me some Presumption against the Reality of this Story, that God does not work Miracles for converting Persons, but upon very extraordinary Occasions. My meaning is, that he does not use to work Miracles to convert Persons, where the ordinary and common Methods may be supposed sufficient. The blind furious Zeal of *St. Paul* (who was designed for eminent Service) occasioned God to recede from his ordinary Methods, and in order to the overcoming those Prejudices which rendered him averse to the use of the Ordinary Means, he calls him by a Voice from Heaven, and surprizes him (not with a Cross but) with a Light above that of the Sun. But I conceive, *Constantine's* Case was very different. We have no reason to believe, that he was possessed of any such mighty Prejudices against Christianity: Nay, according to *Eusebius's* own Account, he was prejudiced against Paganism (which was to him the only

ly Rival of Christianity) and that because of the Unsuccessfulness of the preceding Emperors, who had been the most violent Zealots for it. Some have asserted, that his Mother *Helena* was a Christian long before; which if it were certain, would much strengthen this Argument: But I lay no stress upon it, because I know not of any good Authority for it, and I think that *Eusebius* is express † against it: But however, † *Vit. Const. lib. 3. c. 47.* since his own Father was a very great Favourer at least of the Christians, and chose them for his Courtiers, it is almost impossible that *Constantine's* Education should not possess him with a favourable Opinion of Christianity, and render a Miracle needless in order to his Conversion. If we could indeed believe the Account that is given of *Constantine* by the Authors of the Famous Donation, viz. that he had been at first a Persecuter of the Christians, this Argument would fall. But it is certain that Account is false. *Eusebius* \* assures us, that from his first being made Emperor, he testified the same Affection to Christianity, that his Father had done. *Lactantius* || also assures us, That upon his first being made Emperor, he gave Liberty to the Christians; to which agrees the Author in *Photius*, who tells us, That *Constantine* was instructed by his Father in the Christian Religion.—— And that *Constantius* declared upon his Death-bed, when his Son *Constantine* was Arrived to see him, That Death was more pleasant to him than Life, since he should leave behind him  
such

\* *H. E. lib. 8. cap. 13.*

|| *De Mort. persec. cap. 24. de falsa Relig. c. 1.*



such an Emperor (*Constantine*) that should wipe the Tears from the Christians Eyes, and put a stop to the Persecutions of *Maximianus*.

To this I know it will be objected, That the Conversion of an Emperor to the Christian Faith was a Matter of that Importance to it, that it may be justly reckoned an extraordinary Occasion, and such as might fairly require a Miracle ; and that God might single out this particular Miracle, for the more effectual removing of those Prejudices that were common in the Minds of Heathens against it.

In answer to this Objection, I do readily grant, That it was indeed of great Importance to Christianity to gain the Throne ; but I conceive, the Ease and Tranquility of Christians would be the same, whether the Emperor's Conversion were wrought with or without a Miracle ; and therefore, since the Ordinary Means may be supposed sufficient without a Miracle for his Conversion, this part of the Objection is answered already : And therefore, as to the other part of the Objection, that this might be a good Means to remove the common Prejudice of the Heathens against the Cross ; I answer, That if this had been true, it might have had this Effect ; but I imagine, it would almost necessarily have had another Effect, which I hardly believe the Blessed God would by such a Miracle have occasioned : My meaning is, that it would have been a Confirmation of those ungrounded Imagina-

tions that were common among Christians (before *Constantine's* time) of the great Vertue of the Sign of the Cross ; and that it would have been a Pattern and Rule for the setting up material Crosses, and ascribing Vertue to them ; and indeed that Effect, it is plain, this Story in a great measure had. To this I may add, that when Miracles have been wrought, it has been in such a convincing way, that the very Adversaries of the Truth have not been able to deny the Matter of Fact, but have found themselves obliged to seek out other Evasions ; but he that will seek for this in this Miracle, will I fear be at a loss ; for as no Heathen Writer grants, so the Heathens (as I observed before out of *Gelasius Cyzicenus*) universally denied the Matter of Fact, which yet could hardly have been, had it been wrought (according to the Story) before the whole Army, in which were doubtless abundance of Heathens, some of whom (if this were the Design) would have been Converted by it, and have attested it ; and the whole Credit of the Story would not have rested upon the single Testimony of *Constantine*, which is not much helped by the Addition of *Artemius*, who is brought in by *Simeon Metaphrastes* and *Sarius*, as an Eye-witness of this Miracle ; though in several Ages after it was wrought, we hear nothing of his Testimony.

5. This common Account of *Constantine's* Conversion cannot be true, if he was a professed Christian before the time of this pretended Vision ;

Vision; and that he was indeed a Christian before is not only asserted by *Sozomen*, but such a notable Argument is alledged by him in the proof of it, that I do not see how it can be easily evaded. He tells us most expressly †, that in *France, Britain, and the* † *Lib. 1. cap. 5.*  
*Parts of the World* thereabout, *Constantine* had embraced the Christian Faith before he had War with *Maxentius*, or came to *Rome* or *Italy*; and he adds, that the Laws he made in favour of the Christian Religion do fully prove it. Now this utterly overthrows the Account given by *Eusebius*, that just before this Vision, *Constantine* was deliberating with himself, What God he should address himself to, and chuse as the Patron of his Cause, and at last resolving to intreat the supreme God, that he would reveal himself to him, and help him: And *Sozomen* himself does indeed give us a hint of this, which certainly does no way agree with his own Account, that he had embraced the Christian Faith long before. Nor can *Sozomen* be brought off by alledging that he tells us \*, that many things concurred to make a Convert of *Constantine*, and particularly this Vision of the Cross; for if *Constantine* were not a Convert before this Vision, ~~would not only~~ *Sozomen's* Assertion in the Fifth Chapter be false, but his whole Argument would be impertinent. \* *Lib. 1. cap. 3.*

6. There is another Circumstance in *Eusebius*, which with me does not add much Credit to the Story, and that is, that after (upon his Prayer to the supreme God,

^ would not only be false

*Constantine* had obtained this Vision of the Banner of the Cross with this Motto, *In this Overcome*, he was in suspense about the meaning of it, till that at Night Christ appeared to him in a Dream to discover it to him. He that does but consider, what the general Practice of the Christians was at this time, and how common the use of this Sign among them was, will (I imagine) conclude that the first Vision, if true, was sufficiently plain, and needed not such an Interpreter. The Cross of Christ was reckoned a Matter of so much Glory by all Christians, and of so much Reproach by *Jews* and *Pagans*, that it was next to impossible for a Man to have heard any thing of Christianity, and yet to have been ignorant of the manner of Christ's Death; and it being the general Custom of Christians at that time to sign themselves on all Occasions with the Sign of the Cross, *Constantine* must doubtless have seen it made a Thousand times in his Father's Court; and if *Sozomen's* Account were true, it is a little strange that the Angel that said to him, *O Constantine in this Overcome*, should not so explain it as to render all farther Interpretation needless. But it is farther to be observed, that the Christians did then ascribe great Vertue to the sign of the Cross, and that they used it as a Fence against all Dangers, as abundance of Testimonies prove, and this likewise *Constantine* could not well be ignorant of. We must suppose him to have been a Person, who had not the least Drachm of humane Curio-

Curiosity, never once to have enquired, when he saw the Christians crossing themselves, what was the meaning of that usage; and upon the least Enquiry he would have been immediately informed either by Heathens or Christians. The Heathens had been indeed so scandalized by this their Practice, that they thought they worshipped the Cross; whence the Heathen in *Minucius Felix* tells the Christians, † that they worshipped what they deserved, meaning the Cross. This was occasioned, I suppose, by the use they made of the Sign, and the vertue they ascribed to it; though the Christians denied, that they worshipped the Cross, as we may see in the other part of that Dialogue\*. It seems plain therefore, that *Constantine* might by the first Vision easily understand, that he was to use such a Sign as that was which appeared to him in the Heavens, and that by vertue of it he was to conquer his Enemies: And therefore I confess, the Story seems to me better laid by the Author in *Pbotius*, who supposes the Vision plain enough of it self, and does not with *Eusebius* introduce Christ afterward interpreting it to *Constantine* in a Dream.

7. *Eusebius* tells us, that when *Constantine* saw this Vision, his whole Army saw it with him; and yet he tells us, that when he gave him an account of it, he confirmed it with his Oath. Perhaps some will think, that such a Confirmation is a full Proof of the truth of this Story: But yet, I think, the World is apt to suspect Persons that are over forward in swear-

† *Ut id colunt quod merentur.*  
P. M. 28.

\* *Cruces nec colimus nec optinamus.* p. 89.

ing : And it seems to me, that here was not that special Occasion for his swearing in private Conversation, *viz.* to attest a Matter of Fact, of which according to his own Account, he had so many Eye-witnesses. Methinks it would have been much more to his purpose to have appealed to the Testimony of those that saw the Vision with him. And *Eusebius* would have given us better Assurance of the Truth of this Story, if according to his usual Diligence, he had made a farther Enquiry into the Emperor's Army, had found out some of the Eye-witnesses, and left us upon Record some of their Attestations : But the want of such Evidence as this, seems to me to have made *Eusebius* jealous of the Story, and this gave Occasion to *Constantine* to give that Confirmation. To this purpose I understand *Eusebius*, when he tells us, " That upon the  
 " Emperor's Prayer to God, He was pleased  
 " to afford him a most strange and wonder-  
 " ful Sign, which it would be hard to be-  
 " lieve, if it had been related by any body  
 " else ; but since the Emperor himself rela-  
 " ted it to me (who now write the Histo-  
 " ry) a long time afterward, when he  
 " vouchsafed me the Honour of his particu-  
 " lar Acquaintance, and confirmed it with  
 " his Oath ; Who will hereafter make any  
 " scruple of believing this Story ? Upon  
 the whole, I think we have reason to sus-  
 pend at least our Judgments, since we have  
 but one Witness, and that in a Matter that  
 may seem much to concern his own Reputa-  
 tion ;

tion ; and since it is in the Mouth of Two or Three Witnesses that every Word shall be established ; and since the World is now convinced, that *that* one Witness is not a Person of so compleat a Character as *Eusebius* would represent him to be ; but his Life and Reign had very great Blemishes, upon which I care not to enlarge ; and indeed, Christianity has been so much indebted to him, that it is but decent to cover and excuse them as much as we can : And if any thing seems contrary to this in what has been said, the Reader must not lay the blame upon me, but upon him that by alledging such Proofs, does render it necessary to consider the ground of them.

Thus far concerning the *Reality* of the Story ; which, I think, we cannot, with *Eusebius* and our Author, argue *from the Success of that Prince's Army under it* ; because there is too much reason to suspect, that the Story was mostly contrived after the Experiment had been made of the success of this Banner.

But, however, to pleasure our Author, let us suppose this a thing of great Reality ; let us suppose that it were liable to no such Objections, as have been already alledged, and let us see what use he can make of it : He thinks then, that this is a good Testimony of our Lord's Approbation of the Sign of the Cross.

*We cannot* (says he) *suppose, that our Blessed Lord would, by so immediate a Revelation, countenance such a Rite as this already*

dy

dy used in the Church, if he had resented it before as superstitious, or any way unwarrantable.

Our Author here plainly acquits all the Christians before *Constantine's* time of all Superstition, and vouches every thing in their use of this Sign to be warrantable ; and yet I cannot think that a good Protestant, or a true Son of the Church can upon sober Consideration, and consistently with his own Principles do so. I desire the Reader only to look back upon what I have cited out of *Tertullian*, and what our Author has given us for *Cyprian's*, and then let him judge, Whether he has prudently passed this Judgment upon their Doctrine and Practice. The Church of *England* is against frequent Crossing, nor has she as yet declared in any of her Articles, &c. that she ascribes such vertue to the Cross, as to make it *sanctify Baptism, and compleat every Sacrament*, which yet our Author assures us, is asserted by *Cyprian*, and about which he thinks not fit to question him : Nay, he thinks all these Opinions and Expressions, with abundance more, are to be received by us as Truths revealed, and miraculously confirmed to us from Heaven ; though, nevertheless, when he finds it more to his purpose in the latter end of the Chapter, he sticks not to acknowledge, that Baptism is compleat without the Sign of the Cross. Our Author in the next Page condemns visible Crucifixes : I cannot tell whether he does visible Crosses also, which are one part of



of them. If he does, this Discourse of his makes much against himself; and does notoriously countenance them, and the Opinion of some special Vertue which, through the Divine Blessing, attends the use of them; for, according to our Author, here was an immediate Revelation and Direction from God for the making of them (*and not the transient Sign of the Cross in the Air*) and the expecting Help and Aid from God by them; and to speak freely, I believe, that no doubt is made by those that consider things impartially (I mean all but the Church of *Rome*, whose Interest makes some of them endeavour to think otherwise) that it was at this time that the Practice of setting up Material Crosses had its beginning; that which *Constantine* set up I mentioned before, and we meet with many more after this time.

But farther, many that believe this Story to be true, have thought the Cross had little to do in it any farther, than as the *Greek* Letter  $\chi$ , the first of Christ's Name, was the Figure of a Cross. Learned Men have shewn, that the Form of *Constantine's* Banner was,  $\frac{\rho}{\tau}$  or  $\frac{\rho}{\chi}$  that is, X and P, the two first Letters of the Name  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ . This is evident from ancient Coins †, and indeed from the Authors \* that relate the Story; But the Story will most certainly better vouch for visible material Crosses, than for the use of the Sign of the Cross in Baptism.

† See Onuf. Panvin. lib. 2. com. in fast.

