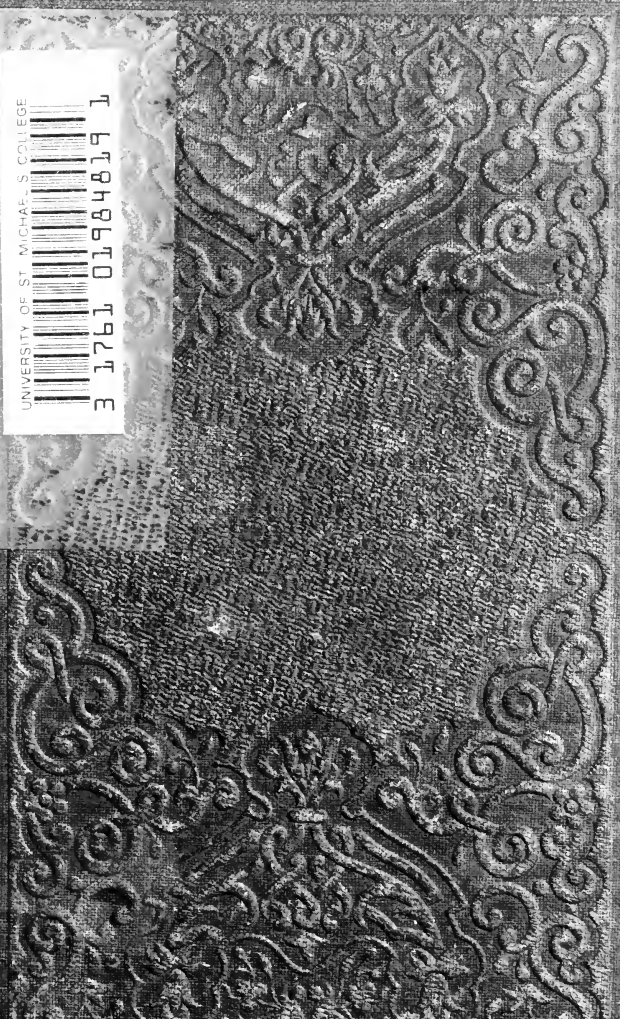


UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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DIALOGUE

BETWEEN A

POPISH PRIEST

AND AN

ENGLISH PROTESTANT:

WHEREIN THE PRINCIPAL POINTS AND ARGUMENTS OF BOTH
RELIGIONS ARE TRULY PROPOSED, AND FULLY
EXAMINED.

BY MATTHEW POOLE.

AUTHOR OF THE SYNOPSIS CRITICORUM.

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TO THE READER.

THE variety and differences of religion between Protestant and Papist distract the minds, and trouble the hearts, of all that have any sense of religious concernments. In this distraction, every serious man that has any care of his soul, cannot choose but heartily desire to seek for resolution. To obtain this, there can be no better way than to understand and examine the pretensions and grounds of both religions. In order to this, I have endeavoured faithfully to represent, and duly to weigh them in the following discourse.

Though I have not discussed all the points in controversy between us and them, yet I have selected the most material, and have discoursed of most, if not all, their weighty and plausible arguments against the Protestant religion. And thus I may say, and no knowing Papist, I think, will deny it, all the other points will follow the fate of those which are here examined, and live or die with them. I know it will be pretended, that I have managed the work with partiality and deceit, and that I make the Papist speak what I please, not what they think.

To silence all clamours, and satisfy all jealousies, will be impossible; I shall never attempt it.

But for satisfaction of such as are rational and ingenuous, I shall give this following account.

1. God is my witness that I did diligently endeavour to pick out the strongest arguments I could find in their best authors in each point; nor have I willingly declined any thing of moment in the questions here debated: if any Papist think otherwise, let him produce their greater strength, and I hope he shall find it fairly examined.

2. The several discourses, arguments, and answers which I have put into the Papist's mouth, are such as were first taken out of their mouth; and so it is but a piece of justice and restitution to return them thither. They are generally such as are either known to be their opinions, and by themselves owned, or else delivered in the sense, and very often in the words, of their most approved authors, whom I have quoted in the notes. But here I expect the old clamour of false quotations. All the relief I desire in that case is, that the reader who is able to do it, would examine them with his own eyes, and that will be my best justification. I shall detain thee no longer, but commend thee to the good Spirit of truth, to enable thee to discern between good and evil.

TO THE

PEOPLE OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.

THE controversies between your church and ours are, by God's blessing upon the endeavours of his ministers, brought to this pass, that I am persuaded there is nothing wanting to the conviction of divers of you, but a free and diligent perusal of their books, without prejudice and partiality. This your priests knowing, it is their great design to keep you from looking into them; and to that end to possess you with this principle, that you need not trouble yourselves to inquire into books; you are safe enough so long as you believe as the church believes, and follow the guidance of your priests and fathers. If this be an error, it is a dangerous one, and may prove damnable. That it is so, and that it will prove but a broken reed when you lean upon it, I hope you will see there is reason to believe, if you will but do your souls that justice not prodigally to cast them away upon blind and wilful mistakes, and take the pains to read these ensuing lines.

1. If your church be not infallible, then this principle is rotten. However, you cannot with safety or discretion venture your souls on it, till you have examined at least this one point of the church's infallibility: do but examine that, and if you do not stifle both reason and conscience, you will see it is a mere cheat.

2. If the church (that is, a pope with a council) were infallible, which is all that your great champions plead for, yet all confess that your particular priests, upon whose conduct you hazard your eternal welfare, are fallible, and subject to mistakes. It is most certain, that divers of your priests and confessors lead you into many, and some of them damnable, errors. Thousands of your priests and learned doctors do charge the Jesuits with poisoning the souls of the people with divers pestilent and damnable errors; such as these:—That a man may venture his soul upon any probable opinion, and that is probable, which but one of their learned doctors affirms. That a private man may kill his enemy to maintain his honour, though not by way of revenge. That a priest may absolve even old and inveterate sinners, and such as he believes incorrigible. That affliction, or sorrow for sin, arising merely from fear of punishment, is sufficient for salvation; and that the affection of loving God is not absolutely necessary to salvation. All these, and many more, are clearly proved out of their own words and writings in the Provincial Letters, otherwise

called, the Mystery of Jesuitism. Now, if the Jesuits may, and do so awfully deceive those thousands of you that depend upon their counsel and conduct, why may not other orders deceive you in other things? Or what is there that can give you any reasonable security? Is it their learning, prudence, pretended devotion, or honesty, or any other such like quality? Why, divers of the Jesuits have given as plausible testimony of these things, so far as men can judge, as most of the other orders; or will you say, all other orders are infallible, the Jesuits only excepted?

3. Nothing can be more evident, if the Bible be the word of God, than that the error or misguidance of the priest will not excuse the sin of the people. To satisfy you of this, I beseech you consider these few reasons.

(1.) The Scripture condemns, and God severely punished, those people who followed the errors of their priests. This did not excuse the Jews in Aaron's time, that they were misled by Aaron, Exod. xxxii.: nor those in the times of the wicked kings of Israel and Judah, that their priests did universally deceive them; and poor Elijah, and so Micaiah, were left alone: nor those in Malachi's days, that the priests caused them to stumble at the law, Mal. ii. 8: nor the crucifiers of Christ, that they obeyed the decrees of their priests and rulers.

(2.) The people will not be excused by their priest's misguidance, because they neglect their duty. If, indeed, there were no

duty incumbent upon the people, but to believe what your priests say, and do what they require, then your church speaks reason. But that none but a madman will say.

There are several duties required of the people, no less than of the priests. The law of God was not given only to the priests, but to all the people. God publisheth this law in the hearing of all the people, and speaks in the singular number to every one of the people: Thou shalt do, or forbear, this or that. And the curse is threatened to the people; "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen," Deut. xxvii. 26; which the apostle repeats, "Cursed is every one,"—not the priest only, but the people too,—"that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. iii. 10. If the priests, then, should have taught the Israelites, (as your priests now teach you,) "Thou shalt worship a graven image," when God saith, "Thou shalt not worship a graven image," can any serious man think this would have freed them from that curse, and that it was safer for them to obey the command of men than of God? Oh the impudence of your priests, that dare say so! Oh the blockishness of those people that will believe them when they say so! Your pope may well contend with us, for it seems your priests will contest with God for supremacy. When the priests and prophets, in Isaiah's days, were generally corrupted,

the people are not advised to believe all that they taught, and to obey all that they decreed, which is the strain of your church, but are commanded immediately to go "to the law and to the testimony:" and if any speak not according to them, they are to be rejected, "because there is no light in them," Isa. viii. 20. Even people are required not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits, 1 John iv. 1. Nor did the apostles exempt themselves and their doctrines from this trial, but allowed, commended, and required it in the people.

The Bereans are not reprov'd and censur'd, (as they would certainly be that should tread in their steps at Rome,) but commended, for examining the doctrine of St. Paul by the Scripture, Acts xvii. 11. And the same apostle allows the Galatians, not only to try his doctrines, whether they were agreeable to what they had received, but in case they find them contrary, he gives them commission to censure and anathematize him, Gal. i. 8, 9. And he bespeaks the Corinthians in this language, "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say," 1 Cor. x. 15. And he commands the Thessalonians to "prove all things," without exception, as well as to "hold fast that which is good," 1 Thess. v. 21. Consider these things, I beseech you, and do not wilfully cast away your precious souls upon trifles. God has given the Scripture as a rule to try things by; and this was written for the ignorant, and the people, as well as the learned and the priests, John xx.

31. He hath given people reason to try things with; if you will hide this talent in a napkin, at your peril be it. The prince was commanded to read and meditate in the book of the law, that he might observe to do all that is written therein, Josh. i. 8. Can you seriously think that if the corrupt priests had agreed to teach him to do contrary to all that was written therein, that this would have excused him before God? Then that precept was both superfluous and dangerous; and if you do not think so, (as you must needs, if you have any conscience,) then neither will it excuse your people; for, according to the doctrine of your church, prince and people are alike in this, both tied to believe as your church believes. God commands every Christian to "prove his own work;" and tells us, that "every man shall bear his own burden," Gal. vi. 4, 5; and that "every one of us shall give account of himself to God," Rom. xiv. 12. Do not think your priest's account shall serve the turn. And all the Christian people of Corinth are commanded to examine themselves whether they be in the faith, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. And dare you still live in the wilful breach of all these commands, and blindly give up your souls and consciences by an implicit faith to the conduct of your priests, to lead them whither they please?

(3.) The Scripture hath given you full warning of your danger. Read but two places, Ezek. xxxiii. 8, where God assures

us, that the wicked shall die in his iniquity, though he perished through the watchman's fault; and Matt. xv. 14, where Christ confutes this very opinion of yours, which was also the opinion of the Jews, that they were safe enough while they followed their priests' decrees and counsels, and tells them, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch;" and doubt of this if you can or dare.

In a word, if this senseless doctrine were true, not only men would have dominion over our faith, contrary to express Scripture, ("Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ," Matt. xxiii. 8; "Not that we have dominion over your faith," said the great apostle, 2 Cor. i. 24,) but also Christ should lose his dominion, and have no authority in his church, but as your priests please; and Christ's power is apparently limited to your interpretation; but the power of your church is absolute and unlimited, and the people obliged to believe them, "whatsoever they shall decree," as Gretser expresseth it. If this be not to make the word and authority of God and Christ void, through your traditions, I know not what is. I will trouble you no further. If you be capable of counsel, take warning, and suffer not yourselves to be led hoodwinked to hell, to serve a carnal interest of some among you; but quit yourselves like men, and by the grossness of this delusion learn to suspect the rest, and with humble and honest hearts read what is here proposed to you for your soul's good; and

may God give you light. Let my soul prosper no otherwise than I heartily wish the good and salvation of you all; but if you will still persist in your blindness, and add further obstinacy to your errors, I shall comfort myself in this, that I have delivered my own soul. Your blood be upon your own head; for there it will assuredly fall, and not upon the priest's only.

A

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A POPISH PRIEST AND AN ENGLISH PROTESTANT.

THE FIRST CONFERENCE.

Popish Priest. DEAR friend, I am glad to meet with you after so long a separation; for I remember we were brought up at the same school, and I rejoice in the opportunity of renewing our acquaintance. I desire a little discourse with you, to understand how it is with you in point of religion.

Protestant. I am of the Protestant reformed religion.

Pop. I am heartily sorry for it, in regard of our old intimacy; but if you will give me leave, I do not question, but in a very little time to give you such reasons, as will force you to leave those damnable errors, and to return to your ancient mother, the church of Rome.

Pro. With a very good will shall I yield myself to your instruction; I desire nothing

more than true information. I know I have a soul to save, which is of infinite worth, therefore, if you give me better grounds than I have, you shall not find me obstinate; but this I must tell you, you must not put me off with fancies and bare affirmations; but I shall expect solid proof of what you say from Scripture, or reason; and now speak what you please.

Pop. First, my dear friend, I must intreat you to consider that which your own ministers teach you, namely, that "there is no salvation to be had out of the true catholic church, which is the church of Rome."

Pro. That none is saved out of the true catholic church I grant, for *the catholic church includes all believers in the world*; but a man may be saved that is no member of the Roman, nor of any particular church; for, although you engross to yourselves the name of the catholic church, nothing is more clear, than that the church of Rome is at best but a part of the catholic church, and that a very unsound one too; and there is a false church, in which salvation cannot ordinarily be had, as well as a true church, out of which it cannot ordinarily be had; and I have heard more to prove yours to be this false church, than I am able to answer, or you either, as I suppose; therefore, this being only a general, and so an unconcluding argument, I desire you to come closer to the point.

Pop. Then I intreat you consider the danger of your way, and the safety of ours; since

all your ministers confess, that a Roman Catholic may be saved in his religion; but all our church unanimously declare, that you will perish if you live and die in your religion.

Pro. You call us schismatics; but by this argument you prove yourselves to be so: for I have oft heard it, that in the very same manner those infamous schismatics, the Donatists, argued against St. Augustine and the catholic church, that he confessed salvation was to be had in their churches, which they affirmed was not to be had in the catholic church; and this very thing was by St. Augustine, and the church of that age, condemned as their great schismatical principle. But let that pass. To come to your argument, remember the condition I made with you, that you do not put me off with fancies and bare affirmations, for I expect you to make good every word you say. Now, here I find you under a great mistake; and though I have heard it most confidently delivered by divers of your brethren, yet you must give me leave to believe my own eyes and ears. I read it in divers books of our learned English divines, and I have heard it from divers very able scholars and ministers, that Popery, in these times and places of light, is to those that may see that light, and will not, not only dangerous, but damnable: nor do I rest my faith upon their words, but they have given me not mere affirmations, as you do; but such arguments as I confess I cannot answer; yet

your religion. For such will be apt to conclude that your faith is not right, because your uncharitableness is so notorious and monstrous in condemning all the world besides yourselves, and that too upon such frivolous pretences. This argument therefore of yours has little weight.

Let me hear what further you have to say against our religion.

Pop. Then consider seriously of this, that your church confesses that she is fallible, and that you have no infallible judge among you, whereby controversies may be ended; but
OUR CHURCH IS INFALLIBLE.

Pro. I confess now you speak home; make this good, that it is necessary the church should be infallible, and that yours is so, and I shall ease you of the trouble of further arguments; but I must ask you two questions: 1. What is the meaning of this proposition? and, 2. How will you prove it? For the first, I ask you how you understand it? what is this church which you tell me is infallible? Are you agreed among yourselves in that point? To tell me of an infallible judge, and not to give me infallible assurance who this judge is, is to deceive me with vain words, and will no more end controversies, than to tell me there is an infallible Judge in heaven; for where, I pray you, shall I find your infallible judge? Now, I am in quest of him, I entreat your counsel and direction. Tell me then, is it the body of your church, and multitude of Roman Catholics, that is

your infallible judge? Do you make your people the judge of controversies?

Pop. No; for we all agree the government of the church is monarchical.

Pro. Are you then agreed, that the pope alone is the infallible judge? Speak the truth, and the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Pop. I will deal truly with you—we are not all agreed in that point; the French Roman Catholics generally deny it, and divers of our eminent doctors and writers, as Bellarmine confesses;* and among the rest a pope, Adrian by name, denies it; and even those that seem to be better minded towards the pope, acknowledge that it is no heresy to deny this, and that divers good Roman Catholics deny it; and that it is but a disputable point.†

Pro. Is it then a general council that is infallible? are you agreed in that? deal truly and clearly with me.

Pop. Then I must confess we are not all agreed in that neither; for the pope will deny this, and all the Jesuits, and Italian Roman Catholics, and others, who ascribe this infallibility to the pope only.

Pro. Who then is this infallible judge?

Pop. The pope and a general council agreeing together.

Pro. Is there then at this time any gene-

* De Pontifice, l. 4. c. 2.

† Cressey in Exomolog. In the Appendix, ch. 4, num. 7, Holden de Resolutione Fidei, l. 2, c. 1.

ral council at Rome, or elsewhere, which does agree with the pope?

Pop. No; but though there be no council now in their persons, yet there is in their writings, and the pope agreeing with them, is infallible.

Pro. But I have been told, that all your doctors agree in this, that no writing can be a judge of controversies. If you deny this, I should think the writing of God (which you all acknowledge the Scripture to be) might challenge this privilege, as well as the writings of any council of men. You all plead for the absolute necessity of a living infallible judge.

Pop. Though Roman Catholics are divided in the manner of expression, yet all are agreed in this general proposition, that our church is infallible.

Pro. Call you this only a difference in manner of expression, for one to say the pope is infallible, another to say he is fallible; for some of you to affirm the infallibility of councils, others utterly to deny it? I beseech you remember, I am inquiring after particulars, and therefore do not put me off with deceitful generals; who and where is the man or men to whom I must go to be infallibly resolved in all controversies? for if the king should tell his people he has appointed a judge to end all their civil controversies, this would be to no purpose, unless he should tell who that judge is. So that till I hear you are agreed in this particular, my doubts and

perplexities must needs remain. And then for the next point, I ask you, how you prove this infallibility which you pretend to? I must tell you, since it is the very foundation of your faith, I expect very clear and undeniable proofs. I pray you bring me two or three of your strongest arguments.

Pop. In this you speak reason, and I shall comply with your desires. I shall give you two or three plain and evident scriptures to prove it. 1. That of Matt. xvi. 18. Hence I thus argue: the church is said to be built upon St. Peter, he is the rock spoken of; and this rock does, together with St. Peter, include his successors; and the church built upon this rock (that is, united to, and built upon, the pope) is infallible; for it is said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Pro. Not one of these things is true.

1. It is more probable that not Peter's person, but his doctrine, or his confession concerning Christ, which now he made, is the rock upon which the church is built. Scripture is its own best interpreter: it is not Peter, but Christ, which is the foundation of the church, as he is called, Isa. xxviii. 16, compared with 1 Pet. ii. 6—8. It is expressly said, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. iii. 11; and this is the more remarkable, because he speaks against those that made the apostles foundations, one saying, "I am of Paul;" and another, "I am of Apollos," ver. 5. And

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if this were spoken of Peter, no more is said of him here than is said of all the prophets and apostles; "Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," Ephes. ii. 20. And besides, if by this text Peter had been made supreme and infallible head of the church, and judge of all controversies, no man in his wits can believe that St. Paul would have treated him so irreverently, to speak the least, as he does, Gal. ii. (which is more remarkable, because then Christ was dead, and Peter in the actual exercise of his headship and government, and, if we may believe you, publicly and universally owned for such;) that he would have equalled himself with him as he does; "The gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter," ver. 7. And that he would have spoken promiscuously of James, Cephas, and John, that they all "seemed to be pillars," ver. 9, and not a word of Peter's being the rock and foundation; and that he would have withstood St. Peter to his face, as he did, ver. 11.

2. If this were meant of Peter, yet this is nothing to his successors. You must first prove that St. Peter had a successor in that supposed universal headship, which will be very hard to persuade any understanding man; for, 1. That authority which the apostles had over all churches, was peculiar to them, and died with them: we see God did not think it necessary to leave a successor to Moses, in his full and absolute authority; no

more was it necessary to leave any after Peter and the apostles: and the reason is the same, because the work of the law-giving was finished, and those that came after were tied to the execution of their laws. 2. Besides, if Peter did leave a successor, what prudent man can believe that he would not have left some notice thereof to the world in one of his epistles? I find he saith, "I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance," 2 Pet. i. 15. How easy had it been to have added, "to that end I leave a successor, whom you must hear in all things!" I find Moses was very careful to leave a successor, and so were Elias and David; and Christ says, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you," John xx. 21. - Was Peter the only careless person, that would not be at the expense of a word to prevent all those heresies, schisms, and contentions which were even then broached, and most likely to increase after the death of the apostles in the Christian world?

3. If any did succeed St. Peter in his headship, one would think it should have been one of the surviving apostles, especially St. John, who lived above twenty years after him; for who can believe (that regards what he believes) that Linus, or Clemens, who is said to be St. Peter's successor, should be superior to St. John? Yet the foundation of all your religion is built upon this nonsensical opinion. And if this privilege did belong not

only to Peter, but some of his successors; yet to say it belongs to all following popes, divers of which are acknowledged to be apostatical and most wicked wretches, and that such monsters as were the true slaves of the devil, and brands of hell, should be the foundations of the church, by whom the church was to be secured from the gates of hell, will not find belief with serious men, till east and west meet together. Besides, when our divines say, the pope is antichrist, and the man of sin, you use to answer, that these expressions, the "antichrist," and "the man of sin," must needs point at a particular man, and not a whole order of men; which if it be true, the expression there used of this rock (especially being so particularly levelled at Peter, as you will needs have it) cannot, with any colour, be thought to mean a succession of many hundreds of persons. And sure I am, whatever the text speaks of Peter, it speaks not one word of Peter's successors, and therefore it is as easy for me to deny it as for you to affirm it.

4. Whatever this promise or privilege is, it belongs no more to the church of Rome than to the church of England; the name of one is here as clear as the other. It is a general promise, extending to the church at all times and places, signifying, that God will have and maintain a church to the end of the world. And if this place concerns only those that are built upon St. Peter, you grant the church of England once was, as the church

of Rome now is, built upon him too, when it was subject to the pope. * And if their being built upon St. Peter did not secure them from fallibility and apostasy, as you say it did not, then consequently the building of the church of Rome upon St. Peter did not make them infallible, but they might, as we say and prove they did, fall away. And certainly one of these two things must be granted, either that every church which once adhered to Peter, or the pope, is secured by this text from falling away; or else that, notwithstanding this promise, every church that now is subject to the pope, may fall away from him, and so the pope may be a head without a body, a shepherd without so much as one sheep. For if this text proved what they desire, that all that adhere to the pope, whilst they do so, are infallible; yet it does not prove, that they all shall constantly adhere to him, which is quite another thing.

5. If this promise and privilege belonged to any particular church, and to yours in a special manner, yet it does not prove your infallibility. This place concerns doctrines no more than manners, and secures your church no more against damnable heresies than against damnable practises, since the gates of hell prevail by one as well as by the other; and since you acknowledge that Peter's successors have lived and died in damnable sins, they might as well die in damnable heresies. Besides, if this text did prove the pope's supremacy, yet here is not one

word concerning his infallibility, which is quite another thing.

6. If this text did prove any infallibility, it does not prove the pope's infallibility, which you allege this text for, but the infallibility of the church which is built upon it.

Pop. But that church is infallible, because they adhere to the rock, namely, the pope, who therefore must needs be more infallible.

Pro. Then it seems the foundation of all your infallibility is in the pope, as Peter's successor, whom multitudes of your learned and approved doctors acknowledge to be fallible. I have heard you all confess that your popes may err in manners and practice. Is it so?

Pop. Yes.

Pro. Then, whatsoever he thinks, he may speak lies, and deceive the world, in telling them he is infallible; and surely if a man will deceive for any thing, he will do it for such an empire as the pope holds. But I have heard also your popes may err in matters of fact.

Pop. That we all agree in.

Pro. Then he may mistake and err in these questions, Whether Peter left a successor? and, Whether the bishop of Rome be the person? and, Whether there has been that uninterrupted succession in the papal chair? which you pretend to be necessary, which must be infallibly certain, or else the pope holds his authority only upon courtesy. So this place will not stand you in much

stead. Let me hear if you have any better argument.

Pop. There is another place, which, if you were not an obstinate sort of men, would satisfy you all, and that is, 1 Tim. iii. 15, where the church is called "the pillar and ground of the truth," and therefore is infallible.

Pro. Let me first ask you, what church is there spoken of, which you say is infallible? Is it the church of Rome? Was Timothy bishop of Rome, or not?

Pop. No, he was bishop of Ephesus: but why do you ask that question?

Pro. This place apparently speaks of that church in and over which Timothy was set; so if it speak of any particular church, it must be that of Ephesus, which you confess was fallible, not that of Rome; or if it speak of the universal church, *that* might be infallible, though the pope and all the church of Rome, truly so called, should fail and perish. Tell me, I beseech you, in particular, what is that church, which, from this and other places, you conclude to be infallible?

Pop. It is the pope with the general council, as I have told you.

Pro. Then I pray you make sense of the verse; for to me it is mere nonsense. Timothy is here advised to behave himself rightly in the house of God, which is the church of God, and the pillar and ground of truth. According to your opinion, this is the sense of it, That thou mightest know how to behave thyself in the pope and a general coun-

cil. I pray you tell me truly, was there a general council then sitting?

Pop. No; there was no general council from that time till two or three hundred years after, when the council of Nice was assembled.

Pro. Then it seems to me a most unreasonable thing to say, that Paul directs Timothy how to behave himself in a general council, which was not then in being, nor likely to be; and that he does not direct him how to behave himself in that body, the church, in which he then resided and ruled.

Besides, I pray you, where is the pope or a council called the house of God? If they have any thing to do there, they are the governors, the stewards, the officers of the house, but are never called the house of God; but this name is always ascribed to the multitude of believers and professors, as Heb. iii. 5, 6, where Moses, (whose place in the church the pope pretends to) is not the house, but the servant, the officer of it; so Heb. x. 21, "Having an high priest over the house of God;" so 1 Pet. ii. 5, "Ye, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." And if you know any one place where it is otherwise used, I pray speak; if not (as by your silence I see you do not) all understanding men will conclude, that neither pope nor council are concerned in this privilege. But besides, let me further ask you, can you give me assurance that these words, "the ground and pillar of the truth," imply infallibility?

Pop. It is true, the words are figurative and metaphorical, but that is the meaning of them.

Pro. My old friend, can you advise me to venture my salvation upon a metaphor? or that that is the true and only sense of the words? Prove it, and I am your prisoner; but it seemeth to me far otherwise. God saith to Jeremiah, "I have made thee an iron pillar," Jer. i. 18. Was Jeremiah, therefore, infallible? Peradventure, that was too mean a metal to amount to infallibility; but your church is a brazen pillar, and so it seems by the impudence of your assertions. I read in Eusebius,* that the saints of Vienne and Lyons called Attalus the martyr, a pillar and ground of the truth; yet you will not allow him to be infallible; by which, and divers other passages, it is sufficiently evident, that a pillar in the church is no more than a man that is well rooted, and grounded, and strong in the faith, as he that is tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine is a reed; let me therefore hear if you have any better arguments.

Pop. Then John xvi. 13, is an express promise, "When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth;" and, therefore, our church is infallible.

Pro. Tell me, I pray you, is not this promise made to the apostles only? if so, what is that to you? If you say otherwise, how do

* Lib. 5. cap. 1.

you make it appear that it concerns their successors?

Pop. That appears by comparing another place with it, John xiv. 16, "The Father shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever:" not surely in their persons, for they were to die in a little time; but in their successors.