\* Euj. Vit. Const. lib. 1. cap. 31. Laet. de Mort. per. c. 44. Nic. Call. lib. 7. I cap. 29. &c.

*I may add, that we ought not to be too pe-  
tulant against that, which the Holy Spirit has  
sometimes signalized by very renowned Mira-  
cles, as those that consult Ecclesiastical Hi-  
storians of the best Authority cannot but be  
convinced*

This Remark of our Author's is liable to the same Objections with the former. I need not therefore give a particular Answer to it. The Reader may (if he please) here apply the Observation of the Learned Bishop Fell, which I cited before, which to me is no small Confirmation of the Prediction of the Apostle, *2 Thes. 2. 9.* When our Author is more particular in his Instances, I may perhaps be so in my Answer; but indeed, he seems not himself heartily to believe those pretended Miracles, though he would amuse his Reader with them; this I guess from his following Words, *viz.*

*And those Conceits of the Fathers concern-  
ing this Sign, which perhaps may be too  
fanciful, do confirm the ancient Reception of  
it in the Primitive Church.*

By which Words (I imagine) our Author would evade the Charge of a very absurd Credulity, which might have been otherwise grounded upon his former Words. It is not in Debate, Whether this Sign was in use in the time of those later Fathers, who are here designed; we grant it, but reckon not that Primitive enough to warrant our Use of it.

But since the *Abridgement* mentions the Miracles of the Cross, without descending to Particulars, I will here take the Liberty to instance in one of its miraculous Vertues, which the Author of the Case seems to believe; and indeed it is such an one as has many a *Probatum est* in the ancient Writers.

And 'tis this † that it is a most terrible scourge to the Devil, and most effectual to drive him away. And a Learned Person tells us,

“ \* That when a Divine Vertue was fancied

“ to accompany that Ritual Action, it was

“ used in Baptism as a sort of Incantation;

“ for with the use of it the Devil was ad-

“ jured to go out of the Person to be Bap-

“ tized: And *Bellarmino* has attempted to

explain this Vertue of it; || and one reason

of its Vertue he makes to be the Apprehen-

sions and Thoughts of the Devil about it,

and tells us, “ That the Devil undoubtedly-

“ ly, when he sees the Sign of the Cross,

“ remembers that he was conquered by the

“ Cross of Christ; and therefore is afraid

“ of that Sign of his Calamity, and runs

“ away just as a Dog does at the sight of a

“ Cudgel. But I confess, I have no Opi-

nion of this strange Vertue of the Sign of

the Cross, and do believe that the Devil

has too much Courage to be so easily sca-

red: Nay, I think I have reason to believe,

that the Devil himself, upon occasion, does

not scruple the use of this Sign; and that

he can do a great deal more mischief with

this Sign to them that use it, than they can

do to him by it. I will give the Reader

here

† *Epiph.*  
*her. 30. § 8.*

10. 12.

*Euseb. Orat*  
*in laud.*

*Const. c. 6.*

9, &c. *So-*

*zom. lib. 5.*

c. 2. *Last.*

*de Mortib.*

*pers. c. 10.*

*Inst. lib. 4.*

cap. 27.

*Theodorit.*

*Hist. lib. 3.*

cap. 3.

*Naz. Orat.*

cont. *Juli-*

*anum.*

\* *Bishop*

*Burnet 4*

*Discours. p.*

291.

|| *Contr. de*

*Sacram.*

*lib. 2. c. 31*

*p. m. 257.*

here some Passages to this purpose, from a very remarkable Story related by Dr. *Balthasar Han*, in a Letter to *Sennertus*, who has printed it in his Works †. The Story is as fruitful a Soil for Remarks, as that which we have been told concerning *Constantine*. The Doctor relates it from his own Knowledge and Observation, and it is briefly this; That in *November, A. C. 1634.* an honest pious Woman (commended by the Doctor in particular for her using the Sign of the Holy Cross) was most dreadfully Bewitched, had blue Spots made in her Flesh, and a multitude of Crosses together, with these Letters *N. B.* and was troubled with sad Fits; — That afterward she had more Crosses made in her Flesh, and the Characters that are used by Astronomers and Chymists; — That in *January* following, besides new Crosses, and several other things, there was a Fool very artificially pictured, with the *German Word Narr*, (which signifies a Fool) written at length.

I don't pretend to much Understanding in Hieroglyphicks; but I think a Man without an *Oedipus* may interpret these, and therefore will leave every one to do it as he sees cause. Only to balance Accounts with our Author, I will add this Remark, That if he thinks that God warranted this Sign for that purpose to which it was formerly used, to terrify the Devil, he has here the Devil's Warrant that he will not be offended at it; that if of Old this Sign had indeed such a wonder-working Vertue, and  
was

† *Sennert.*  
*Med. pract.*  
*lib. 6. p.*  
794.

was so effectual a Terror to the Devil, it is plain that Miracles being long since ceased, this Sign has now lost that Vertue, and the Devil is not in the least offended at it. And that therefore there can no Prejudice or Detriment accrue to Protestants, by wholly laying aside the use of it.

*If it be said, that the ancient Christians used this Sign, because they lived among Jews and Heathens, to testify to both, that they made the Cross the Badge of their Profession, and would not be ashamed of it, though it was a Stumbling-block to the one, and Foolishness to the other; whereas we have no occasion for it who universally profess Christianity.*

Before I consider the Answer that is given to this Objection, I shall, with the good leave of my Reader, a little more particularly inquire into the Original of this Sign, and shall the rather do it in this place, because our Author seems to take this to be a true Account of the Rise of it; wherein he follows the Convocation, who tell us, That "the Honour and Dignity of the  
 " Name of the Cross, begat a Reverend Esteemation, even in the Apostles time (for  
 " ought that is known to the contrary) of  
 " the Sign of the Cross, which the Christians shortly after used in all their Actions,  
 " thereby making an outward Shew and  
 " Profession, even to the Astonishment of  
 " the Jews, That they were not ashamed  
 " to acknowledge him for their Lord and  
 " Saviour, who died for them upon the  
 " Cross;

“ Cross : And this Sign they did not only  
 “ use themselves with a kind of Glory,  
 “ when they met with any *Jews*, but sign-  
 “ ed therewith, &c. I will not deny, that  
 some of the later Fathers, particularly *St. Austin*  
 and *St. Cyril*, do give us some such  
 Hints, that herein the Christians had a Re-  
 gard to their Enemies, and designed to re-  
 sistify to them by this Usage, their Respect  
 to their Crucified Lord. This Sign might  
 be so used by them in their time ; but if  
 they thought that this was the true Ac-  
 count of its first Rise, or that it was thus  
 used at first, with a humble Submission I  
 conceive they were mistaken. I hope I may  
 now, from what has been already said, be  
 allowed to suppose, that this Sign came first  
 into use about *Tertullian’s* time ; and since  
 it is from him that we have the first Ac-  
 count of it, we may certainly form a better  
 Conjecture concerning the true occasion of  
 it from what he says of it, than from what  
 is said by those who lived a considerable  
 time after him. Now it is most evident,  
 that in *Tertullian’s* time this Sign was not  
 used upon this pretended reason, but be-  
 cause of the Vertue which they fancied to  
 attend it : For by what I have already cited  
 out of *Tertullian* it appears, that they used  
 to cross themselves, when it could signify  
 nothing at all to *Jews* or *Heathens*. If  
 they did it only upon the account of such,  
 to what purpose was it for them to cross  
 themselves when they put on their Shoes or  
 Clothes, when they went out or came in,  
 when

when they went to Table or to Bed ? We must suppose the Christians to have been much more familiar with *Jews* and *Heathens* than is commonly imagined, if they were present with them on all these Occasions. Briefly, their crossing themselves in Private, appears at least as old as their crossing themselves in Publick ; and since in Private it could not be upon any such reason, I conclude that this Account of its Original is not probable : Nay, I am persuaded, that whosoever will impartially read the Fifth Chapter of *Tertullian's* second Book to his Wife † will be convinced, that in his time they were not so open in their use of this Sign, and were so far from designing by it to bear their Testimony either to *Jews* or *Heathens*, that they did it clandestinely when they were present, endeavouring to conceal from them what they did, being unwilling to cast such a Pearl as this before Swine, lest they should trample it under their Feet, and turn again and rend them, as *Tertullian* there applies that Text to this purpose. If therefore they by this designed to bear their Testimony to *Jews* and *Heathens*, it could not be at its first Rise ; but some time after, when the *Jews* and *Heathens* had observed and taken notice of them, and indeed considering how frequently they used this Sign, it could not be long before they would be discovered, whatever care they used to hide it ; and perhaps, when their Enemies began to reproach them for

† See also  
Cap. 8.

this, they might then use it with a kind of Glory, &c.

I am the more jealous of this Account of the Original of this Sign, because it seems to me injurious to the Primitive Christians, of whose mild and peaceable Behaviour we have good Assurance: It carries in it a base Reflection upon them, as Persons of a most litigious Temper, and uncivil Deportment; for if upon all those Occasions wherein they used to cross themselves, they did it in Opposition to those that were not of their mind, and that without any Provocation from them, they must have been Persons of such a Character, and have had but little regard to those excellent Rules of the Apostle, † to give no Offence, either to *Jew or Gentile*; to follow Peace with all Men; and if it be possible, as much as in us lieth, to live peaceably with all Men. I cannot but think, that a much more probable Account may be given of the way by which this Sign was introduced; and I wonder it has not been alledged, since it seems very obvious to any Man, that considers the strain of the ancient Writers.

The Doctrine of the Cross (or of Salvation through Christ crucified) was to the *Jews* a Stumbling-block, and to the *Greeks* Foolishness: It was a great Prejudice in the Minds of both, which hindred their embracing of Christianity, and with which as the most material Objection they endeavoured to cramp the Christians. This rendered

† 1 Cor. 10.  
32.  
Heb. 12.  
14.  
Rom. 12.  
18.



dred it absolutely necessary, that the Christians should be especially careful to defend themselves in this Point ; and accordingly, all those that write in defence of Christianity, take particular notice of this Objection, and endeavour to remove the Offence which both *Jews* and *Heathens* took at the Cross. It cannot be denied, that this occasioned them to be guilty of great Extravagance, while, according to the Genius of those times, they set themselves to look out for abundance of Resemblances and Types of the Cross. Their earnest desire of discovering a Cross in every thing, made every thing they looked upon appear to them in the shape of a Cross ; just as painted Glasses, or the Humours of the Eyes discoloured by a Distemper, will make every thing seen through them appear of the same colour with themselves. Thus *Justin Martyr* † answers the *Jew* who made this Ob- † *Dial. P.*  
 jection, by alledging Prefigurations of the *M. 93.*  
 Cross, and makes *Moses's* praying with his Hands lifted up to be typical of the Cross, because *Christ's* Hands (as he thought) were stretched out just in the same manner upon the Cross ; and in this Fancy (one of the best) *Barnabas* \* went before him, and \* *Epist. c.*  
 he is followed by *Tertullian* ||, *Cyprian* †, † 12.  
 and several others. Again, *Justin* makes || *Adv. Ju-*  
 the Horn of an Unicorn, or *Rhinoceros*, to *da. c. 11.*  
 be a Sign of the Cross ; and to this pur- *adv. Marc.*  
 pose he screws the Words of *Moses*, where *lib. 3. c. 18.*  
 the Horns of Unicorns are mentioned, *Deut.* † *Adv. Ju-*  
*33. 17.* *Tertullian*, and several others, *da. lib. 2.*  
 c. 21.

give the same Interpretation, and it is great odds, when the Word Horn comes in their way, that they bring in the *Cornua Crucis*.

† *Apol.* 2. To make sure work of all, *Justin* † tells us, That no Business in the World is done, but you may observe this Figure ; as in Sailing, Plowing, Digging, &c. That it is the Figure of a Cross that puts a difference between a Man and a Beast, because a Man's Body is strait, and he can stretch out his Hands ; and this Figure he observes in a Man's Face, being made by his Nose and his Forehead : But the pleasantest Fancy is that of *Barnabas*, or whoever else was the Author of that ancient Epistle : 1. We read that *Abraham* Armed all the Men in his House, that the Number of them was 318. Now who would imagine, that in this there should be any Mystical Signification of the Cross ? And yet, as awkward as this appears, that Author could easily shape it into a Cross ; For, according to him, those two *Greek* Letters, I. H. the two first of the Name *INŌS*, are signified by the 18. because *in* do in *Greek* stand for just that Number ; and then by the 300. is meant the *Greek* Letter  $\tau$ , which stands for 300. and is it self the Figure of a Cross : So that 318, the Number of *Abraham's* Servants, was a clear Prophecy, that *Jesus* should be Crucified. Herein *Barnabas* is followed by several others, particularly by *Clemens Alexand.* \* who a little after applies the 300 Cubits of the Ark to the same purpose.