Pro. I expected a place which had said, at the least, that the Spirit should lead them into all truth for ever; but this is quite another thing: you dare not say, that every one with whom the Comforter abides, is infallible: but to forgive you this great mistake, tell me truly, is it then your opinion that all the successors of each of the apostles, namely, all bishops, or all ministers, are infallible?

Pop. No, in no wise; for it is only St. Peter's successors, or the pope, who is infallible; and others, only so far as they depend upon him, and cleave to him.

Pro. Then this text is not for your turn; for if it do extend to the apostles' successors, it extends either to all or none; for sure I am, this text makes no difference; besides, how do you prove that these words, of the Spirit's leading into all truth, if they do reach further than the apostles, do imply infallibility? Then all believers are infallible, for they are all led by the Spirit, Rom. viii. 18.

Pop. True, but here they are said to be led into all truth.

Pro. You know the words *all* and *every* are often taken in a limited sense, as when

the gospel is to be preached to every creature, Mark xvi. 15. And you may as well conclude the omniscience of all believers from 1 John ii. 20, "Ye know all things;" and v. 27, "The anointing teacheth you of all things;" as the infallibility of your popes or councils from that phrase; and one answer serves for both places, namely, that they speak of all necessary truths. But why do I hear nothing of Luke xxii. 31? "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." I have heard that Bellarmine useth this argument, but I confess I thought they abused him.

Pop. It is true, he doth use it; and it is a solid one, though you scorn it.

Pro. How do you know that it is meant of all Peter's successors, for there is not one word of them here? But if I grant these were meant, do you, then, all believe that all Peter's successors are infallible?

Pop. I did before acknowledge that we are divided on that point.

Pro. Can you think to convince me with that argument that does not satisfy your own brethren? Moreover, tell me, I pray you, what was the faith of Peter which was struck at by the devil, and prayed for by Christ?

Pop. The event shows that; for the devil tempted him, and prevailed with him to deny his Master.

Pro. Did Peter deny Christ doctrinally, and fall into the damnable error of disbeliev-

ing Christ to be the Messiah? or was it only an error of miscarriage of his tongue, which spoke against his conscience and judgment?

Pop. Far be it from me to say that Peter did so damnably err in his judgment, I know no Roman Catholic who saith so; all do agree that it was only an error of his tongue and conversation, and a practical denial of Christ.

Pro. Very well; hence then I gather, that Christ prayed for his practical, not for his doctrinal faith; and that his grace of faith might not be utterly lost by his fall: so that if this text and prayer reach to your popes, it should rather secure them from damnable apostasies in practice, (which you confess many of them fell into, and died in,) than from heresies of which this text speaks not at all. But have you no other arguments?

Pop. Yes, there is one more, which were sufficient if there were no other, and that is from God's providence. It is unbecoming the wisdom of God to leave his church without a guide, or infallible judge, lest there should be no end of controversies; and, since you do not pretend to have any such in your church, it must be in ours, or else there is none in the world.

Pro. I had thought you would have only taught me, but now it seems you would teach God how to govern the world. It should seem to me, that God was not of your mind; he did not think fit to end all controversies, but to permit that there should be heresies, 1 Cor. xi. 19. And if God, in his wisdom,

thought an infallible judge necessary, certainly that same wisdom would have named the place, person or persons, where people should have found this infallibility. Was it ever known since the beginning of the world, that any prince constituted judges in his kingdom, not so much as giving notice to his people who they were, to whom they must resort for justice? This God hath not done; for you do not pretend a particular place which settles this infallible judge at Rome, but only some general and fallacious arguments, as I have proved. And besides, it is so far from being evident, that yourselves are not agreed about it: but some seek for this infallible judgment in the pope, others in a general council; and these do as fiercely dispute one against another in this point, as you do against us in many others: and therefore, it is much more rational for me to conclude thus, God hath not nominated and appointed such an infallible judge in the church; therefore there is none, and it is not fit there should be one, than saucily to undertake to be the counsellor of the Almighty, and to tell him what is fit to be done, and then conclude that it is done. In short, for controversies about fundamental and necessary things, God hath provided sufficient means for ending them, having clearly enough determined them in his word, for the satisfaction of all that are diligent, and humble, and teachable. And for controversies of lesser moment, there is no necessity for having them ended; nor would they be much

prejudicial to the peace of the world and the church, if man would learn to give any allowance for the infirmities of human nature, and exercise the great and necessary duty of charity and mutual forbearance. But, since this is all you can say upon this particular, I pray you let me hear what other arguments you have against our church and doctrine.

Pop. Then another argument against your church and way is taken from the NOVELTY of it. As for our religion, it hath had possession in the world ever since the apostles' days; but you are of yesterday, and know nothing; your religion is an upstart religion, never heard of in the world till Luther's days.

Pro. First, let me ask you this question: If you had lived in the days of Christ, or of the apostles, or of the primitive fathers, what would you have answered for yourself? You know better than I, that this was the very argument which Jews and heathens urged against the Christians then; they charged Christ with not walking after the traditions of the elders, Mark vii. 5. And the Athenians said to Paul, "May we know what this new doctrine is?" Acts xvii. 19. And the Pharisees had antiquity on their side, being zealous of the traditions of the fathers, Gal. i. 14. And though it be true that the apostles had the first antiquity for them, delivering nothing but what, for substance, was in Moses and the prophets, Acts xxvi. 22, (which also is our case,) yet the immediate and latter antiquity was against them, and for divers ages

together these doctrines had been in great measure obscured and unknown. What, then, would you have answered to a Jew or a heathen objecting this novelty to you? Learn from Christ, who, when the Jews pleaded for the continuance of their old practices in the matter of divorces, accounted it sufficient confutation, that "from the beginning it was not so," Matt. xix. 8. And to all the pretences of the Pharisees from antiquity, he opposeth this one thing, "Search the Scriptures," John v. 39. So you dispute against us with the arguments which the Pharisees used against Christ, and we answer you as he answered them. Besides, let me ask you this question, If I could clearly prove to you all the points of our faith, and disprove the points of yours, from the Holy Scriptures, tell me, would you then acknowledge the truth of the Protestant religion, notwithstanding all this pretended novelty?

Pop. Yes, certainly, for we all confess the truth of all that is contained in the Holy Scriptures.

Pro. Hence, then, it follows undeniably, that the main thing that you and I must look to in our faith is, that it be agreeable to the Holy Scriptures; and if ours be so, (as I am fully persuaded it is,) and yours the contrary, neither antiquity is any argument for you, nor novelty against us. Besides, when you charge our church with novelty, I suppose you mean that our doctrines are new.

Pop. I do so.

Pro. Then you cannot justly charge us with novelty; for,

1. You confess the antiquity and verity of the most of our fundamental doctrines, and yourselves do approve them, only you make additions of your own to them. You own all the Scriptures in our Bible, only you add the Apocrypha. You acknowledge Scripture to be the rule of faith, only you add tradition. We believe all the articles of the Apostles' Creed, (the belief whereof the ancient fathers thought sufficient to salvation,*) and the doctrine of the first four general councils, as you do also. You own our doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, and justification by Christ and faith, only you add your own works and satisfaction. Our two sacraments you approve, only you add five more. Our doctrine of the two states of men in heaven and hell you own, only you add purgatory. You own Christ for your Mediator, and prayers to God through him, only you add other mediators. Our worship of God you own, only you add images. These are the principal points of our religion, and dare you now say that our doctrines are new?

2. Many of your ablest doctors confess that divers of the peculiar doctrines of your church are new, and unknown to the ancient fathers; and it is most evident and undeniable concerning indulgences, purgatory, communion in one kind, worship in a strange tongue, the receiving some of your apocry-

* See Potter and Chillingworth.

phal books, transubstantiation, (especially as an article of faith,) the pope's infallibility, worship of images, denying of the reading of the Scriptures to the people, and others. And will you yet boast of the antiquity of your religion?

3. These doctrines wherein we differ from you have been not only proved from Scripture, but from the plain testimony of ancient fathers, as, I think, none can doubt, that, laying aside prejudices, shall read what our Jewell, and Moreton, and Field, and others have written. How, then, can you have the confidence to charge us with novelty?

Pop. Your church is new in this respect, that, although some others before you might own some of your doctrines, there was no church that owned all your doctrines both positive and negative.

Pro. That is not necessary. I hope every alteration of doctrines of less moment does not make the church new; if it does, it is most certain that your church is new also; for nothing can be more plain, than that the catholic church, nay, even your own church at Rome, did not anciently, in former ages, hold all these doctrines which now she owns, as your own greatest authors confess. This is sufficient, that the church of God, in most former ages, has owned all our substantial doctrines. But what have you further to say?

Pop. It is sufficient against you, that your church is schismatical, and you are all guilty

of SCHISM, in departing from the true catholic church, which is but one, and that is the Roman.

Pro. I desire to know of you, whether in no case a man may separate from the church whereof he was a member, without schism?

Pop. Yes, certainly, if there be sufficient cause for it; for the apostles did separate from the church of the Jews after Christ's death; and the orthodox separated from the Arian churches, and all communion with them; yet none ever charged them with schism.

Pro. Since you mention that instance, I pray you tell me why they separated from the Arians.

Pop. Because they held this heresy, that Christ was a creature, and not the true God.

Pro. Very well; hence then I conclude, that if your church do hold any heresy, and require all her members to own it too, it is no schism for us to separate from you.

Pop. That must needs be granted; but this is but a slander of yours, for our church holds no such heresies.

Pro. Your church does not hold one, but many dangerous errors and heresies, as I do not doubt to manifest ere you and I part; and, if you please, we will leave the present argument to this issue: if I do not prove your church guilty of heresy, and the imposition of it too, I am content you should charge us with schism; if I do, you shall mention it no more.

Pop. You speak reason; let it rest there.

Pro. Besides, methinks, you deal barbarously with us; you drive us out from you by your tyranny, and then you blame us for departing; as if Sarah had called Hagar a schismatic for going out of Abraham's family, from which she forced her. Tell me, I pray you, if the case be so that I must depart from the Roman church, or from God, what must I do?

Pop. The case is plain; you must rather depart from that church.

Pro. This is the case; if I do not depart from your church, she will force me to live in many mortal sins. I must believe a hundred lies, I must worship the cross, and relics, and images, which God commands me, under pain of his highest displeasure, not to worship. I must worship the sacrament with Divine worship, which I am assured is no other for substance than bread; for your church is not content to hold these opinions, but she enjoins these practices to all her members. And if things be thus, I think you will not have the confidence any more to charge us with schism for obeying the command of God to come out of Babylon, since you force all your members to partake with you in your sins, Rev. xviii. 4. Besides all this, let me ask you, upon what account you charge us with schism?

Pop. For departing from the catholic church, and from your mother church of Rome, and from the pope, whose subjects once you were.

Pro. If, then, I can prove that we are not departed from the catholic church, nor from our mother church, nor from any of that subjection we owe to the pope, I hope you will acquit us from schism.

Pop. That I cannot deny.

Pro. Then this danger is over. For, 1. We never did depart from the catholic church, which is not your particular Roman church, as you most ridiculously call it, but the whole multitude of believers and Christians in the world. Nay, the truth is, you are the schismatics, in renouncing all communion with all the Christian churches in the world, except your own, which are equal to yours in number, and many of them far superior in true piety. Next, we do not own you for our mother: Jerusalem which is above (not Babylon that is beneath) is the mother of us all, Gal. iv. 26. If we grant you now are a true church, yet you were but a sister-church.

Pop. You forget that you received the gospel from our hands.

Pro. Suppose we did really so; does that give you authority over us? If it did, not Rome, but Jerusalem should be the mother-church, from whom you also received the gospel. This you deny, which shows that you do not believe your own argument to be good. And as to the pope's universal and infallible authority, which he pretends over all Christians, I have diligently read your arguments for it, and I freely profess to you, I find your pretences, both from Scripture

and fathers, so weak and frivolous, that I durst commend it to any understanding and disinterested person, as a most likely means to convince him of the vanity and falseness of that doctrine, that he would peruse any of your best authors, and the very sight of the weakness and impertinency of your arguments would abundantly satisfy him of the badness of your cause.

Pop. You have no MINISTERS, because you have no uninterrupted succession from the apostles, as we have, and therefore you have no church, and therefore no salvation.

Pro. I observe you take the same course that the adversaries of the gospel ever did, who, when they could not reprove the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, quarrelled with them for want of a calling, as you may see, Matt. xxi. 23; John i. 25; Acts iv. 7. But the good Christians of that time took another course, and examined not so much the call of the persons, as the truth of the doctrine, Acts. viii. 14—17. It seems to me a secret confession of your guilt, and the error of your doctrine, that you are so careful to turn off men's eyes from that to a far meaner point. But tell me, do you believe that such an uninterrupted succession of ministers from the apostles is absolutely necessary to the being of a church?

Pop. Yes verily, or else this argument signifies nothing.

Pro. How, then, can you convince me, or any other Christian, that you have had such

an uninterrupted succession in your church? You must produce, and, it seems, I must read, all those many hundreds of great volumes wherein such passages are mentioned. In those you must show me a perfect catalogue of the several names of those popes, and others, who have, without interruption, succeeded one another ever since the apostles' days. And this catalogue must be such that all your authors are agreed in; whereas, I am told for certain, they differ very much in their reports therein, and are not so much as agreed among themselves who was Peter's next successor, whether Linus or Clemens, or some other person, they know not who. And those historians that report these things, you must assure me that they were infallible, (which you do not pretend they were,) or else they might mistake the things themselves and misreport them to me. And I have heard and read, that there have been divers corruptions and schisms even in your church; one pope set up against another, and each pretending to be the true pope, and disannulling all the acts of the other; and that the Christian people were then wofully divided, some cleaving to one, others to another; but it may be this was a mistake of our ministers; therefore tell me, was this true or not?

Pop. I confess it was true: after the year of Christ 1300, there were several popes at the same time; one at Rome, another at Avignon.

Pro. And how long did this difference last?

Pop. For about fifty years.

Pro. And is it true what I have heard, that your great Baronius reports, that, for one hundred and fifty years together, the popes were rather apostates than apostolics; and that they were thrust into the papal chair by the power of harlots and the violences of the princes of Tuscany?

Pop. I must be true to you; Baronius says so, at the year 897.

Pro. Then never henceforward be so impudent to pretend to such a lawful, clear, and uninterrupted succession; but blush that ever you mentioned it. But, besides, I have heard that divers of our first reformed and reforming ministers too, were such as had received ordination from and in the church of Rome, and from your bishops. Is it true, or is it not?

Pop. I will be ingenuous. Our doctors confess it; but if your ministers, or some of them, had a call from our church, yet they were only called to preach, not to overturn the world, (as they did,) and undertake the reformation of the whole church.

Pro. You have said enough. If they were called to the ministry, their work and office were to bear witness to the truth, and therefore to undeceive the world in those many errors and heresies which you had brought into the church; and ministers are set for the defence of the gospel: they were, therefore, bound by their office to endeavour the reformation of the church, and salvation of souls;

and, as in a great fire, especially where officers neglect their duty, every man brings his bucket to quench it, so, in that miserable state into which you had brought the church, when the pope and bishops would not do their duty, it was the duty of every minister to endeavour, and to stir up the kings and magistrates of the world to endeavour, a reformation. Surely you cannot pretend to a higher privilege than St. Paul, and yet he gives all ministers and Christians this leave and charge, that if he himself should bring any other doctrine than what he had delivered, any minister (though haply such a one as received his calling from him) or Christian might not only forsake him, but judge him accursed, Gal. i. 8. I shall only add this—our ministers are in a very hard case. I have discoursed with some, who have reasoned against our ministers as no ministers, because they had their calling from Rome; and now you will make them no ministers, because they had no calling from Rome. How shall they please you and them too? But what have you further to say?

Pop. I have this further, which is indeed unanswerable, namely, the horrible divisions of and in your churches. Here are Lutheran and Calvinist, Episcopalian and Presbyterian, Independent and Anabaptist, and Quaker and Socinian, and Familist, and what not? So that a man that would turn to your church, knows not which to turn to; but our church is one and entire, at perfect unity in itself.

Pro. I pray you tell me, in the first place, are divisions a certain argument to prove any church not to be true?

Pop. I cannot say so; for it is plain the Jewish church, in Christ's time, was full of divisions: there were Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, etc. And so was the church of Corinth, in St. Paul's time; while some said, I am of Paul; others, I of Apollos; others, I of Cephas; and some denied Paul's ministry and apostleship and some denied the resurrection.

Pro. Very well; then you may blush to use such an argument. I am told that the old heathens did use this very argument against the primitive Christians.

Pop. It is true, they did.

Pro. What a shame is it that you are forced to defend your cause with such weapons as were used by the pagans, and wrested out of their hands by the ancient fathers! But, besides, you talk of our divisions; I pray you let me ask you, will you allow me to father all the opinions of every papist I read or talk with, upon your church?

Pop. No, in no wise; let our church speak for herself. It is one great fault of your ministers, they catch up every particular opinion of any private doctor, and presently charge our church with it, though it be such as she has condemned; whereas they should judge of our church only by her own decrees and councils.

Pro. Very well; I desire only the same

justice from you. Do not father upon our church those opinions which she dislikes and abhors. Socinians, etc., are yours rather than ours, and join with you in abundance of your doctrines. Judge of our churches by their public confessions, and there also you would find that our divisions are generally inconsiderable, being almost all about a form of government, or oftentimes but a manner of expression, and none of them in fundamental points. But since you talk of divisions, let me ask you, are all the members of your church of one mind? I have been told otherwise. We hear great talk every day of the difference between the Jansenists and the Jesuits; and, if we may believe either of them, it is a fundamental difference, and such as concerns the very life of religion. I will not trouble you with other things; but are you agreed in that, which is the foundation of your unity, I mean, concerning the supreme infallible judge of controversies? I remember you told me that some of you thought it was the pope, and others a council; and I have read, that Popish nations, and universities, and doctors, are altogether divided about it. And for the pope, I have heard that Bellarmine reckons up the several opinions, and, amongst others, that the pope, if he be without a general council, may be a heretic, and teach heresies; and this, saith he, is the opinion of divers Papists, and is determined by a pope himself, Adrian VI. by name, in his question about confirmation. Is this true, or is Bellarmine belied?

Pop. It is true, Bellarmine doth say so much;* and moreover, that “this opinion is not heretical, and is tolerated by the church;” but withal he tells you that he is of another opinion, which is also the common opinion.

Pro. However, that is sufficient for my purpose; this one difference among you being far more considerable than all those points wherein Protestants differ among themselves; for, though they differ in other and lesser things, they all agree in this great means of union, that they own the Holy Scriptures to be the judge, or more properly, the rule of controversies; and, therefore, if you please, let this pass, and let me hear what further you have to say against us for yourselves.

Pop. This further I say, THE TRUE CHURCH MUST NEEDS REMAIN VISIBLE PERPETUALLY to the end of the world: such our church has been; whereas yours was invisible, and, as I said before, unheard of in the world till Luther’s days.

Pro. I do not well understand you. Do you think the church must needs be visible at all times to the whole world?

Pop. I cannot say so; for she was not always visible to many great and famous parts of the world, as China and America. It may suffice that she is visible in some kingdom or part of the world, and that she remains so in all ages.

Pro. Then the church may remain invisible to the greatest part of the world, and so

* De Pontific. l. 4. c. 2.

your argument reacheth but a small part of the world. How, I pray you, must the church be always visible?

Pop. There must be, in all ages, in some eminent place, a great company of Christians visibly united together in the worship of God in one body and congregation, and governed by their successive pastors under the pope.

Pro. Very well; now I know your mind: and first I deny that it is necessary for the true church to be so visible in all ages. Do you prove it.

Pop. That I shall easily prove, from those many and glorious promises made to the church. The church is called a great mountain, and said to be exalted above other mountains, Isa. ii. 2. She is a city set upon a hill, that cannot be hid, Matt. v. 14. Christ hath promised to be with her to the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 20. The gates of hell shall not prevail against her, Matt. xvi. 18. Christ's kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, Psal. cxlv. 13; Dan. ii. 44. A few invisible and dispersed Christians cannot make a kingdom.

Pro. Your proofs are impertinent. Isa. ii. doth prove that the church, under the New Testament, should be glorious (that is, spiritually) and prevalent; so it was, and we trust will be: but he says not the church should always continue in that condition, which is the point that you should prove. Matt. v. 14, if it spake of the church, Christ only tells us what the church then was, not

that it should always remain such. Besides, he speaks of their duty, not their condition: and Matt. xxviii. 20, proves that Christ will be with his church, but not so as that it shall always be illustrious and united in a great body; this, neither that, nor any of your other texts, prove, nor can you. But suppose that Christ had made such a promise, that his church should be visible in all ages in a considerable body, how do you prove that our church has not been so visible in all ages?

Pop. If you affirm that it has been visible in all ages, you are bound to produce a catalogue of your churches in all successive ages.

Pro. That is not necessary neither. If I did positively affirm that our church had been visible in such manner in all ages, then I confess I am bound to prove it; but if I leave it in doubt as a thing which, for aught you or I know, might be true or false, he that affirms it was not so, is bound to make it good; and if I deny your proposition, by all laws of dispute, you must prove it. I will show, by an instance, how unconvincing your argument is. There are several prophecies and promises in Scripture, the execution whereof is not recorded there, nor any where else. Suppose an atheist comes to you, and offers this argument against the Scripture: If the Scripture be true, and the word of God, then all its prophecies and promises were accomplished; but there are several prophecies and promises therein which never were accomplished within the time appoint-

ed, therefore it is not true: what would you answer?

Pop. I would deny this proposition, namely, that there are any such prophecies or promises therein which were not accomplished.

Pro. Suppose, then, he urge it thus: If they were accomplished, then you must show when and how they were accomplished, either in Scripture or in other histories; if you cannot, I shall conclude they never were accomplished.

Pop. I should tell him that he is obliged to show they were not accomplished; nor do I show that they were accomplished. I should tell him that they might be accomplished, though the accomplishment of them were never put into any writing, (and being but an historical tradition, might easily be lost,) or, if it were put into writing, that also might be lost by the injury of time, as thousands of other books have been: so that no prudent man will believe this mad proposition, that nothing was done in former ages that was not mentioned in the records which we have. But, if it were possible that some particular things were not recorded, or were lost, yet it is not probable that so eminent and public a matter as a succession of churches should lie hid.

Pro. I confess that it is not so probable that a large and glorious church should so lie hid; but since it was sufficient for the making good of Christ's promise of being

ever with his church, if there were some few congregations and ministers, though scattered in divers places, that these should not be recorded is not at all strange nor improbable to any one who considers, 1. How many matters of far greater note are recorded only in some single author, which, if he had been lost (and that he was as liable to as those that were lost) the memory of those things had perished with him! 2. How wofully dark and ignorant some ages of the church were, as you all confess, wherein there was not much reading; but, to be sure, there was little or no writing, and what little was written was written by men of the times, who would not do their enemies that honour or right to put them into their histories. 3. If any did mention such things, it is not at all improbable that such book or books wherein they were recorded might either be lost by the injury of time, as thousands of other books were, which was much more easy before printing was found out, or suppressed by the tyranny of your predecessors, who made it their business, as Israel's enemies of old, that the name and remembrance of true Christians might be blotted out of the earth. So, then, if Christ did indeed promise the perpetual visibility of his church, I will conclude he made it good, though history be silent on the point: nor will I conclude it was not done, because it is not recorded. But I pray you let me further ask you, is it true, as I am told, that in the former ages there were many Chris-

tians and ministers whom your church did persecute and burn for heretics?

Pop. That cannot be denied.

Pro. This shows there were not wanting, even in former ages, some that testified against your corruptions; and this was a sign they were the true church, whose office it is to contend for the faith delivered to the saints, Jude 3, for these things were not done in a corner. I am told that your great Bellarmine, when it was objected against him that the church was obscure in St. Hilary's days, answered, that though the true church may be obscure by multitude of scandal, yet even then it is visible in its strongest members, as then it was in Athanasius, Hilary, Eusebius, and two or three more whom he mentions.* Whence I gather, that some few eminent preachers and professors of the truth are sufficient to keep up this visibility. I remember I have read, in the history of the Waldenses, who, though your predecessors branded them with odious names and opinions, yet do sufficiently appear to have been a company of orthodox and serious Christians, and, indeed, true Protestants. These began about five hundred years ago, saith your Genebrard;† and your Reinerius, who was one of their cruel butchers, otherwise called inquisitors, writes thus of them:—"This sect," says he, "is the most pernicious of all others, for three causes: 1. Because it is of long continuance:

* *De Ecclesia Militante*, l. 3. c. 16.

† *Chron.* l. 4.

some say that it hath endured from the time of Sylvester; others from the time of the apostles. The second is, because it is more general, for there is hardly any land in which this sect doth not creep. 3. That whereas all others, by the wildness of their blasphemies against God, do make men abhor them, these have a great show of godliness, because they do live justly before men, and believe all things well of God, and all the articles which are contained in the creed; only the church of Rome they do blaspheme and hate." Behold here, out of your own mouths, a plain confutation of your objection, and a testimony of the perpetuity, amplitude, visibility, and sanctity of our church; for it is sufficiently known that our church and doctrine is, for substance, the same with theirs. Now, tell me, I pray you, if this history of them had been lost, and no other mention of them made in other records, had it been a truth for you to affirm, that there never were any such men and churches in that time?

Pop. No, surely, for the recording of things in history does not make them true, nor the silence of histories about true occurrences make them false.

Pro. Then there might be the like companies and congregations in former ages, for aught you or I know; nor can you argue from the defect of a history to the denial of the thing. And all this I say, not as if there were no records which mention our church in former ages, (for, as I said before, it is

sufficiently evident, that all our material doctrines have been constantly and successively owned by a considerable number of persons in several ages,) but only that you may see there is a flaw in the very foundation of your argument. Moreover, I find in Scripture several instances of such times, when the church was as much obscured, and invisible, as ever our church was; as when Israel was in Egypt, so oftentimes under the judges; and so under divers of the kings, as Ahab, when Elijah complained he was left alone, and the seven thousand which were reserved, though known to God, were invisible to the prophet; and under Ahaz and Manasseh; and so in the Babylonish captivity; and so under Antiochus: read, at thy desire, 2 Chron. xv. 3; xxviii. 24; xxix. 6, 7; xxxiii. 3, 4. So in the New Testament, how obscure, and in a manner invisible, was the Christian church for a season! Nay, let me add, this perpetual visibility and splendour is so far from being a note of the true church, that, on the contrary, it is rather a sign that yours is not the true church, as appears thus: Christ has foretold the obscurity and smallness of his church in some after ages; he tells us that there shall be a general apostasy and defection from the faith, 2 Thess. ii. 1—3; 1 Tim. iv. 1—3. I read of a woman, Rev. xii. 6, and she is forced to flee into the wilderness; and I am told your own expositors agree with us, that this is the church which flees from antichrist into the wilderness and secret

places, withdrawing herself from persecution. Is this true?

Pop. I must confess our authors do take it so.

Pro. Then it seems you do not believe yourselves when you plead the necessity of perpetual visibility and splendour, for here you acknowledge her obscurity; and really this place and discourse of yours do very much confirm me, that that obscurity which you object against us, is an argument that ours is the true church; though, according to this prediction, the pope is antichrist, and did drive our predecessors into the wilderness. I read of a beast rising out of the sea, Rev. xiii., which your own authors, Menochius, Tirinus, and almost all expositors (as Riberas saith) acknowledge to be antichrist; and this beast all the inhabitants of the world do worship, except those whose names are written in the book of life, ver. 8; that is, excepting only the invisible church. If any church be visible and glorious at that time, it must be the false and antichristian church. And now I speak of that, I have heard that you yourselves confess, that in the time of antichrist the church shall be obscure, and all public worship in the churches of Christians shall be forbidden and cease. Is it so?