\* *Strom.*  
lib. 6. P.  
M. 656.

purpose. What pity was it, that *Abraham* and *Moses* did not understand *Greek*, that they might have been enlighten'd in these Mysteries? These pretty Fancies were unhappily lost to them and all the *Jews*, because in their Language they will not bear at all. 'Twere endless to reckon up the ridiculous Whims they had about this Matter. Now, these idle Notions and simple Misapplications of Scripture made way for the like Practices. This Notion, for instance, that under the Old Testament almost all things did prefigure the Cross, and that nothing could be done, neither Sailing, Plowing, Digging, &c. without the Sign of the Cross, occasioned some to entertain an Opinion of some extraordinary Vertue in the Sign it self, and made them think it might be of singular Service to Christians themselves to make use of the Sign. These Pretences might have deceived Sound and Orthodox Christians, as we see they did afterward; but it is probable, that the Hereticks did first improve them to this purpose; for the first that we find does expressly ascribe Vertue to the Cross is *Valentinus*, who in his Medly of Christian and Pagan Theology, makes *HORUS* a Confirmer and Preserver of his Thirty *Æones*, and to this *Horus* he gave divers Names, according to its different Vertues; as it did establish and confirm, he call'd it the Cross †; but as it did divide and distinguish, he called it *Horus*: Upon which place in Dr. *Grabe's* Notes upon *Irenæus*, there is this pertinent

† *Iren. lib.*  
 I. c. I. 96.  
*Tert. adv.*  
*Valent. E-*  
*piphan. lib*  
 I. her. 31.

Citation out of the *ἐκλογαί*, at the end of *Clem. Alex.* " That the Cross is the Sign of  
 " that *Horus* that is in the (*Valentinian*)  
 " *Pleroma* ; for it separates between the  
 " Faithful and the Unfaithful, as *Horus*  
 " does between the World and the *Pleroma*.

By this it seems very probable, that they used to distinguish those of their own Sect by the Sign of the Cross. 'Tis certain, the *Carpocratian* Hereticks had at this time

† *Iren. lib. 1. cap. 24. Eccl. in fin. Cl. Al. P. M. 804. Epiph. Her. 27. § 5.* some such Custom, † who used to mark their Disciples, burning them in the hinder part of the Ear. Now *Carpocrates*, the Ring-leader of this Sect, was born at *Alexandria*, and it is not unlikely, that *Valentinus* (who is thought by *Epiphanius* to have been an *Egyptian*, and bred at *Alexandria*) might borrow somewhat of this Usage from his Country-man, and from

\* *Tert. de veland. virginib. c. 10. Dempster. not. in Ros. antiq. p. 79.* the *Pagans*, \* who used such Marks of Distinction upon various Accounts. 'Tis certain, he borrow'd most of his Divinity from the latter ; and if it may be supposed, that he thus took up this Usage, I think then the Testimony I alledged will prove, that the particular Mark that he chose was no other than the Cross, which very well agrees with the Qualities which he ascribes to it. From *Valentinus* I suppose *Montanus* had it, and from him *Tertullian* ; and *Tertullian's* Authority went a great way with *St. Cyprian*, and others, toward the bringing in the use of it into the *African* Churches ; and this was the more easily done, because this superstitious Practice of

the Hereticks carried in it a plausible pretence of a wonderful Respect to our Saviour's Passion, and therein the sounder Christians were very unwilling to be out-done by Hereticks, and therefore in a sort of Emulation soon embraced it; and because of its great Vertue, they at length added it to Baptism, to render it the more efficacious; nay, as our Author tells us, they reckoned every Sacrament incompleat without it. This Opinion seems most probable to me, however, I shall not be fond of it when a better Conjecture is offered. I shall here add what may confirm this, that Mr. *Daille* † thinks, the reason why they first added Ceremonies to Baptism, was that they might remove the Offence which the Heathens took, at the Simplicity and Plainness of the Ordinance; to which we may add (if what I have offered be allowed) that perhaps they perceived the Ceremonies used by the Hereticks served for that purpose, and gained them Profelytes. And that it may not be thought incredible, that the Catholicks who so much abhorred the Hereticks, should yet espouse this Rite of which they had been the first Authors and Inventers, we may observe that they most certainly did so in other Instances. Not to mention Images of a much later Date, which were first used by the *Carpocratian* Hereticks; nor the Ceremony of Exsufflation, which seems to have had some kind of beginning among a Sect of the *Valentinians*. There is one that I shall take notice of, that

† *De Cult. Lat. Relig. lib. I. c. II.*

\* *Iren. ubi supra. Iren. lib. c. 13. vid. not Feuard. & Pamel in Tertull. p. 336.*

is exceeding plain, and that is the Anointing in Baptism : This has undoubtedly the same Original I have assigned to the Cross. *Irenæus*, describing the Baptism of the *Marcosian* Hereticks, has these Words, † “ After  
 † *lib. 1. c. 18. § 2.* “ that they anoint the hallowed Person  
 “ with the Juice of Balm, (*Opopalsamo, the*  
 “ *great Ingredient of our modern Chrism :*)  
 “ This Ointment they say is an Emblem of  
 “ the sweet Odour that is over the Uni-  
 “ verse. Some of them say, it is needless  
 “ to bring the Person to the Water, but  
 “ mixing Water and Oil together, and pro-  
 “ nouncing certain Words, they pour it  
 “ upon the Head of the Person to be thus  
 “ Hallowed (*or initiated*) and this they  
 “ will have to be Redemption. *Epiphani-*  
 \* *Her. 34.* *us* \* has copied this out of *Irenæus* ; and  
*que est*  
*Marcos. p.* *Petavius*, the Popish Advocate, in his Notes  
 256. upon the place, tells us, that this those Apes  
 did according to the Custom of the Catho-  
 lick Church, which they herein retained ;  
 and with him Dr. *Hammond* in this Point  
 † *De Conf.* agrees † ; and *Feuardentius* (a Person of the  
 c. 6. § 1. same Kidney with *Petavius*) takes abun-  
 dance of pains upon the place, to prove  
 that this was a Rite in use among the Ca-  
 tholicks, and produces many Testimonies,  
 but not one that is both genuine and perti-  
 nent before *Tertullian*, who is the first that  
 mentions both this and the Sign of the  
 Cross ; and as he certainly received the one,  
 so it is highly probable he did the other  
 from the Hereticks also. This would be  
 the more probable, if what some have as-  
 ferted

serted were true (which I confess I don't myself believe) that the Chrism and Cross were joined together, and that they were always Anointed in the Form and Figure of a Cross. But to return from this Digression, let us consider how our Author answers the Objection he has started.

*I answer, (says he) 1. That the Objection supposes the Sign to be Lawful, and that it may be used upon weighty Reasons, and surely then the command of Authority will justify the practice of it.*

I answer, That our Author is greatly mistaken; this Objection only relates to the Cross in Conversation, and not at all as it was used as a part of Worship; and therefore, though it were granted, that the first use of it were lawful, no Argument could be drawn from thence, to prove it lawful in the second sense, any more than it can be proved that Chrism is lawful in Baptism, because a Man may Anoint himself upon other Occasions: And therefore, all that should be inferred from this, is only the Lawfulness of that use of the Sign which this Objection refers to. But farther, this is only an Argument (*ad hominem*) from your own Principles, and such kind of Arguments are never supposed to contain any absolute Concessions from those Persons that make use of them. We would in Charity put the best Construction we can upon the Practices of the Primitive Christians, and where we cannot vindicate them, we would yet make what allowance we can to any  
Circum-

Circumstances that may lessen their Guilt: And therefore we say, if you alledge the true reason of their using this Sign, their Case will admit of such an Apology as your own will not. But we deny at the same time, the Lawfulness of using this Sign even in that manner they did; and our Judgment farther is, That Christ has left no uninspired Persons whatever Power to ordain and impose any such Ceremony as this in his Church, and so we cannot see what command of Authority will justify the Practice of it. We cannot think that Christ has left it in the Power of the Civil Magistrate to devise new Terms of Communion, or to clog his Worship with new Rites and Ceremonies; and at present we cannot see, that there is a Command of any such Authority, which can be urged as obliging those Ministers who have not taken the Oath of Canonical Obedience, to use the Sign of the Cross, but they are left to their Liberty, and may omit it without the breach of any humane Law: Nor can we think any Ecclesiastical Authority sufficient for this purpose. Our Sense of this Matter is so fully expressed by a Learned Prelate †, that I shall content my self with his Words.

“ He that came to take away the insupportable Yoke of Jewish Ceremonies, certainly did never intend to gall the Necks of his Disciples with another instead of it: And it would be strange the Church should require more than Christ himself did, and make other Conditions of her Commu-

† *Stillingf.*  
*Pref. to his*  
*Irenicum.*



“ Communion than our Saviour did of Dis-  
 “ cipleship. What possible Reason can be  
 “ assigned or given, why such things should  
 “ not be sufficient for Communion with a  
 “ Church, which are sufficient for Eternal  
 “ Salvation? And certainly, those things  
 “ are sufficient for that, which are laid  
 “ down as the necessary Duties of Christia-  
 “ nity by our Lord and Saviour in his Word.  
 “ What Ground can there be, why Christi-  
 “ ans should not stand upon the same terms  
 “ now, which they did in the time of Christ  
 “ and his Apostles? Was not Religion  
 “ sufficiently guarded and fenced in then?  
 “ Was there ever more true or cordial Re-  
 “ verence in the Worship of God? What  
 “ Charter hath Christ given the Church to  
 “ bind Men up to more than Himself hath  
 “ done? Or to exclude those from her So-  
 “ ciety, who may be admitted into Hea-  
 “ ven? Will Christ ever thank Men at the  
 “ Great Day, for keeping such out of Com-  
 “ munion with his Church, whom he  
 “ will vouchsafe not only Crowns of Glory  
 “ to, but it may be *Aureola* too, if there  
 “ be any such things there? The Grand  
 “ Commission the Apostles were sent out  
 “ with, was only to teach *what Christ had*  
 “ *commanded them.* Not the least Intima-  
 “ tion of any Power given them, to impose  
 “ or require any thing beyond what him-  
 “ self had spoken to them, or they were di-  
 “ rected to by the immediate Guidance of  
 “ the Spirit of God.

I will add for the sake of our Author, that there may be many things which a Person may lawfully do, which yet it may be unlawful for Governours to impose, and which we should not be any ways obliged to observe if they did. For instance, it is very lawful for a Clergy-man to lead a single Life, but yet certainly, it is very unlawful to impose this, and to oblige every one, when he takes Orders, in a solemn Vow not to marry: And in like manner, should it be supposed lawful to use the Sign of the Cross, yet unless it can be shewn that a Satisfaction in this matter is such a Qualification of a Minister as the Church has Power, according to the mind of Christ to require and insist on, I cannot think a Man is obliged to observe any Rule made to enforce it: And if the Authority pretended is that of the Convocation or Church-Representative, we cannot think our selves bound in Conscience to observe their Orders. The Divine Right of our Convocations is not only generally disclaimed, but is most solidly confuted by the excellent and learn-

† *Reflections on a Book, Intituled, Rights of an English convocation.*  
\* *Ubi supra.*

ed Bishop of *Sarum* †; and their Canons are not reckoned Valid in Law, according to the National Constitution. I will conclude this Head with the Observation of the above-mentioned Bishop *Stillingfleet* \*.  
“ Without all Controversy, the main Inlet  
“ of all the Distractions, Confusions, and  
“ Divisions of the Christian World, hath  
“ been by adding other Conditions of  
“ Church-Communion than Christ hath  
“ done.

“ done: With whom Mr. Chillingworth † † *Relig. of Prot. part I. cap. 4. § 16.*  
 does fully agree, whom the Reader may consult if he please.

2. *That we have as just Reason to use it as the Primitive Christians, because of the Blasphemous Contempt that is generally cast upon the whole Scheme of Christianity, particularly the Merits of our Saviour's Cross and Passion, by the Pretended Wits of our Age.*

If any thing follows from this, it is that we had need use it as frequently and upon all Occasions as they did, and not that we should use it in Baptism. It was before *Jews* and *Heathens* they used to cross themselves, to shew they were not ashamed of Christ's Cross; and what does that signify to our Author's purpose, who is pleading for a Ceremony performed in the Church, where the Pretended Wits of our Age who condemn the whole Scheme of Christianity, don't use to come? And farther, our Author forgets the Objection he is answering, and instead of talking of the Cross as a Testimony of our not being ashamed, he talks of it as a Remedy against Shame, as is plain from *Cyprian's* Words next cited by him.

*So that St. Cyprian's Words are now pertinent \*, Arm your Foreheads, that the Seal \* Epist. of God may be kept safe; as if he should 156. ad have said, Remember the Badge you took up. Thiber. on you in Baptism, and so long as you have that upon your Foreheads, never be ashamed or laughed out of Countenance, as to the Memory of our Saviour's Love, and the Foundation*

*dition of your Hopes laid in his Death and Passion.*

I should have passed over this Passage, it being of no moment in the Controversy, had not our Author so oddly Paraphrased it. St. *Cyprian* is not in that Epistle fortifying Christians against the Laughter and Scorn of *Jews* or *Heathens*, but he warns them of, and endeavours to prepare them for a fiery Trial, and a bloody Persecution coming upon them, and excellently commends to them the Advice of the Apostle, to take to themselves the whole Armour of God (of which, by the way, we find not that the Cross is any part;) and then adds,

*“ Accipiamus quoq; ad tegumentum capitis  
 “ galeam salutarem, ut muniantur Aures ne  
 “ audiant edicta feralia; muniantur Oculi  
 “ ne videant detestanda simulachra; muni-  
 “ atur frons ut signum Dei incolume serve-  
 “ tur: That is, Let us take for the De-  
 “ fence of our Head the Helmet of Sal-  
 “ vation, that our Ears may be secured  
 “ from hearkening to the terrible Edicts,  
 “ our Eyes from regarding the abominable  
 “ Idols, and our Foreheads that the Sign of  
 “ God may be kept safe. Which (if I mi-  
 stake not) is as though he had said, The  
 Mark of God and of the Devil are inconsi-  
 stent; you forfeit the Cross by Idolatry;  
 as you hope therefore for the Salvation to  
 which you are marked, you must abstain  
 from Idolatry, even in spite of the most  
 exquisite Torments.*

But

But this Paraphrase of our Author brings to my mind a Remark of the Learned Mr. *Joseph Mede*; who in his excellent Treatise of the Apostacy of the latter times, gives us several Instances of that Apostacy, and of the Fulfilment of that part of *Daniel's Prophecy*, Chap. xi. 38. which he thus renders; *Together with God in his Seat, he shall worship Mahuzzim* [Protectors,] and having shewn how exactly this was fulfilled, in the Honour given to Saints and Reliques, adds, † “ I might also put you in † *Inter ope-*  
 “ mind of the Term *Munimentum*, given <sup>7a, p. 674.</sup>  
 “ to the Cross of Christ, and that so usual  
 “ Latin Phrase of *Munire signo crucis*, to  
 “ fortify (that is, to sign) with the Sign of  
 “ the Cross. And it may seem a little  
 strange, that our Author should say, \* the \* *Pag. 131.*  
 Cross is a meer transient Sign, which abides  
 not so long as to be capable of becoming an Ob-  
 ject or Medium of Worship; and yet here,  
 when he descants upon St. Cyprian's Words,  
 should suppose that a Christian has it upon  
 his Forehead a long time afterward.

I grant indeed, that the use of the Cross is an indifferent Ceremony, and that Baptism is as our Church declares, compleat without it, but what I contend for is fully proved, viz. That the Cross was used in the first Ages of Christianity; from whence it follows, that though it is not necessary, yet it is warrantable.

If it is an indifferent Ceremony, it is highly unreasonable to insist upon it with such Stiffness and Rigour as the Church has done:

done : And if Baptism is compleat without it, I hope the Church will not be angry with the Dissenters, that they desire no more than compleat Baptism. But I cannot but wonder, that our Author should think he has fully proved what he contends for, when there is one part of his Argument which he has not so much as attempted to prove. His Argument is plainly this, Whatever was used in the first Ages of Christianity is warrantable ; the Cross was used in the first Ages of Christianity, therefore it is warrantable. Both the Premises are denied by his Adversaries, and of the first he takes no notice at all, of the latter he has given us, as I have shewn, but very poor Evidence ; but were that ever so strong, his Conclusion will not hold unless he prove the other Proposition also.

*Our use of this Sign is not in the least like the Popish use of it ; for (1.) We admit of no visible Crucifixes.*

The Force of this Argument I do not well understand. It is no Proof, that you do not use one Sign as they do, because they use another more than you. I might as fairly argue the contrary, because you admit of Visible material Crosses, which have more Affinity with this Sign than a Crucifix ; and these are too common among you. And it is to the Immortal Honour of Dr. R. Cox, Bishop of *Ely*, the Beginner of the Quarrel at *Franckfort*, that he was for introducing the use of them, and therefore consulted *Cassander*, a moderate *Papist*, concerning

cerning the particular Form or Shape that he should chuse †. And I suppose it will not be denied, that Arch-Bishop *Laud*, and some others in his time, were for bringing Visible Crucifixes into use; and that at a considerable charge he repaired some in his own Chappel-Windows, which were almost ruined. And such Visible Crucifixes are still admitted, whatever our Author says to the contrary. And concerning them, I shall transcribe from Mr. *Prynne* \*, a notable Remark of Bishop *Mountague's*, who speaking of Images, has these Words; "The setting of them up, suffering them to stand, using them for Ornaments, for helps of Memory, of Affection, of Remembrance, cannot be abstracted to my Understanding, from Reverence and Honour simply in due kind. It is farther very remarkable, that many fine Pictures, and particularly of Christ upon the Cross, are got into the Book of Common Prayer; and one would think, that one may as well guess by the Book of your Devotions, what you admit of, as by any thing. Perhaps some may think, this is only the Printers and Booksellers contrivance, for their own Gain, though contrary to the mind of the Church: But this charitable Interpretation can hardly be allowed by him, who considers how abundantly Jealous the Church is of the Honour of that Book: She cannot reasonably be supposed to have so patiently suffered this, had she resented it as any ways injurious or dishonourable to the Book:

† *Vid. Cas- sand. Epist.*  
20.

\* *Cant. Doom: 165.*  
205.

A considerable Author in the late Dispute chose therefore to lay this upon the Papists, as an Artifice used by them to insnare the common People ; and that they might have a Hand in this I will not deny, but I fear, the fine Cuts that are prefixed to the Treatises of some eminent Church-men will evidence, that it was not universally distasteful to the Church. Mr. *Prynne* tells us how fond Arch-Bishop *Laud* was of those Popish Pictures ; and that he ordered the Bibles which were filled with them, to be called, *The Arch-Bishop of Canterbury's Bibles*. And since the Alterations, which were made after the Restauration, were generally according to the Hearts desire of those of his Kidney, it is not improbable, that those pretty Pictures might have had a helping-hand from some of his old Friends, whose Design the Reader may easily imagine.

*Nor have any of our Writers ventured to say, with Mr. Baxter †, That a Crucifix well besitteth the Mind and Imagination of a Believer.*

† *Christian Directory.*

But I have the Charity to think, that none of your Writers question the Truth of this ; for whoever will read the whole Paragraph will see, that Mr. *Baxter* designs in these Words no more than this, That a Believer's Mind ought to be frequently and much affected with Christ's Death, together with all the Circumstances of it.

*And that it is not unlawful to make an Image (of a Crucifix) to be an Object or Medium*



*Medium of our Consideration, exciting our Minds to worship God.*

This Passage in Mr. *Baxter* is about the distance of a Page in Folio from the other ; I shall cite it more at large, that his meaning may be the more obvious : “ It is not “ (says he) unlawful to make an Image “ (out of the cases of Accidental Evil before named) to be *Objectum vel Medium* “ *excitans ad cultum Dei*, an Object or Medium of our Consideration, exciting our “ Minds to worship God : As a Death’s- “ head, or a Crucifix, or an Historical Image of Christ, or some holy Man ; yea, “ the sight of any of God’s Creatures may “ be so holily used, as to stir us up to a “ worshipping Affection, and so is *Medium* “ *cultus, vel efficienter* : —So that it is “ lawful, by the sight of a Crucifix, to be “ provoked to worship God ; but it is unlawful to offer him that Worship by offering it to the Crucifix first, as the sign, “ way or means of our sending it to God. By this it appears, without any Comment, what Mr. *Baxter*’s meaning is ; but as I am resolved never to defend any Man in what I do not believe my self, I do own this Passage, however qualified, does still very much offend me. I doubt not to say, that Mr. *B.* in this went contrary to the famous Champions of the Protestant Cause, and I verily believe to Truth it self : But then will Mr. *Bennet* (for the Casuist himself does not) assert, that none of their Writers have said as much as Mr. *Baxter*.

Bishop Mountague was one of Their Writers, and he in his Gage approves of Images for Three Uses ; “ *Institutio rudium,* “ *commemoratio historie, & excitatio devotionis* ; the instructing the Ignorant, the remembrance of the History, and the ex-citing Devotion : And this is full as much as can be charged upon Mr. Baxter. He tells us too, “ That the Pictures of “ Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and Saints, “ may be made, had in Houses, set up in “ Churches, Respect and Honour may be “ given unto them, the Protestants do it, “ and use them for helps of Piety, in Re- “ membration, and more effectual Repre- “ senting of the Prototype. And this (if I mistake not greatly) is a considerable strain higher than Mr. Baxter. I might likewise cite to this purpose, his *Appeal & Origines Ecclesiastica* ; as also, the *Altare Christianum* of Dr. Pocklington, another Writer of the Church of England, who has Passages more offensive than Mr. Baxter’s ; but he who has a mind to see more of this matter, may consult Mr. Prynne, whence I took these. *Vide Cant, Doom.* p. 203. and elsewhere.

† *Cant. Doom.* pag. 103. Farther, Mr. Prynne † tells us, That Arch-Bishop Laud, in a Speech against *Sherfield* in the Star-chamber, defended the use of Images in the Churches ; and that he justified the picturing of God the Father in the form of an Old Man, out of *Dan. ix.* Dr. Heylin \* indeed denies, that he justified the painting God the Father in the shape of an

\* *Life of A.B. Laud,* p. 229.

an Old Man, and says, that herein he was Misrepresented, and that he only gave the Reason which induced some Painters to that Representation. A Man would be ready to guess, by the Arch-Bishop's Violence and Zeal against *Sherfield*, and his procuring a Thousand Pound Fine to be laid upon him; for only breaking such a Picture; that he was no great Enemy to the Painters way of Reasoning; but however, the Doctor acknowledges, that the Arch-Bishop shew'd in that Speech, how far the use of painted Images, in the way of Ornament and *Remembrance*, might be retained in the Church: And as this seems to justify Mr. *Prynne's* Account, so it is sufficient to my purpose; the Arch Bishop carrying the Matter as far as Mr. *Baxter*.

I shall add, That Mr. *Hooker* (by whom you say in the next Words, is truly expressed the Sense of the Church of *England*) does make the Sign of the Cross to be of the same use, that Mr. *B.* does a material Crucifix. I shall cite some Passages out of that place in Mr. *Hooker*.

“ If Men of so good Experience (as *Seneca, &c.*) and Insight in the Mayms of  
 “ our weak Flesh, have thought those fancied Remembrances available to awaken  
 “ Shame-facedness, that so the boldness of  
 “ Sin may be stayed e're it look abroad,  
 “ surely the Wisdom of the Church of  
 “ Christ, which has to that use converted  
 “ the Ceremony of the Cross in Baptism,  
 “ it is no Christian Man's part to despise,  
 “ espe-

“ especially seeing that by this means where  
 “ Nature does earnestly import Aid, Reli-  
 “ gion yieldeth her that ready Assistance,  
 “ than which there can be no help more  
 “ forcible serving only to relieve Memory,  
 “ and to bring to our Cogitation that which  
 “ should most make ashamed of Sin. The  
 “ Mind, while we are in this present State,  
 “ whether it contemplate, meditate, deli-  
 “ berate, or howsoever exercise it self,  
 “ worketh nothing without continual Re-  
 “ course to the Imagination, the only Store-  
 “ house of Wit, and peculiar Chair of Me-  
 “ mory.—— Shall I say, that the Sign  
 “ of the Cross (as we use it) is in some  
 “ sort a means to work our † Preservation  
 “ from Reproach ? Surely, the Mind,  
 “ which as yet has not hardned it self in  
 “ Sin, is seldom provoked thereto in any  
 “ gross and grievous manner, but Nature’s  
 “ secret Suggestion objected against its Ig-  
 “ nominy as a bar ; which Conceit being  
 “ entred into that Palace of a Man’s Fancy,  
 “ the Gates whereof have imprinted upon  
 “ them that holy Sign, which bringeth  
 “ forthwith to mind whatsoever Christ  
 “ hath wrought or we vow’d against Sin,  
 “ it cometh hereby to pass, that Christian  
 “ Men never want the most effectual tho’  
 “ silent Teacher, to avoid whatsoever may  
 “ deservedly procure Shame : So that in  
 “ things we should be ashamed of we are  
 “ by the Cross admonished faithfully of  
 “ our Duty at every Moment, when Ad-  
 “ monition doth need.—— The solemnest  
 “ Vow

† *Caro sig-*  
*natur ut a-*  
*nima muni-*  
*atur. Ter-*  
*tull.*

“ Vow that we ever made to obey Christ,  
 “ and to suffer willingly all Reproaches  
 “ for his sake, was made in Baptism; and  
 “ among other Memorials to keep us  
 “ mindful of that Vow, we cannot think  
 “ that the Sign which our New-baptized  
 “ Foreheads did there receive, is either un-  
 “ fit or unforcible, the Reasons hitherto  
 “ alledged being weigh'd with indifferent  
 “ Ballance.—Seeing therefore, that to  
 “ fear Shame which doth worthily follow  
 “ Sin, and to bear undeserved Reproach  
 “ constantly, is the general Duty of all  
 “ Men professing Christianity, seeing also  
 “ that our Weakness, while we are here  
 “ in this present World, doth need, to-  
 “ wards Spiritual Duties, the help even of  
 “ corporal Furtherances, and that by rea-  
 “ son of Natural Intercourse between the  
 “ highest and lowest Powers of Man's  
 “ Mind in all Actions, his Fancy or Imagi-  
 “ nation carrying in it that special Note of  
 “ Remembrance, than which there is no-  
 “ thing more forcible, where either too  
 “ weak or too strong a Conceit of Infamy  
 “ and Disgrace might do great harm, stand-  
 “ eth always ready to put forth a kind of  
 “ necessary helping Hand; we are in that  
 “ respect to acknowledge the good and pro-  
 “ fitable Use of this Ceremony, and not  
 “ to think it superfluous, that Christ has  
 “ his Mark applied unto that part where  
 “ Bashfulness appeareth, in token that they  
 “ which are Christians should be at no  
 “ time ashamed of his Ignominy. But to

“ prevent some Inconveniencies which might  
 “ ensue, if the over ordinary use thereof  
 “ (as it fareth with such Rites when they  
 “ are too common) should cause it to be  
 “ of less Observation or Regard, where it  
 “ most availeth, we neither omit it in that  
 “ place, nor altogether make it so Vulgar  
 “ as the Custom heretofore hath been.