Pop. It is true, it shall be so; that is, during the time of antichrist's reign, as Bellarmine acknowledges; but that is only for a short moment, for three years and a half,

which is all the time that antichrist shall reign.

Pro. I thank you for this, for now you have exceedingly confirmed me in the truth of my religion; for since you grant that the church shall be obscured during antichrist's reign, I am very well assured that your opinion of the triennial reign of antichrist is but a dream, and that he was to reign in the church for many hundred of years, for twelve hundred and sixty days, Rev. xi. 3; xii. 6, (that is, years, it being a very familiar thing to put days for years in prophetic writings.) But if the church may be obscured for three years, why not for thirty, yea, three hundred? Did Christ, in his supposed promise of perpetual visibility in the church, make an exception for these three years? I trow not. And tell me, I pray you, should you live till that time when antichrist shall prevail, and your religion, no less than ours, be obscure and invisible, if any of the followers of antichrist should dispute against you that yours was not the true church, because not visible, would you grant it?

Pop. God forbid I should be so wicked to deny my mother, and church, because of her affliction.

Pro. Then I see you yourselves do not believe this to be a good argument, and that you do not make perpetual visibility a necessary token of the true church. To this I add, there is no need we should show a constant succession of Protestant churches ever since

the apostles' days, as you pretend is necessary. The succession that you pretend in your church, is sufficient for ours: and so long as we generally agree that your church was a true church, (till latter years,) though wofully corrupted, and our predecessors continued in it, till your wounds stunk, and became incurable, we need no other succession than yours; but when your impiety came to the height, then we visibly departed from you, and have given such reasons for it as you will never be able to answer. In the mean time, let me hear what you have further to say.

Pop. Forasmuch as all your ministers confess our church was once a true church, I pray you tell me HOW AND WHEN THE CHURCH DID FALL? You cannot tell either the time when she fell, or the manner how, by apostasy, or heresy, or schism; if you can, name your authors.

Pro. This is a most unreasonable demand. A friend of mine had the plague last year, and died of it; I asked him, when he was sick, how and when he got it? He said, he knew not. Shall I then conclude he had it not? Shall I make Christ a liar, and dispute that there were no tares, because they were sown when men slept, Matt. xiii. 25, and so could not know when or how they came? Shall I believe no heresy to be a heresy, unless I can show how and when it came into the church? What if the records of these things, by the injury of time, are lost, and

their original left in obscurity, shall I therefore say it is now become no heresy? I beseech you answer me freely this question: Suppose I could bring plain and strong evidences from the Holy Scripture, and from ancient tradition, or the unanimous testimonies of the ancient fathers, that your doctrine of merits, for instance, is a heresy, your doctrine of worshipping images is idolatry, and that you are, in divers particulars, apostatized from that faith which the Scriptures and fathers do own; in this case, would you not confess that you are guilty of idolatry, heresy, and apostasy?

Pop. If it were so, and you could really bring (as you falsely pretend you can, but indeed cannot) any such solid proofs, I must and will confess it; for all our writers agree, that although we must believe many things that are not contained in the Scripture, yet we must believe nothing contrary to the Scriptures, nor to the consent of the ancient fathers.

Pro. Very well; hence then I gather, that the only question between you and me is, whether we can evidently and solidly prove the particulars now mentioned; which if we can do, as I am satisfied our ministers have done, you are convicted in your own conscience, and will confess yourself and your church guilty of heresy, idolatry, and apostasy, whether I can tell the manner, or time, or authors of this doctrine or not.

Therefore, leaving these frivolous and im-

pertinent questions, let me hear what you have to say more against our religion; and whereas your discourse, I observe, has wholly run upon generals, I beseech you come to some particulars, and show me the falsehood of the doctrines of our church. But it does not a little confirm me in my religion, that you confess, as I showed before, most of our doctrines to be true, and grounded upon Scripture, whereas yours are additions of your own devising. Now, if things be thus, you shall not need to trouble yourself about many particulars; but, if you please, single out some of our principal heresies, as you call them, and let me hear what evidences you can bring against them.

Pop. Your heresies are very many; but I shall mention one, which may be instead of all, and that is, YOUR RULE OF FAITH AND JUDGE OF CONTROVERSIES, which you make to be the Scripture only.

Pro. I am glad you have fallen upon so material a point, the deciding whereof may make other disputes in great part useless. Tell me, then, what you have to say against this doctrine.

Pop. I will urge four arguments against it. 1. Scripture hath no authority over us, but from the church. 2. You cannot know what books are the Holy Scripture, or part of it, but by the church's report. 3. If neither of these were true, yet Scripture is not a sufficient rule for your faith without tradition. 4. If it were sufficient, yet it is so obscure

that you cannot know the sense of it without the interpretation of the church. You see here is a fourfold cord, which you will find is not easily broken.

Pro. Make these things good, and I confess you do your work in a great measure. Let me hear your proofs.

Pop. For the first, then, I say that SCRIPTURE HATH NO AUTHORITY OVER US BUT FROM THE CHURCH; neither you nor I are bound to believe the Scripture to be the word of God, nor can any man know it, or prove it to be so, but from the testimony of our church concerning it.

Pro. I pray tell me, if you were to discourse with an atheist, who utterly denies the Holy Scriptures, and the church too, could you not prove against him that the Scriptures are the word of God?

Pop. God forbid but that I should be able to defend the truth of the Scriptures against any adversary whatsoever.

Pro. How, then, I pray you, would you prove it?

Pop. I need not tell you the arguments which, in this case, our doctors use, and I stand by them in it: they allege for the truth of the Holy Scriptures, the testimony of all ages and all sorts of persons; the miracles wrought for it, acknowledged even by the enemies of it; the martyrdom that so many thousands, and many of them wise and learned men, did run upon in the defence of them, who, living so near the time

of the writing of them, were best able to discern the truth; and the wonderful power that goes along with them in convincing, converting, and comforting or terrifying sinners.

Pro. Do you believe these are solid arguments, and that the atheist ought to yield to them?

Pop. Yes, doubtless, for every man is bound to receive the truth, especially when it is so proposed and proved to him.

Pro. It seems, then, by this, when you like, you can prove the Scripture to be the word of God without taking in the church's authority; I hope you will allow me the same benefit. But, again, let me ask you; your church that you talk of, which believes the Scripture to be the word of God, does she believe it to be the word of God upon solid grounds or not?

Pop. Yes, doubtless, our church is not so irrational as to believe without grounds; nor do we pretend revelation; but she believes it upon solid argument.

Pro. I wish you would give me a list of their arguments. But whatever they be that are sufficient to convince your church, why should they not be sufficient to convince any private man, Popish, or Protestant, or atheist? And therefore there is no need of the church's testimony. Or, will you say, the church has no other sufficient reason to believe the Scriptures but her own testimony; that is, she believes because she will believe?

Pop. God forbid that I should disparage the church, or give atheists that occasion to scoff at the Scripture!

Pro. Then I also may be satisfied, without the church's testimony, that the Scriptures are the word of God; and I am so by such arguments as you yourself mentioned: but really I cannot but smile to see what cunning sophisters you are, how you play at fast and loose. The same arguments for the Scriptures are strong and undeniable when you talk with an atheist, and are all of a sudden become weak as water when a Protestant brings them.

Pop. But if you can prove, in the general, that the Scriptures are the word of God, yet YOU CANNOT, WITHOUT THE CHURCH'S AUTHORITY, TELL WHAT BOOKS ARE SCRIPTURE, OR WHICH ARE CANONICAL, and so you are never the nearer.

Pro. Here also I must ask you again, how does your church know which books are Scripture and canonical? Does she know this by revelation?

Pop. No, we leave such fancies to your church.

Pro. How then does she know this? and why does she determine it? Is it with reason or without it?

Pop. With reason, doubtless, being induced to believe and determine it upon clear and undoubted evidences.

Pro. I pray you tell me what are those evidences upon which she goes.

Pop. I will be true to you. Our great Bellarmine mentions these three:—"The church," says he, "knows and declares a canonical book, 1. From the testimonies of the ancients. 2. From its likeness and agreement with other books. 3. From the common sense and taste of Christian people."*

Pro. Since a private man (especially one that, besides learning and experience, has the Spirit of God to guide him, which is that anointing given to all believers, which teaches them all things, 1 John ii. 27) may examine and apprehend these things as well as the pope himself, and better too, considering what kind of creatures divers of your popes are confessed to have been, he may therefore know, without the church's authority, what books are indeed canonical; but I pray you tell me, do not you acknowledge those books to be the word of God which we do, that are in this Bible?

Pop. I must be true to you; we do own every book you have there; but you should receive the books which you call apocryphal. So that indeed your Bible is not complete, for you believe but a part of the written word of God, which I must tell you is of dangerous consequence.

Pro. If these books be a part of God's word, I confess we are guilty of a great sin, in taking away from God's word; and if they be not, you are no less guilty in adding to it; so that the only question is, whether these

* De Verbo Dei, lib. 1. c. 10.

books be a part of the Holy Scripture or not? Now, if you please, we will try Bellarmine's rules.

Pop. The motion is fair and reasonable.

Pro. First, then, for the judgment of the ancient church, let us try that. I know you hold the church's judgment infallible, especially in matters of this moment; and I suppose you think the Jewish church was infallible before Christ, as the Christian church now is.

Pop. We do so, and the infallibility of the Jewish church and high priest, Deut. xvii. 11, 12, is one of our principal arguments for the infallibility of our church.*

Pro. Then only these books of the Old Testament were canonical, which the Jewish church did own.

Pop. That must necessarily follow.

Pro. Then your cause is lost; for it is certain, the Jews rejected these apocryphal books which you receive; and they reckoned only twenty-two. Josephus' words, acknowledged for his by Eusebius,† are most express for us. "The Jews have only twenty-two books, to which they deservedly give credit, which contain things written from the beginning of the world to the times of Artaxerxes: other things were written afterward," (so the apocryphal books are granted to have been,) "but they are not of the same credit with the former, because there was no certain succes-

* See Nullity of Romish Faith, ch. 2.

† Hist. l. iii. c. 10.

sion of prophets.”* And I am told divers of your learned authors confess it, as Catharinus,† Costerus,‡ Marianus Victor,§ and Belarmine himself, whose words are these:—“All those books which the Protestants do not receive, the Jews also did not receive;”|| and this is more remarkable, because to the Jews were “committed the oracles of God,” Rom. iii. 2. And neither Christ nor his apostles did accuse them of breach of trust in this matter. Moreover, I am told, (and surely in all reason it must needs be true,) that the canonical books of the Jewish church were written in the Jewish or Hebrew language, whereas these were written in Greek only. Are these things so?

Pop. What is true I will acknowledge: it is so; the Jewish church indeed did not receive them, nor yet did they reject them, as our Canus well answers.¶

Pro. Either that church did believe them to be canonical, or they did not; if they did, then they lived in a mortal sin against conscience in not receiving them; if they did not, they were of our opinion.

Pop. Well, whatever the Jewish church did, I am sure the ancient Christians and fathers did receive these books as a part of the canonical Scriptures.

* Contra Appionem, lib. 1.

† In Annot. adversus Cajet. de libris Maccab.

‡ Enchir. c. de Scrip. de num. lib.

§ In Scholiis ad Epist. 116. Hieronymi.

|| De Verbo Dei, lib. i. c. 10. In principio.

¶ Loc. Theol. lib. ii. c. 11.

Pro. I doubt I shall take you tardy there too. I am told that the council of Laodicea, in the year of our Lord 364, drew up a catalogue of the books of the Scripture, in which, as in ours, the apocryphal books are rejected.

Pop. It is true, they did not receive them, nor yet reject them.

Pro. If they did not receive them, that undeniably shows that they did not believe them to be canonical; and yet they diligently scanned the point, and the books had then been extant some hundreds of years, and they were far more likely to know the truth than we at this distance, having then such special opportunities of knowing the judgment of the ancient church, both Jewish and Christian: besides, I am informed that the famous bishop of Sardis, Melito, (a man of great judgment and venerable holiness, as your Sixtus Senensis said,) did take a journey to the eastern churches, where the apostles principally preached, to find out the true canon of the Scripture, and returned with the same canon that we own; but for the apocrypha brought home a *non est inventus*.* And moreover, that divers of your greatest champions do confess, that a great number of the ancient fathers were of our opinion, among which themselves reckon Melito, Origen, Athanasius, Eusebius, Ruffinus, Hierom, and Amphilocius; so say Canus and Bellarmine, and Andradius: and, in the general, Sixtus Se-

* It is not found.

nensis confesseth, that the ancient fathers were of our opinion. Are these things so?

Pop. I will not deny the truth, it is so; but you must know that other fathers were of another mind, as Clemens, Cyprian, and Ambrose, and especially St. Augustine, and the council of Carthage.

Pro. The fathers of our opinion, were both far more numerous, and such as lived nearest the apostolical times and churches. The council of Laodicea was more ancient than that of Carthage, and therefore of greater authority; and besides, the sixth council of Constantinople does expressly confirm all the decrees of the council of Laodicea, amongst which this was one; and the council of Carthage too, does not your work: for in their catalogue there is both more than you own, namely, the third book of Esdras, (although they call it the second, as the Greeks did;) and less too, for they shut out Baruch and the Maccabees. But besides all this, I am told, that very many of your most eminent doctors have disowned these books which we reject, as the Parisian divines, and cardinal Ximenius, with the Complutensian University, and Aquinas, and Lyra, and Pagnin, and many others. Is it so?

Pop. I confess this is true.*

Pro. Then I am sure this may satisfy any rational man, concerning the testimony of the

* Rainoldus, in his Prelections concerning the Apocryphal Books, proves this out of their own words: see Prælect. 40—43.

ancient church; and for the next point, namely, their agreement with the canonical books, I think it is plain enough that they do grossly contradict them, and the truth too. That fact of Simeon and Levi, which good Jacob, actuated by God's Spirit, detesteth, Judith commends, chap. ix. Tobit is said to have lived one hundred and eighty-five years, chap. xiv. 11; whereas if he said true, he must have lived twice as long, for he saith he was taken captive by Salmanasser, chap. i. 2; and when he was about to die he saith, the time was near for the return of the Israelites from the captivity, and the rebuilding of the temple which was burned. If the books of the Maccabees say true, Antiochus' soul had a lease of his body for three lives, and he was killed thrice over, (I commend the author, he was resolved to make sure work of him.) 1. He dies at Babylon in his bed, 1 Mac. vi. 16; then he is stoned in the temple of Nanea, 2 Mac. i. 16; lastly, he dies in the mountains by a fall out of his chariot, 2 Mac. ix. 28. And the fine fetches of your authors to reconcile these gross contradictions, put me in mind of a story we heard at school (if you remember) of a gentleman that told this lie,* that he shot a deer at one shot through his right ear, and left hinder leg, and you know how hard his man was put to it, to help his master out. But I will not launch forth into the sea of untruths and absurdities that are contained in those books; these may suffice

* See Rainoldus et Spanheim de libris Apocryphis.

to show you, that we do not without warrant reject them; but, however, it is sufficient for my purpose, that you grant that my Bible is the word of God, and these books in it canonical, and I can know this without the church's authority.

Pop. Do not make too much haste, if I do grant that these books in the original language are the word of God, yet yours is but a translation.

Pro. Is it rightly translated for the substance, or is it not? What Bible is that which you have?

Pop. A Latin Bible.

Pro. Is that the word of God, and rightly translated?

Pop. Yes, the council of Trent has decreed so.

Pro. Then I pray you let us try this experiment? Do you pick out any twenty verses in several parts of the Bible, and turn them into English out of your Bible.

Pop. The motion is fair, I will do it.

Pro. I do not find any substantial difference in all these places between your translation and mine: the difference is wholly in words, not at all in sense; so now, I thank you for this occasion, for I have heard some of your priests ranting highly against our translation; and now I see they have no cause for it.

Pop. If all this were over, yet **THE SCRIPTURE IS NOT A SUFFICIENT RULE TO GUIDE**

YOU TO HEAVEN OF ITSELF, WITHOUT TRADITION.

Pro. Why so I beseech you?

Pop. Because you are also commanded there to "hold the traditions." Turn in your Bible to 2 Thess. ii. 15; "Hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."

Pro. How do you prove that he speaks of such traditions as were not written in the Scripture?

Pop. Because he so plainly distinguishes between what he taught them by word, and what he taught them by epistle or writing.

Pro. That may be true that he speaks of some things of which he had not written to them, and yet they might be written by him to others, or by others, at least after that time; but besides, notwithstanding this distinction between word and epistle, divers of your own authors affirm, that tradition is perfect, and that St. Paul taught all things necessary by word of mouth; and why may not I as well say, that he taught all by epistle? But I pray you, what do you mean by these traditions?

Pop. I mean all the traditions which either he or any other apostle did deliver: all these you are bound to receive.

Pro. I will not quarrel with you for that; bring me solid proofs of any of your unwritten traditions, that they did indeed come from the apostles, I promise you I will joyfully

receive them: but I pray you, what are these traditions you speak of?

Pop. Such as these, the doctrine of purgatory, invocation of saints, of the pope's supremacy, of the single life of priests, of the fasts of the church, private masses, worship of images, etc.

Pro. And do you think, that all that did not believe and receive these traditions shall be damned?

Pop. No, by no means; for then I should condemn many of the holy fathers and martyrs, who differed from us, at least in some of these points.

Pro. Then it is not necessary to salvation to receive these traditions; and the Scripture may be sufficient without them. But further, these unwritten traditions you talk of, I beseech you how came you to discover them, and discern the true from the false?

Pop. I altogether approve of Bellarmine's rule, which is this:—"That," saith he, "is a true tradition which all former doctors have successively, in their several ages, acknowledged to come from the apostles, and by their doctrine or practices have approved, and which the universal church owneth as such; and the reason is, because the universal church cannot err.*"

Pro. I see all depends upon this foundation, that the catholic church (in your sense) cannot err; which, having disproved, I need not trouble myself further. To wave that,

* De tradit. cap. 9.

how, I pray you, do you know what former doctors have successively owned by word or practice? I presume none of your popes have so good a memory as to remember all that has been said or done in former ages; though, in my opinion, when your inventions were upon the wheel, and you did confer upon the pope an infallible judgment, you should have given him also an all-sufficient memory, and then you had done your work.

Pop. No, sir, we pretend no such thing: but we know this from the writings which the doctors have left. It is true, Bellarmine mentions another rule, which is "the continual usage of the church in all ages;" but, to deal candidly with you, I cannot know what their use was, but by their writings; so all must come to that.

Pro. First, then, I note, you forsake your cause; and it seems a writing is now made a rule for your unwritten traditions; if it may be so, let me beg your favourable opinion of the apostles' writings; besides, those writers which record these traditions, were they infallible?

Pop. No, we do not hold any particular writers infallible, especially not in matters of fact, such as reporting a tradition or use of the church undoubtedly is.

Pro. Then they might mistake false traditions for true. Besides, how can I tell what the ancient doctors did agree in, since most of them never wrote; and many of their writings are lost; and yet all of them had

equal liberty of voting in this case? Besides, I have heard that divers of the ancient fathers did report several things to be apostolical traditions, which your church now rejecteth, as that infants should receive the communion, and that Christ should reign on earth a thousand years, and many others. I am told, also, that your great Baronius, writing concerning the apostles, professes, he “despairs to find out the truth, even in those matters which true writers have recorded; because there was nothing which remained sincere and uncorrupted.” Is it so?

Pop. You shall find me-ingenuous; it is so: Baronius saith it, anno 44, sect. 42.

Pro. Then truly I shall bid tradition (in your sense) good night, for as to your traditions, I see there is no certainty in them. Shall I forsake the certain and acknowledged verity of the Scripture, for such trash? God forbid.

Again, I pray you tell me, does not every wise man that makes any thing, make it sufficient for its end? if you build a house to live in, will not you make it sufficient for that end? If a man make a sword to cut with, a coat of mail to defend him, is he not a fool if he does not, if he can, make them sufficient for their end and use?

Pop. That must needs be granted.

Pro. And was not our instruction and salvation the end for which God wrote the Scripture?

Pop. How do you prove that it was?

Pro. God himself tells me so; "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." John xx. 31.

Pop. St. John speaks there of miracles, not of doctrines, and so that is nothing to the purpose.

Pro. He speaks of miracles, which were done in confirmation of the doctrine of Christ, and so the doctrine is not to be excluded. Besides, I suppose you will not say that St. John wrote the doctrines of Christ for one end, and the miracles for another. Moreover, it plainly appears, both that this was the end for which the Scripture was written, and that it is sufficient for its end, for he saith expressly, that the Scriptures are able to make a man of God wise unto salvation. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.

Pop. Well, but if all these things be so, yet since **THE SCRIPTURE IS DARK AND DOUBTFUL**, and you can never apprehend the true meaning of it but from the church, you are never the nearer; and **THE SCRIPTURE IS NOT A CONVENIENT JUDGE OF CONTROVERSIES.**

Pro. Tell me, I pray, does your church understand the true meaning of the Scripture?

Pop. Yes, doubtless, because she has the Spirit of God.

Pro. Then certainly she is most deeply guilty of uncharitableness, or envy, or cruelty

to souls, that she does not put forth a clear and infallible comment upon the whole Scripture; but still suffers the whole world to live in contention about the true meaning of hundreds of texts of Scripture.

Pop. She forbears that, for reasons best known to herself. But this is not much to the purpose.

Pro. Whereas you pretend your church certainly knows the true sense of the Scripture, and this church you say is the pope, or a council; and if these be infallible, you say they are so in their decrees. If this be so, how comes it to pass that none do more grossly mistake and misapply Scripture than divers of your popes and councils have done, even in their decrees and decretal epistles, which you reverence as the gospel? Your pope Nicholas I. proves his supremacy from that text, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat," Acts x. 13: small encouragement to us to become his sheep, if he so use them. And from hence, that Peter drew to the shore his net full of fishes, John xxi. 11. Your pope Boniface VIII. proves it from Gen. i. 1: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth;" therefore the pope has power in temporals and spirituals: and this, saith he, you must hold, unless, with the Manichees, you hold two principles. And your councils are not more happy expositors. The council of Lateran proves the pope's power from Psal. lxxii. 11, which speaks of Solomon and Christ, "All kings shall fall down before

him." The second council of Nice alleges these Scriptures for the worship of images, that God created man in his own image, Gen. i. 27; "Let me see thy countenance," Cant. ii. 14; "No man when he hath lighted a candle covereth it with a vessel," Luke viii. 16. In my opinion, they spoke like a council expecting that the world should receive their decrees, not for any solidity of argument, (that had been pedantic,) but merely for the church's majesty and authority. Nay, the jest is, when their adversaries had taken notice of these absurd impertinencies, up steps Pater-noster pope Adrian, and he saith he will maintain it (in spite of fate) that they alleged them rightly and excellently. So here we have a pope and a council joining together, and therefore undoubtedly infallible, in these expositions. Nay, the council of Trent itself, when one would expect they should have grown wiser, though not better, proves the unequal power of popes, bishops, and priests, from Rom. xiii. 1; "The powers that be are ordained of God;" that is, digested into order. I hope, ere you have done, you will put forth an entire comment upon the whole Bible, which, I assure you, will be the rarest book that ever saw the light. But further, I desire to know of you how your church comes to have this true and certain sense of Scripture? Has she it by revelation or inspiration?

Pop. No, we pretend to no such things; but she comes to know it by the diligent use

of means, by prayer, by reading, and comparing Scripture, by consulting ancient interpreters, analogy of faith, the coherence, etc., and even the pope himself, when he set forth his translation of the Bible, professes to all the world that he did it in the very same manner, and by the same helps, that other translators do; that is, by advising with learned men, and consulting ancient copies, and the like.*

* Pope Sixtus V. tells us, in his preface to his translation of the Bible, that he "picked out of the cardinals, and almost out of all nations, a college of most learned men, who advised him in that work." "They," says he, "consulted, and I chose that which was best." And he adds these remarkable words: "It is most evident, that there is no surer nor stronger argument than the comparing of ancient and approved copies." And he tells us that he "carefully corrected it with his own hands." And then the pope imposeth this translation upon all the world, "to be followed, without adding, or diminishing, or altering, under pain of excommunication." And yet (that you may see how they abuse the people's credulity, to make them believe the pope's infallibility, which themselves do not in earnest believe) about two years after comes Clement VIII., and he puts forth another edition and translation of the Bible, differing from, and contrary to the former edition, in two thousand places, as Dr. James has proved, in his *Bellum Papale*, and *Defence of it*, by producing the places as they are in both editions. And, which is more than all this, in the preface to the last Bible of Clement VIII. we have these words: "Receive, Christian reader, this old and vulgar (common) edition of the Scripture, corrected with all possible diligence, which, though in respect of human weakness, it be hard to affirm that it is every way complete, yet it is not to be doubted but it is more pure and corrected than all that have gone before it." I think this were sufficient evidence, if there were no other, how great a cheat it is that you pretend the pope to be the infallible interpreter of Scripture; for here we have one of

Pro. Very good; then I pray you tell me why a Protestant minister, being oftentimes both a more learned and better man than the pope, may not as certainly hit upon the true sense of the Scripture as the pope himself.

Pop. The reason is plain; because the pope is guided by the infallible assistance of God's Spirit.

Pro. You ought not to rant at this height until you have solidly answered what our divines have written against this infallibility. And I heard before the woful weakness of your arguments; for it is to me the vainest thing in the world to pretend a promise of the Spirit of God infallibly to guide such men as (if the Scriptures be true) have not the Spirit of Christ in them, being, as you confess many of your popes and bishops were, "sensual, not having the Spirit;" and having apparently no other spirit in them but the spirit of the world, the spirit that lusteth to envy, and all wickedness. But since you pretend the Scripture is so dark, I pray you tell me what was the end for which God designed the Scripture? Surely, I think, it was for our understanding. My Bible tells me,

those infallibles directly contradicting and overturning the other; and besides, instead of that Divine (or after a sort Divine) infallibility which you ascribe to the pope, we have here a public acknowledgment of his imbecility: nor dare he affirm his work to be perfect, which it must needs have been if he had been infallibly guided in it, as you pretend he was; nor would he have said so, if he had believed his own infallibility.

that "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning," Rom. xv. 4. But if you say true, it seems God meant only to put forth riddles. God's law was designed by him for a light, and that even to the simple, Psal. xix. 7—9, and cxix. 105. And in a word, the gospel is so clear, that St. Paul pronounceth, "It is hid from none but them that perish," 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. And St. Luke wrote his gospel, that Theophilus, and with him other Christians, might know the certainty of those things wherein they had been instructed, Luke i. 4. And generally every discreet man that writes a book, writes it so as it may be understood; especially if it be for the benefit of the ignorant as well as the learned, which the Scripture assuredly was. Tell me, then, I pray you, why should God write his mind so darkly and doubtfully as you know whose oracles are said to be delivered? Was it because God could not write plainer, and wanted the gift of utterance, or because he would not?

Pop. Notwithstanding all this, it is certain the Scripture is full of obscure places.

Pro. I do not deny this; but those things which are obscurely delivered in one place are more clearly delivered in another; and those dark places generally are about prophecies, and such other things, the knowledge of which is not necessary to salvation. But for necessities, the Scripture is plain,

and I am told that divers of your authors acknowledge so much. Is this true?