Thus far Mr. *Hooker*, whom I have the  
 rather cited thus at large, that the Reader  
 may see what strange Weakness the De-  
 fence of this Cause betrays even a Man of  
 his Judgment into. Now let us compare  
 him and Mr. *Baxter* together. 'Tis evi-  
 dent, they both speak of a Visible Sign of  
 Christ's Death, only Mr. *B.* speaks of a  
 Material, Mr. *H.* of an Immaterial or Aeri-  
 al one. They both of them think the Sign  
 or Image useful to excite Memory or Con-  
 sideration: Mr. *H.* thinks it useful upon  
 the account of the part to which the Sign  
 is applied; and thinks, that because that  
 holy Sign is imprinted on the Gates of a  
 Man's Fancy (*i. e.* his Forehead) it must  
 necessarily keep out that which is evil, and  
 may cause Shame. I will not presume to  
 determine from whom Mr. *H.* borrowed  
 this Argument, but I know it was made  
 use of by others before him; and it is upon  
 this very Account that *Aquinas* † will have  
 the Chrysm applied to the Forehead, *Prop-*  
*ter propinquitatem imaginationis.* Now a  
 Man might be ready to think, that since  
 such Advantage is owing to this print up-  
 on the Gates of a Man's Fancy, that the

† *Summa*  
 pag. 3. qu.  
 72. Art. 9.

more legible and plain it is, the more useful it is like to be ; and that therefore according to this Notion, they took the wisest course who made the Print and Character indelible, *viz.* by burning a Cross with a Red-hot Iron in the Forehead of the Children when Baptized ; or if my Devotion would not lead me to this Severity, yet certainly, if I were of Mr. *H*'s Mind, I should with the Papists frequently reprint that Sign upon my Forehead ; and should not only say with Mr. *B.* that a Crucifix well *besitteth* the *Imagination* of a Believer, but that a real visible Cross well besitteth the Forehead of a Christian ; and I am grossly mistaken, if that would not much better answer the end Mr. *H.* proposes.

Methinks, however disagreeable Mr. *B.*'s Opinion is, it is yet intelligible, that a Man by seeing a Crucifix may be put in mind of Christ crucified, and so of worshipping him. But how Mr. *H.* should make his Cross serve to relieve Memory, is to me as yet an inexplicable Mystery. It seems plain to me, that the Memory must here relieve it self ; and that a Man must first remember actually the Cross, before he will be thereby put in mind of Christ crucified, and what relief then will this give to the Memory ? Must it not as much exercise the Memory of a Christian to think of the Cross made over his Forehead when an Infant, as to think of Christ crucified ? One would think, that Mr. *H.*'s way should rather be a Burden than a Relief to the Memory

mory of a Christian ; because in this way there is somewhat more to be remembered than was otherwise needful (I am to remember the Cross, that so I may remember Christ crucified) and because I suppose a Christian will be softner in hearing and reading God's Word, put in mind of Christ crucified, than of the Cross in Baptism, and therefore will the easier remember the former, without any need of burthening it self with the Remembrance of the latter.

The Cross might indeed be said to relieve Memory, if it would bring to our Remembrance Christ crucified, though it were not it self first actually to be thought of by us ; but I confess, I fear that Man will never think of Christ crucified at all, that thinks not of him till he is brought to his Remembrance by the Cross that was made over him in Baptism : But Mr. *H's* dark Expressions seem to shew, that he was of another Mind. He makes the Cross to be a faithful and constant Monitor of our Duty, a most effectual Teacher to avoid Sin, &c. and this he argues from the part over which it is made ; and one would be ready to think therefore, it must be one of these Three Ways : Either,

1. By vertue of God's Promise and Blessing, as it is in those Sacraments which we use ; which being instituted by Christ, are attended with his Blessing according to his own Promise, and so the effect and advantage of them is produced : But this I presume will not be pretended. Or,

2. By



2. By some sort of Incantation, as the Reverend Bishop of *Sarum* tells us, it was used in Baptism †, but this I imagine will be rejected likewise: And therefore,

† *Four discourses.* pag. 291.

3. It must be in some Natural way, according to the general Course and Operation of second Causes; and this Mr. *H.* seems most plainly to intend, that this Sign being made over a part so near the Seat of Fancy, being printed upon the Gates of it (*though only made in the Air, and perhaps never seen by us in our whole Lives*) stands there (*though a transient Sign*) like some Centinel to keep from entering into that noble Palace, any thing that may cause shame, and does whenever we need by a physical sort of Power, give us a helping-hand. It is a pity Mr. *H.* has not shewn us how all this is performed by the Cross: But it is enough for one Age to start this Notion, and to leave it to the next to give a full Account and Explication of it, which to say the truth of it, is not to be expected from a meer Divine; and therefore, I would commend the Consideration of this to some of the brave Virtuoso's of our Age, Men nicely acquainted with the Secrets of Natural Philosophy, that they would give us a good Account of this admirable Phenomenon, which I think cannot be solved, by any thing that has been hitherto said in Natural Philosophy.

And methinks, if Mr. *H.*'s Opinion be just and true, we must acknowledge, that the Cross in Baptism does confer Grace in a most

most singular manner ; and I fear we must not only encourage the Popish Practice of introducing new Sacraments into the Church, but their Doctrine likewise, in making them confer Grace, *ex opere operato*.

Farther, the Reader may observe, what Titles Mr. *H.* bestows upon the Sign of the Cross : He stiles it *Christ's Mark* ; so that it should seem, that this is made the Badge of our Christianity. But till the *Dissenters* see it proved, that Christ has left the Magistrate or Church Power of devising what shall be the Mark and Badge of his Disciples, they will hardly consent to have this Badge set upon their Children ; nor will they esteem it an indifferent thing what is made Christ's Mark, since he has himself already appointed one.

Again, he calls it a *Holy Sign*. Now I would fain know, wherein the Holiness of it does consist, and who it is that has set this Stamp upon it. We account the Papists Superstitious in ascribing Holiness to Reliques, Crosses, and other things to which it does not belong ; and Mr. *H.* seems liable to the same Charge, and that perhaps with some Aggravation too. The Papists, for instance, do not esteem this Sign to be so Holy, but that any Person upon any occasion may use it ; but Mr. *H.* is against the *Vulgar* use of it upon this reason, lest the ordinary use of it should cause this Holy Sign to be of less Regard and Observation ; and therefore you must know, that it is now reserved to the Priest, as his peculiar Pro-

Province, to make a Cross; and if a Man were to guess at the reason of Customs and Usages in the Church of E. by Mr. H. he would be ready to suspect, that that is the reason why the Cross is not used in private Baptism; for tho' he is not for making this holy Sign of the Cross Vulgar (*i. e.* confines the making of it to the Sacred Office) yet he scruples not to † assert the Validity of Baptism administred by Women, a Praëctice not heard of in the Christian Church before *Ter-tullian's* time (who inveighs \* more than once against it, and seems to || intimate that it was but beginning in his time, even among the Hereticks) and is directly opposite to the Sentiments of *Cyprian* †, *Basil* †, *Epiphanius* ||, and several other of the Fathers, and the Author of the Apostolical Constitutions †, who all appropriate the Power of Baptizing to the Sacred Office: But it should seem now no great matter, how Vulgar God's holy Sign is made, so that Persons do not presume to affix the holy Sign of the Cross: So applicable to such Men is that of our Lord \* to the Scribes and Pharisees, in much the like case. If the Reader desires to have the Application, I had rather he should fetch it from that || great Man mentioned in the Margin, than that he should have it from me, though it were but as a Transcriber.

*The Sense of our Church is truly expressed by Mr. Hooker, who † says, That between the Cross which Superstition honoureth as Christ, and that Ceremony of the Cross which*

† *Eccl. Pol.**lib. 5. § 62.*\* *De Bapt.**c. 17.*|| *De Praesc.**Her. c. 41.*† *Epist. 70.**p. 190.*\* *Ad Am-**phil. can. 1.*|| *Adv. her.**79. quæ est**Collyrid.*† *l. 3. c. 9.*\* *Mat. 15.**9. Mark 7.**7, 8.*|| *Bp Stil-**lingf. Iren.**p. 6.*† *Eccl. Pol.**l. 5. p 348.**set with*

*serveth only for a Sign of Remembrance, there is as plain and great a Difference, as between those brazen Images which Solomon made to bear up the Cistern of the Temple, and that which the Israelites in the Wilderness did adore.*

If I did not believe this to be the Sense of the Church of *E.* I must have a very low Opinion of her Honesty; her Sense is, that she is not Superstitious in her Practice, and the same is the Sense of every Church in the World: This is the Sense of the Church of *Rome* her self, whose Writers frequently alledge these brazen Images of *Solomon*, to defend their Practice; and from them I suppose it was borrowed. But perhaps the Difference is not so plain and great in it self, as it is in the Sense of the Church of *E.* It must be confess'd indeed, that the Papists do honour the Cross as they do Christ, as appears by their Writers; and that the Church of *E.* do disavow and abhor any such thing: But yet it is to be considered, that for the making the Image in the Wilderness there was no Warrant at all from God, only from *Aaron* his High-Priest; but for the making those brazen Images in the Temple, there was Direction undoubtedly given from Heaven; without which Protestants do generally conclude the making them had been sinful; whereas there can be no Plea of any such Authority for the use of the Sign of the Cross, either in the one or other use. And because I have observed, that our Adversaries are pleas'd to

urge

urge us sometimes with the Examples of *David, Solomon, and Hezekiah, &c.* as warranting the Additions made to the Worship of God ; I desire they would try if they can give any clear proof, that these things were done by them of their own Heads, and without special Warrant and Direction from God himself. We find God was very strict in his Charge to *Moses*, † to see that he did all things according to the Pattern shewed him in the Mount ; and is it to be thought that he was more Indifferent about the Temple than the Tabernacle ? Or that his Directions or his Pattern was not as exact for that which was to continue the longest ? Or again, did not these noble Kings know very well what God had said with Relation to his Worship ? \* *What thing so ever I command you, observe to do it ; thou shalt not add thereto, or diminish from it.* † *Ye shall observe to do as the Lord your God hath commanded you : you shall not turn aside to the right-hand, or to the left ?* Can they be supposed to look upon the People only obliged by these Commands ? and upon themselves as more at Liberty than *Joshua, Moses's* Successor, to whom God speaks thus ; \* *Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the Law which Moses my servant commanded thee : turn not from it to the right-hand or to the left ?* This is not probable at all to him who considers the nature of that Dispensation ; nay, it is certainly false, as appears by express Texts of Scripture. As  
 God

† *Exod. 25.*

9. 40.

‡ 26. 30.

§ 27. 8.

comp. with

*Numb. 8. 4.*\* *Deut. 2.*

32. comp.

with Chap.

4. 2.

† *Deut. 5.*

32.

\* *Josh. 1. 7.*

God gave to *Moses* a Pattern of the Tabernacle, so he gave to *David* a Pattern of the Temple, and of all other Alterations made by *David* or *Solomon* in the Service of God, and this Pattern *David* gave to *Solomon*, 1 *Chron.* 28. 11, to 19. Then *David* gave to *Solomon* his son the pattern of the porch, &c. And the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit.—All this, said *David*, the Lord made me to understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern. And accordingly *Solomon* ordered all things either according to the Commandment of *Moses* or *David* his Father: 2 *Chron.* 8. 13, 14. Even the Courses of the Porters were fixed by this Rule, as *David* the Man of God had commanded. And by the same command of God *Hezekiah* afterward ordered Matters, 2 *Chron.* 29. 25. and 30. 12. I only desire the Reader to consult all these places, and especially 1 *Chron.* 28. from the 11th to the 19th, and I dare say he will see this matter cleared fully to him.

I shall add here, that our Author bringing in these Words presently upon his Citation of Mr. B. and setting them in Opposition to his, seems to leave it to the Reader to imagine, that Mr. B. approved of the Popish Superstition in the honour they give the Cross; which if he did, he acted very unfairly; it being so plainly (as I have shewn) contrary to Mr. B's Sense.

*Ours* is a meer transient Sign, which abides not so long as to be capable of becoming an Object or Medium of worship, any more than words we use in worship may do. And

And yet Mr. *H.* makes it useful in the same way, that Mr. *B.* does a Crucifix or Death's Head, &c. and tho' it has been said, that you do needlessly agree with the Papists in the use of this Sign, making it a part of Worship, yet I suppose you were never accused of worshipping the Cross; nor was it ever said, that you do every thing that the Papists do: But yet, however transient this Sign is, it is capable of being made an Object of Worship by some Men. The Papists hold, that such a Cross may be worshipped; and there have been Persons in the World, that have worshipped that which had no being at all, but was the pure effect of Fancy and Imagination.

*2. Our use of this Sign is nothing like the Popish use of it, for the Papists use it on all Occasions.*

And therein they agree with the Primitive Church, whose Authority you alledge in your behalf; and if the Authority of *Tertullian*, &c. be a sufficient Vindication of your Practice, it is likewise of the Church of *Rome's*, in that wherein you differ from her:

*And at Baptism, they use it much oftner, and so different from our way, that it is not used at the same time, nor with the same Words that we use it with.*

The Repetition of it will not be thought vain, if the matter be weighty; and proper to move pious Affections, according to what we are † told about Prayer; and certainly, † See *Abr.*  
our Brethren think the Cross to be a weighty † *Pag. 94.*  
matter, who prefer the imposed use of it to

the Church's Peace ; and it must be thought to move pious Affections if it bring to our Remembrance Christ crucified, &c. The Papists use it at the same time the Church of E. does, according to your own account, † that is, immediately after Baptizing with Water in the Name of the Father, &c. and some reason why it is not used with the same Words may be hinted afterward.

† See Pag.  
176.

*As to the second Pretence, that the Sign of the Cross is a new Sacrament, I answer, that we all agree, That a Sacrament is an outward and visible Sign of an inward and spiritual Grace given to us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and as a pledge to assure us thereof; and therefore, since we never supposed that the Cross in Baptism could confer Grace, nor ever made the least pretence to a Divine Appointment for it, we ought not to be charged as introducing a new Sacrament.*

For my part, I cannot think it worth while to manage Controversies about Words not found in the Scriptures. According to Men's different Opinions, and Definitions, they will give the same thing different Names. The great thing in question is, Whether Christ has left any uninspired Persons Power to institute such a Badge as this of those that are his Soldiers. We think, that the Power of instituting such a Badge belongs to Christ, the Captain of our Salvation ; and that he has not authorized the Magistrate or Church to devise or appoint any such thing. I confess, I cannot  
be



be of the mind that our Author and some others seem to be of, that Jesus Christ himself alone can institute a Sacrament, so that the Institution of his inspired Apostles should not be accounted sufficient: In this I heartily acquiesce in the Judgment of the Reverend and Learned Bishop of Sarum †, That † *Upon the Article, p. 269.*

“ whatever his (Christ’s) Apostles settled  
 “ was by Authority and Commission from  
 “ him; and therefore it is not to be denied,  
 “ but that if they had appointed any Sacra-  
 “ mental Action, that must be reckoned of  
 “ the same Authority, and is to be esteem-  
 “ ed Christ’s Institution, as much as if he  
 “ himself when on Earth had appointed it.

Our Author seems to require more than an Apostolical Institution, *viz.* the express and immediate Institution of Christ himself (and thinks that the *Catechism* does so likewise) for he seems well pleased with St. Basil, that he reckons it *an Ecclesiastical Constitution or fixed Law of the Church from the Apostles Days.* Though the *Dissenters* approve of your Definition, yet if you should pretend to lay this stress upon it, they will with his Lordship take liberty to be of another mind; and I believe no foreign Confession will be found to lay such a stress upon this matter. I confess, we have no more Sacraments that may be lawfully retained in the Church, than those two which Christ himself while on Earth did appoint; and this is the reason why we own that those Words are well added in the *Catechism*: But what a strange and self-contradictious

Charge would this be? If it were ordained by Christ there were no need to call it a new Sacrament, or to scruple the lawfulness of the use of it. The Charge therefore against you is, that you have introduced that which in all other respects, but that of a Divine Appointment, has the nature of a Sacrament; that you have brought into the Church (if you will bear with the Expression) an humane Sacrament, which we look upon as a matter not to be found in your Commission; and here I cannot but with pleasure take notice to the Reader, that I have the same excellent Person (whom I mentioned before) again on my side: His Lordship declares, that the Sign of the Cross has been sacramentally used, which according to the Notion of our Author would be impossible.

† Bp Burnet, 4 Disc. p. 291.

“ We find (says † his Lordship) the Primitive Christians used the making a Cross in the Air, or upon their Bodies, on many Occasions; afterwards, when a Divine Vertue was fancied to accompany that Ritual Action, it was used in Baptism, as a sort of Incantation; for with the use of it the Devil was adjured to go out of the Person to be Baptized: Such a Usage of it made it a *sacramental* and superstitious Action; and if it had still been retained in that Form, as it was in the first Reformation of our Liturgy in K. Edward Vith's Days, I do not see how it could be justified. I desire the Reader would carefully observe with reference to this most excellent Passage.

1. That

1. That his Lordship is of Opinion, that the Cross was first brought into Baptism upon a mistaken Fancy, from an opinion of a Divine Vertue that accompanied it ; and really, it is highly reasonable to judge thus with his Lordship in favour of them ; for they would have been a very trifling and impertinent sort of People to bring it in, if they had not had some such Imagination: But certainly, since the reason that introduced them to bring it in was a mistake, it becomes us now to cast it out, or at least not to alledge them in our own Vindication.

2. That his Lordship thinks, that we are only to consider what vertue is ascribed to this Sign, that we may be able to judge, whether it be used sacramentally and superstitiously.

3. That in the Liturgy his Lordship speaks of, the Cross was used before, whereas it is now used after Baptism. Immediately after the first Prayer, the Priest was to ask, what the Name of the Child should be ; and when the God-fathers and God-mothers had told the Name, then he was to make a Cross upon the Child's Forehead and Breast, saying, " N. Receive the Sign of  
 " the Holy Cross in thy Forehead, and in  
 " thy Breast, in token that thou shalt not  
 " be ashamed to confess thy Faith in Christ  
 " crucified, and manfully to fight under  
 " his Banners, against Sin, the World, and  
 " the Devil, and to continue Christ's faith-  
 " ful Soldier and Servant unto thy lives end.  
 After this indeed, the Devil was adjured to

go out of the Person ; but it is not expressly said, that it was in Vertue of the Cross. Whether the Church of E. still ascribe Vertue to it or no, we shall have occasion to enquire in the next place.

*If it be said, that we make the Cross a Sign betokening our Faith and Christian Fortitude, because we apply it in token, that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, &c. and that therefore we make it an outward Sign of an inward and spiritual Grace. I answer, we own it to be a significant Ceremony, as all other Ceremonies are ; for we do not account a Ceremony innocent, because it is insignificant and impertinent ; but yet we deny it to be an outward and visible Sign of an inward and spiritual Grace ; for our Ceremonies are not Seals and Assurances from God of his Grace to us, but Hints and Remembrances of some Obligation we are under with respect to him.*

Our Learned Author does not care nicely to consider this Objection, but very slightly passes it over, as though it were of no manner of weight, and gives not a direct answer to any part of it. He grants it to be a significant Ceremony, but what is that to the purpose ? Why is he so loath to grant it to be an outward and visible Sign, since it is most manifestly such ? And the Reader may here take notice of the thing signified by it, that is, according to the Canons, *the Merits of Christ*. The Words that I now refer to in the Canon are these (speaking of the Primitive times) " At what time, if any  
" had

“ had opposed themselves against it, they  
 “ would certainly have been censured as  
 “ Enemies of the Name of the Cross, and  
 “ consequently of *Christ's Merits, the Sign*  
 “ *whereof they could no better endure.*  
 Now I conceive the meaning of this is, that  
 the Cross is not only an Emblem of the Me-  
 rits of Christ, but that it is likewise a  
 Pledge to assure us of our Interest therein.  
 The Foundation of this Interpretation of  
 the Canon is the Canon it self, in the *Latin*  
 Edition (which is as Authentick as the *Eng-*  
*lish*) wherein the Words run thus ; “ *Quo*  
 “ *quidem seculo siquis huic signo se opposu-*  
 “ *isset, declaratus proculdubio fuisset pro*  
 “ *hoste ac inimico nominis crucis, & proinde*  
 “ *meritorum Christi, quorum illi tessera &*  
 “ *signum adeo displiceret.* These Words,  
*tessera & signum*, give us a clear Inter-  
 pretation of the Sign, that is meant in the *Eng-*  
*lish* : The general Expression of a Sign is by  
 the *tessera* restrained to that sort of Signs  
 which are *Pledges* also, as I think *tessera*  
 has properly that Signification. Now that  
 which the Canon makes the Cross a Sign  
 of, has been generally thought by *Prote-*  
*stants* to be part of that which is signified by  
 the Water in Baptism. The end of Bap-  
 tism is Twofold ; Remission of Sins, and  
 Regeneration ; with reference to the first,  
 the Water signifies the Merits of Christ's  
 Blood, through which alone they can be  
 forgiven, whence are those Expressions of  
 his washing us from our Sins in his own  
 Blood, &c. With reference to the latter, it

signifies the cleansing vertue of the Spirit of Christ. In this respect the Cross seems to be very derogatory to Baptism, as it is us'd to signify that which is intended by the baptismal Water; and there not being (which is worth Observation) in the whole Office, the least hint given that the Water in Baptism has any manner of reference to, or Signification of the Merit of the Blood of Christ: Which is not my Observation, but was made by Mr. *Mede* † long ago, who approves of it. Hitherto I conceive this significant Ceremony does well agree with the nature of a Sacrament, it is an outward and visible Sign.

† Works, P.  
63.

The next thing that is started in the Objection is, that here is an inward and spiritual Grace; but this our Author very prudently passes over in his Answer. He does not care to grant, and yet is ashamed to deny, that Faith and Christian Fortitude are inward and spiritual Graces, as they most evidently are, and are as much the Gift of God as any spiritual Grace whatever. And the Cross is only fit for *Pelagians*, if it be not intended that through God's Assistance and Grace he shall not be ashamed, &c. Nay farther, it seems evident to me, that the Cross is made a Seal, Pledge and Assurance to us from God of his Grace; and thus (1) Dr. *Hammond* understands it, as I shall have occasion to shew from his own Words. (2.) Our Author thinks these Words of *Cyprian* now pertinent, wherein he calls it the *Seal of God*; and chuses him-  
self

self that Expression of the Seal of God, it being in *Cyprian* only *Signum Dei*. (3.) The Words used at the making the Cross do seem plainly to intend this. The Words are, “ We sign him with the Sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his Banner against Sin, the World, and the Devil, and to continue Christ’s faithful Soldier and Servant unto his lives end. If a Man designed to ascribe Virtue to the Sign of the Cross, and to make it a Seal and Assurance to us of God’s Grace, I am apt to think he would find these Words would fitly express his Sense; for thus we ordinarily use those Words *in token*: If a Man say to another, I give you my Hand, *in token* that I will at such a time give you so much Money; the meaning is, I do now by this Sign assure you of it. If a Man at the bottom of an Obligation say, *in token* whereof I have set my Hand; the meaning is, for an Evidence, Assurance or Witness of it [*in testimonium*] the very Words used by *Alex. Alesius* for the rendring *in token* in the first Translation of the Common-Prayer. And farther, I imagine the positive strain in which the Words run, argues this: “ We sign him with the Sign of the Cross, *in token* that hereafter *he shall* not be ashamed to confess, &c. and not that *he should not or ought not* to be ashamed, which would much better express his Obligation and Duty, if that were all that was designed; and there-

therefore, if the only meaning is, We sign him with the Sign of the Cross, to hint to him that it is his duty not to be ashamed, &c. and that he may hereafter remember it; though he now understands nothing at all of the matter, it is very darkly expressed, and the hint is very obscure and ænigmatical, according to Mr. *Elias Petil*, a Presbyter of the Church of *England*, who renders these Words *in token* thus; † *ἐν τῷ αἰνισθῆναι.*

† *Greek*  
*Translat. of*  
*the Litur-*  
*gy.*

In short, either the Cross is effectual for the end for which you use it of it self, or thro' God's Grace; if the first be true, it is requisite to explain how it is so; if the latter be true, answer the Reverend Bishop of

\* *Upon the*  
*Artic. p.*  
*269.*

*Sarum*, who tells us, \* " That federal acts to which a conveyance of Divine Grace is tied, can only be instituted by him who is the Author and Mediator of the New Covenant; who lays down the Rules and Conditions of it, and derives the Blessings of it, by what Methods, and in what Channels he thinks fit.

*And this kind of significant Usages has ever been taken up, without any Imputation of introducing a new Sacrament: For, 1. The Jewish Church changed the Posture of eating the Passover from standing to sitting, in token of their rest and security in the Land of Canaan.*

Very probable it is, that according to the differing Reasons of the times, there might be by God's own Order different Manners and Customs. This might be fairly supposed upon this single Consideration, that there

were



were inspired Persons among them. But I think we have it plain enough in the Scripture, that several things in the first Institution were only appointed to be observed by them in *Egypt*; such as the sprinkling the Posts of the Doors with Blood; and the like is to be judged of the Posture, and therefore though in *Exodus* they are commanded to eat it with their Loins girt, with Shoes on their Feet, and a Staff in their Hand; yet no such thing was commanded them after once they were got out of *Egypt*. See *Deut.* 16.

*There was also an Altar of Witnesses reared on the other side Jordan.*

It is obvious, that it was a very common Practice among the Patriarchs, to erect an Altar upon any particular occasion; and that this was done by them for two ends, to sacrifice upon it, and to leave it sometimes for a standing Memorial and Monument of any thing remarkable, that had happened in the place where the Altar was built. In the short History we have of them, we have no more account of the Direction they had for this from God, than of the Direction they had for sacrificing at all; but I suppose both might be nevertheless from God. Now when God gave particular Laws by *Moses*, to the Children of *Israel*, he altered many things that were lawfully used by them before, and particularly he forbade them the sacrificing (as it was common before) in any place, and restrained it to that one which he himself should chuse,

chuse, *Deut.* 12. 5. and consequently it was not lawful for them to erect an Altar for that purpose: But there was not any Prohibition of Altars for the other use, as Monuments and Memorials of any thing remarkable; and such the Altar of Witness was, and of the same nature seems that Stone to be, which was set up by *Joshua* himself, *Chap.* 24. *ver.* 26, 27. and that which was set up by *Samuel*, *1 Sam.* 7. 12. But neither of them was designed to be holy, in bearing any part, or having any interest in the worship of God; but that which I am treating of was to shew, that though they were on the other side *Jordan*, they nevertheless were of the Children of *Israel*.