Pop. I confess Costerus hath this expression: "That things which are necessary to be known by all Christians are plainly and clearly delivered in the writings of the apostles:" and some others of our doctors say as much."

Pro. It could be nothing but the evidence of the truth which forced such an acknowledgment from its greatest adversaries; therefore let this go, and let me hear what further you have to say against our religion.

Pop. I find you are an obstinate heretic, and settled upon the lees, and therefore it will be needless to discourse further with you; if any thing could have convinced you, surely the arguments I have offered would have done it; for I assure you I have picked out the strength and marrow of the Roman Catholic cause in the points we have discoursed. And since I see you turn a deaf ear to my counsel, I shall give you over as incorrigible.

Pro. You see I have heard you with great patience, and given you all the freedom you could desire; now I have one request to you, that you would allow me the same privilege, with patience to hear, and, if you can, answer what I shall object against your religion.

Pop. With a very good will. I will meet you here to-morrow at this time. So at present adieu.

THE SECOND CONFERENCE.

Pro. Well met, sir. I see you are as good as your word, and I hope you will allow me as much freedom and patience as I did you.

Pop. I shall willingly do it; therefore speak freely, and so will I; and if truth be on your side, let it prevail.

Pro. I shall divide my discourse into two parts.

I. Some general considerations, which indeed do very much set me against your religion.

II. I shall examine the grounds of your principal points of doctrine; for to meddle with all will be needless: if your pillars fall, the rest cannot stand. For the first, there are several weighty considerations against your religion: I shall give you them in order. The first general consideration is this:

1. That YOUR CHURCH DECLINES ALL JUDGMENT BUT HER OWN, and makes herself judge in her own cause. You do not allow Scripture to be judge, nor the ancient fathers, (for all your talk of antiquity,) nor indeed any but yourselves, the pope, or a council of your own; and your church, it seems, must determine whether she be a true church or not, and whether she be pure or corrupt, or whether she be infallible or not. Is this so?

Pop. I confess this is our doctrine, and, I think, grounded upon reason.

Pro. You speak against the common sense of all men. In all controversies or differences between men and men, we generally suspect that party who will submit to no judgment but his own; and he who is willing to refer himself to any third indifferent party is generally presumed to have the best cause; and this is our case: Protestants do not make themselves and their own church the only judge, though they might as justly and reasonably do it as you; but they are very willing to submit to other judges; they refer themselves to be judged by the Scripture, which is acknowledged to be a most impartial judge. If that do not please you, they refer themselves to the fathers for the first six hundred years, till your abominations had leavened the world, according to what was foretold, Rev. xiii. 8.

2. My second consideration is this: you do not only **DECLINE THE SCRIPTURE'S JUDGMENT**, but you infinitely disparage and vilify it. I meet with several passages quoted out of your authors to that purpose.

Pop. Possibly you may, out of some inconsiderable ones, but not out of any of note and name in our church.

Pro. Yes, out of your prime authors. I read that cardinal Hosius, in his advertisement to king Sigismund has this expression: "If they" (that is, the heretics) "say, 'It is written,' that is the voice of the devil, speak-

ing in his members.”* But that it is below a cardinal to read the Bible, he would have found these words also in Christ’s mouth. I read that Costerus calls the Scripture, by way of contempt, “paper and parchment.” “God,” says he, “would not have his church” (by which always understand the Papists themselves) “now depend upon paper and parchment, as Moses made the carnal Israelites.” And again; “That which is written in the heart of the church doth by many degrees excel the Scriptures: first, because that was written by the finger of God, but this by the apostles;”† as if the writings of the apostles were only a device of man. I read that cardinal Pole, writing to Henry VIII., says thus:—“What an absurd thing is this, that thou didst attribute more authority to the Scripture than to the church, since the Scripture hath no authority but for the decree of the church.”‡ (He means the Roman church.) I see we are highly concerned to please your church, else we are like to have no Scriptures. I read that Pighius says, “The apostles did never intend to subject our faith to their writings, but rather their writings to our faith.”§ And afterward he says: “The Scriptures are (as one said, not more pleasantly than truly) a nose of wax, which suffers itself to be drawn hither or thither, as a man

* De Expresso Dei Verbo.

† Enchiridion, c. i.

‡ De Primatu Romanæ Ecclesiæ, fol. 91.

§ Eccles. Hierarch. lib. ii. c. 2.

pleaseth.”* I read that your Bullinger says, “The Scripture is the daughter, the church the mother, which gives being and sufficiency to her she begets.” No wonder; then, the church makes bold with the Scripture, to add, or alter, or dispense with it. We all know the mother may correct the daughter. I confess, when I read those passages, produced by our writers, I suspected they wronged them. Are these things true?

Pop. I acknowledge it, and it is a vain thing for me to deny it; for the books, and those passages in them, are extant under their own hands. And I must confess these authors are as considerable and approved as any we have. But you ought to put a favourable sense upon them.

Pro. I would not strain them, nor make them worse than they are. Take them as you will, they are abominable expressions, and to me a great evidence that the Scripture is no friend to your church. And I conclude this to be one accomplishment of what Christ hath said, “Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d,” John iii. 20. And if this be the spirit by which your church is guided, I am sure it is not the Spirit of God and of truth; for that teacheth men reverence and love to the Scriptures. You seem to do like Herod, who, being convinced that he was not of the royal race of the Jews, burned their genealogies and records, that his false

* Ibid. lib. 3. c. iii. fol. 103.

pretences might not be confuted by them. And just so do you endeavour to do by the Scriptures.

3. My third consideration against your religion is this, that **YOUR CAUSE IS SUCH AS DARES NOT ABIDE TRIAL.** This is the honour and happiness of our religion; we are allowed to examine all that our ministers say; and we have a rule (which we may peruse) to try them by, namely, the Holy Scriptures, which you dare not suffer your people to read. And this I take to be a secret confession of your guilt. And I am told your Alphonsus de Castro says, "That from the reading of Scriptures all heresies come."*

Pop. I think your experience hath justified that expression. You see what you get by the reading of the Scriptures, even this, that you are crumbled into a thousand sects.

Pro. Our Saviour was not of your mind, for he thought not acquaintance with, but ignorance of the Scriptures was the cause of error; "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures," Matt. xxii. 29. Not only did he allow, but commanded the Jews to "search the Scriptures," without any fear of this inconvenience, John v. 39. Had St. Paul been of your mind, he would not have commended, but reprov'd the Bereans for searching the Scriptures, and examining his doctrine by them, Acts xvii. 11. If any of your people should do as the Bereans did, they would be sent to the inquisition. I do not deny but

* Contra Hæreses, lib. v. c. 6.

too many make a bad use of the Scripture, and wrest it to wicked purposes, which is to me no better an argument than this: "Wine makes many men drunk, therefore no wine must be sold. The doctrine of free grace was abused by thousands, as we read, therefore St. Paul did ill in preaching of it. The light of the sun hurts sore eyes, therefore Solomon was mistaken when he said, 'A pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun,' " Eccles. xi. 7. But since you speak of this, I pray you let me ask you one question: were not most of the heresies that ever were in the church brought in by learned men?

Pop. I cannot deny that, for it is notoriously known.

Pro. Then you shut up the wrong door; for it seems it is not the unlearned man's reading, but the learned man's perverting the Scripture, which is the true cause and fountain of heresies. And besides, you must not do evil that good may come out of it; nor defraud people of their greatest treasure, nor keep them from their duty, for fear of some inconveniences. This is to make yourselves wiser than God.

Pop. But indeed you slander us in this point. We do not absolutely forbid reading of the Scriptures: the council of Trent allows it, provided you can get the bishop's leave.

Pro. It is true, that council pretends to give some such liberty; but they take away with one hand what they give with the other;

for in their index of forbidden books they have this passage:—"Since experience showeth that the promiscuous reading of the Bible brings more evil than good; therefore if any man shall dare to read, or have a Bible without license from the bishop, or inquisitor, he shall not be capable of absolution, unless he part with his Bible."* But, in truth, this pretended license is but a handsome blind; for in that very place there is this observation added to that rule, that "the power of giving such licenses of reading, or keeping the vulgar Bibles, is taken away from such bishops and inquisitors, by the command and usage of the Roman and universal inquisition." At best, it seems, I must not obey Christ's command of searching the Scriptures, unless the bishop give me leave. But I pray you tell me, do your people use to ask, and the bishops to give them leave to read the Bible?

Pop. I will not dissemble with you; they do not. And the truth is, an approved writer of ours, Ledesima, puts the question, "What if a man should come to the bishop, and desire liberty to read the Bible, and that with a good intention?" To which he replies, that "the bishop should answer him in the words of Christ, Matt. xx. 22, 'Ye know not what ye ask:' and indeed," saith he, and he saith it truly, "the root of this demand is an heretical disposition."†

* In fine Concil. Trident. reg. 4.

† De Sacris Vernaculis.

Pro. Then I perceive in this, as well as in other things, you are more careful to deceive people with pretences than to inform them. But indeed you tell me no more than I had read or heard out of your own authors. It was the speech of your pope Innocent, that “the mountain which the beast must not touch is the high and Holy Scriptures, which the unlearned must not read.” And your doctors commonly affirm, that people must not be suffered to read the Scriptures, because “we must not give holy things to dogs, nor cast pearls before swine.”

4. My fourth general consideration against your religion is this, that **IT GROSSLY CONTRADICTS THE GREAT DESIGNS AND ENDS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION**, which all confess to be such as these: the glorifying of God and his Son Jesus Christ, and the humbling and abasing of men; the beating down of all sin, and the promoting of serious holiness. Are not those the chief ends of religion?

Pop. I do freely acknowledge they are, and our religion doth most answer these ends.

Pro. That you and I will now try. And for the first; your religion doth highly dishonour God sundry ways. What can be a greater dishonour to God than to make the Holy Scriptures, which you confess to be the word of God, to depend upon the testimony and authority of your pope, or church; and to say that the word of God is but a dead letter, and hath no authority over us without their interpretation and approbation? By

which means malefactors, for such all men are, Rom. iii. 9, 10, (your pope not excepted,) are made judges of, and superior to that law whereby they are condemned. Tell me, would not the French king take it for a great dishonour if any of his subjects should say that his edicts and decrees had no authority over his people without their approbation?

Pop. Yes, doubtless, he would.

Pro. Just so you deal with God; and what can be a fouler dishonour to God, than that which your great Stapleton affirmed, and Gretser and others justified, and your church to this day has never disowned it, "that the Divinity of Christ and of God" (in respect of us) "depends upon the authority of the pope?"* And what more dishonourable to God than what your great champion, Bellarmine, saith, that "if the pope should err in forbidding virtues," which God hath commanded, "and commanding vices" which God hath forbidden, (and that he may so err divers of your most famous and approved authors confess,) "the church were bound to believe vices to be good, and virtues bad, unless she would sin against conscience:"† that is, in plain terms, the pope is to be obeyed before God. Again; is it not highly dishonourable to God to give the worship which is proper to God unto the creature? I confess the prophet Isaiah hath convinced me of it: "I am the Lord: that is my name:

* *Triplicatio contra Whitak.* c. 17.

† *De Pont.* lib. iv. c. 5.

and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images," Isa. xlii. 8.

Pop. I also am of the same mind; but it is a scandal of your ministers to say we give God's honour to the creature. I know whereabout you are, you mean it of images, whereas we worship them with a lower kind of worship.

Pro. You worship them with such a kind of worship as neither angels nor saints durst receive. Cornelius did not worship Peter with a divine worship as God, for he knew he was but God's minister; yet Peter durst not receive it, Acts x. 6. It was an inferior worship which the devil required of Christ, for he acknowledges at the same time God to be his superior, and the giver of that power he claimeth, Luke iv. 6; and yet that was the worship which Christ saith God has forbidden to be given to any creature. You are a valiant man, that dare venture your immortal soul upon a nice school distinction. I pray you, do you not worship the bread in the sacrament with that worship which you call latria, which is proper to God?

Pop. We do so, and that upon very good reason, because it is not bread, but the very body of Christ, into which the bread is turned.

Pro. But what if the bread be not converted into Christ's body; is it not then a high dishonour to God, and indeed damnable idolatry?

Pop. Yes; our Fisher, the famous martyr,

and Bishop of Rochester, saith, "No man can doubt, if there be nothing in the eucharist but bread, that the whole church hath been guilty of idolatry for a long time, and therefore must needs be damned."* But we are well assured that it is no longer bread; and yet I must add this: if peradventure it should still remain bread, yet forasmuch as we believe it to be the body of our Lord, our ignorance, I hope, would excuse us from idolatry, and God would not impute it to us.

Pro. Tell me, I beseech you, will all kind of ignorance excuse a man?

Pop. No, certainly; there is a wilful and affected ignorance, which, because it is against clear light, will not excuse.

Pro. Tell me farther; did this excuse the Jews from their sin of crucifying Christ, and the damnation due to it, that they did it ignorantly, Acts iii. 17?

Pop. No, because they shut their eyes against the plain light and clear evidence of that truth, that Christ was the Messiah.

Pro. No less do you in the doctrine of the sacrament; for they had no greater evidences against them than sense, and reason, and Scripture; all which you reject, as I shall prove, by God's help. And as your religion dishonours God, so does it also highly dishonour Jesus Christ whom he has sent, who is expressly called the "one Mediator," 1 Tim. ii. 5. But you have conferred that honour upon many others, saints and angels.

* Roffensis contra Oecolampadium, c. ii. fol 3.

Pop. True; there is but one chief Mediator; but there may be other secondary mediators.

Pro. In like manner, to that which the apostle there saith, "There is but one God," it might be said, there are other secondary gods; and so we might introduce the heathen gods into the church. It is the great prerogative of Jesus Christ, that he is the Redeemer of the world; yet your Bellarmine was not afraid to communicate this honour to the creature, and expressly saith, "It is not absurd that holy men be called our redeemers after a sort;"* and more of the like stuff we shall meet with before we part. Yet again, your religion, as it depresseth God, so it exalts the creature. I will instance but in one thing, and that is, your doctrine of justification by the merit of good works; a doctrine which, St. Paul affirms, gives unto a man matter of boasting and glorying: "Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith," Rom. iii. 27. "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory," Rom. iv. 2. Next, you grant that it is the great design and intent of religion to discourage and beat down sin, which your religion does exceedingly encourage by your doctrines and practice in absolutions and indulgences. In my acquaintance, I have known several Papists that have wonderfully encouraged themselves in their wicked

* De Indulgentiis, cap. iv. sub finem.

ways from this consideration; especially when Easter drew near, because they knew they should very suddenly be shriven and absolved, and be, as they said, as sound and clean as when they came first into the world. I have known also divers of our loose Protestants that have turned to your religion, that they might have greater liberty for, and the more security in, sin; and in my conscience, if I would let my lusts choose a religion for me, they would presently lead me to your religion. And so again, your religion does not at all promote serious holiness, but the soul and spirit of it is dwindled away into mere formality. What can be of more pestilent consequence to true holiness than to tell a man that the saying so many pater-nosters or ave-marias, though it may be he is talking or gazing about in the midst of his devotions, will procure him acceptance with God? Is it true that your great and devout Dr. Suarez saith that "it is not essential to prayer that a man should think of what he saith?"

Pop. It is true he does say so in his book of prayer.

Pro. Then I confess your religion has the advantage of ours, for a man may do two businesses at once. It has set me much against your religion since I understood that you turned that great doctrine of repentance into a mere formality. What a sad doctrine is it that your great masters teach, that re-

penitance is not necessary at all times, but only on holy days, as some of your authors say: only once in a year, that is, at Easter, as others: nay indeed, once in all his life, and that in danger of death, as Navar and Cajetan! What an encouragement is this to wickedness, to tell men that a thousand of their sins are venial, which, though not repented of, will not exclude them from the favour of God and from salvation! But I will rake no farther into this kennel.

I think this may serve the turn, to let you see that I had a warrant to say that your religion contradicts the design and end of all religion.

5. The fifth consideration that sets me against your religion is THE DESPERATE ISSUES THAT YOU ARE DRIVEN TO IN THE DEFENCE OF YOUR CAUSE; as, for example, in the great point of infallibility, I observe your learned doctors are beaten out of all their former assertions and opinions. You have been driven from Scripture to the fathers, from them to the pope, from him to a council, and thence to a pope with a council; and, as a further sign of a desperate cause, the Jesuits are brought to that exigence, that they are forced to affirm the pope to be infallible in matters of fact, which is confessedly a new, upstart, and, indeed, monstrous opinion; and yet those piercing wits see their cause cannot be defended without it: and others, seeing the vanity of all their former pretences, have been forced to resolve all into the pre-

sent church's testimony. So for the point of idolatry you are driven to those straits that you cannot excuse yourselves from idolatry, but by such pretences as will excuse both Jewish and Gentile idolaters: and one of your ablest champions is brought to this plunge, that he is forced to affirm that "some idolatry is lawful."* I might instance in very many others, but I forbear.

6. A sixth consideration is taken from THE PARTIALITY OF YOUR RELIGION. That religion which is from God is doubtless agreeable to the nature and will of God. But so is not your religion, for it is guilty of that respect of persons which Scripture every where denies to be in God, Job xxxiv. 19; Acts x. 34; Rom. ii. 11.

Pop. How is our religion guilty of respect of persons?

Pro. I might show it in many things, but I will confine myself to one particular; and that is, in point of indulgences. The souls of all that die in venial sins are doomed to the terrible pains of purgatory, there to continue none knows how long.—By the way I cannot but take notice of the great unhappiness of those Christians that lived and died in the days of Christ and the apostles. There have been multitudes of them burning in purgatory to this day, and are likely to be so as long as the world lasts; whereas those that live nearer the end of the world must needs have a far shorter abode there: so men are pun-

* Greg. de Valentia.

ished with continuance of their torments merely for the circumstance of time of their birth. But this is not the thing I aim at. From these pains of purgatory there is no way to deliver a man but by indulgences; and these indulgences must be bought off with money, and wealthy men may buy off those corporeal pains which the poor must suffer without bail or mainprise, and turn them into a fine of the purse. So I see it was not without reason that Solomon said, "Money answers all things," Eccles. x. 19. I have heard that your tax of the apostolical chancery (put forth by the authority of your church, where there is a price put upon all indulgences, and upon all kind of sins) has this expression, "Diligently note that these graces" (of indulgences) "are not given to the poor, because they are not, and therefore cannot be comforted."* By which I see, that if St. Peter himself should rise from the dead, and come to his successor with his old tone, "Silver and gold have I none," if he were a thousand Peters, he must go into purgatory without mercy. I am told that another of your authors, Augustinus de Ancona, an author of great note with you, tells us, that "indulgences are for the relief of the church's" (that is the popes and their prelates) "indulgences,† which are not relieved by a willing-

* *Diligenter nota quod hujusmodi gratiæ non dantur pauperibus, quia non sunt; ideo non possunt consolari. Taxa Cancellariæ Apostolicæ. Tit. De Matrimoniali.*

† *Nam indulgentiæ fiunt ad relevandam indigentiam Ec-*

ness to give," which is all that any poor man can pretend to, "but by the gift itself." It seems your church is not of God's mind; for if there be first a willing mind, he accepteth it for the deed, 2 Cor. viii. 12. And a little after (as I am told) he saith, "As to the remission of punishment which is procured by indulgences, in that case it is not inconvenient that the rich is in a better condition than the poor, for there it is not said, Come, and buy without money."* I confess that was a dangerous speech, and would utterly undo all the church of Rome. It is sufficient that Isaiah once said it, and Christ again, Come, and drink freely, Isa. lv. 1; Matt. xi. 28. People should have been wise, and taken them at the word, for they are never like to hear it a third time. Is this true?

Pop. They do indeed say so; and the practice of our church manifests to all the world that indulgences are sold for money; and the condition of the rich, in that, is better than the poor. But what great matter is that? As to the pardon of sin, and eternal life or death, both rich and poor are alike. This difference is only as to the pains of purgatory.

Pro. Is that nothing to you? You speak against your own and all men's sense. We see how highly men esteem it to be freed

clesiæ quæ non relevatur per solam voluntatem dandi, sed per datum. De Potestate Papæ, quest. 30. Art. 3.

* Quantum ad remissionem pænæ quæ acquiritur per indulgentiam, in tali causa non est inconveniens, quod dives sit melioris conditionis quàm pauper. Ibi enim non dicitur, Venite et emite sine pecuniâ. *Ibid.*

from a painful, though short disease here; how much more to be freed from such pains as you all confess to be unspeakably more sharp and grievous than all the pains that ever were endured in this world! It is so considerable a thing, that I assure you it is to me a matter of wonder, if Christ and the apostles had been of your mind, how it came to pass so unluckily that the poor only should receive the gospel; whereas, if the men of that age had not been all fools, the rich would have been most forward to entertain it.

7. My seventh consideration against your religion is taken from its GREAT HAZARD AND UTTER UNCERTAINTY. According to the doctrine of your church, no man can be sure of his salvation without a revelation; but he must go out of the world, not knowing whither he goes. Indeed there is nothing but hazard and uncertainty in your religion. I suppose you grant that all your faith, and consequently your salvation, depends upon the infallible authority of your church.

Pop. That is most certain.

Pro. Are you then infallibly certain that your church is infallible, or do you only probably believe it?

Pop. I am but a private priest, and therefore cannot pretend to infallibility; but I am fully satisfied in it, that the church is infallible in itself.

Pro. Then I see you pretend to no more certainty than I have; for I know (and you grant) that the Scripture is infallible in itself;

and I know its infallibility as certainly as you know the infallibility of your church. But I pray you tell me what is your opinion? I know you are divided; but where do you place the infallibility, or where do you lay the foundation of your faith?

Pop. To deal freely with you, I place it in the pope; who, when he determines things "out of his chair," is infallible: for St. Peter, who was supreme head of the church, left the pope his successor.

Pro. Then it seems your faith doth wholly depend on these things: that St. Peter was bishop of Rome, and died there, and that he left the pope his successor in his supreme and infallible authority.

Pop. It doth so.

Pro. How then are you infallibly assured of the truth of these things, which are all matters of fact?

Pop. Because they are affirmed by so many of the ancient fathers and writers.

Pro. Were those fathers or writers infallible persons?

Pop. No.

Pro. Then might they, and so may you, be mistaken in that point; and so indeed you have nothing but a mere conjecture for the foundation of your faith. But again; are you infallibly sure, that St. Peter's intention was to leave his infallibility to the pope? for I do not read that St. Peter left it in his last will. I tell you truly, it is strange to me, that St. Peter should write two catholic epis-

bles, and, as I observed before, not leave one word concerning this matter. For my part, I shall always rather question the pope's authority, than St. Peter's fidelity or discretion in omitting so fundamental a point, when he put in many of far less concernment. But further I demand, how are you assured that St. Peter intended to leave his power, and did actually leave it, to his successor?

Pop. By the unanimous consent of the ancient fathers.

Pro. I wonder at your confidence, that you dare affirm a thing which our authors* have so clearly proved to be false. But suppose it were so, that the fathers had said it: tell me, are the fathers infallible? at least are they so in their reports of matters of fact?

Pop. No: we confess that it is only the pope or council that are infallible, not the fathers; and to be true to you, even the pope himself is not infallible in his reports of matters of fact.

Pro. Then you have nothing but a mere conjecture, or historical report delivered by men liable to mistake, for the great foundation of your faith. Yet once more, have you any greater or better certainty for your faith than the pope himself?

Pop. God forbid I should be so impudent or wicked to say so; for my faith depends upon his certainty.

Pro. Very well. How, I beseech you, is the pope assured? What is it that makes

* Moulin, Reynolds against Hart, and others.

him infallibly certain of his own infallibility? Is he assured of it by revelation?

Pop. No, as I have told you often, we pretend to no such thing.

Pro. How then?

Pop. By the Spirit of God, which guides him into all truth.

Pro. How is he assured that the Spirit of God guides him?

Pop. By the promises God hath made to him. I need not repeat then, they are known already; "Thou art Peter," etc. "Simon, Simon, I have prayed that thy faith fail not," etc.

Pro. I have already shown how absurdly these texts are alleged. But, I beseech you, how is the pope infallibly assured, that this is the true meaning of those texts? You confess it is not by inspiration.

Pop. He knows that, by considering and comparing Scripture with Scripture, and by consulting the fathers, and by prayer, diligence, obedience, etc.

Pro. All these things are very good, but any other man may use these means as well as the pope, and hath as full promises from God, as any the pope pretends to; as, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God," John vii. 17; and the Spirit of truth is promised to all that ask it, Luke xi. 13. So if this be all you have to say, may God deliver my soul from such a desperate religion, wherein all the certainty of its faith depends upon his

infallibility that is not certain of his own infallibility.

But I need say no more of this; it is to me an undeniable argument, that there is no certainty at all in this foundation; because, as you confess, so many hundreds of your ablest scholars do utterly reject it. But once more, in my opinion you run a dreadful hazard in the point of worshipping of creatures, images, saints, and especially the bread in the sacrament, in which you run other hazards besides those I spoke of. I am told, that your doctrine is this, that it is necessary to the making of a sacrament (and so to the conversion of the bread into Christ's body) that the priest intend to consecrate it. Is it so?

Pop. Yes, doubtless; Bellarmine and all our authors largely dispute for that.

Pro. And can I be sure of another man's intentions? It is sufficiently known, that divers of your priests are profane, and atheistical wretches; others envious and malicious; and some actually Jews. What assurance have I, that my priest is not such an one, and that he doth not, either out of a contempt or hatred of religion, or malice against my person, intend to deceive me, and not make a sacrament of it? Sure I am, they intend to deceive their people in the preaching of the word; and why they may not do so in the administration of the sacrament, I know not.

8. My eighth and last general consideration is this, that **YOUR RELIGION DESTROYS**

EVEN THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY: which true religion is so far from destroying, that it improves and perfects it. I confess, the bloodiness of your religion hath ever made me both suspect and loath it. I find that Christ is a Prince of peace; though he whipped some out of the temple, yet he never whipped any into his church; that he drew in his disciples with the cords of a man, of conviction and persuasion; and so did his apostles after him; but your religion, like Draco's laws, is written in blood. I perceive you answer our arguments with fire and fagot; besides this, your religion destroys all civil faith and society; your principle is known, and so is your practice of equivocation, and keeping no faith with heretics.

Pop. I know where you are; you mean because of John Huss, who after he had the faith of the emperor given him for his safe conduct, was, contrary to that faith, put to death in the council of Constance.

Pro. I do so, and what can you say for it?

Pop. This I say, you must not charge upon our church, the opinion of some few private doctors; since others disown this, and have written against it.

Pro. It seems it is a disputable point amongst you, whether you ought to be honest or not: but I have heard that John Huss was condemned by the council of Constance, and that when the emperor scrupled to break his faith, they declared he might do it, and ought to do it. Is it so?

Pop. It is true, what was done in that point, was done by the council.

Pro. And you hold councils (especially where the pope joins with them as he did with that council) to be infallible; and therefore this I may confidently charge upon you as a principle of your religion. I cannot but observe your fine devices; at other times when we allege passages out of any of your learned doctors which make against you, you tell us they are but private doctors, and we must judge of you by your councils. Now here we bring an approved council's testimony, and you send us back to your private doctors.

Pop. These discourses of yours are only general; I had rather you would come to the other thing you proposed, namely, to examine the particular points of our religion, wherein I hope I shall give you such solid grounds and reasons, that when you shall understand them, you will embrace them.

Pro. You shall find me ingenuous and docile; only remember, I expect not words, but solid arguments. I think our best course will be to pick out some principal points of your religion, and examine them; for the rest will either stand or fall as they do.

Pop. I am perfectly of your mind; let us proceed accordingly.

Pro. First then, if you please, we will begin with THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS, which you say is essential to the Christian religion.

Pop. It is so, and Bellarmine rightly saith, that "where there is no sacrifice" (as you Protestants have none) "there is in truth no religion."

Pro. Therefore, I pray you, let me hear one or two (for these are as good as a hundred) of your chief grounds and reasons for that sacrifice.

Pop. I approve your motion, and I shall only insist upon two arguments; first, the sacrifice of the mass was appointed by God, or Christ, in the words of institution of the sacrament, "This do in remembrance of me," Luke xxii. 19. It is the great argument of the council of Trent.*

Pro. I admire the fruitfulness of your church's invention. It seems they think these two words, "This do," contain no less than two of your sacraments, namely, that of orders, which makes priests, and that of the supper.

Pop. They do so.

Pro. That no sober man will easily believe; nor that Christ's meaning in the words mentioned was this, Sacrifice me in remembrance of me. But let me hear how you prove the institution of the mass from these words.

Pop. Christ bade his disciples, Do this, namely, that which he did: Christ did in that last supper truly and properly offer up himself to his Father, his body under the shape of bread, his blood under the shape of wine;

* Sess. 22, c. 9, can. 2, 3.

and therefore they were truly and properly to offer up or sacrifice Christ in the sacrament. The argument is Bellarmine's.*

Pro. How do you prove that Christ did in that last supper truly and properly offer up his body and blood to his Father? I read that Christ offered himself but once, Heb. vii. 27; ix. 25—28, and x. 14, and that was upon the cross; nor do I find that he offered any thing at all to God in that supper, but only to his apostles? And what, did Christ sacrifice himself, and imbrue his hands in his own blood? and did he eat up his own body? Did he take his whole body into his mouth? These are monstrous opinions. But how prove you that Christ did then offer up himself to God?

Pop. Because Christ speaks in the present tense, "This is my body which is broken—blood which is shed:" he does not say which "shall be" broken, and shed; and therefore it must have been broken and shed at that very time.

Pro. What a vain argument is this! You know nothing is more usual in Scripture than to put the present tense for the future. Christ saith, "I do lay down my life," John x. 15, when he means, I will do it shortly. "I go to the Father," John xvi. 28, that is, I shall go shortly. "That thou dost," John xiii. 27, that is, are about to do. And in Matt. xxvi. 28, Christ saith of his blood, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed

* De Missa. lib. 6, c. 12.

for many for the remission of sins;" and yet I suppose it was not shed at that time, for you all profess the sacrifice of the mass is an unbloody sacrifice. But again, tell me, I pray you, when Christ said, "This do," did they not obey Christ's command at that supper?

Pop. I cannot deny that.

Pro. Thence unavoidably follows, that this doing concerns the communicants, as well as (if not more than) the minister; and so it is not meant of sacrificing Christ, but receiving of him; and really, if this text do not, there is no other which does enjoin communicants to receive; which he that can believe, has got a good mastery over his faith. Besides, what Christ here commands his apostles, I find St. Paul commands the Corinthians, and expounds doing this by eating and drinking, 1 Cor. xi. 26. And moreover, if the words, "This do," were the words which did ordain both priest and sacrifice, who can think that two of the evangelists, namely, both Matthew and Mark, would have omitted them in mentioning the words of institution; and therefore this may pass. I shall only add, that if our divines should prove their doctrines no better than by such wrested Scriptures and arguments as this, we should hiss them out of the pulpit: but I suppose you have some better argument, therefore let me hear it.

Pop. Consider, then, that irresistible argument, Christ is a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, Psal. cx. 4; Heb. v. 6. Now,

Melchisedec did offer up a sacrifice of bread and wine to God," Gen. xiv. 18; and therefore Christ was bound, in agreement with this type, to offer up such a sacrifice, even his body and blood, under the species of bread and wine.

Pro. You tell me, Melchisedec offered up bread and wine to God; I find no such matter: it is only a dream of your own. The history is in Gen. xiv.; where indeed I read of his offering bread and wine to Abraham and his soldiers, to refresh them, (according to the custom of those times and places, Deut. xxiii. 3, 4, and Judges viii. 6,) but not a word of any offering to God. It is the strangest relation of a sacrifice that ever was; here is not one word of the altar, or offering, or consecration, or the destruction of the sacrifice. You grant the thing sacrificed must be destroyed when it is sacrificed: I pray you how is this bread destroyed, save only by the soldiers' mouths, which you say came after the sacrifice?

Pop. The bread possibly was destroyed by putting it in the furnace, and the wine sprinkled upon the furnace, as Vasquez answers.*

Pro. I see it was otherwise in those days than now it is. If I thought my bread would be destroyed by putting it into the oven, I assure you I would never put it in.

Pop. It must be a sacrifice that is there

* In part 3, Thomæ tem. 3, q. 83, diss. 220, art. 1, c. 3.

related; for it follows, and he was "the priest of the most high God," Heb. vii. 1.

Pro. Not at all; for his being priest evidently relates to that which follows, "And he blessed him," and received tithes of all, Gen. xiv. 19, 20; besides, if Melchisedec did here offer a sacrifice, was Jesus Christ obliged to offer the same kind of sacrifice that he did, for Christ was to offer up himself, Heb. ix. 14, which none of his types did. Tell me first; was Melchisedec a type of Christ in that action of eating bread and wine?

Pop. Yes, doubtless, and this was the principal thing; in respect of which, Christ is called a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, or else I say nothing.

Pro. Then tell me, how can any man in his wits, believe that St. Paul, who spends so much of his epistle to the Hebrews in comparing Christ and Melchisedec, and their priesthood together; and who picks up the very smallest circumstances, as that he was without father, etc., should not speak one word of this, which, if you say true, was the principal thing? Besides all this, if Melchisedec was a type of Christ in that action, did Christ offer bread and wine as Melchisedec did?

Pop. No; but he offered his own body and blood under the appearance of bread and wine.

Pro. Nay, now I see there is no possibility of pleasing you; for I expected this all along, that Christ must needs have offer-

ed the same kind of sacrifice that Melchisedec did here. But now you forsake your own argument; and because Melchisedec did offer bread and wine, Christ must not offer bread and wine, but something else under those appearances. Now, I have heard your two principal arguments, I hope you will hear mine also.

Pop. Good reason I should do so.

Pro. Then first, I argue thus, the sacrifice of Christ was perfect, and did perfect all believers, Heb. x. 14, and therefore it need not, and ought not to be repeated; for the apostle proves the imperfection of Levitical sacrifices, because they were repeated, Heb. x. 1, 2. "Where remission of these," namely, sins and iniquities, "is, there is no more offering for sin," Heb. x. 18. Either then remission was not obtained by his once offering, or there must be no more offering; either Christ's offering upon the cross was insufficient, or yours in the mass is unnecessary.

Pop. It is not properly repeated; for it is the same sacrifice for substance which was offered upon the cross, and is offered in the mass.*

Pro. How is it of the same kind, when you say, the one is bloody, the other unbloody; the one offered by Christ, the other by a priest? But if it were of the same kind, so were the Levitical sacrifices, and all had relation to Christ, (as you pretend all masses have,) and yet the apostle makes their repe-

* Cornelius a Lapide in Heb. vii. 28.

tion an evidence of their imperfection, Heb. ix. 10. And moreover the apostle denies not only the repetition of other sacrifices, but also of the same sacrifice, and tells us as plainly as man can speak, that Christ was to offer up himself but once, Heb. ix. 25—28, whereas you will needs overrule the apostle, and force Christ to offer up himself thousands of times.

Pop. It is true, there is but one sacrifice of redemption, and expiation for sin, and that was the sacrifice of the cross; but there are other sacrifices of application to apply that to us.

Pro. I hope the word and sacraments, and Spirit of Christ, are sufficient to apply Christ's sacrifice. Must we have one sacrifice to apply another? Who ever heard of one plaster made to apply another? or a ransom paid the second time to apply the former payment? And you seem to me quite to forget yourselves, to destroy the nature of your sacrifice; for the business of a sacrifice is oblation to God, not application to men. Besides, I have one argument more which fully satisfies me:—if the mass be a real and proper sacrifice, then the thing sacrificed must be really and properly destroyed.

Pop. That I readily grant, as Bellarmine* also does; and indeed so it was in all the sacrifices that ever were offered to God.

* *Sacrificium verum et reale veram et realem occisionem exigit.* Bell. de Missa. lib. 2, c. 27.

Pro. But surely Jesus Christ is not destroyed in the mass; is he? and are your priests the murderers of Christ?

Pop. He is not so destroyed; for we tell you, it is an unbloody sacrifice: yet he is, in a manner, destroyed by the priests eating of him: for thereby Christ ceaseth to be where he was before; that is, in the species of bread and wine; and the bread and wine are destroyed.

Pro. Call you this a destruction for one to remove from one place to another, or to cease to be where he was before? This is ridiculous; and yet this* fantastical and mock destruction is all which you can bring, instead of that real destruction which you confess necessary to the very essence of a sacrifice. And as for the bread and wine, they were destroyed by transubstantiation, not by the oblation or sacrifice which comes after it.— And now having mentioned that, let us discourse concerning your doctrine of TRANSUBSTANTIATION. And first, tell me what is the doctrine of your church.

Pop. That the council of Trent will inform you, which declareth, that by consecration the whole substance of the bread and wine is converted into the substance of the body and blood of Christ.†

Pro. How is it possible for the bread to be converted into Christ's body, which was

* Bell de Missa. lib. 2, c. 27.

† Sess. 13, de Eucharist. c. 4.

made already before the bread? That Christ could turn water into wine was possible, but that he should turn that water into such wine as was in being before that change, this is impossible: but let that go. My next question is, If a Christian did actually receive Christ's body and blood, tell me what profit has he by it? I cannot believe that God would work so many miracles, as you affirm he does in this sacrament, to no purpose. Scripture and reason tell me, and your council of Trent confesseth,* that the sacrament is a feast for my soul, and not for my body. Is it not so? Now, what is my soul the better for eating the very body of Christ? When the woman cried out to our Saviour, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee," Christ replies, "Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it," Luke xi. 27, 28; nevertheless, if you can solidly prove it, I will receive it; therefore bring forth your principal arguments for it.

Pop. I will do so: and our church proves this point, especially from two places of Scripture, John vi. 51—57, and the words of institution, Luke xxii. 19. I begin with the sixth chapter of John, where our Saviour often tells us, that the bread which he gives is his flesh, etc.

Pro. I have heard that divers of your learned doctors confess this chapter speaks not of the sacrament. Is it so?

Pop. I will not dissemble with you, that

* Sess. 13, c. 2.

was the opinion of Biel,* cardinal Cusanus,† Cajetan,‡ and Tapperus,§ and divers others.

Pro. Certainly, this argument is not likely to convince a Protestant, which could not satisfy your own ablest scholars. But I will not press that further. Tell me then, do you judge that Christ speaks here of a bodily eating and drinking of his very flesh and blood?

Pop. We do so.

Pro. I confess some of the ancients were of your mind; I mean the Jews. But, with submission, I am rather of Christ's opinion, who plainly destroys that gross and carnal sense, telling them, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing," ver. 63. Again, doth not Christ press this as a necessary and present duty upon all the Jews that then heard him?

Pop. That must be granted.

Pro. Then certainly Christ speaks not of the sacrament, which was not then instituted, and therefore they could not partake of it. I demand further, is this sacrament of such efficacy that all who receive it are saved; and of such necessity, that all who do not take it are damned?

Pop. No; our church utterly condemns both those opinions.

Pro. But this eating of Christ's flesh is such, that Christ saith all that eat it are saved, ver. 54; and all that do not eat it are damned,

* In Canone Missæ.

† Ep. 7, ad Bohemos.

‡ In Aquin. par. 3, qu. 80, art. 8. § Artic. Lovan. 15.

ver. 53; therefore, surely he speaks not of a sacramental eating. Besides, the whole laity are utterly undone, if your sense of this chapter be true; for I find that drinking of Christ's blood is no less necessary to life eternal than eating of his flesh; and therefore woe to those to whom you do not allow to drink of the cup in the sacrament. I am told this objection is so considerable, that it forced divers of your doctors, sorely against their will, to forsake this argument; and therefore this will not do your work: but I presume you have better arguments.

Pop. We have so; I shall urge but one, which is of itself sufficient, from the plain words of institution, "This is my body," Luke xxii. 19. Methinks the very hearing of them read should convince you, if you would take the words in their plain and proper sense, and not devise I know not what figures and tropes.

Pro. If it were true that Christ did turn the bread into his body by saying these words, "This is my body," yet how doth it follow that the priest, by reciting these words, worketh the same effect, any more than a priest, every time he reads those words, "Let there be light," doth make light, because God did make it by those words? Or than that he raiseth a dead man every time he reads those words of Christ, "Lazarus, come forth?" Moreover, I have heard, that divers of your most learned doctors confess that this place doth not, nor indeed any other place of Scrip-

ture, prove transubstantiation. I have heard three cardinals named, namely, Cajetan,* and our bishop of Rochester,† and Cameracensis,‡ and divers famous schoolmen, as Scotus and Biel, of whom this is known; and Durandus,§ and Ocham,|| and Melchior Canus,¶ and Vasquez;** and the great cardinal Perron professeth, that “he believes transubstantiation, not by virtue of any necessary consequence or reason, alleged by their doctors, but by the words of Christ, as they are expounded by tradition;”†† and Bellarmine himself confesseth, “This opinion is not improbable.”‡‡ Methinks so many learned men’s forsaking this argument, (who doubtless would have been right glad if it had been solid, and employed all their wits to search out the strength of it,) is to me a convincing evidence of its weakness and vanity, as also of the badness of your cause, that can find no better argument; yet I am willing to hear what you can say.

Pop. This, then, I say, that these words, “This is my body,” are to be taken in their proper, and not in a figurative sense; for surely Christ would speak plainly to the understanding of his disciples, especially when he was so near his death, and making his

* In 3 Thomæ, qu. 75. art. 1.

† Contra Captiv. Bab. c. 10.

‡ In 4 Sentent. qu. 6. lit. f.

§ In 4. Distinct. 11. q. 4. art. 14.

|| In 4. q. 6.

¶ Loc. com. l. 3. c. 3.

** Tom. iii. in 3. dis. 180. c. 5.

†† Traitée p. 793.

‡‡ De Euchar. lib. 3. c. 23.

last will and testament, and instituting the sacrament; in such cases men use to speak plainly.

Pro. I readily grant that Christ did speak plainly and intelligibly; but tell me, is not that plain enough, when we take the words as they are commonly used in Scripture?

Pop. I must needs grant that; but this is not the present case.

Pro. But it is; for we can give you scores of instances, as you very well know, where the word "is" is so taken; nor is any thing more frequent in Scripture: "The seven kine," and so the "seven ears of corn are seven years," Gen. xli. 26, 27. "The stars are the angels of the seven churches," Rev. i. 20. "The seven heads are seven mountains," Rev. xvii. 9. So Christ saith, "I am the way, the door," etc., John xiv. 6; x. 7. So Zech. v. 7, 8; "This woman is wickedness," and thousands of such expressions. How do you understand these places?

Pop. The sense is plain; they signify those things: the stars signify the angels, and so for the rest.

Pro. Then certainly we have the advantage of you in this point, for we take *is* for *signifies*, as you confess it is commonly taken; nor have the Jews, as I have been assured by learned men, any proper word for signify, as the Greeks and Latins have, but generally express it in this manner. But you must take it (if the particle *this* denotes the bread, as I shall plainly prove it does) for *is converted*

into; a sense which you cannot give one example of in all Scripture. I see it was not without reason that you took the interpretation of Scripture into the church's hands; for if you had left it in God's hands, and left one scripture to do that friendly office to expound another, you had certainly lost an article of your faith. And whereas you say, that Christ would speak so that the disciples might understand him, that sufficiently shows that yours is not the true sense; for they could never have understood it, and would doubtless have been as much puzzled then, as all the world now is, to have apprehended that the body of Christ was contained under the species of bread and wine, invisible and undiscoverable, after the manner of a spirit; to conceive of a body without bigness, long without length, broad without breadth, broken whilst it remains whole; all which you profess to believe. This is to turn Christ's plain speech into a bundle of riddles; and to call this the plain sense of the words which is (as you see) a heap of figures, is a greater figure than all the rest; but they did well enough understand the words in our sense, because they were well read in Scripture, wherein, as you grant, that sense of the word is usual.

Pop. If we grant it is used so in other cases, yet not in sacramental texts, for there Christ would speak properly.

Pro. Yes; it is usual even in the sacraments. Is not circumcision called the cove-

nant? "This is my covenant," Gen. xvii. 10; though properly it was not the covenant, but the seal of it, Rom. iv. 11. Is not the lamb called "the Lord's passover?" Exod. xii. 27, though all men knew it was not the lamb, nor the ceremony of eating it, which was or could be properly the Lord's passing over the houses of the Israelites. Thus, 1 Cor. x. 4, the rock, that followed the Israelites, was Christ, though it was so only figuratively and sacramentally. Moreover, I am told, that divers of your own brethren acknowledge figures here. Tapperus saith, "It is not inconvenient to admit of tropes here, provided they be such as do not exclude the true presence of Christ's body;"* and that the bishop of Eureux owns three figures in the words of this sacrament;† and that Suarez,‡ Bellarmine,§ and divers others, confess as much.

Pop. It is true; they do say so.

Pro. Besides, you cannot think it strange if there be figures in the first part, "This is my body," since it is most apparent there are figures in the last part, "This is the new testament in my blood." Here are not one, but divers figures in it. The cup, you grant, is taken for the liquor in it; there is one figure. The wine in the cup is taken for the blood, which was not in the cup: that is a strange figure indeed; logicians call it non-

* Artic. Lovan. 13.

† Repet. c. 3.

‡ In tom. iii. dis. 60, sect. 2.

§ De Eucharistia, lib. 1, c. 11.

sense. This cup, or wine, or blood, if you please, is the new testament, or covenant; whereas it was only the seal of the new testament, as is most manifest, because it is called, "The blood of the new testament," and "The new testament in my blood;" besides other strange figures, which I shall have occasion to speak to by and by. Here is figure upon figure, and yet you have the impudence to reproach us for putting in but one figure, which you confess to be very frequent. Wonder, O heavens, and judge, O earth, whether these men do not strain at gnats, and swallow camels! And nothing does more confirm the truth in this point than to consider into what absurdities this doctrine has forced you, even to say, that "the blood of Christ is properly the covenant or testament;"* and that there are "two sorts of Christ's blood, the one in the cup, the other shed on the cross;"† and that "the blood of Christ is shed in the sacrament," and yet never stirreth out of the veins. Did ever God or man speak of such bloodshed? Therefore, for shame, never charge us with understanding this text figuratively. But again, let me ask you, will you affirm that these words, "This is my body," are to be taken properly? Does your church understand them so?

Pop. Yes, surely, or else we do ill to reproach you for taking them improperly.

* Bellarm. de Euch. lib. 1, c. 11.

† De Euch. lib. 1. c. 11.

Pro. The words are not true in a proper sense, nor indeed do you understand them so.

Pop. Make that good, and I must give up this cause for ever.

Pro. First, for the word *this*, it is most evident that it is made of bread. It is impossible for words to express any thing more plainly than that by *this* is meant the bread. It is said expressly that Christ took bread, and brake it, and gave it, and said, "Take eat, THIS is my body," Matt. xxvi. 26; where "this" necessarily relates to that which Christ took, and brake, and gave. After Christ, came the apostles, and particularly St. Paul, and he expounds the mind of Christ, (and I hope you do not think he was so bad an expositor that his comment was harder than the text,) and he tells us thrice in a breath that it is bread; "As oft as ye eat this bread;" and "whosoever shall eat this bread," and "so let him eat of that bread," 1 Cor. xi. 26. And again; "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor. x. 16. And the participation of the sacrament is called, breaking of bread, Acts ii. 46; xx. 7; which your authors understand of the sacrament. And besides this, whatever it is, is broken, as it follows; but you dare not say Christ's body is broken. Now then, since it is most evident that this is meant of the bread, I hope you will not say this is properly Christ's body.

Pop. No; we are not so absurd to say this bread is Christ's body, for that is false, and

against common sense, as Bellarmine well saith.*

Pro. What, then, do you mean by the word "this."

Pop. By "this," I understand neither the bread, nor Christ's body, but in general, this substance which is contained under this species.†

Pro. What do you mean by that? I pray you tell me, do you believe that there are any more substances under those species, besides the bread first, and afterward the body of Christ? Do not you profess, that as soon as ever it ceaseth to be bread, it becomes the body of Christ?

Pop. We do so.

Pro. Then surely if it be a substance, according to you, it must be either bread, or the body of Christ; but you allow it to be neither, and therefore it is no substance at all. In the next place, for the word "is," I have shown that you do not understand that properly neither. But for the word "body" also, do you understand that properly?

Pop. Yes, without doubt.

Pro. I am told that your church professeth to believe that Christ's body is there after the manner of a spirit, taking up no room; that head, hands, feet, are altogether in the least crumb of the host. Is this true?

Pop. Yes, we all agree in that.

Pro. Then sure I am, the word "body"

* De Eucharist. l. 3. c. 19.

† Bellarm. de Eucharist. l. 3. c. 12.

is most improperly taken. A learned man well observes, that you "plead for the propriety of words, and destroy the propriety of things."* How can you say that it is properly a body, which wants the essential property of a body, which is, to have quantity, and take up room? Take away this, and the body may be properly a spirit; for it is that only which makes it differ from a spirit. So now I see you neither do nor can understand these words properly; and upon the whole matter, that this doctrine is false, and your proofs most weak and frivolous. You shall see that I have better arguments against your doctrine than you have for it.

Pop. I pray you let me hear them, but be brief in them.

Pro. I have only three arguments: your doctrine is against sense, against reason, and against Scripture.

Pop. Let me see how you will make these things good.

Pro. For the first, I ask you, If I am as sure that your doctrine of transubstantiation is false, as you are sure that the Christian religion is true, will you desire more evidence?

Pop. If I should, I were an unreasonable person.

Pro. And have you any greater assurance now of the truth of the Christian religion than you could have had if you had lived in Christ's days?

Pop. That were impudence to affirm. But what do you mean?

Pro. If you had lived then, what greater evidence could you have had of it than what your senses afforded; for since the great argument for Christianity (as all agree) were the words that Christ spake, and the works Christ did, how could you be sure that he did so speak, or so work, if you may not credit the report of your eyes and ears? This was St. Luke's great evidence of the truth of what he writes, that it was delivered to him by eye-witnesses, Luke i. 1, 2; and St. John's, "Which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled, of the word of life," 1 John i. 1; and St. Paul, for Christ's resurrection, that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, then of the five hundred, 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6. Even Thomas's infidelity yielded to this argument, that if he did thrust his hand into Christ's side he would believe, John xx. 25. Christ judged this a convincing argument, when the apostles thought he had been a spirit, "Handle me and see; for spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," Luke xxiv. 39. Are these things true?

Pop. I cannot deny them; they are not yours, but Scripture assertions.

Pro. And do not all my senses tell me that this is bread?

Pop. I must grant that; but your sense is deceived.

Pro. Then your senses also might have

been deceived about the words and works of Christ, and so the greatest evidence of the Christian religion is lost; but, for my part, it makes me abhor your religion, that so you may but seem to defend your own opinions, you care not if you shake the pillars of Christianity. My second argument is, that your doctrine of transubstantiation is against reason. Tell me, I pray you, do you think any of the articles of the Christian religion are contrary to reason?

Pop. No, they may be above reason; but God forbid I should be so injurious to Christianity as to say any of them are against reason.

Pro. But your doctrine is as much against reason as sense, for it makes you believe things absolutely impossible, and gross contradictions.

Pop. You may imagine many things impossible that really are not so; but if you can prove any real impossibilities which this doctrine forceth us to believe, I must yield, for we join with you in condemning the Lutheran opinion that Christ's body is every where, because it is an impossibility; and we therefore expound those words, "I am the vine," "I am the door," etc., figuratively, because it is impossible for him who is a man to be a vine, or a door.*

Pro. And it is no less impossible for the bread to be Christ's body. Why might not the vine (as well as the wine) be, by tran-

* A popish book called, Scripture Mistaken, p. 279.

substantiation, converted into Christ's substance? I think the mother is as good as the daughter; and especially since Christ saith, "I am the true vine," John xv. 1, you might as well have devised another transubstantiation to make Christ's words good. I know not what work you would have made of it, if he had said, This is my body, or, My true blood.

But to give that over, I will show you that there is such a heap of contradictions as never met together in the most absurd opinion that ever was in the world. I profess, when I set my wit at work, I cannot devise greater absurdities than you believe. Tell me, do you hold that the whole body of Christ is present in every crumb of the bread, and in every drop of the wine?

Pop. Yes, doubtless, Christ is there entire and undivided.

Pro. I suppose you believe that Christ's body is in heaven, in such a proportion or bigness as he had upon earth.

Pop. No doubt of that.

Pro. Then the same body of Christ is bigger than itself, and longer than itself, and, which is yet worse, Christ is divided from himself. I know not what can be more impossible than to say that all Christ is at Rome, and all at London, and all in heaven, and yet not in the places between.

Pop. All this is by God's almighty power.

Pro. Then I suppose by the same almighty power it is possible for any other man to be

in so many places; for it matters not that Christ be invisibly in so many places, and another should be there visibly; or that Christ is there in so little a bulk, and another must be in a greater.

Pop. I must needs grant that; and I affirm it is not absolutely impossible for any other man to be at several places at once by God's power.

Pro. Then mark what monsters follow from this. Suppose now John to be, by Divine power, at the same time at Rome, at Paris, and at London; wherever John is alive, I suppose he hath a power to move himself.

Pop. That must needs be, else he were not a living creature.

Pro. Then John at Rome may walk towards London, and John at London may walk towards Rome, and so they may meet (shall I say, one the other) and you may be sure it will be a merry meeting. It were worth inquiry how long they would be ere they come together. Then again, at Rome all the parts of John may be excessively hot, and at London excessively cold, and at Paris neither hot nor cold. This is beyond all the romances that ever were devised. Besides, John may be sorely wounded at Rome, and yet at London he may sleep in a whole skin; John may be feasting at Rome, and fasting at London, in the same moment. I might be infinite in reckoning the horrid absurdities of this doctrine: he that can believe these things will stick at nothing.

Pop. You talk at this rate because you measure God by yourselves, whereas he can do more than you or I can do.

Pro. There are some things which it is no dishonour to God to say he cannot do, because they are either sinful (so God cannot lie) or absolutely impossible. God himself cannot make a man to be alive and dead at the same time. God cannot make the whole to be less than a part of it; he cannot make three to be more than threescore; he cannot make a son to beget his father; he cannot make the same man to be born at two several times, as your authors confess: and therefore, in like manner, he cannot make the same body to be in two several places; for this is not one jot less impossible than the other.

Pop. These indeed are great difficulties to human reason, but reason is not to be believed against Scripture.

Pro. True; but this is your hard case; this doctrine of yours is against Scripture as well as reason, and indeed against many articles of religion.

And first, it is against the Scripture, inasmuch as it is highly dishonourable to Christ, whose honour is the great design of the Scripture. What a foul dishonour is it to him to subject him to the will of every mass-priest, who, when he pleaseth, can command him down into the bread! What a dishonour is it, that the very body of Christ may be eaten by rats or worms, and may be cast up by

vomit, and the like, as your Aquinas affirms!* And that your church in her missals hath put this amongst other directions, that if “worms or rats have eaten Christ’s body, they must be burned; and if any man vomit it up, it must be eaten again, or burned, or made a relic.”† And yet this is no more than your doctrine will force you to own; for if you will believe Christ’s words in one place as well as in another, he assureth us, that whatever, without exception, “entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught,” Matt. xv. 17.