*And the Synagogue Worship, Rites of Marriage, Form of taking Oathes, &c. were significant, and yet were all received in the purest times of the Jewish Church, and complied with by our Saviour himself.*

I know not what it is that our Author refers to in the Synagogue worship, and therefore cannot give any answer to him: But I know when as innocent a Ceremony as could be, was look'd upon as Religious, and pressed as such, though it were but the washing Hands before Meat, &c. our Lord refused to comply with it. Rites of Marriage I reckon belong not to Worship, but were purely civil. As to Oathes, the Lawfulness of taking an Oath is easily proved from the Old Testament, or the New: Various Forms were used in both, but none is prescribed; some Form is necessary, and so that

that it be suited to the Nature and Design of it, it is no great matter what the form of taking it is. An Oath is a part of Natural Religion, confirmed by the Revealed. As it is an Appeal to God, it is a most solemn Religious act, and a Man is obliged to perform it accordingly, and not to swear by any false God. But as there is no Form prescribed in Religion, and it is in the power of the Magistrate to require me to take an Oath, the Form in which he tenders it to me, is to be looked upon as a Civil testimony to him, and therefore may in any Form be taken, so that it favour not of Idolatry or Superstition.

*The Christian Church of the first Ages used the same liberty, as appears by the Customs of the Holy Kifs, and the Feasts of Charity.*

There is a great difference between natural Signs (as Kissing and Feasting together are such signs of Friendship and Love) and arbitrary ones, such as our sacramental Signs are, together with the Sign of the Cross. A Kifs, by the universal Consent of Nations is a sign of mutual Love, and as such was no doubt used by the most Primitive Christians, and not as a part of Worship. In like manner, Kneeling is a natural and ordinary sign of Humility and Reverence; and therefore our Author may observe, that though the *Dissenters* condemned the imposing it upon all in the Lord's Supper, yet they never charged that Imposition as the bringing in of a new Sacrament. But let it  
fare

fare how it will with the holy Kifs, I suppose our Author will allow that it had better warrant than the Cross.

† Works, Vol. 2. p. 774. & seq.

The Feasts of Charity, if lawful, were no parts of Worship; but whether they were lawful as most think, or unlawful as † Dr. Lightfoot thinks, it is certain, they gave occasion to many Disorders; and what course does the Apostle take? Does he go about only to reform the abuse, retaining the Custom, and telling them how they might lawfully use it? No, but he lays them aside, and goes back to the Institution of Christ, *What I received of the Lord, I delivered to you. Deliver us no more, and we shall easily agree.*

1 Cor. II.

*I might farther instance in the Ceremony of Insufflation, which was used as a sign of breathing into them the good Spirit.*

This is indeed an instance in all things parallel with the sign of the Cross; and since our Author thinks this so light a matter, he will do well to shew what this wants to make it Sacramental besides Divine Institution; if here is not an outward and visible Sign of an inward and spiritual Grace, &c. there is none at all. When our Author can vindicate this, we shall not need to dispute about the Cross.

*The Baptized Persons stripping off his old Garments, in token that he put off the Old Man.*

I should rather think the Original of this was, that he might shift his wet Clothes, if I could find any Evidence of the Baptized Person's

Person's having any on, but really it was that he might go naked into the Baptismal Water (which was a usual Custom for several Ages in the Christian Church) however, it was afterward according to the Primitive Genius curiously allegorized.

*The trine Immersion at the mention of each Person in the Trinity, to signify the belief of that Article.*

This was not in the Institution, and was an unnecessary Repetition of the Sacramental Action; That Article of our Faith is expressed in the Words of Administration, and since Christ did not institute this Sign of it, I don't see what right Men have to do so.

*Now all these things were anciently practiced, without any Jealousy of invading the Prerogative of Christ, in instituting new Sacraments.*

This is indeed very likely, for it was while Men slept that the Enemy sow'd the Tares; and it was through a want of such a Jealousy that numberless Corruptions by degrees crept into the Church, and that at length Christianity did as much abound with Ceremonies as Judaism: But we dispute not what others have thought of things, but what esteem the things themselves deserve.

3. *All the Reformed Churches, nay the very Dissenters themselves, do use some symbolical Actions in their most Religious Solemnities: For, 1. Their giving to the Baptized Infant a new Name, seems to betoken its being made a new Creature.*

Interpret the *Dissenters* Practice from their own Declarations, as they do yours from the Common-Prayer, &c. Produce any of them that ever gave the least hint of any such thing. I confess, there would be some Ground for this, if they taught Children among the Principles of Religion; that their God-fathers and God-mothers gave them their Names in Baptism; but I trust no such thing can be alledged. Nor can any thing be argued from their Practice; which is this, to ask what the Name of the Child is; and then calling it by the Name, to baptize it in the Name of the Father, &c. and in this matter some Persons are the more cautious, because some ignorant People are ready to account that Ordinance a Ceremony of naming the Child; and I suppose our Author knows very well, that it is a common thing for the Laity of the Communion of the Church of *England* to talk; as though a Child was not Christned by washing with Water in the Name of the Father, &c. in Private Baptism, but were then only Named; and that the Christning is afterwards, at the Solemnity of God-fathers and the Cross in the Church.

*Nay, the Dissenters generally give it some Scripture Name, or one that betokens a particular Grace, and this is an outward and visible Sign, and this sometimes of an inward and spiritual Grace, and yet they do not think it a new Sacrament.*

I thought that Words were always excepted when Men talk of outward and visible

ble Signs ; and I conceive that here is nothing more, unless our Author thinks the *Dissenters* write that Name upon the Infant in token of the Grace : But I hope our Author will not pretend, that it is all one to give a Child a Name, and to institute a general Badge of Christian Profession ; and if our Author knows that the *Dissenters* lay any stress upon what he mentions, he will do well to shew it. They act in this matter as others do ; for Scripture Names are generally chosen by Christians ; but I imagine it is not commonly understood by those that chuse the Name, what particular Grace is signified by it ; nor do I think that ever any *Dissenter* scrupled to Baptize a Person, because he was named *Henry, Edward, &c.*

*The Dissenters plead for sitting at the Lord's Supper, because it is a Table gesture, and expresses Fellowship with Christ, &c. This is an outward and visible Sign of an inward and spiritual Grace, and yet it is not accounted an additional Sacrament to that of the Lord's Supper.*

A Man must be in some one posture in receiving the Lord's Supper, and by what better Rule can a Man guide himself in fixing upon a posture for himself, than the Example of our Saviour and his Apostles, especially if the posture used by them appears to be suitable to the Ordinance ? It is evident, that our Lord did design in a more familiar manner to treat his Disciples in that Sacrament, and seems therefore to have chosen the ordinary Table-gesture. Now should

it be supposed, that there is a mistake as to the reason why Christ and his Disciples sat at it ; certainly we may argue from his own and his Disciples sitting, that such a posture is lawful, and is very safe, and is preferable to those that have neither Command nor Precedent.

*And lastly, suppose that an Independent, when he is admitted into their Church-Covenant, should signify his assent by holding up his Hand, or the like ; this is an outward visible Sign of no less than a new state of Life, that is, of being made Members of Christ's Church, &c. and yet it was never charged upon them by the Presbyterians, as introducing a new Sacrament.*

And yet I am mistaken in the Presbyterians, if they would have been so partial as to spare them, if they had as much deserved to be so charged as some others. I know not of any such Practice among the Independents as that which our Author speaks of. That which seems to have given occasion to this is, That they admit none into their Communion, but with the consent of the Church, who therefore do by some Action signify their consent : So that a Person's holding up his Hand signifies no more than this, I give my consent that he should be admitted into our Society : And what resemblance is there between this and the Cross ? Is the common way of voting in Societies any thing like an honourable Badge, whereby a Person is dedicated to the Service of Christ. Whatever account our Author makes of such Instances, I am per-



persuaded they will not be much valued by those that will impartially and candidly consider and compare things.

*But it is objected, that our Convocation, cap. 30. declares, that by the Sign of the Cross the Infant is dedicated, &c. Now, say they, Baptism is it self a Seal of Dedication to God, and therefore our dedicating the Infant by our own invented way of the Sign of the Cross, is adding a new Sacrament.*

I cannot but think this Objection has weight in it. Sacraments are Federal Rites between God and us, and do not only import the Love and Grace of God to us, but likewise our Restipulation and the Dedication of our selves to God; so that though it were granted, that the Sign of the Cross wanted somewhat beside Institution to give it the intire Nature of a Sacrament; yet, according to that part of the Canon, it seems chargeable with assuming to it self one essential part of Baptism. In answer to this we are told,

*That Dedication may properly signify a Confirmation of our first Dedication to God, and a Declaration of what the Church thinks of a Baptized Person, and the Sign of the Cross is the Medium of this Declaration.*

But how Dedication can properly signify this I confess I don't understand. Methinks there is very little Propriety of Speech observed by Men that make Dedication, Confirmation of Dedication, Declaration, and a Medium of Declaration, to be all one and the same thing. I should be unwilling that any one should go about to give the Signi-

fication of my Words after this rate, and so I suppose would our Author likewise, especially if he pretended at the same time to tell what they *properly* signified : But however I observe, that he denies not that the Objection would be good, if the Cross were used as a Dedication to God ; and thereby I think he has fairly given away the Cause from the Convocation. I will lay before the Reader the Words of the Convocation, by which he may judge whether it be thus or no. The Words are, " This Sign they (*viz. the Primitive Christians*) did not only use themselves with a kind of Glory, when they met with any Jews, but signed therewith their Children when they were Christned, to dedicate them by that Badge to his Service, whose Benefits bestowed on them in Baptism the Name of the Cross did represent. Here the Reader may plainly see, that they ascribe indeed to Baptism the Benefits that are bestowed on us, but that they ascribe the other part, our Restipulation or our Dedication to God, to the Sign of the Cross ; and therefore, toward the Conclusion of the Canon we are told, That " the Church of " *England* hath retained still the sign of it in " Baptism, following therein the Primitive " and Apostolical Churches, and accounting it a lawful outward Ceremony, and honourable Badge, whereby the Infant is dedicated to the Service of him that died upon the Cross, as by the Words used in the " Book of Common-Prayer it may appear. What the Canon refers to in the Book of Common-Prayer I have already cited, and

cannot find any Ground for the proper Signification our Author has given us of the Convocation's Words.

*That this is the meaning of our Church is evident, if we compare the Office of Baptism and the Canon together : Both the Rubrick and Canon say, That Baptism is compleat without the Sign of the Cross : It is expressly said, we receive this Child into the Congregation of Christ's Flock, before it is signed with the Cross.*

As though it were not a proper way of speaking to say, *we receive this Child*, when we are doing so, or are going about it ; if it had been said, *we have received this Child*, it would have plainly appeared, that the Child was received into Christ's Flock before. This is, I confess, taken care of in some Translations of the Liturgy, which were made since the Convocation, tho', as evident and express as our Author judges it to be, not in all. But since the Convocation has given us this as the Sense of the Liturgy, we are to allow it, that the Child is admitted into Christ's Flock by Baptism before the Sign of the Cross, and therefore it only remains to enquire, to what purpose the Cross is used. The Opinion of our Author, that the Cross is a Confirmation of our Dedication, puts me in mind of an Observation which some have made, and which perhaps will give some light into this matter. They tell us then, that the Ancients, who used Confirmation, made it immediately to follow Baptism, (which is plain from *Tertullian de Baptismo*) and that when the Cross was brought into Baptism, they made

use of it as a Medium of Confirmation. Afterwards it was thought fit to defer Confirmation till some time after Baptism, and at length it was made a distinct Sacrament in the *Roman Church* (for the *Greek Church* to this very Day retain the Custom of the Ancients, and do not separate Confirmation from Baptism.) The Church of *England*, tho' they hold that the laying on of Hands in Confirmation is to certify the Persons by that Sign of God's Favour and Gracious Goodness toward them, yet deny it to be a Sacrament; but have followed the Example of those that deferred Confirmation till some time after Baptism, and the Example of those that made it immediately follow Baptism, and so have two Confirmations, and are perhaps the only Church in the World that ever had. This Observation that was made long since, the Discourse of our Author does sufficiently confirm; and this to me seems the true reason, why though the Papists use the Cross in Baptism, yet they use it not with such Words as the Church does. They reckon that the design of Confirmation, which she looks upon as the design of the Cross. They distinguish between the Family of Christ, into which we are admitted by Baptism, and his Militia, the Sign and Character of which is Confirmation: Now this Distinction seems to be espoused by the Church, who makes Baptism indeed to be the Sign of our being received into Christ's Flock, but uses the Cross as the sign whereby we are dedicated to Christ's Service as his Soldiers; to which purpose I will set

down the Words of Dr. Hammond, which I think are very remarkable †. “ For the *Cross* † *His Works, Vol. 2. last part, p. 242. 243.*  
 “ in *Baptism*: First, it is known to all, that  
 “ our *Christian Course* is a *spiritual warfare*  
 “ under *Christ* our *Great General*. Now it  
 “ is, and always hath been *customary* over  
 “ the *World*, that in a *Militia* there should  
 “ be some *Banner* or *Ensign*, to which eve-  
 “ ry one should *resort*, and fight under it :  
 “ This hath *Custom* made *decent* among all ;  
 “ and supposing that *Custom*, the *Omission* of  
 “ it in an *Army*, is *indecent*, yet not so as  
 “ things *dishonest*, or breaches of the *Law*  
 “ of *Nature*, are *indecent* : And the *Cross*  
 “ on which *Christ* was *crucified*, the *Emblem*  
 “ also of that *state* that every *Christian* en-  
 “ ters into, a *constant* couragious *Patience*  
 “ for all *Afflictions*, was by the *Primitive*  
 “ *Christians* thus used, as their \* *Symbol* or \* *Signo cru-*  
 “ *Ensign* ; and every Man that is *inrolled* in *Christiana*  
 “ the *Christian Militia*, is by him that *inrolls* *describitur.*  
 “ him, signed with it ; and this *Practice* be- *Aug.*  
 “ ing thus *founded*, and received in the  
 “ *Church*, *St. Augustine’s* Words are worth  
 “ *remembering*, and cannot be denied to have  
 “ *truth* in them || ; *Signum crucis nisi adhi-* || *In Job.*  
 “ *beatum, sive frontibus credentium, sive ipsi* *Tr. 118,*  
 “ *aquæ qua regeneramur, &c. nihil rite per-*  
 “ *ficitur* ; Unless the *Sign of the Cross* be  
 “ used either to the *Foreheads of the Belie-*  
 “ *vers* (who are *Baptized*) or to the *Water*  
 “ it self, by which we are *regenerate*, it is  
 “ not *duly performed*, i. e. with such *Cere-*  
 “ *monies*, as by *Custom of the Church*, the  
 “ *Rule of Decency*, belong to it. — And if  
 “ instead of the *frequent use of it* among  
 “ the

“ the *Ancients*, even before the cumbersome  
 “ weight of *Ceremonies* came in, we in this  
 “ our *Church* retain it only in our *solemn en-*  
 “ *trance* into *Christ’s Camp*, in token that  
 “ we mean *valiantly* to fight under his *Ban-*  
 “ *ners*, and in *confidence* that he that thus  
 “ signed to *Constantine Victory* from *Heaven*,  
 “ (*ἐν τῷ νικᾷ*, in this *Overcome*) will thus  
 “ give *Grace*, and *seal* to us *Victory* over  
 “ our *Ghostly Enemies*; What question can  
 “ can there ever be of the *perfect Decency* of  
 “ this *Usage* among us?