Pop. This is no more dishonourable to Christ than that the flock might suck his blood when he was upon earth.

Pro. You mistake wofully; for though, in the days of his flesh, it was no dishonour to him (and it was necessary for us) that he suffered so many indignities, and died, and was crucified; yet now that he is risen from the dead, he dies no more, Rom. vi. 9; and it is a dishonour to him to be crucified again, and to be brought back to those reproaches which he long since left; and all this to no purpose, and without any profit to us, as I showed. Again; the Scripture approveth and useth this argument, that a body cannot be in two places at once; it is the angel’s argument, “He is not here: for he is risen,” Matt. xxviii. 6; sufficiently implying, that he could not be here and there too: or must we

* Sum. qu. 80. art. 3.

† Can. 39. Gloss. in Can. c. 2. De Consecratione.

say, that the angel's argument is weak or deceitful, that yours may be strong and true?

Pop. He meant he was not there visibly.

Pro. It seems, if a man, being sought after, should hide himself with you in some corner or hole in your room, and the pursuers should ask for him, you could answer, with good conscience, He is not here, because he is invisible. Our blessed Saviour every where makes these two opposite, his being in the world, and going to heaven: the "hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father," John xiii. 1. It seems you could have taught him the art of going thither and keeping here too. I promise you, I durst not venture to buy an estate of any of you, for it seems you could tell how to sell it to me, and keep it to yourselves. You may remember, once you and I made ourselves merry with a passage that one used in a speech, that since he could not give content, neither by going nor staying, hereafter he would neither go nor stay. It seems you have as good a faculty as he had; for you know how a man may both go from a place, and stay in it, at the same time. I know not what can be more plain, if you did not shut your eyes. Christ saith expressly, "Me ye have not always," that is, here, Matt. xxvi. 11. Besides, your doctrine destroys the truth of Christ's human nature. I read of Christ, that he was in all points like unto us, sin only excepted, Heb. iv. 15. His body was like ours, and therefore it is impossible it should

be in a thousand several places at once, as you pretend it is: this turns Christ's body into a spirit; nay, indeed, you make his body more spiritual than a spirit, for a spirit cannot be in several places divided from itself. The soul of man, if it be entire both in the whole and in every part of the body, yet is not divided from itself, nor from its body, nor can it be in two several bodies at the same time, as all confess; and much less can it be in ten thousand bodies at once, as by your argument undoubtedly it may. Whenever an angel comes to earth, he leaves heaven; and so this every way destroys the truth of Christ's human body.

Pop. Much of what you say was true of Christ's body in the days of his infirmity; but when he was risen from the dead, then he received a spiritual body, as it is said ours shall be at the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 44.

Pro. To this I answer, first, that you ascribe these monstrous properties to Christ's body before its resurrection; for you say the flesh and blood of Christ were really in the sacrament which the disciples received while Christ lived. Secondly, Christ's resurrection, though it heightened the perfection, yet it did not alter the nature and properties of his body, nor give it the being of a spirit; for after he was risen, he proves that he was no spirit, by this argument, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," Luke xxiv. 39. By this it appears, that your doctrine destroys the truth

of Christ's humanity; at least it destroys the main evidence of it, (against those who affirmed, that Christ had only a fantastical body,) namely, that he was seen, and felt, and heard; for you say, Sense is not to be believed. Again; you destroy the truth of Christ's ascension into heaven; for Christ is not ascended if he hath not left the world, for these two are joined together; "I leave the world, and go to the Father," John xvi. 28: but if you say true, he hath not left the world, but is here in every sacrament. Nothing can be more plain, than that Christ did visibly and locally leave this world when he went up into heaven, Acts i. 9, 10; that being once there, the heavens must receive (or contain) him, "until the times of restitution of all things," Acts iii. 21; and that at the last day he shall come visibly and locally from heaven, 2 Thess. i. 7. But that he should come down a thousand times in a day, at the command of every mass-priest, is such a dream as the Scripture speaks not one syllable of, nor can any rational man believe it. Moreover, your doctrine destroys the very essence of a sacrament, which consists of two parts, an outward element or sign, and the inward grace signified by it; and this I am told your doctors acknowledge.* I shall forbear mentioning further particulars; these are more than enough to show the falseness of this doctrine of transubstantiation.

In the next place, pray let me hear what

* Bell. de Sacramentis in genere, lib. 1. c. 9 et 11.

you have to say for your great article of PRAYING TO SAINTS. But, first, I am told divers of your own authors confess it is not necessary to pray to saints, but only convenient. Is it so?

Pop. It is true; and I must confess the council of Trent do only say, "It is good and profitable."*

Pro. Then surely I will never run the hazard of committing idolatry for an unnecessary work. But I am further told, that your great scholar and wit, Perron, confesseth, that he "found no footsteps of this praying to saints, either in Scripture, or in the fathers, before the first four councils, which was some hundreds of years after Christ.† He confessed likewise to Isaac Casaubon, (as he told our bishop Andrews,) that he himself never prayed to saints but only as he went in procession; that is, for form's sake:‡ and that Salmeron, and Cotton,§ and Eccius, say as much in effect, namely, that there is no command for this in either Testament. Is it so?

Pop. It is true; and Bellarmine confesseth that the saints began to be worshipped, not so much by any law, as by custom.||

Pro. Methinks these two considerations should startle you, that it is both unnecessary and uncommanded. I perceive I am not

* De Invocat.

† Sanct. lib. 1. c. 18.

‡ Andr. in Opusc. Posthumis.

§ Instit. book 1.

|| Beatit. Sanctorum. lib. 1. c. 8. sect. ult.

likely to hear Scripture arguments in this point.

Pop. Some of our authors do urge some Scriptures; but you tie me up to use but few, and those the best arguments; and therefore I will rather urge other considerations. First, Humility and discretion advise us to this duty; for I suppose if you have any request to the king, you do not saucily rush into his presence, but make use of some of his courtiers.

Pro. But tell me, I pray you, if a king not only allows, but commands all his subjects to call upon him in the day of trouble; to come to him freely; and upon all occasions to pour out complaints to him, not doubting but he will receive and answer them; and this king were always at perfect leisure to hear their requests, and the oftener they come to him the welcomer they are; and he appoints his own son the master of the requests, from time to time to receive all the petitions of his subjects; and both the king and the prince are ten thousand times more compassionate than the courtiers; would you not, in this case, count him a fool, and somewhat else too, that should spend his time in petitioning this and the other inferior courtier to gain access to the king?

Pop. I cannot deny that.

Pro. Then your church hath need to make use of that counsel, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God," James i. 5: they rather choose to ask it of saints, and that is

the reason they go without it. Most plain it is, this is the very case; and such a king God in all points is, and infinitely better than all this: and such a master of requests Christ is. But for the humility you talk of, I think therein you do prudently; for I remember the worship of angels came in under a show of humility, Col. ii. 18; and the door being once opened, it was discreetly done to bring in the worship of saints there too. Let me hear what else you can say.

Pop. We used to pray to living saints; why not as well to departed and glorified saints? St. Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "Pray for us," 1 Thess. v. 25.

Pro. Surely Scripture makes a sufficient difference. You meet with very many commands and examples of prayers, or addresses, to the living: not one to the dead. Besides, you know the living hear your prayers; you know not that the dead do so. Besides, I trow, you do not pray to the living in such manner as you do to the dead; you do not religiously worship the living, and about that all our question is. Did St. Paul invoke the Colossians, because he desired their prayers? Col. iv. 3. Can you add any thing more?

Pop. The saints in glory pray for us, and therefore we may pray unto them.

Pro. Will you affirm, that I may and ought to worship, and pray unto all those that pray for me?

Pop. No; then our church's practice would condemn me; for we grant, that the fathers

in their *limbus* did, and so those in purgatory do, pray for us, and so do all the living saints upon earth, yet we do not allow prayers unto them.

Pro. Then your argument is lost, from their intercession to your invocation.

Pop. Let me hear if you have any better arguments against this practice.

Pro. You shall. First, since all grant that prayer is a part of God's worship, then your praying to saints is directly contrary to God's command, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matt. iv. 10.

Pop. We do not worship the saints, as God, with the highest kind of worship, which is proper to God, but only with an inferior kind of religious worship, and therefore do not transgress this command.

Pro. The devil himself did not require the highest worship, as I showed before; yet Christ thought that inferior worship a breach of that law. Nor did those angel worshippers mentioned Col. ii. 18, worship the angels as God, with the highest worship, for they were either Jews, or Judaizing Christians, (both of which never pretended to equalize the angels with God, but judged them far inferior to God, and worshipped them accordingly;) yet nevertheless are they condemned by St. Paul for giving Divine honour to the creature. Next, this praying to saints is a high dishonour to Jesus Christ. God hath made him the only Mediator, 1 Tim. ii. 5, he hath invited

all persons to come freely and boldly to him, hath promised those that come to him, he will in no wise cast out, John vi. 37; why do not you, then, go immediately to Christ? this is a manifest questioning either of his power, or faithfulness, or goodness.

Pop. It is one of the slanders of your ministers, that we dishonour Christ; we only pray to saints to pray to Christ.

Pro. All your books of devotion confute that pretence; for you profess in your mass book* they help you by their merits, as well as by their prayers. Bellarmine affirmeth that the saints in some sort are our redeemers:† is this no more than only to pray for you? Is it no more than this, when you pray thus to the virgin Mary; “Do thou protect us; drive away evil from us; and require good things for us: and in right of a mother, command thy Son?” Is it no more than this, when you say the Lord was with her, (the virgin Mary,) and she with the Lord in the same work of redemption? And when Isa. lxiii. 3, is objected, “I have trodden the wine press alone, and there was no man with me;” they answer cunningly, “True, Lord, there was no MAN with thee, but there was a WOMAN with thee;”‡ Is it no dishonour to Christ that your famous Biel says, that “God has given the virgin Mary half of his kingdom; and that whereas he has justice and

* Quorum meritis precibusque rogamus.

† De Indulgentiis, lib. 1, c. 4.

‡ In Martiali, Ann. 1493.

mercy, he kept justice to himself, and granted mercy to the virgin?"* In my opinion they would do well to take in Christ for a share in the mercy. Is it no dishonour to Christ to say, that "prayers which are made to, and delivered by the saints, are better than those by Christ," as Salmeron says?† Is it no dishonour to Christ, that Barradus, the Jesuit, asketh of Christ, why he took not his mother up with him when he ascended up to heaven? and frames this answer,‡ "Peradventure, Lord, it was lest thy heavenly courtiers should be in doubt, whether to go out to meet thee, their Lord, or her their lady." Is it no dishonour to Christ, that Carolus Scribanius (otherwise Clarus Bonarscius) professeth, "He cannot tell which to prefer, the mother's milk, or the Son's blood?"§ I believe neither Christ nor his mother will give these men thanks for this another day. And all these passages are not in obscure authors, that privily steal abroad into the world; but in eminent persons, and books licensed by the approbation, and according to the order of your church: and besides your church owns them, in that she does not blot them out, nor put them into her expurgatory indices. Moreover, I must pray to none, but those in whom I must trust; "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" Rom. x. 13. 14.

* In Canone Missæ, sect. 80.

† In 1 Tim. ii. dis. 8, p. 467.

‡ Concord. Evang. tom. 1, lib. 6, c. 11.

§ In Amphitheatro honoris.

And trust is God's prerogative, incommunicable to any creature; "Cursed is he that trusteth in man," Jer. xvii. 5. Again, I must pray to none, but to whom I may pray in faith, and without doubting; and upon good grounds, believing that I shall receive, Matt. xxi. 22; Jam. i. 5, 6. But I am not sure that the saints do hear my prayers, or can and will grant them.

Pop. The saints in glory do know what we pray to them for.

Pro. How does that appear?

Pop. There are several ways whereby they know these things; but I adhere to what Bellarmine saith, that they know this by revelation from God.

Pro. You should not only say this, but prove it. One of your infallible popes, Gregory, denies this. No Scripture informs you thus much; nay, that sufficiently implies, that the saints do not particularly know, nor mind the concerns of this world. God tells Josiah, "Thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place," 2 Chron. xxxiv. 28. The dead know not anything of the particular occurrences of this life, Eccl. ix. 5; Job xiv. 21. I am sure these are ten times better arguments than what you bring for the contrary. And, in a word, it is God's incommunicable prerogative to know the heart, and secret prayers, Matt. vi. 6. So upon the whole matter, I conclude, and now by the vanity of your arguments and answers do

fully discern the falseness of this opinion, and the wickedness of the practice of calling upon saints. Let me hear whether you have any better evidences for the WORSHIP OF IMAGES. I am sure you need very clear and strong arguments for that practice, or else you are guilty of the damnable sin of idolatry.

Pop. We have very good arguments for that. I will use only two, and those our strongest arguments, as you desire. First, we have the example and command of God for it: he caused the images of the cherubim to be made, and put upon the ark which was to be worshipped. If the ark was to be worshipped because it represented God's footstool, much more may an image be worshipped, as our Mr. Bishop rightly argued.*

Pro. I suppose if this be a good argument to us now, it was so to the Jews formerly; for length of time does not turn false arguments into true ones; tell me therefore if you had lived when the law, Exod. xx., was newly given, and one had persuaded you to worship images, by your own argument, what would you have answered?

Pop. I would have said it does not follow that because the ark was to be worshipped, which God commanded them to worship, therefore images were to be worshipped, which God forbade them to worship.

Pro. Good sir, bestow this answer, as a token from me, upon any of your brethren that shall argue so absurdly. Besides, it

* Against Perkins of Images.

seems to me very unlikely, that the cherubim were ordained to be worshipped by the people, because they were never seen by the people. You put the images which you worship in the most visible and conspicuous places.

Pop. Yet no man could worship the ark, but he must worship the cherubim, for they were over the ark.

Pro. In that case the cherubim were not at all worshipped, unless you will say that he that worships one of your wooden images worships also the spider, which peradventure is paying its devotion there, and got into the saint's mouth. Besides, it does not appear that the ark itself was worshipped, for that also was not so much as seen by the people, therefore not likely to be worshipped. All that we read is, that the Israelites did and ought to worship God toward the ark; and so they are said to worship God toward the holy temple, and toward Jerusalem, and toward the holy mountain, and toward heaven. Yet I presume you will not say all these places were to be worshipped; and if God was to be worshipped towards these places, because he tells us expressly his special presence was there, what is this to images, which God banisheth from his house and presence? And to conclude this, I pray you tell me, is it lawful to worship every place where God is in a special manner present?

Pop. I conceive it is.

Pro. Then it is lawful to worship every religious man in the world. It is true, your

great Vasquez professeth, that a man may worship a stone or a straw, or any creature where God is, for God is there according to his essence.* By which argument, it seems Christ might have worshipped the devil; for the essence of God being every where, must needs be in him. But what, I pray, is your other argument?

Pop. The honour of God requires the worship of his images, for that redounds to God; as if I honour a prince, I shall honour his picture; and we show our reverence to the king in being uncovered in his presence-chamber, though the king be not there.

Pro. Tell me, I pray you, if a king forbade any pictures of himself to be made, or set up, if any over-officious subject should, notwithstanding this, set up the king's picture, pretending to do it in respect to the king, would the king esteem himself honoured or dishonoured by it?

Pop. In that case, certainly, the king is dishonoured when his commands are broken, and his authority despised.

Pro. You say right; and so God will give you little thanks for breaking his commands, upon pretence of his service. If a king require such reverence to be given to his presence-chamber, it is fit that he should be obeyed, seeing it is only a civil, and not a religious respect; and if God forbid any such reverence, any religious worship should be given to any graven images, good reason his

* De Adoratione, lib. 3. dis. 3. c. 2. pp. 445, 458.

prohibition, too, should be obeyed. You talk of honouring God; but for the way or means of honouring God, whether it be most reasonable to take an estimate from the rules and practices of all former idolaters, who have all justified their idolatry from this pretence of honouring God, or from the commands of God's word, and the practices of the godly Jews before Christ, and godly Christians and fathers for some hundreds of years after Christ, who are all known to detest all manner of worship of images,* I leave to any impartial person to judge. Besides, if you will needs testify your respect to God, by honouring his images, what a madness is it to confine this honour to dead images of wood or stone, and to deny it to his saints upon earth, who are his living and far more noble and express images!

Pop. Since you scorn my arguments for the worship of images, let me hear your arguments against it.

Pro. My first argument is this: the Holy Scripture condemns it as idolatry.

Pop. We have images in our churches only as remembrancers, to put us in mind of worthy and excellent persons, but not as objects of worship.

Pro. No, friend, it is not that time of day; you cannot now deceive us with such foolish excuses; for your councils of Nice and Trent do both command the worshipping of images, and all your authors plead for this.

* See Dallæus de Imaginibus.

Pop. Well, but this I am sure is true: we do not worship the images, but only God by them, and in them; we worship them only as representations of God, or Christ, etc., and the honour passeth from them to God.

Pro. That cannot acquit you either before God or man. Micah and his mother were guilty of idolatry, yet the silver was dedicated to the Lord (Jehovah) to make a graven image, Judges xvii. 3. And the Israelites are charged with idolatry in the worshipping of the golden calf, Acts vii. 41; 1 Cor. x. 7; and yet they could not be so brutish as to think that golden calf, which they brought out of Egypt in their earrings, was that God which brought them out of Egypt with strong hand.

Pop. But they said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," Exod. xxxii. 4.

Pro. You use also to call an image by the name of him whom it represents; you commonly say, This is the blessed virgin, or St. Matthew, etc., when you mean it is only their image; and so it cannot be strange to you that they express themselves in the same manner. Besides, Aaron himself proclaims the feast of the calf in these words, "Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord," ver. 5. The heathens also excused their idolatry by this very pretence. So Celsus,* and others, said,

* Lib. 7. Contra Celsum. Arnobius, lib. 6. Lactant. lib. 2. c. 2. Eusebius de Præparatione Evangelicâ, lib. 3. and lib. 4. in Præfat.

as the ancient fathers tell us, We do not worship the images of gold or brass, etc., as believing them to be gods; but we worship the gods in them, and by them.

Pop. They worshipped wicked men, but we worship only holy men, and the friends of God, as such, and because they are such, and their images; and therefore are not guilty of idolatry.

Pro. Then St. Peter, Acts x. 26; and the angel, Rev. xxii. 9; and St. Paul, Acts xiv. 14, 15; might have received that adoration (as being the friends of God) which they so utterly rejected. Moses was the friend of God, yet God hid away his body, lest the Israelites should worship him. And I have heard that the fathers charged the Collidrians with idolatry for worshipping of the virgin Mary;* and the Arians for worshipping Christ, whom they believed to be but a creature; though all agree they were the friends of God. I suppose that if any man should attempt to give the honour proper to the king, to his brother, or friend, this would not excuse them from treason; nor would it excuse any adulteress that she lay with her husband's dearest friend or relation. Again, it matters not much to this point for what reason you worship images; the only question is, whether you do worship images; for the very doing of that, whatsoever pretences it may have, is idolatry. Besides, if you worshipped God alone, and not the image,

* Epiphanius, Hæres. 97, per totum.

your excuse would have some colour; but it is most evident that you worship not only God, but the image too. I am told that your own Azorius affirms, that "it is the constant opinion of your divines that the image is to be honoured and worshipped with the same honour and worship which is given to him whose image it is;"* and that Cajetan,† and Gregory de Valentia,‡ and Costerus,§ affirm as much; and that your Bellarmine expressly disputes for this, that "images are not only to be worshipped as they are exemplars, but also properly and by themselves, so as the worship may be terminated in them."|| Are these things true?

Pop. I cannot deny that they are.

Pro. Then I see the vanity of your pretences, and that you only seek to raise a mist before the eyes of ignorant people; for in truth you worship the image itself, though happily not for itself; as if a heathen emperor commanded his subjects religiously to worship such a vicegerent of his: no man who did worship the vicegerent could deny that he worshipped him, though he did it only for the emperor's sake. Tell me, I pray you, do you not hold that there are two kinds of religious worship, namely, absolute, which you give to God or the saints, and relative, which you give to their images?

* Lib. 9, Instit. mor. c. 9. art. 3.

† In tom. part 3. q. 25. art. 3.

‡ Tom. 3. disp. 6. qu. 11. punct. 6.

§ Enchirid. p. 438. || De Imag. lib. 2. c. 21. prop. 1.

Pop. I must own it.

Pro. Then it is horrible impudence to say you do not give worship to the images, since you give one of these two kinds unto them, and unto them only. Besides, if all you say were true, this would not acquit you from idolatry; for your church professeth and commandeth the worship of the images of saints, as well as of God and Christ. And since it is idolatry to give Divine honour to any creature, as I before proved, you are no less guilty in giving it to the saints themselves than to their images, and so you are double-dyed idolaters.

My second argument is taken from the second commandment, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image," *Exod. xx. 4.*

But first, I pray you tell me truly, has your church left out this second commandment in divers of her breviaries and offices of prayer, or do our ministers slander them? I hear that in the "Hours of our Lady," printed at Paris, A. D. 1611, the commandments of the first table are set down in these words, and no other:—

1st Commandment.

"I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt not have nor worship any other god but me."

2d Commandment.

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

3d Commandment.

"Remember to keep holy the sabbath-day and feasts."

And that the council of Augsburg, A. D. 1548, delivering the commandments in Dutch for the people, leave out the mention of images; and that their cheat might not be discovered, that the people might have their full number, they make use of the mistake of one of the fathers, and divide the last command into two, against sense and reason, and the practice of the whole ancient church. Are these things so?

Pop. It is true; it is left out in some of our books, but in all Bibles, and divers of our catechisms, we leave it in.

Pro. Very well, I see you had wit in your anger. I commend your discretion that you did not your work so grossly that all the world should cry shame of you. But that you blotted it out in any is an evidence of your guilt. But what say you to this argument?

Pop. Then my first answer is, that this command was peculiar to the Jews, who were most prone to idolatry.*

Pro. This is not true. It sufficiently appears that the Gentiles were under the obligation of this law, from those punishments which God inflicted upon them for their transgression or breach of it by idolatry. "But where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. iv. 15. Besides, Christ tells us, he came not to destroy the law (the moral law,) but to fulfil it, Matt. v. 17. Perhaps you are not of his mind. And dare you say

* Vasquez de Adoratione.

the Jews, as soon as they believed in Christ, were discharged from this command, and allowed to worship the images which that command forbade?

Pop. I will not say so. But I have a second answer: the thing prohibited here is not images, (which are representations of real things,) as you falsely render it, but idols, which are the images of false gods, which are not, and never were in the world.

Pro. The text itself is full against you; for the images there prohibited are not said to be the images of the false gods of the heathens, whereof many never had any being, but the images of "any thing in heaven or earth," etc. Moreover, divers of the heathen gods were men whom they deified. I suppose their pictures were pictures of real things, yet these are idols.

Pop. Though they really were men, yet their pictures were made to represent them as gods, and such as they were not really, and therefore were idols.

Pro. The learned heathens knew, as well as you and I do, that Jupiter, and Mars, and Mercury, and the rest, were mere men, and they smiled at the ignorance of the vulgar, that thought otherwise; only they thought of them just as you do of the saints, that the great God had put some of his honour upon them, and therefore they might worship them. You cannot be so silly as to think the learned heathens thought Augustus was really a god, when he was dead; yet their worship of his

image was idolatry. And those that worshipped the image of Caligula, while he lived, were not so sottish to take him for a god, whom they knew to be a foolish and wicked man; yet I hope you will not excuse them from idolatry. But further, as the Jews did universally understand this to be a prohibition of all manner of images, so all the prophets, and Christ, and the apostles, were so far from reprovng them, which they would have done, if it had been an error, that they every where strengthened them in this opinion, by declaiming against all worship of images, without any distinction. And tell me, I pray you, if any Jew had at that time made, for instance, an image of the sun, not looking on it as God, but as a glorious creature of God, and therefore fit to be religiously worshipped, as you think of the saints and angels, and had bowed down to it and worshipped it, do you think he had not broken this law?

Pop. I dare not deny but he had broken it.

Pro. Yet this had been no idol, but an image, according to your sense of it. Besides, I find that all manner of images are forbidden, Lev. xxvi. 1. However, to me you seem to venture your salvation upon a nice point; for the Hebrew word is neither image nor idol, but *pesel*, as a divine told me; and this, I understand, is diversely translated; some render it an image, others an idol. Now, you venture your soul upon it, that the last is the only true translation, which is

a dreadful hazard, because it is otherwise rendered, not only by Protestants, but by the most and best ancient interpreters,* even those whom your vulgar translation very often follows in other places. These render it not an idol, but a graven image; and the seventy interpreters, I am assured, do promiscuously render the word sometimes an idol, sometimes a graven image. Nay, more than this, that it may appear how desperate your cause is, I am informed your own vulgar translation, from which you are obliged not to swerve, doth frequently render it, not idol, but a graven image, (*sculptile*), particularly in Exod. xx. 4; Levit. xxvi. 1; Deut. iv. 16, 25; v. 8. Are these things so?

Pop. I cannot deny it, for the authors themselves would confute me; but one thing I have to say, you must understand one Scripture so as to agree with another. Now, I find God himself allows and prescribes some images, as those of the cherubim; either then he contradicts himself, or he doth not forbid all images, but idols only.

Pro. Though I might say, God may make an exception to some of his laws, when no man can, (as in the case of Abraham's offering up Isaac, and the Israelites spoiling the Egyptians of their jewels,) yet I need no other answer but this: I directly deny that here is any contradiction at all. For our question is not about the making of images,

* Aquilla, Symmachus, Theodotion. So Josephus, εἰκων; Philo ἄγαλμα.

whether by God's order or man's, but about the worshipping of them. And albeit there were such images made, yet they were not made to be worshipped, as I before proved; nor was there any danger the people should worship them, because they were not admitted to see them. But I pray you answer me this one question: I am told that divers of your own authors confess, that the Jews indeed were, though Christians are not, forbidden the use of images by this command. Is it so?

Pop. These indeed are the words of our famous Vasquez, after he has mentioned divers authors for the contrary opinion:—"There are," saith he, "other authors, neither fewer nor inferior to them, who are of the contrary opinion, which to me always seemed most probable, namely, that all the use of images is here forbidden to the Jews:* and for this he quotes many of our approved authors; and Salmeron saith no less.†

Pro. And you need say no more, for then all these authors thought your distinction of image and idol frivolous, and that the word *pesel* is meant of any images, and not of idols only, as you foolishly distinguish; and so your principal refuge is lost, and you are convicted idolaters; and then if you repent not, you know where your portion will be. Go now and brag of the safeness of your religion.

I see how little it is that you can say for

* De Adorat. lib. 2. def. 4. c. 2.

† In Rom. dis. 29. sect. prima.

your worship of the dead, (saints and their images,) let me hear whether you have any better arguments for YOUR PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD, and PURGATORY.

Pop. I am glad you mention that, since all your divines do agree that prayer for the dead was the practice of the ancient church and fathers.

Pro. If that be true, it is not sufficient for your purpose; for I am fully satisfied that the fathers were not infallible, and your own greatest doctors think so too. But besides, I am told that their prayers for the dead were quite of another nature than yours, and for other purposes; and they were grounded upon some private opinions of theirs, which you disown; for they prayed not only for those whom you suppose to be in purgatory, but for those who, you confess, many of them never did come there; they pray for all the saints, from the righteous Abel, to this day; they pray for all their ancestors, patriarchs, prophets, and martyrs, as I have heard it in some of their liturgies. Is it so?—I pray you tell me, why do you pray for the dead?