I have cited the Doctor thus largely, that  
 the Reader may see, not only that he ap-  
 proves of the Distinction I mentioned before,  
 but that he does in the most express terms,  
 ascribe vertue to the Cross, and makes it (as  
 to *Constantine*, so to us) a sign of God’s  
 Grace to be given to us, and a Seal of our  
 Victory over our Ghostly Enemies.

*Since therefore the Person is dedicated in*  
*Baptism, and the Baptism is acknowledged*  
*compleat without, or before the Sign of the*  
*Cross, we cannot be thought to dedicate in*  
*Baptism, and to dedicate by the Cross again;*  
*but the Dedication by the Cross must be some-*  
*thing very distinct from the Dedication of Bap-*  
*tism; that is, the one is the Sign of Dedic-*  
*ation, and the other the Dedication it self.*

This is a wrestling of the Canon, which  
 distinguishes the use of Baptism and the  
 Cross, *viz.* that in Baptism Christ’s Bene-  
 fits are bestowed on us; but that by the ho-  
 nourable Badge of the Cross the Infant is de-  
 dicated to Christ’s Service, *i. e.* to fight un-  
 der his Banners, and be his faithful Soldier.

The Canon no where says, that a Person is dedicated by Baptism, and a Man may justly doubt whether they thought so. But however, since our Author grants that the Child is dedicated by Baptism, I suppose he will not scruple to grant, that Baptism is a dedicating Sign ; and therefore, I would gladly know what need there is of any other Sign, or for what tolerable use Men can bring in a sign of a Sign : After this rate, you may bring in another sign, to be a sign of that sign of the first Sign, &c. in *infinitum*. I leave it now to the Reader to judge in this matter. If the Child be before dedicated to God and the Service of Christ, by God's own sign of his Covenant, there is no need of renewing it, or of any Confirmation of it, or of any Medium to declare it. It is impertinent and daring to add any such Confirmation to those federal Acts, which are sufficiently valid and efficacious of themselves : But if the Child is not dedicated by Baptism (which seems to be the sense of the Canon) then he has not answered the Objection : And I humbly move, that these Words may be here considered which we meet with in the Rubrick before the Office for Publick Baptism, where this is given as one reason why it should be publickly Administred ; *That the Congregation there present may testify the receiving them that be newly Baptized, into the number of Christ's Church.* In these Words it seems sufficiently imply'd, that Persons are not received into the Church by Baptism, but that *that* is done presently after Baptism, that is, by the Sign of the Cross ;

Cross ; and then the Words of the Convocation will look like a poor Evasion, that does not agree with the Book of *Common-Prayer*.

*So that it is plainly no other than a Declaration the Church makes of what the Baptized Person is admitted to, and what Engagement he lies under ; which Declaration is therefore made in the name of the Church in the Plural number, We receive the Child, &c. and do Sign him, &c.*

The Words are indeed a Declaration of the Engagement the Baptized Person is under ; but whoever reads them may plainly see, that they are more than so. The Sign of the Cross is (according to Dr. *Hammond*, and I think the *Common-Prayer* also) Christ's Banner, under which the Infant is to fight against, and overcome all his Enemies ; and the Doctor's Paraphrase upon these Words **IN TOKEN** (*viz. in Confidence that God will thus (by this Sign) give Grace, and seal to us Victory over our Ghostly Enemies*) is natural and easy ; but the other kind of Glosses that some put upon them, are forced and awkward : But since our Author tells us, that this is done in the Name of the Church, that is, of all that are present, this will not only affect the Clergy, but Laity also ; and a great deal of Satisfaction is necessary about the Lawfulness of this Sign, before a Person should consent to be present at this part of the Office, since he must thereby necessarily have a hand in this Action. I cannot tell whether our Author will care to declare himself of that Opinion, † that the Cross is only a Sign from Man to Man. His Discourse might

† *Protest. Reconcil. part. 2. pag. 30. And Bishop Morley's Words, in Mr. Calamy's Abr. pag. 294.*



might seem to give such a hint ; for that best agrees with a Declaration ; and to say the truth, this would be the most favourable Account of it, if it were true ; but the Canon will not allow of it, because it is a Badge *whereby* a Person is dedicated to Christ's service. I am not concerned much whether this be our Author's Sentiment or no. It is a Remark that deserves to be observed, by those that think they can with that pretence justify their Practice ; and especially I would commend the express Words of the Canon, to the Consideration of a late Author, † who speaking of the Sign of the Cross, tells us, " We do not use it as it is used in the Church of Rome ; for they use it as a Dedicative Sign to God, we only as a Token, or Declarative Sign to Men.

† *The Case stated between the Church of Engl. and the Dissenters, by E. S. D. p. 69.*

*From what has been said I hope it appears, that our Office of Baptism has nothing in it that may in the least justify a Separation from us.*

The Reader must judge as he sees cause ; for my own part, tho' I should be as willing as any Man to see my way clear into the Church, being sensible of the Mischiefs of our Divisions, yet I must profess, after all our Author and some others have said, I cannot see any thing that satisfies me of the Lawfulness of having any thing to do with this Cross in Baptism, either as a Clergyman or Lay-man. I shall end with proposing what, it is obvious, may be a means of a happy Adjustment of this Controversy, and so of promoting our Union. Let the Cross in Baptism be left indifferent, as you say in it self it is. I admire the Temper of  
our

our first Reformers, who in the end of the first Edition of the *Common-Prayer*, have this Rubrick : “ As touching Kneeling, *Crossing*,  
 “ holding up of Hands, knocking upon the  
 “ Breast, and other Gestures, they may be  
 “ used as every Man’s Devotion serveth  
 “ without blame.

Imitate their Moderation, and let this Crossing (about which there is a great variety of Opinions) be left to every ones Liberty. Let no Minister be forced to use it in Baptism, and let no Parent be forced to have his Child signed with it ; but where Minister and Parent cannot agree, let the Parent procure one that will comply with his desire : By this means no Man’s Conscience will be gall’d, Love and Unity will be promoted, which is a matter of far greater Moment than Uniformity in such a Ceremony ; and let the Reader judge, whether those Men can ever be thought to have a just value for the Church’s Peace, and to be clear of the guilt of Schism, who will retain such a Ceremony which they acknowledge unnecessary, and which they know their Brethren account sinful, and by which therefore they necessitate their Departure from them.

God Almighty pity a divided Nation, and give us to understand and practice the things that relate to our Peace, before the evil Day come upon us, and we (through our Divisions) become a Prey to our common Enemy, and be forced to see our fatal Error and Mistake, when it is too late to retrieve the Mischief of it. *Amen.*

## P O S T S C R I P T.

**T**HAT which the rather induces me to publish these Papers at this time, is that I may have an opportunity for this Post-script. I have been some time concerned in a Controversy with Dr. *Wells*, and have just received his *Numb. 4.* and I take this opportunity to let the World know, that I don't think it worth a particular Answer: And I doubt not, all Judicious Persons will be so far from wondering that I despise this last Piece of the Doctor's, that they will rather wonder that I honour'd so many of his Former with particular Answers. And indeed, to what purpose is it for us to Dispute any longer, when we can't agree about the Rule by which this Controversy is to be determined? I am for that Rule which is given by *Inspiration of God, and is sufficient to make the man of God perfect, througely furnished for every good work;* and for comparing one Scripture with another, to determine the meaning of it: But the Doctor, because we can't agree about the meaning of that Rule, is for appealing to the Notions and Practices of the most ancient Writers. This Rule, as I have shewn, the Doctor will not keep to; and I do not see that we are more likely to agree about their meaning, than the meaning of the Scriptures. Nor are the Scriptures so obscure as he would represent them, about the number of Ministerial Orders, as any one may see by his not alledging any Scripture-Arguments on his side, and by the poor Answers he gives to those I have used. He

pretends

pretends not to answer my Argument from the Church at *Ephesus*; and I think that from the Church at *Jerusalem* is very convincing. I ask therefore, did not our Lord at his Ascension leave a Church at *Jerusalem*? In what Hands did he leave it? Was it under Government or no? Was it left to the Government of one, or of a Plurality with equal Power? There is good reason for that Title which is by some of the Ancients given to this Church, of being the *Mother-Church*; and she is in my mind the best Platform for all other Churches to be modell'd by. I do not much regard the Story of *St. James*, if such a kind of Episcopacy be assigned him as I have all along allowed to have been in the Church, I will not deny him to have been Bishop of *Jerusalem*; but for more than that, I will not rely upon the Credit of *Hegesippus*, whose Account of him (as we have it in *Eusebius*) is most demonstrably false in several Matters of Fact.

I denied, that the *Apostles Office* was ever split into two Offices: Upon this the Doctor makes himself merry, as he has me, and I doubt not all his other Readers; for I defy any *Heraclitus* to forbear laughing at the Reading such Writings. All the Powers of Preaching, Ordaining, &c. originally belonged to one Office, but afterwards were supposed to be all of them in Bishops, and some of them in Presbyters; so that here were two distinct Offices supposed to be made out of one; if the Doctor likes not the term of *splitting*, he may call it what he pleases. I deny the Supposition to have any  
Founda-

Foundation in Scripture ; and tho' the Dr. would have us believe that Bishops alone succeed the Apostles, yet *Irenæus*, an *ancient Writer*, affirms that Presbyters do ; so that Bishops and Presbyters were both supposed to be their Successors. I cannot, therefore, much blame my Expression, nor do I know of a better to put in the room of it. The Doctor knows, whose Argument a Wager is according to our *English Proverb* : I appeal to the Judicious, whether the Doctor has not done more to confirm the Proverb, than to answer his Design of exposing his Adversary.

That the Pope was an Usurper signifies nothing to our Controversy ; for if the Notions of the times are the Standard of the several Offices, my Argument is unanswerable, let him be guilty of Usurpation never so : If the Notions of the times are not the Standard, we must then come to the Scriptures. Farther, if Men's mistaken Notions of an Office will make it nul, then the Offices of all Popish Bishops and Priests are nul, since this was taken to be part of their Office to maintain the Jurisdiction of the Pope, and to offer a Propiatory Sacrifice for the Living and the Dead. Farther, the Doctor knows whose Offices are then nul, even those who are supposed to derive their spiritual Jurisdiction from the Prince. ———

The Doctor lays about him to prove what I never denied to be the Papist's Notion, leaves out what I argued upon ; and after all, if he will look a little farther, he will find that Father *Paul* tells us, the *Spanish Bishops could not gain their point, Li Spagnuoli*

*nuoli si partirono senza alcuna coza ottenere.*  
 I can't tell wherein I have not acted the Part of an honourable Adversary in the business of the *Imprimatur*: Did I go about to to assert it was refused him? Was not the Mistake own'd, and the Reasons that led into it alledg'd? But the Doctor represents me as stiling the *Imprimatur* honourable, so long as 'twas thought to be refused him, but says; that as soon as I found it prov'd, that 'twas not refus'd him, then it was represented by me as not being honourable, but such as might be had without Distinction, or any Man might have for asking. Whereas I say expressly, that I cannot entertain so dishonourable a thought of the University as this: And I appeal to the University, and all the World, whether the Doctor has herein acted the part of an honourable Adversary. I shall only say, in Imitation of Arch-Bishop Tillotson, Methinks tho' a Man has all Logick, yet it might not be amiss to have some Conscience. But notorious Misrepresentations, base Calumnies, uncharitable Censures, and damnable Sentences, make a great part of the Doctor's Writings; and there is one thing which he seems to me to forget, tho' I think no Man should in any, and especially a Religious Controversy: I will therefore shut up this Controversy, by saying to him as Cyprian to Florentius, Epist. 66. p. 169. *Habes tu literas meas, ego tuas: in die Judicii ante Tribunal Christi utraq; recitabuntur.*

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 E R R A T A.

Pag. 41. l. 29. *pro* would not only Sozomen's Assertion in the 5th Chap. be false, *leg.* Sozomen's Assertion in the 5th Chap. would not only be false. Pag. 56. l. 16. *del.* 1.