Pop. We pray that God would deliver them from those dreadful pains of purgatory.

Pro. Then if there be no purgatory, the foundation of your prayer for the dead is gone.

Pop. I grant it.

Pro. Then let us discourse of the most fundamental point, as we have hitherto done; the rest will fall of course. Therefore, first,

I pray you, tell me your opinion concerning purgatory.

Pop. Our doctrine, in brief, is this: that though God freely gives to all that are truly penitent forgiveness of their sins, and freedom from eternal death; yet since they have much venial sin and corruption in them, in which oftentimes they die, therefore it is necessary that they should, for the expiation of those sins, and for the satisfaction of God's justice, either do or suffer such penances, fastings, prayers, etc., as are enjoined them here, or, where those are not sufficient, suffer the pains of purgatory.

Pro. I understand your doctrine; now let me hear two of your strongest arguments to prove it. I hear that Bellarmine threatens us, that whosoever doth not believe purgatory, shall be tormented in hell.* Is it true?

Pop. He doth say so, and I am of his mind.

Pro. Then you should have very clear arguments for it, because you lay so great a stress upon it. But first, I have heard that this doctrine of purgatory is confessed by divers of your own brethren to be but a new doctrine. Is it so?

Pop. I will not dissemble with you. Several of our doctors have unadvisedly blurted out such expressions as these: our famous English martyr, Fisher, bishop of Rochester, confesseth, that "purgatory was for a long time unknown, and either never or very sel-

* Bell. de Purgat. lib. 1. c. ult.

dom mentioned among the ancient fathers.”* And Alphonsus de Castro saith, that “many things are known to us, of which the ancient writers were altogether ignorant;”† and amongst them he reckons purgatory, which, saith he, “the Greek writers mentioned not, and even to this day it is not believed by the Greek church.”

Pro. I suppose you do not think all these ancient fathers were damned.

Pop. No, God forbid, for many of them were glorious confessors and martyrs.

Pro. Then I see Bellarmine’s threats are not very formidable. But to let this pass; how do you prove this doctrine?

Pop. From plain Scripture; 1. From Matt. xii. 32, “Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come;” which clearly implies, that some sins, not forgiven in this world, are forgiven in the next, and that must be in purgatory.

Pro. I pray you tell me, what sins are they which are forgiven in purgatory?

Pop. Not great and mortal, but small and venial sins, as we all agree.

Pro. Is not blasphemy against the Son of man a mortal sin?

Pop. Yes, doubtless; but what of that?

Pro. If this text proves the pardon of any sins, it proves the pardon of that sin no less than others, because the sin against the Holy

* In Confut. Luther. art. 18.

† Adv. Hæreses, lib. 12. tit. Purgat. f. 258.

Ghost is here spoken of as the only sin which is unpardonable in both worlds. Besides, Christ speaks thus in opposition to a corrupt opinion, which I have heard now is, and then was, rife among the Jews, namely, that divers of their sins were pardoned after this life, and that this was one of their ancient prayers, "Let my death be the expiation of all my sins;" for they thought the sufferings of this life and death, the last of them, did free them from the punishments of the other life; and I have heard that it was one of their sayings, that "every Israelite hath a part in the future life." Are these things so?

Pop. To deal freely with you, this is not only true, but it is one of our arguments for purgatory, that Judas, who lived long before Christ's time, expressly affirms, that "it is profitable to pray for the dead, that their sins may be pardoned," 2 Mac. xii. 45.

Pro. I think that is impertinently alleged for purgatory; for the sin those men died in was a mortal sin, as you confess, and therefore not pardonable in purgatory. But I thank you for this, for now I am satisfied that it was an ancient opinion among the Jews, and so Christ had just occasion to use this expression to confute that vain expectation of theirs. But besides, the meaning of this phrase, "shall not be forgiven," is, that it shall be punished in both worlds. This is a frequent phrase in Scripture: thus, Exod. xx. 7, "The Lord will not hold him guiltless;" that is, he will severely punish. "It

is not good to have respect of persons in judgment," Prov. xxiv. 23; that is, it is very bad. "The father of a fool hath no joy," Prov. xvii. 21; that is, grieveth much. I hear St. Chrysostom expounds it thus,* and a greater than he, St. Mark iii. 29: "He hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation."

Besides all this, we all agree that there is a kind of forgiveness of sin after this life, and at the day of judgment, Acts iii. 19: "Repent ye, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;" for then indeed the pardon of sin is completed and fully manifested. And it is a common phrase in Scripture to speak of a thing as done, when it is only declared and manifested, as the apostle saith, those words, Psal. ii. 7, "This day have I begotten thee," were fulfilled in Christ's resurrection, Acts xiii. 33, because that declared him to be the only begotten Son of God, as St. Paul saith, Rom. i. 4.

To which I might add, that by "the world to come," Christ may very probably understand the time of the New Testament, which began at Christ's death. The Jews, I hear, often use this expression of the days of the Messiah. Nay, the apostle himself does so, Heb. ii. 5. This also I have read, that the Jews did generally expect a more plentiful and glorious remission of sins at that time; and so Christ's meaning may be this: that

* In locum.

this blasphemy shall not be forgiven, neither in that time nor state of the church, (in which Christ then was,) nor in the time of the gospel and kingdom of the Messiah, which began at his death, as I said, when, though there should be many great sins and sinners pardoned, as we see there were, yet this should not. I hope you will not brag much of your argument from this place. Let me hear your other place.

Pop. My second argument is from 1 Cor. iii. 15; "He shall be saved, yet so as by fire;" that is, the fire of purgatory.

Pro. It seems you understand this fire properly, which is something strange, when the whole place is metaphorical, or figurative; the gold and silver, hay and stubble, all are metaphorical, and so, doubtless, is the fire. I hear your Bellarmine confesseth that the fire mentioned, ver. 13, "the fire shall try every man's work," is not meant of purgatory.

Pop. He does indeed say so.

Pro. That is enough to overthrow this argument, for it is most evident, that the fire, ver. 13, 15, is one and the same. And this fire cannot be purgatory, 1. Because it is the fire of the day of judgment, when you confess purgatory ends.* The time of the last judgment is called "the day," by way of eminency, Heb. x. 25; 2 Tim. i. 12, 18; iv. 8; 1 Thess. v. 4: and the day of revelation and manifestation of all things, Rom. ii. 5, because then all men's works will be manifested; and

* Bell. de. Purg. lib. 2. c. 9.

the day wherein Christ will come in flaming fire, 2 Thess. i. 8. 2. This fire burns the works of men, only their hay and stubble, not their persons, as your purgatory does. 3. This fire tries both good and bad. All pass through it. The gold and silver are in this fire, no less than the hay and stubble.

Pop. How then, I pray you, do you understand this place?

Pro. It is a metaphor, or figurative way of speaking, frequent in Scripture and common use. The delivered Jews are said to be as firebrands plucked out of the burning, Amos iv. 11; Zech. iii. 2. So here, "He shall be saved, yet so as by fire;" that is, not without difficulty and loss, and possibly some momentary shame; but, howsoever, the fire shall burn up his work, and he shall lose that part of his reward. Now I have heard your arguments, I hope you will hear mine.

Pop. I am ready to do that.

Pro. I shall urge only two.

First. Christ has fully paid our debt, and satisfied God's justice for all our offences; and therefore it were injustice in God to require the payment of any part of that debt in purgatory. Christ is a complete Saviour; his blood cleanseth us from all sin, 1 John i. 7. He is able (and surely he is no less willing) to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him, Heb. vii. 25. God laid all our sins upon him, Isa. liii. 6. And he bare them all in his body, 1 Pet. ii. 24. In short, either you make Christ but a half Saviour,

and believers wash away part of their own guilt; or, if Christ hath fully washed away their guilt, you make God both unmerciful and unjust, and untrue too, so dreadfully to punish innocent persons, and those too his own children, as you acknowledge, whom he declares he hath freely and fully pardoned; and to do this for sins which you confess venial, and such as do not deserve the loss of God's favour, and that without any necessity. This is not the act of a father, especially so tender a Father as God is.

Pop. Christ is a sufficient Saviour, and hath fully satisfied; but satisfaction is applied to us by the pains of purgatory.

Pro. If purgatory only applied Christ's satisfaction to us, then he satisfied for our temporal as well as our eternal punishments; and if he did so, surely he did it fully, or not at all. Besides, you need not trouble your heads about the application, God hath provided for us more comfortable means of application; on his part, the word, sacraments, and Spirit; on our parts, faith. You may keep purgatory for your own use; it is not fit you should be pestered with any heretics there. But was ever such an application of God's grace heard of since the world began, that God should apply his mercy, and the grace of Christ Jesus, by such exquisite torments? This is, as one truly saith, "as if a man should apply physic by poison, or apply the light of the sun by putting out our eyes." God deliver us from such appliers. This is

as if a prince should pretend a free pardon to a malefactor, and apply it by putting him upon the rack.

Pop. Though Christ made satisfaction for the guilt of mortal sins, and eternal punishment, yet he did not for venial sins, nor temporal punishment; and therefore they must purge out those themselves in purgatory.

Pro. If it were true that you say, yet there is no need of purgatory; for this purging work may be done by temporal afflictions in this life. The truth is, you add sin to sin, and excuse one error with another. But what do you mean by venial sins?

Pop. We mean such smaller sins as do not exclude a man from God's favour, nor from heaven.

Pro. Then surely you have very slight thoughts of sin, of God, and of his law, that can so judge of such a horrid evil as sin. Scripture fully condemns this doctrine. It tells me that "the wages of sin" (all sin, without any difference) "is death," even that death which is opposite to eternal life, Rom. vi. 23; that he that shall break the least of God's commands, and teach men so, (though peradventure he do it ignorantly, and so, according to your opinion, it is a venial sin,) "shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 19; that is, he shall have no portion there. It tells me, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. iii. 10. And he speaks of

that curse which Christ underwent for us, and redeemed us from. It tells me that for "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment," and by such words, if not repented of, they shall be condemned," Matt. xii. 36, 37. So now your foundation, and one of the pillars of purgatory is gone. And as for your other fancy, that Christ did not satisfy for our temporal punishments, I pray you tell me, did not Christ suffer temporal afflictions?

Pop. Yes, doubtless, the whole gospel is full of such sufferings.

Pro. Surely, all that Christ suffered, he suffered for us, both in our stead, and for our good. He was cut off, not for himself, but for our sins, Dan. ix. 26. It was for our sakes that he bare the temporal part of the curse, to be hanged on a tree; and all that pain and shame was but a temporal punishment, Gal. iii. 13. I read that Christ bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows, Isa. liii. 4; which was not only accomplished in this, that he bare the guilt of our sins, as St. Peter expounds it, 1 Pet. ii. 24, but also in this, that he delivered them from sicknesses and temporal afflictions, as St. Matthew expounds it, Matt. viii. 16, 17; and both these consist well together, since Christ removed both sin, the cause, and affliction, the effect of it.

Pop. If Christ had satisfied for our temporal punishments, then believers should be free from all pains, and loss, and death, which it is apparent they are not; and therefore,

notwithstanding the fulness of Christ's satisfaction, they may be liable to pains in purgatory, as well as in this life.

Pro. To this I answer three things.

1. Your inference from the pains of this life to the torments of purgatory, is weak and false. I may, and must believe, that God afflicts his people here, because Scripture and experience put it out of doubt. But that God will punish his people in purgatory, after this life, no Scripture affirms. You that can multiply your instances of the sufferings of believers in this life, and can tell us of Adam, and David, and Solomon, and many others, have not to this day been able, though often urged, to produce one instance of the sufferings of any one believer after this life, which one consideration is sufficient to overthrow this argument in the judgment of any indifferent man.

2. There is not the same reason for the sufferings of believers here, and those which you suppose in purgatory; nor are they of the same nature. The present sufferings of believers are necessary, ("If need be ye are in heaviness," 1 Pet. i. 6,) both for believers themselves to subdue the flesh, which in this life is potent, and altogether needs such a curb; "By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged," Isa. xxvii. 9; and to prevent their eternal damnation, 1 Cor. xi. 32; as also for the terror and caution of other offenders. So that, albeit Christ hath fully paid the debt, yet it is upon other accounts con-

venient that they should smart and suffer here. But there is no such necessity nor use of purgatory sufferings, neither for believers themselves, since there is no mortification of corruption after this life, no temptations to sin there, no improvement of grace, no fear of eternal damnation;* nor for example and warning to others, for their fellow-sufferers in purgatory, you do not pretend are at all edified by their sufferings; and men here, they neither see nor know any thing of these pains, nor hath God revealed any thing concerning them. But when God makes any examples to others, he sets them in the view of others, or at least acquaints them fully therewith, as he did with hell torments to this end. It were a senseless thing to hang up a man in Jamaica for the terror of those that live in England. Besides, the sufferings of believers here do come from the love and faithfulness of God; "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," Heb. xii. 6; "Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me," Psal. cxix. 75. Accordingly, good men have looked upon them as choice mercies; "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest," Psal. lxxvii. 12; and, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted," Psal. cxix. 71; and the denial of afflictions is threatened as a grievous punishment, Isa. i. 5; Hos. iv. 14, 17.

But now the sufferings of purgatory are in

* In purgatorio animæ nec mereri nec peccare possunt. Bell. de Purg. lib. 2. c. 2. Animæ in purgatorio certæ sunt de sua salute. Ibid, c. 4.

all points contrary; they are purely vindictive, and the effects of mere wrath; nor do you esteem those sufferings a mercy, and your happiness, but freedom from them. And therefore your argument, from the pains of this life to those in purgatory, is foolish and absurd.

3. Believers' suffering here do not at all derogate from the fulness of our redemption by Christ, because, as I have showed, admitting that to be complete, yet they are necessary for other purposes; but your purgatory sufferings do, by communicating at least some part of his proper work to yourselves. You profess they wash away part of your sins, which is Christ's peculiar honour; he "washed us from our sins in his own blood," Rev. i. 5. You make them a part of the curse of the law, from which (and not only from a part of it) Christ has redeemed us, himself being made a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13. You make them a real satisfaction in part to God's justice, which you think is not satisfied by all that Christ did or suffered without them. And, in a word, you make men, in part, their own redeemers and saviours. I hope by this you see how weakly you reason from present troubles to purgatory torments; and that, notwithstanding your objection, my first argument stands good against purgatory.

My second argument is this: that the Scripture every where speaks of the state of

believers immediately after death as happy and blessed, and that all the sufferings of believers are confined to this life; and of this we have many expressions and examples too in Scripture, and not one to the contrary. "The sufferings of this present time," saith St. Paul, "are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," Rom. viii. 18. He knew no other sufferings; the afflictions of believers are light, and but for a moment, and they too are in things that are seen, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18; and therefore he knew of no sufferings in the invisible world, unless haply you will say that St. Paul's travels were in another road, into the third heavens, and so he was ignorant of purgatory. Lazarus received his evil things in this life, "but now he is comforted," Luke xvi. 25; therefore surely not in purgatory. "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have an house, eternal in the heavens," saith St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 1. We are no longer absent from the Lord, than present in the body, saith St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 6, 8. The prophet assures us, that when righteous men die, "they shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds," Isa. lvii. 1, 2. I tell you, their beds are very hard, and the prophet's mistake was very great, if they be burning in the flames of purgatory. The beggar died, and it follows immediately, he was "carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom," Luke xvi. 22. I

cannot think these angels mistook their way. The thief was to be with Christ that day in paradise, Luke xxiii. 43.

Pop. The thief was a kind of martyr, and so had that privilege.

Pro. His death was so far from being a martyrdom, that it was a just punishment for his evil deeds, as he confesseth, ver. 41. But because some of your martyrs (as you call them) were indeed malefactors, therefore to save their honour you make this malefactor a martyr. I will give you but one place more of many, and that is, Rev. xiv. 13; "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord henceforth, that they may rest from their labours;" a place so clear, that I am told a famous doctor of your own, and one of the Sorbonne College, Picherellus by name, did ingenuously confess, St. John had in these few words put out the fire of purgatory.* And I am persuaded you would have been ashamed to have kindled it again, but that by this craft you get all your living.

I think I need say no more to this point; let us now go to another. We have discoursed of purgatory; now, if you please, let us discourse of the ways whereby you pretend to free men from it, which is by absolutions, and indulgences, and that which is necessary thereunto, namely, AURICULAR CONFESSION.

Pop. It is well you mention that, for I assure you it is a matter of salvation and

* De Missa, p. 156.

damnation; our council of Trent has determined, that "it is by Divine right necessary;" and as attrition alone (which is a grief for sin, arising only from a fear of hell,) will save a man where confession to a priest follows, so all the repentance in the world will never save him without this confession to a priest, namely, actual, where it may be had, or in desire, when it cannot be actually had.

Pro. Since you lay so much stress upon it, I require suitable evidence for it. But first, I pray you inform me what your doctrine is in this point.

Pop. I will give you that in the words of the council of Trent, as near as I can: they say, that "every Christian is bound, under pain of damnation, to confess to a priest all his mortal sins, which, after diligent examination, he can possibly remember; yea, even his most secret sins; his very thoughts, yea, and all the circumstances of them which are of any moment."*

Pro. Now let me hear your strongest arguments to prove this.

Pop. You shall. Our two great arguments are these:—First, priests are by God made judges, and intrusted with power of the keys for the remission of sins; but no judges can exercise judicature unless they know and understand the cause; and the priest must know all the particular sins, and their circumstances, by the man's own confession, or

* Concil. Trident. ses. 14. de Pœnitentiâ, c. 4.

else he knows not whether to bind or loose him, to forgive or to condemn him. This is the argument upon which the council of Trent builds their decree.*

Pro. Tell me, I pray you, is it necessary to salvation to confess every particular mortal sin? What if a man unavoidably forget some of them?

Pop. In that case, we confess they may be pardoned without it, and it may suffice to say with David, "Cleanse thy servant from secret sins."†

Pro. Now your argument is quite lost; for it seems in this case, (which may be in many hundreds of sins, especially in a person of bad memory,) your judge can pass sentence without knowing the particular cause, and therefore such knowledge is not necessary to his giving absolution. Moreover, tell me, I pray you, may not a priest absolve him from his sins whom Christ hath absolved?

Pop. Yes, doubtless.

Pro. And is not every priest bound to believe that Christ hath absolved every person that is truly penitent?

Pop. There is no question of that.

Pro. Suppose a sinner hath visibly forsaken all his wicked ways and company, and lives a very holy life before he comes to the priest, and the priest is certainly informed of this, is not the priest bound in that case to believe he is truly penitent?

* Concil. Trident. ses. 14. de Pœnitentiâ, c. 4.

† Ibid.

Pop. I should be most uncharitable if I should deny that.

Pro. Then he may without any more ado, upon his desire, absolve him, because it appears that Christ hath absolved him. It is not at all necessary to a priest to this purpose to know whether a man be a greater or a less sinner, since the grace of God is offered unto great as well as little sinners; and therefore seeing this is your strong argument, and that learned council could find no better, I see your cause is very low and bad. But I suppose you have some other argument for it.

Pop. There is so, and that is Jam. v. 16, "Confess your faults one to another."

Pro. Is this your strong argument? Here is not a word of the priest, nor of confession to him, but only to our fellow Christians. This confession is mutual; and it will as well prove that the priest is bound to confess his sins to the people, as that the people are bound to confess to the priest. The very next words are, "Pray for one another." What, are we bound to pray only for the priest? It is one thing that sets me against your religion, to consider what pitiful arguments you rely upon. I am assured your own brethren confess the weakness of this argument, as Vasquez,* and Cajetan,† and Canus;‡ but it seems you have no better. The weakness of your arguments for it might save me the

* In 3 Thom. qu. 90. Art. 1. sect. Omittimus.

† In locum.

‡ Relict. de Pœnit. par. 6.

labour of mine against it; therefore I shall only offer to your thoughts these two considerations.

1. Your doctrine makes that necessary to salvation, which God hath not made necessary. There is no command of God or Christ for it, as your eminent doctors acknowledge,* and it sufficiently appears from the vanity of your proofs for it. You confess it was not necessary in the Old Testament, and yet there was as much need and use of it then as now; and Christ hath made the condition of his church not more, but less burdensome than it was before. Many commands and exhortations to repentance there are in Scripture; not one which either commands this auricular confession to a priest, or declares the necessity of it. Produce one place, and I yield. There are many instances of John the Baptist, and Christ, and the apostles, either actually giving, or, in God's name, proposing and offering remission of sins, upon the condition prescribed in the gospel, among which, not one of them requires this auricular confession, Luke xviii. 13; Matt. ix. 2; Acts ii. 38; iii. 19; xxii. 16. Bring one instance to the point, and I yield.

Pop. I will give you two instances. The Pharisees were baptized, confessing their sins, Matt. iii. 6; and the conjurors confessed their sins, Acts xix. 18.

* Scotus et omnes decretorum interpretes inquit Maldon in summa qu. 18. art. 4. Cajet. in Joh. xx. 22. Bell. de Pœnit. lib. l. c. 4.

Pro. These places do both speak of public confessions, and in case of scandalous sins, which we acknowledge to be a duty. But what is this to auricular confession; will you never speak to the purpose? Besides, these places cannot be meant of auricular confession, for that was not then instituted, as your council of Trent confesseth. Well, I see you can bring neither instance of this confession, nor precept for it, and therefore I am sure there is no sin in the neglect of it; for “where no law is, there is no transgression,” Rom. iv. 15.

2. Your doctrine makes that insufficient for pardon and salvation which God makes sufficient. The great God assureth us, that “whoso that confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy,” Prov. xxviii. 13.

Pop. That makes against you, for you see there is confession required.

Pro. And no doubt it is a man’s duty to make confession to God, and, in case of wrong, unto men, and sometimes to a minister also, as in case of doubt or trouble of conscience; but this is nothing to auricular confession, nor can the text mean that, for you grant it was not as yet instituted. God declares, that if the wicked forsake his (evil) way and thoughts, and turn unto God, he shall have mercy, Isa. lv. 7; also Isa. i. 16—18. St. Paul, in God’s name, promiseth, “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved,” Acts xvi. 31. Thus, Rom. x. 13; “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall

be saved." And who dare say, that he that does all these things shall not be saved, unless he confess to a priest, since God never spake such a word? What is it to add to God's word, if this be not? The terms upon which Christ offered and promised salvation are, Repent and believe.

Pop. Auricular confession is a part of repentance.

Pro. When Christ preached that doctrine, it was no part of repentance, for you confess it was not then instituted; your council of Trent determines that it was instituted by Christ after his resurrection.* And you will find it hard to persuade any rational man, that repentance wanted a necessary part before Christ's resurrection, or that it was of one kind before it, and quite another after it. But I will not waste more time about so vain a fancy; for my part, I rest upon Christ's gracious promises to repenting and believing sinners. By God's grace, I will endeavour to do these things, and I doubt not but he will make good his word, whether you will or no. "Let God be true, but every man a liar," Rom. iii. 4.

But possibly you have better arguments for ABSOLUTIONS AND INDULGENCES. Produce them. But first let me hear what your doctrine in this point is.

Pop. I will give this in brief, together with the rise and ground of it. We believe, first,

* De Pœnitentiâ.

that there are divers saints who not only merit for themselves, but have a great deal to spare; and all their merits are put into one treasury. Secondly, that these merits are applicable to others; so that, for example, God will pardon Thomas for John's merit. Thirdly, that God has put this treasure into the church's, that is, the pope's hands, and from him into the hands of all priests, who have a power to apply these merits as they see fit.

Pro. There is nothing sound and solid in this whole discourse. First, I have proved that there is no purgatory; there is your foundation of indulgences gone. Next, I hope, ere we part, to show that there is no such thing as merit in good works, which is another of your foundations. Next, that any man's merits, except Christ's, may be applied to another, I pray you inform me, for I have learned quite otherwise. I read that "every man shall bear his own burden," Gal. vi. 5. Every one shall receive according to what he has done in his body, 2 Cor. v. 10. The wise virgins differed from you; they thought they had little enough oil for themselves, and none at all to spare, Matt. xxv. 9. So if you are virgins, it seems you are none of that sort. If you can prove this conceit of yours, do.

Pop. I will give you a clear place, Col. i. 24. St. Paul saith, "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind," or that which is lacking, "of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church."

Pro. First tell me, do you think any thing was lacking or defective in Christ's sufferings?

Pop. No; you use to charge us with that opinion, but falsely.

Pro. It is well you grant thus much; but if you denied it, a cloud of plain Scriptures would force you to grant it, which tells us, that "by one offering Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Heb. x. 14; and that "he is able to save to the uttermost," Heb. vii. 25. By the sufferings of Christ, then, we must understand the sufferings of Christ mystical, or Christ in his members, which are usually so called, Acts ix. 4; 2 Cor. i. 7; Heb. xi. 26. When Christ had done suffering in his person, he left it as a legacy to his members that they should suffer with him, and for him; and St. Paul bore his share in these sufferings, Acts ix. 16; xiv. 22; 2 Tim. iii. 12. And for the last clause, of his suffering for the church, this phrase, it is true, is ambiguous: sometimes indeed it signifies, to satisfy God's justice for another; but in this sense St. Paul rejects it with indignation, "Was Paul crucified for you?" 1 Cor. i. 13. But it is not always thus taken, for St. Paul saith he suffered for Christ, 2 Cor. xii. 10; not surely to satisfy for him. There is therefore another sense, and that is, he suffered for the church's edification and establishment, and so indeed he elsewhere explains himself, Phil. i. 12; and I am told that your own brethren understand it thus;* and your Bel-

* Tho. Est. Justin. in locum.

larmine confesseth the words may be thus expounded, but only saith, "the words may conveniently receive this sense;"* which is as much as to say, if you will be courteous, you may grant him the argument; but if you do not, he cannot prove it. But admit there be such a treasury of merits for others, as you pretend, how prove you that your priests are made judges, and invested with such a power of distributing those merits, and giving absolutions as you challenge?

Pop. Our great argument is, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained," John xx. 23. Answer me this argument, and I will yield up this cause.

Pro. What argument do you draw from these words?

Pop. Hence it appears, that ministers are made judges, and intrusted with full power and authority of binding and loosing, so that Christ does not loose (or forgive) a sinner by himself, but only by the priest, as Bellarmine saith.† And to speak properly, as our most learned Vasquez affirmeth, "God does not properly loose a sinner, but only approves of the priest's loosing of him."‡

Pro. Now, in my opinion, it were good manners to make the priest come after God, and not to make God depend upon the priest. It seems, then, if the priest should grow surly,

* De Pœnit. lib. 3: c. 3.

† De Pœnit. l. 3. c. 3.

‡ In 3 partem Thomæ, qu. 84. art. 3.

or envious, and deny me a pardon, Christ cannot help me, for he has given the power out of his hands. So you make the priest the judge, and God only the approver. The Lord rebuke this spirit of blasphemy. Again, nothing is more familiar in Scripture, than for God's ministers to be said to do that which they do only authoritatively declare that God will do. Thus God saith to Jeremiah, "I have this day set thee over kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy," Jer. i. 10; that is, by declaring that God would do it. In like manner, God's ministers are said to bind and loose, because they have from God authority to declare a sinner to be bound by his sins, or loosed from them, which, if they declare truly, and according to God's word, God in heaven does and will make it good. As for this text, it saith nothing but this, that every one whom they bind or loose, that is, proceeding according to their rule, (which is always to be understood,) shall be bound or loosed in heaven; but it does not say that no man is bound or loosed but those whom the priest bindeth and looseth.

But besides, if all these things were granted, how does this text prove that the priest or pope can absolve or release any souls out of purgatory, if there were such a place? I pray you tell me, can the pope bind any soul, and keep him in purgatory?

Pop. No; we do not pretend to that.

Pro. Then he cannot loose a soul out of purgatory; for I am sure binding and loosing

are of the same extent. But, upon second thoughts, I must own your discretion, for the binding of souls in purgatory would be an invidious and unprofitable work, and would have bound up men's hearts and purses; it is only the loosing of them out which opens their purse-strings, and tends to the edification of the church, that is, the pope and priests, as they always understand that word. In sober sadness, it is enough to make any serious Christian abhor your church, that your pope should not be content to usurp a power over the whole visible world, but that he should extend his authority to the other world, even to purgatory. In my opinion, he had done more wisely to have extended his empire to hell, for there are many of his predecessors (so far as can be judged by any man's life) whom he might have appointed his deputies; but there is never a pope in purgatory, for those who can release others at pleasure will certainly deliver themselves. But now I speak of that, I pray you tell me, if it be true what I have heard, that the pope, when he dies, receives absolution from his confessor; and that after his death, the cardinals give him absolution, and give order for the singing of abundance of masses?

Pop. It is true. I was at Rome when the last pope died, and it was so then; and our books justify it.

Pro. I am much pleased with your ingenuousness. So the pope gave the priest a power to pardon himself. Methinks he might

save the charges of a confessor; it were enough to say, I absolve myself. But tell me, do you say masses for any that are in heaven, or in hell?

Pop. No; we utterly disclaim that.

Pro. Then I perceive the pope goes into purgatory. I see your popes are not self-seeking men, as they are slandered to be, that help so many thousands out of purgatory, and leave themselves in.

But really this is to me a convincing argument that you do not believe yourselves, but deceive poor silly people against your consciences; for else you might be assured the pope would never come into purgatory, for you say he can keep himself out, and no man doubts of his will to do it. Besides, your doctrine usurps upon God's prerogative. I had thought it was only my Father in heaven to whom I should have prayed, "Forgive us our trespasses;" now, it seems we must pray so to one of these padres upon earth. You make subjects the supreme judges of all offences committed against their sovereign, and your priests sit as umpires between God and the sinner, and determine what satisfaction God shall have, and what penance the sinner shall undergo. Methinks they are brave fellows; and now I see it was not without ground that father Cotton boasted, that "he could do any thing when he had his God in his hand," (that is, the sacrament,) "and his king upon his knees," (in confession.) I think you will bring Christ upon

his knees too, for it seems you have resolved he shall stand to your priest's arbitration.

I might add to this, that you leave the souls of people to endless perplexities. You confess, that indulgences profit not, "if a man be not in a state of grace,"* which you say a man cannot certainly know; or, "if a man have not made a free and full confession after sufficient examination,"†—and who knows when he has done these things sufficiently?—or, "if a priest do not intend to pardon him"—and who knows another man's intentions?—And yet you would have me so desperate, to venture my soul upon such sandy foundations, that yourselves are afraid and ashamed of. But to leave this, I perceive that this, and divers of your other doctrines, are grounded upon that of the MERIT OF GOOD WORKS, which, because I judge a very pernicious and dangerous doctrine, let me hear what you can say for it. But first, let me understand your doctrine; for I have heard some of you cry out, that our divines slandered them, and profess that they did not hold merit strictly, but cast the honour of all upon Christ, and the grace of God; therefore I pray you inform me.

Pop. I will be plain and candid with you; I do not like such artifices. The council of Trent in plain terms affirms, that "our good works do truly merit increase of grace and eternal life;"‡ and our famous Bellarmine

* Bell. de Indulg. lib. 1, c. 13.

† Concil. Trident. de Pœnitentia.

‡ Cap. 11, c. 32.

disputes, and proves, that “good works do not only merit in respect of God’s gracious covenant, but in regard of the worthiness of the works themselves;” and, “that eternal life is not only due from God’s liberality, but from his just judgment.”*

Pro. I pray you tell me, has Bellarmine such expressions as these, that “because God would honour his children, he would have them to get heaven by their merits, which is more honourable to them, than to receive it by God’s free gift?”

Pop. Bellarmine does say so.†

Pro. I see he was a man of a brave spirit, and much a gentleman; but, in my poor opinion, he should have taken a little care for the honour of God, as well as of the saints. But I have heard of many strange expressions ascribed to your authors. I hear your Tapperus saith—“Far be it from them, that righteous men should expect eternal life as a beggar doth an alms. It is much more glorious that they should receive it as conquerors and triumphers, and possess it as a reward due to their labours.”‡ I see also, this was a man of honour. And again; that “our good works deserve the reward from God, as from a just Judge, and are able to abide the severe judgment of God, though he weigh all circumstances.”§ I am told

* De Justificat. lib. 5. c. 16, 17.

† De Justificat. lib. 5. c. 3.

‡ In Explic. Artic. Lovan. tom. 2. art. 9.

§ Ibid. art. 8.

that your renowned Vasquez saith, that "eternal life is due to the works of good men, without any covenant, or the favour of God."* And your learned Cajetan and Dominicus a Scoto say as much, as I hear Bellarmine reports.† And that Vasquez again saith, "The merits or person of Christ adds no worth to the works of good men."‡ This man was resolved so far to tread in Abraham's steps; as Abraham would not receive from the king of Sodom, so he would not receive from Christ, from a thread to a shoe-latchet, lest it should be said Christ had made him rich. Are these things true?

Pop. It is so.

Pro. Then sure I am, our religion is the safest way: if we do err, it is in giving too much to God; but if you err, it is no less than the worst kind of sacrilege, to rob God of so much of his glory, and the honour of your salvation. Yet, if you can prove this, I will receive it. Produce your strongest arguments.

Pop. First, then, I prove it hence, that eternal life is called a reward, Matt. v. 12; and given to labourers in the vineyard, Matt. xx. 1—15.

Pro. We must compare Scripture with Scripture: other places tell us it is an inheritance, Gal. iv. 7; Rom. viii. 17. The same estate cannot be mine both by inheritance and purchase.

* In 1 secundæ, tom. 2. dis. 214.

† De Justificat. lib. 5, c. 17.

‡ Ubi Supra.

Pop. Yes it may; I will prove it by an instance. - The glory which Christ had was his by inheritance, (for he was heir of all things,) and yet by purchase, Phil. ii. 8, 9.

Pro. I thank you for this objection; I have scarcely had any thing from you like a solid argument but this; it deserves an answer. First, then, this will not reach our case. The great hinderance of merit in our works is, that the best of them are imperfect, and a debt we owe to God beforehand; but Christ's works are of another kind, they are complete and perfect, and in part no debt; for though when Christ was made man, he was a debtor to God, and bound as a creature to fulfil the law, yet this was a voluntary act, and no debt to God, that he would become man, and so put himself under the law. Besides, the dignity of his person made his works proportionable unto all the glory he received; whereas all our sufferings are not worthy to be compared with our glory, Rom. viii. 18. Secondly, it might be both an inheritance and purchase in Christ, in divers respects, because he had two natures; as he was God, or the Son of God, it was his inheritance, and belonged to his manhood only as united with the Godhead; as he was man, he might purchase it by what he did and suffered in the flesh. But in us there are not two natures, nor any of these pretences to merit. Moreover, Scripture speaks of two kinds of rewards, the one of grace, the other of debt; and withal affirms, that the reward

which God gives to good men is merely of grace, as we profess, and not of debt, as you pretend, Rom. iv. 4.

Pop. Possibly it may be of both, as Bel-larmine saith.*

Pro. No; the apostle forbids that: "If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work," Rom. xi. 6; and this reward is not given to him that worketh, but believeth, Rom. iv. 5. No Protestant could speak our doctrine more fully.

Pop. But God gives this reward to men for working in his vineyard, Matt. xx. 8.

Pro. It is true: but still the reward appears to be of grace, because it is alike to him that came at the last hour, as to those that had borne the heat and burden of the day, ver. 12; but that heaven is a reward of justice, and a due debt, as you profess, this text proves not, and other Scriptures plainly contradict.

Pop. But God is said to reward men "according to their works," that is, according to the proportion of them, and that implies merit.

Pro. Not so neither; for "since God is pleased to reward in us his own gifts and graces, not our merits," as St. Bernard speaks, he may still keep the proportion; and to those to whom he gives more grace here, he may give more glory hereafter; and yet there is no more merit in this additional reward than

* Lib. 5. c. 17.

in the rest. Again; I may as well conclude the blind men merited their sight, because Christ saith, "According to your faith be it unto you," Matt. ix. 29, as you gather merit from this phrase, "According to your work." Therefore let me hear if you have any other argument.

Pop. Our works are mentioned as the causes for which God gives eternal life; "Come, ye blessed, for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat," Matt. xxv. 34, 35; and other like places.

Pro. St. Paul did not think this a good argument; for, though he knew that it was said of Abraham, "Because thou hast done this thing, I will bless thee," Gen. xxii. 16, 17, yet he positively denies the merit of Abraham's works, Rom. iv. and Gal. iii. And he saith of himself, "I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief," 1 Tim. i. 13; yet I hope you do not think his ignorance merited mercy. The king saith, "I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me," Matt. xxviii. 32. Did his asking deserve it? Besides all this, if God did reward them for their good works, this will not prove merit; if God reward men infinitely more than their good works deserve, as God indeed does, and Bellarmine acknowledgeth so much.*

Pop. But good men are said to be worthy, Rev. iii. 4.

Pro. They are so comparatively to other

* De Justificat. lib. 5. c. 19.

men, and also by God's gracious acceptance in and through Christ; but otherwise the holiest saints of God have ever judged themselves unworthy of the least of God's mercies, so far were they from thinking they were worthy of eternal life, Gen. xxxii. 10; Matt. viii. 8. And since it is God's grace which gives them all their worth and meetness for heaven, Col. i. 12, it is impudence to pretend to merit from God by it. If yet you will boast of your own worth and merit, answer the apostle's question at your leisure; "For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. If you can baffle your conscience now, you will find it a hard question to answer at the last day.

Pop. But eternal life is given them by God's justice, 1 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

Pro. This word also does not prove any merit, for God's justice is oftentimes taken improperly. I read, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," 1 John i. 9; yet justification is not merited, as you confess, but is an act of mere grace, "being justified freely by his grace," etc., Rom. iii. 24—28. Thus, 2 Pet. i. 1, we are said to obtain "precious faith through the righteousness of God;" and yet faith is the gift of God, and you confess that is given without merit, (for you grant none but justified persons can merit:) therefore in such

places justice is taken either for equity, and the congruity of it with God's nature or word, or for the faithfulness of God, or the like.

Pop. Since you despise my arguments, let me hear if you have better against the merit of good works.

Pro. You shall; and methinks that one place, Luke xvii. 10, should convince you; "When ye shall have done all these things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."

Pop. Christ doth not affirm they are unprofitable, but only bids them say they are unprofitable, and teaches them to be humble.*

Pro. Very well; then you think Christ taught them to think one thing, and say another; that is, he taught them the art of lying, and that to God.

Pop. I answer further, that without God's grace men are unprofitable; those only can merit that are in the state of grace, as our church holds.

Pro. Doth not your conscience tell you, the apostles, whom Christ commands to say thus, were in the state of grace?

Pop. Though a man cannot profit God, he may profit himself.

Pro. If he cannot profit God, he cannot properly merit any thing from God; for that implies a proportion between giving and receiving.

* Bell. de Justificat. l. 5. c. 5. sect. quart.

Pop. It is true; we are unprofitable by ourselves, in regard of God's absolute sovereignty; but not unprofitable in regard of God's gracious covenant.

Pro. It is ridiculous to say that is merit properly, which depends on God's mere grace; and besides, the Pharisees themselves, whose error Christ there strikes at, were never so vain or absurd to think they could be profitable to God in any other sense than what you affirm.

Pop. Let me hear your other argument.

Pro. The nature of merit shows the impossibility of it in men. It is evident that to merit, these, amongst other ingredients, are required:

1. That the work be not due already. Doth any man deserve an estate for that money whereby he pays an old debt?

2. That the work be our own. You do not think a nobleman's almoner merits by distributing his master's alms.

3. That it be profitable to him of whom he merits.

4. That the work be perfect; for that action which needs a pardon certainly cannot deserve a reward.

5. That it be suitable to the reward. If I present my sovereign with a horse, and he requite me with a lordship, who but a horse would pretend this was merited?

Pop. I must acknowledge most of these things are true; but this doth not concern our works.

Pro. That we will now examine. And first, all the works now we can do for God, are deserved by him. It fills me with horror to hear men pretending to merit of that God, who, as they profess, created them, and every day upholds their souls in life, and redeemed them, and is so infinitely beforehand with them every way. Tell me, dare you say that God doth not deserve that you should do the utmost you can for his service and glory?

Pop. I will not say so.

Pro. Then it is impudence to pretend merit from God. Besides, the good works we do are not properly our own, but God's. Faith is the gift of God, Eph. ii. 8; Phil. i. 29; so is repentance, Acts ii. 18; v. 31. And, in general, every good and perfect gift is from God, James i. 17.

Pop. The first grace is from God; but that I use it aright, that is from myself, and thereby it is that I merit.

Pro. St. Paul was not of your mind. What good work is there, but it lies either in willing or doing? Yet both these God works in us, Phil. ii. 13; not only the power of believing, but the act too, (and suffering also,) is the gift of God, Phil. i. 29. And St. Paul's abundant labours in the gospel, which certainly amounted to merit, if there were ever such a thing in the world; and which, if any thing, were his own act, yet he dare not take to himself; he says, "I laboured, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me," 1 Cor. xv. 10. No less evident is it, that our

works cannot profit God, Psal. xvi. 4; Job xxii. 3; xxxv. 7. As also our best works are so far from meriting, that they need a pardon from the infirmities accompanying them, by reason of which the best of saints have been afraid of the severe judgments of God even upon their best works; so was Job, Job ix. 2; and David, Psal. cxxx. 3; and Paul, 1 Cor. iv. 4. And lastly, it is so evident that our works are not proportionable to the reward, that Bellarmine hath a chapter upon this head, to prove that good works are rewarded above their desert.* And therefore it is an intolerable arrogance to affirm, that divers of the saints have not only merit enough to purchase eternal life, but a great deal to spare for the relief of others.

To let this point pass, now I would willingly be informed of two things, which concern us lay-people in an especial manner.

First. Why you defraud us of the cup?

Secondly. Why you order prayer to be made in a language that many, nay, most of us, do not understand.

For the first, OF DENYING THE CUP TO THE PEOPLE; you rob us of one half of the sacrament. What can you say to acquit yourselves from sacrilege?

Pop. Let me hear what right you have to it.

Pro. First, I remember you disputed for transubstantiation out of John vi. 51—58, which you said spoke of the sacrament; now,

* De Justificat. l. 1. c. 19.

if you say true, there is a passage in it, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," ver. 53. If this be spoken of the sacrament, as you say it is, and the wine be really his blood, then you do no less than murder all your people, by robbing them of that which is necessary to their life.

Pop. Not so; for as I shall show you, you have the blood in the body, or bread.

Pro. If it be so, yet my taking it in that manner cannot be called a drinking of it, unless you will say that every man that eats rawish meat may be said to drink the blood which he eats in it. But further, I think we have as great right to the cup as your priests; we have Christ's "Do this," and you pretend no more. In short, we have both the legacy and command of Christ, fortified with his strong reason; "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins," 1 Cor. x. 25; Matt. xxvi. 28; whereby it sufficiently appears, that the sign belongs to all that have interest in the thing, and are capable of discerning the Lord's body; and this command of Christ is express and positive, "Drink ye all of it," Matt. xxvi. 27. It is remarkable that he does not say, Eat ye all, (though they were to do so,) but "Drink ye all of it," as foreseeing the sacrilege of your church. What can you say to this?

Pop. First, I say, here is no command, but an institution only.

Pro. I understand no subtleties; but if you say this was no command of drinking, then it was no command of eating to say, "Take, eat," and so the sacrament is not commanded, but people may receive or refuse it, as they please, and Christ's "Do this," is no more than, Do as you list. For my part, I shall never know when Christ commands any thing, if this be not a command, for no command can run in more express words.

Pop. If this be a command, it concerns only priests, for such the apostles were, and they only were present.

Pro. Since it is evident that eating and drinking belong to the same persons, if the one be restrained to the apostles, so is the other; and because you confess the eating belongs to the people by virtue of this precept, "Eat of it," by the same reason does also the drinking reach to them by virtue of that precept, "Drink of it." Besides, the apostles, though they were ministers, yet in this act they were in the people's stead; and Christ was the minister or dispenser of the sacrament, and they only the receivers of it at this time.

Besides, as they were ministers, he bade them do this; that is, take and distribute bread and wine to the people as he had to them. If ministers be under any command of administering and giving the sacrament, certainly it is here, for no command can be more express; and if they are commanded to

give the bread to the people, they are commanded to give the wine also, for here is no difference at all.

Add to this, that St. Paul has put this out of doubt, and he expounds this of, and applies it to the people; for thus he writes to all the Corinthians, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup," 1 Cor. xi. 28; in four verses together, namely, ver. 26—29, eating and drinking are inseparably joined together, which you have so wickedly divided. If it be a command, "Let a man examine himself," which none will deny, then it is a command which immediately follows, "So let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

Pop. It does not appear that there is an absolute command of drinking, but only that as oft as they do drink it, they should drink it in remembrance of Christ.

Pro. If this be so, then here is no command for the priest either to consecrate the cup, or to receive it. And further, then here is no command for his consecrating or receiving the bread; for there is no more than a "Do this," and that is for the wine as well as for the bread.

Pop. Here is a difference, for he saith of the body simply, "This do in remembrance of me;" but of the cup, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it."

Pro. If you lay any stress upon these words, "As oft as ye drink it," I beseech you

make use of your eyes, and you shall read it is said of the bread as well as of the cup, ver. 26, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup." Well, I am sorry to see that you dare oppose such plain Scripture upon such pitiful pretences. But I pray you let me ask you, I have been told that your famous council of Constance, in their canon for the receiving the sacrament in one kind, have these expressions: "Although Christ did minister this sacrament under the forms of bread and wine; and although, in the primitive church, this sacrament was received by the faithful under both kinds;" yet they make a canon that it shall be received under one kind only. Is this so?

Pop. It is true; they are the very words of the council.

Pro. This was a wise council indeed! wiser than Christ and all his apostles! But I should think we are on the safest side, having Christ and all the primitive churches for our patterns; and by this I see what to judge of your glorious pretences, that yours is the ancient and apostolical faith, and ours, forsooth, but a new religion. But I pray, let me hear what you have to say for this act of yours in taking away the cup? I see Scripture is against you, and the ancient church, at least so far that for fourteen hundred years together the people might drink of the cup, if they would, as I am told your Becanus confesseth.*

* In manuali de communione sub utraque specie.

Pop. You are greatly mistaken; we have Scripture for us; we have examples there of receiving the sacrament in one kind, Acts ii. 42. "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and in breaking of bread;" and Acts xx. 7, they came together to break bread.

Pro. It is usual to express a whole feast by this one thing; Christ went into the Pharisee's house to "eat bread," Luke xiv. 1. I suppose you think it was not a dry feast. Joseph's brethren sat to eat bread, Gen. xxxvii. 25. so Acts xxvii. 35, Paul and the rest took bread and ate it, yet none doubts but they had drink with it. Besides, here is as much said of the people as of the ministers drinking of the cup; that is, neither is here mentioned; and if the silence concerning the cup be a good argument, it proves that neither did partake of it; if it be not, then both might partake of it. But what have you more to say?

Pop. You need not be troubled so much at the loss of the cup, since the blood is contained in the bread; that is, in the body, by concomitancy.

Pro. This is, in effect, to tell Christ the cup was a superfluous device. Besides, we are commanded to drink the cup. If I should dip bread in drink, and eat it, no man will say I drink the bread. Again, this destroys the main end of the sacrament, which is to show forth Christ's death, and the shedding of his blood; and this was the reason why

Christ appointed the bread and wine apart, as the fittest means to bring to our memories the pouring of his blood out of his body for us; and as God would have us to remember the thing, so he commanded us to use this sign of drinking the cup.

Pop. But there are many weighty reasons why it is not fit you should partake of the cup.

Pro. I dare not forsake plain Scripture for any subtle pretences of human reason. But let me hear them.

Pop. First, in some countries wine is not to be had. Secondly, some there are who have an antipathy against wine, and cannot drink any. Thirdly, there is great danger of spilling the wine, which is the blood of Christ.

Pro. Are these your weighty reasons? I see the reason and religion of Rome are both of a complexion. But I pray you, how came it to pass, that Christ and his apostles, and all the primitive Christians, for so many hundreds of years, should prescribe and use the cup, notwithstanding those reasons? Surely, if these reasons are strong now, they were so sixteen hundred and sixty years ago.* Wine was as scarce then, as now it is in some countries; abstemious persons there were then, as well as now; the wine might be spilled then, as much as now. But they feared none of these things. Either they were all stupid that did not see these things, or your church

* This work was first printed in the seventeenth century.

is audacious, that dare in effect, teach Christ and his apostles what they should have done. It might, peradventure, be added, that in such places where wine cannot be had, or for some persons who cannot drink wine, some other thing proportionable to it may be allowed; but if it might not, or if in such special cases they were confined to one kind, I am sure it is a ridiculous consequence that, because they must be content with the bread, that cannot drink of the cup, therefore they that can shall go without it; and because it may be omitted where it cannot be had, therefore it shall be omitted where it may be enjoyed. And for the danger of spilling of the wine, there is also danger in dropping some of the bread, and so that should be denied. By this argument, also, the priest should not meddle with the wine, for he may spill it. But indeed such fantastical reasons as these deserve no answer; they make me almost sick to hear them.

There is only one point more I would be informed in, what you can pretend for it; and that is, that **YOUR PUBLIC PRAYERS ARE PERFORMED IN A LANGUAGE UNKNOWN TO MOST OF YOUR PEOPLE.**

Pop. What have you to say against it?

Pro. What can be said more plainly and fully against it by us than what St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. xiv. 4—19; there I find some, who having the gift of speaking with divers languages, did use it without interpreting them in public assemblies; those the apostle

informs, that there is a better gift, and more desirable than that of tongues, namely, prophesy; and he useth divers reasons, which are so many undeniable arguments against your Latin prayers. He tells them, it is their duty to manage public worship so that the church may be edified, ver. 4, 5, 12. I hope you will not deny this.

Pop. None can deny that.

Pro. Well, then, 1. He tells us, that what is spoken in an unknown language does not edify the church, ver. 4, 11, 12, 14. 2. Yet again, the apostle commands that if any do speak in an unknown tongue it must be interpreted, ver. 27; you disobey this command. 3. He argues that public prayers are so to be made by the minister, that the people may say, Amen, ver. 16. And he also tells us, that no man can say Amen to that which he does not understand. So the apostle stops all your starting holes.

Pop. The very word Amen is Hebrew.

Pro. You dispute not only against me, but against the apostle himself; but Amen, though a Hebrew word, is by common use sufficiently known to us all, to express our consent to his prayers, and confidence that God will hear them. 4. Yet again, he argues that strange tongues are designed only for the conviction of unbelievers, not to be used by believers amongst themselves, unless interpreted, ver. 22. What can, or dare you say, against such clear places?

Pop. St. Paul speaks not of the ordinary

service of the church, but of extraordinary hymns and songs.

Pro. That is false; he speaks of the ordinary service of the church, though at that time there was something extraordinary in it; and besides, his reasons reach to all times and services, ordinary or extraordinary. Must we not look to the edification of the church in the one as well as the other? Must not the people say Amen in one as well as the other? Let me hear, therefore, what you have to say for yourselves.

Pop. Preaching ought to be in a known language, for the end of that is the people's edification; but prayers are made to God.

Pro. Though they are made to God, yet they are made by the church, who are to join in those prayers, and to signify their consent by saying Amen, which requires their understanding. And moreover, that chapter speaks as expressly of praying, as it does of prophesying in the church. Surely the people went not to church to sit there like senseless images, but to offer up a reasonable service, and to tender their prayers and praises unto God by the mouth of the minister, as those did in Acts iv. 24, "They lifted up their voice to God-with one accord." And if we pray with you, we must understand, else we cannot pray in faith, as it is our duty to do; and we shall fall into their error, to ask we know not what.

Pop. You need not concern yourself about

that; you may rely upon the wisdom and fidelity of the church, who takes care that your prayers be right.

Pro. I confess there is this great encouragement for it, that your church, it seems, is wiser than St. Paul; but as a friend, I advise you to give this counsel of relying upon your church to the Indians, or some remote places; for those that know her will never trust her. For my part, my Saviour's words make me cautious, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch," Matt. xv. 14. If I had no other argument of your church's fallibility and apostasy, this one point were a sufficient evidence of them both. But what have you more to say?

Pop. I will give you then a Scripture instance: the priests prayed in the temple when the people waited without, Luke i. 21.

Pro. What is this to the purpose? I do not read that the priest prayed at all, but only went in to offer incense; but if he did pray, he did it alone, not with and before the people, as your prayers are. You might as well plead thus: those priests said nothing at all, and therefore your priests need only make a dumb show, and may save their Latin, (as well as their English,) which may be good counsel for many of them that have so little to spare.

But seriously; can you, or any rational man, think these reasons of sufficient weight to oppose against that great Scripture rule of

edification, and the express words and plain arguments of St. Paul? God deliver me from such a besotting religion!

Besides, what I have said, I shall leave this with you at parting, that you do not only oppose Scripture, but also that ancient church which you pretend to reverence, and to follow her steps; and your practice is contrary to the church in all ancient times. The prayers of the Jews in public were always made in the Hebrew tongue; and in that tongue God gave them those forms of prayer and blessing which were then used, Numb. vi. 22—27.

God gave the gift of languages to that end, that the apostles might establish the worship of God in every nation in their own language. And I am told, that Origen reports this to be the practice of the church in his time, as well as his own judgment, "That every one did pray to God in his own dialect; Greeks in Greek, and Latins in Latin," etc.* Besides, I am told that your own authors, Lyra, Aquinas, and Harding, and others, confess this was the practice of the ancient church; and that one of your own councils, that of Lateran, in the year 1215, did make this order, that "whereas in many places there were mixed people of divers languages and customs, the bishops should take care to provide fit men, that should perform Divine service amongst them, according

* Orig. contra Celsum. lib. 8.

to the difference of rites and languages.”* Moreover, your great cardinal Cajetan confesses, that “prayers ought to be in a known tongue.”† Are these things so?

Pop. I cannot deny it: their books are extant.

Pro. Then by this I see how far your church is, not only from infallibility, but from common honesty, that dare pretend they hold nothing but what hath been by constant tradition conveyed to them from the apostles’ times until this day. And by this I shall judge of all your other boasts of antiquity in your doctrine.

* Quoniam in plerisque partibus intra eandem civitatem et diœcesin permixti sunt populi diversarum linguarum, habentes sub una fide varios ritus et mores, districte præcipimus, ut Pontifices hujusmodi civitatem provideant viros idoneos, qui secundum diversitatem rituum et linguarum divina officia illis celebrent, c. 9.

† Ex hac Pauli doctrinâ, habetur quod melius ad ædificationem Ecclesiæ est orationes publicas quæ audiente populo dicuntur, dici lingua communi clericis et populo, quàm dici Latinè. Cajet. in 1 Cor. xiv.

THE END.











